

Constructing the future of Western Sydney (WSIG)



A case study in how Solid Support works with Blacktown City Council on the Western Sydney Infrastructure Grant-funded community projects.

Worth **AUS\$273M**, these projects are running concurrently across Western Sydney-based Council. Solid Support was appointed as the independent planning and forensic planning consultant. They developed the projects portfolio programme, construction simulations, and delay analysis reports and recommendations.

These outputs aid the Council to ensure the projects deliver the intended benefits, manage portfolio and project governance, and engage with their community and other stakeholders.



The WSIG Portfolio at a glance

PROJECT	VALUE	TYPE	CONTEXT
Blacktown Aquatic Centre	\$77.2M	Sports & Recreation	Largest single project in the WSIG programme
Mount Druitt Swimming Centre	\$40.6M	Sports & Recreation	Redeveloped aquatic facility
Blacktown Arts & Cultural Centre	\$39.9M	Arts, Culture & Heritage	Flagship culture and arts facility for the Blacktown LGA
Seven Hills Community Resource Hub	\$35.8M	Arts, Culture & Heritage / Community Services	New community library and shared service hub
Mount Druitt Hub Revitalisation	\$26.8M	Community Services	Anchor of the Mt Druitt cluster
Mount Druitt PCYC	\$25.4M	Sports & Recreation / Youth development	Part of the NSW PCYC network
First Nations Cultural Hub	\$19.5M	Arts, Culture & Heritage	Part of the Mt Druitt precinct redevelopment
Mount Druitt Town Centre Public Domain	Council-funded	Urban / Community Services	Public realm and wayfinding across the Mt Druitt cluster



The challenge: A portfolio problem, not a project level one

Blacktown City Council (BCC) secured AUS\$273 million through the New South Wales Government's Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants (WSIG) program, funding seven transformational projects across the local government area. The wider programme portfolio also includes linked, Council-funded public-domain work in Mount Druitt. Each project and workstream has its own project controls and governance structure — client-side project manager, head contractor, contract and programmes — in addition to community stakeholders.

The Council recognised that it had project-management and superintendent expertise but required independent construction-planning and forensic-planning capability. This expertise was important when evaluating builders' tender programmes, conducting independent project status reviews and assessing contractors' delay claims. The Council therefore went to market for a suitable planning and forensic-planning consultancy. Solid Support sits on the Council's side of the table, appointed directly by BCC to look across the portfolio and report honestly.

After an exhaustive and competitive open tender process, Solid Support was selected for its experience, resource availability, capability and breadth of complementary construction-planning services. It now functions as a consistent source of truth on portfolio health and individual project performance, while independently reviewing delay claims submitted by builders.



MOUNT DRUITT HUB — AERIAL VISUALISATION

Image source: Blacktown City Council



The solution: A Portfolio, Program and Project (P3) delivery model

With the diverse range of community infrastructure projects, Solid Support approached its planning & forensic planning oversight using a portfolio, program and project (P3) delivery model. This portfolio delivery model ensures there was suitable resource allocation, management support, and client escalation points.

1 One Planning Director with oversight of the portfolio

The Managing Director was designated as the Planning (Portfolio) Director, with overall accountability for the work delivered across the BCC WSIG portfolio and acting as the escalation point for the planning and forensic teams.

2 Two Construction Planning teams, split between two programs (clusters)

The eight projects were split into two clusters (programs)

managed by two separate teams of construction planners, each led by a Planning Manager / Senior Planning Consultant.

Team A: Mount Druitt Cluster: Mount Druitt Hub, Swim Centre, First Nations Cultural Hub and Town Centre Public Domain — interdependent sites where a slip on one has downstream implications for the others.

Team C: Remaining Sites Cluster: Blacktown Arts & Cultural Centre, Blacktown Aquatic Centre, Mount Druitt PCYC and Seven Hills Community Resource Hub - independent projects where project-level planning rigour matters most.

3 Every delay claim assessed by the same team

A dedicated team of forensic planners (Team B) assesses every extension of time claim across the portfolio, ensuring consistent evaluations under the SCL Delay and Disruption Protocol.

4 4D Simulation on the high-interdependency sites

For the Mount Druitt cluster projects, CAD designers linked 3D models of the project site to the construction programmes to produce 4D simulations.

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We had no hesitation in engaging Solid Support as master programmers for our WSIG projects based on our previous experience with them. When our \$100 million BEST Hub project faced the combined impacts of COVID-19, unprecedented rainfall and major contamination volumes, Solid Support brought clarity to complexity. They helped resolve difficult claims through clear analysis, preserving critical stakeholder relationships

Bill Tsakalos,

City Architect & Director Transformational Design, Blacktown City Council



Forensic Delay Analysis

Solid Support assigned a team of forensic planners who assess every extension of time claim across the portfolio of projects. This approach ensures consistent evaluations and recommendations for each project. This provided BCC with the comfort that delay claims are being considered under the same philosophy — the Society of Construction Law (SCL) Delay and Disruption Protocol — regardless of the project, contractor or project manager.

Every claim is comparable

Contractor A on the Aquatic Centre cannot argue a standard that Contractor B on the PCYC wasn't held to. One set of principles is applied across the portfolio.

Every position is defensible

If a determination is challenged, the analysis behind it is already prepared to court-grade standards. There is no retrospective reconstruction.

Every dollar is accounted for

Unjustified claims are rejected with reasoning and not refused with silence. This ensures justified ones are settled cleanly, without compounding disputes.

The Forensic Planning Manager leads this team, with experience in delay claim analysis, expert letters of advice, and expert witness testimony and reports for dispute resolution at arbitration and court trials.



CAD/4D Simulation

For the Mount Druitt cluster projects, CAD designers linked 3D models of the project site to the construction programmes to produce 4D simulations. This was useful to ensure that the selected construction methodology was appropriate for the selected sites and was doable within the constraints of the location — necessary for the higher risks associated with the Mount Druitt cluster. The National BIM Manager leads the team of CAD Visualisers building the simulations.

Methodology issues surface before they're built on the ground

Sequencing clashes, staging bottlenecks, and access conflicts show up visually while they are still cheap to resolve. The planner and contractor catch them in the simulation, so they can be resolved before the Council sees a variation.

Stakeholders can be briefed without a Gantt chart

Councillors, community groups, and public-facing stakeholders don't read construction programmes. The 4D simulations communicate what's happening, when, and why, to any audience in a visually engaging manner.

Planning, delivery, and Council share one reference

Contractors, project managers, and Council's planning team look at the same model running against the same programme. They can use the simulation as a risk-reduction tool — and make decisions before anything is poured.



What is the benefit for Blacktown City Council

Blacktown City Council engaged Solid Support across several service lines: Construction Planning, Forensic Delay Analysis, and CAD / 4D Simulation on the WSIG programme. Solid Support has prior and ongoing engagements on the BEST Hub and the \$1.3B Blacktown Quarter & Health Precinct - the Council and Solid Support have worked together before in a trusted capacity. The institutional knowledge and familiarity ensure the work gets done in the most efficient way possible. The Council has a partner who delivers portfolio-level reporting and advice in a timely and consistent manner, improving the Council's decision-making and oversight of portfolio governance, benefits realisation and stakeholder management

→ experience ahead of time

To discuss programming or forensic delay support on an upcoming project, call us on +61 2 9743 4666 or email experience@solidsupport.com.au



PROJECT CONTEXT — MOUNT DRUITT SWIMMING CENTRE

Architectural visualisation · Image source: Lippmann Partnership / Blacktown City Council



About Solid Support

Solid Support has been providing independent construction programming, forensic delay analysis, CAD and 4D Simulation, and planning consultancy for over 32 years. Our team delivers 1,000+ programmes per year across infrastructure, commercial, residential, health, education, and civil projects including prior engagements with Blacktown City Council on the BEST Hub and the \$1.3B Blacktown Quarter & Health Precinct.