Transport
for NSW

Chapter 8
Community and stakeholder engagement

NSW
GOVERNMENT

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8. Community and stakeholder engagement

This chapter summarises the community and stakeholder engagement carried out before and during preparation of the EIS, and the consultation proposed to be undertaken during the design and delivery of the project. Further information is provided in Appendix F (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report).

8.1 Engagement approach

8.1.1 Background

Community and stakeholder engagement has formed an integral part of the development of Parramatta Light Rail as a whole. A comprehensive engagement process commenced following the announcement of the preferred network for Parramatta Light Rail in December 2015. Engagement activities associated with the options development process, and the development of the design and EIS for Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1, are described in Chapter 4 of the Stage 1 EIS (available at: Parramatta Light Rail – Stage 1 EIS).

Following approval of Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 in May 2018, a Community Communication Strategy was developed to support communication and engagement during design development and construction of Stage 1. The strategy, which was prepared and is currently being implemented in accordance with the Conditions of Approval for Stage 1, is available at: Stage 1 Community Communication Strategy.

Transport for NSW has continued to undertake a range of engagement activities to gather feedback on Parramatta Light Rail as a whole, and the project. These activities, including engagement for the EIS (summarised in this chapter), have informed the design and contributed to the development of the options and design refinements described in Chapter 5 (Project development, alternatives and options) and section 8.3.4.

8.1.2 Approach to engagement

Transport for NSW prepared an overarching engagement plan to guide engagement and communication activities for the project, including the EIS. The plan, which is consistent with the engagement requirements of *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (DPIE, 2021e), defined:

- engagement objectives and principles
- engagement approach, methodology, tools and timeframes
- accountabilities for delivering community and stakeholder engagement.

The plan links proposed engagement activities to key milestones in the project's assessment and approval process (described in Chapter 4 (Statutory context)) to ensure timely and proactive communication of important information to the community and other stakeholders (see Figure 8.1). The plan provides for engagement across the project, with the following three phases relevant to engagement for the EIS:

- Phase 1 – Pre-EIS engagement: activities undertaken at the start of the assessment and approvals process

- Phase 2 – EIS engagement: activities undertaken during preparation of the EIS
- Phase 3 – Public exhibition engagement: activities to be undertaken during public exhibition of the EIS.
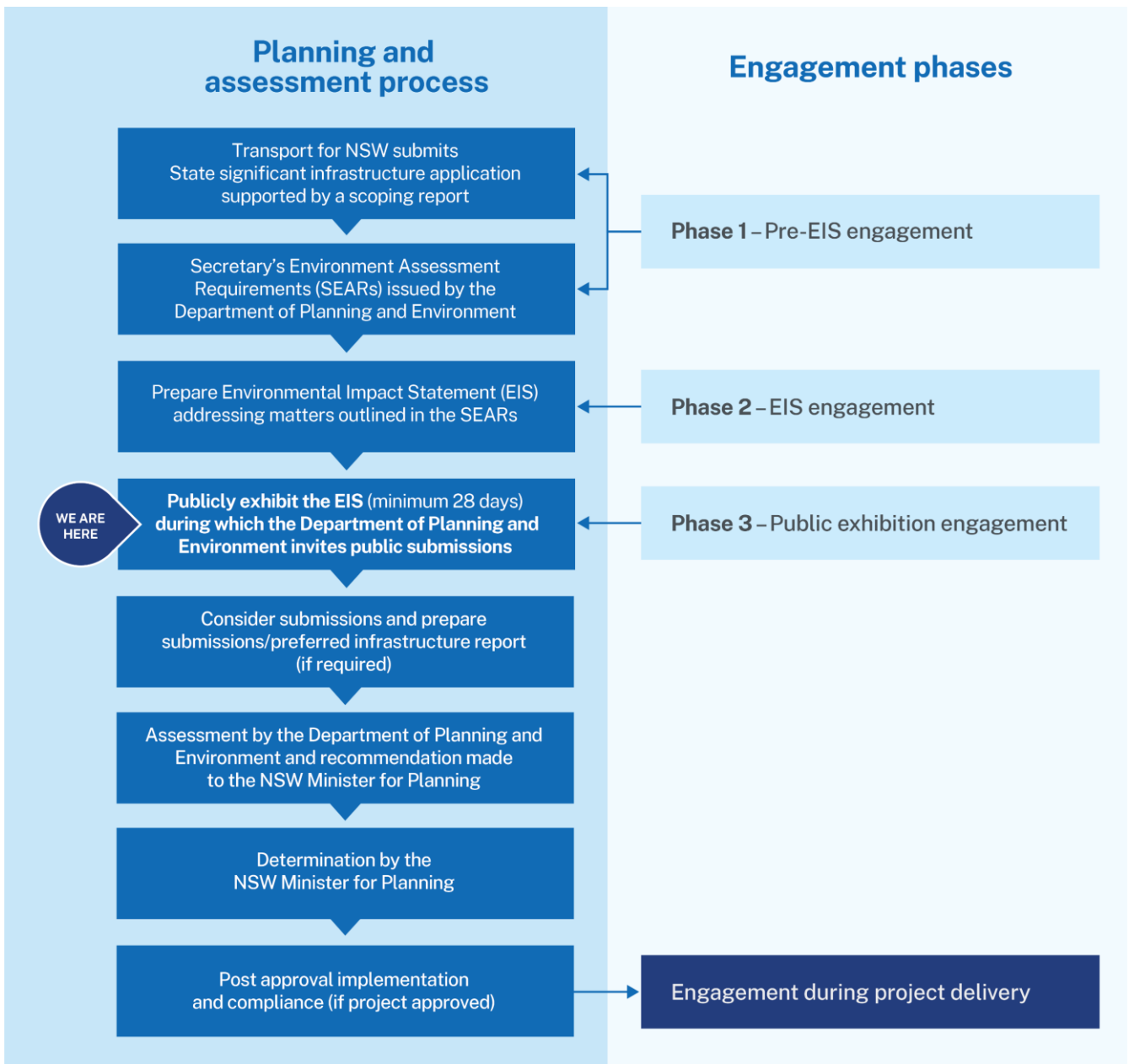
Figure 8.1   Engagement phases

A summary of the engagement undertaken during Phases 1 and 2 is provided in section 8.2, with further detail provided in Appendix F (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report). Engagement proposed during Phase 3 is described in section 8.4.

8.1.3 Engagement objectives

The objectives of engagement during Phases 1 and 2 are to:

- consult with the community and stakeholders on the project, including providing information and gathering feedback on planning and investigation works
- engage community and stakeholders to enhance project development, construction planning and environmental assessment

- understand community and stakeholder issues and concerns and provide feedback to the project team as an input to design development

- communicate the benefits of the project and encourage ongoing participation

- build relationships with local communities and stakeholders.

8.1.4 Community and stakeholder identification

A process of community and stakeholder identification was undertaken to inform the community and stakeholder engagement plan and ensure that relevant community members and stakeholders were identified, and that engagement activities are tailored to their needs, as far as practicable. Key community and stakeholder groupings include:

- community members with the potential to be directly or indirectly affected by the project, including those that own, live and work in properties within or close to the project site

- the broader community, including:

    – community groups

    – local businesses

    – transport customers

- local councils

- NSW Government agencies

- venue and destination managers

- business groups

- other non-government organisations.

Engagement with the Aboriginal community is described in Chapter 11 (Aboriginal heritage).

8.2 Engagement prior to and during preparation of the EIS

8.2.1 Scope

Phase 1 – Pre-EIS engagement

The purpose of engagement during this first phase was to raise awareness of the project, understand community and stakeholder questions and concerns, help shape and assess the project design, and guide future engagement. Key engagement and communication activities during Phase 1 were carried out over the following periods:

- engagement with government agencies, local government and state-owned corporations and entities commenced in January 2018

- a formal consultation process for major landowners in the Rydalmere and Camellia/Rosehill areas occurred between February 2018 and May 2018

- community consultation was undertaken between March 2018 and September 2018.

Phase 2 – EIS engagement

Engagement activities during Phase 2, particularly between June 2021 and September 2022, sought to increase project awareness, and further understand community and stakeholder issues and concerns. This helped to refine the project and inform the EIS process. Identification of community and stakeholder issues during this phase contributed to the design refinements described in sections 5.4 and 8.3.4.

Key engagement and communication activities during Phase 2 included:

- launch of a project-specific virtual engagement room in April 2022 (see Figure 8.2)
- delivery of pop-up engagement sessions
- over 1,100 participants provided feedback on the stop locations and alignment.

Activities specifically relating to Aboriginal engagement are described in section 11.1.2.

8.2.2 Tools and activities

Engagement activities involved a mix of virtual and in-person events. A summary of the activities and tools employed during Phases 1 and 2 is provided in Table 8.1. Further information, including a detailed description of the purpose, outcomes and timing of the various activities undertaken and tools employed, is provided in Appendix F (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report).

Table 8.1   Summary of engagement activities and tools

Activity/tool	Purpose/summary	Timing (consultation phase)		Outcome
		1	2	
Community contact and information points	Project information line (1800 139 389 and email address (parramattalightrail@ transport.nsw.gov.au). Provide opportunities for input and enable the project team to obtain feedback and measure awareness.	●	●	About 340 phone calls and email inquiries specific to the project have been received.
Parramatta Light Rail website	The website (see: Parramatta Light Rail) provides information on Stages 1 and 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail, including details of upcoming community information sessions and engagement activities.	●		Over 28,000 page views between March 2018 and September 2018.
			●	The Stage 1 and Stage 2 webmap had over 1,000 visits between 2 May and 26 June 2022. The Stage 2 'Have your say' web page had over 700 visits between 2 May and 26 June 2022.
Virtual engagement room	A project-specific virtual engagement room (see: Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 Virtual Room) has been developed to provide a focal point for project information and engagement (see Figure 8.2).		●	Over 4,700 visitors to the virtual engagement room between May and July 2022.
Community notifications	Project 'postcards', with project information and details on where to access further information, were distributed to residences in Rydalmere, Ermington, Melrose Park, Wentworth Point, Newington, and Sydney Olympic Park.	●		Distributed to 21,000 residences in March 2018.
			●	Distributed to 29,500 residences in May 2022.

Activity/tool	Purpose/summary	Timing (consultation phase)		Outcome
		1	**2**	
Community information sessions	Drop-in information sessions were held to engage with the community and provide information about the project. Some sessions were combined with the Sydney Metro West project and included representatives of the Department of Planning and Environment to provide information on other plans and projects.	●		13 drop-in sessions were held in March and June 2018, attended by over 1,600 community members.
Community pop-up sessions	Pop-up sessions were held at local community events to provide information about the project and answer questions.	●		20 sessions were held in February and September 2018 visited by over 2,300 community members.
			●	17 sessions were held in May 2022 to June 2022, visited by over 1,200 community members.
Advertisements	Used to promote the community information sessions and invite feedback via the survey. Placed in key suburban newspapers, including Parramatta Advertiser, the Northern District Times and the Weekly Times.	●		Multiple advertisements placed in March 2018 and June 2018.
Media	Media announcements were provided at significant project milestones to assist with information distribution.	●	●	Five project media releases issued between 2018 and 2022.
Newsletters	Quarterly newsletters, distributed to residential and commercial letterboxes along the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 and Stage 2 routes, provided information on the project and information and engagement activities.	●		85,000 newsletters were distributed in May and September 2018.
			●	Four quarterly newsletters were distributed to 84,000 households along the Stage 2 route in 2021 and 2022.
Email distribution lists	A database of project-related community members and stakeholders to receive regular updates, including digital postcards and newsletters. Emails were issued to promote Stage 2 project announcements, the information sessions and other events.	●		Digital postcards sent to over 800 members of the Parramatta Chamber of Commerce and 650 members of the Sydney Olympic Park Business Association in March and June 2018.
			●	Emails distributed to over 40,500 stakeholders and community members in 2021 and 2022.
Social media	Posts to the Parramatta Light Rail Facebook page to promote the community information sessions (pop-up sessions), virtual engagement room and surveys.		●	Five posts on the Facebook page, which has over 7,000 followers and a reach of over 75,000 people.
Surveys	A survey was hosted on the Parramatta Light Rail website to gather information on community use of public transport and project perceptions.	●		Over 300 responses were provided between March 2018 and June 2018.

| Activity/tool	Purpose/summary	Timing (consultation phase)		Outcome
		1	2	
	A social impact and outcomes online survey was hosted on the website and promoted on Transport for NSW's social media pages, by the City of Parramatta Council, and the Sydney Olympic Park Business Association.		●	885 participants commenced the survey, and 564 surveys were completed in full between November 2021 and January 2022.
	A 'Have your say' survey was hosted on the website to capture feedback on the alignment and stop locations.		●	1,194 responses were provided between May and July 2022.
	A survey of local businesses was undertaken to identify issues and inform Technical Paper 8 (Business Impact Assessment).		●	21 surveys were collected in February 2022.
	A survey was distributed to about 7,000 properties along the project site, to further understand the community's preference for balancing a shorter construction period with the potential impacts of the proposed primary project working hours (described in section 7.5.1).		●	257 responses were provided between 30 September and 14 October 2022.
Parramatta Light Rail Advisory Group	The group was formed to provide project updates and encourage discussion, ideas and collaboration with a range of key government and local stakeholders. Group membership covers government stakeholders and other major stakeholders that overlap both Stages 1 and 2.	●		Multiple meetings were held between August 2017 and October 2018.
Community and Stakeholder Reference Group	The Stage 1 Community and Stakeholder Reference Group comprised representation from community members, local businesses, and community-based stakeholder groups.	●		Multiple meetings were held between August 2017 and October 2018.
Greater Parramatta Group	The group comprises multiple Stage 2 stakeholders and assists with disseminating and collecting information relevant to the EIS. Membership of the group is provided in Appendix F.		●	Multiple briefings were carried out between October 2021 and September 2022.
Key stakeholder briefings	Meetings with key stakeholders and commercial landowners, including project updates, addressing project interfaces, and identifying issues, concerns or suggestions for improvement. Includes ongoing meetings with local councils.	●		Multiple briefings were carried out in February and September 2018.
			●	Multiple briefings were carried out between November 2019 and September 2022.
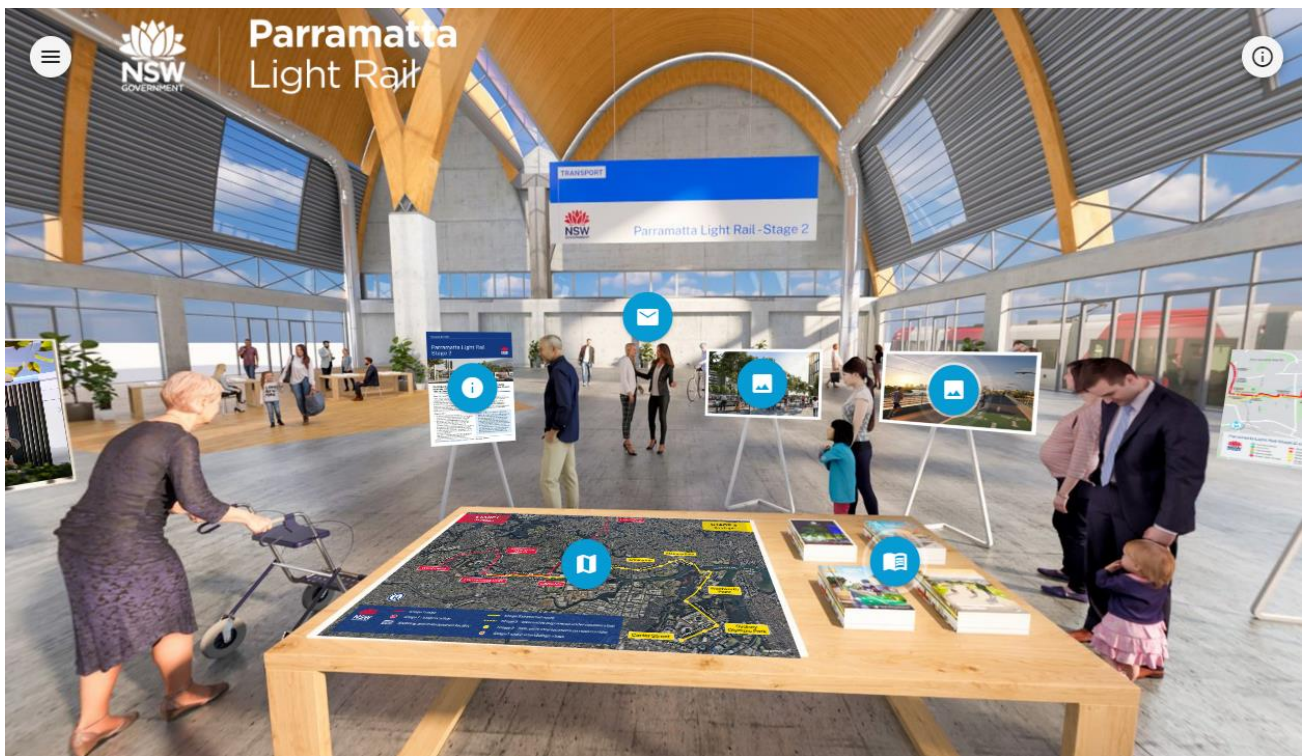
Figure 8.2   Virtual engagement room

8.3   Summary of issues raised and responses to feedback received

8.3.1   Phase 1 feedback

Feedback received during Phase 1, from the information sessions and survey undertaken between March 2018 and June 2018, is depicted in Figure 8.3. Concerns regarding property impacts and acquisition of private property accounted for about 40 per cent of issues raised. These concerns included the request for a more refined map to enable residents to understand the impacts in greater detail and to be able to make choices about their future in the area.

Residents and stakeholders in Melrose Park provided feedback on the (then) proposed alignment along Wharf Road. Issues raised included safety of students at the primary school on Wharf Road (Melrose Park Public School) taking into account the traffic congestion that occurs in peak periods. In July 2018, in response to this feedback, the NSW Government proposed a different alignment in Melrose Park along Waratah Street (see section 5.3.3).

The route options issue category reflects various issues with the proposed alignment options in Camellia and Rydalmere, which had support and opposition for a variety of reasons.
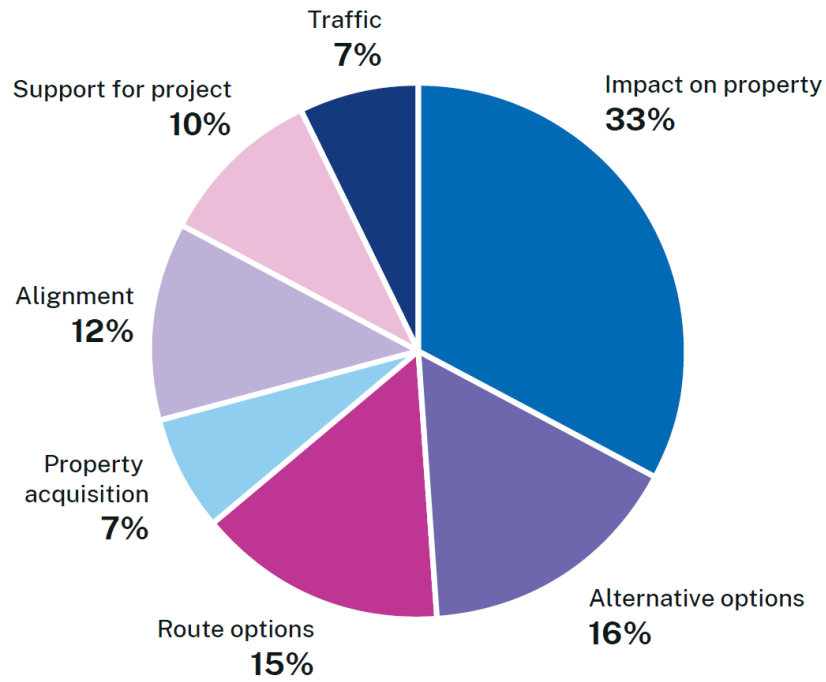
Figure 8.3   Breakdown of key issues raised during phase 1

8.3.2 Phase 2 feedback

Feedback from community and stakeholder engagement activities demonstrates a high level of support for the project. About 80 per cent of participants in the 'Have your say' survey (see Table 8.1) indicated their support for the project and specific project elements, such as the proposed route alignment and stop locations (see Figure 8.4).
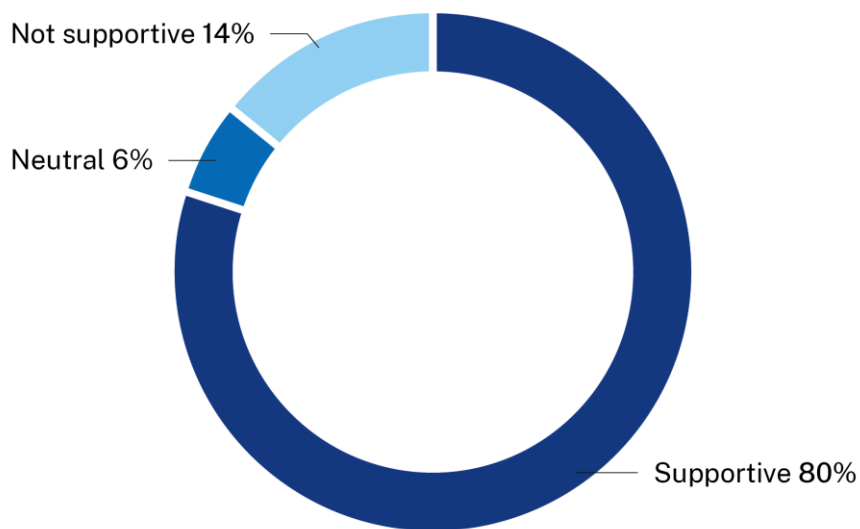

Figure 8.4   Community sentiment

Community feedback provided during Phase 2 included concerns relating to potential construction impacts and the importance of the potential outcomes of the project during operation. Table 8.2 summarises the level of concern for survey participants who identified as either residents or businesses along, or close to, the project alignment. The table shows that 'traffic, parking and impacts on local roads' were of the most concern (45 per cent). This was followed by concerns about 'loss of, or restricted public access' and 'impacts on flora and fauna' (both 41 per cent).

Table 8.2   Concern about potential impacts by survey participants

Potential impacts during construction	Concerned	Neutral	Not concerned
Traffic, parking or impacts on local roads	45%	26%	29%
Loss of, or restricted public access	41%	30%	29%
Impacts on flora and fauna	41%	34%	25%
Impacts on public amenities / social infrastructure	38%	34%	28%
Health, safety and wellbeing	35%	34%	31%
Noise, vibration or air quality	34%	32%	33%
Impact on local cultural heritage	30%	35%	35%
Property impacts	29%	37%	34%
Local business impacts	29%	43%	28%
Visual impacts	24%	33%	43%
Increased employment	19%	38%	44%

Supporting the findings of the survey, community members identified a preference for faster construction, whilst still avoiding prolonged night works. The timing of construction, particularly evening and night works, was identified as an issue for residents.

Transport for NSW undertook a further survey of community members along the project site (see Table 8.1) to understand the community's preference for balancing a shorter construction period with the potential impacts of the proposed primary project working hours (described in section 7.5.1). A total of 257 respondents completed the survey. The results were:

- about half of respondents considered that the proposed working hours would not impact their day-to-day lifestyle
- 75 per cent of respondents supported the proposed working hours on weekdays
- 77 per cent of the respondents supported the proposed working hours on Saturdays
- 53 per cent of respondents supported the proposed working hours on Sundays and/or public holidays.

Community members were also asked their opinions on measures that could be used to mitigate potential noise impacts during construction. Measures involving ongoing monitoring and reporting of noise levels to assist with noise mitigation had the highest level of support, followed by the use of noise barriers or 'at source' noise measures, such as using smaller or less noisy equipment. Further information on the results of the survey is provided in Appendix F (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report).

8.3.3 Where issues raised relevant to the EIS have been addressed

A summary of the key issues raised during consultation relevant to the EIS is provided in Table 8.3 below. This includes potential issues identified and how this is addressed in the EIS. More detailed information on the issues raised by stakeholders, including responses, is provided in Appendix F (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report).

Table 8.3　　Summary of key issues relevant to the EIS during Phase 2

Issue category	Overview of key issues raised	Where addressed in the EIS
The project		
Project need	• Queries about why the project is needed and how it will meet future demands	Chapter 3 (Strategic context and need)
Project options	• Queries about the preferred alignment and the route options considered • Queries about how the preferred alignment and stops were selected	Chapter 5 (Design development, alternative and options)
Project design and features	• Queries about the proposed road works, including whether road widening would be required	Section 6.6
	• Queries about the active transport links proposed	Section 6.4
	• Queries about access for people with disabilities	Sections 6.3.2 and 6.10.4
	• Queries about the proposed approach to tree planting	Section 6.8.3
Construction	• Queries about construction program	Section 7.1.2
Operation	• Queries about changes to other forms of public transport	Section 6.10.3
	• Queries about connections with other forms of public transport	Section 6.10.3
	• Queries about travel times	Section 6.10.1
Potential impacts		
Transport and traffic	• Impacts on local parking	Sections 9.3.5 and 9.4.5
	• Impacts on roads and traffic flow (including the operation of existing roads)	Sections 9.3.1 and 9.4.1
	• Impacts on Ermington Boat Ramp and access to the ramp	Sections 9.3.7 and 9.4.7
	• Impacts on access to properties and businesses	Sections 9.3.6 and 9.4.6
	• Impacts on traffic congestion	Sections 9.3.1 and 9.4.1
	• Changes to public transport services	Sections 9.3.3 and 9.4.2
	• How would impacts on traffic, transport and access be managed?	Section 9.6
Noise and vibration	• Construction noise and vibration, and timing of potential impacts	Section 10.4
	• Operation noise and vibration (including wheel squeal), and potential for local impacts	Section 10.5
Heritage	• Impacts on local heritage	Sections 12.3 and 12.4
Biodiversity	• Impacts on local biodiversity	Sections 16.3 and 16.4
	• How potential impacts will be managed	Section 16.6
Water	• Impacts on flooding, including along the river foreshore	Sections 17.3.3 and 17.4.3
Land use and property	• Impacts on industrial areas	Sections 13.4.1 and 13.5.1
	• Property impacts, including the need for acquisition	Section 13.3
	• Impacts on future development	Section 13.5.1
	• Impacts on parks and reserves	Section 13.4.2
	• Impacts on homes and how these would be managed	Sections 13.4.1 and 13.5.1

Issue category	Overview of key issues raised	Where addressed in the EIS
Social and business impacts	• Impacts on businesses, including the effects of access changes	Sections 14.3.2 and 14.4.2
	• How impacts on businesses would be managed	Section 14.6
	• Impacts on amenity and how this would be managed	Sections 14.3.1 and 14.4.1
Landscape and visual impacts	• Impacts on local character	Sections 15.3.1 and 15.4.1
	• Impacts on trees	Section 15.3.3
	• Tree planting proposed	Sections 15.3.3 and 15.6

8.3.4 How the project has responded to the inputs received

The project's route, design and construction methodology has been developed to avoid and minimise impacts on the local and regional environment, and on the community, as far as practicable. The engagement undertaken to date has contributed to the project team's understanding of the potential impacts and has enabled the design to respond to, and minimise, potential impacts, where practicable. Mitigation measures to minimise and manage impacts that cannot be avoided have been developed as an outcome of the environmental assessment process, as described in Chapters 9 to 22. Impacts would continue to be minimised throughout the design development and construction planning phases, considering further inputs from community and stakeholders.

The project option development and design refinement process (see Chapter 5 (Design development, alternatives and options)) included consideration of potential environmental and social issues, including issues raised by the community and stakeholders. Further information on the options considered and justifications for the options selected is provided in Chapter 5.

Key environmental and community issues have been considered throughout the design development process. Consultation has been carried out with affected community members and other stakeholders to identify key potential impacts at an early stage. Where practicable, impacts have been avoided or appropriate mitigation measures developed in response to this input. This has resulted in a number of design changes that have mitigated some of the potentially significant impacts. Further information about this process is provided in Chapter 5.

Examples of design refinements that have been adopted for the project based on feedback received include:

• refinements to the alignment along South Street, Rydalmere (in the vicinity of the proposed Nowill Street stop) to minimise access impacts for properties on the northern side of the street, including a commitment to continue to review the design to minimise property impacts as far as practicable

• refinements to the alignment near Hope Street in Melrose Park (between Boronia Street and Hughes Avenue) to minimise direct impacts to properties on Hope Street and the Bulla Cream Dairy (Willowmere) heritage item

• alterations to the preferred route past Melrose Park Public School to minimise the potential for safety impacts on the Wharf Road access to the school (see section 8.3.1)

• refinements to the alignment at the northern end of Wentworth Point to minimise indirect impacts to properties and direct impacts to the river foreshore, including the Parramatta Valley Cycleway / River Walk.

More detailed information on the issues raised by the community and stakeholders, including responses to issues raised, is provided in Appendix F (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report).

8.4 Future engagement

8.4.1 Phase 3 – Engagement during exhibition of the EIS

As described in section 4.4.2, the EP&A Act requires exhibition of an EIS for a minimum of 28 days. The EIS will be placed on public exhibition by the Department of Planning and Environment and submissions will be invited. The EIS will be made available for viewing on the Department's Major Projects website (available at: Major Projects - Department of Planning and Environment) and the Parramatta Light Rail website (available at: Parramatta Light Rail).

To support public exhibition, and provide opportunities for the community and stakeholders to ask questions and find out more information before making a submission, a range of engagement tools would be used, which may include:

- in-person pop-up sessions with the community and local businesses
- virtual engagement room
- EIS digital portal
- virtual information sessions
- the 'contact us' facilities (see Table 8.1) would continue to be available
- media releases and advertisements in the local media
- newsletters, email updates and fact sheets
- social media updates
- household and local business letterbox drops
- stakeholder meetings and briefings (including with business groups, peak bodies and landowners, City of Parramatta Council and Sydney Olympic Park Authority).

There may be some limitations to face-to-face engagement pending any social distancing requirements that may be in place during engagement activities.

All engagement activities during this phase, virtual or in-person, are designed to raise awareness, provide consistent and accurate information, and answer questions raised by community members and stakeholders. In addition, submissions on the EIS are welcomed via the Department of Planning and Environment's Major Projects portal (available at: Major Projects - Department of Planning and Environment).

8.4.2 Engagement during design development and delivery

Community Communication Strategy

Comprehensive and appropriate communication and engagement with the community and other key stakeholders would play a key role in managing the potential for impacts during design development, construction and operation. Effective communication and engagement are fundamental to reducing risk and minimising potential impacts. Identifying, engaging and effectively communicating with stakeholders is critical to the successful delivery of the project.

If the project is approved, Transport for NSW would continue to engage with stakeholders and the community in the lead up to, and during, construction.

A Community Communication Strategy would be prepared for the project consistent with the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 Community Communication Strategy (available at: [Stage 1 Community Communication Strategy)](#) to ensure that:

- accurate and accessible information about the project is provided
- feedback from the community is encouraged
- opportunities for input are provided
- community members and stakeholders with the potential to be affected by construction activities are notified in a timely manner about the timing of activities and potential for impacts
- enquiries and complaints are managed (as described in section 8.4.3), and a timely response is provided for concerns raised.

The strategy would also provide for:

- opportunities for place-based local community consultative committees where appropriate
- appropriate engagement with the Department of Planning and Environment, relevant councils and Sydney Olympic Park Authority relating to the delivery of precinct-based planning strategies and master plans, such as the Camellia-Rosehill Place Strategy and Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2030
- integration with engagement-based socio-economic mitigation measures (see section 14.6):
  - involvement of dedicated place managers (see mitigation measures SE2)
  - consultation with relevant councils and Sydney Olympic Park Authority to offset the direct impacts of the project's land requirements on open space through the provision of active transport infrastructure, new and improved open spaces and recreation facilities, and repurposing some residual land (see mitigation measure SE7)
  - measures to engage with, and minimise the impacts on, local businesses as far as practicable (see mitigation measures SE9 to SE11).

Engagement plans would be developed and implemented by the construction contractor(s) to define the specific requirements for engagement during construction consistent with the Community Communication Strategy. The engagement plans would define tools and activities, timing and responsibilities, and monitoring requirements. The plans would be subject to regular monitoring and review to ensure they remain effective and encourage engagement.

Engagement tools

The communication and engagement tools (such as the 'contact us' facilities – see Table 8.1) would continue to be available during construction. Other engagement tools and activities that would be used in the lead up to, and during, construction include:

- regular updates of the project website
- a community complaints and response management system (see section 8.4.3)
- notifications regarding work outside standard working hours and work that might impact residents, businesses and stakeholders
- door knocking when required
- regular community updates on the progress of the construction program through social media and email
- newsletters and fact sheets

- traffic alerts

- site signage around construction facilities.

Communication and engagement tools would be provided in accessible formats to support people with disabilities. The tools would include those that would be used to engage with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, which may include:

- translation of collateral into the most common languages in the study area

- translation functionality on the project website for the most common languages in the study area

- translators for stakeholder meetings where Transport for NSW identifies the stakeholder(s) have a low English proficiency level.

There may be some limitations for face-to-face engagement pending any social distancing requirements that may be in place during the life of the project.

8.4.3 Enquiries and complaints management

Enquiries and complaints management systems would be developed, outlined in the Community Communication Strategy, and implemented before and during construction. The systems would be maintained throughout the construction period and for a minimum of 12 months after construction finishes. The systems would define:

- roles and responsibilities

- steps to receive, manage and take appropriate action in relation to community enquiries and complaints

- procedure to record and respond to all enquiries, complaints and contact with community members and stakeholders in the contacts database

- an escalation procedure.

The enquiries and complaints management systems would include:

- a 24-hour community information line for complaints and enquiries

- a postal and email address to which complaints and enquiries may be sent

- publication of contact details in local newspapers and the project website

- mediation system for complaints unable to be resolved

- mechanism for community members to make enquires and complaints in common community languages of the area.

Details of complaints would be provided to the Department of Planning and Environment if requested.