

ARTC

INLAND  
RAIL  
An Australian Government Initiative



# Summary of findings

**Illabo to Stockinbingal**  
Environmental Impact Statement

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Inland Rail acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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*Front cover and back cover:* **Aerial view of the level crossing where the existing Stockinbingal to Forbes Rail Line meets Burley Griffin Way.**



Proposal description	2
Statutory requirements	4
Consultation	6
<b>Key findings</b>	
Environmental Assessment	8
Biodiversity	9
Land use and property	10
Noise and vibration	12
Landscape and visual impacts	14
Hydrology and flooding	16
Cultural heritage	17
Traffic, transport and access	18
Socio-economic findings	19
Other assessments	20
Conclusion	22

# Illabo to Stockinbingal Project Key Elements



39 kilometres of new single track standard gauge railway



2 rail over road bridges



9 private level crossings



27 longitudinal drainage culverts below level crossings



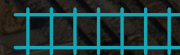
8 bridges across waterways



1 road over rail bridge at Burley Griffin Way



11 stock underpasses



3 kilometres approximately of upgraded existing track



1 crossing loop and associated maintenance siding



6 public level crossings



88 new and existing cross drainage culverts








# Illabo to Stockinbinal alignment



## Key locations

- 1 Old Sydney Road: Proposed level crossing
- 2 Ulandra Creek: Proposed underbridge
- 3 Ironbong Road: Proposed level crossing
- 4 East of Ironbong Road: Proposed crossing loop
- 5 Run Boundary Creek: Proposed underbridge
- 6 Dirnaseer Road: Proposed underbridge
- 7 Isobel Creek: Proposed underbridge
- 8 Isobel Creek Tributary: Proposed underbridge
- 9 Old Cootamundra Road: Proposed underbridge
- 10 Corbys Lane: Proposed level crossing
- 11 Powderhorn Creek: Proposed underbridge
- 12 Powderhorn Creek Tributary: Proposed underbridge
- 13 Burley Griffin Way: Proposed overbridge
- 14 Dudauman Creek: Proposed underbridge

## Legend

-  **Overbridge** is when the road bridge is above the rail line
-  **Crossing loops** allow trains travelling in opposite directions to safely pass each other
-  **Underbridge** is when the rail line bridge runs above the road/watercourse
-  **Public level crossings** are where rail and road intersect
-  **Project limits**
-  **Roads**
-  **Existing rail line**

# The Proposal

**The Illabo to Stockinbingal Project will provide rail infrastructure to meet Inland Rail specifications, and improves reliability and travel times by avoiding the Bethungra Spiral.**

## The Proposal

The site incorporates the area required for the construction and operation of the Illabo to Stockinbingal section of Inland Rail. It is proposed the alignment branches off from the existing Main South line north-east of Illabo and travels north to join the Stockinbingal to Parkes section of Inland Rail.

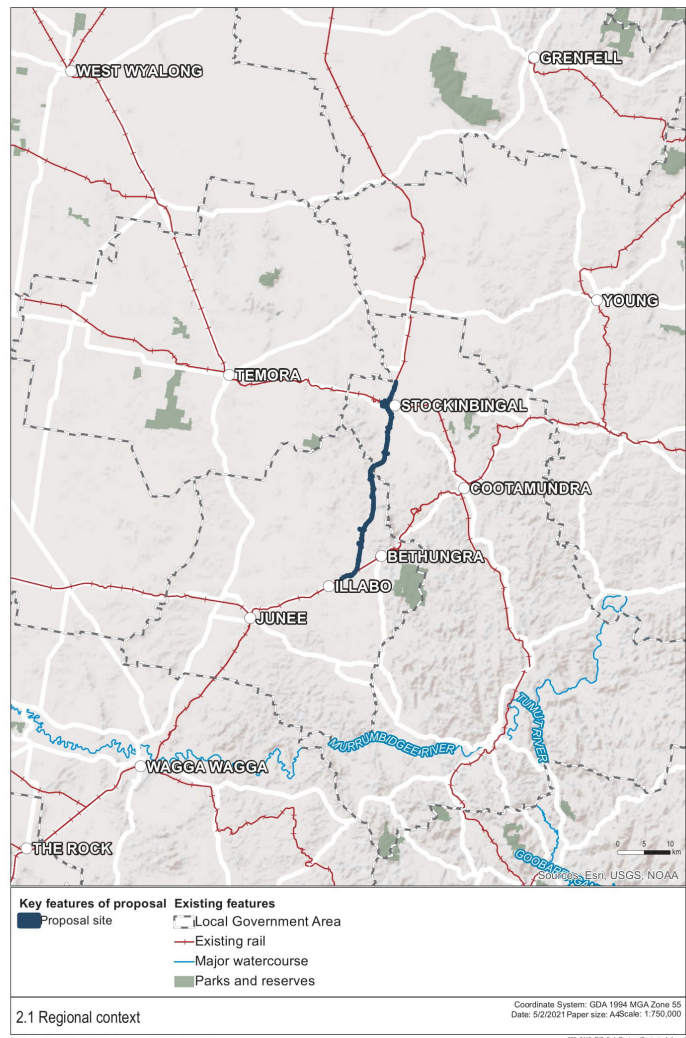
The width of the alignment varies between 40 metres and 130 metres in direct response to the local topography, as well as incorporating necessary infrastructure such as a crossing loop.

The Proposal assessed for the EIS includes all the required track and associated infrastructure, haul roads, culverts, bridges and levels crossings, as well as the location of compounds and necessary batch plants required during construction.

The Proposal is a critical component of Inland Rail, which is needed to respond to the growth in demand for freight transport, while minimising environmental, property and community impacts by maximising use of the existing rail corridor.

## The location

The Proposal is located in south western NSW in the Riverina region. The southern section begins near Illabo in the Junee local government area (LGA). The northern section ends in Stockinbingal in the Cootamundra-Gundagai regional LGA. The land is predominantly rural, used for agriculture and grazing.



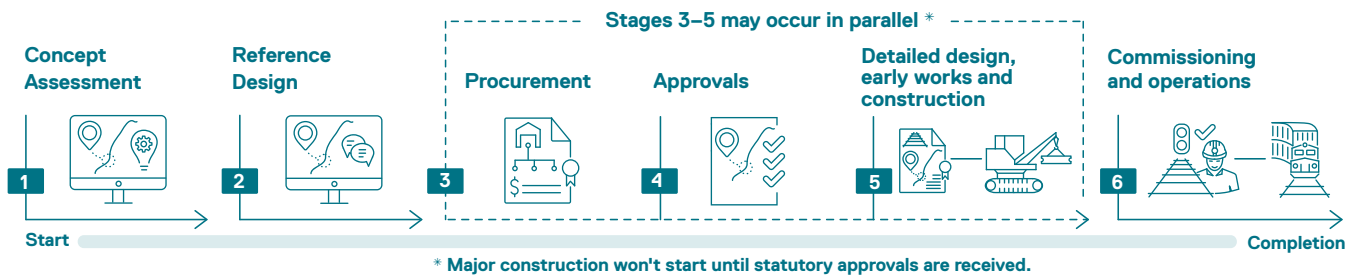
## The Proponent

ARTC is an Australian Government owned statutory corporation that manages more than 8,500 kilometres of rail network across five states.

As the operator and manager of Australia's national rail freight network, ARTC is responsible for selling access to the rail network, capital investment, and developing new business.

## Proposal timeline

Pre-construction and early works on the Illabo to Stockinbingal Proposal are scheduled to commence in 2024 and construction is expected to finish in 2026.



## Construction

Construction of the Proposal will commence in mid-2024 following all necessary approvals. It is expected to take about 24 months, concluding in mid-2026.

### Construction hours

The proposed construction program has been developed to reduce the construction duration, accommodate the remote location of worksites and provide workforce efficiencies.

The proposed construction hours are Monday to Sunday – 6.00am to 6.00pm.

Proposed construction hours are beyond the recommended standard hours in the Interim Construction Noise Guidelines. Work outside standard hours, wherever possible, will be minimised near sensitive receivers (see Noise and Vibration).

### Workforce

Workforce on site for the Proposal is estimated to peak at 425. Due to limited local accommodation, one temporary workforce accommodation camp would be established about 2km north of Stockinbingal. Further planning and consultation will occur.

## Operations

Operational activities will include:

- the use of the railway for freight purposes
- general track and infrastructure maintenance.

About six train services per day are estimated in 2026. This is likely to increase to an average of 11 trains per day in 2040. Annual freight tonnages will increase in parallel, from approximately 12 million tonnes in 2025, increasing to about 19 million tonnes per year in 2040.

The new rail line will enable the use of double-stacked freight trains up to 1,800 metres long and 6.5 metres high along its entire length. Train speeds will vary according to axle loads, ranging from 80 to 115 kilometres per hour.

Standard ARTC maintenance activities will be undertaken during operations. Train services will be provided by a variety of operators.

# Statutory requirements

**The Illabo to Stockinbingal Project is declared Critical State Significant Infrastructure. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is now available for public review.**

## Inland Rail – Illabo to Stockinbingal Project

The Inland Rail Program is a major national project to construct a direct interstate freight rail corridor between Melbourne and Brisbane via central-west New South Wales (NSW) and Toowoomba in Queensland.

The Program is about 1,700 kilometres long and has been divided into 13 projects, which can be delivered and operated independently, with tie-in points to the existing railway network.

The Illabo to Stockinbingal section is about 42.5 kilometres in total, including 39 kilometres of new single track standard gauge railway. The new rail line will be a faster and more efficient route that bypasses the steep and windy section of the Bethungra Spiral and would enable the use of double-stacked freight trains along its entire length.

## Statutory requirements

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared to describe the potential impacts and proposed mitigations of the works and is now available for public comment.

An EIS supports an application for approval of the Proposal under division 5.2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). It addresses the environmental assessment requirements set by the Secretary of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), which is commonly referred to as the SEARs.

In addition, this Proposal is a controlled action under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and therefore requires approval by the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment. The Commonwealth's assessment requirements are included in the EIS.

The EIS has four parts:

- ▶ introduction of the Proposal, legislative context and consultation undertaken
- ▶ detailed description of the Proposal, including how it will be constructed and operated
- ▶ assessment of potential environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the Proposal
- ▶ compilation of key impacts and proposed mitigations.

The EIS is supported by a number of technical papers. This summary of findings is an overview of the potential effects of the Proposal and the proposed management measures.



## Public review period

The EIS is currently in a public review period. The period is displayed on the DPE project and ARTC Inland Rail websites.

You can view the EIS and associated approval documents on DPE's project website: [planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/onexhibition](https://planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/onexhibition)

## Have your say

DPE encourages online submissions to ensure public safety as well as the timely consideration of all issues raised.

To have your say online, during the exhibition period go to [planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/onexhibition](https://planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/onexhibition) and click on 'Make a submission'. You will need to log in or create a user account.

If you cannot lodge online, post or drop your submission to the address below, to arrive before the close of exhibition:

Director – Transport Assessments  
Planning and Assessment  
Department of Planning and Environment  
Locked Bag 5022  
Parramatta NSW 2124.

If you choose to send a paper-based submission, it is important that both the submission and mailing envelope are addressed to the nominated contact team. DPE advise if you choose to send a paper-based submission and it is not addressed to the correct contact team, the submission may not be received and may be returned.

Your submission must include:

- ▶ your name and address, at the top of the letter only (if you want your personal details to be withheld from publication, please request this in a separate cover letter and do not include personal details in your submission)
- ▶ the name of the application and the application number: Inland Rail – Illlabo to Stockinbingal SSI-9406
- ▶ a statement on whether you 'support' or 'object' to the Proposal or if you are simply providing comment
- ▶ the reasons why you support or object to the Proposal; and
- ▶ a declaration of any reportable political donations you have made in the last two years.

(visit [planning.nsw.gov.au/DonationsandGiftDisclosure](https://planning.nsw.gov.au/DonationsandGiftDisclosure) or phone **1300 305 695** to find out more).

For further enquiries, please call ARTC Inland Rail on **1800 732 761**.

## ARTC help is available

If you need help with reading, or if English is your second language, please call **13 14 50**. This free service will help you read this document and other relevant Project information.






A community drop-in session in Bethungra



# Consultation

Consultation with community and key stakeholders has occurred across three key phases of the Proposal's development.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
		Preliminary consultation						
		Route option assessment						
				Reference design and environmental assessment				

## Consultation

Stakeholders identified for the Illabo to Stockinbingal Project:

- Australian, state and local government representatives
- government and statutory agencies
- special interest groups including peak bodies
- Traditional Owners
- potentially affected landowners
- utility providers
- local/regional business
- general public and local community.

## Consultation and the route selection outcomes

The preferred alignment was determined through a multi-criteria analysis (MCA) process and consultation with landowners and key stakeholders. This resulted in the focussed area of investigation for development of the feasibility design.

Landowners and other community stakeholder feedback was used to score five route options and specifically considered impacts on:

- property
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage
- future land use
- the local economy.

Property impacts were further reduced through optimisation of the preferred alignment.

## How we have listened

Stakeholder feedback has contributed to multiple design changes that avoid or minimise potential impacts of the Proposal including:

- ▶ redesigned alignment adjacent to the Olympic Highway at Illabo to use the existing rail corridor, significantly reducing earthworks, and land severance, and removing the need for an additional level crossing by upgrading one existing
- ▶ shifting the alignment to preserve and protect a scar tree, which is of Aboriginal heritage significance
- ▶ shifting the alignment at Stockinbinal Junction reduces earthworks, and still provides the 175,600 cubic metres necessary to construct the Burley Griffin Way Overpass with reduced haulage
- ▶ Stockinbinal Junction design removes significant impacts to existing waterways and reduces the number of culverts and bridges required
- ▶ reducing visual impacts in Stockinbinal by changing a rail bridge over existing Burley Griffin Way to road over rail bridge
- ▶ redesigned Burley Griffin Way removes an existing level crossing in Stockinbinal
- ▶ Ironbong Road road-rail interface design significantly reducing the rail embankments, earthworks and visual impact
- ▶ impacts reduced on threatened ecological communities north of Illabo and alongside Isobel Creek
- ▶ existing vegetation and wildlife habitat avoided as far as practicable
- ▶ reduced earthworks, leading to shorter construction duration, fewer environmental impacts, improved visual amenity, a smaller footprint and better budget outcomes
- ▶ construction areas to be accessed via existing roads to reduce impacts on landowners
- ▶ relocation of the crossing loop and associated Rail Maintenance Access Road improves emergency services access to the Bethungra range
- ▶ stock underpasses added where practicable to minimise operational impacts for landowners.



# Environmental assessment

**An environmental impact assessment was completed for the construction and operation phase of the Illabo to Stockinbingal Proposal.**

The impact assessment identifies key potential environmental issues, impacts and risks, which are informed by the SEARs. To produce the EIS the assessment must consider the worst possible consequences of the potential impacts associated with the Proposal and outline the efforts to minimise or avoid potential impacts during construction and operation.

There were 14 individual SEARs addressed during the impact assessment. More detailed information about the impact assessment results and how they relate to the construction and operation of the Illabo to Stockinbingal Proposal can be found in the full EIS.

# Biodiversity



The majority of native vegetation in the Proposal area has been previously cleared for agriculture and other land uses and is highly fragmented. The Proposal of a new rail corridor and permanent operational infrastructure will require the removal of 76.63 hectares of native vegetation.

This land clearance will have a direct impact on native vegetation, which will impact fauna relying on hollows for shelter and breeding.

Through the planning and design of the Proposal, efforts have been made to avoid and minimise impacts on biodiversity values.

## What you could experience during construction:

- ▶ clearing of native vegetation
- ▶ loss of fauna habitat, habitat fragmentation and loss of connectivity
- ▶ direct impacts on listed threatened flora species and endangered terrestrial ecological populations and communities
- ▶ loss of hollow-bearing trees
- ▶ potential injury and mortality of native fauna from construction traffic
- ▶ construction of waterway crossings impacting aquatic biodiversity
- ▶ water quality impacts and changes to flow regimes through the removal of farm dams
- ▶ potential impacts on protected and sensitive lands.

## What you may experience once operational:

- ▶ potential injury and mortality of native fauna from freight rail
- ▶ impacts on connectivity due to new rail corridor.

## What we will do:

- ▶ develop a biodiversity management plan
- ▶ secure offsets for vegetation clearing
- ▶ rehabilitate areas of cleared vegetation
- ▶ rescue and relocation of fauna in areas disturbed
- ▶ structures including culverts and bridges designed to promote fauna connectivity.



# Land use and property

The Proposal's study area generally consists of agricultural properties between the residential townships of Illabo and Stockinbingal. The typical farm comprises cleared land used for mixed operations of agriculture and grazing.

These farms are currently serviced by public roads and private internal tracks. Properties generally have multiple points through which movement can occur across a farm and on to public roads. Where practical, level crossings and underpasses will be incorporated to maintain connectivity between farm areas impacted by the Proposal.

Since 2018, ARTC has engaged in extensive consultation with landowners impacted by the Proposal and conducted property inspections to understand the potential impacts to each farm along the proposed alignment. This consultation is ongoing and will continue throughout detailed design and construction.



The total land required for the Proposal is **612 hectares**. Of this, **458 hectares is a permanent land requirement** and **154 hectares is temporary land requirements** for construction.

Land would be temporarily required for construction to:

- ▶ establish the key construction infrastructure
- ▶ provide access to construction work areas
- ▶ temporary laydown and site office locations
- ▶ manoeuvre construction plant and machinery.

The permanent land requirements affect about 43 lots of land across 19 farms. The key potential impact on farming operations relates to farm severance.

Farm severance could:

- ▶ permanently disrupt the overall configuration of a farm
- ▶ affect efficiency, productivity and viability
- ▶ make some severed portions unviable due to remaining size, configuration or access
- ▶ affect internal access to tracks or roads within properties
- ▶ temporarily impact property due to rationalisation of access points, damage to roads, and inability to access key infrastructure during flood events.



### What you could experience during construction:

- ▶ impacts on soil and/or surface or groundwater resources/supplies
- ▶ inadvertent damage to property/farm infrastructure
- ▶ impacts on fencing, causing livestock risks
- ▶ impacts on animal welfare and stock behaviour
- ▶ interruption of crop and livestock operations
- ▶ dust (affecting crops and pastures)
- ▶ noise and light (affecting livestock grazing patterns)
- ▶ water availability
- ▶ competition for labour supply
- ▶ reduction in total agricultural production
- ▶ increased costs for farm operators
- ▶ biosecurity impacts with increased vehicle and people movements
- ▶ introduction of weeds, pests and diseases
- ▶ impacts on human health and biodiversity.

### What you may experience once operational:

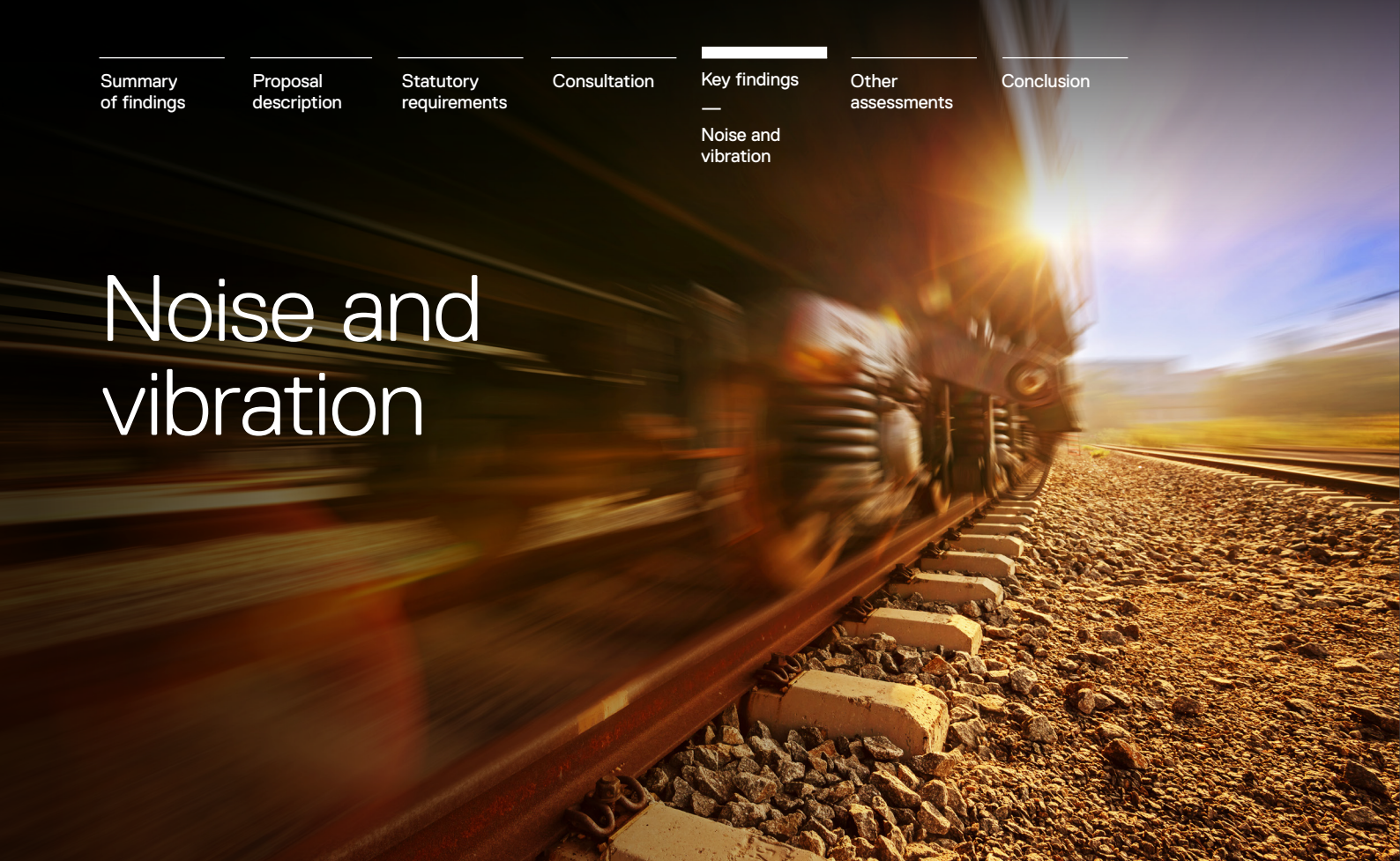
- ▶ disrupted movements of machinery and livestock across the rail corridor
- ▶ time and costs impacting farming efficiencies
- ▶ altered water drainage lines
- ▶ increased wait times at level crossings.

### What we will do:

- ▶ minimise the construction and operation footprints as far as reasonably practicable
- ▶ manage the acquisition process in accordance with relevant requirements
- ▶ incorporate level crossings and stock underpasses for farm connectivity
- ▶ develop property-specific measures to manage individual farms' needs during acquisition.



# Noise and vibration



Noise and vibration studies were conducted to understand existing (baseline) background noise levels and identify 'sensitive receivers' most likely to be impacted by heightened noise and vibration activity due to the Proposal.

There are 152 residential sensitive receivers located within the study area, mostly in Stockinbingal. There are also 16 commercial and industrial buildings and eight other sensitive receivers, including churches and schools, identified as noise sensitive.

During construction, noise trigger level exceedances are predicted at residential receivers across all sections of the construction footprint, with some of the closest receivers potentially impacted by sleep disturbance. These exceedances trigger the implementation of feasible and reasonable mitigation measures, and a noise and vibration management plan will be developed with mitigation measures for affected receivers.

The proposed extended work hours aim to reduce the construction duration and, in turn, reduce the inconvenience of noise impact exposure.

Generally noise trigger levels are more stringent for the operation of new rail infrastructure compared to existing rail infrastructure, as measures can be implemented on newly designed and constructed rail infrastructure more readily.

The predicted noise levels were above noise assessment criteria at six sensitive residential receivers for railway operations at 2026 (the commencement year) and at the same locations in 2040. There are two non-residential sensitive receivers at Stockinbingal (church and school) that may be above the noise assessment criteria.

The predicted noise levels trigger the assessment criteria by less than 3 decibels (dB(A)) at the majority of these sensitive receivers. The highest predicted railway noise level was 4 dB(A) above the noise assessment criteria.

## Identified sensitive receivers



residential dwellings



schools



passive recreation (cemetery)



places of worship

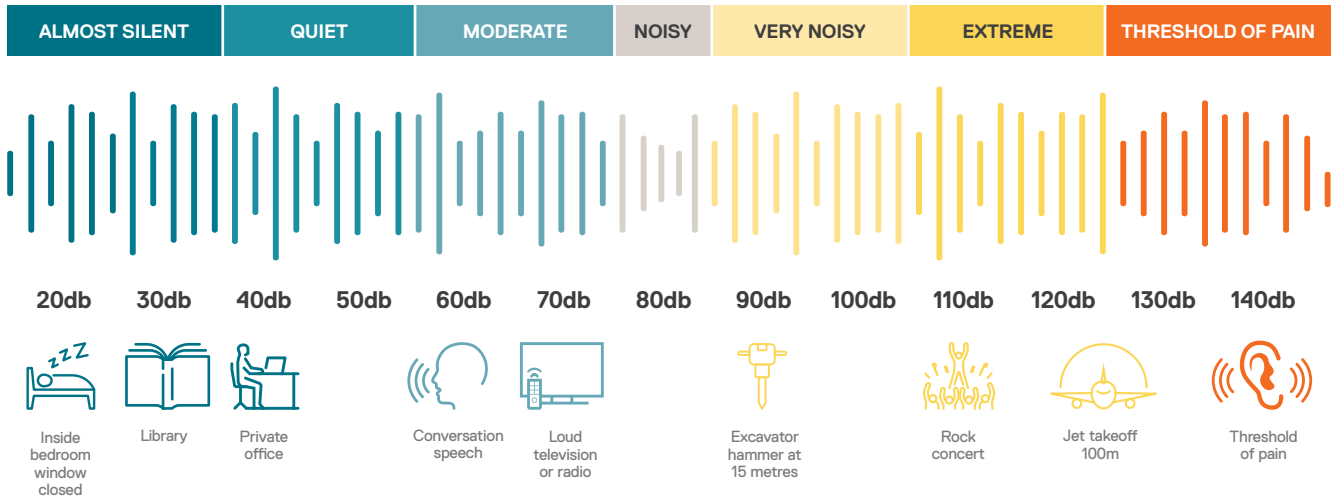


active recreation



## Understanding noise

Noise intensity is measured in decibels using a method that mimics the human ear, abbreviated as dB(A). Noise is considered as an average, for example across a 15-minute period, which is shown as LAeq15min. At other times, we are interested in night-time averages for the 9-hour period of 10pm to 7am (LAeq9-hour), or maximum noise (LAmix).



### What you could experience during construction:

- noise and vibration from construction activities
- potential sleep disturbance
- noise from construction traffic
- temporary road closures generating additional traffic noise on existing roads
- noise from installation, operation and decommissioning of the workforce accommodation camp.

### What you may experience once operational:

- rail noise and vibration along the new line
- noise from warning signals and train horns at level crossings
- noise from trains idling at the rail crossing loop
- noise from traffic on realigned sections of road at Burley Griffin Way and Ironbong Road.

### What we will do:

- limit noisy works during construction to standard working hours where feasible
- communicate clearly any works outside of standard construction hours
- lower powered/smaller machinery used to reduce vibration impacts
- increase working distances from sensitive receivers to reduce vibration impacts
- implement a construction noise and vibration plan
- additional mitigation measures for affected residential receivers considered including alternate accommodation during construction, at-property treatments, or boundary screening.

# Landscape and visual impacts

*View of proposed overpass at Burley Griffin Way, Stockinbingal*

The Proposal site and surrounding area is predominantly comprised of rural land with scattered residences and farm buildings. There are two villages, Stockinbingal to the north and Illabo to the south and these communities have been historically rail-related.

The terrain is wide open and relatively flat land allowing for unobstructed views of the Proposal from several locations along the proposed alignment.

## What you could experience during construction:

- clearing of vegetation
- view of construction equipment and stockpiles
- spoil mounds during earthworks
- increased heavy vehicle traffic and diversions
- lighting for night-time construction, lighting at temporary workforce accommodation camp, and security of compounds.

## What you may experience once operational:

- visual impacts of new rail infrastructure
- embankments above natural ground levels
- Burley Griffin Way road realignment
- new bridges
- signage and infrastructure for level crossings
- fencing along the rail corridor.

## What we will do:

- reduce lighting impacts where practicable during construction
- locate stockpiles and laydown areas with reduced visual impact
- locate compounds as far as possible from sensitive receivers
- implement low maintenance landscape design to reduce visual impacts
- rehabilitate temporary construction areas and temporary workforce accommodation site
- establish appropriate native grass species where practicable within the rail corridor to minimise exposed surfaces
- rehabilitate agricultural land
- use appropriate construction materials to minimise visual impacts where possible and integrate sympathetically with surrounding landscapes
- ensure the design responds to natural patterns of the landscape
- implement screening where feasible.



**Before**

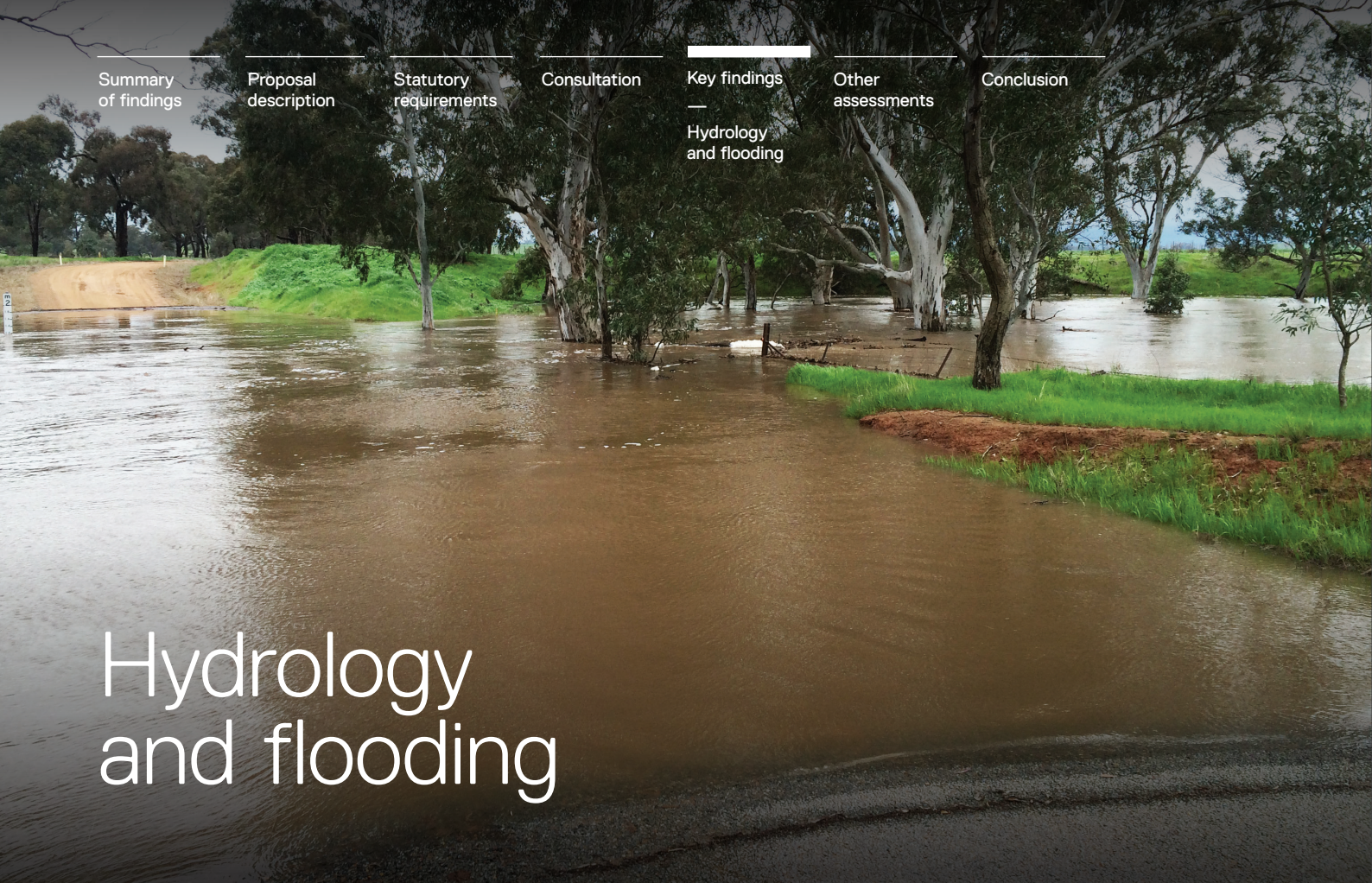


Existing view of where Old Cootamundra Road meets Dudauman Road, Cootamundra

**After**



View of proposed rail bridge over Old Cootamundra Road, just south of Dudauman Road, Cootamundra



# Hydrology and flooding

The Proposal is located at the catchment divide of the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee River catchments. Most of the creeks and tributaries only flow following intense rainfall so only subject to localised flooding and not impacted by the regional floodplain.

Landowners have shared their feedback on the potential impact on contour banks.

These contour banks on agricultural properties are used to control overland flow generally in the direction of farm dams and to minimise erosion. The Proposal has been designed to maintain all but one overland flow path, to minimise the impact to farm dam flows.

During construction overland flows may be altered locally, but these are likely to be temporary and would not impact the long-term source of surface water.

## What you could experience during construction:

- ▶ altered surface water flow due to earthworks, compounds, plant and equipment storage, and stockpiling material onsite
- ▶ flooding of earthworks could move sediment and materials into waterways
- ▶ flooding within watercourses could damage or wash away temporary structures, impacting property and infrastructure
- ▶ new access tracks and temporary watercourse crossings could impact vegetation cover, create sediment movement and erosion, and redirect water flow paths
- ▶ dam infilling and new traverse drainage could impact water flows.

## What you may experience once operational:

- ▶ the proposed rail formation would interrupt overland water flow
- ▶ overland flow concentrated at bridge and culvert outlets potentially causing peak flood levels at these locations.

## What we will do:

- ▶ limit the construction duration to lower the probability of being impacted by large rainfall
- ▶ design to avoid and/or minimise the potential impacts on flooding and watercourses
- ▶ minimise cut and fill, following the existing topography
- ▶ maintain the passage of flow through the installation of culverts
- ▶ design pier footings at bridges to suit potential flood flow
- ▶ undertake further flood modelling during detailed design.

# Cultural heritage

The Proposal is located within the land of the Wiradjuri People. Through the assessment, 22 Aboriginal sites were identified, including four scarred trees. The design of the Proposal ensures a 50 metre buffer between the final alignment and the location of three scarred trees to ensure their preservation. A fourth tree located on an access track will be fenced.

The Stockinbingal Railway Station and Stockinbingal Heritage Conservation Area are listed as locally significant by Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council. However, there are no permanent works proposed within or adjacent to any listed heritage item in the town of Stockinbingal.

## What you could experience during construction:

- ▶ disturbance of part or all of a heritage item or place
- ▶ vibration impacts
- ▶ accidental damage through movement of machinery and equipment
- ▶ altered historical access.

## What you may experience once operational:

- ▶ impacts on visual amenity.



## What we will do:

- ▶ direct impacts will be further reduced where practical during detailed design
- ▶ consult Aboriginal stakeholders where impacts are not avoidable
- ▶ isolate and collect identified artefacts before construction
- ▶ avoid and minimise impacts on Aboriginal heritage.



# Traffic, transport and access

Construction of the Proposal will be staged, and associated traffic will be generated from these works. In addition to construction of the rail line, two roads are also proposed for realignment. Burley Griffin Way will undergo major realignment to use a new bridge to cross the proposed rail line. Ironbong Road will undergo a minor realignment around the proposed level crossing to improve safety.

Construction of the Proposal will generate additional vehicle movements, including light and heavy vehicles. Light vehicles will mainly be construction workers moving to and from site and compounds. Heavy vehicle movements will include delivery trucks for equipment and materials, as well as water tankers.

Access routes used for construction traffic will vary depending on the location of each work site. Some routes will extend from Temora, Cootamundra and Wagga Wagga, as well as Gundagai and Young. This will be primarily on public roads, but some haul roads will be constructed within the Proposal site.

The intersections on the construction routes likely to be most impacted from workforce and construction vehicles are:

- Olympic Highway/  
Goldfields Way
- Olympic Highway/  
Dirnaseer Road
- Old Cootamundra Road/  
Dudauman Road
- Hibernia Street/  
Dudauman Street
- Troy Street/  
Dudauman Street
- Olympic Highway/  
Baylis Street
- Grogan Road.

## What you could experience during construction:

- increased traffic and change in traffic flow
- interrupted land access
- increased journey times due to traffic diversions
- impacts to livestock transportation
- transport services impacted by road realignments.

## What you may experience once operational:

- removal of level crossing at Burley Griffin Way improving road safety
- rail safety measures at level crossings
- traffic delays due to level crossings
- reduction in road-side parking at Burley Griffin Way.

## What we will do:

- develop a traffic, transport and access plan
- use traffic controllers during construction
- ensure emergency vehicle access
- rehabilitate damaged local roads.



# Social and economic benefits

Across the three LGAs, 6.0 per cent (549 workers) of the existing total workforce are employed in the construction industry.

As part of its commitment, the assessment identifies the communities of Junee, Cootamundra-Gundagai and Temora LGAs to experience social and economic benefits through:

- direct and indirect employment opportunities during construction
- opportunities for local, regional and Indigenous businesses to participate in the construction supply chain
- training opportunities and skills development
- improvements in transport infrastructure
- improved road safety
- improved economic and social livelihood from easier access to and from national and global markets for agricultural producers, farmers and businesses.

## What you could experience during construction:

- up to 425 workers
- workforce compounds and temporary workforce accommodation camp
- up to 176 direct and indirect jobs created
- skills development and training through the ARTC Skills Academy
- noise and visual impacts.

## What you may experience once operational:

- freight benefits
- improved employment opportunities
- improved road safety at Burley Griffin Way
- noise and visual impacts.

## What we will do:

Develop a social impact management plan for:

- industry participation
- temporary workforce accommodation camp
- workforce management
- community health and wellbeing.

# Other assessments

In completing the impact assessment, the key issue SEARs are addressed in the EIS and detailed assessments are provided in the technical papers. This includes a summary of the existing environment, the potential impacts of construction and operation, and the recommended management.

**In addition to the key SEARS outlined above, assessments have been conducted on:**



## Water quality

Water quality impacts from construction of the Proposal are anticipated to be short term and limited due to the ephemeral nature of the watercourses. It is anticipated that implementation of appropriate soil and water construction management measures will minimise these impacts further.



## Groundwater

The Proposal is unlikely to impact groundwater resources due to the limited depth of excavations. During operation, impacts to groundwater are expected to be negligible with groundwater conditions expected to return to existing conditions soon after construction is completed.



## Soils and contamination

A soil and water management sub-plan will define the processes, responsibilities and erosion and sediment control measures to be implemented during construction.



## Workforce accommodation

To reduce the impact on local accommodation availability, an additional 7.7 hectares of land will be temporarily acquired to erect a workforce camp for up to 450 people to allow for surge capacity. This will be serviced with minibuses to transport workers to and from construction access points, minimising potential traffic impacts on local roads. Grogan Road will be most impacted as the identified location for the camp and a traffic management plan will be developed.

Operational policies and procedures will be put in place to preserve the local community environment including work, health and safety measures to minimise demand for social and health services, noise curfews, and security measures.



## Waste

A detailed design will include measures to minimise spoil generation and the re-use of materials on site. During construction a waste management plan will be prepared to ensure correct management for waste types and quantities.



## Climate change risk

The Inland Rail Climate Change Risk Assessment Framework provides a standard approach to climate change risk assessment and mitigation across all Inland Rail projects.





### Sustainability

Inland Rail has identified a number of sustainability objectives during detailed design, procurement and construction. It is committed to achieving an “Excellent” Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) rating, which measures sustainable outcomes in infrastructure projects as defined by the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia.



### Air quality

The main potential for air quality impacts would be during construction, when there would be the potential for dust impacts if works are not effectively managed. An air quality and dust management sub-plan would ensure that dust and emissions are managed in an environmentally sound manner, and in accordance with statutory requirements.



### Health and safety

Design and construction planning measures will be implemented to avoid and minimise impacts. A community safety awareness program will educate landowners and the broader community about safety around trains.



### Cumulative impacts

Coordination and consultation would occur with the proponents of any current development proposals with potential for cumulative impacts at the appropriate project stages.



# Conclusion

**Inland Rail is needed to respond to the growth in demand for freight transport and to address existing freight capacity and infrastructure needs.**

Demand for freight transport in the Melbourne to Brisbane corridor is expected to grow substantially from about 4.9 million tonnes in 2016 to around 13 million tonnes by 2050. Inland Rail is needed to improve the efficiency of freight moving between Melbourne and Brisbane. It will bypass the Sydney metropolitan area to deliver an overall journey time less than 24 hours.

## Consequences of not proceeding with the Proposal

The Proposal is a section of Inland Rail as a whole and is a key greenfield component of the Inland Rail project. Inland Rail cannot proceed without the Proposal. This means that the benefits of Inland Rail would not be realised.

## Findings of the environmental impact assessment

The Proposal has evolved to avoid impacts where possible and to reflect the findings of the studies undertaken. The route for the Proposal has been selected to minimise the potential environmental impacts, particularly the amount of vegetation clearing that would be required and any severance or land access impacts.

Key environmental issues have been examined throughout the design development process. Consultation has been carried out with affected stakeholders to identify key potential impacts at an early stage, and where possible, avoided or appropriate mitigation measures developed. This has resulted in a number of design changes that have minimised many of the potential significant impacts.

Provided the measures and commitments specified in the Environmental Impact Statement are applied and effectively implemented during the design, construction and operational phases, the identified environmental impacts are considered to be acceptable and manageable.

Inland Rail is needed to:

- ▶ respond to the growth in demand for freight transport
- ▶ address existing freight capacity infrastructure issues
- ▶ meet the demand for transport of non-bulk manufactured product.

# The benefits of Inland Rail

A more prosperous Australia with a world-class supply chain based on a fast, safe, reliable, connected Inland Rail.

