

17. Social impacts

This Chapter summarises the potential positive and negative social impacts of the SWRL concept on the affected LGAs (Campbelltown, Liverpool and Camden), primary communities and secondary communities. For the purpose of the social impact assessment, ‘primary communities’ are defined as properties and communities within 500 metres of the proposed SWRL corridor; and ‘secondary communities’ are defined as communities between 500 metres and 2.5 kilometres of the proposed SWRL corridor. The construction and operation stages of the proposed SWRL are examined in this Chapter and compared to the ‘no SWRL scenario’ and, particularly, the possible social implications the project would have in a projected high growth area of Sydney.

A more detailed social impact assessment is provided in Technical Paper 8 (Social Assessment). The existing and forecast future social profile of the area is detailed in Chapter 5.

17.1 Assessment approach

The methodology adopted for the social impact assessment followed that outlined in *The Concepts, Process and Methods of Social Impact Assessment* (Burge 2004), including:

- determining the social profile of the area, including reviewing existing Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2001 data and council social plans
- examining the predicted future social profile of the area through:
 - identifying potential social impacts
 - analysing potential social impacts
 - managing potential social impacts and change.

As described in Chapter 4, consultation was undertaken with Councils, community groups and other key stakeholders during the concept design and Environmental Assessment preparation. This assisted in identifying social issues to be considered in this assessment.

17.2 The ‘no SWRL scenario’

The south-west of Sydney will continue to grow over the next 30 years regardless of whether the SWRL is constructed, with new planned growth of up to 110,000 new dwellings within the Growth Centre. Should the SWRL not proceed, there would be potential social impacts as a result of:

- increased demand on the existing public transport, including local public bus services
- increased reliance on private vehicle travel, with associated congestion, increased travel times, potential negative impacts on the environment, amenity and road safety issues
- increased need for upgrade of roads, in addition to those already identified, to cater for the higher volumes of motor vehicles in the area
- limited community connectivity and linkage between planned precincts

- increased demand on already ‘at capacity’ commuter car parking at Glenfield and other Main South Line stations
- increased patronage on the existing Main South Line trains already experiencing high demand and capacity constraints.

Should the SWRL not proceed, it is likely that the new precinct areas would attract a population reliant on private vehicles. Higher density and affordable accommodation would be less attractive if no public transport is readily available as the area would be more attractive to those with access to private vehicle travel to employment, shops and community services and infrastructure. There would also be broader social implications for health and community cohesion due to difficulties with accessing community facilities and elsewhere.

The SWRL is integral to creating sustainable communities and linking precincts and people to employment and community services and infrastructure. This opportunity would be lost should the SWRL not proceed.

17.3 Social impacts prior to construction

Prior to construction, the potential social impacts of the proposed SWRL would include the full or partial acquisition of a number of private properties, as described in Chapter 10 (and Table 10-2). These properties would be purchased prior to construction of the SWRL.

The social implications of property acquisition include:

- *potential impacts on the wellbeing of property owners* — Private land owners may experience various levels of concern and anxiety in anticipation of the acquisition of their properties and homes and during negotiations. The time taken for the process to be completed would affect the level of anxiety felt by each individual.
- *Loss of lifestyle and amenity* — A number of land owners, business owners and residents would need to relocate as part of the acquisition. In these cases, it may not be possible for the persons affected to relocate to a similar property or dwelling in the area because of lack of affordability or availability. These individuals may experience a different environment and potential lifestyle impacts. Those with businesses (such as market gardening businesses in Leppington) may also experience economic impacts due to loss of business (see Chapter 18). Property owners subject to partial acquisition would be subject to lifestyle and amenity changes and may not be able to continue the same land use activity due to the reduced amount of land available. However, where potential severance impacts would be large, the whole parcel is proposed to be acquired as part of the project.
- *Loss of community linkages and cohesion* — Relocation of property owners/residents could also cause a loss of existing community linkages, community cohesion and social interaction.
- *Potential impacts to property values* — Some land owners may experience difficulty in selling their properties due to uncertainty regarding the SWRL. Once the SWRL is in operation, community amenity and public transport would improve, so the project is unlikely to have a long-term negative impact on property values. In fact, properties close to train stations may increase in value.
- *Severance* — Given the number of properties to be acquired and in consideration of future land use, the potential severance impacts to the community from the SWRL would be relatively low. Community linkages and access would be improved through transport and pedestrian access to the SWRL, particularly at the stations.

17.4 Social impacts during construction

Construction of the proposed SWRL would result in some disruption of people’s lives, but these potential impacts would be temporary in nature. Potential social impacts resulting from the SWRL construction are summarised in Table 17-1. Potential social impacts in the form of noise and visual amenity and economic impacts are discussed in Chapters 16 and 18 and are not repeated here. Potential traffic and transport impacts on residential amenity are discussed below, with further detail provide in Chapter 11.

Table 17-1 Summary of potential social impacts during construction

Impact description	Affected stakeholder	Level of impact
<i>Changes to rural-residential lifestyle and community character</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Noise and visual impacts ▪ Loss of residential amenity for residents of fully and partially acquired properties that are still residing at acquired properties at commencement of construction ▪ Changes to land use relating to the establishment of construction sites and access routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Properties within 500 metres of construction sites, the SWRL footprint, stations and stabling facility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ all properties to be partially acquired or adjacent to the SWRL ▶ Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens Cemetery ▶ Western Sydney Parklands ▶ market gardens at Leppington ▶ nearby schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderate given the commitment to ongoing consultation with those affected and the application of mitigation measures in Chapters 10, 12 and 16
<i>Severance and connectivity</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Major construction site to be located near Hurlstone Agricultural High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Department of Education facility at Glenfield ▪ Hurlstone Agricultural High School ▪ Residents and business owners in Glenfield town centre ▪ Others near construction sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low given application of mitigation measures in Chapters 10 and 11
<i>Traffic and access impacts affecting travel and residential amenity</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weekend and holiday rail services affected during the Glenfield Junction and Glenfield Station works ▪ Disruption to pedestrian access at Glenfield Station ▪ Loss of public car parking near major construction sites including at Railway Parade ▪ Traffic diversions and lane closures relating to construction sites and vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Glenfield Station passengers ▪ Residents and other land uses located near haulage roads and construction worksites; however main haulage routes are not particularly sensitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low to moderate given application of mitigation measures in Chapter 11

Impact description	Affected stakeholder	Level of impact
<i>Air quality impacts affecting health and wellbeing of the community</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dust emissions may increase household activities associated with cleaning external surfaces, especially for residents close to construction sites ▪ Potential increases in carbon dioxide emissions from combustion of fuels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary communities and residents near construction sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low given application of mitigation measures for air quality in Chapter 19
<i>Public safety impacts</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction zones are to be located close to several schools and community facilities ▪ Construction would potentially affect pedestrian access ▪ Sedimentation during construction could potentially affect water quality in the Sydney Water Supply Canal, with subsequent impacts on public health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools and businesses in Glenfield and other residents/businesses near construction sites ▪ Train passengers in and around Glenfield station ▪ The general public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low given application of mitigation measures in Chapter 19
<i>Disruptions to services affecting daily life</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disruptions to existing water, communication and power services could affect residents and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residents and commercial and business premises close to construction sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low given application of mitigation measures in Chapter 19
<i>Cumulative effects of construction impacts affecting wellbeing</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential for overlap of construction works with other developments (including works at Edmondson Park) ▪ 'Construction fatigue' at Glenfield due to construction of Southern Sydney Freight Line immediately prior to SWRL works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Existing residential areas surrounding Edmondson Park, Denham Court and Glenfield Station ▪ Schools in Glenfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderate overall, as most construction projects in the area would not overlap (potentially high at Glenfield)
<i>Social cohesion</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased communication regarding the project and associated construction impacts may result in greater social cohesion as communities gather to obtain and exchange information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary communities ▪ Secondary communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low to moderate positive impact
<i>Impact on public places and access</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Temporary reduction or alteration of public spaces such as footpaths and pedestrian walkways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patrons of Glenfield Station ▪ Businesses and residents adjacent to Glenfield Station ▪ Users of Railway Parade, Glenfield and other walkways/footpaths near to construction sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderate impact at Glenfield with low to moderate impact for other areas along SWRL given application of mitigation measures in Chapter 11.

Light spill

Light spill should be minimised as much as possible to reduce potential impacts on surrounding existing and future residents.

At the train stabling facility, which has the greatest potential for light spill impacts, measures to be considered should include:

- lights with baffles to direct light spill onto the facility and away from surrounding land uses
- the use of low to the ground lighting, where possible
- lights designed to throw light only where required
- specific lighting types used that balance the need for subdued lighting with operational and security requirements.

Lighting around stations and car parking areas should also be specifically designed to reduce light spill to nearby residents, whilst still meeting public safety requirements. A specialist in this area of design should be engaged to ensure the best outcome.

17.5 Social impacts and benefits during operation

17.5.1 Overview

The benefits of the SWRL would increase as the new residential areas are developed and as the population grows. Leppington and Edmondson Park would not only become more accessible places to visit, but residents residing in these areas would have improved access to other areas. In addition, the provision of public transport would see less reliance on cars.

There would be some immediate impacts on residential amenity along the rail corridor in the short to medium term. However, the landscape and ‘look’ of the area would change from a rural residential setting to a more urban character as the South West Growth Centre develops. The SWRL would also facilitate planned future growth in the South West Growth Centre and is a major part of the NSW Government’s plans to provide a comprehensive transport network to connect job and economic centres, people and services.

The SWRL would provide the essential transport link required in a developing area. It would support employment lands in the northern part of the Growth Centre, which would benefit from the proximity of a mass transit corridor supported by bus services. The rail line, over time, would be a key feature of the community that it would identify with. Stations, which would be coupled with a level of retail/commercial activity, would most likely become the social hub of the community, drawing people to them everyday. The SWRL would also improve rail services to Liverpool, which is destined to become a major regional city.

The key social benefits of the SWRL with planned future growth include:

- providing linkages to employment, education, services and social infrastructure to new and existing areas
- providing infrastructure and services to meet the social needs of the community
- providing an affordable alternative to private vehicle use and reducing reliance on private vehicles
- improving access to the Global Arc, including Sydney Airport and the Sydney CBD
- improving the capacity and reliability of Sydney’s suburban network
- reducing vehicle emissions (compared to the ‘no SWRL scenario’) and therefore, less potential health impacts on the community.

17.5.2 Impacts and benefits for primary communities

Glenfield

The key social benefits for the community within this section of the proposed SWRL corridor would relate to the improved amenity, access and efficiency of the upgraded Glenfield Station. Changes to potential land use and property-related social impacts would be low in magnitude as most of the works would occur within the existing rail corridor.

This section of the SWRL would be nearby to a number of schools in the area, including Hurlstone Agricultural High School, Campbell House School, Glenfield Park School, Ajuga School and Glenfield Public School. The proximity of the rail corridor may also raise safety concerns for pupils of the schools; although safety and security measures, such as fencing off of the rail corridor, would be implemented to minimise potential impacts. The Hurlstone

Agricultural High School has raised concerns about the change in the rural-residential nature of the area. Although the SWRL would add to this change, this is also related to the wider development of areas to the north of the school.

Edmondson Park and the Western Sydney Parklands

The proposed SWRL would support the development of the Edmondson Park release area. The proposed new station would be an important commuter access point and would promote strong community interaction between the suburbs to the north of Edmondson Park (including Prestons and Horningsea Park). This would result in enhanced community cohesion between the suburbs.

Potential severance and property access impacts on individual property lots are addressed in Chapter 10. The Western Sydney Parklands would be subject to potential severance impacts, as discussed in Chapter 10, which could reduce the enjoyment of this Parkland if adequate connections are not implemented across the rail corridor. Measures to mitigate this are proposed, as discussed in Chapter 10.

The SWRL corridor boundary would be within 50 metres of the back of Cassidy Street near Denham Court, which would result in potential noise and visual impacts and changes to the amenity and character of this area (see Chapters 12 and 16). Mitigation measures would be put in place to minimise these potential impacts.

Potential visual and noise impacts associated with the operation of the SWRL are also likely to affect users and owners of the Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens Cemetery. Some of the Cemetery's Asian visitors and families who own burial plots in this vicinity may be concerned about the rail line affecting the Feng Shui of the area. (Feng Shui is the Chinese art of positioning objects in buildings and other places to achieve harmony and balance with the environment and to promote wellbeing.) More detailed consideration of the potential impacts would be undertaken as part of the future design, and where possible, impacts would be minimised through the application of appropriate landscaping measures.

Leppington/Rossmore

With or without the SWRL, the Leppington and Rossmore precincts are planned to undergo significant social changes. These areas currently enjoy a rural atmosphere with close community cohesion. Given its strategic location, Leppington would become an urbanised, major town centre over the next 30 years. Rossmore would also become urbanised with a smaller town centre. There would be an opportunity to consider surrounding light industrial land uses at Rossmore.

The SWRL would have potential residential amenity impacts in these areas due to the proposed location of the SWRL on an embankment east of the proposed Leppington Station location and the proposed location of the train stabling facility in east Rossmore. These issues are not considered to be significant as they would be managed and mitigated through future design and landscape/noise mitigation planning. The future development of the area would also see the SWRL viewed as part of the developing environment, rather than a potentially adverse impact.

Impacts and benefits of railway stations/stabling facility

Glenfield Station

The upgrade of Glenfield Station could have the following social implications:

- loss of 120 existing commuter car parking spaces (as discussed in Chapter 11) (This would be unlikely to have a significant impact on the community as replacement car parking would be provided.)
- reduction of Railway Parade to a single two-way carriageway in the vicinity of Glenfield Station, which could potentially affect traffic flow, or alternatively the road could be designated a local traffic zone
- improved station design and amenity, which would promote higher usage of the area
- improved social interaction in the centre of Glenfield as a result of improved pedestrian access focusing on links between Glenfield Station and the village
- improved access for persons with a disability and other less mobile persons, such as mothers with prams (as the Station is proposed to be upgraded with ‘easy access’ facilities).

Leppington Station

The future town centre of Leppington would be planned around the location of the station. As such, the SWRL would be instrumental in assuring that good access to community services, amenities, employment lands and education facilities is provided for people in Leppington and future surrounding precincts.

Until the town centre is established, there would be some residential amenity changes, but these would be significantly minimised by the proposed location of the station in a cutting. The station would facilitate growth in the precinct and create connectivity and relationships between the newer areas and the nearby established suburbs. There would be greater development opportunities including education, community facilities, open space and retail, which would have benefits for the social development of these communities.

Edmondson Park Station

Edmondson Park Station would have good connectivity with the regional road network in order to facilitate bus interchange, with access to the M5 and M7. This Station would also offer commuter parking to surrounding suburbs. Edmondson Park is proposed to have good pedestrian and bicycle links to and from the station. Like Leppington, the Station would facilitate growth in the precinct and create connectivity and relationships between the newer areas and the nearby established suburbs. There would be greater development opportunities including education, community facilities, open space and retail, which would have benefits for the social development of these communities. The proposed location of the station in a cutting would minimise potential residential amenity impacts.

Train stabling facility

The stabling facility would have significant regional and metropolitan benefits to the suburban rail network in terms of reducing train delay times and improving the train system functionality for all passengers.

The stabling area is proposed to be located west of Leppington Station to minimise potential impacts on the surrounding local area and create opportunities for industrial development in Rossmore. However, a number of rural-residential properties would be affected by this location (as discussed in Chapter 10).

Initially, properties within 500 metres of the corridor are likely to experience a high level of residential amenity impacts associated with visual and noise impacts. The magnitude of these potential impacts would be reduced as the area around the stabling facility is gradually developed for recommended industrial uses and residents and market garden businesses move out of the area.

The stabling facility would have significant benefits to the suburban network in terms of reduced train delay times and improved train system functionality.

Secondary communities

Secondary communities in the Liverpool LGA (including Prestons, Casula and West Hoxton) and Campbelltown LGA (including Macquarie Fields) would significantly benefit from the SWRL through the provision of transport choice creating access and linkages to educational facilities, employment centres, open space and services for young people that do not have access to motor vehicles. Similar benefits would be provided to families moving into the new residential development areas.

Suburbs in the Camden LGA (including Catherine Field and Oran Park) would benefit from the location of the train station at Leppington, providing alternate modes of transport to access employment centres and educational facilities.

Some severance of land required to accommodate the SWRL may be initially perceived as separating communities; however, new residents moving into these areas would be unlikely to have such perceptions.

17.6 Recommendations for further assessment and mitigation

17.6.1 Further assessment recommendations

The following recommendations are made for further assessment of potential social impacts:

- a review of the existing social profile of the area once the 2006 Census data becomes available
- a review of the existing social profile of the area once the Liverpool Social Plan is updated
- community and stakeholder consultation to develop an urban and landscape design that minimises potential noise, vibration and visual impacts to properties, businesses and future precincts and promotes ownership by the community. This could include the development of measures to minimise any potentially negative impacts on the Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens Cemetery, including consideration of cultural sensitivities and, particularly, visual and noise impacts.

17.6.2 Recommended management/mitigation measures

Enhancing social and economic benefits

Ongoing community consultation would communicate and manage potential social impacts and enhance the benefits of the SWRL for the community. The proponent should endeavour to take a co-ordinated approach to effectively communicate the social benefits of the SWRL and increase public awareness and understanding.

The stakeholders that should be included in the community consultation program include land owners affected by property acquisition and primary communities.

Managing construction impacts

Community consultation would be a key component in managing potential construction impacts of the SWRL. Consultation that has already commenced with stakeholders about the likely construction impacts should continue following approval of the project. A Community and Stakeholder Involvement Plan would be developed to ensure that affected stakeholders and communities are provided with regular information regarding construction activities. In addition, a Community Liaison Representative should be appointed to deal with public enquiries and manage the ongoing consultation process.

The recommended mitigation and management measures to manage potential social impacts during construction are detailed in Table 17-2. (Noise, dust, visual and traffic management measures are detailed in other sections of this document).

Table 17-2 Managing potential social impacts during construction

Impact	Recommended management measure
Property access	In the event that private property access is required, it is recommended that consultation with land owners of properties that need to be accessed prior to construction (during detailed design and survey) should be undertaken prior to entering, to ensure the land owner has provided permission, and understands the construction works including restoration and reinstatement. Private property access should be documented and could include an access/lease agreement or private property construction plan, or similar, depending on the type of work required. Pre-construction surveys could be required to ensure restoration can be undertaken to a similar quality to the pre-construction condition (although the corridor should be all acquired by then).
Utility service interruptions	Service interruptions should be scheduled to avoid peak demand times to minimise impacts on businesses and residents. Prior to service interruptions, residents and businesses should be notified through door knocks, calling cards or in writing.
Aesthetics during construction	Construction sites should be kept clean and tidy. All waste should be properly contained in waste containers away from publicly visible areas. Footpaths and roads should be cleaned of dirt at the end of each day.
Aesthetics after construction	Most sites should be reinstated to at least their pre-construction condition, excluding sites that are approved for development (e.g. Edmondson Park).
Safety	All construction areas should be securely fenced or closed off from public access. Advertisements in local newspapers and notifications to local residents, businesses and schools should inform them of the construction area, duration of works and safety hazards.
Timing of work	Where possible, work should be scheduled so as to minimise impacts to the community. Consultation with the community would assist in identifying the best times to undertake activities in certain areas.

Impact	Recommended management measure
Night work	Where night work is required, stakeholders, residents and local businesses should be notified prior to the commencement of any work.
Site staff behaviour	All construction staff should be inducted and made aware of expected behaviour when dealing with and interacting with the public. All complaints made to site staff should be reported to the site supervisor. In addition, the site supervisor and Community Relations Representative's contact details should be carried by site staff and provided to members of the community or staff to call to resolve issues on the spot.

Managing social change

Managing community perception

The community is likely to have preconceived ideas regarding the extent and potential impacts of the proposed SWRL. In particular there has been concern regarding the potential impact of the SWRL project on land values. Property purchasers may see the positive impacts of the SWRL through the provision of public transport links; however, uncertainty regarding properties in proximity to the proposed corridor may result in reluctance to purchase properties in these areas. One of the key outcomes of the concept approval would be the fixing of the SWRL corridor, providing certainty.

Promoting community ownership of the SWRL

Promoting community ownership of the SWRL would enable the community to identify with the infrastructure. By ensuring community input to the urban and architectural design of the stations (community art, landscape works and access) and other landscaping and noise barriers, communication and interaction between community groups would be encouraged and community ownership of the SWRL achieved.

Promoting positive aspects of the SWRL

Once the SWRL construction works are complete, the new stations (and amendments to Glenfield Station) would assist in the formation of community and social hubs. The SWRL would revitalise the community and provide increased interaction opportunities for the community both within and outside the area.

