

Southern Sydney Freight Line Community Liaison Group - Background Paper

December 2007

ARTC



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NCSI Certified Quality System ISO 9001

1. Project description

The Australian Rail Track Corporation (the ARTC) is a Commonwealth Government-owned company responsible for operating the interstate rail freight network that links Australia's major mainland capital cities.

ARTC and the NSW Government entered into an agreement in June 2004 which granted a lease of the main interstate and Hunter Valley rail networks to ARTC. ARTC committed under the agreement to undertake a program of investments to improve the rail networks which would enable freight operators an opportunity to improve freight services, on the Melbourne-Sydney-Brisbane line and on the Coal network in the Hunter Valley. The Southern Sydney Freight Line (SSFL) project is one of the key projects within that program of infrastructure improvement works.

1.1 Southern Sydney Freight Line

The SSFL Project involves building a 36 kilometres bi-directional, non-electrified, dedicated freight line from Macarthur to Sefton in south-western Sydney. The new SSFL track is located on the western side of RailCorp's Main South Line corridor. The track extends from south of Macarthur through to Ingleburn Railway Station where it connects into an existing six kilometre freight passing loop (constructed in 1995) and continues north to Glenfield Railway Station. The new track starts again north of Glenfield Railway Station. The SSFL will cross from the western to the eastern side of the corridor on an overpass (or flyover) just north of RailCorp's Glenfield junction where the East Hills line joins the Main South. The SSFL continues on the eastern side of the rail corridor through Cabramatta and then on the southern side through to Sefton Park Junction. At the Sefton Park Junction the SSFL crosses in an underpass (or deep cutting) to enable connection with the existing Metropolitan Goods Line. The SSFL will be located wholly in the RailCorp corridor adjacent to their passenger tracks. Refer to Figure S.1 overleaf.

To accommodate the proposed SSFL, retaining walls and earthworks are required. The works will include:

- new rail bridges
- road bridge extensions
- upgrades at six railway stations and their surrounding precincts - namely Leumeah, Minto, Casula, Warwick Farm, Cabramatta and Sefton
- modifications to a number of pedestrian bridges
- other supplementary works such as erection of noise barriers.

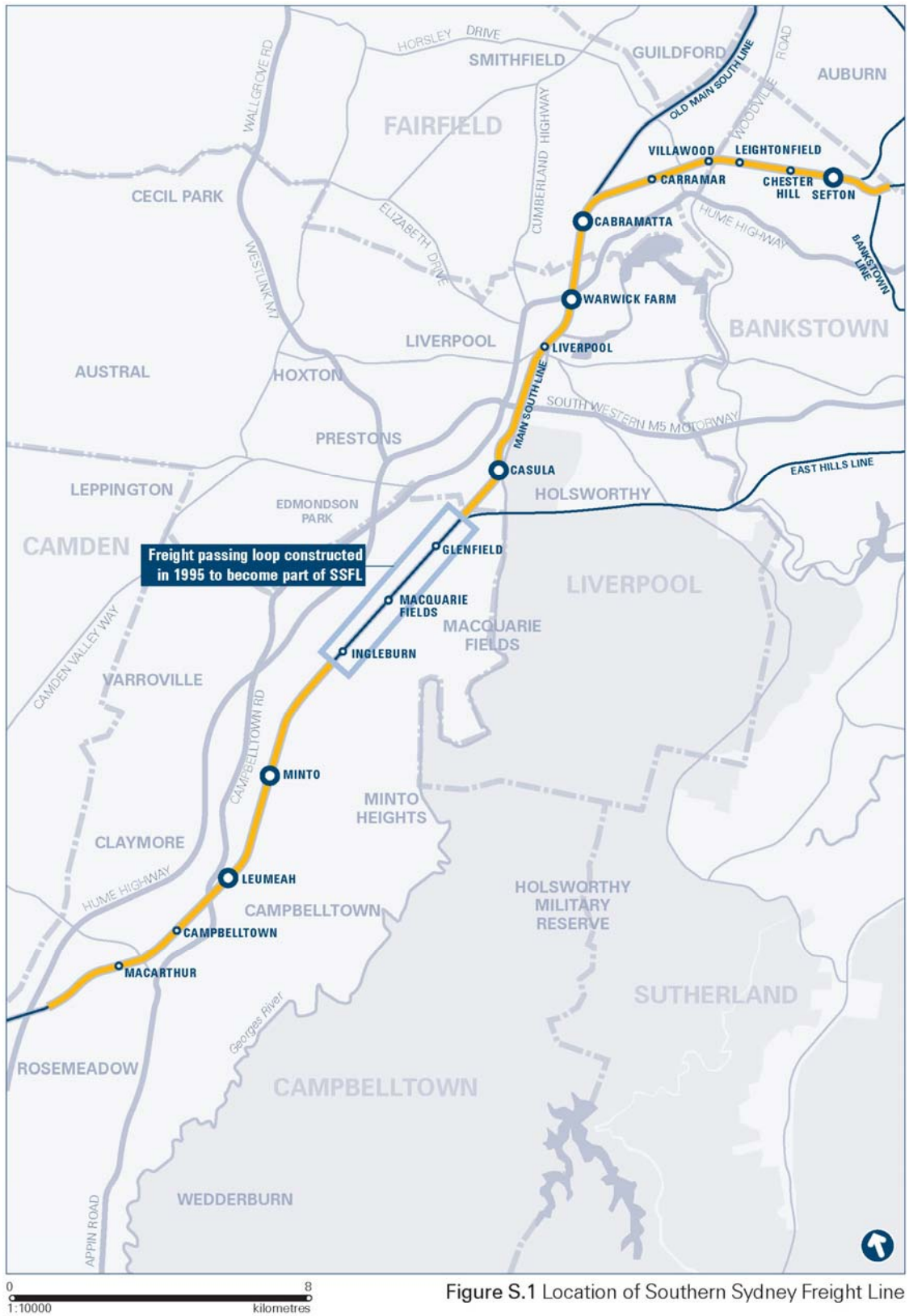


Figure S.1 Location of Southern Sydney Freight Line

- Station precinct plans
- Southern Sydney Freight Line route
- Local government areas

1.2 Stakeholder consultation

Stakeholder consultation was conducted during the preparation of the environmental assessment to inform stakeholders about the proposed SSFL and its potential environmental impacts. Consultations also sought comment from stakeholders on issues of concern to be addressed in the environmental impact assessment and design of the proposed SSFL. Stakeholder groups consulted included:

- Commonwealth, NSW and local government authorities
- Commonwealth, NSW and locally elected representatives
- providers of utilities and services, such as gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telecommunications
- non-government organisations, such as Local Aboriginal Land Councils and emergency services providers
- non-government transport groups and companies, businesses and schools
- local and regional community groups, such as business groups, senior citizens groups and multicultural associations
- directly affected residents and businesses, including property owners adjacent to the rail corridor
- train commuters
- the wider community through a variety of mechanisms, including newsletters and advertisements.

Consultation activities included a planning focus meeting with government authorities; separate briefings with local councils, community groups, and Commonwealth, NSW and locally elected representatives; community information meetings (8) for directly affected residents adjacent to the rail corridor; stakeholder meetings (6) in relation to station precinct upgrades; mailing of two project newsletters to directly affected residents and businesses; establishment of a 1800 project information telephone line; establishment of a project website; and individual land owner discussions.

1.3 Community Liaison Groups

Four (4) Community Liaison Groups (CLGs) will be formed within the Bankstown, Campbelltown, Fairfield and Liverpool LGAs. The CLGs must hold their first meeting prior to construction unless otherwise agreed by the Director General of the Department of Planning and will run during the construction period or as the Independent Community Liaison Representative deems appropriate. Each CLG meeting will be attended by ARTCs Construction Manager, ARTC Community Liaison Representative, an independent Chair as well as representatives from each of the Councils and the community.

Community representatives will be identified and selected from relevant community and business groups and individual members of the community adjoining or impacted by the project. ARTC has also approached each of the local Councils to provide a list of community representatives, business groups and individuals that would be suitable for joining the groups.

An independent Chairperson will facilitate and prepare meeting notes for all four CLG meetings. The meetings will include discussion on topics such as:

- the progress of construction and related environmental performance
- explanations of technical information to the groups including technical presentations by specialists
- consultation activities and dissemination of information to the community
- design issues relating to the conditions of approval
- duration and staging of construction works
- contractors and obligations.