

Responses to Questions from Community Information Session 28 July 2021

Was the former rail corridor between Cockle Creek and the western side of Barnsley considered?

The connection from Teralba Colliery along Cockle Creek was considered via Cameron Park to Minmi but was impeded by urban development. This can be found in section B1.5 of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#). A Proposed Future Infrastructure Corridor Map can be found on page 14 of the Explanation of Intended Effects (EIE)

No alternative route options have been considered in the southern half of the corridor. How can this be seen as a genuine options study?

An options assessment and multi-criteria assessment (MCA) was carried out to identify corridor options. Southern connections were explored to determine the preferred option through this area. Due to mining and land use issues there is only one feasible option. This can be found in section B1.6 of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#).

The bush here is a big part of our community, have you considered the impact of taking that away from us?

The development of the corridor alignments, and selection of the recommended corridor has avoided direct impacts on sensitive areas, such as homes, heritage and ecologically important areas where practicable. Co-location of the corridor with the M1 Pacific Motorway north of the Newcastle Link Road Motorway, for example, minimised significant impacts on ecological communities relative to other options outlined in Appendix B of the Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment. Opportunities to further avoid and minimise impacts on vegetation would be considered during the next phase of design development.

The noise from the M1 can still be heard currently. I don't believe you will be able to reduce the noise once this corridor is developed.

Noise mitigation options will be further explored during the detailed design development stage of the project to ensure that impacts on residents are mitigated in accordance with the required standards.

What consideration has been made regarding a potential future 'faster rail' corridor. Priority for this corridor should be on the east of M1, with noisy freight on the west.

The Lower Hunter Freight Corridor is a proposed corridor intended for a future dedicated freight rail link between Fassifern and Hexham to bypass Newcastle's urban area and achieve better outcomes for local communities and enable both freight and passenger rail capacity to grow. The future faster rail strategy is looking at a staged approach to achieving better passenger travel times between Sydney to Newcastle as outlined on the dedicated website [A Fast Rail Future for NSW](#). Freight rail is proposed to be on a separate alignment to meet the efficient movement of freight.

What side of the roadway "the road into Killingworth " will the line run the south side or the north side ?? When it crosses Wakefield road?? Currently has it running up the road!

The Lower Hunter Freight Corridor crosses to the south of the intersection of Wakefield Rd and The Broadway. The design of the future rail infrastructure will not be undertaken for sometime, however when it is required in 10-20 years it will be grade separated at this crossing.

Will the fast passenger train be on this line

The proposed corridor is intended for a future freight rail link between Fassifern and Hexham to bypass Newcastle urban area and achieve better outcomes for local communities and enable both freight and passenger rail capacity to grow. Urbanised areas and future identified urban growth

areas were avoided to the greatest extent possible. The use of the proposed corridor for a future passenger train is not considered appropriate.

Will you put railway station near west Wallsend if passenger trains will run on the line?

The proposed corridor is intended for a future freight rail link between Fassifern and Hexham to bypass Newcastle urban area and achieve better outcomes for local communities and enable both freight and passenger rail capacity to grow. Urbanised areas and future identified urban areas were avoided to the greatest extent possible. The use of the proposed corridor for a future passenger train was not considered appropriate.

What supporting infrastructure is going to be put along the rail corridor and where eg (shunting) bunting yard etc

The proposed corridor is 60 m in width to accommodate a double track rail bypass of Newcastle's congested urban area. There are currently no proposals for shunting or holding lines, nevertheless within this corridor the future detailed designs will need to also consider mitigation measures to protect adjoining land users to mitigate noise impacts. The strategic design and operational requirements of the infrastructure considered for this corridor are outlined in Chapter 3 of the Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Your planning allows for one or potentially dual lines how long into the future will this corridor be viable before further duplication is required?

The proposed corridor is suitable for a double track railway with associated rail infrastructure, as outlined in Chapter 3 of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment](#). Modelling undertaken for this project indicates that the infrastructure will be required in 10 - 20 years. The corridor width can accommodate the dual track and potentially additional tracks if ever required. Future growth in the freight rail task will determine infrastructure designs which would be subject to a future environmental approval process at that time.

24/7 is not a benefit to the residents. Will double glazing etc be offered to residents as was done at Cardiff.

Noise mitigation will be assessed when the project is needed in 10 - 20 years from now. At this time, further detailed design will be undertaken and, as part of these detailed designs, noise mitigations will be developed to ensure that the project meets the required standards to ensure residents are not adversely affected by the future rail operations

What were the specific reasons why the dark blue lined option on the western side of Killingworth was ruled out on Figure B.2, Page B-15 in the DSEA?

An options assessment and multi-criteria assessment (MCA) was carried out to identify the recommended corridor option. Central connections were explored to determine this preferred option. Details can be found in section B1.6 of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#). The Killingworth option was ruled out due to poor performance in the MCA in comparison to other options, with primary concerns around the engineering performance and community impacts. The criteria included freight movement, economic growth, community impacts, environmental impacts, integrated land use and transport and future proofing. Transport welcomes alternate views from the community. Please share these by way of a submission.

How are you going to deal with the flooding issue between Killingworth and Barnsley. This area floods annually and no flood mitigation has been added or address in the proposal,

A strategic hydrology and flood modelling has been conducted as part of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#) study. The future rail line design will consider the detailed flood and hydrology modelling as part of the next phase of design development. This will ensure that no adverse impacts result to existing land uses and will be supported by a future environmental assessment and approval process.

The location of the line when it crosses the Wakefield road effects the residents of Barnsley significantly.

The Lower Hunter Freight Corridor crosses to the south of the intersection of Wakefield Rd and The Broadway. The design of the future rail infrastructure will not be undertaken for 10 - 20 years when it is required but it will be grade separated at this crossing. Transport welcomes suggestions from residents as to how to further mitigate the impacts to residents of Barnsley as part of this consultation process.

Can you give a more accurate estimate of the proximity to properties at Killingworth?

The location of the corridor relative to the nearest residential dwelling in Killingworth is approximately 800 m.

This proposal is simply too close to the towns and can you provide a better map to show how close this line is to the residents in Holmesville.

The shortest distance from the residents in Homesville to the corridor is approximately 450 m. Detailed maps of the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor can be found in Appendix D of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment](#).

What about how it has already impacted our property prices? I live at the end of Bendigo St Barnsley which looks to be within 100m of proposed rail line.

The location of the corridor relative to the nearest residential dwelling in Bendigo Street, Barnsley is approximately 250m.

Will you give back West Wallsend mining heritage park which has been on hold for 27years so far. Parks are Soical gathering and will we get fast passenger train on that railway.

As described in Section 7.1.1 of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#), the recommended corridor is over 100 metres from Johnston Park at West Wallsend. The recommended corridor passes to the north of the West Wallsend Colliery No.1 heritage site, which has been identified for future opportunities for renewal and to contain informal walking and cycling opportunities (Lake Macquarie City Council, 2020)

I note the noise portion of the environmental assessment concludes there is no impact from the proposal. As this isn't construction and operation of a rail line. It will have impacts on residents.

In Section 7.5.1 of [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#), the strategic noise investigations are described. These are undertaken at a strategic level for the purposes of identifying and protecting land for a future infrastructure corridor. The future design of the project and mitigation measures would be determined in the next stage of project development in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements.

It has been recommended that a future environmental impact assessment would:

- Include predictions of operational noise and vibration levels at individual homes and other receptors
- Consider construction impacts in accordance with relevant legislation and guidelines.

These mitigations will be subject to the a further, future environmental approval process.

I'm a Wakefield resident and curious if this development is in addition to the Blackrock motor park development? Noting the significant environmental impacts of one or both proposals.

In Section B1.9 of [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#) it's noted that the recent approval and future development of the Wakefield Park Motorsports facility near Killingworth is a physical constraint to the corridor that the corridor planning has sought to avoid as much as possible.

What are the impacts on the historical mine sites behind west wallsend, and the conservation plans?

In the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment](#) Section 7.1.1 it's noted;

The recommended corridor is over 100 metres from Johnston Park at West Wallsend. The recommended corridor passes to the north of the West Wallsend Colliery No.1 heritage site, which has been identified for future opportunities for renewal and to contain informal walking and cycling opportunities (Lake Macquarie City Council, 2020).

How close to Minmi town will this corridor pass

Section 6.3 of the [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#)

The recommended corridor avoids the existing Minmi urban release area, and is positioned on the western side of the M1 Pacific Motorway within Government owned land between the motorway and the Stockrington Conservation Area and Pambalong Nature Reserve. The proposed corridor is located approximately 235 m from the nearest residential property in Minmi.

Ken said line would be 700 mtrs from Holmesville but the impact assessment days 300 mtrs for barnsley and 400 mtrs to holmesville- what is correct?. Does the 60 mtrs start there or is included

Section 7.1.1 [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#)

At Holmesville, the closest residential dwelling is over 400 metres from the recommended corridor and is separated from the recommended corridor by bushland.

I live in Holmesville and I am concerned how this rail line will impact on the environment and how close it will be to all houses. Dust, noise and pollution implications

At Holmesville, the closest residential dwelling is over 400 metres from the recommended corridor and is separated from the recommended corridor by bushland.

Will properties be purchased?

The proposed corridor is currently out for community consultation alongside DPIE's Explanation of Intended Effects. Subject to successful consultation outcomes and gazettal of the corridor, the corridor of land would be rezoned for the future rail infrastructure. If, as a result of the rezoning of the corridor impacted property owners are unable to sell their property, have the opportunity under the hardship provisions of the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 to apply for early acquisition. to apply for early acquisition landowners must be able to show that they would suffer 'hardship' if the acquisition of their land is delayed.

What freight is expected to be moved on this track, given the (hopefully) significant reduction of coal exportation and usage in the future?

The freight expected to use the new freight rail bypass when it is constructed in 10 - 20 years time includes bulk exports and imports as well as commodities such as coal, grains, and construction materials, as well as interstate containers.

Will there be additional noise suppression / noise reduction installed on the M1 where current trees provide a screen, which will be removed with the rail line being installed?

The potential for noise has not been modelled in detail given the strategic nature of the corridor identification and protection process. The purpose of the review is to inform the discussion of potential future noise impacts in relation to noise propagation and shielding impacts.

Will noise as well as pollution control - coal dust, diesel fumes for close residences be in place

Appropriate environmental standards will need to be met by all operations on the line.

What consideration has been given to improving the existing rail line infrastructure in place of this new corridor?

The upgrade of current infrastructure was considered in the early stages of development of the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor project. However, the constraints along the existing rail line, including proximity of residents and significant incompatibility of passenger and freight rail in the existing corridor through Newcastle, precluded use of this corridor.

I feel to secure our housing values, the studies into the noise, vibration and other environmental issues should be detailed before the land is secured

Noise mitigation options will be further explored according to the standards at the time, when the project is needed in 10 - 20 years from now. At this time, further detailed design will be undertaken and as part of these detailed designs, project mitigations against noise will be developed to ensure that the project meets its obligations to ensure residents are not adversely affected by the future rail operations. The detailed designs for the future rail infrastructure will be subject to a further environmental assessment and approval process.

The proposed Richmond Vale Rail Trail (RVRT) is largely protected by the preferred Freight Corridor route. How will Freight Rail reps monitor and have input into local development applications?

The Richmond Rail Vale Trail (RVRT) is a project lead by Newcastle City Council. Transport will

work with Newcastle City Council to ensure that the Lower Hunter Freight rail infrastructure minimises impacts on the future bicycle trail project.

Will there be additional noise barriers for the "OLDER" parts of the M1. In areas such as West Wallsend?

The location of noise barriers will be determined as the project development proceeds and appropriate noise modelling is completed. As part of the EIS noise modelling will be required along the length of the corridor and where predicted noise level exceed the levels allowed under the project approvals noise mitigation will be required. For location on the M1 outside of the project boundary residents are able to apply for consideration under the Transport for NSW Noise Abatement Program.

The rail line is proposed between west wallsend residences & the M1, , how close is this to the residences and the heritage mine sites?

[Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#) provides the following responses:

6.2

The recommended corridor is located as far as practicable from existing communities at Barnsley and West Wallsend, with consideration of the constraints of the mining operations (present and past), Killingworth substation and high voltage wires to the west.

6.3.1

The recommended corridor continues north avoiding operational and historic mine workings.

7.1.1

The recommended corridor is over 100 metres from Johnston Park at West Wallsend. The recommended corridor does pass through the north of the West Wallsend Colliery No.1 heritage site, which has been identified for future opportunities for renewal and to contain informal walking and cycling opportunities (Lake Macquarie City Council, 2020).

Upon completion of the community consultation is the next stage Concept Design and EIS/REF?

The next step following community consultation is to review community submissions and responding to those submissions. Adjustments to the recommended corridor may be made in response to these submissions. Subsequent to this, there would be a decision on whether to gazette the recommended corridor by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. The detailed design of the future rail infrastructure would be undertaken prior to when the project is needed which is likely many years from now.

Does this mean The Wallarah 2 mine is being approved hence why more rail services are required

The growth in freight and passenger rail movements through Newcastle requires that a future bypass of the urban area of Newcastle between Fassifern and Hexham as outlined in the [DSEA](#) is required. No single project such as the proposed future Wallarah 2 mine is responsible for this rail freight growth

You have guidelines for noise and dust etc that freight rail services must follow but is anything actually enforced to ensure these freight services actually comply?

All rail operators are required to comply with strict environmental requirements for dust management. The NSW Environmental Protection Agency regulates train dust compliance. Further information regarding dust and other environmental regulation in relation to trains is available on the EPA website.

The mining heritage park it's very important to the local residents of West Wallsend

The mining heritage park has been recognised through the constraint identification process and efforts have been made to minimise impacts on this significant area.

Any consideration of options to depart the existing line further south? For instance from south of Awaba, where the line is currently closest to the M1 corridor.

This was not seen as appropriate because of the primary constraints exist on the shared passenger/freight rail network between Fassifern and Hexham through the urbanised area of Newcastle.

Will the corridor be fenced off for safety of the public but this creates a barrier for local fauna species that utilise the area. What solutions do you have for local fauna species?

Section 7.9 [Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment \(DSEA\)](#)

Mitigation measures such as fauna overpasses and underpasses would be required to maintain connectivity for terrestrial fauna species as part of future potential rail infrastructure in the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor. It should be noted that any provision of a tunnel would reduce ecological impacts substantially in the area in which the tunnel was constructed. Opportunities to further avoid and minimise impacts would be considered during the next phase of design development. Security fencing to ensure public safety will also be a consideration as part of the future detailed design of the railway infrastructure.