

2. Consultation

This section documents the consultation that was undertaken by TIDC during the preparation and public exhibition of the Environmental Assessment. This section also provides details of the consultation that would be undertaken by TIDC if project approval is granted.

2.1 Pre-exhibition consultation

Consultation was undertaken with government agencies, members of the community and other stakeholders during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment. The objective of this consultation phase was to identify stakeholder and community issues to be addressed in the Environmental Assessment and to inform stakeholders about the Project.

In addition to ongoing regular meetings coordinated by the Strategies and Land Release Branch with the MoT, RailCorp, the RTA and Blacktown City Council, the following consultation activities were undertaken prior to the exhibition of the Environmental Assessment:

September 2007

An advertisement was placed in the local print media in September 2007, which invited Aboriginal stakeholder groups with an interest in the Quakers Hill, Riverstone and Vineyard areas to register their interest in the Project, in accordance with DECC's (2005) *Interim Community Consultation Requirements for Applicants*. The advertisement was placed in the Blacktown City Sun (25/09/2007), Blacktown Advocate (26/09/2007), Rouse Hill Times (26/09/2009), Koori Times (26/09/2007) and Indigenous Times (20/09/2007).

February 2008

A newsletter was distributed by TIDC in February 2008 to residents of the Schofields village, outlining the details of the Project, particularly as they relate to the relocation of Schofields Station.

May 2008

Project team representatives attended a community meeting held by Blacktown City Council for Schofields residents on Sunday 3 May 2008 at the Schofields Community Centre. This meeting was organised and facilitated by Council for the community; however, project team representatives attended the meeting to gain an appreciation of community concerns and to provide further information to the community.

A community newsletter was distributed in May 2008. The newsletter was distributed to approximately 11,000 residents and business owners along the rail corridor. The newsletter introduced the community to the Project, provided a description of the proposed works, the environmental assessment process, and informed the community of the key issues to be addressed in the Environmental Assessment.

Two Project information sessions were held at the Riverstone Senior Citizens Hall on 29 and 31 May 2008. The purpose of these sessions was to provide community members with further project information. Approximately 150 community members attended the information sessions over the two days. Community members were also invited to make written submissions on the Project, which were used to identify community and stakeholder issues for consideration during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment.

December 2008

A project update meeting was undertaken with relevant government agencies on 3 December 2008 to provide these stakeholders with an update of the design development of the Project during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment.

April 2009

An advertisement was placed in the Sydney Morning Herald on 7 April 2009 pursuant to Clause 8F(3) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Reg) that requires the proponent to advertise a notice of application for project approval.

2.2 Consultation during the public exhibition period (April to June 2009)

The Environmental Assessment was placed on public exhibition for a period of 34 days (approximately four weeks) between 29 April and 1 June 2009. The exhibition activities and consultation undertaken during the exhibition period are summarised in the following sections.

2.2.1 Exhibition venues

Hard copies of the Environmental Assessment were placed on public exhibition at the following locations:

- Blacktown City Council
- Blacktown Library
- Hawkesbury City Council
- Hawkesbury Central Library
- Richmond Branch Library
- NSW Department of Planning (Sydney Office)
- The Nature Conservation Council of NSW (Sydney Office)
- Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation (Chatswood Office).

The display included copies of the Environmental Assessment, an A3 poster and copies of the Project Update Newsletter (refer Appendix A). An electronic copy of the Environmental Assessment was also available on the Department of Planning's website. A link to the Department of Planning's website was provided via the TIDC website (www.tidc.nsw.gov.au).

2.2.2 1800 project information line, project email and website

The 1800 project information line and email address were monitored throughout the exhibition period. Twelve calls and 18 emails were received during the exhibition period.

Project information was also available on TIDC's website. This website included information on the upcoming community information sessions (refer Section 2.2.5), an electronic copy of a summary document that was prepared for the Environmental Assessment, a copy of the Project Update newsletter (refer Section 2.2.4), and a link to the electronic copy of the Environmental Assessment on the Department of Planning's website.

2.2.3 Advertisements

Advertisements outlining the key details of the Project and exhibition of the Environmental Assessment were placed in the following seven local and metropolitan newspapers as listed below:

- Sydney Morning Herald (29 April and 13 May 2009)
- Daily Telegraph (29 April and 13 May 2009)
- Blacktown City Sun (28 April and 12 May 2009)
- Hawkesbury Gazette (29 April and 13 May 2009)
- Blacktown Advocate (29 April and 20 May 2009)
- Rouse Hill Times (29 April and 20 May 2009)
- Hawkesbury Courier (29 April and 20 May 2009).

These advertisements requested submissions on the Environmental Assessment from anyone with an interest in the Project, including stakeholders and members of the community. A copy of the advertisements is provided in Appendix B.

2.2.4 Community newsletter – Project Update

Approximately 14,000 Project Update newsletters were distributed in late April 2009 to residents and business owners in the area surrounding the Project. Newsletters were also sent to stakeholders on the project database. On 29 April 2009, TIDC staff distributed copies of the newsletter to rail commuters at Schofields and Riverstone stations during the morning peak. Copies of the newsletter were also available at the community information sessions held during May 2009 (refer Section 2.2.5).

The newsletter described the Project and the Environmental Assessment, and informed stakeholders about the project schedule. The newsletter provided information on the dates and venues for the public exhibition of the Environmental Assessment and upcoming community information sessions (refer Section 2.2.5). It also invited submissions about the Project to be sent to the Department of Planning. A copy of the Project Update newsletter is provided in Appendix A.

2.2.5 Community information sessions

Two community information sessions were held during the public exhibition period. These sessions were advertised in the Project Update newsletter (refer Section 2.2.4), in local and metropolitan newspapers (refer Section 2.2.3) and on the TIDC website. Details about the community information sessions are summarised in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1 Community information session details

Venue	Date and time	Registered attendees ¹
Schofields Community Centre, 65 Railway Terrace, Schofields	Thursday 7 May 2009, 7 pm – 9 pm	41
Riverstone Senior Citizens Hall, Park Street, Riverstone	Saturday 23 May 2009, 9 am – 12 pm	26

Note 1: The number of community members who attended the Community Information Sessions was higher than the number quoted as not all community members registered their attendance.

The sessions enabled members of the public to meet and speak with the project team and view exhibition material about the Project. Material provided at each of these sessions included:

- hard copies of the Environmental Assessment and summary document
- DVDs containing an electronic copy of the Environmental Assessment and summary document
- aerial maps with the proposed Project works superimposed
- posters containing information about the Project
- copies of the Project Update newsletter (refer Section 2.2.4)
- submission forms.

Summaries of the Environmental Assessment, DVDs containing the electronic copy of the Environmental Assessment, Project Update newsletters and submission forms were all available for attendees to take away from the information sessions.

Representatives from TIDC and its construction, engineering and environmental consultants for the Project were also in attendance to speak with community members about aspects of the Project and to respond to queries and concerns raised by attendees.

Community feedback forms were available at each of the community sessions to encourage members of the community to make a formal submission on the Project. These forms were either collected by TIDC, and a copy sent to the Department of Planning to be registered as a formal submission on the Project, or sent directly to the Department of Planning. Where required, representatives from TIDC and the Project team were available to assist community members prepare their submissions.

Table 2-2 summarises the key issues raised during the community information sessions. These issues are detailed further and have been addressed in the responses to submissions (refer Chapter 3).

Table 2-2 Summary of key issues raised at the community information sessions

Session Venue	Issue raised
<p>Schofields Community Centre, 65 Railway Terrace, Schofields</p> <p>Thursday 7 May 2009, 7 pm – 9 pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceived increased safety risks associated with the relocation of Schofields Station due to community members having to walk further to access the station. ▪ Impact of relocating Schofields Station on the value of properties located in the vicinity of the existing Schofields Station. ▪ Impact of relocating Schofields Station on the viability of local businesses located within the Schofields village centre. ▪ Stronger justification was needed as to why Schofields Station needed to be relocated away from the existing village centre. ▪ Impact of relocating Schofields Station on the cohesion of the Schofields community (i.e. the perception of creating 'old' and 'new' Schofields communities). ▪ Justification for why the existing Schofields Station could not be retained or upgraded and an additional station created to service the future needs of the NWGC. ▪ Creation of vehicle access to the western side of the station via Bridge Street would increase traffic volumes and associated safety risks to residents (particularly children). ▪ Opposition to the proposed construction vehicle access route via Vernon Road. ▪ The proposed relocation of Schofields Station favours future residents of the NWGC at the expense of existing Schofields residents.
<p>Riverstone Senior Citizens Hall, Park Street, Riverstone</p> <p>Saturday 23 May 2009, 9 am – 12 pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Justification for why existing Schofields Station needs to be closed. ▪ Clarification on what happened to the plan to establish two stations (existing Schofields and Nirimba Stations) to create two smaller townships? ▪ Clarification on why Schofields Station could not be retained and a new station constructed between Quakers Hill and Schofields. ▪ Concern that closing the existing Schofields Station will devalue property values. ▪ Concern about increased traffic accessing new Schofields Station via Grange Avenue and Bridge Street. ▪ Concern about the use of Bridge Street as a construction traffic route. Vernon Road should be used instead. ▪ Concern about the provision of vehicle access to new Schofields Station via Bridge Street. ▪ Clarification on why vehicle access to the new Schofields Station could not be provided via Vernon Road as opposed to Bridge Street. ▪ Clarification on why car parks and interchange facilities are not proposed at Riverstone Station. ▪ Clarification on why Westminster Street overbridge is not being upgraded as part of the Stage 1 works.

Session Venue	Issue raised
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification on why the decommissioning of the existing Schofields Station could not be deferred until Stage 2. Concern regarding security at the compounds to prevent members of the public accessing a construction zone. Request that security fencing is installed around the Richmond Line Alliance construction compound at Schofields. Concern about the impact of the proposed culvert works on the fabric of the old brick culverts.

2.3 Receipt and management of submissions

Submissions from the general public, interested groups, organisations and public authorities were received by the Department of Planning. Copies of the submissions received were provided to TIDC by the Department of Planning. Submissions that were sent directly to TIDC via email or at the community information sessions were forwarded to the Department of Planning to be registered as a formal submission on the Project.

Each submission that was received was allocated a unique identification number in chronological order. The submissions were reviewed to identify the key issues raised against a master list of issues that mirrored the presentation of information in the Environmental Assessment. Additional categories were also created to address other issues.

Late submissions were accepted by the Department of Planning up until three weeks after the close of the exhibition period and accommodated using the same assessment process described above.

2.3.1 Acknowledgement and management of submissions

Responses and submissions provided to TIDC via feedback forms available at Community Information Sessions, direct email or through the project email address were acknowledged by return email or by post, where contact details were provided. All responses and submissions were forwarded to the NSW Department of Planning to be registered as a submission.

2.4 Future consultation

Should the Project be approved, TIDC would continue to consult with community members, government agencies and other stakeholders during the detailed design and construction phases of the Project. TIDC's commitment to ongoing stakeholder consultation is reflected in the SoCs (refer Chapter 6).

The following sections provide an overview of the communication activities that would be undertaken during the pre-construction and construction phases of the Project. Prior to construction, a community and stakeholder management plan would be developed, which would include some additional consultation activities for the construction phase of the Project (such as notifications, advertisements).

2.4.1 1800 project information line, project email and website

The freecall 1800 project information line (1800 684 490) and project email (mail@tidc.nsw.gov.au) would be maintained throughout the pre-construction and construction phases of the Project. These contact details would be included on all project related correspondence.

The project website (www.tidc.nsw.gov.au) would be maintained throughout the pre-construction and construction phases of the Project. The website would provide an electronic copy of the Submissions Report, Project Updates, monthly construction updates, copies of some management plans, and contact details for TIDC to allow community members to raise their questions or concerns.

2.4.2 Construction response line

A freecall 1800 construction response line (1800 775 465) would be maintained throughout the construction of the Project. This phone number would be available for residents and the wider community to seek clarification on scheduled construction works, or to make a formal complaint about construction related impacts (such as noise, dust). TIDC would be responsible for complaint handling throughout construction to ensure that any adverse construction impacts are appropriately managed.

2.4.3 Advice to submitters

A letter would be sent to individuals/organisations that provided a submission advising them of the completion of the Submissions Report, and their submission number. Letters would also be sent to respondents following determination of the Project.

2.4.4 Community newsletter – Project Update

A Project Update newsletter would be sent to residents and business owners in the area surrounding the Project advising them of the completion of the Submissions Report, and determination of project approval. This newsletter would also provide community members with an outline of the Project schedule, anticipated disruptions to the community throughout the construction period as well as contact details for TIDC (including the freecall 1800 project information and construction response lines).

Further project updates would be distributed to the community throughout the construction of the Project.

2.4.5 Meetings

Following the completion of the Submissions Report, meetings would be held with government and non-government stakeholders (such as Council, RailCorp and the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA)), where appropriate, to provide an update on the Project and outline the next steps. Ongoing consultation with other stakeholders, including the community, would occur during the next stages of the Project (refer Section 7.2).

