TECHNICAL REPORT

11

Social Impact Assessment

ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Technical and Approvals Consultancy Services: Illabo to Stockinbingal

Technical Paper 11 – Social Impact Assessment

August 2022

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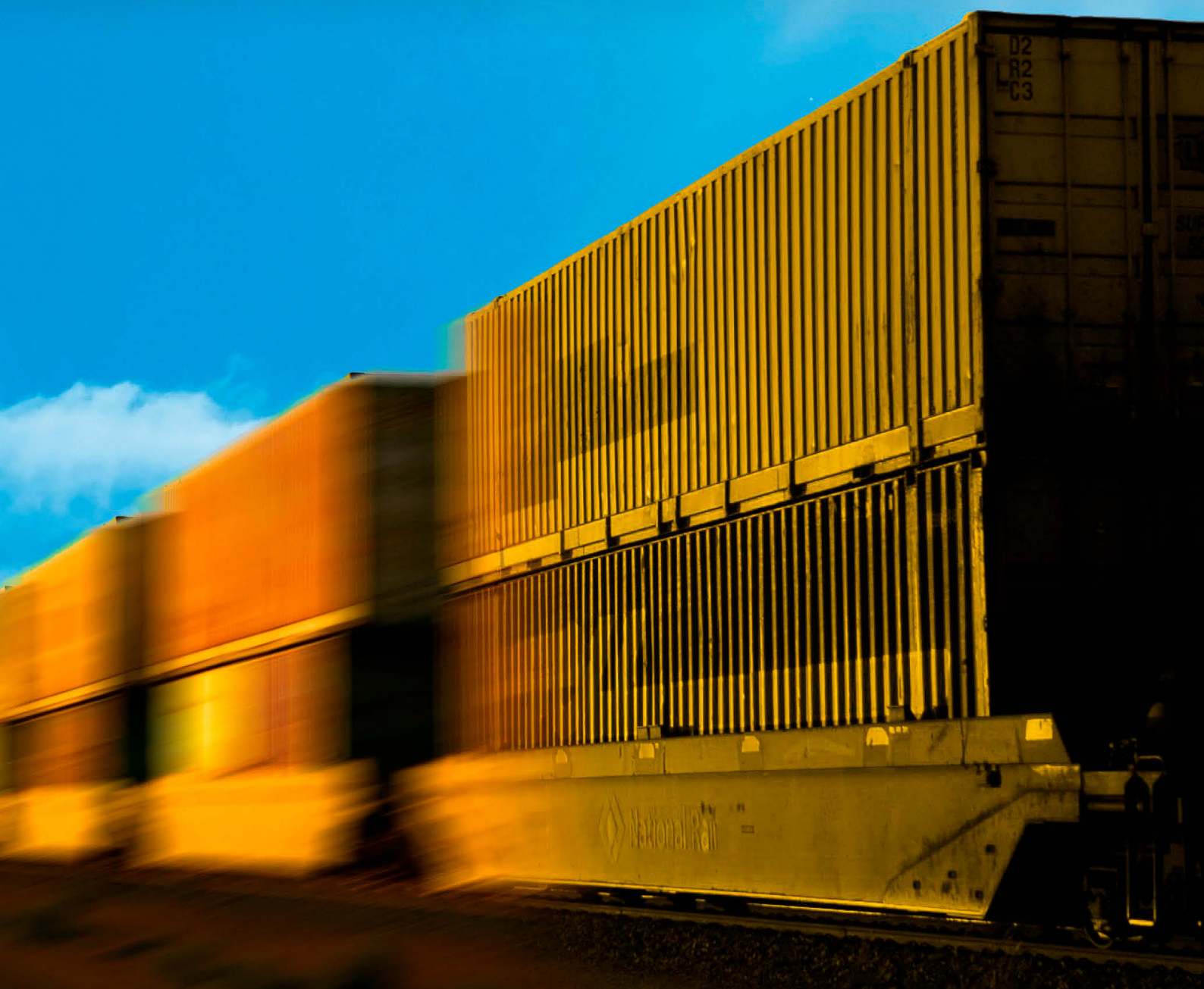

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Glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ARTC	Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd.
CCC	Community Consultative Committee
Construction compound	An area used as the base for construction activities, usually for the storage of plan, equipment and materials and/or construction site offices and worker facilities.
Country	Country describes everything within the landscape, which is intrinsically linked to identify and culture. When Aboriginal communities refer to their Country, it usually expresses a custodial relationship (i.e. the land where their community originated from).
DPE	NSW Department of Planning and Environment
DPIE	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EP&A Act	*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW)
EPBC Act	*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth)
Freight	Goods transported by truck, train, ship, or aircraft
GRP	Gross Regional Product
IAIA	International Association for Impact Assessment
Impact	Any change to the existing situation that can be attributed directly or indirectly to the proposal.
Inland Rail	The Inland Rail program encompasses the design and construction of a new Inland Rail connection between Melbourne and Brisbane, via Wagga, Parkes, Moree, and Toowoomba. The route for Inland Rail is about 1,700 kilometres in length. Inland Rail will involve a combination of upgrades of existing rail track and the provision of new track.
IRDJV	Inland Rail Design Joint Venture (WSP|MM JV legal entity)
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
Landscape character	The combined quality of built, natural and cultural aspects that make up an area and provide its unique sense of place.
LGA	Local Government Areas are approximated with whole Mesh Blocks.

Local road	Road used primarily to access properties located along the road.
Mesh Block	Mesh Blocks are the smallest geographical area defined by the ABS. Most residential Mesh Blocks contain approximately 30 to 60 dwellings.
Program	Inland Rail Program
Proposal	The construction and operation of the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of Inland Rail.
Proposal site	The area that would be directly affected by construction works (also known as the construction footprint). It includes the location of proposal infrastructure, the area that would be directly disturbed by the movement of construction plant and machinery, and the location of the storage areas/compounds sites etc., that would be used to construct that infrastructure.
Project	The Illabo to Stockinbingal section of Inland Rail.
Rail alignment	The exact positioning of the track accurately defined both horizontally and vertically, along which the rail vehicles operate.
Rail corridor	The corridor within which the rail tracks and associated infrastructure are located.
RMS	Roads and Maritime Services (NSW)
SA1	Statistical Area 1, the second smallest geographic area and is the smallest unit where population characteristics area available. They are designed to be consistent in population size and character. They have a population range of between 200 and 800 persons, with an average population of 400 persons.
SA2	Statistical Area 2 is optimised for demographic data and are designed to represent functional areas outside major urban area and in regional Australia. Where possible, SA2s are based on gazetted suburbs and localities and have an average population of 10,000 persons.
SA3	Statistical Area 3 is built from aggregations of whole SA2s to represent regions of between approximately 30,000 people and 130,000. These boundaries reflect a combination of widely recognised informal regions as well as existing administrative regions such as State Government Regions in rural areas and LGAs in urban areas.
SA4	Statistical Area 4, designed to reflect one of more whole labour markets for the release of Labour Force Survey data. SA4s are required to have large populations of over 100,000 people in order to enable accurate labour force survey data to be generated in each SA4.
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas is a range of indices developed by the ABS showing relative levels of socioeconomic advantage and disadvantage. They summarise key economic and social information about people and households within a defined area and are derived from Census variables.
Sensitive receivers	Land users which are sensitive to potential noise, air and visual impacts, such as residential dwellings, schools and recreation areas.
SIA	Social Impact Assessment

SIA Guideline	Social Impact Assessment for State significant projects published by the (then) NSW DPIE in 2021
SIMP	Social Impact Management Plan
Social impact	Social impacts are defined as the consequences experienced by individuals, households, groups, communities and organisations generally due to changes associated with a project, program or intervention.
Social licence to operate	Refers to the level of acceptance or approval of the activities of an organisation by its stakeholders, especially local impacted communities.
Social locality	The area likely to experience social impacts as a result of the proposal. Also known as the “area of social influence”.
SSI	State significant infrastructure
Surge capacity	Relates to the ability to obtain adequate workers to meet any unforeseen requirements of the construction phase.
Workforce accommodation camp	A facility used to accommodate the construction workforce for the proposal, and provide a range of facilities for the workforce, including accommodation and catering. Described in full in Appendix I (Workforce accommodation camp assessment) of the EIS.
UCL	Urban Centre and Localities represent areas of concentrated urban development with populations of 200 people or more. These areas of urban development are primarily identified using objective dwelling and population density criteria using data from the 2016 Census.
Visual amenity	The value of an area or view in terms of what is seen.
Visual impact	The impacts on the views from residences, workplaces and public places. This can be positive (i.e. benefit or an improvement) or negative (i.e. adverse or a detraction).
WSP | MM	WSP Australia | Mott MacDonald Joint Venture trading as IRDJV.

Executive summary

The proposal

The Australian Government has committed to delivering a significant piece of national transport infrastructure by constructing a high performance and direct interstate freight rail corridor between Melbourne and Brisbane. Inland Rail involves the design and construction of a new inland rail connection, about 1,700 kilometres long, between Melbourne and Brisbane. Inland Rail is a major national proposal that will enhance Australia's existing national rail network and serve the interstate freight market.

Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC) is seeking approval to construct and operate the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of Inland Rail ('the proposal'), which has a total extent of about 42.5 kilometres. This consists of approximately 39 kilometres of new, greenfield single track standard gauge railway and associated infrastructure between Illabo and Stockinbingal.

This report

This social impact assessment (SIA) is a technical report prepared in response to the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued for the proposal. It provides a description of the existing social environment which establishes a baseline to assist in identifying the type and level of change that would be experienced in the social locality. This report then identifies the potential positive and negative impacts on local communities in the social locality brought about by the proposal during construction and operation, noting the impact assessment for the workforce accommodation camp is separately assessed in Appendix I of the environmental impact statement. Finally, this report presents a plan of management and mitigation of potential adverse social impacts and the enhancement of positive impacts.

Approach

The SIA was prepared in accordance with and taking guidance from the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development* (NSW DPE, 2017) and the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant projects* (NSW DPIE, 2021).

Steps undertaken to develop this SIA included:

- reviewing the proposal description
- scoping potential social impacts
- determining the social locality
- describing the social baseline context
- undertaking community and stakeholder consultation
- describing, predicting and assessing the social impacts, positive and negative
- developing appropriate mitigation and management measures.

Overview of the existing social environment

The local study area exhibits the following key characteristics:

- Agricultural land uses dominate the local study area, with 97 per cent of the proposal site and 94 per cent of surrounding land being used for cropping or grazing activities.
- The population is relatively dispersed, with 86.6 per cent of the population residing in semi-rural and rural areas outside of the townships of Cootamundra, Stockinbingal, Bethungra and Illabo.
- The road network is subject to seasonal peaks in usage due to increased agricultural movements during harvest season and via stock movements.
- The housing stock comprises almost entirely of detached dwellings, with family households with children comprising the most common household type.

- The local study area exhibits relatively low levels of socio-economic vulnerability as a whole. However, there are high rates of:
  - residents requiring assistance with core activities in Stockinbingal, suggesting a high reliance on the road network to access health and community service providers in Cootamundra and Temora
  - residents identifying as Indigenous in Illabo
  - households earning less than $650 per week in Stockinbingal and Bethungra suggesting vulnerability to price increases and or environmental changes
  - households without internet access in Bethungra, requiring non-digital forms of notification and consultation.

There are several community characteristics evident across the regional study area, such as:

- The region is very culturally homogenous, with a regional study area average of 85.1 per cent of residents being born in Australia, compared to 65.5 per cent for NSW.
- There is a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents in the regional study area (4.7 per cent). However, Indigenous residents are more prevalent in larger townships, particularly Cootamundra, Young and Wagga Wagga.
- Overall, except Wagga Wagga and Junee Shire, the regional study area has an aging population and a relatively small proportion of people in the potential labour force. However, most LGAs are also exhibiting higher incidences of residents aged 0–14, suggesting a robust regional birth rate.
- An adequate supply of short-term accommodation stock, such as hotels and motels, to satisfy local tourism and seasonal demands. Availability is, however, subject to seasonal capacity constraints due to an influx of seasonal agricultural workers to the region.

Workforce requirements

There would be both construction (peaking at approximately 425 personnel) and non-construction workforce (approximately 20 personnel) required for the proposal during the construction phase. The construction workforce would be accommodated in a workforce accommodation camp (with 450 beds allowed for surge capacity). Of the non-construction workforce, a small number (approximately 5) would constitute the core project management team (ARTC staff) and be longer-term residents in the local study area. The remaining 15 non-construction workforce would be ARTC managed technical specialists who would require short-term accommodation within the local study area during site visits.

Summary of impacts – construction

The potential positive social impacts expected to result during construction of the proposal are as follows:

- improved livelihoods resulting from direct and indirect employment opportunities
- improved regional economic outcomes and opportunities resulting from increased project procurement activities
- new education, skills development and training opportunities for regional residents.

The key potential negative social impacts expected to occur during construction of the proposal are summarised below:

- potential impacts to short-term accommodation market availability (during site visits by ARTC managed technical specialists), restricting access for other community needs
- restriction on people's ability move around their community as a result of traffic restrictions and delays at level crossings
- decreased perceptions of safety resulting from anti-social behaviour in local townships due to temporary construction workforce
- perceived risk of impeded access across the rail corridor for emergency services, specifically during times of high bushfire risk
- stress and anxiety resulting from potential harm to identified sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage around the proposal site

- adverse mental health impacts predominantly for directly affected landowners as a result of the land access and acquisition process of negotiations over a long period of time
- adverse mental health impacts (frustration, impatience) and cessation of engagement with ARTC due to the protracted design and planning process
- changes in rural amenity and character which may affect people's sense of place, including adverse changes to existing visual amenity for three residential sensitive receivers in the local study area
- potential health and wellbeing impacts associated with amenity impacts, including:
  - adverse changes to existing levels of noise and vibration for up to 152 sensitive receivers in the local study area
  - adverse changes to existing air quality for up to 108 sensitive receivers in the local study area
- loss of local and regional agricultural production felt by individual landowners and regional producers
- adverse impact on agricultural businesses from land acquisition leading to severance.

Summary of impacts – operation

The potential positive social impacts expected to result from operation of the proposal are as follows:

- improved economic and social outcomes from supply chain efficiencies, employment and investment opportunities in the Southern NSW region (inclusive of the regional study area in this report)
- improved economic and social livelihoods from easier access to and from regional, national and global markets for agricultural producers, farmers and businesses
- direct and indirect employment opportunities in the local study area
- a legacy of upskilled workers from the skills and development training provided during the construction phase, leading to opportunities for these workers to transfer their skills to other projects and further contribute to economic development in the region
- improved road safety through a reduction in traffic incidents and delays from removal of one public level crossing on Burley Griffin Way
- improved traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities where realignment to Burley Griffin Way occurs.

The key potential negative social impacts expected to occur during operation of the proposal are summarised below:

- changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities including minor delays at new public level crossings
- a permanent change to the rural sense of place and identification to the land, experienced more acutely by landowners directly affected by the proposal, but also by residents of townships in the local study area
- concerns around safety of people and livestock, and disturbance to farming operations from the impact of potential flooding on accessibility and safety around underbridges
- ongoing mental health impacts from that experienced during the construction phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners.
- an altered sense of enjoyment of the rural landscapes from changes to the existing visual amenity leading to potential frustration
- sleep disturbance or ongoing exposure to air-borne noise for sensitive receivers along the proposal site due to train activity, leading to a change to the level of enjoyment of the rural lifestyle that is highly valued by local residents
- ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for one residential receiver due to non-rail noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way
- ongoing stress and anxiety associated with the longer-term effects of property impacts on individual landowners relating to the land acquisition process, as well as the ongoing impact on economic livelihoods.

Summary of management measures

A preliminary Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP), see Appendix D, has been developed detailing mitigation and enhancement measures and a framework for the ongoing monitoring of desired social outcomes derived from the proposal. The themes used to describe the suite of management measures are as follows:

- Workforce Management
- Industry Participation
- Housing and Accommodation
- Community Health and Wellbeing
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement.

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Australian Government has committed to delivering a significant piece of national transport infrastructure by constructing a high performance and direct interstate freight rail corridor between Melbourne and Brisbane. Inland Rail involves the design and construction of a new inland rail connection, about 1,700 kilometres (km) long, between Melbourne and Brisbane. Inland Rail is a major national proposal that will enhance Australia's existing national rail network and serve the interstate freight market.

Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC) is seeking approval to construct and operate the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of Inland Rail ('the proposal'), which has a total extent of about 42.5km. It consists of approximately 39km of new, greenfield single track standard gauge railway and associated infrastructure between Illabo and Stockinbingal.

The proposal requires approval from the NSW Minister for Planning under Division 5.2 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The proposal is also a controlled action under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and requires approval from the Australian Government Minister for the Environment.

This report has been prepared by Inland Rail Design Joint Venture (WSP/Mott Macdonald) as part of the environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposal. The EIS has been prepared to accompany the application for approval of the proposal and addresses the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) from the (then) Secretary of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) (now the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)), issued on 30 April 2021.

1.2 The proposal

The proposal is located between Illabo and Stockinbingal within the Riverina region of NSW. The location of the proposal is shown in Figure 1.1.

1.2.1 Key features

The key features of the proposal (which would be confirmed during detailed design) are shown in Figure 1.2 and includes:

- a total extent of about 42.5km, including about 39km of new, greenfield single track standard gauge railway between Illabo and Stockinbingal, including:
  - a combination of track vertical alignments on existing ground level, on embankments and in cuttings
  - 8 new bridges at watercourses, two road overbridges and one grade separated (road over rail) at Burley Griffin Way
  - one crossing loop and associated maintenance siding
  - construction of new level crossings and alterations of existing level crossings (at public roads and private accesses)
  - stock underpasses and other vehicular crossings on private land to allow for the movement of livestock and vehicles across the rail line
  - installation and upgrade of about 88 new and existing cross drainage culverts below the rail formation and 27 longitudinal drainage culverts below level crossings
  - removal of redundant sections of track along the existing Stockinbingal to Parkes line and Lake Cargelligo line at Stockinbingal.

- upgrades of about 3km of existing track for the tie-in works to the existing Main South rail line at Illabo, and tie ins to the Stockinbingal to Parkes rail line at Stockinbingal
- construction of about 1.7km of new track to maintain the existing connection of the Lake Cargelligo rail line either side of the proposal
- realignment of a 1.4km section of the Burley Griffin Way to provide a road over rail bridge at Stockinbingal
- realignment of Ironbong Road to allow for safe sight lines at the new active level crossing.

The proposal also includes the construction and operation of one temporary workforce accommodation camp (with 450 beds allowed for surge capacity) (separately assessed in Appendix I: Workforce accommodation camp assessment (Appendix I) of the EIS.

Associated infrastructure would include signalling and communications, signage, fencing and services and utilities. The construction of the proposal would also require the following works:

- construction access roads and access tracks
- watercourse crossings
- temporary changes to the road network
- construction compounds.

1.2.2 Timing and operation

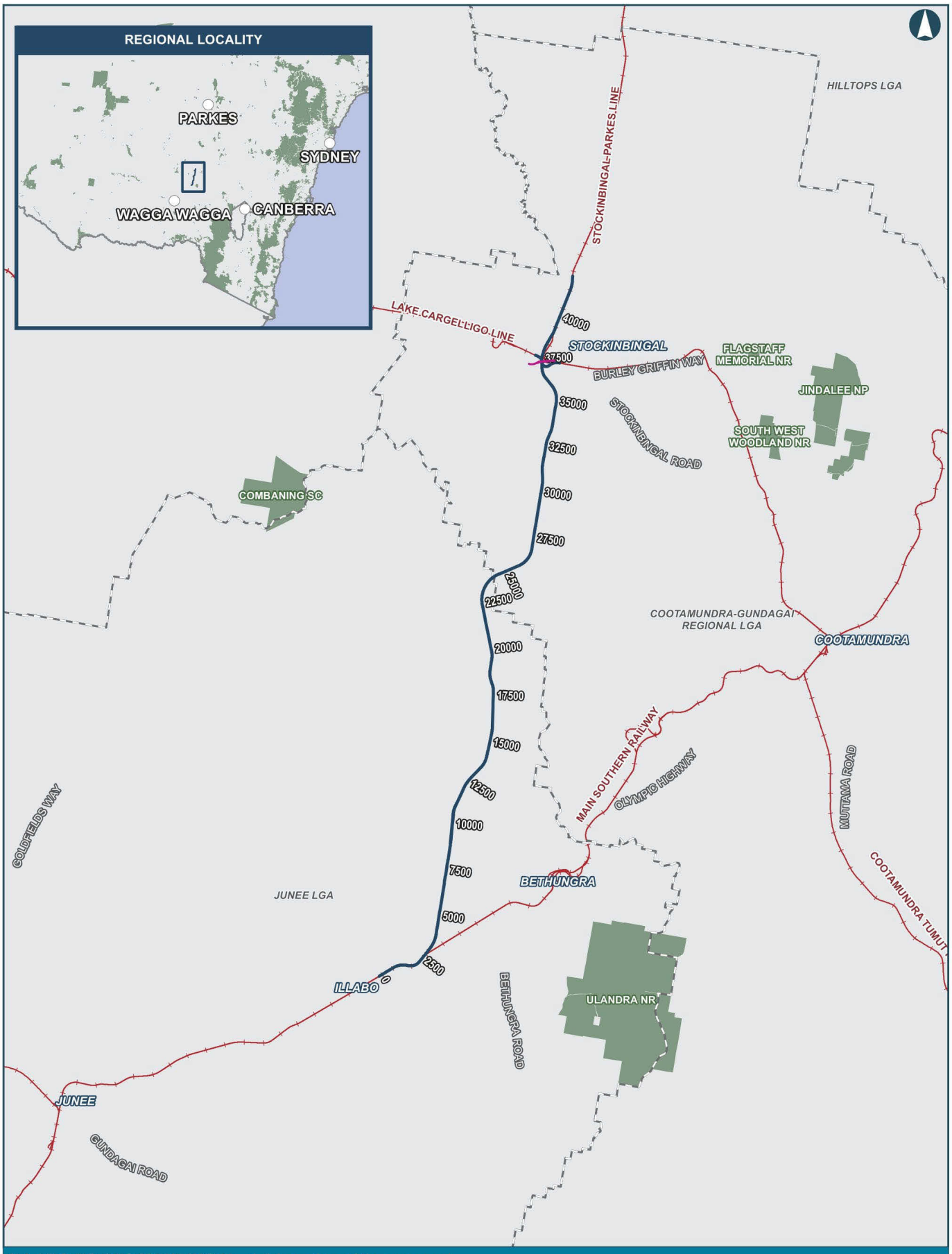
Subject to approval of the proposal, construction of the proposal is planned to start in mid-2024 and is expected to be completed by mid-2026.

The proposal would form part of the rail network managed and maintained by ARTC. Train services would be provided by a variety of operators. It is estimated the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of Inland Rail would be trafficked by an average of 6 trains per day (both directions) from commencement of operation in late 2026, increasing to about 11 trains per day (both directions) in 2040.

The new rail line will be a faster, more efficient route that bypasses the Sydney rail network and will enable the use of double stacked trains (up to 6.5 metres (m) high) along its entire length.

The trains would be diesel powered, and would be a mix of grain, intermodal (freight), and other general freight trains up to 1,800m in length.

The proposal is expected to be operational, as part of Inland Rail as a whole, once all 13 sections are complete, which is estimated to be in 2027. Prior to that, regional rail movements may occur on the Illabo to Stockinbingal section once complete.



ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL 1.1 Location of the proposal

0 2 4 6 km

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

Date: 7/23/2021 Paper: A3

Author: IRDJV Scale: 1:200,000

Data Sources: ARTC, NSWSS, ESRI

Key features of proposal

- Key features of proposal
- 40950 Chainage (distance in metres from southern limit of the proposal)
- Burley Griffin Way realignment

Existing features

- Local Government area boundary
- Existing rail
- Parks and reserves
- Sub-arterial road
- Arterial road

INLAND RAIL ARTC

The Australian Government is delivering Inland Rail through the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), in partnership with the private sector.

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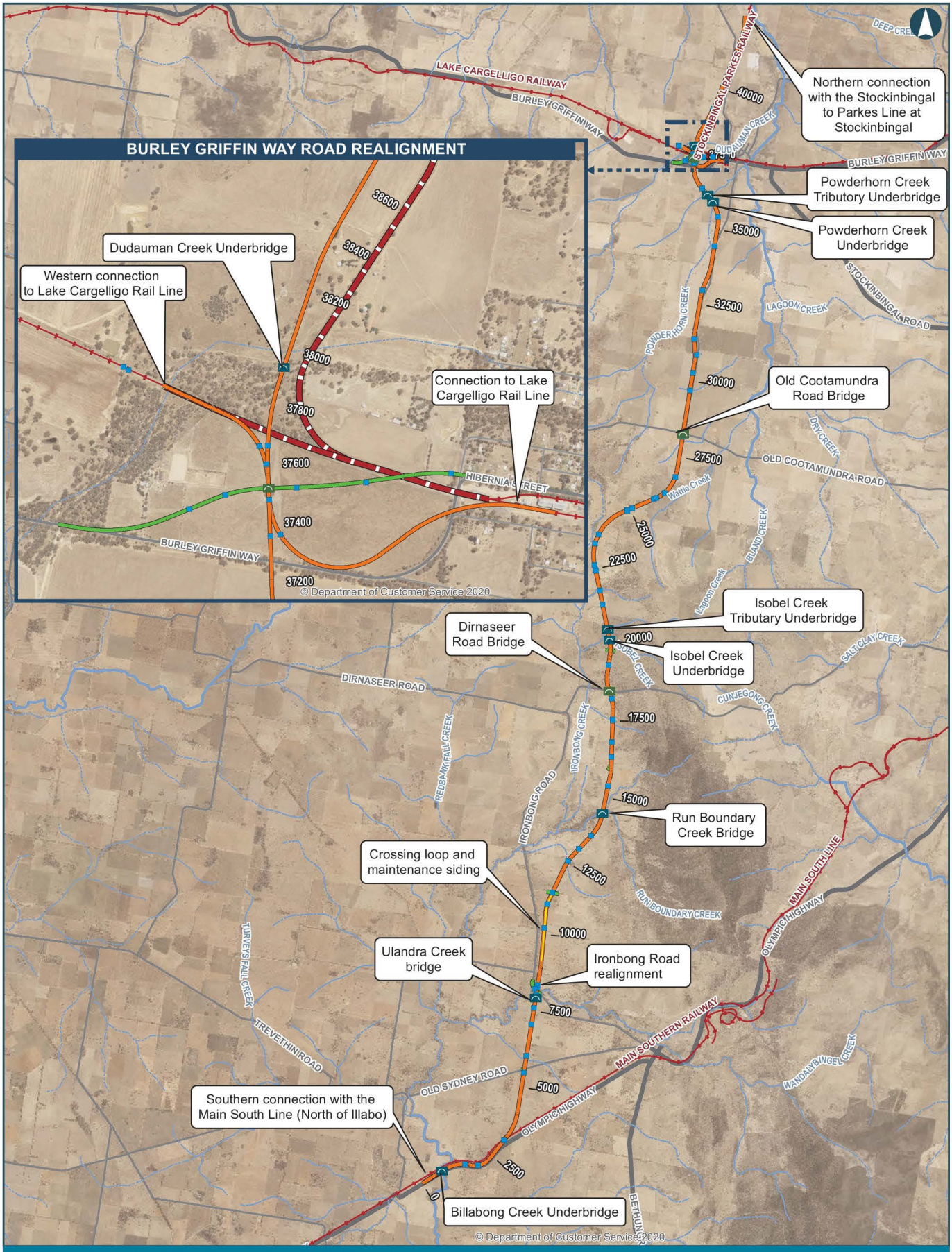

ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL 1.2 Key features of the proposal

0 1 2 3 km

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

Date: 7/23/2021 Paper: A3

Author: IRDJV Scale: 1:120,000

Data Sources: ARTC, NSWSS, ESRI

Key features of proposal

- New track/track upgrade
- 40950 Chainage (distance in metres from southern limit of the proposal)
- Crossing Loop & Maintenance Siding
- Burley Griffin Way Road realignment
- Culvert
- Bridge (road crossing)
- Bridge (water crossing)

Existing features

- Sub-arterial road
- Arterial road
- Existing Rail
- Major Watercourse
- Minor Watercourse
- Redundant sections of rail to be decommissioned

INLAND RAIL ARTC

The Australian Government is delivering Inland Rail through the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), in partnership with the private sector.

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1.3 Scope and purpose of this report

This report has been prepared to specifically address the SEARs issued by (then) DPIE on 30 April 2021. The SEARs relevant to social impact, and references to sections where they have been addressed in the report are presented below in Table 1.1.

This report documents the process and outcomes from the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) undertaken for the proposal. Specifically, this SIA:

- provides a description of existing social conditions to broaden the understanding of the social environment and establishes a baseline suitable for the definition and measurement of potential social impacts
- identifies potential social impacts on local communities in the local and regional study areas relating to the construction and operation of the proposal; and
- recommends management and mitigation approaches to address the potential impacts to help build and maintain a social licence to operate.

Table 1.1 SEARs for the proposal

Key issue	Requirement	Where addressed
1) Social	1) Potential social impacts of the project from the points of view of the affected community/ies and other relevant stakeholders, i.e. how they expect to experience the project.	Perspectives from affected communities are presented in Chapter 5 (Community and stakeholder consultation). Social impacts are addressed throughout Chapter 7 (Social Impact Assessment – construction) and Chapter 8 (Social Impact Assessment – operation).
	2) How potential environmental changes in the locality may affect people's (including, but not limited to): a) community b) access to accommodation and housing c) access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities d) culture e) health and wellbeing f) surroundings g) personal and property rights h) decision-making systems i) fears and aspirations, as relevant and considering how different groups may be disproportionately affected.	Chapter 7 (Social Impact Assessment – construction) and Chapter 8 (Social Impact Assessment – operation) address how each of these potential environmental changes in the social locality may affect people.
	3) Social actions and outcomes that address both negative and positive social impacts.	Appendix D (Social Impact Management Plan) details proposed management and mitigation measures to address both negative and positive social impacts.

1.4 Structure of this report

The structure of this report is outlined in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 SIA report structure

Report chapters	Description
Executive summary	• Presents an overview of the key findings of the SIA for the proposal.
Chapter 1 – Introduction	• Provides an overview of the rationale for the Inland Rail Project and how the proposal will contribute to this Project. Also, includes an overview of the social environment • Describes the SIA report purpose and structure.
Chapter 2 – Legislation and policy context	• A summary of relevant government legislative and policy documents to better understand the existing environment.
Chapter 3 – Methodology	• Provides an overview of the SIA methodology • Includes the limitations and assumptions adopted • Provides an overview of the local, State and national policy/legislation that is relevant to the SIA.
Chapter 4 – Scope of the assessment	• Overview of the scoping process undertaken for this assessment including definition of the assessment study areas.
Chapter 5 – Community and stakeholder consultation	• Outlines the stakeholder engagement program undertaken to date to identify key social issues and opportunities in relation to the proposal.
Chapter 6 – Existing social environment	• Provides an overview of the existing conditions in the identified social locality to gain an understanding of and assess potential changes to the social environment that may occur due to the proposal.
Chapter 7 – Social impact assessment – construction	• Outlines the potential social impacts and benefits associated with the proposal during the construction phase based on the findings of the existing social environment and stakeholder and community engagement.
Chapter 8 – Social impact assessment – operation	• Outlines the potential social impacts and benefits associated with the proposal during its operation, based on the findings of the existing social environment and stakeholder and community engagement.
Chapter 9 – Cumulative impact assessment	• An assessment of concurrent projects in the social locality and whether they pose a material impact on the nature of the identified social impacts of the proposal.
Chapter 10 – Assessment of residual impacts	• An assessment of the residual social impacts and their significance ratings after the recommended management measures have been implemented.
Chapter 11 – Conclusion	• Provides a summary of the key findings.
Chapter 12 – References	• Lists the references used in the preparation of the report.
Appendix A – Events by town	• A summary of community and stakeholder consultation events held.
Appendix B – SIA stakeholder consultation June-July 2019 questions	• A summary of the questions that were asked to various community and stakeholder groups during the June-July 2019 round of consultation for the proposal.
Appendix C – SIA consultation questions and themes- February-April 2021	• A summary of the questions that were asked to various community and stakeholder groups during the February-April 2021 round of consultation for the proposal.
Appendix D – Social Impact Management Plan	• Outlines mitigation and management actions to enhance social benefits and reduce or appropriately manage social impacts during relevant proposal life stages.

2 Legislation and policy context

This section provides an overview of government policy and strategic documents relevant to this SIA. These primarily relate to employment and procurement, transport planning, regional development, and community planning.

2.1 Commonwealth legislation

2.1.1 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The objective of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is to protect and manage prescribed Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). Under the EPBC Act, proposed 'actions' that have the potential to significantly impact on MNES, the environment of Commonwealth land, or that are being carried out by a Federal Government agency, must be referred to the Federal Minister for the Environment for assessment.

As a result of the potential for impacts on protected matters, the proposal was referred to the (then) Australian Government Minister for the Environment in June 2018 (EPBC Referral No 2018/8233). On 6 August 2018, the (then) Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy notified that the proposal is a controlled action, with the controlling provisions being 'listed threatened species and communities' (under section 18 & 18A of the EPBC Act).

2.2 NSW legislation

2.2.1 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Regulation) establish a framework for the assessment and approval of developments in NSW. They also provide for the making of environmental planning instruments, including state environmental planning policies (SEPPs) and local environmental plans (LEPs), which determine the permissibility and approval pathway for development proposals and form a part of the environmental assessment process. In accordance with the provisions of the EP&A Act, the proposal is State Significant Infrastructure),

SSI may also be declared to be critical State significant infrastructure (CSSI) in accordance with section 5.13 of the EP&A Act, if it is of a category that, in the opinion of the NSW Minister for Planning, is essential for the State for economic, environmental or social reasons. The proposal was declared as CSSI in 2021.

Under section 5.14 of the EP&A Act, the approval of the NSW Minister for Planning is required for State significant infrastructure (including CSSI), and an EIS has been prepared under Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act.

2.3 Commonwealth policies and plans

2.3.1 Australian Industry Participation National Framework 2001

The *Australian Industry Participation National Framework 2001* (AIPNF) seeks to promote industry capability and maximise investment projects participation. The Framework commits the Australian Government and state and territory governments to adopt a consistent national approach. The framework encourages proponents to maximise Australian industry participation in investment projects by providing industry full, fair and reasonable opportunity to participate.

ARTC has committed to maximising Australian businesses' opportunities to be involved in the proposal's construction and operation.

2.4 NSW Government guidance for social impact assessment

2.4.1 Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant projects (NSW DPIE, 2021) (2021 SIA Guideline)

The (then) NSW DPIE released an updated guideline for preparing social impacts assessments for all State significant projects in NSW. This guideline is intended for use for all non-resources projects and to supersede the 2017 guideline that was developed specifically for the resources sector. The 2021 SIA Guideline features a number of changes to the methodology. Amendments relevant to this SIA include the changes to the social impact categories and a change to the categorisation of 'catastrophic' level of consequence to 'transformative' to better capture the level of significance rating of positive social impacts in the social risk matrix.

This SIA uses the 2021 SIA Guideline methodology as the primary source of guidance as per the SEARs for this proposal.

2.4.2 Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development (DPE, 2017)

The (then) NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) released a comprehensive guideline for assessing both positive and negative social impacts associated with State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry projects. While the guideline is predominately related to resource projects, it does provide standards and approaches which relate to social impact assessments for major infrastructure projects such as the proposal.

2.4.3 Social Impact Assessment Scoping Tool (DPE, 2017)

The Social Impact Assessment Scoping Tool ((then) DPE, 2017) (the scoping tool) is a decision-support scoping tool intended to guide the scoping phase of SIA. The scoping phase highlights what elements of the natural or human environment (matters such as amenity, access, built environment, heritage, community) are expected to be impacted by activities associated with a proposal (whether positively or negatively), and how those impacts should be assessed and to what level of detail.

2.5 Regional planning policies and strategies

2.5.1 Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036

The Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036 (Murrumbidgee Local Health District, 2019) is a consolidated strategic plan prepared for the 20 Local Government Areas (LGA) in the Riverina Murray Region, and includes the Cootamundra-Gundagai, Temora, and Junee LGAs.

The plan is the NSW Government's strategy for guiding land use planning decisions in the region up to 2036. A number of initiatives have concluded during the preparation of the EIS for the proposal. It outlines four regionally focused goals, including:

1. a growing and diverse economy
2. a healthy environment with pristine waterways
3. efficient transport and infrastructure networks
4. strong, connected and healthy communities.

The plan identifies the development of the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail as a key opportunity to reshape the way freight is moved in the region. As part of Goal 3, Direction 20, the plan highlights major infrastructure corridor planning as a priority to enable long-term, sustainable growth. To achieve this goal, the plan proposes working with the Australian Government to finalise planning, engineering design and assessment of the Melbourne–Brisbane Inland Rail Corridor.

The plan also identifies the following key priorities for each of the LGAs that are included in this assessment:

- Cootamundra-Gundagai:
  - support agriculture as the dominant industry, encouraging development of large-scale livestock production and processing, as well as development of key freight transport services
  - develop niche value-added agricultural produce and related tourism opportunities
  - capitalise on the existing access to rail and road infrastructure; and
  - enhance access to services and facilities including health and aged care, to support a healthy rural community.
- Junee:
  - encourage economic growth by supporting agriculture and other emerging industries such as tourism and freight-related opportunities; and
  - increase access to local services and infrastructure within the community including improving recreation and sporting facilities and enlarging efficient sewerage systems.
- Temora:
  - support the ongoing growth opportunities presented by agriculture and value-add manufacturing
  - take advantage of tourism opportunities, focusing on heritage, aviation, agriculture, sport and recreation
  - provide facilities, services and housing options to support diverse community needs, including for seniors
  - grow awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of the shire's natural environment; and
  - leverage growth opportunities through its proximity to Wagga Wagga.
- Coolamon:
  - sustain the strong agriculture-based economy in an evolving global market
  - promote and support existing and new business investment, taking advantage of the shire's proximity to Wagga Wagga
  - continue to deliver a high standard of services, facilities and infrastructure to support residents and visitors; and
  - adapt to climate variability and protect environmental assets.
- Wagga Wagga:
  - establish an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and start-up businesses, with the aim of inspiring innovation and advances in technology
  - support industrial land development, including at Bomen Business Park in Wagga Wagga
  - support the delivery of residential release areas in the council's proposed local plan review and increase the range of housing options in existing urban areas
  - support the establishment of health precincts around Wagga Wagga Rural Referral Hospital
  - facilitate a greater share of the national freight activity by improving and developing the city's road, rail and air connections to Australia's major cities and sea ports; and
  - contribute to a sustainable environment for future generations through proactive waste management and responsible sustainable practices.

2.5.2 Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan

The Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan (Transport for NSW, 2018) sets a 40-year vision for transport in regional NSW to support liveable communities and productive economies. The vision for regional NSW as per the plan is a safe, efficient and reliable network of transport services and infrastructure.

The plan identifies the Inland Rail proposal as a significant addition to the NSW rail freight network as it would optimise the movement of freight in regional NSW through efficient linkages to NSW ports and the development of economically sustainable freight hubs. As identified in the plan, the ports of Melbourne and Brisbane will become increasingly important to the Riverina Murray and Northern NSW regions respectively with the implementation of Inland Rail.

A region-specific transport plan and vision will be prepared for the Riverina Murray region. A place-based plan and framework will be developed in conjunction with key stakeholders for prioritised key hubs across the Riverina Murray region.

2.6 Local government planning policies and strategies

The proposal traverses the LGAs of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and Junee Shire Council. The LGA of Temora Shire Council, which is located just outside the proposal site at the northern end of the proposal, would also experience social impacts. Relevant local government strategies and plans outline each LGA's role in the region, their vision for the local community, and preferred future directions. Furthermore, understanding each strategy and plan would ensure the proposal can contribute to the vision of each council.

The following provides a summary of planning and strategy documents that are relevant to the SIA. They provide background commentary of each Council vision and approach for delivering community benefit and managing local and regional challenges. Engagement and planning associated with the proposal would address key outcomes from these strategies.

2.6.1 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council

2.6.1.1 Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020

The Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) plans for Council's economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20 years. The LSPS gives effect to the Riverina-Murray Regional Plan, implementing the directions and actions at a local level. The LSPS works with Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP), which has a similar but broader purpose on how Council will work to meet on the community's needs.

Council's vision as provided in the LSPS is "*Opportunities through choice*". The LSPS outlines 15 planning priorities under five distinct themes: Liveability, Sustainability, Productivity, Technology, and Infrastructure and Planning.

The LSPS notes Inland Rail as a catalyst for greater productivity and growth across the region. Action 9.1: Implement the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy's focus area of "Inland Port, relates to Council advocating for the development of an intermodal freight hub in the LGA.

2.6.1.2 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Villages Strategy 2018 (Villages Strategy)

The Villages Strategy provides clear strategic indicators for the development of the villages of the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA over the next 30 years and beyond. The plan aims to inform residential and economic growth, whist remaining reflexive and responsive. The Strategy is based on extensive community consultation and planning analysis. The Villages Strategy makes provision and recommendations for short-term accommodation such as caravan parks and campgrounds in certain areas.

Stockinbingal is analysed in the Villages Strategy as having capacity to establish an intermodal facility which could service the Inland Rail program, Lake Cargelligo Branch Line and Burley Griffin Way. The existing rail grain depots at Stockinbingal could be further enhanced with opportunities for access to two more ports to be available through the proposal Inland Rail. Action 3.38 regarding Inland Rail states: Rezone to support freight and logistical land uses with access to the Inland Rail, Lake Cargelligo Branch Line and Burley Griffin Way.

2.6.1.3 Cootamundra-Gundagai Community Strategic Plan 2018-28

The Cootamundra-Gundagai Community Strategic Plan, *Our place, Our future* was developed by Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council on behalf of the community to drive the communities' priorities and preferred future. The vision statement for this plan and the council is that Cootamundra-Gundagai will be: *"A vibrant region attracting people, investment and business through innovation, diversity and community spirit."*

The Community Strategic Plan identifies the proposal as one of the large-scale infrastructure investments that can be a catalyst for positive change, providing opportunities for the future, making it easier for business to do business and increasing connection across the region.

2.6.1.4 Cootamundra-Gundagai Delivery Program 2018/19 – 2020/21

The Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Delivery Program is a key guidance document for all activities undertaken by council. It details the activities to be undertaken to achieve the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan, *Our place, Our future* over the four-year council term. This plan explains the 163 activities, along with measures of success and responsibilities, that council will undertake to achieve the key directions and objectives from the Community Strategic Plan.

2.6.1.5 Cootamundra-Gundagai Economic Development Strategy 2017

The Cootamundra-Gundagai Economic Development Strategy 2017 outlines the Economic Development Framework for the region to promote long-term sustainable economic growth. It highlights the financial strengths of the area and outlines as part of its objectives the improvement of rail infrastructure to support the agribusiness sector and efficient freight and logistic access.

2.6.2 Junee Shire Council

2.6.2.1 Junee Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040

The Junee Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040 (LSPS) sets the land use framework for Junee Shire Council's economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20 years. The planning priorities and actions contained in the LSPS provide the rationale for decisions about how Council will utilise land in the LGA to achieve the community's broader goals and aspirations.

Planning priority five: provide opportunities for new business and industry in the right locations specifically notes Inland Rail and the development of the Riverina Intermodal Freight and Logistics Hub as key opportunities to improve local agricultural and industrial output.

2.6.2.2 Illabo and Bethungra Village Improvement Plans

The Village Improvement Plans for Illabo and Bethungra were adopted by Junee Shire Council on 22 June 2021.

The residents of Illabo were consulted during the preparation of the Village Improvement Plan. They reported many elements as being valuable to them, primarily the quiet, relaxed lifestyle and proximity to larger towns and cities such as Junee, Cootamundra and Wagga. Illabo residents value the shared community spirit and abundance of community events and facilities. Residents felt that enhancing the beauty of the village was a high priority for the future of Illabo. Additionally, enhancing tourism, painting the silos, new public gardens, raising the profile of community events, engaging youth, and enabling residential development would all benefit future growth in Illabo. Specifically, the value of a community noticeboard was raised as a priority.

Residents of Bethungra engaged during the development of the Village Improvement Plan reported a range of elements as being important to the future of the community. These included the importance of events and activities in the village, youth engagement, improved presentation of the village, connecting tourists into local businesses and promoting new events in conjunction with the Railway Spiral.

2.6.2.3 Junee Shire Community Strategic Plan 'Making Tracks' 2035

The Junee Shire's Community Strategic Plan identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and outlines strategies for achieving these goals.

The Plan outlines eight objectives under four key themes: liveable, prosperous, sustainable, and collaborative.

The following key themes and associated objectives are relevant to the proposal and to this SIA:

- Prosperous: A prosperous community provides people with choices and opportunities for investment, employment and learning - it focuses on the things that will attract visitors and new residents which in turn generate wealth and vibrancy in the community – it extracts more from what it already has – it is mindful of change and prepares itself to adapt for the future. Relevant objectives outlined in the plan include:
  - Objective 3 – To grow our local economy; and
  - Objective 4 – To be a resilient community able to adapt for the future.
- Collaborative: A collaborative community is an informed and involved community which recognises the need for shared responsibility to achieve outcomes – it recognises the need for and the importance of volunteers – capable leaders within council and the community working together guided by plans made for the future and within a framework of good governance. Relevant objectives outlined in the plan include:
  - Objective 7 – To be a socially, physically and culturally engaged and connected community; and
  - Objective 8 – To work together to achieve our goals.

  The activities and actions for council that come from the Community Strategic Plan are found in council's Delivery Program (4-year program) and Operational Plan (one year plan and budget) as outlined below.

2.6.2.4 Junee Shire Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2018-2022

Junee Shire's combined delivery and operations plan describes the activities and actions council will undertake over the next four years to achieve its long-term goals and outcomes. This plan explains the 102 activities and 326 actions associated with eight objectives and related strategies as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

The Plan outlines the following actions to achieve the objectives outlined in the Community Strategic Plan:

- Enhance the Rail and Agriculture Sector:
  - explore opportunities for business development associated with the Inland Rail
  - seek out business opportunities to support our economy into the future; and
  - continue to support and advocate for the national Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail through Junee.

The Plan also outlines key budget features showing expenditure, income and changes to both for this plans' timeframe.

2.6.3 Temora Shire Council

2.6.3.1 Temora Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement

The Temora Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (the Statement) is a document used by Temora Shire Council, the community and developers to guide the current and future land use for Temora Shire over the next 20 years. The Statement then identifies the planning priorities of the community, including agriculture, housing, aviation, employment, tourism, heritage, environment, amenity and liveability.

Inland Rail is mentioned several times throughout the Statement, including:

- Theme 2: Enhanced infrastructure to meet community need, Planning Priority 4: Support the improvement of road and rail infrastructure to respond to local and regional transport and freight needs.
- Action 4.5: Respond to emerging transport opportunities associated with Inland Rail and rail freight upgrades, through active engagement with rail network managers or ARTC/Federal Government and NSW Government, to ensure Temora Shire maximises the leverages of the location of these investments by the end of 2023.

2.6.3.2 Temora Shire Community Strategic Plan 2030

The Temora Shire Community Strategic Plan adopts a Quadruple Bottom Line Framework of Economic, Social, Environmental and Civic Leadership categories. Key themes and objectives include:

- retaining quality of life
- engaging and supporting the community
- building the shire's economy through diversifying the economy and providing employment
- preserving surrounds
- embracing and developing aviation; and
- enhancing agricultural wealth by supporting farmers through the development and maintenance of major roads, key bridges and other transport infrastructure, such as rail, that will help the movement of livestock and farming production.

3 Methodology

The methodology for this SIA has been informed by leading practice and designed specifically in response to the requirements of the SEARs and the 2021 SIA Guideline.

3.1 Overview

Key steps in the methodology included:

- reviewing relevant NSW guidance documents such as the 2021 SIA Guideline, and relevant ARTC Inland Rail procedures and policies (refer to Chapter 2)
- conducting social impact scoping methodology to identify the preliminary potential social impacts of the proposal, including a review of relevant comparable projects and literature (refer to Chapter 3)
- identification of the local and regional study area to define the proposals social locality (refer to Chapter 4)
- reviewing the outcomes of stakeholder engagement to determine key social impacts and issues that should be considered in the assessment (refer to Chapter 5)
- developing a social baseline (also known as the existing social environment), which describes the existing social environment of the social locality based on qualitative and quantitative data sources (refer to Chapter 6)
- conducting tailored engagement through face-to-face and online surveys to understand and validate the existing environment, potential impacts and relevant management and mitigation strategies (refer to Chapter 7)
- predicting and identifying potential social impacts from the proposal and the social implications of impacts identified in other technical assessments of the EIS, and assessing the significance of potential impacts based on the likelihood and magnitude of the impact (refer to Chapters 7 and 8)
- assessing cumulative social impacts (refer to Chapter 9)
- assess the residual significance ratings for each identified social impact (refer Chapter 10)
- determining mitigation and management strategies which specifically relate to each impact. Management strategies are based on the hierarchy avoiding, minimising, mitigating and offsetting impacts and maximising potential benefits (refer to Appendix D).

The methodology for the assessment is outlined in the following sections.

3.1.1 Impact categories

The 2021 SIA Guideline outlines the following categories under which to assess social impacts:

- way of life, including how people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day
- community, including composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions and people's sense of place
- accessibility, including how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private or not-for-profit organisation
- culture, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, including shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings
- health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, and changes to public health overall
- surroundings, including ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, and erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity
- livelihoods, including people's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business
- decision-making systems, including the extent to which people can have a say in decisions that affect their lives, and have access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms.

Chapter 4 of this report details how these impact categories have been considered through scoping of social impacts.

3.2 Detailed methodology

3.2.1 Scoping social impacts and identification of social locality

The SIA process begins with a project scoping phase used to determine the size and scale of likely social impacts (DPIE 2021).

As per the SEARs, the scoping tool (DPE, 2017) assisted in providing a basis from which to understand the potential social impacts likely to occur as a result of the proposal. The scoping tool was revisited throughout the preparation of the SIA to validate the preliminary social impacts as the proposal design process progressed.

The scoping phase aimed to inform the assessment by:

- guiding the determination of the social locality based on geographical areas expected to experience social impacts
- illustrating which of the preliminary social issues associated with the proposal required fuller investigation
- supplementing the preliminary identification of social issues by conducting a brief review of relevant literature and comparable State significant projects to better understand potential social impacts associated with linear transport infrastructure projects. The following projects were reviewed:
  - Inland Rail Narrabri to North Star Phase 1, Socio-economic Assessment (GHD, 2017a)
  - Inland Rail Narromine to Narrabri, Social Assessment (JacobsGHD, 2020)
  - Inland Rail Parkes to Narromine, Socio-Economic Assessment (GHD, 2017b)
  - Project EnergyConnect (NSW - Western Section), Socio-economic Impact Assessment (WSP, 2020)
  - WestConnex M4-M5 Link, Technical working paper: Social and economic (Hill PDA, 2017).

A summary of preliminary social issues can be found in Chapter 4 and the detailed social locality is provided in section 4.2.

3.2.2 Describing the existing social environment

A description of the existing social environment was compiled to provide a baseline against which to predict and measure the potential social impacts of the proposal. The social characteristics, also known as social indicators were described for both the local study area and regional study area, see section 4.2.

For the local study area:

- existing land use patterns and transportation networks were described across the local study area, and local townships were identified
- a demographic profile was developed
- a housing profile was developed
- local social infrastructure such as schools and community facilities were identified.

For the regional study area:

- land use, industry and community profiles were developed for each of the LGAs
- community values and challenges were identified
- regional population trends were analysed
- key industry and employment characteristics were identified
- a regional housing and accommodation profile was compiled
- regional transport network and movement patterns were identified
- key indicators of social wellbeing such as income, disadvantage and health outcomes were identified
- health, education and training facilities were identified.

While most social indicators can be gathered by desktop research, some aspects of the existing environment are best obtained through primary data sources, i.e. community and stakeholder consultation.

3.2.3 Community and stakeholder consultation

3.2.3.1 EIS consultation

An understanding of key social impacts and benefits associated with the proposal was developed from a review of community and stakeholder engagement outcomes throughout development of the EIS. This included initial engagement from 2016 through to 2019, and then further consultation following design optimisation in 2020–21. EIS consultation was targeted at introducing Inland Rail to the community, developing alignment options, understanding landowner requirements and selecting a final corridor for assessment purposes. Consultation activities included meetings with councils, service providers and potentially affected landowners as well as workshops and information sessions with the broader community. Meetings were also held with Traditional Owners during the early planning and options development phases of the proposal.

Outcomes from the community and stakeholder consultation are summarised in Chapter 5. Key issues and potential social-related fears and aspirations raised by the community and other key stakeholders have also been used to inform the assessment of social impacts.

3.2.3.2 SIA-specific consultation

To supplement the desktop analysis and broader EIS consultation undertaken by ARTC and to develop a more robust understanding of the existing social environment to inform the assessment of impacts, primary qualitative data was gathered through consultation activities with:

- community groups
- service providers
- accommodation providers
- real estate agents
- local councils
- landowners.

Community and stakeholder consultation for the SIA was first undertaken by IRDJV in June-July 2019 and again in February-April 2021 via a mix of face-to-face interviews, online videoconferences and phone calls. The consultation undertaken during the 2021 round focused primarily on whether respondents had experienced changes to their community values or livelihoods due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the end of the drought or as a result of the proposal design development in the intervening years since they were first engaged. The 2021 round was the first time some respondents had been engaged for the proposal, while others were involved in the 2019 round. The current social environment and potential changes due to the proposal were explored through several tailored surveys (details provided in Appendix B).

ARTC facilitated consultation with the Young and Wagga Wagga Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) and three of the four directly affected landowners who live along the proposal site on behalf of IRDJV during both the EIS and SIA consultation periods in 2021. IRDJV engaged with the fourth directly affected landowner. The ARTC community engagement program will continue to consult with directly affected landowners throughout the course of the pre-construction, construction and operation phases of the proposal. Detailed information on consultation activities and respondents is provided in Chapter 5.

Interview questions specific to each stakeholder group were created to encourage answers that generated an accurate assessment from different sectors of the community, about the potential positive and negative issues surrounding the proposal. Interview questions for each of the above sectors of the community can be found in Appendix B, with survey results summarised in section 5.2. Stakeholders interviewed in 2019 and again in 2021 were asked a different range of questions to their respective stakeholder groups to acknowledge the information previously captured and to confirm and add to their existing feedback. IRDJV acknowledges the importance of recency in primary data collection however, it was not considered fair to the 2019 round of respondents to disregard their feedback in favour of the 2021 input. As such the SIA has prioritised the most recent feedback received but drawn upon the 2019 feedback where it remained relevant to the assessment.

At the beginning of each survey, respondents were provided with an overview of the proposal at the relevant design stage. Upon request further information was provided regarding the whole Inland Rail alignment and objectives, a description of the Illabo to Stockinbingal study area and design features, an update on current phase of the project and next steps, and contact details for the ARTC Inland Rail team for any specific questions regarding the project beyond the SIA component.

3.2.4 Identification of social impacts

This SIA defines social impact as per the 2021 SIA Guideline to be the consequences that people experience when a new project brings change. Social impact identification has been undertaken based on the following inputs, namely:

- understanding the key components and activities of the proposal
- contextualising the proposal in its strategic and regulatory setting
- considering lessons learned and experiences of comparable projects
- consideration of the demographic and socio-economic profile of the local and regional study areas
- outcomes of stakeholder and community consultation.

This SIA examined both the direct and indirect social impacts of the proposal, defined as follows:

- direct impacts are those caused directly by the proposal and are usually quantifiable through measurement of a set of social indicators. Direct impacts cause changes to the community in the areas such as population, health or employment
- indirect impacts are those that result from changes caused by the proposal relating to more qualitative indicators such as community cohesion and sense of place.

3.2.5 Evaluation of identified social impacts

Each identified social impact has been evaluated for its level of significant based on factors including:

- the current social environment as defined in the social baseline (Chapter 6)
- the characteristics of the impact as defined in the 2021 SIA Guideline, namely the extent, duration, severity, sensitivity and level of concern (definitions provided in Table 3.1)
- when the potential impact is expected to occur (pre-construction, construction, operation)
- application of likelihood and magnitude significance criteria.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of social impact magnitude (DPIE, 2021)

Characteristic	Definition
Extent	Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any potential vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g. near neighbours, local, regional, future generations).
Duration	When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g. over particular project phases) or permanent?
Severity or scale	What is the likely scale or degree of change? (e.g. mild, moderate, severe)
Sensitivity or importance	How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? This might depend on the value they attach to the matter; whether it is rare/unique or replaceable; the extent to which it is tied to their identity; and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change.
Level of concern/interest	How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes, concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessments of likelihood, duration and/or severity.

Social impacts may affect people differently, depending on the nature of the impact and each individual's circumstances. An assessment of each social impact has been undertaken with consideration given to the likelihood and magnitude of the impact to determine a pre-mitigated significance rating. The evaluation of significance is undertaken from the perspective of the affected parties.

Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 define the magnitude and likelihood criteria applied for this assessment, while Figure 3.1 shows the matrix used to identify social impact significance.

Table 3.2 Defining magnitude levels for social impacts

Magnitude criteria	
Transformational	Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, amenity, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values; permanent displacement or additional of at least 20% of a community.
Major	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
Moderate	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people.
Minor	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonable short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable.
Minimal	Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

Table 3.3 Defining likelihood levels of social impacts

Likelihood level	Definition
Almost certain	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)
Likely	High probability
Possible	Medium probability
Unlikely	Low probability
Very unlikely	Improbable or remote probability

Likelihood	Magnitude Level				
	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
Almost Certain	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Very Unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Source: SIA Guideline for State significant projects (DPIE,2021)

Figure 3.1 Social impact significance matrix

The pre-mitigated social impact significance rating is used to determine if mitigation or management actions are required. Negative social impacts with a risk rating of medium, high or very high require mitigation or management actions (see section 3.2.7).

This SIA has assessed the potential social impacts and benefits that may occur as a result of construction of the proposal (Chapter 7), operation of the proposal (Chapter 8), and the cumulative social impacts that may occur as a result of other major projects in vicinity of the proposal (Chapter 9).

3.2.6 Cumulative assessment

Cumulative impacts refer to the interactions between the proposal and other approved or yet-to-start projects, or with reasonably foreseeable future development in the area that is likely to be affected by the proposal. Cumulative impacts can indicate that the combination of effects, either positive or negative, created by multiple projects or developments may be greater than that of the impact of one project or proposed development. The analysis considers recent and future large-scale infrastructure projects located in the social locality. The cumulative assessment considers the communities' experiences of past projects and other historical events, ensuring that consideration of local values, priorities and issues are critical in understanding likely community reactions to new developments, and in planning mitigation and enhancement measures (refer to Chapter 9).

3.2.7 Development of social impact mitigation and management measures

Recommended mitigation and enhancement strategies are detailed in Appendix D. These strategies were informed by guidance provided in 2021 SIA Guideline, guidance from ARTC, community and stakeholder feedback and design outcomes.

The mitigation measures have been grouped into the following categories as per ARTC guidance:

- Workforce Management
- Industry Participation
- Housing and Accommodation
- Community Health and Wellbeing
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement.

Proposed management and mitigation measures recognise the evolving nature of project delivery, and the need to be adaptive and responsive to project changes and requirements.

A social impact monitoring framework has also been developed as part of the SIMP (see Appendix D) to provide guidance to ARTC and the principal contractor for monitoring and measuring the desired social outcomes of the proposal.

3.3 Study limitations

IRDJV acknowledges the following study limitations:

- During the 2019 SIA consultation, a survey was created for directly impacted landowners of which there were approximately 21 to be completed face to face. However, due to the sensitive nature of discussions at the time of survey release, ARTC made the survey available online for landowners to complete. As with all consultation the surveys were optional to complete. Only three surveys were completed, and the responses were used in the impact assessment.
- During the 2021 SIA consultation, a revised survey was created for directly impacted landowners of which there were approximately 19. Consultation fatigue was evident given the sequential nature of proposal design development and so landowners were given the option of a face-to-face meeting, an online videoconference, a telephone call or to respond in writing. Three landowners were not invited to participate due to the acknowledged stress likely to be caused from undertaking more consultation at that specific time. Of the 16 landowners invited only four responses were received however, meaningful data was able to be used in the assessment.
- The scoping tool was completed during the preparation of the 70% issue while supplementary community and stakeholder consultation was being undertaken. However, the scoping exercise assisted in sense-checking the pre-identified social impacts and their level of assessment.
- The data collected and used to establish a social baseline for the local and regional study areas was gathered from a wide range of sources. The primary source was the ABS Census conducted in 2016. When the social baseline was prepared in 2021, the data was five years old and does not reflect the recent significant changes regional Australia has experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent effect on regional migration, tourism and employment. The 2021 Census data is released by ABS in a phased approach beginning late June 2022. While some updated data was available during the development of the SIA, complete census data will only be released later in 2022–2023. Available 2021 data was therefore not incorporated in this SIA to avoid using two sets of data from different Census periods. Best efforts have been made to apply the most relevant data to the SIA and supplement with consultation findings or more recent publicly available research reports.

4 Scope of the assessment

This section details the outcomes of the scoping process undertaken for this this SIA.

4.1 Scoping of social issues

The scoping of social issues for the proposal was able to draw on the findings of other completed Inland Rail SIAs and inform ongoing community and stakeholder consultation and the redefinition of the social locality (section 4.2).

The scoping of social issues occurred through:

- completing the scoping tool to confirm the social impacts that are considered likely to occur and the proportionate recommended level of assessment
- a review of comparable project SIAs and relevant literature on predicted social impacts, i.e. land access and acquisition
- a preliminary review of Commonwealth, State and local government legislation and planning documents and technical studies
- outcomes of preliminary consultation undertaken for the proposal by ARTC
- a review of State-based SIA guidance, namely the 2021 SIA Guideline.

Table 4.1 provides a summary of the scoping process for this SIA. This includes:

- the environmental matters identified in the 2021 SIA Guideline
- a description of the potential social issues that are expected to occur as a result of construction and operation of the proposal based on the information sources discussed above
- the corresponding social impact categories as described in the 2021 SIA Guideline (described in section 3.1.1)
- the preliminary assessment of impacts.

Table 4.1 Identification and preliminary assessment of social impacts

Environmental matters as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Preliminary social impact	Reference technical papers in EIS	Preliminary assessment					Impact assessment areas as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Where addressed in the SIA
			Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity or importance	Level of concern/interest		
Amenity (noise and vibration)	Construction of the proposal is anticipated to result in noise, vibration and visual impacts to dwellings proximal to the proposal site. The severity of these impacts would increase with proximity to the proposal site and is likely to result in reduced amenity resulting in changes to people's routines and the way people use and enjoy private space.	Technical Paper 8 – Noise and vibration (construction)	Local area along proposal site Likely impact on multiple matters, i.e. health and wellbeing	Specific project phase and temporary and transient	Moderate to severe depending on proximity to proposal site	High level of value placed on noise levels from residential sensitive receivers	High level of concern from affected landowners	Way of life Health and wellbeing	Section 7.6
	The proposal's operation is anticipated to result in change in the current levels of noise and vibration. These impacts would be primarily concentrated on receivers located nearby to the proposal site.	Technical Paper 9 – Noise and vibration (operation – rail) Technical Paper 10 – Noise and Vibration (operation – non-rail)	Local area along proposal site	Isolated to when a train is using the line Permanent in nature	Moderate depending on proximity to line	High level of value placed on noise levels from residential sensitive receivers Considered adaptable to change	Moderate level of concern from affected landowners	Way of life Health and wellbeing	Section 8.6
Amenity (visual)	Construction of the proposal may result in a change from the existing visual environment for private properties and townships of Illabo, Bethungra and Stockinbingal. There may be more acute visual impacts to dwellings along the proposal site.	Technical Paper 14 – Landscape and visual	High during construction, low during operation. Local area	Temporary during construction phase	Moderate depending on proximity to proposal site	High level of importance placed on visual landscape and rural lifestyles Affected group is considered resilient yet apprehensive	High level of concern from affected landowners	Way of life Surroundings	Section 7.6
	Operation of the proposal would present a permanent change to the visual landscape for residential dwellings along the proposal site.	Technical Paper 14 – Landscape and visual	Low to medium impact depending on proximity to proposal site	Permanent during operation	Irreversible (severe) change from existing landscape	High value attributed to visual character and rural lifestyle	High level of concern from affected landowners about co-existing with a freight train line	Way of life Surroundings	Section 8.6.1
Access (access to property)	Construction and operation of the proposal may require full or partial access to private property either temporarily or permanently. A number of properties may be fully acquired and/or demolished by ARTC.	Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access	Local and isolated to properties along proposal site	Permanent during operation	Severe change from existing environment	High value attachment to residential and commercial properties Affected group is considered resilient yet apprehensive	High level of concern for affected landowners	Way of life Accessibility Health and wellbeing	Section 7.7 and 8.7
Access (utilities)	Construction of the proposal may result in the rupture of, or interference with, underground utilities and services. This disruption may be experienced by users of utilities along the proposal site.		Local and regional during construction phase	Temporary	Moderate impact for local roads	Low in terms of affecting resilience of affected parties	Medium level of concern	Way of life Accessibility	Section 7.7

Environmental matters as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Preliminary social impact	Reference technical papers in EIS	Preliminary assessment					Impact assessment areas as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Where addressed in the SIA
			Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity or importance	Level of concern/interest		
Access (road and rail network	Construction of the proposal may adversely affect traffic conditions and movements in the social locality. Increased construction vehicle movements and workforce movements may cause some traffic delays in the social locality.	Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access	Local and regional	Permanent road improvements	Moderate	High importance	High level of positive interest	Way of life Accessibility	Section 7.1.4 and 8.1.4
	Road improvements are expected to result from the construction of an overpass on Burley Griffin Way in place of level crossing. This may result in reduced travel times and improved road safety.	Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access	Community Regional	Permanent	Mild	Low	Low level of concern	Health and wellbeing Way of life Livelihoods	Section 7.1.4 and 8.1.4
	Operation of the proposal may result in a freight mode shift to rail, which would improve local road safety and efficiency.	Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access	Local	Permanent	Moderate	Low to moderate depending on proximity to proposal site	High level of concern for affected landowners	Way of life Accessibility	Section 7.1.4 and 8.1.4
Built environment	New rail infrastructure such as bridges, noise walls and barriers may impact residents' sense of place and public space enjoyment.	Technical Paper 14 – Landscape and visual	Regional	Temporary	Mild	Low	Medium level of concern for road users	Community Surroundings	Section 7.2.3 and 8.2
	Increased passenger and heavy vehicle movements resulting from workforce transportation may result in degradation to the local road network, particularly on unsealed roads.	Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access	Regional	Permanent	Severe degree of change	High level of importance	Medium level of concern	Way of life Surroundings	Section 7.1.4 and 8.1.4
Heritage (Aboriginal cultural)	Archaeological evidence found in proximity to the project area has cultural value to the local Aboriginal people, including scar trees and ring trees as tangible indicators of traditional marking of the landscape. Two scarred trees are in the vicinity of the proposal but would not be affected, though their presence conveys the significance of the landscape to the local Aboriginal people. Potential harm to these artefacts may cause partial loss of Aboriginal cultural value.	Technical Paper 7 – Aboriginal heritage	Would affect all landowners along the proposal site directly Potential to affect some more than others	Temporary with potential for permanency	High/severe degree of change from current situation	Some affected landowners are members of vulnerable groups, i.e. elderly, poor health	High level of concern	Culture	Section 7.4.1 and 8.4.1
Community (health and wellbeing)	Health and wellbeing impacts may be experienced by affected landowners, namely the anxiety associated with land acquisition and access agreements. Further cumulative stress impacts may be felt due to changes in economic livelihoods for agricultural landholdings.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Would affect all landowners along the proposal site directly Potential to affect some more than others	Temporary, construction phase	Medium to high degree of change from current situation	Some affected landowners are members of vulnerable groups, i.e. elderly, poor health	High level of concern	Health and wellbeing Way of life	Section 7.5.2, 7.7.2, 7.8 and 8.5
	Reduced amenity for residential dwellings during construction phase may cause occupants stress, anxiety and potential loss of sleep leading to potential short and long-term health implications.	Technical Paper 8 – Noise and vibration (construction) Technical Paper 13 – Landscape and visual Technical Paper 15 – Air quality	May affect each stakeholder group that has been consulted	Temporary, pre-construction phase with potential for ongoing impact as consultation continues	High degree of change from current situation	Highly consulted group is landowners, of which some are vulnerable	High level of concern	Health and wellbeing Way of life	Section 7.6 and 8.6
	Frustration and impatience due to the extensive nature of planning and consultation activities. Stress and anxiety may be caused due to staged method of communicating technical information for the proposal and what it means for each individual.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Community Region	Temporary	Mild, expected to be low level demand generated from workforce	Moderate	Low level of concern	Health and wellbeing	Section 7.8.3 and 8.8

Environmental matters as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Preliminary social impact	Reference technical papers in EIS	Preliminary assessment					Impact assessment areas as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Where addressed in the SIA
			Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity or importance	Level of concern/interest		
Community (services and facilities)	Influx of a temporary non-resident construction workforce may place additional demands on community services, such as healthcare, limiting access for existing residents in the social locality.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Community	Temporary	Moderate	Highly valued risk	Medium level of concern	Way of life Community	Section 7.3.1 and 8.3
Community (safety)	Influx of a temporary non-resident construction workforce may pose a personal safety issues relating to anti-social behaviour and affect social networks and people's sense of place.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Community	Temporary with potential for permanency	Moderate	Highly valued	Medium level of concern	Way of life Community	Section 7.2.2
Community (cohesion, capital and resilience)	Potential loss of resilience and cohesion due to land acquisition and severance. Stress and uncertainty due to land acquisition and access agreement process leading to potential tension amongst neighbouring properties. potential change to cohesion through workforce in local towns.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Community Region	Potential for permanent positive legacy	Mild	High level of importance	High level of interest	Livelihoods Community	Section 7.7.2 and 8.2.1
	Construction of the proposal may result in local training opportunities which could improve ongoing employment prospects for individuals and improved labour force market for the community and region.	Technical Paper 12 – Economic	Community	Temporary	Severe	High level of importance	High level of concern for potential pressures coupled with high level of interest and expectation of benefits for housing/accommodation market		Section 7.1.1 and 7.1.2
Community (housing)	An influx of non-resident workers during the construction phase may place additional demands on local housing and accommodation markets which may lead to competition and increased prices. This may force low-income earners out of the housing market.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Local	Temporary with potential for permanency	Severe	For some stakeholders this is high sensitivity	High level concern expressed by small number of stakeholders	Livelihoods Way of life Community	Section 7.1.3 and 8.1.3
Community (social licence to operate)	Perceived levels of trust, promise-keeping, goal alignment, information-sharing and listening have been affected during the lengthy staged consultation and design period for the proposal. These attributes make up the community's level of acceptance of ARTC, known as social licence to operate.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Local community Regional	Temporary	Severe	High level of sensitivity for affected landowners and business owners	High level of concern	Community Decision-making systems	Section 7.8 and 8.8
Economic (livelihood)	Construction of the proposal may impact the operation and viability of some agricultural properties resulting in impacts to the economic livelihoods of affected landowners.	Technical Paper 12 – Economic	Local community	Temporary	Mild	Moderate	High level of interest and expectation of direct employment benefits	Livelihoods Way of life	Section 7.7.1 and 8.7
	Ongoing economic development due to the proposal may result in long-term changes to population which could lead to impacts on social networks and community interaction.	Technical Paper 12 – Economic	Community	Temporary	Moderate	Medium	High level interest	Way of life	Section 7.2.1 and 8.2.1
	Construction of the proposal may result in local job opportunities which would contribute positively to the local economy.	Technical Paper 12 – Economic	Community Sensitive receivers with respiratory conditions	Temporary	Moderate	Medium sensitivity	Moderate level of concerns raised	Way of life	Section 7.1.1 and 8.1.1
	Perceived impacts on property may cause concern regarding future property values.	Technical Paper 13 – Landscape and visual	Community Sensitive receivers with respiratory conditions	Temporary	Moderate	Medium sensitivity	Low level of concerns raised	Livelihoods	Section 7.7 and 8.7

Environmental matters as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Preliminary social impact	Reference technical papers in EIS	Preliminary assessment					Impact assessment areas as per 2021 SIA Guideline	Where addressed in the SIA
			Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity or importance	Level of concern/interest		
	Residents across the social locality perceive there would be a strong positive economic impact from the proposal's non-resident construction workforce spending in local towns, especially for accommodation providers.	Technical Paper 11 – Social	Community Sensitive receivers with respiratory conditions	Temporary	Moderate	Medium sensitivity	Low level of concerns raised	Fears and aspirations Livelihoods	Section 7.1.1
Air (particulate matter)	Health and wellbeing impacts associated with dust generation during bulk earthworks and increased vehicle movements associated with transport of construction materials.	Technical Paper 15 – Air quality	Community Region	Temporary	Moderate	Medium to high sensitivity	Moderate level concern	Way of life Health and wellbeing	Section 7.6.3
Air (gases)	Health and wellbeing and amenity impacts associated with the operation of construction plant and equipment. Impacts to local air quality due to new train operation between Illabo and Stockinbingal. Emissions of greenhouse gases from construction energy use and embodied energy in construction materials.	Technical Paper 15 – Air quality	Local area along proposal site Likely impact on multiple matters, i.e. health and wellbeing	Specific project phase and temporary and transient	Moderate to severe depending on proximity to proposal site	High level of value placed on noise levels from residential sensitive receivers	High level of concern from affected landowners	Way of life Health and wellbeing	Section 7.6.4
Air (atmospheric emissions)	Health and wellbeing impacts operation of construction plant and equipment. Impacts to local air quality due to new train operation between Illabo and Stockinbingal.	Technical Paper 15 – Air quality	Local area along proposal site.	Isolated to when a train is using the line Permanent in nature	Moderate depending on proximity to line.	High level of value placed on noise levels from residential sensitive receivers Considered adaptable to change	Moderate level of concern from affected landowners	Way of life Health and wellbeing	Section 8.6.3
Biodiversity (native vegetation)	Potential cultural impacts and loss of environmental values due to impacts on endangered populations, threatened species and threatened ecological communities during construction within agricultural greenfield areas with scattered remnant significant vegetation.	Technical Paper 1 – Biodiversity Development Assessment Report	High during construction, low during operation. Local area.	Temporary during construction phase	Moderate depending on proximity to proposal site.	High level of importance placed on visual landscape and rural lifestyles Affected group is considered resilient yet apprehensive	High level of concern from affected landowners	Surroundings	Section 8.6.1
Biodiversity (native fauna)	Potential cultural impacts and loss of environmental values due to the removal of native fauna habitat.	Technical Paper 1 – Biodiversity Development Assessment Report	Low to medium impact depending on proximity to proposal site	Permanent during operation	Irreversible (severe) change from existing landscape.	High value attributed to visual character and rural lifestyle	High level of concern from affected landowners about co-existing with a freight train line	Surroundings	Section 7.6
Land (capability)	Transition from agricultural land to rail line.	Technical Paper 13 – Landscape and visual	Local and isolated to properties along proposal site	Permanent during operation	Severe change from existing environment	High value attachment to residential and commercial properties Affected group is considered resilient yet apprehensive	High level of concern for affected landowners	Surroundings	Section 7.7.1 and 8.7
Water (quality, availability)	Water quality impacts due to spills and erosion. Construction water supply requirements. Increase in hydrological flows from additional hard surfaces and addition of new culverts.	Technical Paper 4 – Hydrology and flooding	Local and regional during construction phase	Temporary	Moderate impact for local roads	Low in terms of affecting resilience of affected parties	Medium level of concern	Surroundings Accessibility	Section 7.6 and 8.6
Risks	Impacts on flood-prone areas from permanent infrastructure.	Technical Paper 4 – Hydrology and flooding	Local and regional	Permanent road improvements	Moderate	High importance	High level of positive interest	Livelihoods Way of life	Section 8.7

4.2 Study areas and social locality

The social locality refers to those communities that have potential to experience changes to social conditions due to the location of the proposal or proposal infrastructure, construction activities, and/or changes to local movement patterns for residents, workers and visitors. These changes could be localised such as noise, dust and visual changes or extend into the broader region such as towns that may potentially supply goods and services and labour to the proposal.

Based on further consultation conducted in 2021, refined scoping based on optimised design and the guidance provided in the 2021 SIA Guideline, the social locality for the proposal includes a local study area and a regional study area. These are defined as follows:

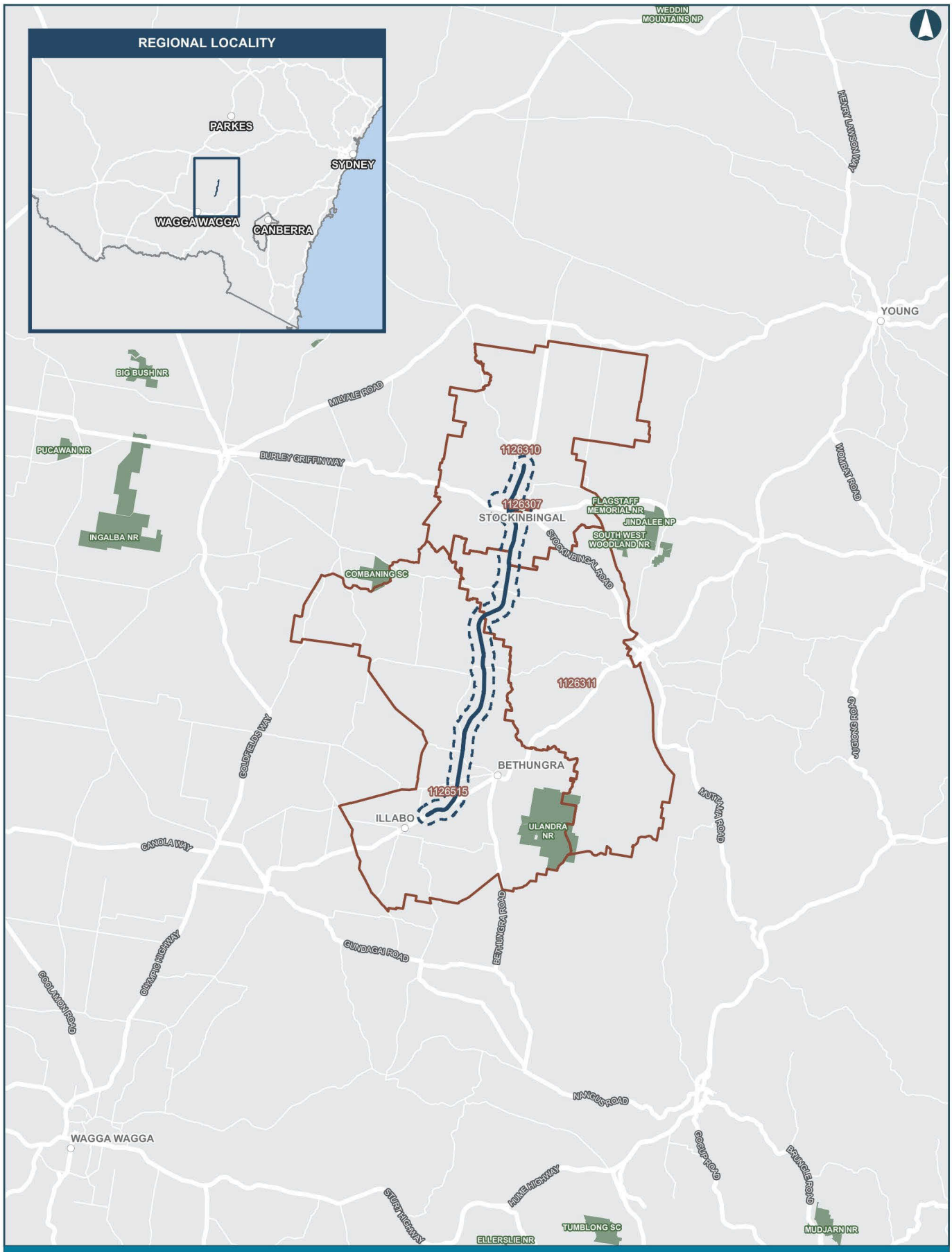
- The **local study area** is where direct social impacts up to a transformational level (defined in Table 3.2, such as noise and vibration, are anticipated to be experienced by residents. Statistical Area 1 (SA1) * units that spatially aligned with a one-kilometre buffer of the proposal site have been selected to reflect this local study area.
- The **regional study area** represents communities unlikely to experience significant direct impacts due to the proposal, however, these communities may share social and cultural links and form part of the broader labour force for the proposal. The combination of LGAs that sit within 125km of the proposal site have been selected to reflect this regional study area. As part of the regional study area:
  - **Service communities** refer to major townships within the regional study area that could service proposal related employment, workforce accommodation, leisure and wellbeing demands.

The two study areas are geographically stratified around the proposal site to form the social locality as shown in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2. The proposal site is buffered by the local study area, which is surrounded by service communities, which sit within the regional study area.

Table 4.2 Study area determination

Study area	Description
Local study area: the local study area is compiled using a set of SA1* boundaries that provide an approximation of the project area and its surrounds. Where the proposal site is located in a sparsely populated area, SA1 regions that provide a buffer to the project area of approximately 1,000m should be compiled. **SA1** (Statistical Area level 1) is the second smallest geographic area and is the smallest unit where population characteristics are available. SA1s are designed to be consistent in population size and character. They have a population range of between 200 and 800 persons, with an average population of 400 persons.	The local study area includes three small rural townships: • Illabo: a small rural township of 114 people located approximately three kilometres south west of the southern extent of the proposal site. • Stockinbingal: a township of 202 people located adjacent the proposal site. • Bethungra: a dispersed rural township of 164 people located approximately three kilometres east of the proposal site. A detailed profile of local study area communities is provided in section 6.1 using four SA1s around the proposal site. • 1126515 • 1126311 • 1126310 • 1126307. It is noted that the **proposal site** is a small area of 19 landholdings that are directly traversed or adjacent to the proposed Inland Rail corridor. The area is too small from which to obtain Census data. While key to the SIA, as it includes those landowners most directly affected, the social impact issues identified for the proposal site were obtained primarily from consultation directly with those landowners rather than quantitative data.
Regional study area: The project area will sit within a broader region. This region may be defined as an ABS structure (i.e. SA4) or it may be defined by other geographical bounds.	The regional study area has been defined as the combination of six local government areas, which are: • Hilltops Council • Temora Shire • Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council • Coolamon Shire • Junee Shire • City of Wagga Wagga Data for the regional study area was sourced using LGA statistical boundaries.

Study area	Description
Service communities Service communities are identified using Urban Centres and Localities (UCL) boundaries. **UCL** (Urban Centre and Localities) represent areas of concentrated **urban** development with populations of 200 people or more. These areas of **urban** development are primarily identified using objective dwelling and population density criteria using data from the latest Census	There are seven service communities identified for this assessment as part of the regional study area: • Young (Hilltops Shire): located 55km by road from Stockinbingal. • Temora (Temora Shire): located 34km by road from Stockinbingal. • Cootamundra (Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council): located 22.5km by road from Stockinbingal. • Gundagai (Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council): located 58km by road from Illabo. • Coolamon (Coolamon Shire): located 56km by road from Illabo. • Junee (Junee Shire): located 19km by road from Illabo. • Wagga Wagga (City of Wagga Wagga): located 56km by road from Illabo.



ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL 4.1 Local Study Area

0 1 2 3 4
km

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

Date: 8/18/2021 Paper: A3
Author: IRDJV Scale: 1:400,000

Data Sources: ARTC, NSWSS, ESRI

- Proposal site
- Proposal site - 1km buffer
- Local Study Area townships
- Urban Centre Localities
- Parks and reserves

INLAND RAIL ARTC

The Australian Government is delivering Inland Rail through the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), in partnership with the private sector.

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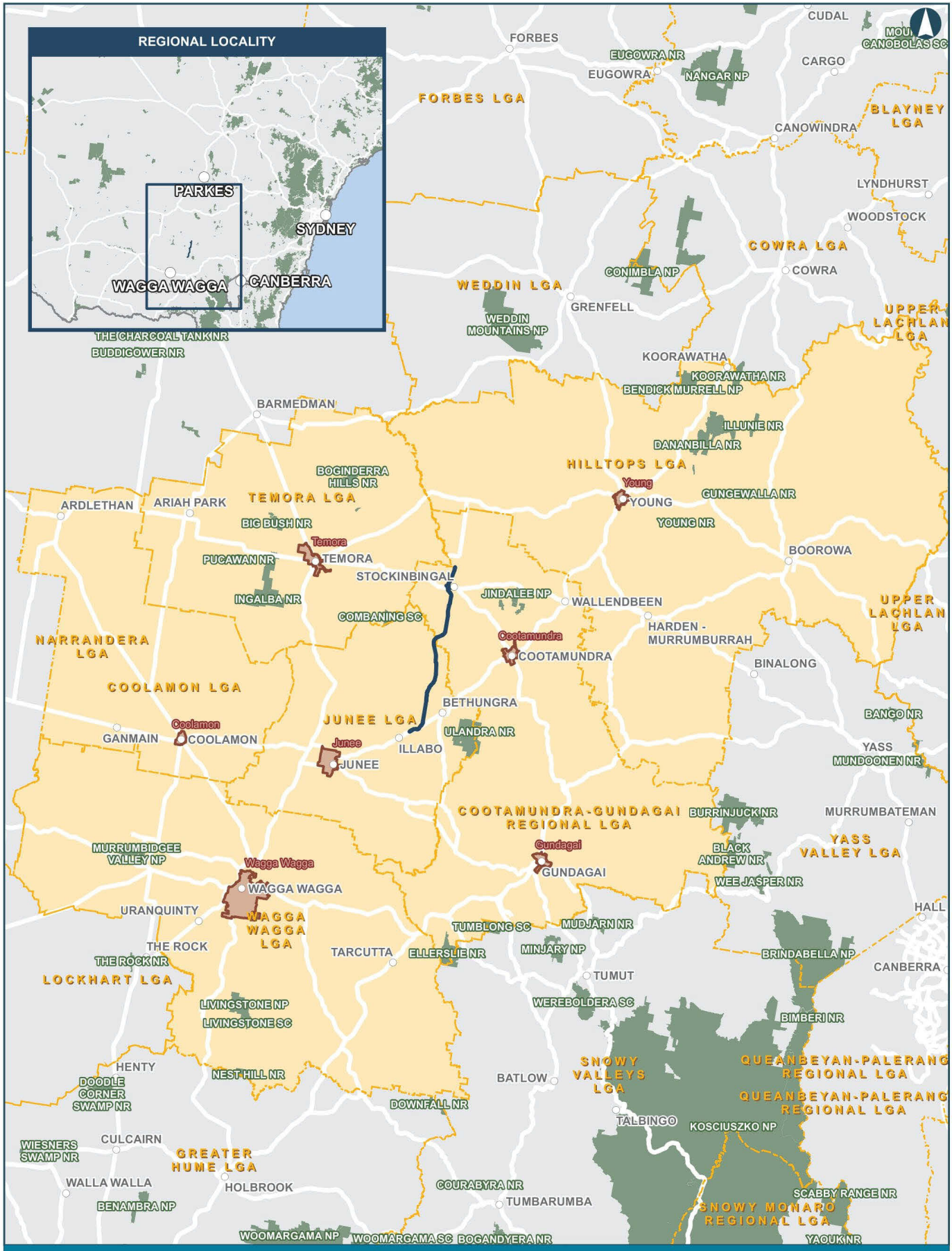

ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL 4.2 Regional Study Area and service communities

0 5 10 15 20 km

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

Date: 8/18/2021 Paper: A3

Author: IRDJV Scale: 1:8,500,000

Data Sources: ARTC, NSWSS, ESRI

Proposal site

Regional study area

Local government area

Parks and reserves

Service community - Urban Centre Localitites (UCL)

INLAND RAIL ARTC

The Australian Government is delivering Inland Rail through the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), in partnership with the private sector.

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5 Community and stakeholder consultation

This section provides a summary of the issues raised during consultation activities with community and stakeholders prior to and during preparation for the EIS and SIA for the proposal.

5.1 EIS consultation

ARTC has undertaken extensive consultation with community and stakeholders throughout the design process for the proposal between 2015 and 2021. Chapter 4 (Engagement) and Appendix C of the EIS provide details of the specific activities, stakeholders engaged, and issues raised. Additional Aboriginal consultation has been undertaken for the proposal by Technical Paper 7 – Aboriginal heritage (Technical Paper 7).

The purpose of consultation was to raise awareness about Inland Rail and the proposal, understand community and stakeholder issues, and obtain important feedback to help shape the proposal's route, design and environmental assessment.

A summary of the issues raised during EIS consultation pertinent to the assessment of social impacts is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Relevant issues raised through ARTC consultation for the EIS

Issue category	Issue raised	Where addressed in the EIS	Where addressed in the SIA
Proposal scope and route	Interest in opportunities for local connectivity, including for towns like Temora	Chapter 11 (Traffic, transport and access)	Section 7.1.4 Section 8.1.4 Section 8.1.5
Design and features of the proposal	Interest in whether the current design takes into account future traffic conditions	Chapter 11 (Traffic, transport and access)	Section 7.1.4 Section 8.1.4 Section 9.2.3
	Concerns about level crossing design and safety	Chapter 25 (Health & safety)	Section 7.1.4 Section 7.7 Section 8.1.4 Section 8.6
Consultation	Queries about consultation undertaken	Chapter 4 (Engagement) Appendix C	Section 5.1
	Queries about who to contact if there is property damage during construction		Appendix D.5
Construction impacts	Where will accommodation for construction workers be provided?	Chapter 17 (Social and economic) Appendix I	Section 7.1.3 Section 8.1.3
Operation of the proposal	How many trains per day?	Chapter 27 (Approach to environmental management and mitigation)	Section 1.2.2
	Will there be a regular timetable for trains?		Appendix D.5
Traffic, transport and access	Property access impacts	Chapter 11 (Traffic, transport and access)	Section 7.7.2 Section 8.7
	Construction traffic management, including access to the rail corridor		Section 7.1.4

Issue category	Issue raised	Where addressed in the EIS	Where addressed in the SIA
	Construction traffic damage to roads		Section 7.1.4
	Access for emergency vehicles across the rail corridor		Section 7.3.2 Section 8.3
	Impacts on heavy vehicle movements particularly during peak harvest times		Section 8.1.5
	Safety impacts associated with proposal and motorists and heavy vehicle movements over the rail alignment		Section 7.1.4 Section 8.1.5
Noise and vibration	Construction noise and vibration	Chapter 16 (Noise and vibration)	Section 7.6.3
	Operation noise and vibration		Section 8.6.2
Air quality	Construction air quality impacts	Chapter 24 (Air quality)	Section 7.6.4
Land use, property and agriculture	Impacts on private infrastructure, e.g. dams and shearing sheds	Chapter 18 (Land use and property)	Section 7.7.1
	Impacts on farming operations during construction and operation in relation to severance and viability of ongoing enterprise due to loss of productive area and connectivity		Section 7.7.1 Section 8.7
	Impacts on stock movements across the rail corridor and suitability of size of crossings		Section 7.7.2
	Impacts on, and access to, travelling stock reserves		Section 7.7.2
	Possible impacts from lack of access and moving stock/machinery on local roads.		Section 7.7.2
	Impacts on landowners associated with the property acquisition process including compensation		Section 7.7.2
	Impacts on biosecurity from use of shared public level crossings		Section 7.7.2 Section 7.7
Flooding	Impact of flooding on construction and operation Flooding impacts of proposal on farmer accessibility	Chapter 12 (Hydrology and flooding)	Section 7.7.1 Section 8.3
Visual	Light impacts from night-time train operations	Chapter 19 (Landscape and visual impacts)	Section 7.6.2 Section 8.6.1
	Impacts to views from houses and public viewpoints		Section 7.6.2 Section 8.6.1
	Visual impacts during operation, and the need to consider mitigation strategies, such as tree screening		Section 8.6.1 Appendix D.4
Heritage and cultural impacts	Impacts on culturally important locations to be assessed. This includes potential sites of significance along the alignment, and destruction of culturally significant vegetation providing natural remedies and food sources to the local people	Chapter 15 (Cultural heritage)	Section 7.4 Section 8.4

Issue category	Issue raised	Where addressed in the EIS	Where addressed in the SIA
Socio-economic/ safety impacts	Health and wellbeing impacts associated with the property acquisition process including compensation	Chapter 17 (Social and economic)	Section 7.5.2 Section 7.7.2 Section 8.7
	Potential benefits of the wider Inland Rail project, including increased opportunities for education, employment and vocational training; increased modal competition between road and rail; improved road safety and community amenity	Chapter 17 (Social and economic)	Section 7.1 Section 8.1
	Adverse health and wellbeing impacts associated with land severance, possible economic loss of farming operations	Chapter 17 (Social and economic)	Section 7.5.1 Section 7.5.2 Section 8.7
	Impacts on safety and the need for rail safety education	Chapter 17 (Social and economic)	Section 8.5
	Adverse health and wellbeing impacts associated with amenity impacts to residential receivers near the proposal	Chapter 17 (Social and economic)	Section 7.6 Section 8.5 Section 8.6
	Effects on community cohesion, which may include severance between properties, disruption to movements across the rail corridor, disruption to families' links to land and local communities	Chapter 17 (Social and economic)	Section 7.2 Section 8.2
Bushfire	Access across rail corridor for bushfire management and emergency services	Chapter 25 (Health and safety)	Section 7.3.2

5.2 SIA-specific consultation

Social impact assessment requires input from the affected community and stakeholders. It ensures participation of affected parties has been considered and included in the assessment. It acts to supplement the quantitative data and desktop research. Community and stakeholder consultation is key to developing an in-depth understanding of the existing social setting, to identify impacts and to develop mitigation measures.

Targeted consultation activities relating to this SIA were carried out during initial development in June-July 2019, and again in February-April 2021 as the design of the proposal was developed but prior to the inclusion of a workforce accommodation camp as part of the proposal description. The section below summarises key community and stakeholder feedback as a result of SIA consultation. A stakeholder list showing SIA engagement is included in Appendix B and Appendix C of the EIS.

As noted in section 3.2.3 IRDJV acknowledges the importance of currency in primary data collection however, it was not considered fair to the 2019 round of respondents to disregard their feedback in favour of the 2021 input. As such the SIA has prioritised the most recent feedback received and has drawn upon the 2019 feedback where it remained relevant to the assessment.

The SIA engagement process sought to involve affected parties, including affected landowners, community and business representatives, government representatives. The process sought to include more vulnerable members of the community which in this context includes, as per the baseline, elderly people, those with poor health or disabilities, Indigenous people, women and people under 25 years old, those from a lower socio-economic background, unemployed people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

It is acknowledged that reaching vulnerable groups can be difficult as part of broad community engagement activities. Community groups, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and education and health services interact with these community members and engaging such groups and services interact is a way to reach vulnerable people.

Some of the specific engagement activities that targeted vulnerable groups included:

- consultation with Riding for the Disabled Association
- consultation with Junee Senior Citizens Club
- consultation with Temora Shire Council's Youth Development Manager and Community Development
- health services including Temora Youth Officer
- schools and childcare to discuss families and children/youth
- Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) and Indigenous groups.

Table 5.2 Summary table of SIA-specific consultation between 2019 and 2021

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders consulted	Overview of consultation activities
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) (2019–2021) February 2019 August 2019 November 2019 May 2020 August 2020 November 2020 February 2021 June 2021	CCC members	Detailed presentations were given to the CCC during each stage of the proposal design by specialists and representatives of the IRDJV and ARTC. Eight CCCs have been held since 2019. A hard copy survey was provided to the CCC in February 2021 for the purpose of gathering SIA-specific feedback how their communities expect to experience the proposal.
Broader community (2019–2021)	Stockinbingal community Illabo community Bethungra community Cootamundra community Temora community Junee community	Hard copy surveys were completed at community drop-in sessions held in Stockinbingal and Illabo in 2021. Five online drop-in sessions were held with 14 attendees. Additional community drop-in sessions have been held in Illabo, Temora, Bethungra, Cootamundra, Junee and Stockinbingal.
Community groups (2019)	Cootamundra Arts Centre Development Corporation Riding for the Disabled Association (Cootamundra) Cootamundra Development Corporation Junee Senior Citizens Club	Face to face and online engagement was undertaken with community groups in 2019 to gain their perspectives of the proposal's potential to impact on their community and to gather a snapshot of community values.
Business chambers (2019–2021)	Temora Business Enterprise Group	Face to face meeting was held in July 2019 and online response to SIA questions received in 2021.
Affected landowners (2021)		A range of engagement options were offered to affected landowners during the 2021 consultation period. Landowners had been heavily consulted on a range of technical aspects of the proposal before the SIA consultation commenced. A mix of face-to-face meetings, email responses and telephone calls were completed with four landowners.

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders consulted	Overview of consultation activities
Local government (2019–21)	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council* (Community and Culture Manager, Manager of Planning, Building and Compliance) Temora Shire Council* (Youth Development Manager, Economic Development Manager, Community Development) Junee Shire Council* (Planning and Community Development)	Councils have been consulted throughout development of the EIS. Specific SIA consultation was completed with each council both in 2019 and 2021. A mix of telephone calls, email responses and telephone calls were completed. Specific topics addressed for the SIA were the potential impacts on housing and accommodation, community cohesion from the construction workforce, and demands on social infrastructure and services.
Health and community services and organisations (2019–21)	Junee Multipurpose Service (hospital) Nutrien Cootamundra (formerly Landmark)* Pinnacle Community Services Temora Youth Officer	The following service providers were engaged during preparation of the SIA to gain their perspectives on how the proposal might impact on their services. A mix of telephone calls and email responses were used in the 2021 round of consultation. A combination of online survey, face-to-face meetings and telephone calls were used in 2019 to engage with all service providers.
Short-term accommodation providers and tourism operators (2019–21)	The Albion Hotel (Cootamundra)* The Crossing Motel Junee* The Rusty Table (Cootamundra) Skylodge Temora* Southern Comfort Motor Inn (Cootamundra) Southern Cross Motel Red Steer Hotel (Wagga) Mantra Pavillion Hotel (Wagga) Poets Recall Motel (Gundagai) Quest Wagga Wagga* Junee Hotel Gundagai Motel Criterion Hotel (Gundagai) Cootamundra Garden Motel* Cootamundra Heritage Motel* Central Hotel (Cootamundra) Junee Tourist Park Gundagai Tourist Park	Accommodation providers and real estate agents were specifically engaged in relation to potential impacts on the housing and accommodation market across the social locality. 18 surveys were completed with accommodation providers across Cootamundra, Junee, Wagga Wagga, Gundagai and Temora.
Real estate (2019–21)	Ron Loiterton Real Estate (Cootamundra)* QPL Rural Temora* LJ Hooker Wagga Wagga Raine&Horne Wagga Wagga* RE/MAX Elite (Wagga Wagga) Miller & James Real Estate (Temora) Gundagai Real Estate Elders Cootamundra Elders Gundagai	9 surveys were completed by real estate agents across Cootamundra, Wagga Wagga, Gundagai and Temora.
Schools and childcare (2019–21)	Temora High School South West Regional Family Day Care Goodstart Early Learning Cootamundra EA Southee Primary School	4 surveys were completed by representatives from schools and childcare across the local study area.

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders consulted	Overview of consultation activities
Police and emergency services management (2019–21)	Temora RFS Temora Shire Local Emergency Management Committee Wagga Wagga NSW RFS Stockinbingal RFS Riverina Police SES Gundagai NSW Fire & Rescue – Junee Junee Police Cootamundra RFS	9 surveys were completed by representatives from policy and emergency management.
Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) and Indigenous groups	Young LALC Wagga Wagga LALC Mawang Galway Elders Group - Riverina	SIA questions were provided to Young LALC, Wagga Wagga LALC, and the Mawang Galway Elders Group by ARTC on behalf of IRDJV. A written response was received from Young LALC in response to SIA-specific questions relating to the Wiradjuri people and how they would experience potential impacts of the proposal. A representative of the Mawang Galway Elders Group in the Riverina provided a written response to SIA-specific questions. Despite best efforts, no response was received from Wagga Wagga LALC.

*These respondents were engaged in both 2019 and 2021 rounds of consultation.

5.2.1 SIA Consultation – February-April 2021

While recognising the community and stakeholder engagement already undertaken for the proposal since 2015, and in particular the consultation carried out for the SIA in 2019, re-engagement with local stakeholders and communities was also necessary due to the likely shifts in people's wellbeing, livelihoods, fears and aspirations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and other major events. Further development of the proposal design was also noted during consultation activities.

This phase of SIA consultation focused on interviews with targeted stakeholders, and some hard-copy surveys to capture the feedback of the CCC and the broader community. Identified stakeholders and survey questions are included in Appendix B.

Each meeting provided an overview of what an SIA is and how their feedback would contribute to the overall assessment and project. For stakeholders who had previously been engaged for the SIA in 2019, their previous feedback was acknowledged, and a brief project update was provided to explain the need to meet again and discuss any changes in their response.

5.2.1.1 Consultation findings

Community Consultative Committee

The purpose of the Illabo to Stockinbingal CCC is to provide a forum for the discussion between the proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to the proposal. The CCC is also a forum for the public to gain an understanding of the project and source information and is an effective channel for stakeholders to communicate their views, issues and concerns.

The Illabo to Stockinbingal CCC has 14 members in addition to its Independent Chair. The CCC represents the areas of Illabo, Junee, Cootamundra and Stockinbingal. Members are representatives from Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Junee Shire Regional Council, NSW Farmers and the townships of Stockinbingal and Cootamundra. CCC meetings are also attended by representatives from the ARTC Stakeholder Engagement and Environment teams.

The following issues were raised during CCC meetings held between 2019 and 2021. These issues are presented in aggregate form and have informed the social impact assessment:

- Representatives at the CCC raised the ongoing concern and questions in relation to landowner compensation and the negotiation process. A query was raised as to whether landowners could seek funding independent of ARTC to assist with the land acquisition process. A separate information landowner forum was held at the conclusion of the February 2021 CCC meeting. This issue relates to the level of inclusiveness in decision-making on matters that affect landowners. If decision-making and transparency are doubted, trust in delivery the project would be affected.
- The proposal may present opportunities for growth of local business who could be involved in the supply chain process. The requirement for the principal contractor to prioritise local content was understood by the CCC. This issue relates to the potential uplift in socio-economic wellbeing for members of communities across the social locality. There is a perceived positive economic impact expected to occur.
- The mental health of landowners in relation to coping with the Inland Rail project was raised in multiple CCCs. ARTC raised providing support to Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network for their activities in providing mental health support for those affected members of the community. CCC members were offered online training to upskill the community on mental health issues in August 2020. Mental health issues were discussed as being difficult to baseline, rather a monitoring and assessment was the best method for to ensure adequate measures are in place. Mental health issues can be cumulative in nature and can last for a significant period of time. The ability for the community to raise wellbeing concerns if they felt they were not being managed adequately was raised in the CCC.
- Areas of doubt surfaced amongst some members of the communities represented by the CCC. These areas included the arguments presented in the business case justifying the money spent on Inland Rail versus other priorities such as water, the suitable timing of holding the land acquisition process negotiations at the same time as lodgement of the EIS in the second half of 2021, and whether the outcomes of the Senate Inquiry into delivery of the Inland Rail would affect the project going ahead at all.
- There were issues raised in relation to public safety concerns at level crossings at Stockinbingal and whether adequate measures would be put in place to address these concerns. Bushfire management during operation of the proposal was also raised, linked to public safety concerns.
- Amenity concerns regarding noise and vibration caused during construction and operation and the visual impacts during operation of the proposal were raised in CCC meetings. Tree planting was raised as a suggested mitigation measure to address noise impacts in Stockinbingal.
- The land use impacts were considered of high concern by representatives in CCC meetings. These impacts included land severance, moving livestock across the alignment and level crossings, the location of potential track crossings and/or underpasses for stock and machinery, isolating small parcels leading to reduced farming practices, farm infrastructure, operations and agribusiness impacts. Impacts on property prices as a result of the proposal were of concern.

- Flooding and hydrology impacts were discussed during CCC meetings.
- Access for emergency service vehicles around the proposal site, in particular for fighting bushfires during construction of the proposal was considered highly important. Access and mobility would also be affected if roads were damaged by construction vehicle movements.
- The potential threat to biodiversity caused by the proposal in particular, on already threatened flora and fauna species such as the Superb Parrot.
- The June 2021 CCC raised issues around whether the principal contractor would have the right local knowledge to work with local rural conditions and school bus times. Questions were raised as to whether contractors would work on days of high fire danger.
- Landowner feedback provided in the June 2021 CCC meeting was positive toward the level of information provided by ARTC, noting there were still some outstanding issues such as operational noise on livestock and the visual impact during construction.
- Specific property impacts were raised in the June 2021 CCC, ARTC advised the Committee that the land acquisition process would commence in the second half of 2021 and will run for 18 months. A personal manager from ARTC would be included in the process for each landowner.
- The many changes made since the 70% reference design were discussed in the June 2021 CCC meeting. Specifically, details were provided on the public level crossings and the relocation of the Rail Maintenance Access Road (RMAR) in response to Rural Fire Service (RFS) requirements. Committee members also raised questions in relation to stop signs and speed limits.

Broader community

Consultation with the broader community relied upon people to opt-in to participate in hard copy surveys and a mix of face-to-face and online drop-in sessions. Issues raised by the broader community included:

- land access, severance or of productive land and disturbance to grazing stock
- property acquisition and adequacy of compensation
- noise and dust pollution during operation of the proposal
- changes to the visual landscape during construction and operation
- flood risk and water diversion caused by the proposal
- changes and impacts to traffic flows through local towns, potential for disruptive road works during construction of the proposal
- expectation of positive business impacts including short-term stimulus from construction labour, services and materials
- the positive impacts of seeing more people in town which may lead to new buildings.

Affected landowners

Affected landowners along the proposal site have taken part in extensive consultation since as early as 2015. Consultation has historically been targeted toward technical aspects of the design development such as flooding and hydrology modelling. After the optimisation of the proposal design in 2020, the five most affected landowners of the total 19 landowners took part in further targeted consultation in July 2020. Feedback related primarily to the topics of access and compensation when selecting between alternate alignment options.

During preparation of the SIA in 2021, targeted questions were developed to obtain feedback on how landowners were currently experiencing the project, and how they expect to experience it in the future. Allowing for the sensitivities in individual landowner situations of three landowners, 16 of the 19 directly affected landowners were invited to respond to the SIA questions. Of the 16 landowners invited to respond to the survey, four surveys were completed either face-to-face with a member of the ARTC stakeholder engagement team, in written response to an email or via a telephone interview with the SIA team.

Most landowners were generally not opposed to the project; however, they would like it to progress with as minimal impact as possible. A summary of key issues raised is provided below:

- impact of increased traffic with more people moving around the area
- property impacts and loss of land that provides feed and water supply to livestock
- land access provisions to continue farming operations
- financial impact in relation to land and business values and reduced livestock production outputs
- access and movement in relation to stock and machinery
- vibration from an increase in number of trains passing by
- noise disturbance due to the length of the trains, with many noting 'we came here for the peace and quiet'
- biosecurity and weed threats were of high concern
- impacts on livestock movement.

Landowners were asked specifically about the land access agreement experience. While the experience was considered 'fine' for one landowner, one other reported it as being unsatisfactory.

Noting the low response rate, when asked if landowners felt they had been listened to and had a say in decisions that would affect them, one landowner believed that the process had been fair despite the adverse impacts expected to occur in some cases. Another landowner felt they had been consulted but it was too early to know if their feedback had been listened to. One landowner did not feel they had a say in decisions. One landowner believed the consultation process was beneficial and they had built a trusted relationship with the ARTC stakeholder engagement team.

When asked what could be done to improve their experience, one landowner noted that more upfront and complete information earlier in the process would have been beneficial. There was still important information on access agreements not received at the time of interview. Regarding preliminary mitigation suggestions, two landowners raised the issue of maintaining access to the other side of the line during construction of the proposal. They desired further consultation in relation to important decisions and design information.

Real estate agents

The following feedback was gained through consultation with real estate agents in Cootamundra, Temora, Gundagai and Wagga Wagga in 2021:

- Overall real estate agents are seeing more people moving from the cities to regional towns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Short-term impacts on the housing market are expected as a result of the proposal. Housing stock for rental and purchase is currently under-supplied with occupancy rates as high as 80 per cent in Wagga Wagga and 90 per cent in Cootamundra.
- There is a very high demand for rental properties in Wagga Wagga, Young, Gundagai, Cootamundra, Junee and Temora with a significant shortage on available stock of rental properties. One agent attributed this to the influx of new industry in the area requiring housing stock for their workforces. Cootamundra is already hosting a number of Fly in-Fly out (FIFO) workforces as well as longer-term workers in housing.
- There is very little available stock in Stockinbingal or Illabo.
- Agents in Temora seeing rental properties being converted into short-term accommodation, Cootamundra is starting to see AirBnB's emerge as expectations of incoming workforce for projects like Inland Rail.
- There is higher demand for houses in the $200–$300k range which are being turned into rental properties.
- There is concern that project construction workforce would be able to pay more for rentals which would force locals out of the market. This was thought to have already occurred in Cootamundra in October and November 2020 when the housing market started to accelerate.
- There is strong interest from investors looking to buy property in regional areas.

Short-term accommodation providers

The following issues were raised during consultation with short-term accommodation providers in 2021:

- Overall accommodation providers experienced a short-term downturn during the first part of 2020, however they are currently experiencing strong occupancy rates in each of the townships in the social locality.
- Accommodation providers in the area rely on a mixture of corporate, tourists and families. There are more local tourists at the moment so many providers have had low vacancy rates.
- Other major industry coming into the region has workforces that require accommodation which is contributing to new corporate contracts guaranteeing income over low periods.
- Most providers were familiar with accommodating temporary workforces of varying sizes and for varying time periods. However, not all providers were set up to accommodate workers as well as other, as some rooms only had basic facilities. The larger hotel chains such as Quest were able to provide the facilities required for construction workforces.
- Sporting events and local events and festivals were reported to bring in tourists and numbers to the local areas. These did not seem to be affected by COVID-19 as much as they were in the early months of 2020.
- There is a willingness across all accommodation providers to work with Inland Rail in regard to pre-planning for accommodation requirements. They are able to work with each other to spread the demand around a number of nearby hotels.

Business chamber

The Temora Business Enterprise Group reported minimal adverse impacts on the business community from COVID-19 matched by a strong agricultural season feeding economic benefits through the area. They had previously reported that they expected growth in local businesses during the construction period but were not expecting long-term benefits in the form of jobs. Construction related benefits in the short-term for the business community were expected to be trades-related, accommodation, food and beverage, taxi and laundry services. The downside of the construction phase of the proposal was that people may potentially over-invest in preparing for construction but would not realise the long-term benefits. Deflation of the local economy could leave businesses exposed, which could have flow-on effects for consumer confidence in business, sentiment and real estate.

Previous consultation undertaken with the Junee Business and Trades Association highlighted the economic opportunities from the project and how Inland Rail would work closely with the local business industry.

Local government

In general, local government representatives reported a number of changes in their community since last being consulted for the proposal in 2019. Notable changes brought about due to the COVID-19 pandemic included the significant tourism losses, lost revenue from temporary closures of council-run facilities, a trend toward in-home services and people working from home. Stimulus packages for new building works and the increase in people moving to regional NSW has created a strong increase in development applications. This has caused pressure on local rental and permanent accommodation in the region (raised by Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA) while people wait for new land packages to be released.

Regarding community perceptions of Inland Rail, some frustration was reported in relation to the pause on community consultation while the proposal design was optimised however, some consultation fatigue is evident. There was also feedback from the community to local government that their feedback was not being heard (JSC).

The region experienced a high agricultural yield in 2020 which has led to positive economic impacts on local businesses and the housing market. The business investment pipeline was not impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic, likewise local businesses benefited from people shopping locally rather than travelling to Wagga Wagga. There is a continued focus on economic development and growth in the region, including providing opportunities for upskilling the local employment market and sourcing opportunities for them. Temora Shire Council reported more young people staying in the area, taking up the Jobkeeper payment and apprenticeship placements. Job advertisements have tripled, leading to a strong employment rate amongst skilled and unskilled workers.

The following issues and themes were raised by local government representatives from Temora Shire Council, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and Junee Shire Council consulted during preparation of the SIA:

- Impacts on local housing and accommodation market as a result of the temporary construction workforce requiring accommodation options across the townships in the social locality. Cootamundra-Gundagai Council reported very limited capacity in both the rental and short-term accommodation markets.
- Councils noted the presence of other projects in the area that require workforce accommodation, i.e. the Cootamundra Abattoir.
- The impacts on affected landowners and farming operational activities being maintained or restricted from land acquisition and severance.
- Effects on local social infrastructure with health care viewed as limited in Temora but well serviced in Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA.
- Long-term community benefits through funding opportunities.
- Opportunity for upskilling the local employment market, including apprentices, and keeping those skilled workers in the community.
- Influx of temporary workforce may have negative impact on lower socio-economic areas of Stockinbingal and Temora and the feeling of being ‘overrun’ with people from out of town and a potential threat to social cohesion in smaller townships.
- Potential for positive impacts from the influx of a temporary workforce on social cohesion and social inclusion opportunities, a preference to shift away from FIFO, want more families to move to the area.
- The change to the quiet rural lifestyle may be a concern for local communities in the region, particularly during construction of the proposal.
- Construction traffic management on local roads, would need the contractor to implement detour routes, management of road closures.
- Road safety around level crossings as well as farmers using crossings to move stock between properties. Worker fatigue leading to road safety for the public and queries on how shift work would be managed with recommendation to bus workers to the site to mitigate these risks.
- Opportunities for noise barriers to be used for outdoor art.

Local Aboriginal Lands Councils and Indigenous groups

The Young LALC reported the following relevant points during consultation for the SIA:

- The community is very close-knit and values the betterment of its people and culture.
- Services provided by the Young LALC are housing, employment (where possible), training, education and a support network.
- The LALC prioritises the protection of Aboriginal culture and heritage, employment for young people and teaching both young and old about local Indigenous culture.
- The LALC also prioritises issues of land claims, Crown Lands and passing down knowledge to the young and upcoming leaders.

- Positive social impacts would come in the form of employment opportunities for Indigenous people and for the appropriate Wiradjuri signage to be introduced in sites of cultural significance in the local study area to educate Indigenous and non-Indigenous people about the Wiradjuri history, people and culture.

The Mawang Galway Elders Group discussed the following key issues in response to SIA-specific questions:

- The community is diverse and complex due in part to the historical resettlement of families from around the region to Wagga Wagga.
- There is a significant Indigenous population in and around Wagga Wagga with very strong Wiradjuri cultural values.
- Services provided by the Mawang Galway Elders Group are labour hire, Indigenous employment and targeted training.
- Key vulnerabilities within the community include residential overcrowding, lack of education amongst youth, unemployment barriers, limited transport and travel services, and the lack of targeted training.
- The Mawang Galway Elders Group prioritise Indigenous employment, the development of Reconciliation Action Plans, community engagement, and supporting Indigenous employment and training targets for large scale projects.
- The Mawang Galway Elders Group also prioritise local Indigenous employment and support programs as a part of the Inland Rail project, with the suggestion of a 20% Indigenous workforce and contractor target.
- Identified sites with associated cultural significance near or within the project alignment include ‘Bomen’, ‘Bethungra’, and ‘the Rock’.

Despite best efforts the Wagga Wagga LALC did not provide feedback on the SIA-specific questions provided in July 2021. ARTC did, however, meet with Wagga Wagga LALC in December 2021 to provide an update on the I2S project, an update on the EIS and timings, cultural heritage investigations, employment and training (refer to Appendix C of the EIS).

Further consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) and Young LALC was undertaken for the workforce accommodation camp assessment (Appendix I of the EIS).

5.2.2 SIA Consultation – June-July 2019

Targeted surveys were conducted across the townships of Junee, Cootamundra, Temora, Gundagai, and Stockinbingal. Surveys were tailored for community groups, service providers, accommodation providers, and real estate agents. Survey questions are provided in Appendix B.

Participants were asked a set of core questions to gain a collective impression about the current social environment, perception and community values, perceived impacts of the proposal, and how impacts might be managed. The core questions help anticipate community response to construction and operation of the proposal and allow recommendations for mitigation measures to be proposed. The following provides a summary of information provided by community groups, service providers, accommodation providers and real estate agents.

It should be noted that during the June-July 2019 SIA consultation, a survey was created for directly impacted landowners to be completed face to face. However, due to the sensitive nature of discussions at the time of survey release, ARTC made the survey available online and optional for landowners to complete. As a result, only three surveys were completed.

5.2.2.1 Community groups

In 2019, the local community groups recognised the immediate impact the proposal would have on agricultural properties, however, they also welcomed the potential opportunity the proposal offers to boost the economy in the social locality during the construction and operation periods. Additional to economic benefits, community groups generally felt that removing trucks from the region’s roads to be a long-term

benefit for the region. It was recognised that this may not materialise as a local benefit, but would be experienced on major highways, i.e. the Newell Highway. Concern was noted that the proposal may not benefit the smaller communities or if the majority of the benefit would be experienced in Wagga.

Community groups acknowledged that the hospitality sector, primarily accommodation and catering services, had the most to gain from the construction period. Ideally, they would like to see some long-term benefit in the shape of apprenticeships, traineeships and upskilling of local youth. Upskilling of some of the region's young people would, hopefully, address the challenges of unemployment and the declining youth demographic.

Community groups anticipated that the predicted economic injection that the construction phase would bring, would ensure the survival of the existing, and highly valued, local services, and potentially help re-establish lost or declining services.

Respondents highlighted the importance of ongoing communication with the community so that feedback can help create an integrated response to impacts and maximise the community benefits.

5.2.2.2 Service providers

Service providers returned the greatest number of surveys, with six completed in Cootamundra (including Stockinbingal) and five completed in both Temora and Junee.

The service providers across the social locality noted concern about the ageing population, with greatly reduced retention of local youth. Young people and the elderly are highly valued in the community and providing consistent and adequate opportunities and support for these groups was raised as an ongoing challenge. The commitment and importance of volunteers was another common theme as their contribution is perceived as maintaining various services and activating new initiatives, despite reduced volunteer numbers adding pressure to their service offering.

Service providers highlighted the proposal as a positive development. Over 50 per cent of responses specifically provided comment which aligned with, "if it gets trucks off the road it is a good thing." Respondents noted they were optimistic about the number of local jobs that would be generated from construction. For the operational period the benefit was seen to be smaller in terms of permanent jobs, however, several respondents highlighted there is an opportunity for the freight industry around the Stockinbingal interchange.

The effect of the drought on individual and community wellbeing was a common theme raised by service providers in 2019. There is a clear expectation that construction would alleviate some of the stress of the drought. Other issues, such as the doctor shortage, especially in Temora and Junee, and mental health services, are unlikely to improve because of the proposal.

Education providers noted their students to gain knowledge about other industries open to them for employment. However, the potential for students to leave education early to take up construction employment was raised.

When asked about the challenges and opportunities of both the construction and operational phases of the Inland Rail Project, RFS and NSW Fire and Rescue identified challenges to the services they provide. The key identified risks included construction activities, such as welding, inadvertently causing fires and the ability for services to attend to call-outs should their access be inhibited as a result of construction work or operations. To ensure optimum outcomes, both service providers are keen to establish open communication and a working relationship with ARTC throughout construction and operation.

A strong engagement and communication program prior to and throughout construction was raised as paramount to communities maximising economic benefit from the Proposal. In general, most service providers were open to establishing a collaborative relationship for the mutual benefit of the Proposal and the social locality communities.

5.2.2.3 Accommodation providers

Over 50 per cent of accommodation providers surveyed in 2019 as part of the SIA stakeholder consultation noted that people stay for business reasons. Most stays are for short-term and participants noted that the reasons people stay are for Inland Rail and tradespeople associated with the national broadband network (NBN). It was also highlighted that people stay in the area on overnight stays because the proposal is halfway between Sydney and Melbourne. Accommodation providers also generally provided breakfast, while others also provided restaurants. Apartment style accommodation was available at one facility and one provider offered onsite and offsite catering.

Over a quarter of accommodation providers outlined that May was the busiest time of year, and September was selected as the busiest time by 20 per cent of the accommodation providers. The times of year with the highest vacancy rates were January and June, which is potentially being linked to mid-summer and mid-winter.

Several festivals are held each year (further detailed in Appendix A) and accommodation availability is very low during these periods. One real estate agent noted that those unable to obtain accommodation in Temora during peak periods often found accommodation in nearby West Wyalong or Wagga Wagga with their relatively high number of hotels.

5.2.2.4 Real estate agents

Ten real estate agents across the study area participated in an online survey specific to the local rental and housing market.

In 2021 real estate agents reported very little capacity to accommodate a construction workforce (of up to 300 people). If this temporary population moved into the area and sought rental accommodation, all participants noted the increase in rental demand would put pressure on the local market, increasing pricing in the area. Due to local events in the town, in 2019 Temora was considered most well placed to cater to an increase in any short-term accommodation needs.. This sentiment changed over time and in 2021 real estate agents reported very little capacity for the construction workforce in the local area.

5.2.3 Broader community in 2018

Five drop-in sessions were held across the social locality in 2018. Key issues raised are provided in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Community feedback provided during October 2018 drop-in sessions

Engagement activity	Feedback
Drop-in session 1: Illabo	As residents within the local study area, attendees from Illabo indicated that the following areas would be of interest: • the proposal's benefits to the region • impact to farmland • noise impacts • impact to township • flooding impacts • impacts to flora and fauna • visual impacts; and • Aboriginal heritage. Landowners from Bethungra expressed concerns about the impact that a rail line will have on the value of their lifestyle property, including noise and visual amenity impacts. A representative from NSW Farmers Association requested to have the proposal in a tunnel through the Bethungra range and recommended Inland Rail work with Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) and build a bridge over Olympic Highway to remove the level crossing near Illabo (associated with the Albury to Illabo section of the Inland Rail program).

Engagement activity	Feedback
Drop-in session 2: Bethungra	Some attendees expressed concerns about impacts to farms including, stock movements, hydrology, property severance and a level crossing on Old Sydney Road. Other attendees were concerned about biosecurity during construction and management and mitigation of weeds spread. Other concerns shared by some attendees included: increased dust, noise and vibration due to increased rail traffic on the line and erosion on the ballast and the junction.
Drop-in session 3: Stockinbingal	Attendees expressed overwhelming preference for the road-over-rail concept for Burley Griffin Way at Stockinbingal, for the new Inland Rail route to connect into the existing Forbes rail line. This is due to a variety of reasons including safety for the freight trains, improved traffic conditions and safety due from the removal of the level crossing at Burley Griffin Way to the east of junction of CRN/Forbes line, less visual impact, and perceived savings in comparison with the rail-over-road option. Attendees expressed concern about the size of the structure and the visual and noise impacts associated with the rail-over-road option.
Drop-in session 4: Cootamundra	Attendees also shared their preference for the road-over-rail concept for Burley Griffin Way at Stockinbingal. There is a community perception that rail needs to be focused on in Australia, as there is too much reliance on trucks. Rail will be cheaper, safer and provide local opportunities.
Drop-in session 5: Temora	There was support for the road-over-rail concept for Burley Griffin Way at Stockinbingal to provide greater rail route flexibility. There was a suggestion to eliminate Burley Griffin Way level crossing, keep rail traffic at ground level, and build one bridge. Some attendees shared their support to the proposal as this would reduce the amount of trucks going through towns. Other attendees showed interest in the bridge at Stockinbingal, proposal updates and further information on noise, impact to township and visual impact.

6 Existing social environment

The following section provides an overview of the existing social characteristics of the social locality of the proposal. These characteristics are used to inform the impact assessment and to describe and assess potential changes to the social environment that may occur due to the proposal. The data was compiled in accordance with the methodology described in section 3.2.

6.1 Local study area baseline

The local study area is predominately comprised of private agricultural land holdings, and rural type land uses. However, three small rural townships are located proximal to the proposal site: Stockinbingal, Illabo and Bethungra. This section details the social environment within the local study area as defined in section 4.2, including demographic and housing characteristics (section 6.1.4), movement and access patterns (section 6.1.2), land use (section 6.1.1) and social infrastructure (section 6.1.3).

6.1.1 Land use

Most of the local study area has been extensively cleared and is predominantly used for agriculture. The study area is mainly zoned Primary Production (RU1), and as such, agricultural land uses dominate the local study area. Ninety-seven per cent of the proposal site and 94 per cent of the surrounding properties are used for livestock and cropping enterprises.

Cropping activities are focused on annual crops, with sheep and cattle accounting for the majority of grazing activities. The quality of agricultural land tends to be higher in the northern and southern sections of the study area, with the quality decreasing closer to the middle of the proposal site.

There is minimal residential development located within one kilometre of the proposal site for most of the alignment, except for the township of Stockinbingal near the northern extent. Stockinbingal is typified by semi-rural and village-type settlement patterns, with a cluster of dwellings located on Burley Griffith Way, directly east of the proposal site.

6.1.2 Transport and access

As noted in the Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access (Technical Paper 3), the proposal intersects one highway, Burley Griffin Way (B94), towards its northern extent. Other major highways in the vicinity of the project are the Olympic Highway (A41) to the east and south east and Goldfields Way (B85) to the west. The proposal also crosses several local and private roads.

Traffic volumes in the local study area are generally considered low, with little congestion. The Olympic Highway and Burley Griffin Way account for the majority of traffic movements. Most local roads across the local study area average less than 100 vehicle movements per day. General traffic volumes in the local study area are heavily influenced by the surrounding agricultural land uses and are subject to seasonal peaks during harvest time.

Similarly, stock movements across the local study areas are commonplace and can result in delays or traffic hazards. There is a livestock highway (a sealed road used for the movement of stock between watering and grazing land) that utilises several of the same roads required to service the proposal site. Further detail on these roads is provided in Technical Paper 3.

Several active rail lines traverse the local study area, including the Main South Line, the Lake Cargelligo Line and the Stockinbingal–Parkes line. These lines carry a mixture of passenger and freight services to and through the region from the rest of NSW and Victoria. However, there are no active passenger stations located in the local study area, with Illabo, Bethungra and Stockinbingal train stations no longer in service.

6.1.3 Overview of towns in the local study area

As defined in section 4.2, there are three small rural townships in the local study area.

6.1.3.1 Stockinbingal

Stockinbingal is a small township located on the Burley Griffin Way, 410km south of Sydney and adjacent to the proposal site. Established in 1886, it is primarily a farming community that produces wheat, canola, cereal crops, sheep, wool, fat lambs and cattle.

Today, Stockinbingal is characterised by village streets that lack formal curb and guttering outside of the Hibernia and Martin Street precinct. As the area is unsealed, it regularly becomes dusty and presents maintenance issues in wet conditions.

The township is typified by low-density and semi-rural residential development primarily located to the north of Hibernia Street/Burley Griffin Way. A small cluster of both active and abandoned commercial buildings and several community facilities is located on Hibernia Street. However, there is no active or defined town centre.

The urban form and lot layout of Stockinbingal remain almost the same as the town plan in 1885, with quarter-acre blocks along Troy, Hibernia and Martin Streets and half-acre blocks in the streets behind these.

Stockinbingal has maintained most of its Federation architecture and remains virtually untouched since the early 1900s. Its former commercial buildings remain intact as prime examples of the Australian vernacular style.

Social infrastructure

Stockinbingal features a range of community facilities to service the needs of the town. It is considered that residents would likely travel to Cootamundra, which is 20 km south-east of the Stockinbingal or a 20-minute drive, to access secondary education, retail and community services.

All community facilities in Stockinbingal are located within one kilometre of the proposal site and may experience direct impacts as a result of construction and operation.

Table 6.1 Social infrastructure in Stockinbingal

Category	Name	Location	Approximate distance from proposal site
Education	Stockinbingal Public School	Britannia Street	700 metres
Religion	St James Anglican Church	Dudauman Street	500 metres
Religion	St Joseph's Catholic Church	Grogan Road	500 metres
Recreation	Stockinbingal Bowling Club	Hibernia Street	200 metres
Recreation	Stockinbingal Recreation Ground	Obrien Street	500 metres
Recreation	Stockinbingal Tennis Courts and Playground	Britannia Street	700 metres
Memorial	Stockinbingal War Memorial	Britannia Street	200 metres
Meeting Spaces	Elwood Hall	Martin Street	700 metres

6.1.3.2 Illabo

Illabo is a small rural township located on the Olympic Highway between Junee and Cootamundra. The township exhibits a very dispersed settlement pattern of semi-rural residential and agricultural service facilities such as silos.

There is no commercial centre in Illabo, with the primary retail outlet being the Illabo Hotel, which also serves as a post office, general store, restaurant and motel.

The township hosts the Illabo Show in October annually, a major agricultural showcase and community event.

Social infrastructure

Table 6.2 details the social infrastructure provided in Illabo. There is limited social infrastructure in Illabo, which corresponds with the relatively small population and proximity to Junee. It is considered that residents would travel to Junee, 14km to the south-west and approximately a 15-minute drive, to satisfy most needs.

There is no social infrastructure in Illabo within one kilometre of the proposal site.

Table 6.2 Social infrastructure in Illabo

Category	Name	Location	Approximate distance from proposal site
Education	Illabo Public School	Layton Street	3,000 metres
Meeting spaces	Illabo showground and meeting hall	Illabo Showground Road	2,700 metres
Recreation	Illabo Motorsports Park	Illabo Showground Road	2,700 metres
	Illabo Tennis Court	Wood Street	2,900 metres

6.1.3.3 Bethungra

Bethungra is also a small rural township typified by dispersed semi-rural residential development with a small cluster of houses and commercial business located along Bethungra Street/Olympic Highway.

Retail outlets in the town are limited to a petrol station and a café in the old schoolhouse.

Bethungra is most famous for the Bethungra Rail Spiral, located north of the town, a rail spiral built in the late 1940's to ease the gradient for trains on the Main South Railway Line that still carries a daily return Sydney to Melbourne XPT service. There is no train station remaining in Bethungra.

Social infrastructure

Table 6.3 details the social infrastructure provided in Bethungra. The only social infrastructure in Bethungra is the War Memorial and recreation reserve, which features a playground and rest areas. It is considered that residents would travel to Junee, 24km to the south-west (22-minute drive), or Cootamundra, 24km north west (19-minute drive) to satisfy most needs.

There is no social infrastructure in Bethungra within one kilometre of the proposal site.

Table 6.3 Social infrastructure in Bethungra

Category	Name	Location	Approximate distance from proposal site
Recreation	Bethungra War Memorial and Recreation reserve	Bethungra Road	5,000 metres

6.1.4 Demographic characteristics

Local study area populations are more likely to experience direct impacts due to the construction and operation of the proposal. As such, it is important to understand the social environment in the study area and identify any characteristics that may indicate higher levels of vulnerability to specific impacts.

There were 1,321 people living across 633 dwellings in the local study area at the 2016 Census (ABS, 2016), with the majority (86.8 per cent) residing in rural areas outside of the three townships study area communities exhibit differing levels of socio-economic vulnerabilities. The median age in each of the towns within the local study area is notably higher than that of NSW more broadly, most significantly in Stockinbingal where the median age is more than 10 years older than the State.

Indicator	Stockinbingal	Illabo	Bethungra	NSW
Median age	50	44	48	38

6.1.4.1 Social vulnerability

The local study area exhibits high English proficiency, a low proportion of low-income households, and high levels of internet penetration. The local study area does, however, exhibit a slightly higher proportion of residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, especially in Bethungra and Illabo where the Indigenous population is proportionally larger than NSW (Figure 6.1).

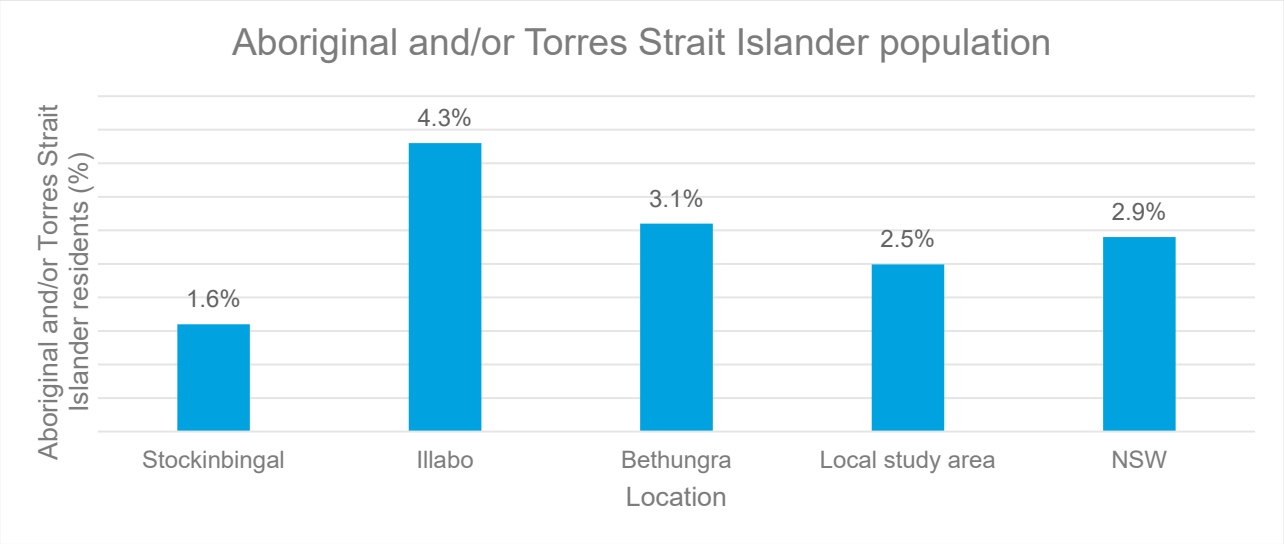

Figure 6.1 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population of towns in the local study area

6.1.4.2 Physical vulnerability

The local study area also has a higher proportion of residents requiring assistance with core activities, either due to age and/or disability, when compared to NSW. Furthermore, there is a higher proportion of residents providing unpaid assistance in the local study area than NSW. Illabo had the highest percentage of residents who have a need for assistance with core activities (9.4%) and Bethungra had the highest percentage of residents providing unpaid assistance (14.2%), both of which were significantly higher than the NSW percentages (5.4% and 9.5% respectively). Stockinbingal exhibits a high proportion of residents requiring assistance with core activities (6.8 per cent, NSW 5.1 per cent).

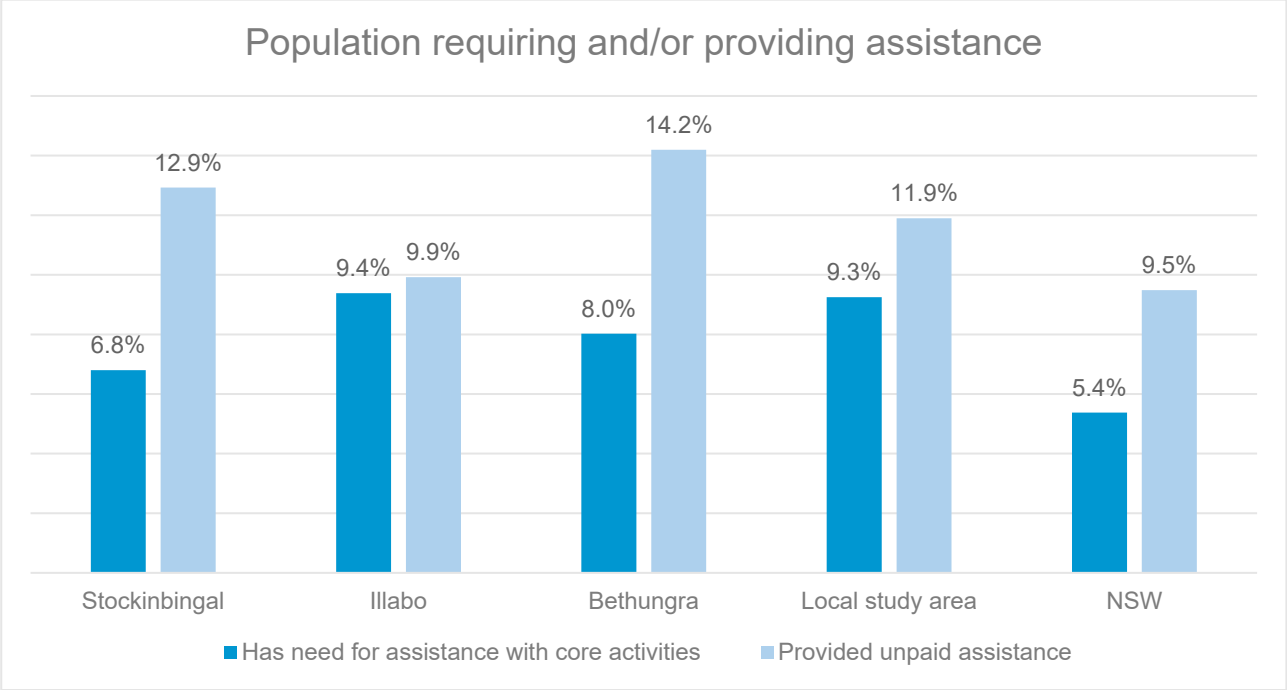

Figure 6.2 Population requiring and/or providing assistance

6.1.4.3 Other vulnerability indicators

Within the towns located in the local study area:

- Illabo exhibits the highest proportion of residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders (6.3 per cent, NSW 2.5 per cent).
- Stockinbingal (27.7 per cent) and Bethungra (26.4 per cent) both exhibit high rates of households who earn less than $650 per week (NSW: 19.7 per cent).
- Bethungra exhibits a high rate of households with no internet access (26.4 per cent, NSW: 14.7 per cent).

Table 6.4 Vulnerability indicators for the local study area

Vulnerability	Indicator	Local Study Area	Stockinbingal	Illabo	Bethungra	NSW
Social vulnerability	Is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	3.4%	3.5%	6.3%	2.4%	2.5%
Social vulnerability	Speaks no English/limited English	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	4.5%
Economic vulnerability	Households earning less than $650 per week	7.5%	27.7%	15.3%	26.4%	19.7%
Social vulnerability	Household has no internet connection	6.7%	15.1%	16.7%	26.4%	14.7%

6.1.4.4 Access to social services

All three towns have limited access to social, health and disability services. Residents requiring specialist services will likely be required to travel to regional service hubs which range from a 15-minute to one hour drive from impacted communities. The lack of local community services may enhance the vulnerability of already at-risk groups, especially amongst those with limited mobility. Key service hubs in the region are listed in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Key regional service hubs

	Hospital	General Health Services	Disability Services	Aged Care Services	Aboriginal Services	Employment Services	Mental Health Services	Community Centre/ Services	Child Care Services
Temora	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Young	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cootamundra	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Junee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Wagga Wagga	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

6.1.5 Housing

There were 632 dwellings located in the local study area in 2016, of which 522 were occupied. All dwellings except six are detached dwellings. Further analysis of rental and short-term accommodation markets is provided in section in section 6.2.10 and section 6.2.11.

6.1.5.1 Tenure

Figure 6.3 shows the breakdown of housing tenure types in the local study area. Of the 522 occupied dwellings in the local study area, 72.3 per cent are owned, either with or without a mortgage. There are relatively few renters in the local study area, with only 8.6 per cent of dwellings being rented by the occupants.

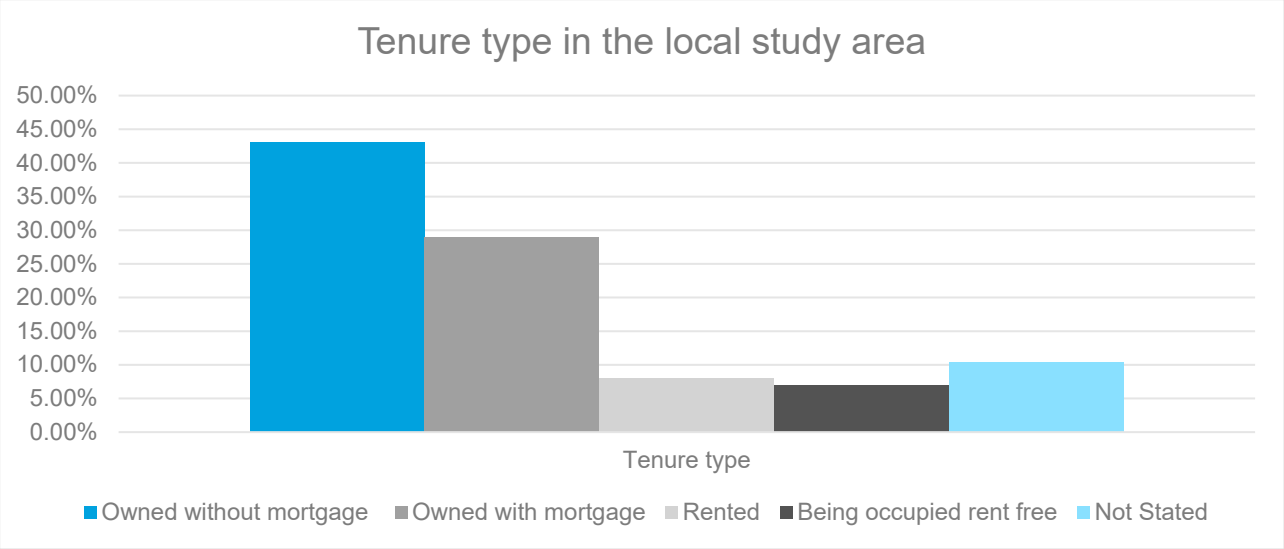

Figure 6.3 Tenure type in the local study area

6.1.5.2 Household composition

Figure 6.4 shows the household composition breakdown for the local study area. Family household with children is the dominant household type in the local study area, which correlates with the relatively high proportion of residents aged under 18 years old detailed in the age profile. Overall, the proportion of family households is in line with the NSW average. However, the rate of Lone Person households is five per cent lower than that of the NSW average (24.5 per cent), likely attributed to the high proportion of working agricultural properties in the local study area.

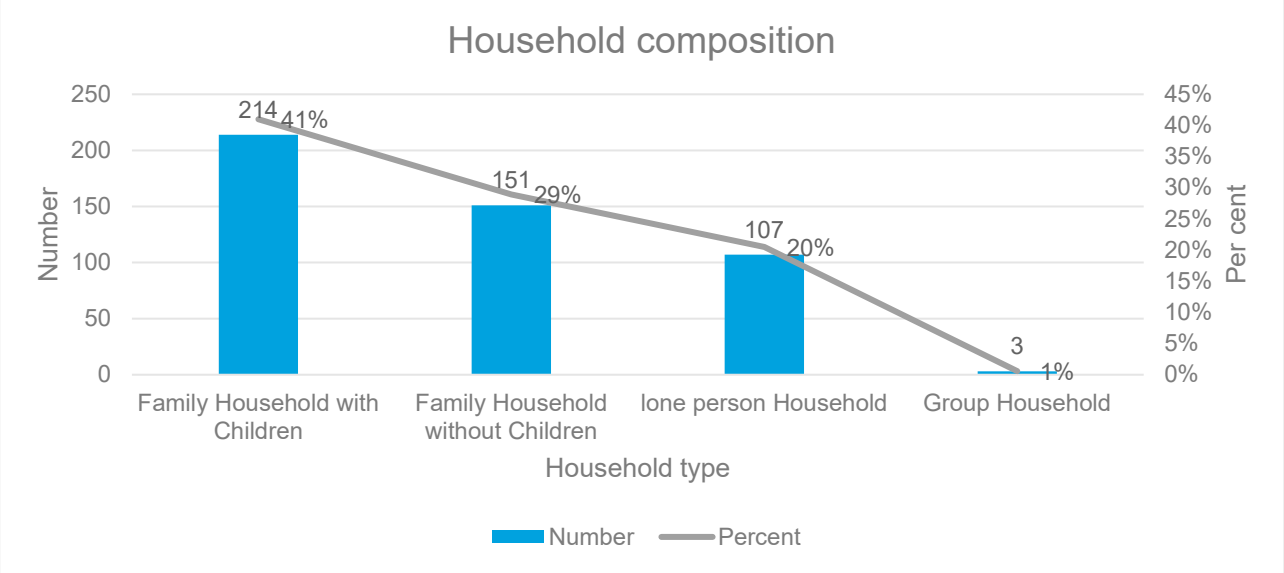

Figure 6.4 Household composition in the local study area

6.1.6 Summary of key characteristics

The local study area exhibits the following key characteristics:

- Agricultural land uses dominate the local study area, with 97 per cent of the proposal site and 94 per cent of surrounding land being used for cropping or grazing activities.
- The population is relatively dispersed, with 86.6 per cent of the population residing in semi-rural and rural areas outside of the townships of Cootamundra, Stockinbingal, Bethungra and Illabo.
- The road network is subject to seasonal peaks in usage due to increased agricultural movements during harvest season and via stock movements.
- The housing stock comprises almost entirely of detached dwellings, with family households with children comprising the most common household type.
- The local study area exhibits differing levels of socio-economic vulnerability, including:
  - residents requiring assistance with core activities in Stockinbingal, suggesting a high reliance on the road network to access health and community service providers in Cootamundra and Temora
  - residents identifying as Indigenous and/or Torres Strait Islander in Illabo
  - households earning less than $650 per week in Stockinbingal and Bethungra suggesting vulnerability to price increases and or environmental changes
  - households without internet access in Bethungra, requiring non-digital forms of notification and consultation.

6.2 Regional study area baseline

The regional study area includes six LGAs that will act as the employment and service catchment for the proposal. The proposal site sits within the LGAs of Junee Shire and Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council. The townships of Junee and Cootamundra are the administrative centres and largest townships in the two LGAs and are also the largest urban centres located proximal to the proposal site. Junee is approximately 14km from the southern extent of the proposal site, and Cootamundra is approximately 24km from the northern extent (refer to Figure 4.1).

Four other LGAs form part of the regional study area: Hilltops Council, Temora Shire, Coolamon Shire, and Wagga Wagga. The proposal does not directly impact the four LGAs. Still, their relative proximity and shared economic, social and cultural ties make them part of the proposals broader area of social influence.

This section provides an overview of the regional study area, including a summary of relevant LGAs (section 6.2.1), community values (section 6.2.5), population trends (section 6.2.7), education (section 6.2.8), employment (section 6.2.9), housing and accommodation (section 6.2.10) and vulnerability (section 6.2.12).

6.2.1 Overview of the local government areas

6.2.1.1 Junee Shire

The Junee Shire is an agricultural community covering approximately 2,030 square kilometres (km^2) of land. The landscape of the Junee Shire generally consists of broad plains graduating up to undulating hill areas. The proposal site runs through cultivated agricultural land and hilly terrain in the north east section of the LGA.

Junee Shire is a rural area and home to the local centre of Junee, which provides services to the surrounding towns and villages of Bethungra, Illabo, Wantabadgery, Harefield, Old Junee, Junee Reefs, Dirnaseer and Eurongilly. As shown in Table 6.6, in 2016, Junee Shire had a population of 6,400.

Junee Correction Centre is an 800-bed medium-minimum security prison located in Junee township. The prison population is likely to skew population demographics for the LGA due to up to 800 additional “residents” being counted on Census night.

A summary of key population and demographic characteristics for the Junee Shire is provided in Table 6.6.

Key insights include:

- Most of the population in Junee Shire reside in Junee Township (74.4 per cent).
- The LGA and Junee township exhibit the highest proportion of:
  - male residents (LGA: 56.8 per cent, Junee township: 58.8 per cent)
  - residents aged 15-64 years (LGA: 65.9 per cent, Junee township: 67.3 per cent) and
  - residents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (LGA: 7.8 per cent, Junee township: 9.4 per cent) in the regional study area.
- This may be in part attributed to the large prison population, which is primarily young, male and includes over representation of Indigenous persons and minorities (ABS, 2018).

Table 6.6 Junee Shire - key population and demographic characteristics, 2016

Indicator	Junee Shire	Junee Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Population	6,400	4,762	109,435	7,480,228
Population profile				
Male	56.8%	58.8%	50.5%	49.3%
Female	43.2%	41.2%	50.5%	50.7%
Median Age	40	38	43	38
Age profile				
0-14: Children and youth	17.8%	16.4%	19.3%	18.5%
15-64: potential labour force	65.9%	67.3%	59.5%	65.2%
65+: pre-retirement and retirement	16.3%	16.3%	21.2%	16.3%
Cultural background				
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	7.8%	9.4%	4.7%	2.9%
Born in Australia	82.9%	81.5%	85.1%	65.5%
Disability indicators				
Has need for assistance with core activities	5.2%	5.7%	5.4%	5.4%
Provided unpaid assistance	9.0%	8.5%	9.6%	9.5%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

There is a comparatively large Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population in Junee Shire LGA with over double the percentage of Indigenous residents living in the LGA than in the state of NSW. Indigenous Australians are statistically more at risk of experiencing social inequality and marginalisation than non-Indigenous Australians, and as such, identified impacts may affect these groups to a greater degree (SCRGSP, 2020).

Junee is well connected via both road and rail, located on the main Sydney to Melbourne rail corridor, the Junee to Griffith rail corridor and the Olympic Highway connecting the LGA to Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. The ARTC control centre is also located in Junee, controlling rail traffic between Sydney and Melbourne and supporting a strong rail industry in the region.

Agriculture and supporting industry are an important part of the identity of the Junee Shire, which continues to build on its agricultural history, with this sector contributing strongly to jobs and economic growth. The LGA is also home to several large specialist industries, such as the prison mentioned previously, and the Junee Abattoir.

6.2.1.2 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council

The Cootamundra–Gundagai Regional Council was formed out of the amalgamation of Cootamundra Shire Council and Gundagai Shire Council in 2016. The LGA covers 3,981 square kilometres varying from steep hills and forestry in the east, lush Murrumbidgee valleys in the south and productive croplands to the North West. The proposal site runs through the north west section of the LGA, with the northern extent of the alignment located near the small township of Stockinbingal.

Cootamundra is the largest township and urban centre in the LGA with smaller towns and villages including Gundagai, Brawlin, Coolac, Frampton, Muttama, Nangus, Stockinbingal and Tumblong. The LGA had a population of 11,300 in 2016. Table 6.7 provides an overview of the community within the LGA and Cootamundra township.

Key population trends include:

- A significant proportion of resident aged over 65 years (25.8 per cent) when compared to both the regional study area (21.2 per cent) and NSW (16.3 per cent), and the highest median age in the regional study area at 47 years.
- The age profile in Cootamundra township trends older than the LGA, suggesting a high reliance health and community services in the town.
- Cootamundra township exhibits a higher proportion of residents who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (6.0 per cent) when compared to the regional study area (4.7 per cent) and NSW (2.9 per cent).

Table 6.7 Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA social profile

Indicator	Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	Cootamundra Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Population	11,300	5,669	109,435	-
Population profile				
Male	49.5%	48.1%	50.5%	49.3%
Female	50.5%	51.9%	50.5%	50.7%
Median Age	47	51	43	38
Age profile				
0-14: Children and youth	18.1%	16.3%	19.3%	18.5%
15-64: potential labour force	56.1%	53.2%	59.5%	65.2%
65+: pre-retirement and retirement	25.8%	30.5%	21.2%	16.3%
Cultural background				
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	4.6%	6.0%	4.7%	2.9%
Born in Australia	85.8%	85.8%	85.1%	65.5%
Disability Indicators				
Has need for assistance with core activities	6.9%	7.6%	5.4%	5.4%
Provided unpaid assistance	13.4%	13.7%	9.6%	9.5%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

The LGA is traversed by the Murrumbidgee River and Hume Highway with the two main towns in the shire, Cootamundra and Gundagai, located halfway between Sydney and Melbourne. The Hume Highway, Olympic Highway and Melbourne to Sydney rail line play a crucial role in providing ease of connections to export markets.

The council's economy is primarily based on dryland cropping and grazing and horticultural products and cereal crops grown on the rich alluvial river flats. Other key industries in the LGA include freight and transport, education, health, and food and beverage manufacturing. Council has acknowledged the significant ageing population and is also working towards developing the health care and social services sector.

6.2.1.3 Hilltops Council

Hilltops Council is a 7,139 square kilometre LGA located on the south western slopes between Sydney and Canberra. Hilltops Council is on the eastern edge of the Riverina region, famed for its highly productive broad hectare farming lands. As such, the Hilltops LGA is a diverse agricultural and horticultural area renowned for its picturesque countryside and fresh produce.

The administrative and economic centre of the LGA is Young, which delivers local retail, commercial and community services and high quality of life for residents and visitors. Hilltops Council is also home to smaller rural towns and villages, including the local centres of Harden and Boorowa. The population of the LGA was 18,750 in 2016. Table 6.8 provides an overview of the Hilltops community profile.

Key insights include:

- Young exhibits a significantly smaller proportion of residents aged 16–64 (55.4 per cent) than both the regional study area (59.5 per cent) and NSW (65.2 per cent), which may have ramifications for labour force availability and social services provision.
- Young also exhibits a relatively young median age of 44 when compared to the LGA and regional study area, which corresponds with the higher proportions of residents aged 0–14 years (21.4 per cent) when compared to the regional study area (19.3 per cent) and NSW (18.5 per cent).

Table 6.8 Hilltops LGA community profile

Indicator	Hilltops LGA	Young Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Population	18,750	7,170	109,435	-
Population profile				
Male	49.2%	47.2%	50.5%	49.3%
Female	50.8%	52.8%	50.5%	50.7%
Median Age	44	40	43	38
Age profile				
0-14: Children and youth	19.5%	21.4%	19.3%	18.5%
15-64: potential labour force	58.0%	55.4%	59.5%	65.2%
65+: pre-retirement and retirement	22.5%	23.2%	21.2%	16.3%
Cultural background				
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	4.4%	5.1%	4.7%	2.6%
Born in Australia	85.6%	86.1%	85.1%	65.5%

Indicator	Hilltops LGA	Young Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Disability indicators				
Has need for assistance with core activities	6.2%	6.3%	5.4%	5.4%
Provided unpaid assistance	12.7%	11.7%	9.6%	9.5%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

The LGA is located along some of NSW's major road and rail routes. These routes directly connect to Sydney and Melbourne and provide access to the remainder of Australia and international markets. The Main Southern Rail line traverses the area and is an important freight link.

The region is renowned for quality and specialised agricultural outputs, including cherries, which are locally and regionally celebrated. The LGA is also recognised for producing quality cool climate wines and foods such as organic lamb, pork, duck, beef, free-range chickens, grains, olive oils, cherries, plums, prunes, peaches and apricots.

6.2.1.4 Temora Shire

Temora Shire is 2,802 square kilometres of high-quality flat fertile farming lands. The LGA has a close alignment with Coolamon and Junee Shires, with this region of the Riverina marketed collectively for tourism purposes as the Canola Trail.

Temora Shire is covered by large agricultural properties and is prized for its rural amenity. The largest township of Temora houses 65 per cent of the population, with the remainder scattered across the small rural villages of Ariah Park and Springdale and hundreds of farming properties and small localities. The population of Temora LGA was 6274 in 2018. Table 6.9 provides an overview of the LGA community profile.

Key insights include:

- The LGA (46) and Temora (48) township both exhibit a higher median age than the regional study area (43) and NSW (38).
- Temora township has a higher proportion of persons aged 15–64 years (69.4 per cent) in the township than the regional study area (59.5 per cent) and NSW (65.2 per cent). However, the LGA and township also exhibit higher proportions of residents aged over 65 (LGA: 24 per cent, Temora: 28.3 per cent) when compared to the regional study area (21.2 per cent) and NSW (16.3 per cent). This suggests an aging population profile.
- The LGA exhibits high levels of cultural homogeneity, with only 2.3 per cent of residents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (regional study area: 4.7 per cent), and 88.4 per cent of residents born in Australia (regional study area: 88.4 per cent, NSW: 65.5 per cent).

Table 6.9 Temora LGA community profile

Indicator	Temora LGA	Temora Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Population	6,200	4,054	109,435	-
Population profile				
Male	48.8%	48.8%	50.5%	49.3%
Female	51.2%	51.2%	50.5%	50.7%
Median Age	46	48	43	38

Indicator	Temora LGA	Temora Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Age profile				
0-14: Children and youth	19.3%	17.6%	19.3%	18.5%
15-64: potential labour force	56.7%	69.4%	59.5%	65.2%
65+: pre-retirement and retirement	24.0%	28.3%	21.2%	16.3%
Cultural background				
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	2.3%	2.3%	4.7%	2.6%
Born in Australia	88.4%	88.4%	85.1%	65.5%
Disability indicators				
Has need for assistance with core activities	6.4%	7.8%	5.4%	5.4%
Provided unpaid assistance	13.1%	13.4%	9.6%	9.5%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

Temora Shire is located approximately 400km south-west of Sydney and approximately 80km north of Wagga Wagga. The LGA and Township are traversed north-south by Goldfields Way and east-west by Burley Griffin Way, both state roads proving onward connections to the national highway network. There are no active rail services in the LGA. However, there is a strong aviation presence in the shire, with the Temora Aerodrome popular amongst aeronautical enthusiasts, skydivers and tourists.

The diversity and strength of agriculture is the foundation of the local economy – it is one of the State's biggest producers of wheat, canola, other cereals and wool. Other industries include agriculture, aviation, retail, tourism, health, education and training.

6.2.1.5 Coolamon Shire

Coolamon Shire is one of the richest agricultural and pastoral areas in the Riverina region, featuring 2,433 square kilometres of highly cultivated agricultural plains. The name 'Coolamon' is an Aboriginal word meaning dish or vessel for holding food or water.

The LGA has a highly dispersed population of 4,400, with 37.9 per cent of the population residing in the main township of Coolamon, which is well known for its picturesque rural heritage and character. The remainder of the population is spread across the smaller towns and villages of Ganmain, Ardlethan, Marrar, Matong and Beckom and remote farming properties. Table 6.10 provides an overview of the community profile.

Key insights include:

- The LGA (56.0 per cent) and the Township (53.5) both have a lower proportion of residents aged 15–64 when compared to both the regional study area (59.5 per cent) and NSW (65.2 per cent).
- Conversely, both the proportion of residents aged 0-4 (LGA: 20.6 per cent, township: 21.6 per cent) and 65+ (LGA: 23.4 per cent, township: 25.3 per cent) in both the LGA and township are both higher than the regional study area and NSW average. Indicating that while there is an aging population occurring, there is also a robust child population.

Table 6.10 Coolamon LGA community profile

Indicator	Coolamon LGA	Coolamon Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Population	4,400	1,669	109,435	
Population profile				
Male	50.0%	48.1%	50.5%	49.3%
Female	50.0%	51.9%	50.5%	50.7%
Median Age	44	44	43	38
Age profile				
0-14: Children and youth	20.6%	21.2%	19.3%	18.5%
15-64: potential labour force	56.0%	53.5%	59.5%	65.2%
65+: pre-retirement and retirement	23.4%	25.3%	21.2%	16.3%
Cultural background				
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	3.2%	3.8%	4.7%	2.6%
Born in Australia	84.0%	85.9%	85.1%	65.5%
Disability indicators				
Has need for assistance with core activities	5.5%	6.8%	5.4%	5.4%
Provided unpaid assistance	12.2%	12.7%	9.6%	9.5%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

The Newell Highway crosses the LGA in the northwest, with Ardlethan Road directly connecting the highway through the shire and township to Wagga Wagga. There are no active rail services in the Coolamon Shire.

The LGA is renowned for its production of wheat, canola, oats, other cereal crops, wool, lamb, and beef products. The shire's proximity to Wagga Wagga and advances in internet connectivity are supporting the emergence of home-based business and e-commerce opportunities, in addition to the agricultural-dominated economy.

6.2.1.6 City of Wagga Wagga

City of Wagga Wagga is the broader administrative region for Wagga Wagga city. Covering 4,826 square kilometres, the LGA is a highly productive agricultural and natural resources region with Wagga Wagga city at its centre.

Wagga Wagga LGA is home to the largest inland regional city in NSW, with an LGA population of 62,385, of which 77.3 per cent reside in the Wagga Wagga urban area. Wagga Wagga is the largest retail, commercial, administrative and population centre in the Riverina Murray, servicing the needs of surrounding settlements, including the regional study area. Table 6.11 provides an overview of the community profile.

Key insights include:

- a relatively young LGA median age of 35, significantly younger than the regional study area (43) and also NSW (38)
- a large potential labour force, with residents aged between 15–64 representing 64.5 per cent of the population (Regional study area:59.5 per cent)
- a high proportion or residents who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (5.6 per cent), particularly in the urban area (6.3 per cent).

Table 6.11 Wagga Wagga LGA community profile

Indicator	Wagga Wagga LGA	Wagga Wagga Township	Regional Study Area	NSW
Population	62,385	48,263	109,435	
Population profile				
Male	48.9%	48.3%	50.5%	49.3%
Female	51.1%	51.7%	50.5%	50.7%
Median Age	35	36	43	38
Age profile				
0-14: Children and youth	20.3%	20.4%	19.3%	18.5%
15-64: potential labour force	64.5%	63.5%	59.5%	65.2%
65+: pre-retirement and retirement	15.2%	16.1%	21.2%	16.3%
Cultural background				
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	5.6%	6.3%	4.7%	2.6
Born in Australia	84.1%	84.3%	85.1%	65.5%
Disability indicators				
Has need for assistance with core activities	4.9%	5.9%	5.4%	5.4%
Provided unpaid assistance	11.5%	11.9%	9.6%	9.5%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

Wagga Wagga is strategically located on the Murrumbidgee River. It is at the confluence of the Olympic Highway and Sturt Highway, providing direct road connections to Adelaide, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. Wagga Wagga also sits on the Main South rail line, providing passenger and freight connections. There is also an active passenger airport in Wagga Wagga, providing commercial flights to Sydney and Melbourne.

Wagga Wagga has a low unemployment rate and diverse economy that does not rely on a single sector. Multiple military facilities and bases, a university and major health and community services are located in the LGA and service as an anchor to the surrounding region.

6.2.2 LGA population summary

There are several community characteristics evident across the regional study area, such as:

- the region is very culturally homogenous, with a regional study area average of 85.1 per cent of residents being born in Australia, compared to 65.5 per cent for NSW
- there is a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents in the regional study area (4.7 per cent). However, Indigenous residents are more prevalent in larger townships, particularly Cootamundra, Young and Wagga Wagga
- overall, except Wagga Wagga and Junee Shire, the regional study area has an aging population and a relatively small proportion of people in the potential labour force. However, most LGAs are also exhibiting higher incidences of residents aged 0–14, suggesting a robust regional birth rate.

6.2.3 Community identity

Consultation indicates that residents value the region for the strength of its community connections and support, particularly in times of hardship. Community resilience and support for each other were noted as one of the key social values. The area is experiencing some downturn and the loss of local population through business closure, the increased size of landholdings and the lack of opportunities for young people. Environmental determinants such as drought and natural disasters also cause severe social and economic issues for the region and its residents.

Maintaining a young population in the area is a key concern. The trend of an ageing population that most LGAs are experiencing is likely to increase demand for health and support services. There needs to be a suitably sized labour force in the region to sustain the economic cost of increased service provision. Sport and participation in local clubs and services are also highly valued. Similarly, sports participation is falling as residents age.

The rural environment and agricultural industry base are the key feature of the regional study area and the economic and social lifeblood of the region. Communities value the support agriculture provides and the historical and social significance the industry has in the region.

6.2.3.1 Indigenous community

The regional study area covers the lands of the Wiradjuri Nation; 4.7 per cent of the regional study area population identifies as Indigenous. The Wiradjuri Nation is geographically the largest Indigenous Nation within NSW and is suspected to be the largest in terms of population (MLDRIN, 2012). The representation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents varies notably across the regional study area.

It is noted that that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents are traditionally under or misrepresented in quantitative research, such as the ABS Census, due to a range of reasons, including:

- historical and contemporary mistrust of Government representatives, departments and decision making relating to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander issues
- different cultural understandings of kinships and concepts of usual residency; and
- literacy issues.

Community and cultural values are very strong amongst the Wiradjuri People. The advancement and betterment of the Wiradjuri People and culture is considered highly valued. Opportunities for gainful employment and education were considered the key enablers of advancement. The protection and promotion of culture and history is also highly valued.

6.2.4 Events and activities

Events and activities are a key part of community identity and social value as they bring people together for common interests. Events also help to display what an area offers to local people and visitors. Major events help to benefit local businesses and community organisations through additional participation and spending. Major events also increase visitors to an area and can generate some pressure on local accommodation and services. Key events and timing in the regional study area include:

- January – Australia Day celebrations
- February – The Gundagai Show and Tractor Pull and Swap Market in Gundagai
- March - Stockinbingal Village Fair, Stock Fair and B&S Ball in Cootamundra and the Tucker Box Bash in Gundagai; Fusion in Wagga Wagga
- April – Anzac Day commemorations, Anzac Day Aircraft Showcase and Picnic Races in Cootamundra
- May – The Hay Carters Cycle Race and The Dog Show in Cootamundra
- June – The Australian Highland Cattle Society National Show in Junee and the Australian Road Transport Heritage Centre Fundraiser Dinner and Road Run
- July – Gundagai Races
- August –The Riverina Schoolboys Football Carnival in Junee, the Wattle Time Fair and Art Shows in Cootamundra and the Aircraft Show in Temora

- September – Mind Body Spirit Festival in Cootamundra and the Temora Show
- October – Illabo Show, Cootamundra Show and The Battle of the Bridges and Spring Flower Show and the Australian National Busking Championships in Gundagai
- November – Ellwoods Hall Christmas Markets in Stockinbingal, the Lions Christmas Carnival in Cootamundra and the Aircraft Show in Temora and the Temora Country Music Festival; and
- December – Christmas Carols and Fairs in various locations. New Years Celebrations Wagga Wagga.

A complete list of community events and activities in each town and centre, including Wagga Wagga, is detailed in Appendix A.

6.2.5 Values

Surveys and broader engagement results indicate key and consistent community values in the regional study area, such as:

- close-knit, connected, resilient supportive and generous communities that work to help each other across ages and different social groups
- a relaxed lifestyle where people are friendly
- an attractive area for families, due to the lifestyle offered
- the economic contribution of older community members, particularly farmers, and the support that local people give to businesses, particularly during times of hardship such as drought
- many different activities for local people and visitors, such as the air show and jet boating
- strong agricultural ties due to the area thriving on a rural economy which includes cropping, sheep and cattle
- a desire to sustain or grow regional populations
- a general sense of safety and security within their town
- low crime rates
- sporting history and current focus and achievement in sport; and
- local clubs and facilities are important to the local community and help to maintain relationships.

6.2.6 Challenges

Key challenges and concerns, identified through the consultation process, which influence community values, included:

- drought and the related impacts on farmers and local businesses
- volunteers in the community are not being replaced as the population falls. Also, students are leaving for boarding school and not coming back to the area
- young working-age people are leaving the region to pursue study and alternative careers
- vulnerability within the business community and the impact of people shopping at larger centres and the ability to attract medium to large retailers to the region
- tertiary education has been scaled back
- inability to maintain services and facilities in the region such as roads and medical facilities
- inability to attract service providers such as education and health care professionals to the area
- an ageing population and a lack of opportunities for young people
- smaller rural holdings are being sold to larger or corporate landowner which is placing the population in decline
- local clubs and organisations are in decline because of the changing population
- indigenous young people are disengaged and there should be more opportunities for involvement
- infrastructure and services such as sewerage and water services are ageing and need updating, this can hinder development in towns such as Stockinbingal
- low levels of crime which are perceived to be increasing
- unemployment rates; and
- low land values and a lack of services.

6.2.7 Population trends

Table 6.12 below shows the population projections for 2041 for the regional study area. Coolamon and Temora LGAs are anticipated to experience relatively stable populations through to 2041. Junee LGA will experience a slight decline in the population through to 2041 (-2.7 per cent). Cootamundra – Gundagai (-17.5 per cent) and Hilltops (-12.1 per cent) are expected to experience a significant population decline. In contrast, Wagga Wagga LGA will experience strong population growth of 11.7 per cent in the same period.

The COVID 19 Pandemic has seen a shift in Australian population trends, with an acceleration of regionalisation occurring and Australian households moving away from metro areas to regional centres. This has resulted in a 200% increase in net migration from capital cities to regional areas (Infrastructure Australia, 2020).

Population projections outlined in this section pre-date the pandemic. As a result, regional study area communities may be experiencing a stabilisation or increase in population that challenges the below figures. Consultation with local real-estate agents and service providers and recent property and sales data across the region indicates strong demand in the short-term, which will likely support a population growth scenario. However, the data remains unclear whether this population growth in regional areas will be sustained over the long-term.

Table 6.12 Population trends and projections for the regional study area

LGA	2016 population	Natural change	Net migration (all sources)	Growth 2016–2041	Growth 2016–2041 %	2041 population
Coolamon Shire	4,390	-101	150	49	1.1%	4,439
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional	11,291	-920	-1,051	-1,971	-17.5%	9,320
Hilltops Council	18,756	-214	-2,058	-2,272	-12.1%	16,484
Junee Shire	6,414	280	-450	-170	-2.7%	6,244
Temora Shire	6,210	-185	203	18	0.3%	6,228
City of Wagga Wagga	63,906	7,155	210	7,365	11.5%	71,271
Regional Study Area	110,967	6,015	-2,996	3,019	2.7%	113,986
NSW Total	**7,732,858**	**1,308,538**	**1,531,300**	**2,839,838**		**10,572,696**

Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2020

6.2.8 Education

Education has become one of the clearest indicators of life outcomes such as employment, income and social status and is a strong predictor of attitudes and wellbeing (Economic and Social Research Council, 2014). Research in Australia also suggests that young people living in rural and isolated parts of the country have poorer educational and labour market outcomes than their urban counterparts (Lamb, Glover & Walstab, 2014).

Table 6.13 shows that when compared to NSW, the regional study area exhibits:

- lower rates of Bachelor's degree and above (10.6 per cent, NSW: 23.4 per cent) and advanced diploma (6.6 per cent; NSW: 8.9 per cent) qualifications
- higher rates of Certificate three and four (18.5 per cent, NSW: 14.8 per cent) qualifications
- lower rates of year 12 completion (11.1 per cent, NSW: 15.3 per cent); and
- significantly higher rates of people who have completed year ten or lower (30.5 per cent, NSW: 19.9 per cent).

Overall, the regional study area exhibits relatively low educational attainment levels. As a large regional centre and home to a university campus, Wagga Wagga has the highest educational attainment levels of all LGA's and closely aligned to NSW averages. All LGA's also exhibit higher rates of Certificate three and four attainment than the NSW average. Certificate three and four qualifications are typically trades and skills focussed, which correlates with likely employment demands related to the agricultural and manufacturing-based economy where technical qualifications are required.

Table 6.13 Educational attainment in the regional study area

	Bachelor's Degree level and above	Advanced Diploma and Diploma level	Certificate level III & IV	Year 12	Year 10 or lower
Coolamon (A)	10.2	6.5	18.9	11.4	31.9
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional (A)	9.2	7.1	18.7	11.0	33.2
Hilltops (A)	9.9	7.0	18.8	11.1	31.6
Junee (A)	7.9	5.3	15.5	9.0	25.8
Temora (A)	9.9	5.9	19.0	10.0	36.4
Wagga Wagga (C)	16.7	7.7	20.3	14.1	24.0
Regional Study Area	**10.6**	**6.6**	**18.5**	**11.1**	**30.5**
NSW	23.4	8.9	14.8	15.3	19.9

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

6.2.9 Employment

December 2020 Small Area Labour Markets data identifies a potential local labour force of 58,260 located in the regional study area. Figure 6.5 shows the unemployment rates for regional study area LGAs over the previous five years. The regional employment market reflects the strong agricultural sector in the regional study area, with unemployment rates peaking due to decreased agricultural outputs during drought conditions in 2018. Unemployment rates peaked again in mid-late 2020 as the flow-on effects of the COVID 19 pandemic hit education, tourism and hospitality markets.

Unemployment across the region is improving, in line with national (6.6 per cent) and state (6.4 per cent) unemployment rates. In December 2020, Coolamon Shire exhibited the lowest unemployment rate in the regional study area at 3.4 per cent, which is considered a constrained labour market. Conversely, Hilltops Council exhibited the highest unemployment rate at 5.7 per cent.

By March 2021, the national unemployment rate had decreased to 5.4 per cent, and the NSW unemployment rate had decreased to 5.6 per cent, demonstrable of robust economic growth across Australia. It is considered that unemployment across the regional study area would have also likely decreased due to record-breaking improved agricultural conditions, local economic development and increased regional migration (Infrastructure Australia, 2020, ABC News, 2021, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, 2021).

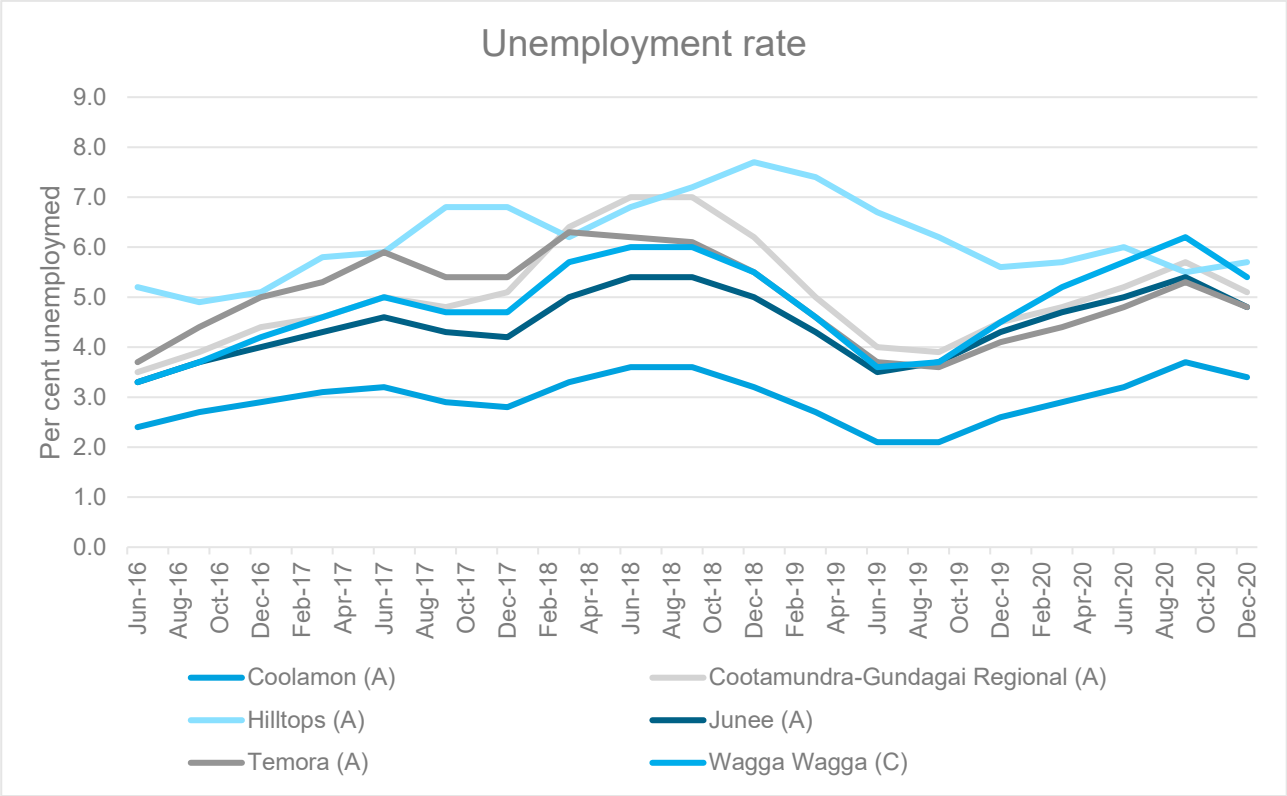

Figure 6.5 Unemployment rates for regional study area LGAs

6.2.9.1 Industry and employment

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing and Manufacturing dominate the regional economy as the largest employer by industry and responsible for the largest economic output for nearly all six of the LGA's. However, each LGA also exhibits variations in their economic profile in line with local specialisations and unique industries. Table 6.14 details the top five industries of employment, occupations and industries by economic output for each LGA.

There is a high prevalence of managers, labourers and technicians and trade workers in Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Junee, Temora and Hilltops LGAs associated with the extensive agriculture and manufacturing industries. In comparison, Wagga Wagga LGA exhibits an employment profile more common in larger urban areas with specialist industries, with employment focussed around service industries and defence.

Community and professional services occupations also feature frequently across all LGAs, with healthcare, aged care and community support industries in the top five employers in five LGAs. This is most likely related to the trend of an ageing population across the regional study area resulting in increased demand for specialist health and support services.

Employment statistics for the 2016 Census identified 3,603 persons who work in the construction industry in the local labour force. However, of these, only 311 work in the heavy and civil construction sector, possessing the skills and knowledge most relevant to the construction of the proposal. Overall, 311 workers represent a minute proportion of the total local labour force (0.5 per cent) and indicate that adequately skilled workers may be difficult to find in the region.

Table 6.14 Regional study area economic and employment profile

Industry of employment (% of total workforce)	Occupations (% of total workforce)	LGA top five industries by economic output ($ per annum)
Coolamon Shire		
• Other Grain Growing: 7.3% • Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming: 6.3% • Local Government Administration: 3.2% • Sheep Farming (Specialised): 2.9% • Higher Education: 2.9%	• Managers: 24.6% • Professionals: 13.7% • Technicians and trade workers: 13.5% • Labourers: 11.0% • Community and Personal Services Workers: 10.3%	• Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: $104,513,452 • Manufacturing: $16,962,908 • Education & Training: $5,657,315 • Transport, Postal & Warehousing: $2,600,099 • Wholesale Trade: $2,303,122
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional		
• Meat Processing: 7.0% • Sheep Farming (Specialised): 3.6% • Aged Care Residential Services: 3.4% • Supermarket and Grocery Stores: 3.1% • Local Government Administration: 2.9%	• Labourers: 18.5% • Managers: 16.7% • Technicians and Trades Workers: 13.5% • Professionals: 12.8% • Community and Personal Service Workers: 10.7%	• Manufacturing: $314,771,445 • Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: $65,335,650 • Transport, Postal & Warehousing: $36,729,224 • Accommodation & Food Services: $19,414,930 • Financial & Insurance Services: $10,421,702
Hilltops Shire		
• Sheep Farming (Specialised): 4.9% • Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals): 3.0% • Supermarket and Grocery Stores: 2.8% • Primary Education: 2.7% • Aged Care Residential Services: 2.6%	• Managers: 20.6% • Labourers: 15.9% • Technicians and Trades Workers: 14.0% • Professionals: 11.9% • Clerical and Administrative Workers: 10.7%	• Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing: $446,700,000 • Mining: $111,200,000 • Manufacturing: $115,000,000 • Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Service: $2,200,000 • Construction: $800,000
Junee Shire		
• Meat Processing: 8.3% • Correctional and Detention Services: 5.6% • Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming: 4.2% • Sheep Farming (Specialised): 3.9% • Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals): 3.0%	• Managers: 18.6% • Labourers: 17.7% • Community and Personal Service Workers: 12.6% • Technicians and Trades Workers: 11.8% • Professionals: 11.6%	• Manufacturing: $120,880,290 • Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: $53,746,711 • Transport, Postal & Warehousing: $50,093,355 • Public Administration & Safety: $43,687,169 • Accommodation & Food Services: $3,820,036

Industry of employment (% of total workforce)	Occupations (% of total workforce)	LGA top five industries by economic output ($ per annum)
Temora Shire		
• Managers: 22.2% • Professionals: 14.1% • Technicians and Trades Workers: 13.9% • Labourers: 11.9% • Clerical and Administrative Workers: 10.8%	• Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming: 6.5 • Other Grain Growing: 5.4 • Supermarket and Grocery Stores: 4.2 • Local Government Administration: 3.3 • Aged Care Residential Services: 3.2	• Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: $141,575,465 • Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services: $45,973,418 • Manufacturing: $17,082,835 • Transport, Postal & Warehousing: $11,211,116 • Education & Training: $8,436,311
City of Wagga Wagga		
• Professionals: 19.7% • Technicians and Trades Workers: 15.6% • Community and Personal Service Workers: 13% • Clerical and Administrative Workers: 12.3% • Managers: 12.2%	• Defence: 4.6% • Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals): 4.5% • Higher Education: 3.1% • Other Social Assistance Services: 2.4% • Secondary Education: 2.4%	• Public Administration & Safety: $1,200,818,577 • Manufacturing: $952,789,739 • Education & Training: $262,618,190 • Health Care & Social Assistance: $211,276,051 • Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: $145,555,261

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

6.2.9.2 Indigenous Labour Force

The Indigenous population is under-represented in the regional labour force. Only 53.0 per cent of Indigenous people aged 15 or over are either employed or looking for work. At the time of the Census, the Indigenous unemployment rate was 8.0 per cent, which is nearly double that of all regional study area LGAs. These patterns indicate that indigenous residents likely face significant barriers to employment in the region, and many choose to disengage from the labour market as a result.

Table 6.15 outlines Indigenous employment data from the 2016 Census. At the LGA level, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Hilltops and Wagga Wagga LGAs all have relatively large Indigenous populations numbering in the hundreds or thousands. These LGAs also exhibit a relatively high Indigenous unemployment rate and low labour force participation rate, suggesting a large proportion of Indigenous residents who could benefit from local employment and training initiatives.

While Junee also exhibits a high Indigenous population, it is considered that the majority of the noted people are incarcerated at the Junee Correctional Centre. This is evidenced by the relatively low unemployment rate and a significant proportion of people not in the labour force.

Table 6.15 Indigenous labour market

	Indigenous people aged over 15	Employed		Unemployed		Not in the labour force	
Coolamon (A)	77	43	56%	6	8%	24	31%
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional (A)	348	159	46%	24	7%	161	46%
Hilltops (A)	504	214	42%	40	8%	229	45%
Junee (A)	368	68	18%	9	2%	297	81%
Temora (A)	99	36	36%	16	16%	42	42%
Wagga Wagga (C)	2162	1026	47%	181	8%	902	42%
Regional Study Area	***3558***	1546	43%	276	8%	1655	47%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

6.2.9.3 Youth (15 to 24 Years) Labour Force

The youth unemployment rate of Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA is 9.7 per cent compared to 13.6 in NSW (in 2016, pre-COVID-19). Youth unemployment rates are considered in the context of labour force participation rates, as many may be studying full-time and may have no current interest in working or looking for work. Junee LGA represents the highest rate of youth unemployment at 13.2 per cent and Temora LGA the lowest at 8.1 per cent. Across the three LGAs, the youth labour market participation rate is 56.4 per cent, while full time employment represented the highest rate of youth labour force with Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA at 48.4 per cent, Junee LGA at 47.2 per cent and Temora LGA at 46.5 per cent.

6.2.10 Housing and accommodation

Housing and accommodation data has been analysed at LGA and Service Community level. Service communities often comprise the majority of housing stock in an LGA and are most likely to experience changes in demand as a result of the proposal.

There were 50,265 dwellings in the regional study area at the 2016 Census.

The townships of Wagga Wagga (21,081), Young (7,170) and Cootamundra (2,797) feature the highest number of dwellings of the regional study area townships. Table 6.16 shows the number of dwellings across the LGAs and townships and the applicable rate of unoccupied dwellings.

Occupied dwellings in the Census means a private dwelling occupied by one or more people on Census night. Unoccupied dwellings are structures built specifically for living purposes which are habitable, but unoccupied on Census night. Vacant houses, holiday homes, huts and cabins (other than seasonal workers' quarters) are counted as unoccupied private dwellings.

Unoccupied dwellings do not necessarily align with market availability given the time between 2016 and 2021, and the subsequent social and economic changes that have occurred in the region in the interim. Current market conditions are further discussed in later in this section.

Table 6.16 Dwelling stock

Location (LGA)	Dwellings	Occupied dwellings	Unoccupied dwellings
Hilltops LGA	8,900	7,087	1,341
Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	5,340	4,356	679
Junee LGA	2,329	1,910	235
Temora LGA	2,816	2,384	348
Coolamon LGA	1,811	1,492	173
Wagga Wagga LGA	29,069	18,131	2,084
Regional study area	**50,265**	**35,360**	**4,860**
Townships			
Illabo (UCL)	72	50	16
Stockinbingal (UCL)	119	87	24
Young (UCL)	7,170	2,795	359
Cootamundra (UCL)	2,797	2,351	307
Gundagai (UCL)	930	769	100
Junee (UCL)	1,671	1,403	132
Temora (UCL)	1,965	1,666	235
Coolamon (UCL)	703	583	66
Wagga Wagga (UCL)	21,081	18,131	2,084

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

6.2.10.1 Dwelling structure

Of the occupied dwellings, separate houses are the most common structure across all LGAs, with Wagga Wagga registering the lowest rate of detached houses at 84.5 per cent. This can likely be attributed to the size of Wagga Wagga city and the high prevalence of tertiary education and specialist industries prevalent in the area. Table 6.17 shows the housing composition breakdown for the study area LGAs and townships.

Table 6.17 Dwelling structure in the regional study area

Location (LGA)	Separate house (%)	Semi-detached house/townhouse (%)	Flat or apartment (%)	Other (%)
Hilltops LGA	89.7	4.5	4.3	0.7
Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	92.8	3.3	2	1.2
Junee LGA	95.4	2.1	2	0
Temora LGA	91.5	1.7	5	1.1
Coolamon LGA	96.5	0.2	1.9	0.3
Wagga Wagga LGA	84.9	4.1	9.8	0.9
Regional study area	**91.80**	**2.65**	**4.17**	**0.70**
Service communities				
Illabo (UCL)	50	0	0	0
Stockinbingal (UCL)	96.6	0	0	3.4
Young (UCL)	83.2	7.2	9.2	0.1
Cootamundra (UCL)	90.9	4.9	3.3	0.8
Gundagai (UCL)	90.8	3.4	2.9	2.2
Junee (UCL)	94.2	2.6	2.7	0
Temora (UCL)	89.7	4.9	7	1.3
Coolamon (UCL)	95.2	0.5	3.6	0
Wagga Wagga (UCL)	82.9	4.4	11.7	0.9
NSW	66.4	12.2	19.9	0.9

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

6.2.10.2 Bedrooms per dwelling

Table 6.18 shows the bedroom composition of regional study area dwellings. Three-bedroom (44.1 per cent) and four-bedroom (34.4 per cent) dwellings are the most prevalent dwelling types across the study area. There is a higher prevalence of three-bedroom homes across the study area than the NSW average (37.2 per cent). The higher prevalence of three- and four-bedroom dwellings correlates with the high rates of detached dwellings, as noted in the previous table.

Table 6.18 Bedrooms per occupied dwelling

Location (LGA)	None (%)	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4+ (%)
Hilltops LGA	0.6	2.7	16.3	42.9	34.4
Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	0.5	2.2	16.6	45.9	31.8
Junee LGA	0.2	2.9	13.6	45.5	33.6
Temora LGA	0.1	4.3	14.9	45.5	32.7
Coolamon LGA	0.3	3.3	13.2	44.4	36
Wagga Wagga LGA	0.2	2.1	16.4	40.6	38
Regional study area	0.3	2.9	15.2	44.1	34.4
Townships					
Illabo (UCL)	0	7.3	7.3	40	38.2
Stockinbingal (UCL)	0	4.6	29.9	44.8	20.7
Young (UCL)	0.5	2.6	20.7	46.2	26.9
Cootamundra (UCL)	0.5	2.2	19.5	49.8	25.2
Gundagai (UCL)	0.4	2.5	16.7	48.6	28.6
Junee (UCL)	0.2	3	15.9	48.1	28.2
Temora (UCL)	0.22	4.9	17.3	48.8	26.4
Coolamon (UCL)	0	3.4	13.2	45.2	35
Wagga Wagga (UCL)	0.2	2.3	18.2	41.5	35.1
NSW	0.7	6	22.2	37.2	31.3

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

6.2.10.3 Tenure

There is a higher proportion of owned outright dwellings across the study area (40.4 per cent) than the NSW average (40.4 per cent). All LGAs, except Wagga Wagga (29.2 per cent), exhibit higher homeownership rates than the state average.

Wagga Wagga LGA exhibits the highest proportion of rented dwellings across the study area (33.5 per cent), as does Wagga Wagga City (35.9 per cent). The settlement of Young also exhibits the highest rate of rented dwellings (37.9 per cent) compared to other study area communities. Table 6.19 shows the tenure type for dwellings across the study area LGAs and townships.

Table 6.19 Tenure of occupied dwellings

Location (LGA)	Owned outright (%)	Owned with a mortgage (%)	Rented (%)	Other (%)
Hilltops LGA	41	28.4	26	0.9
Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	44.5	26.7	24	1.2
Junee LGA	36	32.9	24.8	1.2
Temora LGA	46.6	26.5	23.3	0.8
Coolamon LGA	45.1	31.1	18.6	1.5
Wagga Wagga LGA	29.2	33.4	33.5	1
Regional study area	40.4	29.8	25.0	1.1
Townships				
Illabo (UCL)	42.9	28.6	14.3	8.2
Stockinbingal (UCL)	58.6	37.9	3.4	0
Young (UCL)	33.7	24.3	37.9	0.7
Cootamundra (UCL)	43.8	25.4	26.4	1.1
Gundagai (UCL)	43.6	24.1	26	1.2
Junee (UCL)	33	33.5	17.9	0.5
Temora (UCL)	44.1	25.9	26.5	1
Coolamon (UCL)	37.1	34.3	21.8	2.7
Wagga Wagga (UCL)	28.8	31.5	35.9	0.8
NSW	32.2	32.3	21.8	2.7

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

6.2.10.4 Vacancy rates

Residential vacancies across the study area are currently at record lows due to increased regional migration and improved agricultural conditions (Infrastructure Australia, 2020). Recent rainfall has ended the drought conditions that had affected much of the region during 2018–2020, limiting agricultural outputs and local employment opportunities. The COVID-19 pandemic has also triggered regional migration, as city-dwelling residents migrate from Sydney and Melbourne to regional centres.

Infrastructure Australia notes that there has been a 200 per cent increase in net migration to regional areas in the 12 months since COVID-19 restrictions were first imposed in Australia. The ABS Regional internal migration estimates for the September Quarter of 2020 note that Sydney experienced a net loss of 4,700 people from the city to regional NSW in the quarter.

Table 6.20 highlights current residential vacancy data for the study area. Residential property data is sourced from property analytics specialists SQM Research. Data is provided at the postcode level, with each postcode covering the applicable settlement and surrounding areas. The data demonstrates significant residential demand in the study area, with an average vacancy rate of 0.9 per cent. Less than 2 per cent is deemed a competitive market, leading to price increases, restrictive leasing practices and less security for tenants.

Overall, there are 131 houses and 59 units for rent in the study area, with the bulk of these being located in Wagga Wagga.

Table 6.20 Residential rental vacancy data at April 2021

Settlement (Postcode)	Vacancy rate	Available houses	Available units	Average rent 3bd House	Average rent 2bd unit
Young and surrounds (2590)	0.4%	12	6	$333 per week	$211 per week
Cootamundra, Illabo and surrounds (2590)	2.3%	16	3	$289 per week	$178 per week
Gundagai and surrounds (2722)	0.7%	2	0	$333 per week	$231 per week
Junee, Old Junee and surrounds	1.0%	11	1	$282 per week	$251 per week
Temora and surrounds (2666)	0.4%	7	1	$282 per week	$251 per week
Coolamon and surrounds (2701)	1.0%	2	1	$258 per week	None
Wagga Wagga and surrounds	0.9%	81	47	$366 per week	$267 per week
Regional Study Area	0.9%	131	59		

Source: SQM Research

6.2.11 Short-term accommodation

The following section details the availability of short-term accommodation options in the regional study area, current demand patterns and potential vacancy levels. This analysis assisted in determining that the short-term accommodation market could not accommodate the temporary construction workforce (estimated peak of 425 personnel) and a workforce accommodation camp would be required with a total of 450 beds to account for surge capacity (as defined in section 7.1.3).

This analysis supported a separate assessment of accommodation of the proposal which was subsequently prepared and contains more detail. Aspects of the assessment of accommodation are described in section 7.1.3.

6.2.11.1 Short-term accommodation capacity

Accommodation options in the study area were identified by searching local tourist board websites and the hotels.com.au and booking.com websites in April 2021. Further consultation was undertaken in both 2019 and early 2021 with accommodation providers across the study area to confirm the number of rooms available and facilities offered.

Table 6.21 below details the number of rooms available across the study area. There are approximately 1,354 rooms available in the study area, with over half of those located in Wagga Wagga (700). Motel rooms are the most common type of short-term accommodation (717 rooms), with hotels the second most common (380 rooms). All hotel type rooms are located in Wagga Wagga, accounting for the city's role as a major regional centre.

Table 6.21 Short-term accommodation stock

Town	Type	Rooms
Coolamon	Motel	10
	Apartment	4
Total rooms in Coolamon		14
Cootamundra	Motel	113
	Pub	34
	Caravan park	3
Total rooms in Cootamundra		150
Gundagai	Motel	107
	Pub	14
	Caravan park	18
Total rooms in Gundagai		139
Junee	Motel	40
	Pub	22
	Caravan park	19
Total rooms in Junee		81
Temora	Motel	66
	Apartment	4
	Pub	62
Total rooms in Temora		132

Town	Type	Rooms
Wagga Wagga	Hotel	380
	Motel	243
	Caravan park	77
Total rooms in Wagga Wagga		700
Young	Motel	138
Total rooms in Young		138
Total Hotel		380
Total Motel		717
Total Pub		132
Total Caravan Park		117
Apartments and BnBs		8
Total rooms in the study area		1,354

Source: Hotels.com.au, Stakeholder engagement outputs, 2021

6.2.11.2 Tourism demand

Regional tourism is experiencing significant growth with international border closures due to the COVID-19, pandemic forcing Australians to holiday in Australia. In the year to February 2021, visitors to regional NSW increased 5 per cent to 2.7 million and overnight spend increased 11 per cent (up $206 million). The number of nights stayed was also up 12 per cent compared with the same period last year (Tourism Research Australia, 2021). Consideration should be given to how tourism demand may be affected once international borders reopen for Australians wanting to travel overseas. At the time of writing reopening was scheduled for November 2021, however, it is unknown to what extent international travel will be taken up during construction period for the proposal (mid 2024 – mid 2026).

Table 6.22 shows tourism demand data from the 2019 Domestic Tourism Study. Data was only available for Cootamundra-Gundagai, Hilltops, Temora and Wagga Wagga LGAs. However, the data is evident of a robust local tourism market and associated demand. Wagga Wagga had the highest overall visitors of the four LGAs (1,357,00 people) who stayed a total of 503,000 combined nights in hotel or motel accommodation. Visitors to Cootamundra-Gundagai stayed a combined 81,000 nights in hotel accommodation in 2019 and 76,000 combined nights in Hilltops.

These numbers are expected to have increased in line with current tourism trends mentioned above. Consultation with accommodation providers across the study area indicated that the Spring and Autumn months are the peak times for tourism demand.

Table 6.22 Tourism demand 2019

LGA	Visitors	Nights	Hotel / Motel
Cootamundra-Gundagai	151,000	318,000	81,000
Hilltops	411,000	422,000	76,000
Temora	105,000	122,000	N/A
Wagga Wagga	1,357,000	1,666,000	503,000

Source: Tourism Research Australia, 2019

6.2.12 Wellbeing

Wellbeing is influenced by several biological, psychological, social and environmental factors which interact in complex way, these include access to economic resources, sense of belonging and physical health (Everymind, 2021).

6.2.12.1 Income

All regional study area LGAs exhibit a lower median weekly income than the NSW median. Wagga Wagga LGA exhibits the highest median weekly household income at $1,354 and the lowest proportion of low income households in the regional study area. Which is likely attributed to Wagga Waggas status as a major regional city, and home to specialist industry and employment sectors.

Across the regional study area, Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA had the lowest median weekly household income ($964), closely followed by Hilltops LGA ($976). Both LGA's exhibit a median weekly household income over $500 less than the NSW Median and approximately $140 less than the regional study area.

Table 6.23 Household income

Location (LGA)	Median weekly household income	Low income households (per cent) *Less than $650/week*	High income households (per cent) *More than $3000/week*
Coolamon	$1,169	24.4	10.4
Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	$964	25.8	9.5
Hilltops	$976	29.0	6.4
Junee LGA	$1,139	25.4	9.3
Temora LGA	$1,033	23.5	10
Wagga Wagga	$1,354	20.1	11.7
Regional study area	$1,106	24.7	9.5
NSW	$1,481	17.8	23.1

Source: ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing

6.2.12.2 Advantage and disadvantage

The ABS has developed a range of indices showing relative levels of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage, termed Socio-economic Indicators for Areas (SEIFA). It considers indicators relating to household income, education, occupation type, age, employment, household composition, wealth and living conditions to determine the relative level of advantage or disadvantage an area may experience relative to all other areas in Australia (ABS, 2008).

The SEIFA score of 1000 is the national mean, scores below 1000 show higher disadvantage than the average and scores above 1000 show less disadvantage. A decile band of 1 indicates the top 10 per cent most disadvantaged areas.

A low score indicates relatively greater disadvantage and a lack of advantage in general. For example, an area could have a low score if there are:

- many households with low incomes, or many people in unskilled occupations
- few households with high incomes, or few people in skilled occupations.

A high score indicates a relative lack of disadvantage and greater advantage in general. For example, an area may have a high score if there are:

- many households with high incomes, or many people in skilled occupations
- few households with low incomes, or few people in unskilled occupations.

Table 6.24 shows the index rating for the three LGAs. Cootamundra-Gundagai, Hilltops and Junee LGA all rank in the third decile and experience high social disadvantage levels with a high relative socio-economic disadvantage. Temora LGA has the highest decile scores in the regional study area, making it the location with the least disadvantage.

Table 6.24 Index of relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage

Location (LGA)	Score	Rank within Australia	Decile	Rank within NSW	Decile
Coolamon	960	278	6	71	6
Cootamundra-Gundagai	943	132	3	27	3
Hilltops	931	151	3	32	3
Junee	927	135	3	29	3
Temora	943	207	4	47	4
Wagga Wagga	976	344	7	88	7

Source: ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) 2016

6.2.12.3 Community participation

Volunteering can help develop and sustain social support networks, support disadvantaged groups and strengthen a community's social capital and identity (Volunteering Australia, 2017). The regional study area exhibits a highly engaged and active volunteer community, with relatively high proportions of residents undertaking unpaid work for a community organisation and group when compared to the NSW average (18.9 per cent). Temora LGA, rates in the top five LGAs in NSW for the proportion of residents in the LGA undertaking volunteer work (32.9 per cent).

Overall, Temora LGA (32.9 per cent) and Coolamon LGA (31.3 per cent) exhibit the highest volunteer rates, while Wagga Wagga (219 per cent) and Junee (21.0 per cent) exhibit the lowest participation rates. Wagga Wagga and Junee are both home to sizable transient populations which may impact volunteering rates, Wagga Wagga with multiple military facilities and a University campus and Junee with the correctional centre.

Consultation undertaken in 2019, indicated that certain community groups and organisations were facing closure due to a shrinking population and the flow on effects of reduced volunteer uptake. However, this may have improved with the recent upturn in the local economy and improved regional migration rates.

6.2.12.4 Health outcomes

The regional study area sits within the Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD), which is a NSW government health administration region. The following health outcomes analysis is sourced from the 2019 MLHD Heath Atlas which utilises both NSW Health hospital data and 2016 Census data.

Social and economic disadvantage can influence a person's overall health and wellbeing and is a key indicator for assessing potential health impacts within a community. Within the MLHD, Hilltops LGA and Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA are identified as two of the most disadvantages LGAs, while Wagga Wagga was identified as one of the least disadvantaged.

Overall life expectancy in the MLHD is 83.9 years for females and 79.5 years for males, which is just over a year shorter than NSW. Hilltops LGA, Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA, and Temora LGA all had significantly lower life expectancy than NSW (MLHDD, 2019).

Hospital admissions

Approximately 350 residents are admitted to hospital daily in the MLHD. Junee LGA, Wagga Wagga LGA, Cootamundra Gundagai LGA, Temora LGA and Coolamon LGA all exhibited daily hospitalisation rates significantly higher than that of NSW. This indicates that local health services in these LGAs may experience higher demand for hospital beds and emergency services.

Injury deaths

Injury deaths are deaths that are potentially preventable and can include motor vehicle accidents, trips or falls and suicide. The leading causes of injury death in the MLHD varied for males and females with suicide making up 25 per cent of male injury deaths followed by motor vehicle transport deaths (23%) and falls (9.7%). For women falls accounted for 27 per cent of injury deaths, motor vehicle transport 21.5 per cent and “exposure to unspecified factor” 19 per cent.

The above data supports the feedback gained during the consultation process, which noted significant concern amongst stakeholders about mental health issues across the region. The high incidents of motor vehicle related deaths also correlates with the high proportion of people that commute to work by car, and the intraregional journeys they take.

Hilltops LGA was noted as experiencing one of the highest rates of injury death in the MLHD.

Motor vehicle injuries

Injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes made up seven per cent of all injury admissions in the MLHD in 2015–2016. Males make up an overwhelming proportion of these injuries at over 75 per cent. Hilltops LGA, Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA, Temora LGA and Coolamon LGA all exhibit higher rates of motor vehicle accident related injuries than NSW.

The high rates of motor vehicle rated injuries in the above mentioned LGAs is likely linked to the high prevalence of agricultural employment in the LGAs and the large distances workers travel to reach farms and properties each day.

Self-harm

Self-harm hospitalisations are directly linked to mental health outcomes and are the result of attempts at suicide or deliberate self-inflicted injuries. There were 520 admissions related to self-harm across the MLHD in 2016–2017.

As noted above, there is a relatively high incidence of suicide related injury deaths across the region, particularly in Hilltops LGA. Hilltops LGA also exhibits significantly higher rates of self-harm than NSW and the rest of the MLHD.

6.3 Regional transport networks

A comprehensive review of the existing transport network can be found in Technical Paper 3.

6.3.1 Existing road network

The regional study area is traversed by an extensive network of highways and state roads, providing access to the rest of NSW and Australia for passenger and freight services. Of relevance to the regional study area:

- The Olympic Highway runs through the townships of Young, Cootamundra, Junee and onward to Wagga and the small townships of Bethungra and Illabo in the local study area. The Olympic Highway commences in Cowra, NSW and runs through to Albury at the NSW-Victoria border.
- Burley Griffin Way is a state road that connects with the Olympic highway midway between Young and Cootamundra and runs through Stockinbingal in the local study area and onward to Temora. Burley Griffin Way commences at the Hume Highway in Browning, NSW and runs through to Griffith in NSW.
- Goldfields Way is a state road that connects Temora to Junee at the Olympic Highway. Goldfields Way commences at the Newell Highway in Wyalong and ends at the Olympic Highway in Junee.

Coolamon is not serviced by any major state roads or highways and relies on Ardlethan Road, Canola Way and Coolamon Road as the primary access point to the wider highway network.

The local and non-resident workers would heavily utilise these roads to access both the proposal site and accommodation and community services supplied in regional townships.

6.3.2 Existing rail facilities and operations

The existing rail network in the area includes the Main South Line, the Lake Cargelligo Line and the Stockinbingal-Parkes Line.

Illabo is located on the existing Main South Line that runs from Albury to Liverpool in Sydney. The Main South line continues north-east from Illabo through the Bethungra Spiral to Cootamundra and continues to Sydney.

The Lake Cargelligo Line branches north-west from Cootamundra and links to Stockinbingal and continues to Lake Cargelligo. The line is now primarily used for grain haulage and freight trains.

The Stockinbingal-Parkes Line (also known as the ‘Forbes’ line) runs north-south joining Stockinbingal to Parkes on the Main West line. No regular passenger services currently use the line, although the Main West line passenger services occasionally divert over the line when track work closes the main route. This line is part of the main route for goods trains travelling between Sydney and the west of NSW as it allows freight to bypass the Blue Mountains from Cootamundra to Parkes. The Illabo and Stockinbingal stations are no longer in use as passenger stations.

6.3.3 Passenger services

The Cootamundra and Junee railway stations remain open to passengers travelling on the Main South line. However, neither the Illabo nor Stockinbingal stations currently service passengers. NSW TrainLink operates two services a day in each direction between Sydney and Melbourne along the line. Daily passenger rail services operate between Junee and Cootamundra, traversing through Illabo via a rail line adjacent the Olympic Highway.

Daily passenger and school bus services operate between Junee and Wagga. These services operate along the Olympic Highway.

6.3.4 Active transport networks

There is no dedicated pedestrian or cycling infrastructure in the regional study area.

6.3.5 Journey to work

A formal survey of worker travel behaviour was not undertaken as part of the SIA assessment. Several respondents to the SIA survey (described in section 5.2.2 of this report), indicated they lived in a nearby town rather than the town in which they worked. The towns they travelled from were on average 30–60 minutes away.

Table 6.25 details the mode of travel to work across the regional study area at the time of the 2016 Census. As expected for a regional area, motor vehicle is the dominant mode of transport to work with over 70 per cent of workers travelling to work by car. The high rates of motor vehicle usage across the study area, and relatively high regional mobility identified through consultation indicate that regional study area residents would be highly reliant on the regional highway and state road network to travel to work.

There is a high proportion of home-based workers in all LGA's except for Wagga Wagga, which likely correlates with the strong agricultural sector in the region, and the number of home based farm managers and workers.

Table 6.25 Method of travel to work, 2016

Location	Car as driver (per cent)	Car as passenger	Work from home	Public transport
Coolamon LGA	63.6	4.7	11.3	0.8
Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	66.4	5.8	7.6	0.6
Hilltops LGA	63.6	5.0	9.1	0.4
Junee LGA	62.8	7.3	10.6	0.6
Temora LGA	62.2	4.2	11	0.7
Wagga Wagga LGA	71.5	5.7	4.0	0.6
Regional study area	65.0	5.5	8.9	0.6
NSW	57.8	4.3	4.8	16.0

Source: ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) 2016

6.4 Social infrastructure

Social infrastructure in the regional study area has been identified in the context of servicing workforce training, health and lifestyle demands. As such, the following analysis identifies hospitals and healthcare facilities (section 6.4.1) and tertiary and vocational education providers (section 6.4.2).

6.4.1 Hospitals and healthcare facilities

6.4.1.1 Hospitals and medical facilities

The regional study area is well supplied with a range of health and medical facilities of varying sizes and capacities. All service communities feature a purpose-built health service with inpatient and emergency consultation capabilities.

Wagga Wagga as the principal regional service centre for the Murrumbidgee Local Health District host the largest hospital at 325 beds. The Wagga Wagga Health Service is a referral hospital and absorbs critical care and complex cases from the surrounding smaller health services.

The regional study area also features a range of mental health outpatient and inpatient treatment services to service the high levels of mental health injury cases noted in section 6.2.12.

An overview of these facilities and the services offered at each is provided in Table 6.26.

Table 6.26 Hospitals and medical facilities within the regional study area

Facility	Capacity	Services
Junee Multipurpose Service	38 beds (30 are residential aged care)	Indigenous health services, Aboriginal sustained home visiting program, aged care services, child protection counselling service, child wellbeing coordinator, community care intake, critical care advisory, dental health, diabetes, domestic violence, lunch health, mental health emergency consultation, mental health, nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, palliative care, patient flow unit and patient transport, physiotherapy, violence prevention and response support, women's health nurse team.
Temora Health Service	28 beds (5 are maternity)	Indigenous health, aged care, child protection counselling, child wellbeing coordinator, community care intake, critical care advisory, dental health, diabetes, domestic violence, drug and alcohol, lung health, maternity, mental health emergency consultation, mental health, nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, palliative care, patient flow unit and patient transport, physiotherapy, violence prevention and response support, women's health nurse team.
The Cootamundra Hospital	30 beds (3 are maternity)	Indigenous health services, aged care, Aunty Jeans program, care coordination, child protection counselling, child wellbeing coordinator, community care intake service, critical care advisory, diabetes, domestic violence, lung health, maternity, mental health emergency consultation, mental health, nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, palliative care, patient flow unit and patient transport, violence prevention and response support.
Young Health Service	32 beds (21 hospital care beds, 5 maternity beds and 6 day surgery chairs)	Indigenous Health Services, Aged Care Services, Aunty Jeans Program, Child, Protection Counselling Service (CPCS), Child Wellbeing Coordinator (CWC), Community Care Intake Service, Community Care Nursing Service, Critical Care Advisory Service (CCAS), Dental (Oral) Health Services, Diabetes Services, Domestic Violence, Drug and Alcohol Services, Lung (Respiratory) Health Service, Maternity and Parenting Services, Mental Health Emergency Consultation Service, Mental Health Services, Nutrition and Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Palliative Care, Patient Flow Unit & Patient Transport Services, Patient Transport Services, Pharmacy Services, Physiotherapy Services, Violence Prevention and Response Support Services, Women's Health Nurse Team.
Coolamon-Ganmain Multipurpose Service	14 Beds (2 Hospital care, 12 Aged Care)	Indigenous Health Services, Aboriginal Sustained Home Visiting Program, Aged Care Services, Care Coordination Service, Child Protection Counselling Service (CPCS), Child Wellbeing Coordinator (CWC), Community Care Intake Service, Community Care Nursing Service, Critical Care Advisory Service (CCAS), Diabetes Services, Domestic Violence, Lung (Respiratory) Health Service, Mental Health, Emergency Consultation Service, Mental Health Services, Nutrition and Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Palliative Care, Patient Flow Unit & Patient Transport Services, Patient Transport Services, Violence Prevention and Response Support Services, Women's Health Nurse Team.
Wagga Wagga Health Service	325 Bed referral and critical care hospital	Indigenous Health Services, Acute Inpatient Services, Aged Care Services, Care Coordination Service, Child Protection Counselling Service (CPCS), Child Wellbeing Coordinator (CWC), Community Care Intake Service, Community Care Nursing Service, COVID-19 Vaccination, Critical Care Advisory Service (CCAS), Dental (Oral) Health Services, Diabetes Services, Domestic Violence, Drug and Alcohol Services, Kidney and Renal Services, Lung (Respiratory) Health Service, Maternity and Parenting Services, Medical Imaging, Mental Health Emergency Consultation Service, Mental Health Services, Metabolic Obesity Service, Nutrition and Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Palliative Care, Patient Flow Unit & Patient Transport Services, Patient Transport Services, Pharmacy Services, Physiotherapy Services, Recovery Unit, Tuberculosis Services, Violence Prevention and Response Support Services.

Facility	Capacity	Services
Specialist health care		
Victoria Street Surgery (Temora)	Drop in clinic	General Practice, podiatry.
Cootamundra Community Health Centre	Drop in clinic	Indigenous Health Services, Aged Care Services, Care Coordination Service, Child Protection Counselling Service (CPCS), Child Wellbeing Coordinator (CWC), Community Care Intake Service, Community Care Nursing Service, Dental (Oral), Health Services, Diabetes Services, Domestic Violence, Lung (Respiratory) Health Service, Mental Health Services, Nutrition and Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Palliative Care, Violence Prevention and Response Support Services, Women's Health Nurse Team.
Temora Medical Complex	Drop in clinic	Home visits, minor surgery, travel vaccinations, family planning, health assessments, counselling, medical reports, nutrition advice, cardiograms, pregnancy care, treatment for sunspots, pap smears, chronic disease management, treatment for skin cancers, pilot medicals, onsite pathology.
Mercy Care Centre Young	Drop in clinic	Mercy Care Centre Young is a 26-bed health service providing a range of outpatient, community health and aged care services for the people of Young and surrounding regions.
Junee Medical & Dental Centre	Drop in clinic	General Practice, dietician service, dental service, immunisation.
Wagga Wagga Community Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Service - O'Reilly Street	Drop in clinic	The O'Reilly Street facility is home to the Wagga Wagga Specialist Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Service which provides specialist assessment and support to people experiencing severe or complex mental health issues and those with drug and alcohol dependency.

6.4.1.2 Emergency services

Emergency services provision across the regional study area is primarily concentrated in the major service centres of Young, Cootamundra, Junee, Wagga Wagga, Coolamon and Temora. Each service centre hosts a Police Station, Fire Station and Ambulance Station.

The State Emergency Service Murrumbidgee-Southern Zone covers most of the regional study area, with the Southern Zone Headquarters located in Wagga Wagga. Smaller local units are located in Coolamon, Cootamundra, Gundagai. Junee and Temora.

6.4.2 Tertiary and vocational education

There are a range of tertiary and vocational training providers in the regional study area delivering a range of training programs of relevance to the proposal.

Charles Sturt University is the only university located in the regional study area, with the Headquarters and principal campus located in Wagga Wagga. Charles Sturt University is a specialist regional University, with campuses spread across regional NSW.

Courses provided in Wagga Wagga mainly focus on business, humanities and health sciences, with courses available in:

- accounting
- business and management
- creative industries
- early childhood and primary, K-12 education
- equine science
- medical radiation sciences
- oral health
- psychology and social science.

It is considered that regional study area resident likely travel to Sydney, Canberra or another regional centre to undertake tertiary studies in Engineering or similar disciplines.

There are five TAFE campuses also located in the regional study area:

- TAFE NSW Young Campus
- TAFE NSW Temora Campus
- TAFE NSW Cootamundra Campus
- TAFE NSW Primary Industries Centre (Wagga Wagga)
- TAFE NSW Wagga Wagga Campus.

The five campuses offer a range of courses in varying disciplines including health, community services, business, project management, construction, automotive and mechanical services, fabrication, and hospitality services.

Of relevance to the proposal, the Young, Cootamundra and Wagga Wagga campuses offer Certificate three and four level courses in construction trades, fabrication technology and worksite safety. The three campuses also deliver short courses relevant to machinery operation necessary to attain construction white cards and machinery tickets.

6.5 Social infrastructure in proximity to proposal site

There are a number of examples of social infrastructure that are located in proximity to the proposal site.

Table 6.27 Social infrastructure and proximity to proposal site

Land use	Location	Approximate minimum distance from proposal footprint (m)
Passive Recreation	Stockinbingal Cemetery	300
Place of Worship	St Joseph's Catholic Church	500
Place of Worship	St James Anglican Church	550
Active Recreation	Britannia St Tennis Courts	250
Active Recreation	Stockinbingal Bowling Club	100
Active Recreation	Stockinbingal Racecourse	750
Active Recreation	Stockinbingal Public School	300
Education	Stockinbingal Public School	300

7 Social impact assessment – construction

This section provides a detailed description and assessment of the potential social impacts that may eventuate as a result of construction of the proposal. The following analysis has been completed in accordance with the relevant guidance methodology described in section 3.2.

Overall, the following causes of social impacts are expected to be experienced by stakeholder groups in the social locality:

- employment opportunities for local workforce
- presence of the temporary construction workforce in local townships
- construction and non-construction workforce accommodation requirement
- land requirements for the proposal which would affect livelihoods, health and wellbeing for landowners along the proposal site
- construction activities leading to changes to local amenity, access and mobility.

The sections below describe the potential social impacts resulting from these drivers of social change, according to each social impact area.

7.1 Way of life

7.1.1 Employment and economic impacts

The proposal is expected to result in local and regional employment and economic benefits during the construction phase. The extent of local economic benefit is derived from Technical Paper 12 – Economic (Technical paper 12), the existing social environment analysis in Chapter 6 and qualitative findings from community and stakeholder engagement in Chapter 5.

7.1.1.1 Construction workforce

During the construction period, the construction workforce will fluctuate depending on the type of construction activity being undertaken and the final staging strategy adopted.

This analysis applies the following input assumptions:

- proposal is anticipated to commence construction in mid-2024, subject to planning and approvals
- construction will take approximately 24 months
- construction workforce numbers will fluctuate according to demand with a peak of approximately 425 people expected to be active during late December 2024 and January 2025
- construction workforce numbers will remain above 300 from November 2024 through to May 2025.

Figure 7.1 shows the forecast construction workforce numbers during the construction program. The core construction workforce will consist of professional staff, supervisors, trade workers and plant operators, with earthworks crews, bridge structure teams, capping and track-works crews working at different periods through the construction phase.

Local resources would be utilised as much as possible, accounting for current labour market conditions, skills and availability (refer section 7.1.1.3).

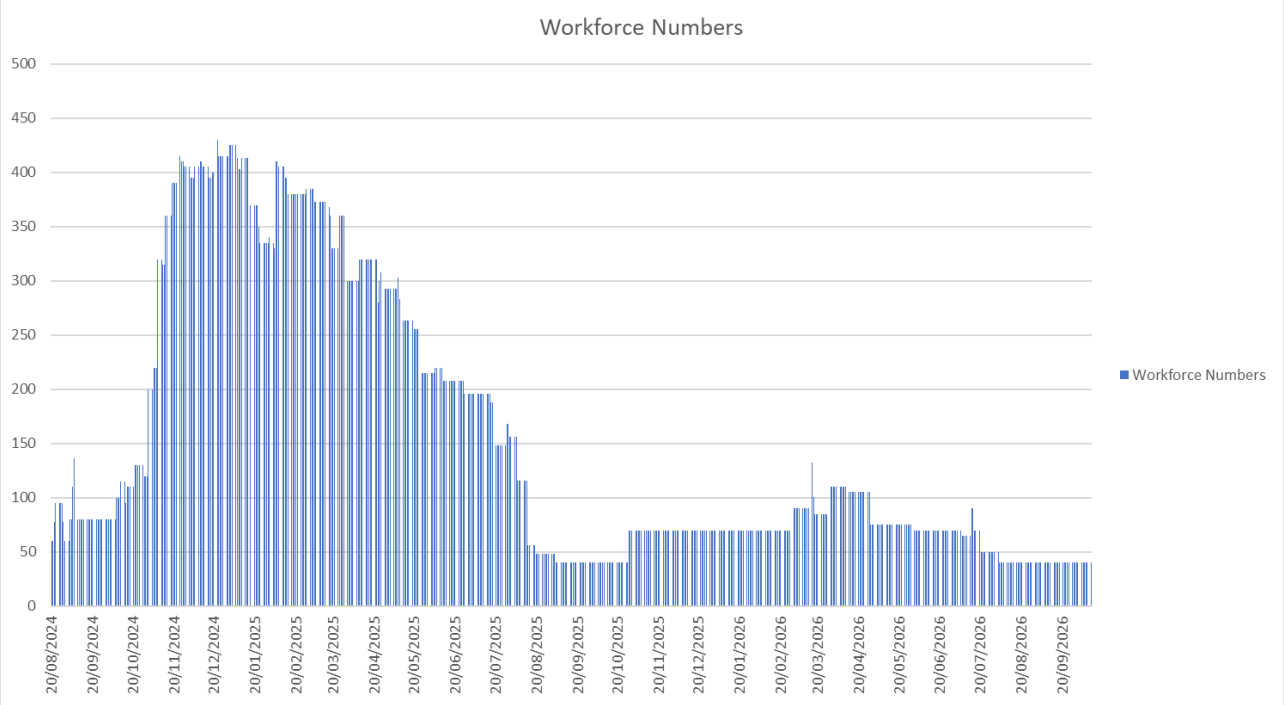

Figure 7.1 Proposed I2S construction workforce numbers

7.1.1.2 Non-construction workers

ARTC anticipates a small number of workers (approximately 20 who are not considered part of the construction workforce) will be present during the construction phase. Of these, five would be considered part of the ARTC core project management team and would use private accommodation in the local study area for a period of 18-24 months. The remaining 15 workers (ARTC managed technical specialists who will conduct site visits along the proposal site) will reside in temporary accommodation within the local study area (refer section 7.1.3).

7.1.1.3 Local direct employment

Technical Paper 12 reports that local employment is based on labour market conditions, skills availability, and local workforce training and participation programs to support Indigenous and youth employment. ARTC considers local employment to be any person whose principal place of residence is located in any local government areas within an approximately 125km radius of a project corridor (local employment region). For this SIA, the local employment region comprises the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Coolamon Shire, Hilltops Shire, Junee Shire, Temora Shire and the City of Wagga Wagga.

December 2020 Small Area Labour Markets data identifies a potential local labour force of 58,260 located in the local employment region. Further, employment statistics for the 2016 Census identified 3,603 persons who work in the construction industry in the local labour force. However, of these, only 311 work in the heavy and civil construction sector, possessing the skills and knowledge most relevant to the construction of the proposal. Overall, 311 workers represent a negligible proportion of the total local labour force (0.5%).

The local employment region features an average unemployment rate of 4.7 per cent, lower than the NSW rate of 6.0 per cent (December 2020). 4.7 per cent represents approximately 3,087 unemployed persons that make up the available local labour pool. Given the current conditions of the local labour market, including relatively low unemployment rates, it is considered that the majority of unemployed persons likely represent low-skilled or no-skilled candidates. It is considered unlikely that there would be a considerable proportion of local unemployed persons who also possess the heavy civil and construction skills relevant to support the majority of roles necessary to deliver the proposal.

Analysis of possible workforce composition for the proposal identifies the bulk of positions being of skilled roles, or those requiring some level of technical skill or Plant Operator/Machine Operator Ticket. Employment data for the Parkes to Narromine (P2N) section of Inland Rail notes that approximately 15 per cent of the total workforce were labourer roles. While not all labourers are unskilled, these roles represent the bulk of unskilled direct employment opportunities on the project. However, it is necessary to note that the P2N section was also longer than the proposal and predominantly consisted of track upgrade works, a construction methodology supported by a larger unskilled workforce.

Based on similar approaches in other Inland Rail projects, it could be considered that up to approximately 64 (15%) of the 425 roles at peak could be filled using the local labour pool over the construction lifecycle, and 361 (85%) workers at peak would need to be sourced from outside the local area. However, given current local employment conditions and the complex nature of the proposed construction methodology, it is considered likely that the number of external workers would likely be higher due to the technical requirements of the project. Therefore, a more conservative assumption of ten per cent local workforce during low demand months (August to October 2024 and June 2025 to October 2026) and 15 per cent local workforce during high demand months (November 2024 to May 2025) has been adopted for this study.

Table 7.1 shows the peak workforce and estimated non-local workforce numbers during the construction period based on the 10–15 per cent local workforce rates. This indicates that up to approximately **64** of the 425 roles at peak could be filled using the local labour pool over the construction lifecycle, and **361** workers at peak would need to be sourced from outside the local (regional) area.

Table 7.1 Non-local workforce numbers

Month and year	Peak workforce	Non-local peak workforce
Aug-24	95	85
Sep-24	136	122
Oct-24	130	117
Nov-24	415	353
Dec-24	425	361
Jan-25	425	361
Feb-25	410	348
Mar-25	385	327
Apr-25	320	288
May-25	303	272
Jun-25	220	198
Jul-25	196	176
Aug-25	156	140
Sep-25	48	43
Oct-25	70	63
Nov-25	70	63
Dec-25	70	63
Jan-26	70	63
Feb-26	70	63
Mar-26	133	119

Month and year	Peak workforce	Non-local peak workforce
Apr-26	110	99
May-26	75	67
Jun-26	70	63
Jul-26	90	81
Aug-26	50	45
Sep-26	40	36
Oct-26	40	36

The opportunity for employment in the proposal's construction workforce would be highly beneficial for improving the levels of financial and social wellbeing of individuals and their families. Section 6.2.12 of this report notes that household income acts as an indicator for wellbeing when combined with other factors such as participation in the local community and improved health outcomes. Vulnerable groups identified in the local study area in the context of potential employment opportunities during construction of the proposal are women, Indigenous people and people aged under 25 years old.

7.1.1.4 Local indirect employment

In terms of aspirations, some landowners adjoining the rail line at Illabo and Stockinbingal, and their nearby communities, anticipate positive outcomes from the construction period. Landowners see temporary disruption with a broader benefit for the local area and region, as do non-farming residents. Some see opportunity for temporary injection of money into their local economy from catering and accommodation, which might help them achieve local goals. Others see opportunity for enterprising business to gain work and experience on a large infrastructure project.

Stimulation of business up the supply chain would create indirect employment opportunities in occupations such as engineering and consulting (e.g. feasibility assessment) during project planning, and in the supply chain for construction materials during the proposal's construction. Technical Paper 12 states that the industrial and consumption effects of the proposal could lead to indirect jobs due to the upstream and downstream linkages between the proposal's activities and the rest of the economy. Upstream jobs may include manufacturers and suppliers of industry inputs, while downstream jobs may include the provision of inputs to other sectors and the expenditure patterns of employees.

7.1.2 Skills development and training

The Inland Rail Skills Academy (the Academy) was launched in August 2019 with the aim of creating opportunities in education, skills development, training and employment for communities affected by the project. The Academy itself is not and Registered Training Organisation (RTO), rather it provides a pathway to potential employment opportunities and partners with Councils, State Government, RTOs, LALCs and local employment services to support people interested in working on Inland Rail.

The desired outcomes of the Academy are to:

- increase the size of the local eligible workforce for Inland Rail projects
- increase school student awareness and capability
- open up new local supply chains for businesses in the local areas along the Inland Rail corridor
- provide Inland Rail employees with top-level skills.

Training and skills development initiatives across the entire Inland Rail program could provide opportunities for upskilled workers to apply for positions across different sections of the project.

Industry standards will be met by providing the eligible workers with White Card accreditation and rail competency training. Trainees would also develop a greater understanding of recruitment processes on major infrastructure projects which could result in future employment opportunities. Tailored programs that form part of the Academy relate to:

- training, upskilling and capacity building of potential employees
- awarding undergraduate scholarships commencing studies at the University of Southern Queensland, Charles Sturt University and La Trobe University
- workshops for primary and secondary STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) students and professional development opportunities for teachers of STEM subjects
- ARTC and Australasian Railway Association partnership.

As identified in Chapter 6 of this report there is a skills shortage in the regional study area in disciplines that may be relevant to the construction of the proposal. The skills development and training provided during construction through the Academy would contribute to some workers' ability to diversify their skillset to obtain broader employment opportunities. Once a worker has completed their role on the proposal, they could transfer those skills to other construction projects or opportunities in the social locality, increasing the potential to contribute to cumulative and long-term economic benefits.

7.1.3 Housing and accommodation

The separate assessment of accommodation details regional accommodation options and potential capacity issues relevant to the proposal.

There would be both construction (peaking at approximately 425 personnel) and non-construction (generally management and technical professional personnel) workforce (approximately 20 personnel) required for the proposal during the construction phase.

The assessment of accommodation concluded that there is currently insufficient supply in both the private rental and short-term accommodation market to satisfy this demand, as described further in section 6.2.11.

For the construction workforce, one workforce accommodation camp is included as part of the proposal to be located on private land north of and in proximity to Stockinbingal, with a conservative total of 450 beds. An allowance of 450 beds is recommended for surge capacity. Surge capacity relates to the ability to obtain adequate workers to meet any unforeseen requirements of the construction phase. The additional 25 bed allowance is a risk mitigation.

Appendix I of the EIS provides a separate assessment of the camp, including evidence of consultation, the location, layout and proposed services, and associated social impact assessment.

Of the non-construction workforce, 15 would be considered short-term visitors to the proposal site (ARTC managed technical specialists) and the remaining 5 would be longer-term residents in the local study area (ARTC core project management staff). All 20 non-construction workforce will require long term or temporary accommodation within the local study area and are not anticipated be housed in the workforce accommodation camp (explained further in section 7.1.3.1 and 7.1.3.2).

The following sections further outline the justification for a workforce accommodation camp during construction.

7.1.3.1 Private rental market

Current social trends such as strong regional migration and improved economic conditions resulting from increased agricultural conditions and local development have resulted in a highly competitive private rental market.

Construction workforce

ARTC would utilise a workforce accommodation camp rather than the private rental market to house the proposal construction workforce (up to 361 non-local workers at peak), as any further demand would likely constrain supply and increase prices.

If the construction workforce were to use the private rental market, potential price increase would most likely impact vulnerable and low-income residents who would be unable to compete in a competitive rental market. This may create housing stress for these tenants. Further, removing available private rental stock from the market to satisfy relatively short workforce demand could result in potential new residents missing out on a property, excluding some community members from potential long-term employment opportunities and income generation which contributes to social capital. Increased prices may also force some existing tenants to relocate to more inexpensive properties.

Non-construction workforce

Approximately 5 non-construction personnel would constitute the core Inland Rail project management team (ARTC staff) during the construction phase. ARTC would seek long-term rental accommodation for these workers for a period of 18-24 months. ARTC would be responsible for monitoring the impact on the rental market with particular reference to any material price increase with subsequent reported displacement of local residents seeking rental properties.

Based on analysis presented in section 6.2.10.4, the highest vacancy rate for private residential rental properties was found in Cootamundra, Illabo and surrounds. However, given the much larger population, the highest number of vacant rental properties was found in Wagga Wagga albeit more expensive.

It is anticipated that the private rental market would be able to service the small number of non-construction personnel with minimal impact.

7.1.3.2 Short-term accommodation market

The separate assessment of accommodation notes that there are 1,354 rooms in the study area located in Hotels, Motels, Pubs, Apartments, BnBs and Caravan Parks. A detailed breakdown of rooms across the study area is provided in section 6.2.11.1. Key findings of the assessment of accommodation included:

- consultation with regional accommodation providers indicated strong demand for short-term accommodation by seasonal agricultural workers during the Spring/early Summer and Autumn months. Many indicated occupancy rates around 80–100 per cent during these periods
- consultation with Wagga Wagga accommodation providers indicated relatively stable occupancy rates across the year, with minor peaks around major events and holiday times.

Table 7.2 shows the estimated occupancy rates across the regional study area as outlined in the assessment of accommodation, taking into account tourism data, seasonal worker demand and major events. These are conservative estimates based on a range of data sources including ABS regional tourism data and consultation with accommodation providers.

Table 7.2 Estimated occupancy rates

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Study area (excl Wagga)	60%	70%	80%	70%	60%	40%	40%	60%	80%	90%	90%	80%
Wagga Wagga	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%

Table 7.3 shows the estimated number of available rooms across the regional study area during the calendar year based on estimated average occupancy rates noted above. The lowest availability period is during October and November, where approximately 205 rooms would be available in the study area. The lowest demand period is during the winter months of June and July when approximately 672 rooms would be available.

Table 7.3 Estimated available rooms

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Study area (excl Wagga)	196	196	131	196	262	392	392	262	131	65	65	131
Wagga Wagga	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
Total rooms available	**406**	**406**	**341**	**406**	**472**	**602**	**602**	**472**	**341**	**275**	**275**	**341**

Construction workforce

Workforce accommodation demand would fluctuate as the construction program progresses and will be further refined as the project progresses. However, high level forecasts indicate that accommodation demand would exceed 300 beds from November 2024 through to March 2025, peaking at 361 beds in December 2024 and January 2025. Given the above noted room availability forecasts, there is considered to be insufficient supply in the short-term accommodation market to satisfy workforce demand. If ARTC were to absorb all available capacity, there would be a peak gap in supply of 20 rooms in December 2024.

Safe Work Australia has outlined minimum standards for worker accommodation, which would require excluding the majority of pub-based accommodation options in the regional study area if applied. This would reduce the total stock to 1,222 rooms. Based on the forecast demand noted above, should ARTC utilise all available stock once pub accommodation is removed it would result in a peak gap in supply of 153 rooms in December 2024.

It is evident that there is currently strong demand for short-term accommodation in the regional study area. Consultation with accommodation providers in 2021 identified that while there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposal workforce in low season, there is significant demand during peak seasons that constrains accommodation supply. Further, many local providers have also existing contractual arrangements with other companies to withhold stock from the market to satisfy their workforce demands.

Should ARTC absorb all available capacity it would result in constrained supply across the regional study area, which may impact seasonal workers and local tourism operators. These impacts could be exacerbated if improved agricultural conditions result in increased accommodation demands by seasonal workers and tourism growth continues resulting in greater demand from leisure travellers.

ARTC will therefore develop a workforce accommodation camp (with 450 beds) to avoid housing the peak non-local construction workforce in either the private rental or short-term accommodation markets based on the risk to displacement of vulnerable or low-income groups looking for rentals, or tourists seeking accommodation (refer Appendix I).

Non-construction workforce

Approximately 15 non-construction personnel would constitute ARTC managed technical specialists during the construction phase. These workers would require short-term accommodation in the local study area during site visits. Depending on the timing of the site visits (with the worst-case scenario being all 15 workers requiring accommodation at the same time), seeking short-term accommodation for these workers may place pressure on the short-term accommodation market and affect availability for tourists or other visitors to the area. It is recommended that ARTC and the principal contractor should monitor the availability of accommodation options and if constraints are identified, identify an alternative accommodation option.

7.1.4 How people get around their community

How people move through their community shapes their way of life and influences their health and wellbeing. The preferred form of travel is private vehicle as public transport is limited, though some public transport via coach and train is available. A private vehicle is the most practical way to travel the distances required to reach services not offered locally. For this reason, it is important to assess the impact the proposal would have on connectivity to go about their daily lives.

Temporary detours at local roads due to construction activities may lead to some increased travel times and disruption of journeys for community members and agricultural landowners, which may cause stress and frustration. Detours and increased travel time have consequences for emergency services who have requested continuous communication throughout construction to retain the ability to efficiently and safely respond to call-outs.

Given the low volume of pedestrian and cyclist activity in the social locality, and the location of the proposal, significant impacts on pedestrian and cyclist accessibility and connectivity are not expected during construction.

SIA consultation with communities, local government, emergency services and the affected landowners residing in the social locality highlighted that safety on local roads is highly valued. Community members showed clear interest in seeing safety improvements involving existing train level crossings. Landowners indicated concern about their ability to continue to safely move large machinery between paddocks if they had to use the local road network. Based on Rural Fire Service (RFS) feedback relating to their requirements during the 70% reference design consultation phase, ARTC committed to the relocation of the Rail Maintenance Access Road (RMAR) so access and safety is ensured.

Construction of the proposal would entail increased heavy and light vehicle movements on local roads. Whilst vehicles will remain within the construction corridor as much as possible, there would still be requirements to use public roads.

Traffic routes to the proposal construction site from local towns include:

- Burley Griffith Way
- Old Cootamundra Road
- Stockinbingal Road
- Dirnaseer Road
- Retreat Road
- Junee Reefs Road
- Olympic Highway
- Old Sydney Road
- Goldfields Way.

Overall the local road network would be capable of absorbing construction traffic with minimal impact. Technical Paper 3 identified the following potential impacts to traffic and transport along these roads:

- major construction vehicle movements associated with earthworks and materials and workforce traffic with potential impacts to road safety, increasing risk of traffic incidents, especially within the higher risk crash zones (Junee, Temora and Cootamundra town centres)
- road dilapidation and traffic delays associated with construction works including Burley Griffin Way road overpass and level crossing upgrade to Dudauman Street, Stockinbingal
- construction work related to tie-in with existing rail operations on the north and south ends of the proposal site
- realignment of Burley Griffin Way with potential impacts of detours and traffic control
- severance of the road network
- transportation of workforces whether as individuals or groups from townships in the local study area
- impacts to private property access along Old Sydney Road and other major traffic routes.

7.1.4.1 Transportation for construction workers

Technical Paper 3 assessed a worse-case scenario where workforce trips to the site are assumed to be via private vehicles with car parking through the various compound sites. This would increase local traffic levels, however, Technical Paper 3 has indicated that the level of service of local roads would not be adversely impacted.

The impact of transporting construction workers is expected to be minor during non-peak times and moderate at peak periods with daily construction commencing between 5am and 7am and construction finish between 5pm and 7pm. The resulting increase in traffic within the town centres of neighbouring Cootamundra, Junee and Temora, would cause a slight rise in the potential for traffic accidents. Further assessment of impacts associated with workforce transport to and from the workforce accommodation camp are discussed in Appendix I.

7.2 Community

Community changes are likely to be experienced across the social locality and to a lesser extent the region. The social locality is known for its strong community connection and sense of place. The construction period would have the most impact on the social locality due to temporary changes in population from the influx of workers. After the construction period community and cohesion is likely to return to the existing status with some additional benefits.

7.2.1 Community cohesion and character

A social impact associated with the temporary construction workforce relates to the inherent, albeit temporary, change to the social make-up of the social locality across age, gender and workforce participation. The temporary increase in working aged people (15–64 years), predominantly males and non-residents may lead to an altered sense of community, experienced both positively for some people and negatively for others. This may be compounded by the presence of workforces from other projects underway concurrently in the social locality.

For the 24-month construction period, Junee, Cootamundra, Wagga and Young may notice a small temporary increase in people moving around the area. The temporary increase in local people movement would most likely occur in the larger towns such as Wagga Wagga, Young and Cootamundra. There may be influx to smaller towns such as Illabo and Stockinbingal and these towns may experience the effect of population change more acutely.

SIA Consultation indicated most residents were welcoming of new people to the area and there was optimism associated with increases in population, opportunities for employment, and the ability to maintain and attract young local people. Community vitality and support would likely be supported through participation in local activities and clubs over the construction period, with potential increases in participation. Among most stakeholder groups there are strong positive perceptions associated with the proposal in terms of economic benefit and the social benefits this brings.

Community groups, especially sporting organisations, were hopeful that a number of the construction workers would participate in local clubs and sports. Many community groups are keen to make any addition to the town feel welcome and asked to be included in the planning and induction of workers to inform them of the opportunities available whilst they are in the area. A number of people interviewed also hoped that workers having a positive experience might be inclined to settle in the area.

As noted in section 6.2.12, there are varying patterns of socio-economic disadvantage exhibited across the social locality. It will therefore be important for the principal contractor to monitor the effect of the temporary influx of workers is having on the local communities.

Community cohesion impacts associated with the workforce accommodation camp are discussed in Appendix I of the EIS.

7.2.2 Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour has the potential to increase crime and adversely influence community perceptions of safety (McAtamney and Morgan, 2009). Potential occurrences of anti-social behaviour may be more likely in the vicinity to town centres where night life is more prevalent. 2019 SIA consultation reported incidents of construction personnel from nearby and recent projects becoming intoxicated and ‘causing trouble’, which may generate community concerns for the future construction workforce for the proposal.

7.2.3 Sense of place impacts

Due to the greenfield nature of the proposal, there will be significant changes to the rural nature of the visual landscape around the proposal site. The rural amenity associated with a quiet rural lifestyle may be particularly impacted during the construction phase of the proposal.

Depending on the distance of the construction activities from individual homes located on private properties along the proposal site, the existing views of rural landscapes will be affected. All practical attempts should be made to ensure that the visual disturbance of construction compounds does not adversely affect the sense of place enjoyed by local community members, particularly directly affected landowners along the proposal site. Due to the linear nature of the proposal, construction activities would move as construction progresses, therefore it is expected that construction-related visual impacts would be relatively short-term in nature, approximately 24-months.

During construction, residents along the proposal site may experience a loss of privacy due to the presence of a construction workforce in and around private properties, which may generate perceived safety and privacy concerns for affected landowners.

This impact is investigated further in section 7.6.

7.3 Accessibility

7.3.1 Access to community services and facilities

Existing community facilities, services and networks which help individuals, families, groups and communities meet their social needs, maximise their potential for development, and enhance community wellbeing would experience a minor impact during the construction of the proposal.

The increase in population associated with non-resident workforces may create a small increase in demand for existing services and infrastructure, including sport and recreation facilities and health and emergency services. Ongoing consultation with local councils and service providers will be required to identify future demand and supply of social infrastructure and services. It would be essential to consider changes that may arise with the expansion or contraction of the proposal workforce.

A key issue in parts of the social locality is attracting and maintaining medical staff and doctors. An increase in population associated with construction would likely increase pressure on medical services and facilities. The potential for outbreaks of illness or major accidents that can be associated with construction workforces, would require additional planning and resourcing.

SIA Consultation indicates that some aged care facilities and childcare services are at capacity, but this is unlikely to be affected through increases in non-resident workforces as the majority would be single and of working age. However, consideration should be given to attracting women in trade positions to be part of the local workforce, and whether assistance with childcare (if still at capacity) or flexible working arrangement would facilitate this. Schools and educational facilities are unlikely to be impacted, however further engagement is required to ensure local services can support and facilitate training and apprenticeships in the lead up to construction.

Impacts associated with access to community services and facilities in relation to the workforce residing at the workforce accommodation camp have been described in Appendix I of the EIS.

7.3.2 Access for emergency services

ARTC has refined the proposal in consultation with emergency services providers. The crossing loop and Rail Maintenance Access Road (RMAR) was changed from west side of the alignment at request of the RFS and Junee Shire Council to improve emergency fire access to the Bethungra Ranges.

Emergency services would continue to be consulted during planning and construction to ensure they have safe and efficient access throughout the social locality in case of an emergency. This issue was also raised in consultation with stakeholders as it is perceived as a risk to public safety if emergency services experienced restricted access throughout the local and regional study areas. Particular reference was made to firefighting.

Based on consultation outcomes with emergency services providers it is not anticipated that emergency response times would be impacted during construction of the proposal. Providers did raise concerns about the ability for services to attend to call-outs should their access be inhibited as a result of construction work or operations. However, both ARTC and local providers committed to maintaining continual open communication to mitigate potential impacts to service provision.

7.4 Culture

The proposal site exists on Wiradjuri land. The proposal falls within the Wagga Wagga and Young Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) areas. Technical Paper 7 details the required investigations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage for the proposal.

7.4.1 Aboriginal cultural heritage impacts

The proposal site has been subject to significant disturbance as this area has been impacted by historical and current agricultural practices which are likely to have resulted in the removal/relocation of archaeological evidence that may have been present. An evaluation of landscape features that indicate the potential existence of Aboriginal objects or places was undertaken (refer to Chapter 14 (Groundwater) of the EIS).

Scarred trees and ring trees identified in close proximity to the study area were determined to hold significance as tangible indicators of traditional marking of the landscape, the procurement of resources and other ceremonial activities. Technical Paper 8 – Noise and Vibration (construction) (Technical Paper 8) identified the scarred trees located near Ironbong Road and separately to the north-west of Stockinbingal as Aboriginal heritage receivers for vibration impacts. The presence of two scarred trees within the general vicinity conveys the significance of the landscape to the local Indigenous community.

Technical Paper 7 included research, survey and test excavation investigations in consultation with the local Registered Aboriginal Parties to determine if Aboriginal cultural objects were present, and to establish the nature and extent of any archaeological evidence that may exist relating to Aboriginal occupation of the area. The investigation found that the proposal crosses an Aboriginal cultural landscape which retains archaeological and cultural evidence of Aboriginal occupation. In particular the landforms around Billabong and Ulandra Creeks have archaeological sites which indicate the repeated use of the landscape over a lengthy period of time. The southern portion of the proposal holds artefacts of Aboriginal cultural significance that may be impacted during construction of the proposal. Bethungra was cited as an area of cultural

significance by the Mawang Galway Elders Group during 2021 SIA consultation. Bethungra is 15 kilometres north east of Illabo in the southern portion of the proposal site.

Overall Technical Paper 7 identified that the study area is considered to have a low level of significance, mainly through its cultural value to the local Aboriginal community and based on some of its low-key indicators of scientific significance. The archaeological sites within the study area are of significance to the local Aboriginal community as a tangible demonstration and connection to the understanding that this landscape was used by Aboriginal people in the past. Intangible connections are associated with the plains to the west of the Bethungra Ranges which are a significant area for the Wiradjuri people. The river systems across these plains provided resources in support of the cultural activity in nearby areas such as the ranges.

Connection to history and culture are highly valued by the Wiradjuri People and was raised during consultation. Any harm that may occur to identified artefacts during construction activities would threaten the intangible connection to Country and cultural obligation to care for Country for the local Indigenous population.

Measures have been proposed to address any impacts to cultural value as outlined in Appendix D.

7.4.2 Non-Aboriginal culture impacts

The Stockinbingal Heritage Conservation Area includes the Stockinbingal Railway Station, Kurrajong trees and waterfalls. Other local heritage items located adjacent to the proposal site include Begley's Store, Post Office, Powder-horn Museum, Stockinbingal Cemetery and other shops/residences located within the Stockinbingal Heritage Conservation Area.

There are no identified items within the construction area and there is minimal likelihood of unidentified items. Construction works on Burley Griffin Way and the rail corridor are expected to be contained within existing road and rail reserves.

Further information is available in Chapter 15 (Cultural heritage) of the EIS.

7.5 Health and wellbeing

7.5.1 Economic livelihoods and wellbeing

The proposal has the potential to deliver improved community wellbeing through providing access to employment opportunities, business diversification and community development due to the temporary increase in economic activity in the local study area. The small temporary increase in people moving throughout the area would create demand for additional services and facilities and indirect employment. 2021 SIA consultation and data collection indicates that there is strong workforce participation in the local study area, meaning that the uplift from the small number of jobs created from construction of the proposal would not be as significant as it would have been previously.

7.5.2 Land acquisition and mental health impacts

All social change has the potential to cause stress and anxiety to different parts of the community. Such stress and anxiety can unintentionally be caused long before commencement of construction activities due to rumours of upcoming disruption, media announcements, changing project communications or local stories passed between members of the community about similar experiences.

Case study research and SIA consultation undertaken in 2021 indicates that private land acquisition for major infrastructure projects has the potential to cause a significant strain on mental health of directly affected landowners. This social impact will only affect those landholders whose properties through which the proposal traverses and will be subject to the acquisition process. Further details regarding the number and location of landowners and how they have been engaged through project planning is provided in section 7.7.

Frustrations are borne out of the inherent nature of major infrastructure project teams having many changing faces at the door requesting access to measure different environmental and social changes. The uncertainty of what the project will mean for landowners creates discomfort and, in some cases, causes a halt on all communications, severing their ability to contribute to decision making.

While the formal land acquisition program has not yet commenced as of November 2021, voluntary negotiations have commenced with numerous landholders across the proposal site.

7.5.3 Consultation on proposal design development and mental health impacts

In some cases, directly affected landowners have been consulted for as long as six years. The staged design of the proposal means that all stakeholders are consulted at each design stage and invited to provide their feedback. Frustration, impatience and uncertainty has become evident through SIA consultation and for some, consultation fatigue has resulted in restricted access for further technical investigations. The low response rate to the SIA-specific landowner consultation in March 2021 highlighted this issue further.

The scale and duration of the proposal has the potential to create stress and anxieties not only on mental health but also in relation to a loss of connection to a place, in some cases where landowners have lived for generations. It is evident through consultation that in some cases that this impact is already being felt. Landowners affected by the construction of the proposal are able to adapt to changing circumstances (i.e. climate change, commodity prices), within reason. Suitable management approaches in relation to compensation of affected properties would be addressed by ARTC in consultation with individual landowners and the relevant legislation.

The impact of land acquisition on agricultural business is detailed in section 7.7.

7.6 Surroundings

An increase in construction related activities may impact the rural amenity in the local study area and its quiet lifestyle. Rural amenity relates to the visual landscape, the level of noise and air quality experience in people's daily lives. Amenity impacts would be temporary and more noticeable for residential sensitive receivers near construction compound sites due to the noise and visual impacts expected. Smaller communities and towns such as Illabo and Stockinbingal would notice a temporary change in amenity associated with non-resident workers temporarily residing in the area, travelling on local roads, reducing the quiet and peaceful nature of the rural and small-town atmosphere.

7.6.1 Biodiversity

Impacts to biodiversity and possible loss of fauna and/or flora species were identified by the CCC during consultation as a concern, as biodiversity holds value to some members of the community. This was not identified as a key concern during the rest of consultation. Technical Paper 1 – Biodiversity Development Assessment Report identifies that the proposal is likely to have a significant impact on two endangered ecological communities; Inland Grey Box Woodland and White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland. There will be impacts on other species, including the Superb Parrot mentioned by the CCC during consultation. When construction commences, the project will therefore impact on fauna and flora that have social significance for some members of the community.

7.6.2 Visual impacts

While not all parts of the proposal site would be under construction at the same time, laydown areas, general earthworks, bridge construction and fencing would be the most notable change to visual amenity as it will be in place around the whole proposal site for the duration of the 24-month construction period. This will be particularly visible to the Illabo and Stockinbingal communities and passing traffic.

Visual amenity impacts during construction are likely to include:

- compound sites, stockpiling and earthworks
- adverse visual impacts from the presence of construction activities and construction sites including temporary site fencing along the proposal boundary
- adverse impacts on rural landscape character during construction with long range views to the proposal and clearing of vegetation along the rail corridor, bridge and level crossing sites including Burley Griffin Way and Dudauman Street
- light-spill on sensitive receivers during night construction works at Stockinbingal; and
- increased site traffic, including heavy vehicles within construction areas along the proposal boundary.

Due to the linear nature of the proposal, construction activities would move as construction progresses, hence the majority of visual amenity impacts during construction are anticipated to be temporary and short-term and associated with construction equipment, site compounds and storage. Some permanent impacts to visual amenity are anticipated for sensitive receivers located in Illabo and Stockinbingal close to major new infrastructure including road alignment and bridges at Burley Griffin Way, Corbys Lane, Dudauman Road, Old Cootamundra Road and Dirnaseer Road. Cuttings, and bunds along the rail corridor creates an additional impact to visual amenity.

Technical Paper 13 – Landscape and visual notes the following isolated areas of impact:

1. Specific residential sensitive receivers located off Cambria Street in Stockinbingal would experience a moderate temporary visual impact in the form of ground disturbance and increased equipment in the area in order to update the existing track. Elements of the proposal site compound may be visible, as would equipment undertaking earthworks directly in line with the viewpoint on Cambria Street. The level of movement and activity within the viewpoint would be increased during the construction period which would increase the sensitivity and period of view for the landowners.
2. Private residents at 84 West Street in Stockinbingal would experience a moderate temporary visual impact in the form of a possible view of the proposed construction compound in the distance. Construction of new rail track, earthworks for the new track and the rail over road on Burley Griffin Way would be highly visible. They would have ongoing views of construction workers and associated activity.
3. Private residents at Wattle Retreat, off Old Cootamundra Road would experience a negligible visual impact. They would have a view of machinery associated with the construction of the new track and associated construction workers in the distance.

7.6.3 Noise and vibration

Technical Paper 8 indicates that construction activities could significantly impact the closest sensitive receivers. Impacts to these receivers include exceedance of noise management levels, highly noise affected receivers, and in some cases, sleep disturbance. Noise disturbance caused by construction activities would be temporary in nature as works progress along the alignment. The proposed construction hours are 6am to 6pm Monday to Sunday, with every second weekend serving as a respite period where construction would cease at 1pm on Sunday and recommence on Monday.

There is a concentration of approximately 100 residential receivers located in Stockinbingal who would be highly impacted by noise exceedances. Noise levels are exacerbated by the existing low ambient noise levels in the area. Sleep disturbance would only be experienced during the early morning (6am and 7am Monday to Saturday, 6am to 8pm Sunday). It is noted that this early morning period is expected to be less sensitive to sleep disturbance impacts due to higher background noise levels generated by early morning traffic and activity has the potential to awaken residents from sleep. Frustration, or ‘construction fatigue’ is also a side effect of noise disturbance, which could accumulate in conjunction with other amenity changes over the 24-month construction period. While examples of social infrastructure and commercial premises were identified as sensitive receivers in proximity to the proposal site (see section 6.5), no exceedances are predicted for these recreational receivers.

The likelihood of impact from the construction noise would depend on the timing, type and duration of the construction activities, and the proximity to the sensitive receiver.

Potential vibration impacts may occur during the construction phase. Construction vibration can lead to cosmetic and structural building damage, and loss of amenity due to perceptible vibration, termed human comfort.

Residential, non-residential, commercial and industrial receivers may be impacted by use of vibration generating equipment during construction of the proposal. According to Technical Paper 8, there is a total of 152 residential receivers located within the noise and vibration assessment study area. Most residential receivers are located in Stockinbingal, east of the proposal site, in low-density residential dwellings. South of Stockinbingal, residential receivers are typically present as isolated rural residential dwellings within open farmland.

Non-residential receivers include Cohen's Trade Palace (CWA Rooms) and the Stockinbingal Railway Station (located within Stockinbingal), and the scarred trees identified as aboriginal heritage receivers (located near Ironbong Road and separately to the north-west of Stockinbingal). The Stockinbingal Cemetery, St Joseph's Catholic Church, St James Anglican Church, Britannia Street Tennis Club, Stockinbingal Bowling Club, Stockinbingal Racecourse, and Stockinbingal Public School are all non-residential receivers.

There is a total of 16 commercial and industrial buildings within the vibration assessment study area. Commercial and industrial areas close to the proposed alignment have been identified along Hibernia Street and Martin Street, towards the eastern end of Stockinbingal. Due to the linear nature of the proposal, noise and vibration impacts would be experienced for limited periods.

Overall, noise and vibration impacts identified include:

- construction noise associated with the Burley Griffin Way upgrade and works around Stockinbingal where there is a concentration of residential sensitive receivers
- impacts from additional construction traffic noise and the movement of machinery and large trucks along the traffic routes; and
- minor potential impacts of vibration due to excavation equipment within the proposal boundary.

7.6.4 Air quality

Technical Paper 16 – Air quality states a total of 108 sensitive receivers were identified within 350m of construction footprint among which 19 receivers are also located within 50m of haulage routes up to 500m from access points. Most receivers are located in Stockinbingal, immediately east of the construction footprint, in low-density residential dwellings. South of Stockinbingal, residential receivers are typically sparsely distributed as rural dwellings within agricultural properties.

Activities that generate air quality impacts for sensitive receivers include:

- dust generation during bulk earthworks (from exposed soil/stockpiles and excavation)
- operation of construction plant and equipment
- trackout dust from HDVs such as excavators, rollers, dozers, graders, compactors, rigid trippers and trucks ting dust and dirt while using the local public road network, and
- emissions from increased vehicle movements associated with transport of construction materials.

Further factors affecting existing air quality in the proposal site would include road traffic, agricultural activities and prevailing meteorological conditions.

7.7 Livelihoods

In November 2018 Tremain Ivey Advisory conducted a study on properties potentially affected by the proposal. Of the 19 properties directly affected by the permanent footprint, consultations were undertaken with the owners of 11 properties. The remaining eight properties declined interviews and surveys. In this case a remote visual assessment was undertaken to understand property activities that would likely be affected by the proposal. In 2021, four of the 19 directly affected landowners were consulted for this SIA and discussed the impact of the overall proposal, and specifically land acquisition on their health, wellbeing and economic livelihoods.

The directly affected landowners represent a small proportion of the overall local study area population. This includes the residents of 19 individual properties. As the property owners are predominantly involved in agribusiness, impacts are to their economic livelihood and, for some, their identity, health and wellbeing (see section 7.5 for health and wellbeing impacts). The degree of impact varies not only between temporary (mostly from construction) to permanent (during operation) but also vary according to scale depending on the proportion of property affected, detailed in Chapter 18 (Land use and property) of the EIS.

The single largest impact in terms of land use changes is to land suitable for cropping. Biosecurity threats such as the introduction of weed and pest species are a potential impact common to almost all affected properties during both construction and operation. Additionally, level crossing safety and the loss of productive land were of high concern. There is currently no potential impact to the network of travelling stock reserves that interface with the proposal. The use of the livestock highway at Old Cootamundra Road is expected to be disrupted over the six day construction period of the Super T landing which could result in delays or the need to utilise different, more expensive, modes of transport for stock during this period.

The equitable distribution of social impacts is not guaranteed in major infrastructure delivery. The term refers to how different groups of people will experience social impacts differently. The negative social impacts expected to occur, both temporary and permanent as a result of changes to land use and acquisition, would be felt more acutely for directly affected landowners along the proposal site than for other stakeholder groups.

Within the group of affected landowners, some have had longer exposure to the proposal development, while others are new to the process having recently purchased their property. Age, health, level of social capital and resilience, support networks and financial outlook may all be factors that influence the magnitude of the social impact for each individual landowner. These nuances should be considered in all future stakeholder engagement for the proposal. There is potential that the positive social impacts of the proposal would not be experienced by the same people who are experiencing the negative social impacts. The level of inequity may not be avoided by ARTC however, it may be minimised through a series of considered measures.

7.7.1 Impacts to land use

The permanent footprint directly affected by the proposal site is approximately 612 hectares, with around 458 hectares of land comprising the permanent land requirement and around 154 hectares comprising the temporary land requirement for construction.

The proposal would result in changes to land use from its current rural use to railway infrastructure. The agricultural productivity of the local study area is relatively high compared to other areas in NSW. Due to the relatively high productivity, the potential impact of any disruption to agricultural enterprises caused by the proposal is also relatively high.

The greatest permanent impact is on cropping land which can also be used for grazing. At an annual value of $586 per hectare, the temporary loss of agricultural production is estimated at $101,964 per annum. Some farm infrastructure such as houses, sheds, and farm dams would also be lost during construction.

Some smaller properties would lose a larger proportion of their agricultural area to the proposal site. The temporary footprint would be rehabilitated and returned to its former land use after construction has been completed. Agricultural production would only be lost on this area during construction and for a limited time afterwards.

7.7.2 Property impacts from acquisitions, fragmentation or severance on business operations

It is estimated the proposal would require acquisition of land under 26 separate private landowners (across 19 operational farms (i.e. agricultural holdings), some with multiple ownership). As such this acquisition primarily affects land with existing rural or agricultural uses. Acquisition of private properties and changes to land access required during construction have the potential to cause severance. The 26 private landowners who would be subject to acquisition, totalling approximately 476 hectares across the 19 agricultural holdings.

Previous engagement with directly impacted landowners throughout the feasibility and environmental assessment raised different issues and considerations for each landowner, and different levels of distress around the proposition of partial acquisitions. In some cases the prospect of an economic injection was insufficient to counteract other considerations. Property acquisition may raise landowner concerns related to displacement and financial hardship, relocation and potential for social isolation.

Additionally, landowners have raised concerns in relation to land access, property management including water flow and drainage, accessibility for emergency vehicles and the potential impact on agricultural operations being affected by temporary occupation of land for construction access and laydown areas such as Old Sydney Road, Ironbong Road, Dirnaseer Road and Old Cootamundra Road.

7.8 Decision-making systems

ARTC has provided ongoing engagement and opportunities for involvement in the proposal planning and assessment and would continue to do so during ongoing stages of the proposal development including construction and operation. Most engagement has been in the form of providing information and gathering feedback.

7.8.1 Consultation to date

As a mostly greenfield proposal, impacts would be experienced by the farming properties that it traverses. Sentiment varies amongst these landowners and has evolved over the course of the investigations and consultation. Several landowners have indicated they are opposed to the proposal and see no positive outcome for themselves or their community. Concerns were raised during CCC meetings in relation to managing the mental health implications of property impacts on affected landowners. Others are accepting that the proposal is set to proceed and have sought to work alongside ARTC to achieve the best possible outcome for their business.

The extent of identified fears and aspirations of people in the social locality for the proposal depends on the level of direct impact the proposal is likely to cause them. Based on SIA consultation activities, the majority of stakeholders whose homes or livelihoods are directly affected by the proposal have higher fears and low expectations that it will be beneficial to them. Stakeholders who do not have a direct interface with the proposal see considerable opportunity and benefit for their community.

As noted throughout Chapter 5, a number of significant events have occurred in the intervening years since design of the proposal commenced and the community and stakeholders were first consulted. While their original fears and aspirations may be the same in some cases, there is potential for these concerns to accumulate. Affected landowners often experience multiple pressures at the same time, which can contribute to either a perceived fear or an inflated expectation of the benefits that would arise from the proposal.

Community feedback has been incorporated in the design in the following ways (described in more detail in the Consultation Report):

- construction hours were tested with the community
- extent of vegetation clearing
- changes to various alignments resulting in reduced earthworks and reduced impacts to waterways and associated infrastructure
- engagement with Indigenous stakeholders to ascertain cultural heritage considerations
- changes to access to construction areas and addition of stock underpasses
- changes to access arrangements for emergency services.

7.8.2 Procedural fairness and transparency in negotiations

A small number of directly affected landowners consulted during preparation of this SIA felt they had not been listened to during consultation activities on a range of EIS matters. This sentiment may be the result of consultation fatigue or accumulated frustration at the process. The small sample size of directly affected landowners is noted, however, concerns of this nature are material to how affected parties feel they are influencing decisions that affect them.

Procedural fairness is paramount in forthcoming negotiations on land acquisition (as an example of one of the EIS matters being consulted on) between proponents of infrastructure projects and landowners. This type of social impact is one that has already occurred and that warrants further consultation on appropriate mitigation, to allow ARTC to maintain its social licence to operate.

7.8.3 Ongoing community and stakeholder consultation

SIA consultation with community and stakeholders indicated a willingness to collaborate and coordinate with the proposal as much as possible to maximise both the economic and social benefits of having a 24-month construction project in the area. The majority of organisations acknowledged they had been included in consultation to date and expressed a desire to remain a part of the process, particularly during construction.

The stakeholder-driven discussion centred on the means to be involved in the successful delivery of the project. Access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms is critical during construction and operation and will be a key aspect of communication programs developed by the principal contractor.

Specifically, the Local Area Command, NSW Fire and Rescue and RFS requested they be included in regular communications about issues involving vehicle numbers, changed access, and activities such as hot works. Ambulance NSW were not able to be contacted at the time the interviews were conducted, however, as part as the emergency services network they would receive the same consideration.

7.9 Summary of social impacts

The potential positive social impacts expected to result during construction of the proposal are as follows:

- improved livelihoods resulting from direct and indirect employment opportunities
- improved regional economic outcomes and opportunities resulting from increased project procurement activities
- new education, skills development and training opportunities for regional residents

The key potential negative social impacts expected to occur during construction of the proposal are summarised below:

- potential impacts to short-term accommodation market availability (during site visits by ARTC managed technical specialists), restricting access for other community needs
- restriction on people's ability move around their community as a result of traffic restrictions and delays at level crossings
- decreased perceptions of safety resulting from anti-social behaviour in local townships due to temporary construction workforce
- minor restriction in access to community services and facilities due to increased demand from the construction workforce
- minor restriction in access across the rail corridor for emergency services, specifically during times of high bushfire risk
- stress and anxiety resulting from potential harm to identified sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage around the proposal site
- adverse mental health impacts predominantly for directly affected landowners as a result of the land access and acquisition process of negotiations over a long period of time
- adverse mental health impacts (frustration, impatience) and cessation of engagement with ARTC due to the protracted design and planning process

- changes in rural amenity and character which may affect people's sense of place, including adverse changes to existing visual amenity for three residential sensitive receivers in the local study area
- potential health and wellbeing impacts associated with amenity impacts, including:
  - adverse changes to existing levels of noise and vibration for up to 152 sensitive receivers in the local study area
  - adverse changes to existing air quality for up to 108 sensitive receivers in the local study area
- loss of local and regional agricultural production felt by individual landowners and regional producers
- adverse impact on agricultural businesses from land acquisition leading to severance.

Table 7.4 presents a pre-mitigated risk rating for each potential impact with consideration given to the distribution of impacts/stakeholders (including vulnerable groups) potentially affected by it. Given the temporary and relatively short nature of construction, impacts will most likely affect current generations.

Pre-mitigated risk ratings have been applied as per the social risk matrix presented in Figure 3.1.

Social impacts Table 7.4 have been assigned a mitigation or enhancement measure, presented in Appendix D.

Table 7.4 Social impact summary table – construction

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts /Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (where applicable)	Nature, type, duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Way of life						
Local direct employment opportunities for up to 64 workers on the proposal during the construction period. Direct employment opportunities for up to 361 people across the regional study area during construction of the proposal. This brings about social wellbeing and economic security.	Local eligible workers within 125km of the proposal site searching for work in heavy construction or civil engineering Eligible workers in the regional study area searching for work in heavy construction or civil engineering	Unemployed workers	Positive Temporary Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Local indirect employment for businesses up and down the proposal's supply chain.	Business enterprises in sectors relating to construction, planning approvals, engineering and associated industries Indigenous businesses	Unemployed workers	Positive Temporary Direct Actual	Likely	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)
Potential impacts to short-term accommodation market availability (during site visits by ARTC managed technical specialists), restricting access for other community needs.	Community members relying on local short term accommodation market	Households experiencing housing stress or generally on lower incomes	Negative Temporary Direct and indirect Actual	Possible	Moderate	Medium (Possible-Moderate)
Opportunities for skills development and training through the Inland Rail Skills Academy.	Students, workers searching for employment in rail infrastructure	Unemployed workers, low skilled and low-income groups such as students	Positive Temporary Direct Actual	Likely	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts /Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (where applicable)	Nature, type, duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Potentially restricted ability for local residents to move around their communities due to increased construction-related traffic, road diversions and road closures during construction of bridges and level crossings	Users Old Sydney Road, Ironbong Road, Dirnaseer Road, Old Cootamundra Road and Burley Griffin Way Emergency services	Residents with limited mobility, emergency services	Negative Temporary Direct and indirect Actual	Likely	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)
Community						
Sense of place may be altered for some affected stakeholders, i.e. landowners along the proposal site due to the change of rural character and amenity during construction and operation.	Mostly directly affected landowners will experience a direct change to the sense of place, and to a lesser extent, residents of nearby townships	Potentially more vulnerable landowners	Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Community cohesion and character may be positively influenced by influx of temporary workforce who have the potential to participate in the community and stimulate local business.	Townships of Illabo, Stockinbingal, Temora		Positive Temporary Direct and indirect Perceived	Likely	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)
Adverse changes to community cohesion and perception of safety in relation to anti-social behaviour exhibited by construction and non-construction workforce.	Townships of Illabo, Stockinbingal, Temora		Negative Temporary Direct and indirect Actual	Possible	Moderate	Medium (Possible-Moderate)
Community/accessibility						
Patrons having to go elsewhere to use facilities due to increased demand for community facilities, services and networks such as sport and recreation, health and emergency services as a result of the construction workforce.	Users of community facilities and services in the local study area		Negative Temporary Direct and indirect Actual	Possible	Major	High (Possible-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts /Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (where applicable)	Nature, type, duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Potential for increased risk to public safety if ability for emergency services to access all parts the social locality, in particular during times of high fire risk is compromised.	Members of the local and regional study area communities		Negative Temporary Direct and indirect Actual	Possible	Major	High (Possible-Major)
Accessibility						
Increased demand for access to community facilities, services and networks such as sport and recreation, health and emergency services during the construction of the proposal.	Users of community facilities and services in the local study area	Sensitive receivers identified as requiring specialist health treatments and services	Negative Temporary Direct Actual	Possible	Minor	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Ability for emergency services to access the study areas, in particular during times of high fire risk.	Members of the local and regional study area communities Members of emergency services	More vulnerable households, households experiencing an emergency with risk on human life/safety	Negative Temporary Direct Actual	Possible	Major	Medium (Possible-Major)
Culture						
Potential harm to examples of Aboriginal cultural heritage during construction of the proposal – loss of cultural significance/value.	Members of the local Aboriginal communities in the affected zones identified	Aboriginal communities	Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Unlikely	Transformational	High (Unlikely-Transformation)
Health and wellbeing						
The perceived uplift in economic livelihoods and wellbeing as a result of the construction employment and subsequent spending in the local study area. This impact has the potential to become negative if these perceived benefits do not eventuate.	Residents in the local and regional study areas Local Indigenous community	Unemployed or low skilled community members, students	Positive Temporary with potential for permanency Direct and indirect Perceived	Likely	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts /Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (where applicable)	Nature, type, duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Mental health impacts (uncertainty, frustration and stress) associated with the land access and acquisition agreements process.	Directly affected landowners and their families	More vulnerable community members or those with existing health issues	Negative Temporary but already being felt Direct Actual	Likely	Major	High (Likely-Major)
Mental health impacts associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation.	Directly affected landowners and their families	More vulnerable landowners	Negative Temporary but already being felt Direct Actual	Likely	Major	High (Likely-Major)
Consultation fatigue and frustration associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation.	Directly affected landowners and their families A small number of landowners are experiencing this impact more acutely than others, depending on the length of time and level of involvement they have had in the design phases of the proposal		Negative Temporary but already being felt Direct Actual	Almost certain	Major	Very High (Almost certain-major)
Surroundings						
Visual amenity changes during construction of the proposal will be experienced by some residential sensitive receivers and lead to frustration and disappointment in ARTC.	Residential sensitive receivers off Cambria Street in Stockinbingal Residential sensitive receivers at 84 West Street in Stockinbingal		Negative Temporary Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts /Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (where applicable)	Nature, type, duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Noise exceedances are expected during works on the Burley Griffin Way upgrade for residential sensitive receivers that may result in sleep disturbance.	Residential receivers in Stockinbingal in proximity to Burley Griffin Way	Sensitive receivers identified as having existing health issues	Negative Temporary Direct Actual	Almost certain	Moderate	High (Almost certain - Moderate)
Works on the Burley Griffin Way upgrade would result in noticeable vibration for sensitive receivers that may result in concern for building safety.	Residential receivers in Stockinbingal in proximity to Burley Griffin Way	Sensitive receivers identified as having existing health issues	Negative Temporary Direct Actual	Almost certain	Moderate	High (Almost certain-Moderate)
The project would impact on fauna and flora that have social significance for some members of the community.	Members of the local and regional study area communities		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)
Dust resulting from earthworks, trackout dust from HDVs on local roads and increased vehicle emissions from construction traffic will affect air quality.	110 sensitive receivers residing within 350m of the construction footprint, predominantly in Stockinbingal	Health-sensitive community members	Negative Temporary Direct Actual	Almost certain	Moderate	High (Almost certain-Moderate)
Livelihoods						
Loss of local and regional agricultural production during construction of the proposal felt by individual landowners and regional producers.	Directly affected landowners who own farming businesses Regional agricultural supply chains		Negative Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts /Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (where applicable)	Nature, type, duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Delays or need for new route for farmers using the livestock highway during a six day period.	Directly affected landowners who own farming businesses and use the livestock highway		Negative Temporary (six days) Direct Actual	Possible	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)
Potential adverse impact on agricultural businesses from land acquisition required for construction and operation of the proposal.	Directly affected landowners with agricultural business holdings located along the proposal site		Negative Permanent Direct Actual and perceived (property and business values can drop prior to construction)	Likely	Major	High (Likely-Major)
Decision-making systems						
There has been an iterative consultation process resulting in changes to the project that respond to community feedback.	Residents in the local and regional study areas		Positive Preconstruction - permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Major	High (Likely-Major)
There are various reactions within the community and some may have been negatively impacted more than others, with fears that the project will negatively affect them and associated impacts on mental health. Some also feel they have not been properly engaged or listened to.	Residents in the local and regional study areas, and more specifically directly affected landowners		Preconstruction – construction	Almost certain	Moderate	High (Almost certain-Moderate)

8 Social impact assessment – operation

This section provides a detailed discussion on the potential social impacts that may occur as a result of operation of the proposal. These impacts have been assessed according to the methodology presented in section 3.2.

8.1 Way of life

8.1.1 Employment and economic impacts

Operation of the Inland Rail program would deliver a range of benefits to the State of NSW, including:

- improved economic benefits engaging 587 contracts committed at a value more than $400 million
- increased workforce employing up to 980 full time jobs
- increased gross regional product by up to $5.5 billion in the first 50 years of the rail line's operation (EY 2020).

A small number of maintenance positions would be required for operation of the proposal. These would be NSW-based and comprised of drivers and track maintenance workers. The small development and expansion of existing businesses expected to occur during construction of the proposal is expected to flow through to operation, though in a reduced capacity. The contraction of the workforce during the operational phase of the proposal may see a reduction in working age people and a return to pre-construction workforce participation. It is likely that unemployment would increase but it is unlikely to be as high as pre-construction due to the increased skills, business development and diversification, brought about by the proposal.

Regional benefits in the Southern NSW region include:

- improved supply chain efficiencies through reduced transport costs, greater access to suppliers and increased reliability
- enhanced investment opportunities and supporting formation of industry hubs including freight, logistics, operations and businesses (EY 2020).

Long-term indirect employment benefits may extend to a diversification of businesses in the area and potentially increase Indigenous participation and employment through procurement from Indigenous businesses and services.

Due to the confluence of multiple rail services at Stockinbingal, several community members have indicated the potential for long-term opportunities such as a logistics company to be based at Stockinbingal. Removal of level crossings and improvement of the Burley Griffin Way through Stockinbingal are viewed as a resounding benefit.

It is recommended that the principal contractor investigate employment opportunities on other Inland Rail projects to maximise the skills acquired during construction and operation of the proposal (further detail is provided in Appendix D).

8.1.2 Skills and development training

The skills and development training opportunities provided during the construction phase of the proposal would develop local skilled workers who can transfer to subsequent Inland Rail projects (dependent on scheduling) or other construction and infrastructure development projects in the region. This would incentivise economic development and benefit local employers, contributing to efforts to keep workers living in the local study area.

8.1.3 Housing and accommodation demand

There is unlikely to be any operational impacts to local housing and accommodation markets. A temporary workforce accommodation camp will be developed for the purposes of accommodating the construction workforce (see Appendix I of the EIS).

8.1.4 How people get around their community

Operation of the proposal may represent a change to the existing levels of connectivity and access available to local and regional communities. The removal of a level crossing and conversion of Burley Griffin Way to an overpass of the proposed track alignment for the proposal would be a permanent change of road function at Stockinbingal. The removal of the level crossing, which has been an accident hotspot in the region, would enhance the safety, speed and reliability of Burley Griffin Way, as identified in Technical Paper 3.

Operation of the proposal will include the introduction of five new public level crossings on Old Sydney Road, Ironbong Road, Corby's Lane and two 'unnamed' roads. These level crossings would create delays for motorists as a result of train activity. An estimated delay of up to 131 seconds occurring once during a peak hour is considered negligible according to Technical Paper 3. Safety and operational benefits would be seen through the realignment of Burley Griffin Way and the removal of vehicle interaction at the West Street and Troy Street intersections, which the alignment would bypass. There are however possible safety risks to motorists associated with level crossings due to potential collisions with trains, as per Technical Paper 3.

8.1.5 Accessibility and connection

Access to properties will be maintained, however, the configuration will change for some streets. Some streets around Stockinbingal would have some permanent but minor changes due to the upgrade of Burley Griffin Way, however, all property access is retained.

No significant impact to traffic volumes is expected from the operation of the proposal. It would take some time before the reduction of freight trucks is noticeable, due to the gradual uptake of goods transported via rail. When this transition occurs, it would represent a social and environmental benefit for the local study area. The changes to access and manoeuvrability of stock and machinery on agricultural properties was discussed with affected landowners throughout the design process to arrive at solutions deemed workable for the alignment and the landowner.

Operation of the proposal is not expected to affect pedestrians and cyclists due the remote location of the proposal. SIA consultation did not indicate the affected roads are regularly used by pedestrians or cyclists. Regardless, the treatments to roads in the area would not prohibit pedestrian or cyclist activity and still allows for a route between townships that does not involve a major road.

8.2 Community

8.2.1 Community cohesion and character

The proposal is unlikely to change the community character during operation. Consultation outcomes, and policy direction indicate many regional study area communities are implementing plans to leverage Inland Rail which may bring more business and industry opportunities. These include Temora, Junee and Cootamundra. While these plans may result in population growth and create some employment, it is unlikely that the existing sense of community and cohesion would change.

During operation of the proposal, communities would still experience the same sense of cohesion and support for which the area is currently valued. Should the non-resident workforce participate in local activities during the construction period, their departure may require a small period of readjustment for the resident community. However, in the context of a regional community that experiences regular seasonal fluctuations in population, this impact would be relatively minimal.

8.2.2 Sense of place

Operation of the proposal could affect the quiet rural character and atmosphere valued by those who live in the landholdings directly affected or nearby to the proposal site. This includes rural landholders and those that reside in the township of Stockinbingal. Changes to rural character could impact residents' sense of place and the way they use and enjoy their homes and valued community spaces.

This is a permanent social impact for most stakeholders. Impacts associated with visual landscape, noise and vibration disturbance are investigated in Technical Paper 9 – Noise and vibration (operation – rail), Technical Paper 10 – Noise and vibration (operation – non-rail) and Technical Paper 13 – Landscape and visual. This impact is investigated further in section 8.6.

8.3 Accessibility

Access to social infrastructure and service provision in the area would not change during operations as the operational workforce is expected to be low in numbers. Impacts to social infrastructure and service provision in terms of amenity changes are discussed in section 8.6.

A common request from RFS and NSW Police during SIA consultation was to keep communicating to allow them to be abreast of all changes and potential risks. The RFS and NSW Fire and Rescue noted the potential for rail carts to cause fire in rural rail corridors, particularly in dry and hot seasons. Whilst the proposal does not increase this risk, the design of the new corridor needs to include appropriate access for fire response units.

Emergency response times are not expected to be impacted during operation of the proposal as once construction is complete, emergency services will be able to incorporate permanent changes to the road network into their planning and documentation. ARTC would provide ongoing information during operations and maintenance to emergency services about temporary changes so they can plan accordingly.

During ongoing landowner consultation on hydrology and flooding, concerns and queries were raised around the impact of potential flooding on accessibility and safety around underbridges. The social effect of this is related to people's perceptions of safety and security for both themselves, their family, and livestock. There is also potential disturbance to farming operations. Suitable mitigation measures have been designed in association with this impact.

8.4 Culture

8.4.1 Aboriginal cultural heritage impacts

No additional impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage to those identified in the construction phase are expected during the operational phase of the proposal. However, these will remain as long-term impacts.

8.4.2 Non-Aboriginal culture impacts

Although there are no plans forecast for additional developments in the area, reported aspirations of the community may see development associated with the new rail line, such as a freight terminal and business. The rail itself may extend the region's affinity with a long rail history that forms part of the region's identity, particularly at Junee near the southern end of the proposal.

8.5 Health and wellbeing

Ongoing health and wellbeing impacts associated with the operation of the proposal would primarily be ongoing stress, anxiety and health complications associated with amenity issues. The introduction of permanent, regular freight rail services may result in sleep disturbances, increased stress due to changed surroundings and anxiety as a result of an unwanted and unavoidable new normal. Without management, health issues that emerged during construction such as mental health conditions could continue and worsen due to prolonged exposure to stressors.

The adoption of appropriate mitigation measures to alleviate significant amenity impacts, and ongoing consultation with affected landholders would likely go some way to managing most long-term impacts. ARTC would assign a local community liaison officer to engage affected landowners to ensure an open communication channel for grievances is in place.

8.6 Surroundings

During operation, amenity impacts and changes to lifestyle also created concern and fear for potentially affected landowners.

Potential long-term amenity-based impacts such as noise and visual amenity are likely to occur in areas where the proposal is situated within proximity to residential areas. There is potential for an ongoing long-term reduction in amenity. Refer to Chapter 18 (Landscape and visual) of the EIS for detailed information.

The loss of biodiversity areas that bear social significance for some will continue as a long-term impact.

8.6.1 Visual amenity

Completion of the proposal would introduce a new permanent infrastructure and modify the rural character of the landscape. The proposal would generate visual impacts on rural landscape character during operation with long range views to the proposal due to the topography. Technical Paper 14 – Landscape and visual indicates the following residential properties would experience visual impacts during operation:

1. 84 West Street – The realigned Burley Griffin Way will become a highly noticeable new element in the visual scene, crossing over the existing rail line in the distance before cutting through the stand of mature trees visible in the scene and occupying the view to the left of the scene. Current open rural land will be replaced by a two-lane asphalted road with a verge on either side. In order to accommodate the road a number of the existing mature trees will need to be removed which will create a more open view corridor to more distant vegetation and existing rail line.
2. Private residents located off Cambria Street – The proposed route diverges from the existing line approximately 1km to the north of this position in a south-west direction. As a result of this the proposed alignment will encounter a change in topography which will result in the need for earthworks in the form of cuttings and embankments to the existing hill. This would result in a noticeable change to the existing scene as a result of earthworks and the removal of a significant grouping of mature vegetation visible on the hill in the middle of the scene. As a result of the proposal a noticeable ‘opening up’ of the view would change the horizon line by removing the mature stand of vegetation in the middle of the visual scene, creating a more open view of the sky than is currently available.
3. Private residence off Dudauman Street – considered negligible visual impact during operation due to existing mature vegetation, distance and topography.

Additional visual impacts from permanent rail infrastructure would include:

- track embankments, at locations where the proposal is above the ground, particularly Burley Griffin Way and proximity to Stockinbingal
- Burley Griffin Way road overpass largely obscuring the horizon and distant vegetation
- new rail bridges including locations at Dudauman Road and Old Cootamundra Road
- signage and infrastructure at level crossings; and
- permanent fencing along the rail corridor.

Changes to surroundings could result in altered sense of place, decreased enjoyment of public and private space and at worst feelings of detachment and resentment towards one’s property and home.

8.6.2 Noise and vibration

The train activity between Illabo and Stockinbingal may cause noise and vibration impacts to sensitive receivers along the proposal site, such as airborne noise including “wheel squeal” and ground-borne vibration from passing trains. These noise impacts may also be experienced at night due to night-time movements (24-hour operation) and from ad-hoc maintenance throughout the day/night. There is a concentration of residential sensitive receivers within the noise assessment area in Stockinbingal who are at risk of sleep disturbance. The area particularly affected would be properties within or neighbouring the corridor that are normally quiet and peaceful; operations at any time of day or night would likely impact resident wellbeing and perceptions of their area.

Technical Paper 9 – Noise and vibration (operation – rail) concluded that based on the assessment of potential noise levels from the daily train movements on the proposal, the noise criteria for the daytime and night-time periods are met at the majority of the identified sensitive receivers. There are up to eight sensitive receivers, including seven residential receivers and the St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Stockinbingal, where predicted noise levels trigger a review of mitigation. The social effects of noise disturbance include sleep disruption and a long-term change in the level of enjoyment of the rural lifestyle many local residents’ value highly.

Technical Paper 10 – Noise and vibration (operation – non-rail) states there is one residential receiver who would be eligible for consideration of mitigation, based on operational road noise modelling for 2036. This is an individual dwelling at an isolated location. There is potential for ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for this household due to noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way.

8.6.3 Air quality

Technical Paper 15 – Air quality concluded that there are six sensitive receivers within 100m of the proposal site. Any changes to air quality as a result of the proposal’s operation are expected to be felt more acutely in the town of Stockinbingal, where there is the highest density of sensitive receivers. All air quality impacts are expected to be below the relevant Impact Assessment Criteria (IAC) for all assessed pollutants. The technical assessment of these impacts determined there was negligible impact.

8.7 Livelihoods

The impacts to livelihoods identified during the construction phase would continue to be felt for some landowners through operation of the proposal.

For agribusiness, the operational fears expressed during consultation were largely the same as those for construction. Key impacts relate to farm management with the realignment of paddocks, water access and the safe and timely movement of stock and machinery on altered routes or new underpasses.

Potentially affected landowners have indicated they are concerned about the proper management of the rail fences and pointed to the poor management of rail fences in adjoining areas. Breaks in fences would endanger wandering stock and impose additional cost to them if they are not properly maintained or repaired in a timely manner.

Chapter 18 (Land use and property) of the EIS states the impact of severance on farming operations is highly dependent on the circumstances of each farming business. Property severance has the potential to result in ongoing additional time and costs in moving livestock and machinery between severed parcels of land, making farm operations less efficient and practical. Additional capital investment could be required to replace current infrastructure in some locations.

It is considered unlikely that the decline in productivity due to fragmentation or severance into large areas will cause the loss of viability of the larger surrounding properties. As the severed lots form part of a larger farm area, the decline in productivity due to fragmentation is reduced at this scale.

All property acquisitions/adjustments would be undertaken in consultation with landowners and, where relevant, in accordance with the requirements of the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* (NSW) (Land Acquisition Act). In line with the Land Acquisition Act, ARTC's preference is for acquisition by agreement where practicable.

The social effects of property impacts are multi-dimensional in nature, relating to individual economic livelihood and mental health and wellbeing associated with the ongoing uncertainty and frustration of the process.

8.8 Decision-making systems

As discussed throughout Chapter 7 there are many drivers of social change that can lead to stakeholders feeling anxious or optimistic about the forthcoming proposal and the benefits or risks it may bring.

The support of those most affected – landowners whose land the proposal site traverses – will be best achieved by seeking their local knowledge and requesting their review and input into management and contractor requirements to maintain biosecurity, weed abatement, and fire risk management. This not only builds a social licence to operate but can deliver noticeable cost savings to the project. Support of emergency services could be ongoing through consulting them and aligning local procedures with operational requirements. These stakeholders should be included in the systematic review of documents to ensure the evolution Inland Rail procedures continue to align with local practices.

Whilst current day practices require complaints and enquiries procedures, the availability of this information should be readily available to community and stakeholders. The successful implementation of the proposal-specific communications management plan will ensure ARTC, the principal contractor and the community are engaged in open dialogue on matters relating to operation of the proposal.

8.9 Summary of social impacts

The potential positive social impacts expected to result from operation of the proposal are as follows:

- improved economic and social outcomes from supply chain efficiencies, employment and investment opportunities in the Southern NSW region (inclusive of the regional study area in this report)
- improved economic and social livelihoods from easier access to and from regional, national and global markets for agricultural producers, farmers and businesses
- direct and indirect employment opportunities in the local study area
- a legacy of upskilled workers from the skills and development training provided during the construction phase, leading to opportunities for these workers to transfer their skills to other projects and further contribute to economic development in the region
- improved road safety and traffic incidents and delays from removal of one public level crossing on Burley Griffin Way
- improved traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities where realignment to Burley Griffin Way occurs.

The key potential negative social impacts expected to occur during operation of the proposal are summarised below:

- changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities including minor delays at new public level crossings
- a permanent change to the rural sense of place and identification to the land, experienced more acutely by landowners directly affected by the proposal, but also by residents of townships in the local study area
- concerns around safety of people and livestock, and disturbance to farming operations from the impact of potential flooding on accessibility and safety around underbridges
- ongoing mental health impacts from that experienced during the construction phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners

- an altered sense of enjoyment of the rural landscapes from changes to the existing visual amenity leading to potential frustration
- sleep disturbance or ongoing exposure to air-borne noise for sensitive receivers along the proposal site due to train activity, leading to a change to the level of enjoyment of the rural lifestyle that is highly valued by local residents
- ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for one residential receiver due to noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way
- ongoing stress and anxiety associated with the longer term effects of property impacts on individual landowners relating to the land acquisition process, as well as the ongoing impact on economic livelihoods.

The following Table 8.1 presents a pre-mitigated risk rating for each potential impact with consideration given to the distribution of impacts/stakeholders (including vulnerable groups) potentially affected by it. Pre-mitigated risk ratings have been applied as per the social risk matrix presented in Figure 3.1.

Social impacts in Table 8.1 will be assigned a mitigation or enhancement measure, presented in Appendix D.

Table 8.1 Social impact summary table – operation

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts - Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (if applicable)	Nature, type, extent and duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Way of life						
The proposal provides enhanced freight connections to markets for local producers delivering economic efficiencies and growth.	Local and regional businesses		Positive Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Major	High (Almost certain-Major)
Operation of the proposal sees a freight mode shift from road to rail, reducing interactions between heavy vehicles and passenger vehicles and improving road safety.	Local and regional residents Road users		Positive Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Supply chain efficiencies, employment and investment opportunities in the Southern NSW region (inclusive of the regional study area in this report) will bring about improved economic and social outcomes.	Southern NSW region		Positive Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Easier access to and from regional, national and global markets for agricultural producers, farmers and businesses will lead to improved economic and social livelihoods.	Local and regional businesses		Positive Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Direct and indirect employment may be generated within the local study area during operation of the proposal.	Suitably qualified workers seeking employment	Potentially currently unemployed people	Positive Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Possible	Minor	Medium (Possible-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts - Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (if applicable)	Nature, type, extent and duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
The skills and development training that was provided during the construction phase will contribute to leaving a legacy of upskilled workers who may be able to transfer their skills to other projects and contribute to economic development in the region.	Participants who participated in training and skills improvement opportunities	Potentially currently unemployed or low skilled people, students	Positive Permanent Direct Actual	Possible	Minor	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities will be affected during operation of the proposal, both positively and negatively. Some minor benefits will be seen where realignment to Burley Griffin Way occurs, whereas minor delays will also be experienced at new public level crossings.	Local road users		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Possible	Minor	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Removal of level crossing at Burley Griffin Way leading to improved road safety and reduction in delays.	Road users of Burley Griffin Way		Positive Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Major	High (Likely-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts - Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (if applicable)	Nature, type, extent and duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
New level crossings will be introduced at six locations along the proposal site. Vehicle delays are expected to reach a maximum of 131 seconds increasing travel times, leading to fatigue and stress. However, these trips are predominantly on rural roads, and longer journeys are a regular occurrence. This impact would increase over time as the average frequency of trains increases between 2024 and 2034.	Local road users		Negative Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Almost certain	Minimal	Low (Almost Certain-Minimal)
New level crossings may also present safety risks to motorists due to potential collisions with trains.	Local road users		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Possible	Major	High (Possible-Major)
Community						
Minor changes to community character and cohesion may be felt after the departure of the temporary construction workforce.	Residents in townships located in local study area		Negative Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Likely	Minimal	Low (Likely-Minimal)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts - Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (if applicable)	Nature, type, extent and duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
A permanent change to the rural sense of place and identification to the land brought on by operation of the proposal. This will be experienced more acutely by directly affected landowners along the proposal site, but also by residents of townships in the local study area. This overall impact links to amenity changes identified in the Surroundings section.	Directly affected landowners along the proposal site Residents in townships in local study area		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Almost certain	Minor	Medium (Almost certain-Minor)
Accessibility						
Concerns and anxiety around safety of people and livestock, and disturbance to farming operations from the impact of potential flooding on accessibility and safety around underbridges.	Directly affected landowners along the proposal site		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Possible	Major	High (Possible-Major)
Culture						
Potential adverse change to sense of place and connection to Country amongst Indigenous people due to impacts to artefacts of cultural significance in southern portion of proposal.	Local Indigenous community		Negative Permanent Direct and indirect Actual	Unlikely	Transformational	High (Unlikely-Transformational)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts - Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (if applicable)	Nature, type, extent and duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Health and wellbeing						
The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners.	Directly affected landowners and their families General public consulted during development of the proposal	More vulnerable community members or those with existing health issues	Negative Permanent or temporary for some people Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Noticeable changes to existing visual amenity caused by operation of the proposal leading to an altered sense of enjoyment and potential frustration over time.	Private residences at 84 West Street and Cambria Street in Stockinbingal		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
The potential for ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for one residential receiver due to noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way.	Stockinbingal, in proximity to Burley Griffin Way		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Major	High (Likely-Major)
Surroundings						
Noticeable changes to existing visual amenity caused by operation of the proposal leading to an altered sense of enjoyment and potential frustration.	Private residences at 84 West Street and Cambria Street in Stockinbingal		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts - Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (if applicable)	Nature, type, extent and duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
The project will impact on fauna and flora that have social significance for some members of the community.	Members of the local and regional study area communities		Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Minor	Medium (Likely-Minor)
Noise and vibration effects will be experienced by sensitive receivers along the proposal site. Prolonged exposure can lead to adverse physical and mental health effects.	Residential and non-residential sensitive receivers	More vulnerable community members or those with existing health issues; sensitive receivers	Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Livelihoods						
The effect of property impacts on individual landowners relates to the stress and anxiety of the process, as well as the ongoing impact on economic livelihoods.	Directly affected landowners	More vulnerable community members, landowners currently facing stress or financial hardship	Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Major	High (Likely-Major)
Decision making systems						
Possible long term affects or uncertainties felt by the community particularly landholders.	Members of the local and regional study area communities Directly affected landowners	More vulnerable community members or those with existing health issues; sensitive receivers	Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Possible	Moderate	Medium (Possible-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts - Stakeholders affected	Vulnerable/under-represented groups (if applicable)	Nature, type, extent and duration	Likelihood	Magnitude	Risk rating (pre-mitigation)
Cumulative						
The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners. Additionally, the cumulative impact of multiple changes to amenity can lead to people disconnecting from their surroundings or choosing to relocate.	Directly affected landowners and their families General public consulted during development of the proposal	More vulnerable community members, those with existing health issues and landowners currently facing stress or financial hardship	Negative Permanent Direct Actual	Likely	Moderate	High (Likely-Moderate)
Multiple projects under simultaneous delivery in the Riverina-Murray region leads to an influx of non-local workers impacting community, safety and wellbeing.	Residents in the local and regional study area		Negative Temporary Direct and indirect Actual and perceived	Possible	Moderate	Medium (Possible-Moderate)

9 Cumulative impact assessment

9.1 Overview

Cumulative impacts refer to those which occur as a result of concurrent construction projects. The impacts 'add up' and can exacerbate the significance of previously standalone impact activity. The methodology and projects considered for the cumulative impact assessment are provided in detail in the Chapter 26 (Cumulative and residual impacts) of the EIS. A number of major projects were considered for potential cumulative impacts with the proposal. These included:

- Inland Rail – Albury to Illabo (A2I)
- Inland Rail – Stockinbingal to Parkes (S2P)
- Two solar farms (Cootamundra Solar and Illabo Solar)
- Grade Separating Road Interfaces
- Humelink transmission project.

Illabo Solar is currently on hold (and as such does not formally require consideration).

9.2 Construction and operation

The most appropriate way to assess the cumulative impacts of the proposal is to consider the context of the wider Inland Rail works program. The construction of two adjoining sections of Inland Rail, A2I and S2P, (subject to planning and approvals) may overlap with the construction of the proposal. However, these sections primarily involve line upgrade works within an existing corridor, which is less intensive than a new build.

Based on the construction schedule for S2P, there may be an overlap with construction of the proposal for up to six months. However, the S2P sites are located at or greater than 40km from the proposal (the distance to Milvale Yard) and the works at Milvale Yard are minor and are anticipated to take two days to complete.

Subject to planning approval, construction of A2I is planned to commence in late 2023 and will be completed by early 2026. Based on this schedule, construction of A2I may overlap with construction of the proposal for up to two years.

As linked linear infrastructure projects with significant construction programs and broad operational pathways, the spatial and temporal impacts cumulative impacts are anticipated to be varying and long-term as described in sections 9.2.1 to 9.2.7.

In terms of the other projects, there may be cumulative impacts from these projects if their construction overlaps with the proposal. No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated at the time of writing based on the available project information, including on timing for these projects. Further consultation would occur with the proponents of any development proposals with potential cumulative impacts to confirm where mitigation and management of these impacts is required.

9.2.1 Way of life

Inland Rail currently sits in a socio-economic environment of significant investment in national infrastructure, high levels of regional migration, construction skills shortages in regional Australia and improved agricultural outputs. Three concurrent or closely aligned construction programs underway in the current socio-economic environment are likely to constrain regional labour markets. As reported in Technical Paper 12, the concurrent construction of major projects can increase demand for labour in the local and regional economy, particularly for workers in the trade and construction industry.

Current identified skills shortages in the construction sector are considered likely to increase, due to record national and state investment in infrastructure, resulting in a robust construction pipeline boosting employment. Federal interventions in the skills and training sector, including increased funding for apprenticeships and re-skilling, may improve skilled resource availability in the medium to short-term. However, the likely effect of the proposal workforce in 2024 will be an increase in the availability of partially skilled apprentices.

When the labour market is buoyant, competition for workers is high, and poaching is common. This can lead to cycling through the same group of workers and an increase in the temporary movement of workers, especially those who have the desired skills and experience (National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2014). Poaching, increased wages and increased movement of workers would have a detrimental impact on local industry as smaller employers may struggle to adequately resource local demand. The social and economic benefit is experienced by the worker.

Labour force availability impacts could be managed through coordinated planning of construction program schedules to manage potential skills shortages and resourcing demands effectively. The changes to transport and access throughout the local and regional study areas may be compounded by other major projects taking place.

9.2.2 Community

An influx of non-local construction workers into the region for a prolonged period due to multiple construction programs could result in residents feeling a loss of community connection and values. However, given that workforce peaks are generally short-term and the mobile nature of linear infrastructure construction program, it is considered that these impacts would be minimal.

Regional study area communities also experience seasonal fluctuations in population due to mobile season workforces that service agricultural demand. It is considered that communities exhibit resilience to change and are used to experiencing changes in the local population profile. Proposal workers would also be housed in or near larger settlements (including in workforce accommodation camp/s) to minimise impacts to local amenity and, where possible, ensure that the workforce population does not overwhelm resident and services.

9.2.3 Accessibility

Technical Paper 3 notes that cumulative transport and access impacts are likely minimal. Increased vehicle movements along highway and state road corridors may increase across the region during construction, with impacts most felt at the entrance to worksites and where the three Inland Rail projects abut.

A prolonged influx of non-resident workers for multiple projects could place increased demand on local social infrastructure, limiting access for existing residents. Ongoing consultation with council and service providers will also proactively identify and manage any potential constraints and implement strategies to manage ongoing issues that may impact local communities.

9.2.4 Culture

Traditional Owner groups may experience increased isolation and distress at both the extent and duration of construction works related to the multiple projects underway in the region. However, as A2I and S2P are predominantly rail upgrade projects in the existing rail corridor, and the Illabo and Junee Solar Farms are being developed on highly cultivated private properties, the cumulative cultural impacts are minimal.

Improved employment and skills improvement opportunities across multiple regional projects could also lead to broader cumulative benefits for Indigenous residents.

9.2.5 Health and wellbeing

Ongoing exposure to construction impacts such as noise and vibration could significantly impact residents' physical health and wellbeing. As all cumulative projects are located in agricultural land dispersed away from urban centres, the cumulative health and wellbeing impacts are considered to be minimal.

The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners. There is also potential for cumulative changes to a person's sense of place resulting from multiple amenity-related changes (visual impact of construction compounds, ongoing noise, dust or air quality changes). This can lead to local community members disconnecting from their surroundings or in extreme cases choosing to leave the area.

Impacts are likely to be most pronounced where the three Inland Rail projects meet, and nearby residents may experience construction impacts over a more extended period. However, as A2I and S2P are predominantly upgrade projects, works in one area will be temporary. Any impacts could be effectively managed through ongoing consultation with landowners and the implementation of agreed mitigation measures.

Operational impacts for the proposal can only be considered in the broader context of Inland Rail as a linear infrastructure project. Operation impacts identified in this SIA are considered to apply across the entire alignment and are not considered cumulative.

9.2.6 Surroundings

There are not anticipated to be any cumulative impacts to surroundings.

9.2.7 Livelihoods

The delivery of three rail projects over multiple years is likely to have flow-on economic benefits to local industry and businesses in the form of increased and prolonged spending. The non-resident workforce is likely to deliver increased spending in surrounding service communities to satisfy recreational and lifestyle demands. At the same time construction demands could also increase income for local businesses that supply the three Inland Rail projects.

10 Assessment of residual social impacts

The residual impact assessment identifies the residual severity of potential impacts post-implementation of recommended management and mitigation measures presented in detail in Appendix D.

These impacts may occur in the pre-construction, construction and operation phases of the proposal. The following tables identify the recommended mitigation or enhancement measures for each social impact or make reference to the relevant EIS technical paper which details a specific mitigation measure that would address the identified social impact.

Table 10.1 Residual impact assessment

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Way of life						
Local direct employment opportunities for up to 64 workers on the proposal during the construction period. Direct employment opportunities for up to 361 people across the regional study area during construction of the proposal. This brings about social wellbeing and economic security.	Local eligible workers within 125km of the proposal site searching for work in heavy construction or civil engineering Eligible workers in the regional study area searching for work in heavy construction or civil engineering	Construction	Positive	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.1) • Implementation of ARTC's Australian Industry Participation Plan (AIPP) • Implementation of the Inland Rail Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) • Contractor to liaise with ARTC to identify opportunities to provide the continuation of employment where possible • ARTC and the principal contractor would monitor regional infrastructure projects to pre-emptively identify potential constraints in labour markets • Implement communication and engagement strategy with reference to employment and training opportunities	High (Almost certain -Moderate)
Local indirect employment for businesses up and down the proposal's supply chain.	Business enterprises in sectors relating to construction, planning approvals, engineering and associated industries Indigenous businesses	Construction	Positive	Medium (Likely-Minor)	(See Table D.1) • Refer to 'Local direct employment opportunities' measures as above	High (Almost certain -Moderate)
Potential impacts on local short-term accommodation market availability (during site visits by ARTC managed technical specialists), restricting access for other community needs.	Community members relying on local short term accommodation market	Construction	Negative	Medium (Possible-Moderate)	(See Table D3) – ARTC to monitor local accommodation availability and pressures	Medium (Unlikely – Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Opportunities for skills development and training through the Inland Rail Skills Academy.	Students, workers searching for employment in rail infrastructure	Pre-Construction Construction	Positive	Medium (Likely-Minor)	(See Table D.1) • Implementation of Inland Rail Skills Academy programs and initiatives to upskill and develop local and regional residents • Implementation of communication and engagement strategy with reference to employment and training opportunities • Engage with relevant Registered Training Organisations (RTO's), and school leavers at relevant High Schools • Workforce management plan, monitoring and adaptative management • Industry participation plan and monitoring	High (Almost certain -Moderate)
Potentially restricted ability for local residents to move around their communities due to increased construction-related traffic, road diversions and road closures during construction of bridges and level crossings.	Users Old Sydney Road, Ironbong Road, Dirnaseer Road, Old Cootamundra Road and Burley Griffin Way Emergency services	Construction	Negative	Medium (Likely-Minor)	(See Table D.1 and Table D.5) • A Traffic Management Plan would be developed and implemented as part of the workforce management plan • The principal contractor would provide hard copy notification of upcoming road closures to affected landholders and nearby communities providing ample time to prepare for upcoming changes • The principal contractor would ensure emergency services are regularly updated of the program and status of upcoming road closures or traffic management measures to ensure sufficient time for network planning	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Enhanced freight connections to markets for local producers delivering economic efficiencies and growth.	Local and regional businesses	Operation	Positive	High (Likely-Major)	• Delivery of the Inland Rail program	Very High (Almost certain-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Freight mode shift from road to rail, reducing interactions between heavy vehicles and passenger vehicles and improving road safety.	Local and regional residents Road users	Operation	Positive	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • Rail safety awareness program as part of community investment program • Prepare and implement communication strategies which promote road and rail safety including culturally relevant programs and school-based education • Provide ample notification to affected residents of changes to access or changes to the road network to minimise interactions with construction works • Identify those areas in which it has been reported throughout consultation safety risks to people accessing to rail line and potentially accessing adjacent properties to improve security, and agree on mechanism to improve safety	High (Likely-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Supply chain efficiencies, employment and investment opportunities in the Southern NSW region (inclusive of the regional study area in this report) will bring about improved economic and social outcomes.	Southern NSW region	Operation	Positive	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.2) • Proposal-specific industry participation plan would be developed and implemented to manage the potential employment and regional economic benefits of the proposal • Liaise with business development and industry support groups to understand the capacity of local and Indigenous business to supply the proposal. • Promotion of the Inland Rail website and supplier portal to businesses in the region. • Support for training and business capacity building programs • Prepare and implement the Social Delivery Plan, Workforce management plan and the Local and Indigenous Participation plan • Promotion of connectivity potential to other markets using Inland Rail. • ARTC would explore ways through a Community Investment Program to promote how new and advanced manufacturers and circular economy projects in the social locality can be enhanced using Inland Rail to reach markets elsewhere in Australia.	High (Likely-Major)
Easier access to and from regional, national and global markets for agricultural producers, farmers and businesses will lead to improved economic and social livelihoods	Local and regional businesses	Operation	Positive	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.2) • Refer to 'Supply chain efficiencies, employment and investment opportunities' measures as above	High (Likely-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Direct and indirect employment may be generated within the local study area during operation of the proposal.	Suitably qualified workers seeking employment	Operations	Positive	Medium (Possible-Minor)	(See Table D.1) • Implementation of ARTC's Australian Industry Participation Plan (AIPP) • Implementation of the Inland Rail Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) • Contractor to liaise with ARTC to identify opportunities to provide the continuation of employment where possible • ARTC and the principal contractor would monitor regional infrastructure projects to pre-emptively identify potential constraints in labour markets • Implement communication and engagement strategy with reference to employment and training opportunities	Medium (Likely-Minor)
The skills and development training during the construction phase may contribute to the upskilling of workers who may be able to transfer their skills to other projects and contribute to economic development in the region.	Participants who participated in training and skills improvement opportunities	Operations	Positive	Medium (Possible-Minor)	(See Table D.1) • Implementation of Inland Rail Skills Academy programs and initiatives to upskill and develop local and regional residents • Implementation of communication and engagement strategy with reference to employment and training opportunities • Engage with relevant Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) • Engage with school leavers at relevant High Schools • Workforce management plan, monitoring and adaptative management • Industry participation plan and monitoring	Medium (Possible-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities may be affected during operation of the proposal, both positively and negatively. Some minor benefits will be seen where realignment to Burley Griffin Way occurs, whereas minor delays will also be experienced at new public level crossings.	Local road users	Operations	Negative	Medium (Possible-Minor)	(See Table D.1, Table D.4 and Table D.5) • A Traffic Management Plan would be developed and implemented as part of the Workforce Management Plan. • The principal contractor would provide hard copy notification of upcoming road closures to affected landholders and nearby communities providing ample time to prepare for upcoming changes • The principal contractor would ensure emergency services are regularly updated of the program and status of upcoming road closures or traffic management measures to ensure sufficient time for network planning	Low (Unlikely-Minor)
Removal of level crossing at Burley Griffin Way leading to improved road safety and reduction in delays.	Road users of Burley Griffin Way	Operations	Positive	High (Likely-Major)	(See Table D.1, Table D.4 and Table D.5) • Refer to 'Changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities' measures as above • ARTC Community Investment Program • Community and stakeholder engagement plan	Very high (Almost certain-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
New level crossings will be introduced at six locations along the proposal site. Vehicle delays are expected to reach a maximum of 131 seconds increasing travel times, leading to fatigue and stress. However, these trips are predominantly on rural roads, and longer journeys are a regular occurrence. This impact would increase over time as the average frequency of trains increases between 2026 and 2040.	Local road users	Operation	Negative	Low (Almost Certain-Minimal)	(See Table D.1, Table D.4 and Table D.5) • Refer to 'Changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities' measures as above • Rail safety campaign as part of community investment program	Low (Likely - Minimal)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
New level crossings may also present safety risks to motorists due to potential collisions with trains.	Local road users	Operation	Negative	High (Possible-Major)	(See Table D.1, Table D.4 and Table D.5) • Refer to 'Changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities' measures as above • ARTC will develop an operations Communication and Engagement Strategy including Rail Safety Campaign that builds community awareness of the rail line's operational characteristics, promotes road and rail safety including potential hazards of level crossing operations. • As per Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access, proposed public level crossings are to be designed to adequate standards and objectives, including adequate safety design measures to mitigate the likelihood of incidents. The operation of public level crossings constructed as part of the proposal would be reviewed following the commencement of operation and be subject to an interface agreement with the relevant road manager to ensure that safety risks are identified and minimised as far as reasonably practicable.	Medium (Possible-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Community						
Sense of place may be altered for some affected stakeholders, i.e. landowners along the proposal site due to the change of rural character and amenity during construction.	Mostly directly affected landowners will experience a direct change to the sense of place, and to a lesser extent, residents of nearby townships	Construction	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.5) • Develop a strategy to engage with landowners located in the local study area to build understanding and preparedness for potential amenity impacts. • Identify and engage with households identified as eligible for noise mitigation treatments in the Operational Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment and support owners/tenants through the delivery process • Investigate the provision of vegetation planting and screening of the construction compounds	Medium (Possible-Moderate)
Community cohesion and character may be positively influenced by influx of temporary workforce who have the potential to participate in the community and stimulate local business.	Townships of Illabo, Stockinbingal, Temora	Construction	Positive	Medium (Likely-Minor)	(See Table D.1) • Workforce management plan that includes measures to manage potential impacts of the non-resident construction workforce on local and regional communities • Workforce and community safety and wellbeing plan, including community involvement and relationship building measures and considerations to improve worker and resident attraction and retention • This would include specific and culturally appropriate recommendations to maximise the integration of Indigenous non-resident workforces within the broader workforce and within the local community. These would be defined in consultation with Wagga Wagga and Young LALC's and Mawang Galway elders Group.	High (Likely-moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Adverse changes to community cohesion and perception of safety in relation to anti-social behaviour exhibited by construction workforce.	Townships of Illabo, Stockinbingal, Temora	Construction	Negative	Medium (Possible-Moderate)	(See Table D.1) • Refer to 'Community cohesion and character' measures as above	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Minor changes to community character and cohesion may be felt after the departure of the temporary construction workforce.	Residents in townships located in local study area	Operation	Negative	Low (Likely-Minimal)	(See Table D.1) • Refer to 'Community cohesion and character' measures as above	Low (Possible-Minimal)
A permanent change to the rural sense of place and identification to the land brought on by operation of the proposal. This will be experienced more acutely by directly affected landowners along the proposal site, but also by residents of townships in the local study area. This overall impact links to amenity changes identified in the Surroundings section.	Directly affected landowners along the proposal site Residents in townships in local study area	Operation	Negative	Medium (Almost certain-Minor)	(See Table D.5) • Develop a strategy to engage with landowners located in the local study area to build understanding and preparedness for potential amenity impacts • Identify and engage with households identified as eligible for noise mitigation treatments in the Operational Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment and support owners/tenants through the delivery process • Investigate the provision of vegetation planting and screening of the construction compounds	Medium (Possible-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Community/accessibility						
Patrons having to go elsewhere to use facilities due to increased demand for community facilities, services and networks such as sport and recreation, health and emergency services as a result of the construction workforce	Users of community facilities and services in the local study area	Construction	Negative	High (Possible-Major)	(See Table D.1) • ARTC and the principal contractor would engage with Junee Shire Council, Cootamundra-Gundagai Council, Temora Shire Council and the Wagga Wagga Health Service and the NSW Department of Education to develop a plan and processes to mitigate the social implications of an unserviceable increase in demand for social infrastructure and services during construction • ARTC would confirm workforce requirements and the associated requirements for, and availability of, support services (including health, wellbeing and emergency services) to meet the needs of the non-resident construction workforce • Workforce management plan would be developed and implemented during construction	Medium (Possible-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Potential for increased risk to public safety if ability for emergency services to access all parts the social locality, in particular during times of high fire risk is compromised.	Members of the local and regional study area communities Members of emergency services	Pre-Construction Construction	Negative	High (Possible-Major)	(See Table D.4) • Communication management plan would include measures to ensure ongoing consultation with local emergency services • Engage with Emergency Services, as well as the Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) and the Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMC) to investigate potential issues associated with the design that may hamper service provision • Provide ample notice to Emergency Services providers of upcoming traffic management measures and road closures during construction • Confirm workforce requirements and the associated requirements for, and availability of, support services (including health, wellbeing and emergency services) • Fire, ambulance and police emergency services would be briefed regarding anticipated construction and operational activities • Engage traffic control teams to reroute traffic in a safe major where possible.	Medium (Unlikely-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Accessibility						
Increased demand for access to community facilities, services and networks such as sport and recreation, health and emergency services during the construction of the proposal.	Users of community facilities and services in the local study area	Construction	Negative	Medium (Possible-Minor)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to Potential for increased risk to public safety if ability for emergency services to access all parts the social locality, in particular during times of high fire risk is compromised' measures as above • Confirm workforce requirements and the associated requirements for, and availability of, support services (including health, wellbeing and emergency services)	Low (Possible – Minimal)
Ability for emergency services to access the study areas, in particular during times of high fire risk.	Members of the local and regional study area communities Members of emergency services	Construction	Negative	Medium (Possible-Major)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to Potential for increased risk to public safety if ability for emergency services to access all parts the social locality, in particular during times of high fire risk is compromised' measures as above	Medium (Unlikely – Major)
Concerns and anxiety around safety of people and livestock, and disturbance to farming operations from the impact of potential flooding on accessibility and safety around underbridges.	Directly affected landowners along the proposal site	Operation	Negative	High (Possible-Major)	(See Table D.5) • Implement communication management plan • Arrangements with landholders regarding works timing and practices; any required adjustments to fencing, access, and farm infrastructure; and relocation of any impacted structures. • Implement the suitable mitigation measure as per the Flooding and Hydrology Impact Assessment and communicate regularly with the affected landowners as per the communications management plan	Medium (Unlikely-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Culture						
Potential harm to examples of Aboriginal cultural heritage during construction of the proposal – loss of cultural significance/value.	Members of the local Aboriginal communities in the affected zones identified	Construction	Negative	High (Unlikely-Transformation)	(See Table D.4) • Continue engagement with Indigenous communities post-exhibition including as part of the preparation of a Construction Heritage Management Plan as per GML's recommendations (refer Technical Paper 7) • Investigate opportunities to incorporate cultural and social values, aspirations and connection to Country design principles • Implement the strategies identified to enhance connection to Country • Investigate opportunities to provide permanent appropriate signage in prominent locations at sites of cultural significance • Explore with the local community and Indigenous groups ways to enhance cultural and aesthetic values across the rail line through a Community Investment Program.	Medium (Unlikely-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Potential adverse change to sense of place and connection to Country amongst Indigenous people due to impacts to artefacts of cultural significance in southern portion of proposal	Local Indigenous community	Operation	Negative	High (Unlikely-Transformational)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'Potential harm to examples of Aboriginal cultural heritage' measures as above • Work with the Wagga Wagga and Young LALCs and Indigenous community service providers to develop strategies to manage upcoming impacts on cultural heritage sites and to investigate opportunities to incorporate Indigenous design principles • ARTC and the principal contractor would provide permanent appropriate signage in prominent locations for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to gain familiarity with the history of the area	Medium (Unlikely-Major)
Health and wellbeing						
The perceived uplift in economic livelihoods and wellbeing as a result of the construction employment and subsequent spending in the local study area. This impact has the potential to become negative if these perceived benefits do not eventuate.	Residents in the local and regional study areas Local Indigenous community	Pre-Construction	Positive	Medium (Likely-Minor)	(See Table D.5) • Engage with local schools and training providers to build knowledge of training opportunities and employment pathways associated with the proposal • Engage with local business groups, LALCs and local industry body networks to promote local employment and procurement opportunities • Support Councils, business chambers and other local industry bodies to promote the opportunities for further development once the rail line is operational.	High (Likely-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Mental health impacts (uncertainty, frustration and stress) associated with the land access and acquisition agreements process.	Directly affected landowners and their families	Pre-construction Construction	Negative	High (Likely-Major)	(See Table D.4) • Develop a community wellbeing plan • Prepare and implement communication strategies to ensure the broader community and stakeholders are aware of upcoming changes brought about by the proposal to promote preparedness and resilience to change • Implement a workforce and community safety and wellbeing plan, including communications, which supports non-resident workforces to contribute to local communities and businesses positively • Maintain ongoing engagement and monitoring with those residents identified as vulnerable during early engagement. • The principal contractor would investigate support mechanisms and pathways for landowners, residents and other stakeholders who may experience mental health issues resulting from the proposal. • Facilitate a dedicated land access liaison officer to be allocated to each landowner as the consistent and trusted single point of contact	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Mental health impacts associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation.	Directly affected landowners and their families	Pre-construction Construction	Negative	High (Likely-Major)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'Mental health impacts (uncertainty, frustration and stress) associated with the land access and acquisition agreements process' measures as above	Medium (Possible-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Consultation fatigue and frustration associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation.	Directly affected landowners and their families. A small number of landowners are experiencing this impact more acutely than others, depending on the length of time and level of involvement they have had in the design phases of the proposal.	Pre-construction Construction	Negative	Very high (Almost certain-Major)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'Mental health impacts (uncertainty, frustration and stress) associated with the land access and acquisition agreements process' measures as above • The principal contractor would facilitate a dedicated land access liaison officer to be allocated to each landowner as the consistent and trusted single point of contact throughout pre-construction and construction of the proposal	Low (Unlikely-Minor)
The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners.	Directly affected landowners and their families General public consulted during development of the proposal	Operation	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'Mental health impacts (uncertainty, frustration and stress) associated with the land access and acquisition agreements process' measures as above	Medium (Possible-Moderate)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Noticeable changes to existing visual amenity caused by operation of the proposal leading to an altered sense of enjoyment and potential frustration over time.	Private residences at 84 West Street and Cambria Street in Stockinbingal	Operation	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • An urban design and landscape plan would be prepared to provide a consistent approach to design and landscaping • Ongoing engagement with affected sensitive receivers as detailed in the Communications Management Plan • Refer to Landscape and Visual mitigation measures LV-8 • Work with the community along the proposal site to identify local values as well as opportunities for improving visual amenity, which may include increasing the number of plants/trees along the proposal site and creating natural screens/barriers • Explore with the local community, including relevant Indigenous groups, ways to enhance aesthetic value across the social locality through a Community Investment Program • Community and landowner liaison officer would give project updates and discuss concerns and complaints.	Low (Unlikely-Minor)
The potential for ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for one residential receiver due to noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way	Stockinbingal, in proximity to Burley Griffin Way	Operation	Negative	High (Likely-Major)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'noticeable changes to visual amenity' measures as above • Implement the appropriate noise mitigation options for this sensitive receiver as per the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (Operation-non-rail)	Medium (Possible-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Surroundings						
Visual amenity changes during construction of the proposal will be experienced by some residential sensitive receivers and lead to frustration and disappointment in ARTC.	Residential sensitive receivers off Cambria Street in Stockinbingal Residential sensitive receivers at 84 West Street in Stockinbingal	Construction	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'noticeable changes to visual amenity' measures as above • Mitigation measures for visual impacts would be included in the CEMP • Implement Landscape and Visual mitigation measures LV-7 • Complaints Register detailed within the Communications Management Plan	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Noise exceedances are expected during works on the Burley Griffin Way upgrade for residential sensitive receivers that may result in sleep disturbance.	Residential receivers in Stockinbingal in proximity to Burley Griffin Way	Construction	Negative	High (Almost certain-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'noticeable changes to visual amenity' measures as above	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Works on the Burley Griffin Way upgrade would result in noticeable vibration for sensitive receivers that may result in concern for building safety.	Residential receivers in Stockinbingal in proximity to Burley Griffin Way	Construction	Negative	High (Almost certain-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'noticeable changes to visual amenity' measures as above	Medium (Possible-Minor)
The project will impact on fauna and flora that have social significance for some members of the community.	Members of the local and regional study area communities	Construction Operation	Negative	Medium (Likely-Minor)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'noticeable changes to visual amenity' measures as above • A biodiversity offset approach should be implemented as outlined in Technical Paper 1, to ensure maintenance or improvement in biodiversity, which is recognised as an important community value, as mentioned during consultation by some community members	Medium (Possible-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Dust resulting from earthworks, trackout dust from HDVs on local roads and increased vehicle emissions from construction traffic will affect air quality.	110 sensitive receivers residing within 350m of the construction footprint, predominantly in Stockinbingal	Construction	Negative	High (Almost certain-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'noticeable changes to visual amenity' measures as above • An air quality management plan would be prepared and implemented as part of the CEMP • Refer to Air Quality mitigation measures AQ-1, AQ-2 and AQ-4 • Complaints Register detailed within the Communications Management Plan	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Noise and vibration effects will be experienced by sensitive receivers along the proposal site. Prolonged exposure can lead to adverse physical and mental health effects.	Residential and non-residential sensitive receivers	Operation	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.4) • Refer to 'noticeable changes to visual amenity' measures as above • Identify and engage with households identified as eligible for noise mitigation treatments • Refer to Operational Rail Noise and Vibration mitigation measures • Ongoing engagement with affected sensitive receivers as detailed in the Communications Management Plan and Complaints Register	Low (Unlikely-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Livelihoods						
Loss of local and regional agricultural production during construction of the proposal felt by individual landowners and regional producers.	Directly affected landowners who own farming businesses Regional agricultural supply chains	Construction	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.5) • Provide independent advisory to affected landowners in regard to land acquisition agreements and economic compensation protocols • Establish a contact person (liaison officer) from the project to provide project information • Protocols to ensure adequate coexistence of land use activities during construction (business operation), which may include coordination of special working hours, alternative access point to the property during construction and designated parking area for the property. • Measures to address and manage potential impacts to business operation. • Implement hard barriers (fences or other mechanisms) • Agree on a mechanism to identify and resolve potential property impacts due to vibration during operation (if applicable) • Refer to Land Use and Property mitigation measure LP-1 during pre-construction phase	Medium (Possible-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Delays or need for new route for farmers using the livestock highway during a six day period.	Directly affected landowners who own farming businesses and use the livestock highway	Construction	Negative	Medium (Likely-Minor)	(See Table D.1) • A Traffic Management Plan would be developed and implemented as part of the CEMP • The principal contractor would provide hard copy notification of upcoming road closures to affected landholders and nearby communities providing ample time to prepare for upcoming changes • Refer to Technical Paper Land Use and Property mitigation measure LP4, LP-9 and LP-11	Medium (Possible-Minor)
Potential adverse impact on agricultural businesses from land acquisition required for construction and operation of the proposal.	Directly affected landowners with agricultural business holdings located along the proposal site.	Construction Operation	Negative	High (Likely-Major)	(See Table D.1) • Refer to 'Delays or need for new route for farmers using the livestock highway during a six day period'; measures as above • Refer to Land Use and Property mitigation measures LP-2, LP-3, LP-4, LP-5 during pre-construction phase	Medium (Possible-Minor)
The effect of property impacts on individual landowners relates to the stress and anxiety of the process, as well as the ongoing impact on economic livelihoods.	Directly affected landowners	Operation	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.1) • Refer to 'Delays or need for new route for farmers using the livestock highway during a six day period'; measures as above • Ongoing engagement with affected landowners would be conducted as detailed in the Communications Management Plan • Evidence of ongoing stress and anxiety would be monitored	Medium (Likely-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Decision-making systems						
There has been an iterative consultation process resulting in changes to the project that respond to community feedback.	Residents in the local and regional study areas	Preconstruction	Positive	High (Likely-Major)	(See Table D.5) • Ongoing engagement would be conducted as detailed in the Communications Management Plan to identify further opportunities for project improvement, including with the CCC (should the committee continue) • Ongoing engagement with affected landowners would be conducted as detailed in the Communications Management Plan • The introduction of a dedicated community and landowner liaison officer is recommended as an overarching strategy to build and maintain ARTC's social licence to operate • A comprehensive social impact management plan (SIMP) would manage and monitor the implementation of the proposed social and economic mitigation measures • Local residents, landholders, landowners, businesses, affected social and recreation facilities and other relevant stakeholders would be notified • Complaints during construction would be managed in accordance with the complaints management system	Very high (Almost certain-Major)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
There are various reactions within the community and some may have been negatively impacted more than others, with fears that the project will negatively affect them and associated impacts on mental health. Some also feel they have not been properly engaged or listened to.	Residents in the local and regional study areas, and more specifically directly affected landowners	Preconstruction Construction	Negative	High (Almost certain-Moderate)	(See Table D.5) • Refer to 'iterative consultation process resulting in changes to the project that respond to community feedback' measures as above • As part of Communications Management Plan, ensure availability of information should be readily available to community and stakeholders. The successful implementation of the proposal-specific communications management plan would ensure ARTC, the principal contractor and the community are engaged in open dialogue on matters relating to operation of the proposal	Medium (Likely-Minor)
Possible long term affects or uncertainties felt by the community particularly landholders.	Members of the local and regional study area communities Directly affected landowners	Operation	Negative	Medium (Possible-Moderate)	(See Table D.5) • Refer to 'iterative consultation process resulting in changes to the project that respond to community feedback' measures as above • As part of Communications Management Plan, develop and implement permanent grievance mechanism for the life span of operations. Respond and act on complaints.	Medium (Possible-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Cumulative						
The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners. Additionally, the cumulative impact of multiple changes to amenity can lead to people disconnecting from their surroundings or choosing to relocate.	Directly affected landowners and their families General public consulted during development of the proposal	Operation	Negative	High (Likely-Moderate)	(See Table D.5) • Refer to 'iterative consultation process resulting in changes to the project that respond to community feedback' measures as above • Ongoing engagement with affected landowners would be conducted as detailed in the Communications Management Plan.	Medium (Likely-Minor)

Potential impact description	Distribution of impacts/stakeholders affected	Phase	Nature (positive/ negative)	Pre-mitigation rating (likelihood-magnitude)	Relevant management plan or measure as per the SIMP	Residual impact rating
Multiple projects under simultaneous delivery in the Riverina-Murray region leads to an influx of non-local workers impacting community, safety and wellbeing.	Residents in the local and regional study area	Construction	Negative	Medium (Possible-Moderate)	(See Table D.1 and Table D.5) • The principal contractor would prepare a proposal specific workforce management plan that sets out: • participation goals and targets, including Indigenous participation targets • local skills gaps and potential workforce skills requirements with apprenticeship and training participation targets • workforce management protocols and strategies including induction framework, code of conduct, drugs and alcohol policy, and worker support pathways • Consult with councils, local police and the LALCs to monitor workforce compliance with code of conduct and identify potential community issues • The principal contractor would consider consultation with government agencies, other proponents, service providers, and the community to understand the risk of multiple projects overlapping.	Medium (Possible-Moderate)

11 Conclusion

This report provides the results of a social impact assessment for the proposal. It contains a description of the existing social baseline conditions for local and regional areas potentially affected by the proposal, an assessment of the potential likelihood and magnitude of the predicted social impacts on those communities during the construction and operation of the proposal, and the list of recommended mitigation and enhancement measures associated with each identified social impact.

The potential positive social impacts expected to result during construction of the proposal are as follows:

- improved livelihoods resulting from direct and indirect employment opportunities
- improved regional economic outcomes and opportunities resulting from increased project procurement activities
- new education, skills development and training opportunities for regional residents.

The key potential negative social impacts expected to occur during construction of the proposal are summarised below:

- potential impacts to short-term accommodation market available (during site visits by ARTC managed technical specialists), restricting access for other community needs
- restriction on people's ability move around their community as a result of traffic restrictions and delays at level crossings
- decreased perceptions of safety resulting from anti-social behaviour in local townships due to temporary construction workforce
- restricted access to community services and facilities due to increased demand from the construction workforce
- impeded access across the rail corridor for emergency services, specifically during times of high bushfire risk
- stress and anxiety resulting from potential harm to identified sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage around the proposal site
- adverse mental health impacts predominantly for directly affected landowners as a result of the land access and acquisition process of negotiations over a long period of time
- adverse mental health impacts (frustration, impatience) and cessation of engagement with ARTC due to the protracted design and planning process
- changes in rural amenity and character which may affect people's sense of place, including adverse changes to existing visual amenity for three residential sensitive receivers in the local study area
- potential health and wellbeing impacts associated with amenity impacts, including:
  - adverse changes to existing levels of noise and vibration for up to 152 sensitive receivers in the local study area
  - adverse changes to existing air quality for up to 108 sensitive receivers in the local study area
- loss of local and regional agricultural production felt by individual landowners and regional producers
- adverse impact on agricultural businesses from land acquisition leading to severance.

The potential positive social impacts expected to result from operation of the proposal are as follows:

- improved economic and social outcomes from supply chain efficiencies, employment and investment opportunities in the Southern NSW region (inclusive of the regional study area in this report)
- improved economic and social livelihoods from easier access to and from regional, national and global markets for agricultural producers, farmers and businesses
- direct and indirect employment opportunities in the local study area
- a legacy of upskilled workers from the skills and development training provided during the construction phase, leading to opportunities for these workers to transfer their skills to other projects and further contribute to economic development in the region

- improved road safety via a reduction in traffic incidents and delays from removal of one public level crossing on Burley Griffin Way
- improved traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities where realignment to Burley Griffin Way occurs.

The key potential negative social impacts expected to occur during operation of the proposal are summarised below:

- changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities including minor delays at new public level crossings
- a permanent change to the rural sense of place and identification to the land, experienced more acutely by landowners directly affected by the proposal, but also by residents of townships in the local study area
- concerns around safety of people and livestock, and disturbance to farming operations from the impact of potential flooding on accessibility and safety around underbridges
- ongoing mental health impacts from that experienced during the construction phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners.
- an altered sense of enjoyment of the rural landscapes from changes to the existing visual amenity leading to potential frustration
- sleep disturbance or ongoing exposure to air-borne noise for sensitive receivers along the proposal site due to train activity, leading to a change to the level of enjoyment of the rural lifestyle that is highly valued by local residents
- ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for one residential receiver due to noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way
- ongoing stress and anxiety associated with the longer-term effects of property impacts on individual landowners relating to the land acquisition process, as well as the ongoing impact on economic livelihoods.

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Appendix A Events by town

A.1 Events by town

Month	Stockinbingal	Illabo	Junee	Cootamundra	Temora	Wagga Wagga	Gundagai
January	Australia Day Celebrations	Australia Day Celebrations	Junee Markets Australia Day Celebrations	Cootamundra Antique Motor Club 40th Anniversary Run Annual Unisex Touch Football Carnival Australia Day Festivities Annual Bradman Letter cricket match (Albert Park)	Australia Day Celebrations Hot to Trot Carnival	Riverina Producers Market Riverina Comedy Club Wagga Parkrun Wagga Wagga Road Runners Tarcutta Markets Mates Gully Produce Market Sounds of Summer Concert Series Australia Day Celebrations World Championship Gumi Race TumbaFest	New Year's Day Races Australia Day Celebrations
February		Club Car Runs	Junee Markets	Beach Volleyball Carnival		Riverina Producers Market Riverina Comedy Club Wagga Parkrun Wagga Wagga Road Runners Tarcutta Markets Mates Gully Produce Market	The Gundagai Show ARTHC Tractor Pull & Swap Meet

Month	Stockinbingal	Illabo	Junee	Cootamundra	Temora	Wagga Wagga	Gundagai
March	Stockinbingal Village Fair	Vintage Speedway Event Club Car Runs	Junee Markets Annual Junee Rhythm 'n' Rail Festival	Stock Fair Cycle Race B&S Ball	Rural Museum Annual Live Exhibition Day Aircraft showcase Active Farmers Games Rotary District Conference	Riverina Comedy Club South Wagga Apex Fisherama Wagga Wagga Road Runners Tarcutta Markets Mates Gully Produce Market Mardi Gras Festival Leisurefest Roadshow Cork and Fork Festival Food and Wine festival Craft Alive Wagga Wagga Gamma.Con Temora West Public School Annual Fete	Tucker Box Bash
April	Anzac Day Service (King George V Park)	Anzac Day Ceremonies Club Car Runs	Junee Markets Anzac Day Ceremonies	Picnic Races Anzac Day Ceremonies	Anzac Day Aircraft Showcase Anzac Day Ceremonies Temora Show and Shine V8 Superboats Temora RV Muster	Mates Gully Produce Market Stone the Crows Festival	Anzac Day Ceremonies
May		Vintage Speedway Event	Junee Markets	The Hay Carters Cycle Race Cootamundra Dog Show	V8 Superboats	Mates Gully Produce Market Wagga Wagga World up	

Month	Stockinbingal	Illabo	Junee	Cootamundra	Temora	Wagga Wagga	Gundagai
June		Club Car Runs	Junee Markets Australian Highland Cattle Society National Show		Aircraft Showcase	Mates Gully Produce Market	Australian Road Transport Heritage Centre: Fundraiser Dinner and Road Run
July			Junee Markets			Mates Gully Produce Market	
August		Vintage Speedway Event Club Car Runs	Junee Markets Riverina Schoolboys Football Carnival	Annual Wattle Time Fair & Street Parade The Wattle Time Art Show Cootamundra Annual Cycle Race	Aircraft Showcase	Mates Gully Produce Market Wagga Wagga Trail Marathon Running Weekend	
September	Spring Markets			Mind Body Spirit Festival Father's Day Swap Meet	Temora Show	Mates Gully Produce Market Riverina Truck Show and Kids Convoy Wagga 6-hour Mountain Bike Enduro	

Month	Stockinbingal	Illabo	Junee	Cootamundra	Temora	Wagga Wagga	Gundagai
October		Vintage Speedway Event Illabo Show Club Car Runs	Junee Show	Cootamundra Show Cootamundra Nursing Home Annual Spring Fling	V8 Superboats Temora Bowling Club Annual Mixed Paris Tournament	SASS Mates Gully Produce Market Fusion Multicultural Street Festival Classic Car Show and Shine For the Love of Strawberries Festival CMRI Christmas Fair Cork and Fork Fest Annual Scale Model Show Octoberfest Banff Mountain Film festival Gears + Beers Festival Little Big Day Out Annual Dragon Boat Challenge	Battle on the Bidgee Spring Flower Show/ Festival of Flowers Australian National Busking Championships
November	Ellwoods Hall Christmas Markets		Junee Markets Charity Show'n'Shine	Lions Christmas Carnival	Aircraft Show Remembrance Day Services Temora Country Music Festival	Mates Gully Produce Market Cork and Fork Fest	Snake Gully Cup Carnival Gundagai Rodeo
December		Club Car Runs	Junee Markets	Christmas Festivities – street party	Christmas Street Fair	Mates Gully Produce Market Wagga Wagga Christmas Spectacular Wagga Skyworks - NYE	Christmas Carols and Twilight Markets

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Appendix B Social impact assessment stakeholder consultation

B.1 Core questions – June-July 2019

B.1.1 Current social environment

These questions are about what you value about where you live and work and how you see your community. The information you provide will help ARTC understand what is important to your community and ways the project will make a difference.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
Who and what in your community is important to you and your family?	
What are the current issues/challenges for your community?	
What local services and facilities are important to you and your family?	

B.1.2 Project perception And Community values (knowledge and attitudes towards the Proposal)

These questions are about the project and what you think will happen during construction and operation of Inland Rail in your area.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
What's your general perception of the project?	Consider the broader community
What project benefits and impacts during construction and operation have you identified?	

B.1.3 Impacts

With the next questions, think about potential impacts on you and the community you have described. Keep in mind that up to 300 extra people could live in and travel to the area for two to three years. Also, consider the location of the rail line and what its operation could mean.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
Do you think the project will affect: • community safety • community health and wellbeing • accommodation and housing in the region • local businesses • local employment • local services and facilities • local transport. If so, in what ways?	Consider: • Construction and operation; • Project construction workforce may be housed locally and travel to site each day; • The current levels of services and whether local needs are being met.

B.1.4 Managing impacts and enhancing needs

With the following questions, keep in mind the impacts from construction and operation you identified already.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
How can ARTC manage or reduce potential impacts during construction and operation, and help the community?	
Do you think local people can be involved in the Project construction and operation? If so, in what ways.	

B.1.5 Accommodation providers

These questions are for accommodation providers and real estate agents only and should be accompanied by a brief project description to ensure participants can provide informed comment, particularly for providers outside the immediate Study Area.

Accommodation providers

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
How would you describe the community that your accommodation is in? Town/community	Are people visiting for tourism, travelling through the area or for work?
What is the main reason people stay at your accommodation?	
How many rooms do you have?	
How many vacancies do you have today?	
Apart from accommodation, what other services do you provide?	
What times of the year are your busiest (at or near capacity)?	
Why are these your busiest times?	
Generally, how many vacancies do you have at this time?	
When is your least busiest time?	
Why are these times the least busy?	
Generally, how many vacancies do you have at this time?	
If a construction workforce of up to 300 people were to move to the region during construction, what impact would this have on your business (negative and beneficial)?	
What can ARTC do to help you manage this impact?	

Real Estate Agents

These questions are for not for profit and community organisations only and relate to how the project will change service provision and community to services.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
How many rentals do you have available today?	
How many houses/townhouses or units do you have for sale today?	
In which areas are these vacancies?	
What is the average cost of a rental per week?	
What is the average cost of a three-bedroom house in your area?	
Is this typical for 2019?	
Do you see any major changes in the property market in the next three years?	
If a temporary population of up to 300 people moved into the area, what affect would that have on the local property market?	

Individual landowners only

These questions are for directly affected landowners only and relate to how the project will change individual properties and place.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
How would you describe your community?	Consider: • Property management and operations, employees and suppliers and transport; • Your lifestyle and what you value about living where you live.
What is your property is used for?	
How will the Inland Rail project affect you, your family and your property/business?	

Community groups only

These questions are for not for profit and community organisations only and relate to how the project will change service provision and community to services.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
How would you describe your community?	Consider: • If the project will change why and how people access your service and your ability to provide support to your community.
Can you describe the services you provide or the role you play in the community?	
How will the project affect the services or the role you play in the community?	

Service providers only

These questions are for service and facility providers only and relate to how the project will change service provision and community services.

Question	Prompt or follow-up question
How would you describe your community?	Consider: • If the project will change why and how people access your service and your ability to provide support to your community; • How many people are employed in your service and whether you think the project will increase or decrease the need for local services.
What services do you provide?	
What helps you determine the services needed in the community?	
Are your services under, at or above capacity and in what ways will your ability to provide this service change during construction and operation of the project?	

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Appendix C Social impact assessment-specific consultation

The below table outlines discussion themes, method, timing and questions for consultation for the I2S SIA.

Category	Discussion themes	Questions
General discussion points	• Existing social and community characteristics • Vulnerable community cohorts • Existing infrastructure and services • Population influx • Local development opportunities	• Generally – how has community changed in last year or so • Has Covid-19 changed how you provide your service/work? • In addition to what we have already discussed, have you felt a shift in your organisation/community's priorities since 2019? • Since 2019, have you felt a shift in how the communities perceives Inland Rail? • What project benefits and impacts during construction and operation has your organisation identified? How may the project affect the services or the role you play in the community? • Are there any vulnerable members of the community that may be impacted by the project in different ways?
Affected landowners	• Land access, acquisition and compensation • Land use and management • Agricultural livelihoods and lifestyles • Amenity, safety and construction activities	• Can you tell us about how the Illabo to Stockinbingal project will impact on you in general? • Can you detail the primary change that acquisition/land access will bring about for your business [if applicable]? • We know there are land access and acquisition agreements in progress for you, can you tell me about how the process has been for you? • Do you think you had a say in decisions that affect you? Have you been listened to? • Aside from land acquisition and access, what other impacts are you most concerned about? (Noise/visual/economic disadvantage/being heard etc.) • What could be done to improve your experiences? • Within reason, have the design changes at the 70% reference design reflected your feedback? Has information been provided been helpful so far? • What could be done to minimize the disruption caused by Illabo to Stockinbingal for you during the construction phase? And what about once it's up and running)?
Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and Indigenous groups • Wagga Wagga LALC • Young LALC • Mawang Galway Elders Group - Riverina	• Existing Aboriginal community characteristics and vulnerabilities • Land access and land management • Cultural heritage • Local Aboriginal interests and priorities • Local development opportunities	• How would you describe your community? What services do you provide? • What are the key characteristics and vulnerabilities of your community? • What are some of the interests or priorities your community/service/organisation is focusing on? • How would you describe your community's cultural and local values? • Are there any specific areas of cultural significance near the project alignment or in the wider area? • Are there any current Native Title claims or determinations? • How do you think Inland Rail will impact your community? • What can ARTC implement to benefit your community during construction/operation? What would you like to see come to the community as a result of IR?

Category	Discussion themes	Questions
• Councils • Service providers • Community groups • Accommodation providers • Real estate agents	• Existing social and community characteristics • Vulnerable community cohorts • Existing infrastructure and services • Population influx • Local development opportunities	• How would you describe your community? • Can you describe the services you provide or the role you play in the community? • How will the project affect the services or the role you play in the community? • Who and what in your community is important to you and your organisation? • What are the current issues/challenges facing your community and organisation? • What local services and facilities are important to you and your organisation • What is your general perception of the project? • What project benefits and impacts during construction and operation has your organisation identified? • How do you think ARTC could be able to manage or reduce potential impacts during construction and operation? • Do you think local people can be involved in the project construction and operation? If so, in what ways? • How do you think the project may impact the local housing/accommodation market? • What is the current situation regarding short stay accommodation occupancy and the local tourism/visitation sector? • Are there any vulnerable members of the community that may experience different impacts of the project?

Category	Discussion themes	Questions
Community Consultative Committee	• Property acquisition • Land use • Community characteristics and values • Existing infrastructure and services • Population influx • Local development opportunities	• What do you value most about your community and lifestyle? • How would you describe your community in five words or less? • What is your general perception of the project? – Positive – Neutral – Negative • What impacts are you most concerned about, ranked from 1 (being most concerning) to 5 (being of least concern): – Level/stock crossings – Land and property acquisition – Noise – Vibration – Construction disturbance – Railway operations – Visual impact – Safety – Biosecurity – Heritage – Local employment and training – Traffic and transport – Property management – Consultation • What are the long-term effects that you think the project will bring to your local area – either positive or negative? • What does a successful Inland Rail project look like for you and your family? • What opportunities for the community to benefit do you see from Inland Rail? • Would you like to be contacted by a member of our engagement team to discuss the project in further detail?
Broader community • Residents near the alignment • Residents in nearby towns	• Community characteristics and values • Existing infrastructure and services • Vulnerable community cohorts • Population influx • Local development opportunities	• What community do you represent? • What are the current values and priorities of your community? • What are the challenges that you think the Inland Rail project might bring to your local area? • What opportunities/benefits for the community do you see from Inland Rail? • What potential impacts of Inland Rail are you/your community most concerned about?

TECHNICAL REPORT

11

Social Impact Assessment

Appendix D Social impact management plan

ILLABO TO STOCKINBINGAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

This following plan includes the key social impact mitigation and enhancement measures that relate to each of the impacts and benefits identified in this report (Appendix D.1 to D.5) and a preliminary plan for monitoring and managing the proposal's social impacts (Appendix D.6).

The key social impact mitigation and enhancement measures align to the ARTC Inland Rail Programme – Social Impact Management Programme Framework (the Framework) and aim to minimise negative social impacts and maximise positive social impacts for communities within the local and regional study areas.

The SIMP is also guided by the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant projects* (NSW DPIE, 2021) (2021 SIA Guideline) with reference to the management and monitoring of social impacts. The principles below informed the development of management measures and monitoring framework:

- Informed by consultation. Stakeholders were consulted how ARTC could manage the impacts and enhance the benefits of the proposal, the input was considered when developing measures and management framework.
- Specific and relevant. Measures will be designed to address the negative social impact being mitigated.
- Feasible and practicable. Justification and supporting evidence as to what is feasible to implement will be provided on those cases a measure suggested by the community is not practicable.
- Measurable and time bound. A desirable outcome and target indicator will be provided for each measure as well as an associated timeline to achieve the desired outcome.

The social impact mitigation and enhancement measures and social impact monitoring framework are presented according to the following topics:

1. Workforce Management
2. Industry Participation
3. Housing and Accommodation
4. Community Health and Wellbeing
5. Community and Stakeholder Engagement.

D.1 Workforce management

ARTC commits to working with the principal contractor to refine local, Indigenous and gender workforce participation targets that account for the area's social and demographic characteristics.

The proposal would provide up to 64 direct local jobs and up to 361 direct regional jobs during the construction period. ARTC and the principal contractor would review the works schedule for the project in reference to linking segments of Inland Rail at Albury to Illabo (A2I) and Stockinbingal to Parkes (S2P) projects and investigate opportunities to provide employment continuity for workers whose contracts are complete.

ARTC takes a proactive approach to preparing potential workers for the Inland Rail program and supporting contractors to meet or exceed workforce participation targets relating to apprenticeships and traineeships, skills development, Indigenous participation, and workforce management measures.

The workforce management plan would include measures to manage potential impacts of the non-resident construction workforce on local and regional communities, as well as any potential impacts that may be experienced by the construction workforce themselves, including:

- a code of conduct for workers developed in consultation with local police, Councils and Local Area Land Councils (LALCs), including a zero-tolerance policy relating to anti-social behaviour
- strategies to promote wellbeing of the workforce
- a transport management plan to and from site to reduce impacts on the local and regional road network
- a monitoring mechanism for use of local tourist accommodation and rental housing by workers
- consultation with local health and emergency services to establish processes for managing potential increased demands due to non-resident workforce
- health and wellbeing services needs of the temporary construction workforce, including medical, allied health and wellbeing services.

D.1.1 Management strategies

Table D.1 provides workforce management measures for the proposal.

Table D.1 Workforce management measures

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Employment and economic impacts • Local direct employment opportunities for up to 64 workers on the proposal during the construction period. Direct employment opportunities for up to 361 people across the regional study area during construction of the proposal. This brings about social wellbeing and economic security • Local indirect employment for businesses up and down the proposal's supply chain • Direct and indirect employment may be generated within the local study area during operation of the proposal	**Pre-construction** • The principal contractor would prepare a project-specific workforce management plan that sets out: – strategic initiatives and aspirational targets for under-represented and non-traditional demographics including but not limited to Indigenous people, women, youth participation and trade related positions – consideration of the Indigenous population and workforce participation rates as outlined in the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) – consideration to relevant Commonwealth Government, NSW Government and Inland Rail Policies, Plans and Programs, including: » Australian Jobs Act 2013 » Australian Industry Participation Plan » Indigenous Participation Plan » NSW Government Infrastructure Legacy Program » Inland Rail Australian Industry Participation Plan

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
• The perceived uplift in economic livelihoods and wellbeing as a result of the construction employment and subsequent spending in the local study area. This impact has the potential to become negative if these perceived benefits do not eventuate • Loss of local and regional agricultural production during construction of the proposal felt by individual landowners and regional producers • Potential adverse impact on agricultural businesses from land acquisition required for construction and operation of the proposal	– a desirable 20 per cent of total cumulative workforce should comprise of a local workforce including the targeted social benefit demographics of the following: » local and regional employees » Indigenous people » women » under 25 years of age » apprenticeship/traineeship positions – commits to: » connecting with participants of pre-construction training opportunities delivered through support of the Inland Rail Skills Academy and its program and initiatives partners, local RTO's, etc. » monthly reporting on cumulative achievements against the targets with accompanying meetings with ARTC to identify challenges and strategies to achieve aspirational targets » quarterly reports to comply with AIPP and DPIE reporting commitments. – identifies, outlines and includes: » local skills gaps and potential workforce skills and training requirements » how the contractor would utilise the Inland Rail Skills Academy to achieve its training objectives. » workforce management protocols and strategies including induction framework, code of conduct, drugs and alcohol policy, and worker support pathways. » consideration of additional mechanisms to address employment and training barriers based on a needs-threshold, such as: » implementing flexible working arrangements for certain roles so women can more easily participate in the workforce (school hours). • The principal contractor would liaise with ARTC to identify potential opportunities to provide, where possible, the continuation of employment to maximise worker retention from subsequent Inland Rail segments. • ARTC and the principal contractor would monitor regional infrastructure projects to pre-emptively identify potential constraints in labour markets. If constraints are identified, ARTC and the principal contractor would consider as a last resort FIFO options or temporarily extending the drive time limit for workers in the employment catchment • ARTC and the principal contractor would develop a localised communication and engagement strategy to help all interested community members understand opportunities to gain employment and training. • The principal contractor would engage with the Wagga Wagga and Young LALCs, Temora Shire, Cootamundra-Gundagai and Junee Shire Councils, and local Indigenous employment agencies to determine opportunities and strategies for maximising local training and employment opportunities for Indigenous residents.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
	Construction • ARTC and the principal contractor would consult with Temora Shire, Cootamundra-Gundagai and Junee Shire Councils, relevant business chambers and local agricultural bodies to identify any potential labour force constraints in the region. If constraints are identified through the monthly meetings, ARTC and the principal contractor would consider temporarily extending the drive time limit for workers in the employment catchment or as a last resort and at the exhaustion of all other options consider a FIFO option. • The workforce management plan would include measures to manage local employment and procurement requirements, including but not limited to recruitment, skills and training measures, including identification of skills and qualifications required, and training targets, and how the contractor would work with regional stakeholders to upskill local residents.
Training and skills development • Opportunities for skills development and training through the Inland Rail Skills Academy • The skills and development training that was provided during the construction phase will contribute to leaving a legacy of upskilled workers who may be able to transfer their skills to other projects and contribute to economic development in the region	**Pre-construction** • ARTC to facilitate the implementation of Inland Rail Skills Academy programs and initiatives to upskill and develop local and regional residents for potential employment opportunities • ARTC and the principal contractor would develop a localised communication and engagement strategy to help all interested community members understand opportunities to gain employment and training. • The principal contractor would engage with relevant Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) including TAFE NSW campuses in Young, Cootamundra and Wagga Wagga to promote current students' training and apprenticeship opportunities. • Present and/or invite school leavers at relevant High Schools, such as Temora High School to learn about opportunities to work on the proposal and how to access programs provided by the Inland Rail Skills Academy and/or through local training providers. **Construction** • ARTC would continue to facilitate the implementation of Inland Rail Skills Academy training programs for regional residents. • The principal contractor would continue to promote employment and training opportunities during construction.
Management of construction workforce • Increased demand for access to community facilities, services and networks such as sport and recreation, health and emergency services during the construction of the proposal • Patrons having to go elsewhere to use facilities due to increased demand for community facilities, services and networks such as sport and recreation, health and emergency services as a result of the construction workforce	**Construction** • A workforce management plan would be developed and implemented during construction to manage local business and employment opportunities, and health and wellbeing services needs of the temporary construction workforce, including medical, allied health and wellbeing services. • The plan would be developed through consultation with key stakeholders including local councils and service providers, local and regional health and emergency services providers. • Drug and alcohol test would be conducted prior and during construction, as well as a negative COVID-19 test in last 12 hours (if still applicable under state health guidance). • Nominate a health and safety officer/manager from construction workforce with COVID marshal responsibilities • The principal contractor would ensure workforce compliance with commuting and driver fatigue measures.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Management of non-resident workforce on location communities and services (community cohesion) • Community cohesion and character may be positively influenced by influx of temporary workforce who have the potential to participate in the community and stimulate local business • Adverse changes to community cohesion and perception of safety in relation to anti-social behaviour exhibited by construction workforce • Minor changes to community character and cohesion may be felt after the departure of the temporary construction workforce • Potentially restricted ability for local residents to move around their communities due to increased construction-related traffic, road diversions and road closures during construction of bridges and level crossings. • Delays or need for new route for farmers using the livestock highway during a six day period	**Construction** • The principal contractor would develop a workforce management plan that includes measures to manage potential impacts of the non-resident construction workforce on local and regional communities, including: – a code of conduct for workers developed through consultation with local police, Councils and LALCs, including a zero-tolerance policy relating to anti-social behaviour – develop and implement strategies to promote adherence to the code of conduct and a positive relationship between workers and host communities, such as conditions of employment contract or incentives – strategies to promote wellbeing of the workforce – a workforce traffic management plan to and from site (from workforce accommodation camp to the proposal site) to reduce impacts on the local and regional road network. This may include strategies such as car-pooling and workforce buses to minimise individual project-related traffic movements, zero drug and alcohol policies, and enforced project speed limits. – a monitoring mechanism for use of local tourist accommodation and rental housing by workers – consultation with local health and emergency services to establish processes for managing potential increased demands due to due to non-resident workforce – consideration of the use of existing telehealth for Non-urgent medical advice to reduce demand on primary healthcare services – encourage community cohesion between the local community and workforce through active volunteering programs facilitated by ARTC. Opportunities for workforce volunteering could include RFS training and volunteering in local towns, or ‘professional volunteering’ for construction worker for projects such as community hall upgrades (liaise with Councils for advice on capital works program) – a workforce and community safety and wellbeing plan, including community involvement and relationship building measures and considerations to improve worker and resident attraction and retention – include specific and culturally appropriate recommendations to maximise the integration of Indigenous non-resident workforces within the broader workforce and within the local community. These would be defined in consultation with Wagga Wagga and Young LALC’s and Mawang Galway elders Group. • ARTC would maintain ongoing reporting and liaison with the contractor.

D.2 Industry participation

This section addresses potential impacts and opportunities for local businesses, agricultural properties and other commercial entities. ARTC is committed to supporting local industry and Indigenous businesses to ensure they are prepared for and provided with opportunities to participate in Inland Rail.

ARTC has committed to working with local and Indigenous businesses where possible and works with contractors to improve local economic outcomes by developing local suppliers' capacity to engage in the procurement process. Suppliers can access information and guides on the Inland Rail website and, where relevant, ARTC facilitates to meet the contractor and procurement information sessions to promote local opportunities.

ARTC has prepared an Inland Rail Australian Industry Participation Plan (AIPP) under the *Australian Jobs Act 2013* (Cth) which outlines program-wide approaches to ensuring Australian based and local business participation in the Inland Rail project. The IRAIPP would provide full, fair and reasonable opportunities for Australian-based industry to compete for work associated with the proposal's construction, including the supply of goods and services.

Similarly, ARTC has prepared an Inland Rail Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) which outlines ARTC goals for Indigenous participation and commitments to working with Indigenous communities and businesses along the alignment. ARTC would work with selected contractors to ensure the AIPP and IPP are integrated into the project delivery, and targets are set and achieved.

ARTC has launched an online supplier portal to help match suppliers to Inland Rail projects. Potential suppliers can access educational and training resources and guidelines on becoming a supplier to the Inland Rail Project. ARTC also offers supplier training and capacity building programs through the Inland Rail Skills Academy.

D.2.1 Management strategies

Table D.2 details local business and industry measures for the proposal.

Table D.2 Industry participation measures

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Economic development • Supply chain efficiencies, employment and investment opportunities in the Southern NSW region (inclusive of the regional study area in this report) will bring about improved economic and social outcomes • Easier access to and from regional, national and global markets for agricultural producers, farmers and businesses will lead to improved economic and social livelihoods • The proposal provides enhanced freight connections to markets for local producers delivering economic efficiencies and growth	**Pre-construction** • In line with the Workforce Management Plan, ARTC would continue to support local employment in accordance with the *Australian Jobs Act 2013* and Australian Industry Participation National Framework, and through the Inland Rail Skills Academy, to leverage training programs, upskill local residents and young people, and connect businesses with Inland Rail opportunities and key regional industries. • The principal contractor would prepare a local and Indigenous participation plan which identifies: – the capacity of local and Indigenous businesses and suppliers to be ready for potential demand, including: – the delivery of business capacity workshops to address contract requirements (financial and administrative), – tailored meet- the-contractor events for local and/or Indigenous businesses to learn about potential business opportunities. – develop local and Indigenous procurement targets, which would aim to contract: – at least two services or products from multiple local suppliers across the social locality during construction – at least two services or products from multiple local Indigenous suppliers across the social locality during construction.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
	• As part of the Social Delivery Plan document provided as a returnable item of the tender process, the principal contractor shall outline how they would comply with the requirements in the Inland Rail Program Australian Industry Participation Plan which requires Australian entities be provided *full, fair and reasonable* opportunity to bid to supply key goods and services to the project. The principal contractor shall also outline how they would use best endeavours to apply the Australian Government Indigenous Procurement Policy. • A proposal-specific industry participation plan would be developed and implemented to manage the potential employment and regional economic benefits of the proposal. The plan would address the requirements of the Australian Jobs Act 2013, the Australian Industry Participation National Framework, and the Inland Rail Indigenous Participation Plan. • The principal contractor would liaise with business development and industry support groups, including the Temora Business Enterprise Group, Junee Business and Trades Association Inc., Cootamundra Development Corporation and the Wagga Wagga and Young LALCs to understand the capacity of local and Indigenous business to supply the proposal. • ARTC and the principal contractor would promote the Inland Rail website and supplier portal to businesses in the region. • ARTC and the principal contractor would support training and business capacity building programs. **Operation** • ARTC would work with Councils and business chambers to continue promoting the connectivity potential to other markets using Inland Rail. • ARTC would explore ways through a Community Investment Program to promote how new and advanced manufacturers and circular economy projects in the social locality can be enhanced using Inland Rail to reach markets elsewhere in Australia.

D.3 Housing and accommodation

As per the Inland Rail Accommodation Principles, contractors are required to prepare a Workforce Housing and Accommodation Plan to manage the impacts of non-resident workforces on local housing and accommodation markets. Appendix I of the EIS includes a detailed assessment of social impacts and benefits associated with the proposed workforce accommodation for construction workers. Proposed mitigation and management measures related to potential housing and accommodation impacts are also described in Appendix I.

D.3.1 Construction workforce accommodation needs

This SIA has identified very limited capacity in the short-term accommodation and private rental markets in the catchment of townships that constitute an acceptable driving-time limit (one-hour) from the proposal site. Taking into consideration the size of the proposed construction workforce, the number of available rooms in the catchment area and consultation findings from providers, analysis indicates that the limited available capacity in the short-term accommodation and private rental would not suffice. Several negative impacts could also be associated with the construction workforce using the limited available capacity. As such, the project proposed the construction of a 450-bed temporary workforce accommodation camp, as discussed in Appendix I.

D.3.2 ARTC responsibility for non-construction workforce accommodation needs

ARTC anticipates a small number of workers (approximately 20) who are not considered part of the construction workforce would require short and long-term accommodation in the local study area during the construction phase.

Of the approximately 20 personnel, a small number (approximately 5) would constitute the core project management team (ARTC staff). ARTC would seek long-term rental accommodation for these workers for a period of 18–24 months. It is anticipated that the private rental market would be able to service this small number of non-construction personnel with minimal impact.

The remaining 15 non-construction workforce (ARTC managed technical specialists) would likely be housed in temporary accommodation within the local study area during short-term site visits. Depending on the timing of the site visits (with the worst-case scenario being all 15 workers requiring accommodation at the same time), seeking short-term accommodation for these workers may place pressure on the short-term accommodation market and affect availability for tourists or other visitors to the area.

ARTC would be responsible for monitoring the impact on the accommodation market with particular reference to any material price increase with subsequent reported displacement of local residents seeking rental properties.

D.3.3 Management strategies

Table D.3 details housing and accommodation measures for the proposal. Appendix I further discusses management strategies associated with the temporary workforce accommodation camp.

Table D.3 Housing and accommodation measures

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Temporary workforce accommodation for construction workforce	**Pre-construction** • The principal contractor would prepare a temporary workforce accommodation plan to guide the design and provision of the temporary workforce accommodation village. The plan would be developed in accordance with ARTC's Inland Rail Program Accommodation Principles, relevant council development codes and guidelines, and the following overarching principles: – temporary workforce accommodation is designed to be integrated into, and minimise the impacts on, the existing communities – temporary workforce accommodation adequately provides for occupants and has a high level of on-site amenity. • The plan would be developed in consultation with key stakeholders, including the relevant local Councils. • The plan should include an assessment of social impacts associated with such type of temporary accommodation and adequate mitigation or enhancement measures (including those identified in Appendix I). • The workforce accommodation plan would include consultation and monitoring of the local short-term accommodation and private rental markets to ensure no material impact is evident.
Access to housing and accommodation (for ARTC's non-construction workforce) • Decline of tourism industry due to shortage in vacancies in short-term accommodation establishments for non-construction workforce (core project managers, supervisors) • Risk of homelessness for low-income and social/affordable housing tenants and residents as a result of limited housing availability and price increase if the non-construction workforce (core project managers, supervisors) is accommodated in the local short-term accommodation and rental housing market	**Pre-construction** • ARTC would be responsible for sourcing suitable accommodation for the non-construction workforce who would be both residing in the local study area long-term (acting as core project management), as well as short-term (e.g. technical specialists conducting site visits). As part of this preparation, ARTC would provide input into the temporary workforce accommodation plan, based on: – consultation with local real estate agents and local short-term accommodation providers to ensure the approximately 15 short-term ARTC personnel would not have a material impact on availability of short-term accommodation, and the 5 long-term personnel would not adversely affect the local private rental market – monitoring the local rental market to identify any changes in supply and price – consultation with councils to understand seasonal peaks and identify constraints. – measures that manage any identified pressure on either the short-term accommodation or private rental markets so as to not impact local supply for tourism, season workforce and highway traveller demand while maximising opportunities for local supply; and – plans for supporting the safe movement of workers to and from the work site daily. **Construction** • If supply constraints become apparent, ARTC would work with councils and local accommodation providers to identify causes and amend the workforce housing and accommodation plan appropriately. • The principal contractor would ensure workforce compliance with commuting and driver fatigue measures.

D.4 Community health and wellbeing

ARTC seeks to contribute to sustainable outcomes and leave an enduring legacy in communities along Inland Rail alignment through a program of community investment. The community investment program has three focus areas:

1. **Rail safety**: delivering rail safety programs to communities – particularly school-aged children to encourage safe behaviours from a young age.
2. **Mental health/wellbeing:** supporting community initiatives and organisations that can positively impact mental health and wellbeing in local communities.
3. **Environment:** investigate opportunities to support initiatives that can contribute to environmental sustainability such as land beautification opportunities, drought relief programs and planting days.

Before construction, the principal contractor would prepare a community wellbeing plan through consultation with key stakeholders, including local councils and relevant community service providers. These plans would identify potential community impacts and benefits associated with Inland Rail. The plan would outline measures to mitigate or manage impacts and enhance benefits.

ARTC is also a supporting member of the TrackSAFE foundation that delivers rail safety initiatives and programs that seek to reduce accidents and injuries on the rail network and improve rail employees' wellbeing.

Analysis in this SIA highlights that the communities likely to be affected by the proposal may experience changes to their wellbeing as a result of the proposal. Some stakeholders have reported adverse mental health impacts due to the stress and anxiety related to the forthcoming land acquisition process for selected directly affected landowners and their families along the proposal site. Other concerns relate to uncertainty of the future of some farming operations and movement and access of farming machinery and livestock during construction of the proposal. Some physical health considerations relate to aspects of amenity, such as noise and vibration, changes to the visual landscape and air quality. There are also high expectations amongst the community that the proposal will bring about economic benefit and employment opportunities for local townships.

D.4.1 Management strategies

Table D.4 details community health and wellbeing measures for the proposal.

Table D.4 Health and community wellbeing measures

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Mental health and community wellbeing • A permanent change to the rural sense of place and identification to the land brought on by operation of the proposal. This will be experienced more acutely by directly affected landowners along the proposal site, but also by residents of townships in the local study area. This overall impact links to amenity changes identified in the Surroundings section • Mental health impacts (uncertainty, frustration and stress) associated with the land access and acquisition agreements process.	**Pre-Construction** • The principal contractor would develop a community wellbeing plan for construction activities that includes: • The principal contractor would seek to understand support programs, services and pathways for mental health and wellbeing within the project area to communicate and promote to potentially affected stakeholders. This would include engaging with Wagga Wagga and Young LALC's to understand culturally appropriate services. • Identification of residents who are more prone to experience stress and wellbeing issues due to construction activities, such as those with a disability, older age groups, children and infants, those with chronic health conditions, pre-existing mental health conditions, and/or sensory processing disorders. It is also likely that residents who are typically at home during the day (e.g., retirees, residents who work from home, and at-home parents/carers) may potentially experience these impacts more frequently, and possibly to a greater degree.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
• Mental health impacts associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation • Consultation fatigue and frustration associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation. • The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners • The effect of property impacts on individual landowners relates to the stress and anxiety of the process, as well as the ongoing impact on economic livelihoods • The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners. • Possible long term affects or uncertainties felt by the community particularly landholders	• Other vulnerable groups may include residents who come from a lower socio-economic background including, for example, those who are unemployed or without job security, renting or living in semi-permanent dwellings, and/or those who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. • Partnering with local support mechanisms/services to provide information and support residents. Potential local organisations for partnerships, collaboration and funding include: – RAMHP (Rural Adversity Mental Health Program) Cootamundra and Wagga Wagga coordinators – Wellways Wagga Wagga and Young – Flourish Australia Community Mental Health Services Temora – Murrumbidgee LHD Specialist Community Mental Health Service – Young, Temora and Wagga Wagga centres – Sunflower House Wagga Wagga • Enhance community resilience by providing early notification of works and information as to how noise, vibration and dust is going to be managed and notify neighbours when activities may reach higher peaks of noise, dust or vibration (as identified in the social impact monitoring framework) • Ensure the local community is aware of the 1800 number available to use in relation to Inland Rail-related issues, specifically where mental health impacts are anticipated. This service is currently facilitated via ARTC's partnership with the Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network. • The community and landowner liaison officer recruited by ARTC would also play a role in identifying potential instances of activities leading to adverse mental health impacts. These cases would be reported and appropriately managed through providing individuals with access to relevant support services. • The principal contractor would prepare and implement communication strategies to ensure the broader community and stakeholders are aware of upcoming changes brought about by the proposal to promote preparedness and resilience to change • A biodiversity offset approach should be implemented as outlined in Technical Paper 1, to ensure maintenance or improvement in biodiversity, which is recognised as an important community value, as mentioned during consultation by some community members **Construction** • The principal contractor would implement a workforce and community safety and wellbeing plan, including communications, which supports non-resident workforces to contribute to local communities and businesses positively. • This plan would also look at community involvement and relationship building, by, for example, encouraging workforces to participate in community or sports events, join clubs or groups. • This would include engaging with local government to understand worker and resident attraction and retention goals, in order to identify measures to contribute to these goals and promote permanent relocation. • This would include specific and culturally appropriate recommendations to maximise the integration of Indigenous non-resident workforces within the broader workforce and within the local community. These would be defined in consultation with Wagga Wagga and Young LALC's and Mawang Galway elders Group.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
	• The principal contractor would maintain ongoing engagement and monitoring with those residents identified as vulnerable during early engagement. • The principal contractor would liaise with local Indigenous and community service providers to identify increases in demand that may be as a result of the proposal.
Distributive equity for vulnerable groups • Noticeable changes to existing visual amenity caused by operation of the proposal leading to an altered sense of enjoyment and potential frustration over time • Visual amenity changes during construction of the proposal will be experienced by some residential sensitive receivers and lead to frustration and disappointment in ARTC • The potential for ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for one residential receiver due to noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way • Noise exceedances are expected during works on the Burley Griffin Way upgrade for residential sensitive receivers that may result in sleep disturbance • Works on the Burley Griffin Way upgrade would result in noticeable vibration for sensitive receivers that may result in concern for building safety • Dust resulting from earthworks, trackout dust from HDVs on local roads and increased vehicle emissions from construction traffic will affect air quality • Noticeable changes to existing visual amenity caused by operation of the proposal leading to an altered sense of enjoyment and potential frustration • Noise and vibration effects will be experienced by sensitive receivers along the proposal site. Prolonged exposure can lead to adverse physical and mental health effects • The project will impact on fauna and flora that have social significance for some members of the community.	**Pre-construction** • The community and landowner liaison officer would interact with key stakeholders and landowners to give project updates and discuss concerns and complaints. Liaison officer may also be able to consult with individual stakeholders to determine any individual/household vulnerabilities and propose personalised mitigation and management measures where necessary. • Consider additional support measures that may be considered to address wellbeing issues of those most vulnerable affected landholders and residents, including elderly people, people with disability (or need for assistance), and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who were all highly represented in the local study area in comparison to NSW more broadly (as discussed in the Section 6). **Construction** Plan for and adaptively manage support measures implemented on a case-by-case basis may include: • consideration of specific construction mitigations for households of vulnerable sensitive receivers (noise) (if they are required to keep windows closed during summer and winter months in particular) • frequent community updates and notices regarding construction activities that may cause amenity, health and wellbeing impacts (Via SMS, email, letterbox drop, phone call etc.) • the beautification of local areas through landscaping, gardening and other community identified projects may provide a beneficial opportunity for the construction workforce to participate in community volunteering. • Planting trees as part of a ‘community day’ may help to foster social cohesion and improve sense of wellbeing and community between the project and residents, whilst also improving visual amenity. **Operation** • ARTC may work with the community along the proposal site to identify local values as well as opportunities for improving visual amenity, which may include increasing the number of plants/trees along the proposal site and creating natural screens/barriers. • ARTC may explore with the local community, including relevant Indigenous groups, ways to enhance aesthetic value across the social locality through a Community Investment Program, which may include the maintenance or improvement of green areas.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
• Community safety around construction sites and new rail infrastructure • Concerns and anxiety around safety of people and livestock, and disturbance to farming operations from the impact of potential flooding on accessibility and safety around underbridges • Operation of the proposal sees a freight mode shift from road to rail, reducing interactions between heavy vehicles and passenger vehicles and improving road safety • Changes to traffic movements and access for people moving around their communities will be affected during operation of the proposal, both positively and negatively. Some minor benefits will be seen where realignment to Burley Griffin Way occurs, whereas minor delays will also be experienced at new public level crossings • Removal of level crossing at Burley Griffin Way leading to improved road safety and reduction in delays • New level crossings will be introduced at six locations along the proposal site. Vehicle delays are expected to reach a maximum of 131 seconds increasing travel times, leading to fatigue and stress. However, these trips are predominately on rural roads, and longer journeys are a regular occurrence	**Pre-construction** • ARTC would prepare and implement communication strategies which promote road and rail safety during the construction program. • ARTC would work with LALCs and local Indigenous people to develop culturally appropriate approaches to rail safety education and awareness campaigns. • As per Technical Paper 3 – Traffic, transport and access, proposed public level crossings are to be designed to adequate standards and objectives, including adequate safety design measures to mitigate the likelihood of incidents. The operation of public level crossings constructed as part of the proposal would be reviewed following the commencement of operation to confirm that the level of protection and the proposed infrastructure is appropriate for the traffic conditions. In addition, in accordance with National and State Rail Safety Law requirements, public level crossings would be subject to an interface agreement with the relevant road manager to ensure that safety risks are identified and minimised as far as reasonably practicable. **Construction** • ARTC would prepare and implement communication strategies which promote road and rail safety, including school-based education programs for schools in the local study area. i.e. Stockinbingal Public School and Illabo Public School. • The principal contractor would provide ample notification to affected residents of changes to access or changes to the road network to minimise interactions with construction works • This would include a Rail Safety Campaign that builds community awareness of the rail line's operational characteristics, promotes road and rail safety including potential hazards of level crossing operations. • ARTC would explore the potential to partner with local schools and community groups to provide rail safety awareness programs for children, to raise awareness regarding safe active travel and the potential hazards of rail crossings etc. Local schools include Illabo Public School and Stockinbingal Public School. • ARTC would identify those areas in which it has been reported throughout consultation safety risks to people accessing to rail line and potentially accessing adjacent properties to improve security, and agree on mechanism to improve safety, which may include: – improving signage and crossing safety signals (lights, sounds, reflectors, boom gates, pedestrian walkways) – provide information to local communities regarding train schedules and daily passing times – update if/when these change – placing security cameras or lights to disperse people accessing rail line and properties – placing noise panels, protective screen or ‘green barrier’ in properties that reported issues around safety and privacy **Operation** • ARTC would develop a rail safety awareness program and implement it prior to the operation of Inland Rail to educate the community regarding safety around trains. This would include landholders with properties that are intersected by the proposal, as well as the general community and emergency services.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Impacts on cultural heritage sites affect the wellbeing of Indigenous residents • Potential harm to examples of Aboriginal cultural heritage during construction of the proposal – loss of cultural significance/value • Potential adverse change to sense of place and connection to Country amongst Indigenous people due to impacts to artefacts of cultural significance in southern portion of	**Pre-construction** • The principal contractor would work with the Wagga Wagga and Young LALCs and Indigenous community service providers to develop strategies to manage potential impacts on cultural heritage sites. • ARTC and the principal contractor would work with the Wagga Wagga and Young LALCs and the local Indigenous community to investigate opportunities to incorporate cultural and social values, aspirations and connection to Country design principles. • Opportunities may include: – incorporating artwork (i.e. murals) along certain sections of the proposal site – erecting signage and information panels in any locations of cultural significance within or surrounding the social locality that have been identified during the cultural heritage studies – adding signage with place names in Wiradjuri language and/or – improving landscape by planting native plants along the rail line, potentially including edible plants and relevant signage/information panels • Continue engagement with Indigenous communities post-exhibition including as part of the preparation of a Construction Heritage Management Plan as per GML's recommendations (refer Technical Paper 7). • Intangible connections and impacts remain unclear in Technical Paper 7, and should be assessed (or their non-existence clarified). **Construction** • The principal contractor would implement the strategies identified to enhance connection to Country. • Consultation with relevant Aboriginal parties would continue throughout the construction phase, including providing frequent scheduled updates to stakeholders regarding potential heritage and cultural values on or surrounding the social locality • An unexpected finds process would be implemented in line with the Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage assessments. **Operation** • The principal contractor would investigate opportunities to provide permanent appropriate signage in prominent locations at sites of cultural significance for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to gain familiarity with the history of the area. • ARTC would explore with the local community and Indigenous groups ways to enhance cultural and aesthetic values across the rail line through a Community Investment Program.

Potential impact/s	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Capacity to deliver and preserve emergency services • Potential for increased risk to public safety if ability for emergency services to access all parts the social locality, in particular during times of high fire risk is compromised • Ability for emergency services to access the study areas, in particular during times of high fire risk	**Pre-construction** • ARTC would confirm workforce requirements and the associated requirements for, and availability of, support services (including health, wellbeing and emergency services) to meet the needs of the non-resident construction workforce. ARTC would develop strategies and measures to ensure these needs are met with minimal potential impacts on the local community. The measures would be developed through consultation with local councils and service providers (including health and emergency service providers), where relevant, and would be detailed in the workforce management plan. • ARTC and the principal contractor will engage with Emergency Services, including the Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) and the Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMC) to investigate potential issues associated with the design that may hamper service provision • Key emergency services to consult with may include: – Junee RFS, Ambulance and Emergency Service, SES, Fire and Rescue NSW, Police Station – Cootamundra RFS, Police Station, Ambulance Station, SES, and Fire and Rescue NSW. • Fire, ambulance and police emergency services would be briefed regarding anticipated construction and operational activities prior to the commencement of works, and an emergency response plan would be negotiated in consultation with ARTC and the relevant emergency provider. • Placing signage to alert road users of the street closure and future detours (3 months of anticipation) and providing face to face information at share user bridges at least 1 months before temporary closure. The community would also be notified of all road closures in anticipation and approaching the closure (e.g. text reminders at 3 months, 1 month, one week and on the day). • Engage traffic control teams to reroute traffic in a safe major where possible. **Construction** • The principal contractor would provide ample notice to Emergency Services providers of upcoming traffic management measures and road closures. ARTC would maintain carriage for public and emergency service access. • As part of the traffic management plan, the principal contractor would seek to provide transportation services will be assessed for those most vulnerable members of the community who may see their accessibility to services constrained • The principal contractor will engage with Murrumbidgee Local Health District, including the Wagga Wagga Health Service and surrounding service centres to monitor any upturn in hospital presentations that may be associated with proposal construction activities. • The principal contractor would provide ample notice to Emergency Services providers of upcoming traffic management measures and road closures.

D.5 Community and stakeholder engagement

Further engagement with directly affected landowners, interested community and industry groups and the local community would be vital to maintaining positive stakeholder relationships and building understanding and preparedness for the proposal's potential benefits and impacts.

Engagement undertaken by ARTC over the previous five years indicates that a broad range of stakeholders and the community support the Inland Rail project, and the opportunities it would provide to the region. However, as is typical for a project of this scale, there are also broad concerns about construction and operational impacts that ARTC and the principal contractor would need to manage. Ongoing, targeted community and stakeholder engagement is the most effective method of managing community and stakeholder expectations and providing certainty to those likely to experience direct impacts.

Approaches to ongoing engagement during the pre-construction, construction and early operational phases of the project are provided in the following sections.

D.5.1 Consultation during design and construction of the proposal

ARTC would continue to manage and deliver program-wide community and stakeholder engagement for Inland Rail in accordance with the Inland Rail Communications and Engagement Strategy.

A project-specific communication management plan would be developed, in accordance with the Inland Rail Communications and Engagement Strategy, and implemented prior to and during construction, to ensure that:

- the community and key stakeholders are provided opportunities to input into construction planning where appropriate
- accurate and accessible information is made available
- feedback from the community is encouraged
- enquiries and complaints are managed, and a timely response is provided for concerns raised
- landowners/landholders and community members with the potential to be affected by construction activities are notified promptly about the timing of activities and potential for impacts
- landowners/landholders are consulted about the measures (developed per mitigation measure LP5) that would be implemented to minimise the potential impacts on individual properties.

Once details of the construction program and likely work hours are finalised, further communication would take place with residents and the community.

The existing 1800 phone number and proposal email address would continue to be available during construction, along with a 24-hour construction response line.

Targeted consultation methods, such as letters, notifications, signage and face-to-face communications, would continue. The Inland Rail website and social media platforms would also include updates on the progress of the proposal.

The following communication tools and activities used during the construction phase would include:

- development of a project communications management plan detailing the complaints handling process
- proposal email address
- 1800 phone number
- updates to the Inland Rail website
- targeted consultation and notifications such as letters, notifications and face-to-face communication; and
- construction signage.

D.5.2 Complaints management

The principal contractor would be required to implement a complaints management procedure during the construction of the proposal. This procedure would be defined within the Construction Environmental Management Plan, which the contractor would be required to prepare and have approved by ARTC prior to construction commencing.

The complaints management procedure would be defined by the project communication management plan. The complaints management system would be maintained throughout the construction period and for a minimum of 12 months after construction finished.

The complaints management procedure would include the following (at a minimum):

- contact details for a 24-hour program response line and email address for ongoing stakeholder contact throughout the proposal
- provision of accurate public information signs while work is in progress
- review construction staging and activities to identify opportunities to minimise disruptions and impacts to community activities and functions
- management of complaints in accordance with ARTC's emergency management procedure, specifically:
  - details of all complaints received would be recorded
  - verbal and written responses describing what action would be taken would be provided to the complainant within time limits (or as otherwise agreed by the complainant).

D.5.3 Consultation during operation

ARTC would prepare an operations communication and engagement plan to guide engagement activities during the early years of operation.

D.5.4 Management measures

Table D.5 highlights the proposed communications and engagement measures for the proposal.

Table D.5 Communication and engagement measures

Impact area	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Maintaining a social licence to operate • There has been an iterative consultation process resulting in changes to the project that respond to community feedback. • There are various reactions within the community, and some may have been negatively impacted more than others, with fears that the project will negatively affect them and associated impacts on mental health. Some also feel they have not been properly engaged or listened to.	**Pre-construction** • The introduction of a dedicated community and landowner liaison officer is recommended as an overarching strategy to build and maintain ARTC's social licence to operate. This role has been successfully fulfilled by ARTC's Stakeholder Engagement team members who were the consistent points of contact for directly affected landowners. The role would further develop relationships with key stakeholders/landowner, address concerns and key vulnerabilities, and ensure that ARTC has an in-person presence in the local social locality • ARTC would continue to manage and deliver program-wide community and stakeholder engagement for Inland Rail in accordance with the Inland Rail Communications and Engagement Strategy. • A proposal-specific communication management plan would be developed, in accordance with the Inland Rail Communications and Engagement Strategy, and implemented prior to and during construction, to ensure that: – the community and key stakeholders are provided opportunities for input are provided to the design and construction planning where appropriate

Impact area	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
• Possible long-term effects, or uncertainties felt by the community particularly landholders	– landowners/landholders and community members with the potential to be affected by construction activities are notified in a timely manner about the timing of activities and potential for impacts, and the measures (developed in accordance with mitigation measure LP-5) that would be implemented to minimise the potential for impacts on individual properties – enquiries and complaints are managed, and a timely response is provided for concerns raised – accurate and accessible information is made available – feedback from the community is encouraged – the methods for engagement are tailored and appropriate to each stakeholder group, i.e. for members of the community who do not have access to the internet or phone, face-to-face engagement is recommended. The community liaison officer would record instances of communication challenges and adapt the strategy accordingly • The communication management plan would define the requirements for the complaints management system to be implemented during construction. • The communication management plan would include measures to ensure ongoing consultation with local emergency services providers to inform providers about the locations of level crossings and changes to access routes and road conditions. • Using this SIA as a basis, a comprehensive social impact management plan (SIMP) would be finalised through consultation with key stakeholders to manage and monitor the implementation of the proposed social and economic mitigation measures. The SIMP would review and refine the proposed monitoring and reporting framework presented in this report on an ongoing basis. **Construction** • Key stakeholders (including local councils, emergency service providers, public transport providers, the general community, and surrounding landowners/occupants) would continue to be consulted in accordance with the communication management plan. • Local residents, landholders, landowners, businesses, affected social and recreation facilities and other relevant stakeholders would be notified before work starts in accordance with the communication management plan, and be regularly informed of construction activities. • Complaints during construction would be managed in accordance with the complaints management system defined by the communication management plan. The complaints management system would be maintained throughout the construction period and for a minimum of 12 months after construction finishes. • Ongoing engagement would be conducted as detailed in the Communications Management Plan to identify further opportunities for project improvement, including with the CCC (should the committee continue) • Ongoing engagement with affected landowners would be conducted as detailed in the Communications Management Plan.

Impact area	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Amenity, access, health and wellbeing • Uncertainty felt by landholders on frequency of trains and flow on impacts to amenity (rail noise, visual disturbance • A permanent change to the rural sense of place and identification to the land brought on by operation of the proposal. This will be experienced more acutely by directly affected landowners along the proposal site, but also by residents of townships in the local study area. This overall impact links to amenity changes identified in the Surroundings section • Noticeable changes to existing visual amenity caused by operation of the proposal leading to an altered sense of enjoyment and potential frustration over time • The potential for ongoing health and wellbeing impacts for one residential receiver due to noise impacts associated with the realignment of Burley Griffin Way • The project will impact on fauna and flora that have social significance for some members of the community.	**Pre-construction** • The principal contractor would develop a strategy to engage with landowners located in the local study area to build understanding and preparedness for potential amenity impacts. The strategy would: – include proactive methods of communication with affected parties, i.e. letter or doorknock – provide clear oversight of the construction schedule and the nature and duration of the potential impacts at each location – communicate proposed mitigation measures identified in the EIS; and – identify households considered more vulnerable to impacts that may require additional support or management. • ARTC would identify and engage with households identified as eligible for noise mitigation treatments in the Operational Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment and support owners/tenants through the delivery process. • ARTC and the principal contractor would investigate the provision of vegetation planting and screening of the construction compounds. • ARTC and the principal contractor would continue to engage with relevant local councils and service providers to mitigate any emerging social impacts during construction. • The principal contractor would ensure stakeholders and the community are aware of ARTC feedback and complaints tools and communications channels. **Construction** • The principal contractor would provide households identified as vulnerable in the pre-construction phase notification to inform of upcoming events and monitor the effectiveness of mitigation measures. • ARTC would make available to households' information regarding pathways to wellbeing support tools and contacts for mental health and community support services. • The principal contractor would ensure stakeholders and the community are aware of ARTC feedback and complaints tools and communications channels.
Industry participation and employment • The perceived uplift in economic livelihoods and wellbeing as a result of the construction employment and subsequent spending in the local study area. This impact has the potential to become negative if these perceived benefits do not eventuate	**Pre-construction** • ARTC and the principal contractor would engage with local schools and training providers to build knowledge of training opportunities and employment pathways associated with the proposal. • The principal contractor would engage with the Temora Business Enterprise Group, Junee Business and Trades Association Inc., Cootamundra Development Corporation and the Wagga Wagga and Young LALCs and other local industry body networks to promote local employment and procurement opportunities. **Operation** • ARTC would support Councils, business chambers and other local industry bodies to promote the opportunities for further development once the rail line is operational.

Impact area	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Land operations and management • Mental health impacts (uncertainty, frustration and stress) associated with the land access and acquisition agreements process. • The effect of property impacts on individual landowners relates to the stress and anxiety of the process, as well as the ongoing impact on economic livelihoods • Possible long term affects or uncertainties felt by the community particularly landholders	**Pre-construction** • Property owners and occupants would be consulted in accordance with the communication management plan to ensure that owners/occupants are informed about: – the timing and scope of activities in their area; – any potential property impacts/changes, particularly in relation to potential impacts on access, services, or farm operational arrangements; and – activities that have the potential to impact on livestock. • Refer to Technical Paper Land Use and Property mitigation measure LP4, LP-9 and LP-11 **Construction** • Where construction is located on or immediately adjacent to private properties and has the potential to affect farm operational arrangements/properties. • Feasible and reasonable property-specific measures would be identified and implemented in consultation with landholders to address identified issues where feasible and reasonable and implemented during construction, where construction is located on or immediately adjacent to private properties and has the potential to affect farm operational arrangements. • The measures would include, as appropriate, arrangements in terms of works timing and practices; any required adjustments to fencing, access, and farm infrastructure; and relocation of any impacted structures.
Way of life • Mental health impacts associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation • Consultation fatigue and frustration associated with the broader experience of participating in the development of the proposal through consultation. • The mental health impacts experienced during the construction phase of the proposal may continue for some people into the operation phase. This accumulated sense of frustration, impatience and occasional mistrust of the process may affect future interactions between ARTC and affected landowners	**Pre-Construction** • ARTC would continue to engage with the LALCs to incorporate local Indigenous community knowledge into engagement practices. • The principal contractor would develop communications action plans tailored to each stage of the construction program that focuses on awareness and preparedness for upcoming impacts: Plans would include: – schedule updates and any upcoming milestones or activities that may increase local impacts – changes to the local road network – information on local employment; and – strategies to reach vulnerable communities. • The principal contractor would ensure the community is aware of ARTC feedback and complaints tools and communications channels. **Construction** • The principal contractor would ensure emergency services are regularly updated of the program and status of upcoming road closures or traffic management measures to ensure sufficient time for network planning. • The principal contractor would provide hard copy notification of upcoming road closures to affected landholders and nearby communities providing ample time to prepare for upcoming changes. **Operation** • ARTC would develop an operations communication and engagement plan that builds community awareness of the rail line's operational characteristics, including information on level crossing operations, likely daily train movements and ARTC's ongoing role after construction.

Impact area	Proposal – specific measures and management plans
Landowner communication • Possible long-term effects, or uncertainties felt by the community particularly landholders • Sense of place may be altered for some affected stakeholders, i.e. landowners along the proposal site due to the change of rural character and amenity during construction and operation • Loss of local and regional agricultural production during construction of the proposal felt by individual landowners and regional producers • Possible long term affects or uncertainties felt by the community particularly landholders	**Pre-construction** • ARTC to provide independent advisory to affected landowners in regard to land acquisition agreements and economic compensation protocols. • establish a contact person (liaison officer) from the project to provide information about next steps, and during operation to maintain inform about when works would occur (especially night works). • Protocols to ensure adequate coexistence of land use activities during construction (business operation), which may include coordination of special working hours, alternative access point to the property during construction and designated parking area for the property. • Measures to address and manage potential impacts to business operation. **Construction** • Implement hard barriers (fences or other mechanisms) to ensure risks to properties are adequately managed, considering a buffer zone to avoid impacts on property. **Operation** • Agree on a mechanism to identify and resolve potential property impacts due to vibration during operation (if applicable)

D.6 Social impact monitoring and adaptive management

This section presents a preliminary social impact monitoring framework to identify measures to monitor and where possible, measure and adaptively manage the mitigation and enhancement measures recommended in the SIMP.

D.6.1 Monitoring and reporting

The purpose of SIMP monitoring is to track and enable reporting on delivery of measures which mitigate social impacts and enhance community benefits. A program of monitoring ensures that mitigation and enhancement measures are effective, and/or support identification of corrective actions to improve their effectiveness.

The monitoring framework is comprised of the desired social outcomes associated with each area of social impacts, the indicator used for measurement of the outcome, the indicative target that the responsible party needs to achieve, the methodology to reach the target, the frequency associated with the method and the responsible party for monitoring activity.

Targets have been presented for a selection of desired outcomes only, noting that ARTC would work with the principal contractor to further refine the recommended targets and develop additional targets under each of the areas of social impact:

1. Workforce Management
2. Industry Participation
3. Housing and Accommodation
4. Community Health and Wellbeing
5. Community and Stakeholder Engagement.

The community has the opportunity to take part in the monitoring activities through responding to surveys, and utilising the communication channels described in Appendix D.5. Outcomes of the monitoring framework will be made publicly available to the community, as described in following sections.

D.6.2 Social Impact Management Plan reviews

ARTC will track implementation of the SIMP and review performance measures quarterly, to facilitate continual improvement. The SIMP will be reviewed annually and updated based on monitoring data and community and stakeholder feedback. In addition to the monitoring review, proposed mitigation measures will also be reviewed to assess whether they are still applicable and on track to meet the residual risk rating applied in the EIS. Any new issues or initiatives that have emerged and that should be included in ongoing mitigations and/or monitoring will be addressed.

Monitoring findings will also be presented to the proposal's community engagement committee meetings (if active) and to an annual community meeting where feedback will be sought on the monitoring program and whether actions or targets require revision. ARTC will track implementation of the SIMP and review performance measures quarterly, to facilitate continual improvement.

A review of the SIMP will be undertaken by an independent third party annually. Reviews will require consultation with affected landowners, Councils, local businesses, LALCs, local and regional emergency management committees, NSW Government agencies and community representatives.

The adaptive management of the SIMP means that it remains an active document. Feedback from the community and stakeholders will be considered by ARTC and actions would be taken to update the relevant management plan accordingly. The purpose of the SIMP reviews is to identify the effectiveness of the SIMP strategies and whether changes are required. Data collected through monitoring delivery of the SIMP will be reported on the Inland Rail website and to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

The SIMP monitoring framework is provided in Table D.6.

Table D.6 Social monitoring framework

Desired outcome	Indicators	Target	Methodology	Frequency	Monitoring responsibility
Workforce management					
The proposal has maximised local employment opportunities as far as is practicable	Number of residents employed from each local government area Number of enquiries received from residents	To be developed by contractor	Construction employment register Employment enquiry log	Quarterly during construction	Principal Contractor
Employment opportunities are available to people of under-represented or vulnerable backgrounds, including Indigenous people, women, under 25's and the unemployed	Number of Indigenous people, women, under 25s employed	20% of total cumulative workforce should comprise of a local workforce including the targeted social benefit demographics of the following: • local and regional employees • Indigenous people • women • under 25 years of age • apprenticeship/traineeship positions	Construction employment register	Monthly and Quarterly during construction	Principal Contractor
The proposal offers skills improvement and structured training opportunities to residents that lead to employment	Number of residents who completed Inland Rail Skills Academy supported training opportunities and training from principal contractor	Not specified/under development	Trainee register Apprenticeship data	Quarterly during construction	ARTC and/or Contractor
The proposal seeks to avoid any potential negative impacts on the local and regional social localities, including service providers	Number of complaints received from community members regarding non-resident workforce behaviour Number of police-related incidents and complaints involving the project workforce Number of presentations to local health service providers from construction workforce	80% of complaints are responded to within 24 hours and resolved to a satisfactory level for the complainant	Engagement records/ survey of service providers	Quarterly during construction	ARTC and/or Contractor

Desired outcome	Indicators	Target	Methodology	Frequency	Monitoring responsibility
The proposal makes best efforts to contribute to a positive perception of community cohesion, and minimises any activity that may hinder these efforts	Level of workforce participation in professional volunteering activities Perceived sense of community once workforce accommodation camp is operational	Increase in aggregate measure obtained through community perception survey	Community perception survey	Quarterly	Principal contractor
Industry participation					
To provide full and fair opportunity for local businesses to tender on contracts	Amount spent as a cumulative total, and number of businesses engaged during the delivery of the proposal	To be developed by contractor	Principal contractor procurement data	Monthly and Quarterly	Principal contractor
To assist in equipping local and regional businesses to access supply chain opportunities	Attendance rates at Inland Rail Skills Academy capacity building sessions Evidence of implementation the AIPP and IPP Number of businesses participating in training and events, and total spend funding/supporting training and upskilling	To be developed by contractor	Attendance logs Principal contractor procurement data	Quarterly	Principal contractor
Increased capability for local suppliers and contractors to tender, including Indigenous businesses	Cumulative spend relative to local and Indigenous businesses engaged during construction and operation. Demonstrated equitable distributed economic benefit across the local study area, as far as is practicable	Monthly reporting on cumulative spend – Local and Indigenous businesses • at least two services or products from multiple local Indigenous suppliers across the social locality during construction. • at least two services or products from multiple local suppliers (non-Indigenous) across the social locality during construction	Procurement logs	Monthly and Quarterly	Principal contractor

Desired outcome	Indicators	Target	Methodology	Frequency	Monitoring responsibility
The proposal contributes to the regional economic benefit and market activation	Number of local businesses who use Inland Rail to transport their products/materials.	Not specified	To be determined	Annually	ARTC
Housing and accommodation					
The proposal does not impact housing affordability and availability for locals	Number of private rental properties leased by ARTC or the principal contractor The local rental market experiences no significant changes to availability or price	Not specified/under development	Engagement with Temora Shire, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional and Junee Shire Councils Engagement with real estate agents in Cootamundra, Junee and Temora Local rental data from domain.com.au	Annually	ARTC/Principal contractor
The proposal maximises opportunities for local accommodation providers (in relation to short-term non-construction workforce)	Number of nights booked in local short-term accommodation for project workers	Not specified/under development	Principal contractor workforce accommodation data Local vacancy data Consultation with accommodation providers	Six monthly	ARTC
The proposal minimises impacts on temporary accommodation providers during major tourist events and peak seasons (in relation to short-term non-construction workforce)	Short-term accommodation vacancy rates remain consistent throughout the delivery program	Not specified/under development	Engagement with short-term accommodation providers	Six monthly	ARTC

Desired outcome	Indicators	Target	Methodology	Frequency	Monitoring responsibility
Community health and wellbeing					
Amenity impacts are minimised through monitoring, engagement and continuous improvement initiatives	Presentations to local health service providers Number of complaints around noise, dust and vibration from sensitive receivers Number of complaints about loss of green space or visual impacts to landscape Number of trees/plants planted across the rail line	80% of complaints are responded to within 24 hours and resolved to a satisfactory level for the complainant	Engagement with Wagga Wagga Health Service and Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network Review with individual landholder liaison officer	Six monthly	ARTC and/or principal contractor
Demand for existing social and community infrastructure and services is monitored	Attendance at community health and wellbeing programs	Not specified	Engagement with Temora Shire, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional, Wagga Wagga and Junee Shire Councils	Six monthly	ARTC and/or Contractor
The community is educated and actively implementing rail safety practices	Number of community safety program events delivered at Illabo Public School and Stockinbingal Public School Number of community safety program events delivered. Number of complaints about safety issues Number of incidents due to unauthorised access to rail line in the social locality	80% of complaints are responded to within 24 hours and resolved to a satisfactory level for the complainant	ARTC event logs Complaints register	Six monthly	ARTC and/or Contractor

Desired outcome	Indicators	Target	Methodology	Frequency	Monitoring responsibility
The proposal makes best efforts to avoid or minimise any activities causing adverse stress and anxiety for the community including affected landowners	Funding and successful collaboration/programs established between local mental health services and ARTC Number of works notifications sent out to residents Proportion of stakeholders who received timely information about disruptions Local presentations to local health service providers, associated with mental health, stress, sleep deprivation.	100% of residents received works notifications. Residents include all adjoining rural occupiers, directly affected landowners/residents and those within a two kilometre radius of the alignment Maximum increase of 5% during construction			ARTC and/or Contractor
The level of access for emergency services is not negatively affected by the proposal	Number of notifications sent out to Emergency Services Number of complaints about delays to emergency services.	80% of complaints are responded to within 24 hours and resolved to a satisfactory level for the complainant	Complaints register	Quarterly	ARTC and/or Contractor
Community and stakeholder engagement					
Stakeholders and the community are engaged in an open and transparent process	Number and type of interactions based on stakeholder group Number of engagement activities undertaken with vulnerable groups, such as Indigenous representatives and community support services	Not specified/under development	Proposal engagement records	Six monthly	ARTC and/or Contractor
Landowners are aware of the proposal schedule and supported to manage impacts	Number of complaints received during the construction program, and whether those complaints followed the ARTC complaints handling procedure	Not specified/under development	Feedback from landowners during consultation Complaints register and resolution timeframes	Six monthly	ARTC and/or Contractor

Desired outcome	Indicators	Target	Methodology	Frequency	Monitoring responsibility
The community is made aware of disruptions and able to manage impacts accordingly	Number of complaints received during the construction program, and whether those complaints followed the ARTC complaints handling procedure Proportion of stakeholders who received timely information about disruptions	Not specified/under development	Feedback from consultation with Temora Shire, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional and Junee Shire Councils Complaints register and resolution timeframes	Six monthly	ARTC and/or Contractor
Landowners feel confident and have trust in the relationship between themselves and their liaison officer	Number of successful exchanges between the landowner and the liaison officer Proportion of landowners who received information on the proposal schedule via the landowner liaison officer Number of complaints from landowners/adjacent properties about not honouring land access agreements or property damage	Not specified/under development	Feedback from landowner consultation	Six monthly	ARTC and/or Contractor
The distributive equity of impacts for vulnerable groups is managed and monitored appropriately by the liaison officer	Number of engagement activities undertaken with vulnerable groups Number of vulnerable residents who access additional support measures Number of vulnerable residents who report no deterioration or managing adequately their health and wellbeing	Not specified/under development			
The level of mobility for the community is not negatively affected	Number of complaints about mobility – detours – access and parking issues during construction	80% of complaints are responded to within 24 hours and resolved to a satisfactory level for the complainant	Complaints register	Quarterly	ARTC/Principal Contractor

Desired outcome	Indicators	Target	Methodology	Frequency	Monitoring responsibility
ARTC's level of social licence to operate is consistently positive	Community sentiment towards Inland Rail project Number of complaints about input not being considered for decision making Number of complaints about lack of information/engagement	To be developed	Community perception survey	Quarterly	ARTC

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Social Impact Assessment

Appendix E Social impact assessment review questions

SIA alignment to DPIE 2021 SIA Guideline principles	SIA Section
Provide information which demonstrates how the methodology and SIA report addressed (then) DPIE's 2021 SIA guideline principles	Action oriented – Appendix D Adaptive – Appendix D.6 Culturally responsive – Section 5.2.1 Distributive equity – Appendix D.1–D.5 Impartial –Throughout Inclusive – Chapter 5 Integrated – Chapters 7 and 8. Specifically refer to Table 4.1 Lifecycle focus – Chapters 7–9 Material – Chapters 7–9 Precautionary – Chapters 7–9 Proportionate – Section 4.2 Rigorous –Throughout Transparent –Throughout, and particularly Chapters 5, 7–9

SIA Review Questions	SIA Section
General	
1) Does the lead author meet the qualification and experience requirements? 2) Has the lead author provided a signed declaration? 3) Would a reasonable person judge the SIA report to be impartial, transparent and suitably rigorous given the nature of the project?	All those involved in the preparation of this report have: • suitable qualifications in SIA and social sciences • proven experience in SIA, as well as social science research methods and social planning. The SIA lead author is a member of the International Association of Impact Assessment, IAP2 and the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand. A signed declaration is provided in Appendix F.
Project's social locality and social baseline	
1) Does the SIA report identify and describe all the different social groups that may be affected by the project?	Chapter 6 provides a description of the existing social characteristics of the study area, including the identification of different population groups and vulnerable groups.
2) Does the SIA report identify and describe all the built or natural features that have value or importance for people, and explain why people value those features?	Chapter 6 provides a description of: • townships, housing and short term accommodation within the study area • transport infrastructure • social infrastructure • natural features e.g. waterways, and agricultural land.
3) Does the SIA report identify and describe historical, current, and expected social trends or social changes for people in the locality, including their experiences with this project and other major development projects?	Chapter 6 provides a description of social characteristics in the local and regional area. Expected changes and experiences with this project are assessed in Chapters 7–8. People's experiences and potential changes associated with other development projects are described in Chapter 9.
4) Does the social baseline study include appropriate justification for each element, and provide evidence that the elements reflect both relevant literature and the diversity of views and likely experiences?	Chapter 6 has been informed by publicly available socio-demographic data, literature findings and other technical studies that have been prepared for this project. The baseline has also been informed by consultation findings particularly in relation to community values, challenges and identity.

SIA Review Questions	SIA Section
5) Does the social baseline study demonstrate social-science research methods and explain any significant methodological or data limitations?	Social science research methods are described in the methodology (Chapter 3). This section also describes study limitations.
Identification and description of social impacts	
1) Does the SIA report adequately describe likely social impacts from the perspectives of how people may experience them, and explain the research used to identify them? When undertaken as a part of SIA scoping and initial assessment, has the plan for the SIA report been detailed? 2) Does the SIA report apply the precautionary principle to identifying social impacts, and consider how they may be experienced differently by different people and groups? 3) Does the SIA report describe how the preliminary analysis influenced project design and EIS engagement strategy?	Chapters 7–9 describes likely and potential impacts on people with adequate evidence from literature, technical studies and consultation. Tables 7.4 and 8.1 specifically summarise which geographical areas and population groups are affected by each impact, and consider which vulnerable or underrepresented groups are affected, where relevant. This EIS includes information on design development and the EIS engagement strategy.
Community engagement	
1) Were the extent and nature of engagement activities appropriate and sufficient to canvass all relevant views, including those of vulnerable or marginalised groups?	Chapter 5 describes consultation activities with community and stakeholders prior to and during preparation for the EIS and SIA for the proposal. SIA-specific consultation was undertaken which sought to involve all affected parties. This included broad community activities, as well as targeted engagement with community groups (e.g. senior citizens club, arts corporation, Riding for the Disabled Association), affected landowners, health and community services and organisations and Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Mawang Galway Elders Group.
2) How have the views, concerns and insights of affected and interested people influenced both the project design and each element of the SIA report?	Consultation findings have informed the social baseline (Chapter 6), impact identification and assessment and identification of measures (Chapters 7–10 and Appendix D).
Predicting and analysing social impacts	
1) Does the SIA report impartially focus on the most important social impacts to people at all stages of the project, without any omissions or misrepresentations? 2) Does the SIA report analyse the distribution of both positive and negative social impacts, and identify who will benefit and who will lose from the project? 3) Does the SIA report identify its assumptions, and include sensitivity analysis and alternative scenarios? (including 'worst-case' and 'no project' scenarios where relevant)	As per the 'Inclusive' and 'Impartial' SIA principles, this SIA report has searches for all social impacts on all groups and all stages of the project. Negative and positive impacts are identified in Chapters 7–9, and affected population groups are clearly identified against each impact. The current stage of design being preliminary in nature, some aspects of the project require a certain number of assumptions to be made. Some identified impacts are potential and will depend on how the project design progresses. Some of the SIA recommendations are expected to be considered during the detailed design stage. The SIA does not specifically outline alternative options if the proposal does not proceed. A worst-case scenario has been applied where relevant.

SIA Review Questions	SIA Section
Evaluating significance	
1) Do the evaluations of significance of social impacts impartially represent how people in each identified social group can expect to experience the project, including any cumulative effects? 2) Are the evaluations of significance disaggregated to consider the likely different experiences for different people or groups, especially vulnerable groups?	It is recognised that the project may be experienced differently by people. Identified impacts have been assessed by giving consideration to their nature, type, duration and likelihood, as well as who is likely to be impacted and how. Tables 7.4 and 8.1 specifically summarise which geographical areas and population groups are affected by each impact, and consider which vulnerable or underrepresented groups are affected, where relevant.
Responses, monitoring and management	
1) Does the SIA report propose responses that are tangible, deliverable, likely to be durably effective, directly related to the respective impact(s) and adequately delegated and resourced? 2) Does the SIA report demonstrate how people can be confident that social impacts will be monitored and reported in ways that are reliable, effective and trustworthy? 3) Does the SIA report demonstrate how the proponent will adaptively manage social impacts and respond to unanticipated events, breaches, grievances and non-compliance?	A Social Impact Management Plan is provided in Appendix D. It includes: • mitigation and enhancement measures that relate to each of the identified impacts • identification of responsible stakeholder for each measure • for each impact, an assessment of the residual impact to understand the effectiveness of each measures • a monitoring and management plan including identification of responsible stakeholder and frequency.

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Appendix F Author declaration

F.1 Author declaration

This report was prepared by Sophie Le Mauff, Senior Associate – Social Strategy and Outcomes at WSP Australia. Sophie holds the degrees of Bachelor of Arts (Geography and Planning), Master of International Architectural Regeneration and Development, Master of Territorial Tourism Development and Planning and a Certificate in Engagement Essentials.

The assessment was completed in August 2022 based on information available at the time of writing. It contains information relevant to the SIA for the proposal, and to my knowledge does not contain information that is false or misleading.

Sophie Le Mauff
Senior Associate, Social Strategy and Outcomes, WSP Australia