

Executive summary

Overview of the Project

Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation (TIDC) proposes to duplicate part of the existing Richmond Branch Line by constructing an additional track between Quakers Hill and Vineyard stations ('the Quakers Hill to Vineyard Duplication' or 'the Project') as part of the Rail Clearways Program. The Project includes associated works at Schofields, Riverstone and Vineyard stations, including new stations, bus interchanges and car parking at Schofields and Vineyard stations, and improved provision for pedestrians and cyclists. The Project would be constructed in two stages:

- Stage 1 would deliver an additional track between Quakers Hill Station and the new Schofields Station (including construction of a new Schofields Station, construction of a pedestrian footbridge at Schofields and removal of the existing Schofields Station and pedestrian level crossing).
- Stage 2 would deliver an additional track between the new Schofields Station and Vineyard Station (including construction of a new Vineyard Station, upgrade to Riverstone Station, reconstruction of Westminster Street overbridge and removal of the existing Vineyard Station).

Purpose of this report

This Submissions Report documents and considers the submissions received on the *Quakers Hill to Vineyard Duplication Environmental Assessment* (the 'Environmental Assessment') and outlines TIDC's response to these submissions, as required under Section 75H(6) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The Submissions Report provides an overview of the Environmental Assessment (refer Section 1.3), consultation activities undertaken during the preparation and public exhibition of the Environmental Assessment (refer Chapter 2), a summary of the key non-government and government issues raised (refer Chapter 3) as well as details of additional investigations and project modifications that have been made since the exhibition of the Environmental Assessment (refer Chapters 4 and 5, respectively). This Submissions Report also documents a revised Statement of Commitments (SoCs), which reflect the key issues raised in the public submissions.

Overview of submissions

The key issues raised in this Submission Report (refer Chapter 3) are divided into two main categories: non-government submissions and government agency submissions. The most frequently raised issues in these two categories of submissions include:

- accessibility and socio-economic impacts associated with the relocation of Schofields Station
- the development of the preferred project option and the justification for the relocation of Schofields Station
- the use of Bridge Street as an access road during the construction and operational phases of the Project
- project design issues, including the provision of commuter car parking and station/footbridge design issues

- requests for modifications or additions to the Project design, including the provision of additional commuter car parking spaces, additional stations (as opposed to the relocation of Schofields Station) and the extension of the track duplication works
- the Project's linkage with other projects being undertaken by other government agencies
- other issues, including operational noise and flooding impacts on future communities and the North West Growth Centre precincts, as planned by the Strategies and Land Release Branch (formerly the Growth Centres Commission).

The appendices to this report reference each submission received in table format, with each issue and sub-issue raised addressed in detail.

Modifications to the Project

Since the exhibition of the Environmental Assessment, the following minor modifications have been made to the Project design:

- the Schofields pedestrian footbridge is proposed to be moved to within the site of the existing Schofields Station commuter car park, instead of being located north of the current level crossing, as proposed in the Environmental Assessment (refer Section 5.1.1)
- modifications to the alignment and width of the proposed utility corridor between Quakers Hill and the new Schofields stations (refer Section 5.1.2)
- the incorporation of the proposed Quakers Hill footbridge into the planned Easy Access Upgrade at Quakers Hill Station (refer Section 5.1.3).

These modifications have been made in response to feedback received from project stakeholders (including the community) during the exhibition period as well as from the identification of future opportunities and constraints with the proposed Project design as presented in Chapter 6 of the Environmental Assessment.

An assessment of the proposed modifications to the Project design is provided in Chapter 5. This demonstrates that the modifications are minor and can be adequately managed with the application of suitable mitigation measures, and as such, do not require a Preferred Project Report in accordance with Section 75H(6) of the EP&A Act.

Conclusions

This Submissions Report has addressed the issues raised through the consultation process conducted during, and following, the exhibition of the Environmental Assessment for the Quakers Hill to Vineyard Duplication project.

It is proposed that the Quakers Hill to Vineyard Duplication Project, as described in Chapter 6 of the Environmental Assessment, and as amended by this Submissions Report, should be submitted for determination by the Minister for Planning.

The revised SoCs provided in Table 6-1 will establish the appropriate environmental framework for the Project to be undertaken in a sustainable manner.

Next steps

The Minister for Planning will subsequently decide whether to grant approval, or to refuse the Project under Section 75J of the EP&A Act.

Should the Project be approved by the Minister for Planning, TIDC will continue to consult with community members, government agencies and other stakeholders during the pre-construction and construction phases of the Project.

