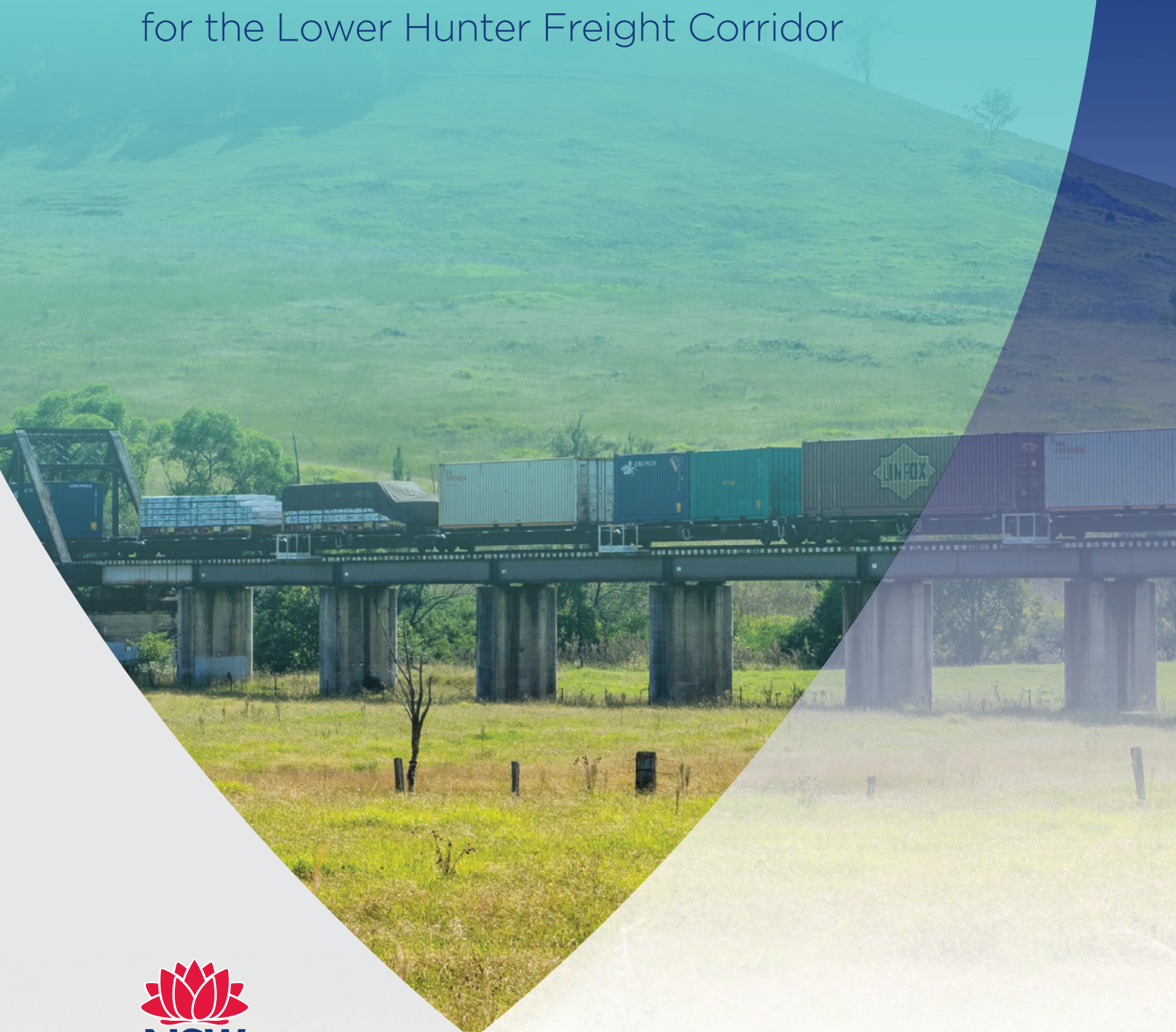


Transport for NSW

Planning for a freight rail connection between Fassifern and Hexham

Consultation on a recommended corridor for the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor



Supporting freight rail connections in the Lower Hunter Region

We would like your feedback on the recommended corridor.

Transport for NSW is identifying a future freight rail link between Fassifern and Hexham to bypass Newcastle's urban area. Planning for this vital transport link will identify a Lower Hunter Freight Corridor which will provide for a future dedicated freight rail line.

Separating freight and passenger rail is a NSW Government initiative to improve reliability and increase capacity on both freight and passenger rail networks.

A dedicated freight rail corridor will also enable investment in freight infrastructure to support growth, and improve freight connectivity and movement across the Lower Hunter region. Most importantly,

it will generate local jobs for the community and support economic growth across the region.

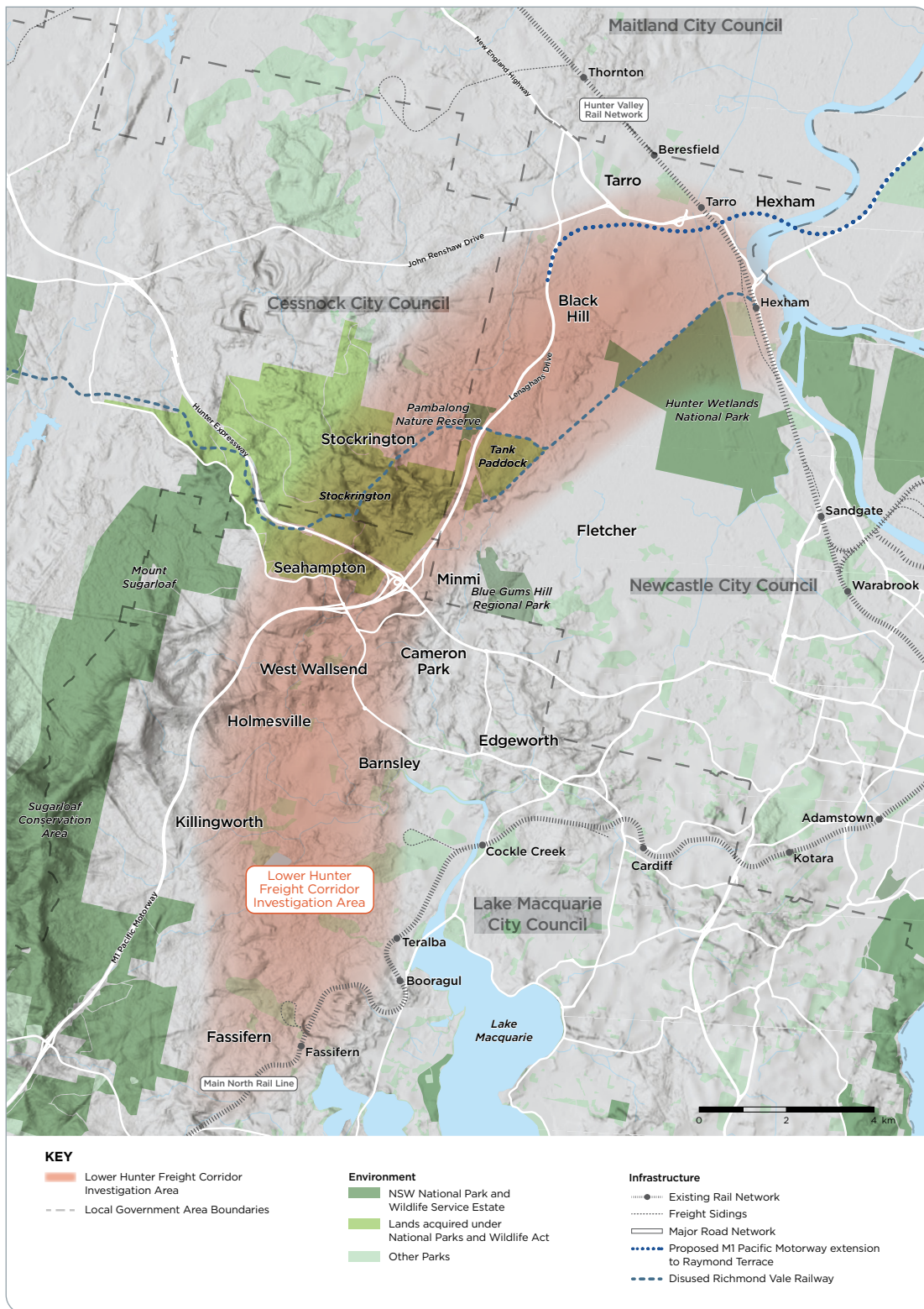
Securing land for the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor is an important step in realising the outcomes of Future Transport 2056 to better connect communities with jobs, services and amenities, and to help businesses and industry move freight more efficiently. A dedicated Lower Hunter freight line will allow industries to get their goods to market, to keep businesses running and provide households with their everyday needs, while supporting our economy through exporting goods.



Provide your feedback

We are seeking feedback on the recommended corridor between Fassifern and Hexham from 12 July 2021 to 31 August 2021. You can use the interactive online mapping tool to see the location of the corridor options, and provide feedback at transport.nsw.gov.au/LHFC.

Map of the study area



Planning for our freight needs

The NSW freight industry, which moves goods on our roads, rail, through our ports and airports contributes \$66 billion to the state's economy each year, allowing industries to get their goods to market, keeping businesses running and providing households with their everyday needs.

Newcastle Port is identified as an international trade gateway with annual trade worth about \$25 billion to the NSW economy. This trade includes:

- Coal and other mineral exports
- Manufacturing and machinery
- Agriculture products
- Forestry products
- Fuel distribution

Significant growth across various industries has created a greater demand for more freight infrastructure across the Hunter Region to be planned and delivered. It is estimated there will be demand for an additional 66 freight rail trains on the Newcastle rail network per week in both directions over the next 36 years.

Currently, freight rail and passenger rail services share the rail network through Newcastle. NSW legislation requires that passenger trains are given reasonable priority. Planning for a dedicated freight rail line will provide for the efficient movement of goods to keep our economy growing as well as allowing growth in passenger rail services.

Planning for the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor will provide for future alleviation of pressure on the rail network by allowing additional freight capacity which will help reduce freight services through Newcastle. This will improve amenity for local communities, and enable both freight and passenger rail capacity to grow.

A dedicated freight rail line will also encourage road freight onto rail to reduce road congestion, and reduce delays for road users at level crossings near St James Road, Adamstown and Clyde Street, Islington.



New England Highway, Maitland



The recommended corridor

The first step in this project is to confirm a freight rail corridor across the Lower Hunter between Fassifern and Hexham.

The recommended corridor has been identified following initial technical investigations and in consultation with key Government agencies and stakeholders.

Stakeholders, landowners and community can provide feedback on the recommended corridor to help the project team refine the corridor location for future transport use.

The recommended option uses mostly Government owned land on the western side of the M1 Pacific Highway and extends past the Pambalong Nature Reserve. From here the corridor curves at Black Hill and will split for connections at Tarro and Hexham along the Main North Railway line.

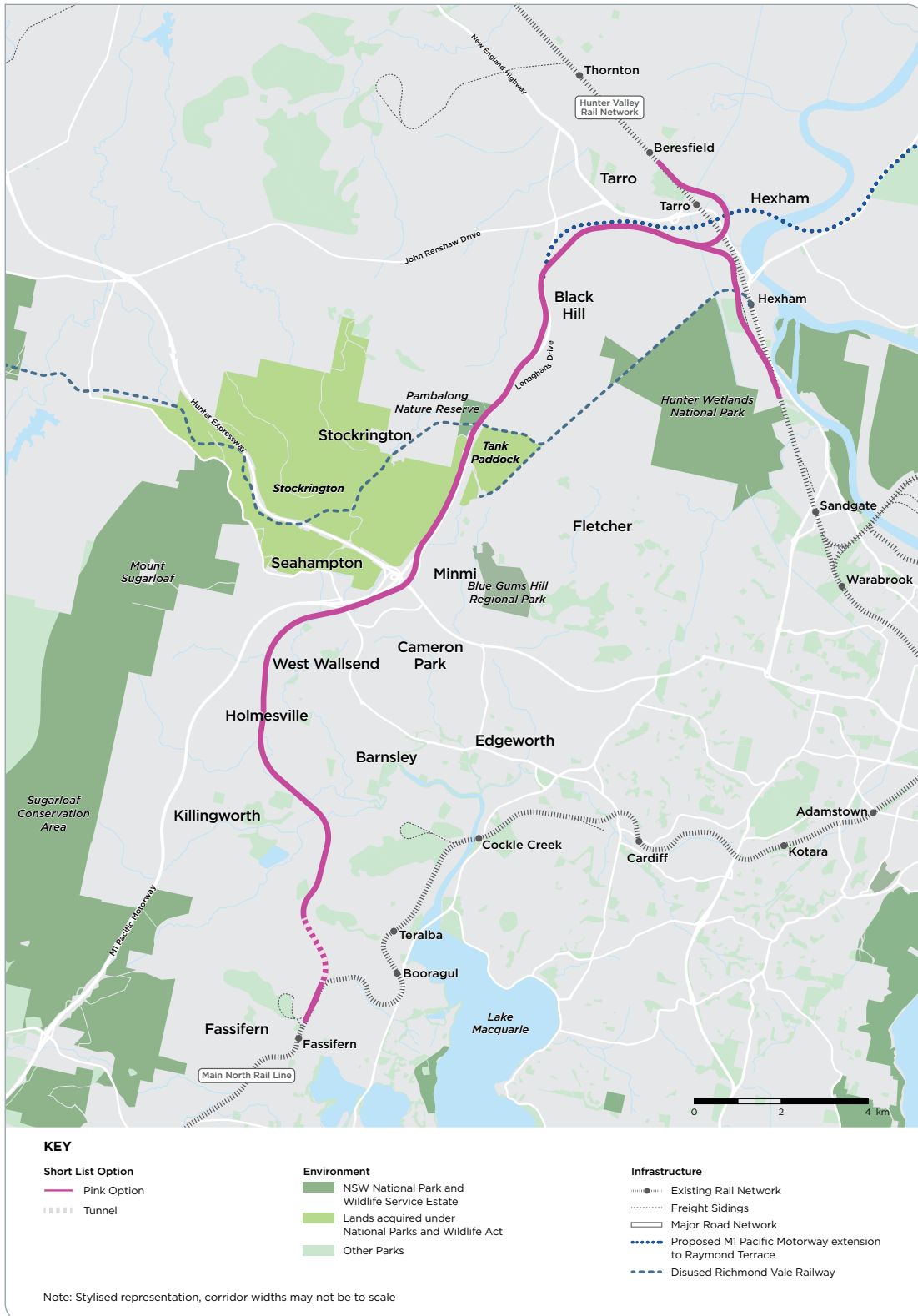
Key features:

- This option has least impact on Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage
- Minimises impacts on vegetation clearing
- Minimises impact on Threatened Ecological Communities such as Mount Sugar loaf and Hexham Wetlands
- Uses western side of M1 to minimise property, noise and amenity impacts



Transport for NSW will continue working with other NSW Government agencies, local councils, stakeholders, landowners and community to confirm a suitable corridor option.

Recommended corridor



Identifying corridor options

The recommended corridor has been identified following preliminary investigations which includes identification and consideration of:

- Existing and future residential land uses
- Biodiversity and conservation
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage
- Existing landscape and geography including land contamination
- Existing bodies of water including floodplains
- Potential noise and vibration impacts
- Visual impact
- Transport planning needs, and
- Socio-economic impacts.

These investigations have provided an understanding of the area and its constraints to help define the location of the recommended corridor. Information about the investigation process is provided in the Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Stakeholders, landowners and community are encouraged to participate in the consultation process, and provide feedback on the recommended corridor option between the Fassifern and Hexham.



Main North Railway line through Argenton

What is the benefit to identifying a corridor of land between the Fassifern and Hexham?

Transport for NSW is working with other NSW Government agencies and local councils to respond to the freight transport needs for the Lower Hunter region.

As part of this process, we have identified how a dedicated freight rail line can support growing businesses, and industries to keep their goods moving. Identifying a corridor now will ensure that land is available to deliver the transport infrastructure in the future, when it is needed.

A future dedicated freight rail corridor for the Lower Hunter will provide for:

- Separation of freight rail and passenger rail services between Fassifern and Hexham, to bypass Newcastle's inner suburbs
- Future infrastructure required to meet demand as freight and passenger rail services in Northern Sydney, Newcastle, and the Sydney-Newcastle and Sydney to Brisbane corridor continue to grow
- Reduced network congestion and improved travel times and reliability for both freight rail and passenger rail services
- Economic growth across the Lower Hunter region
- Relieved congestion and journey delays to road and active transport users around level crossings at St James Road, Adamstown and Clyde Street, Islington
- Relieved pressure on regional roads and highways by moving more freight via dedicated freight rail
- Reduced number of heavy vehicles on the roads
- Freight to move efficiently and safely



Looking west from Hexham toward Tarro

How will areas of Aboriginal cultural significance be protected?

Transport for NSW has been working with the Aboriginal community to identify sites of Aboriginal cultural significance. This is part of the Aboriginal cultural values assessment across the Lower Hunter. The study area includes the traditional lands of the Awabakal people. A number of areas of significance were identified including ceremonial areas near the head of Hexham Swamp, pathways between Mount Sugarloaf and Hexham Swamp, Hexham Swamp itself and the headwaters of Cockle Creek.

Renowned local artist, Sarretta Fielding, was commissioned to develop an artwork which reflects the Aboriginal cultural landscape values of the investigation area. An interactive online tool has been developed to collaboratively explore and learn more about these important Aboriginal heritage sites. Information is available at transport.nsw.gov.au/LHFC

We will continue to work with the the Aboriginal community and Local Aboriginal Land Councils to identify and document areas of Aboriginal cultural significance.

Will land be acquired for the corridor?

There is a lot of work to be done before any land is acquired for a future transport freight rail link. At this stage, we are consulting with stakeholders, landowners and the community on a recommended corridor between Fassifern and Hexham.

The consultation process will help to identify further constraints and opportunities that will need to be considered before a final corridor is determined.

There is no need for Transport for NSW to acquire land until close to the time the transport infrastructure is required, which may be many years away. In the meantime landowners can continue to live on and use their land.

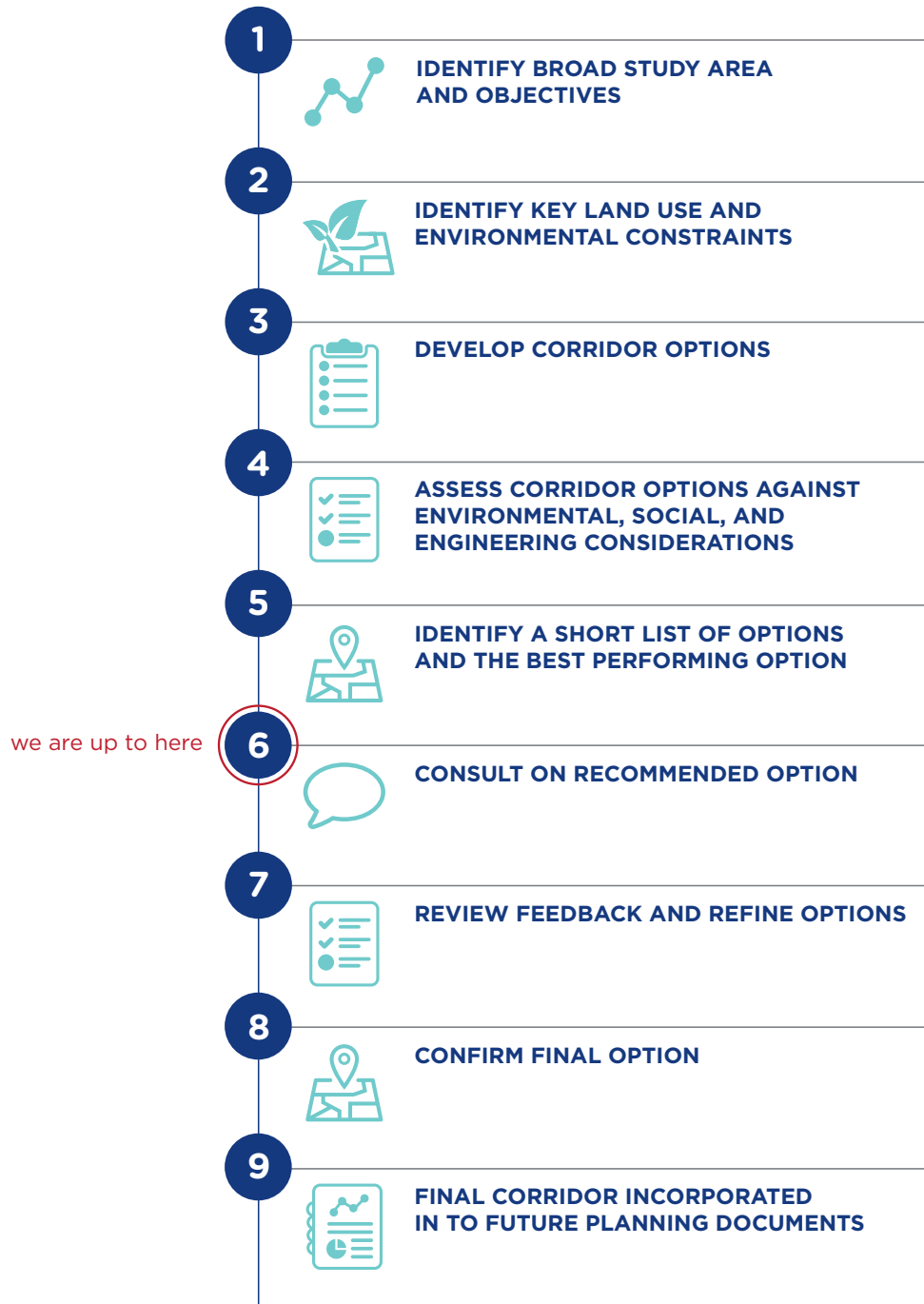
The project team from Transport for NSW will be in direct contact with any potentially affected property owners, and continue to be in contact as the corridor investigation progresses.

In the future, there will be further consultation opportunities with stakeholders and communities before the new freight rail is delivered. These consultations will occur when funding has been allocated to deliver the infrastructure project, and the environment impact statement along with concept designs are prepared. The broader community will be notified on the progress of future consultations.



Looking south-east from Hexham to Newcastle

Next Steps





Looking north from West Wallsend to Seahampton



Provide your feedback on the recommended corridor by 31 August 2021

Stakeholders, landowners, and community can provide feedback on the proposed recommended Lower Hunter Freight corridor identified. Feedback together with further technical investigations will be used to confirm a suitable corridor for future transport use.

Have your say

- Use the interactive online map to see the locations of the corridor options and to provide your feedback transport.nsw.gov.au/LHFC
- Email corridors@transport.nsw.gov.au
- Write Corridor Investigation Office
Transport for NSW
PO BOX K659
Haymarket NSW 1240
- Call **1800 837 511**



This document contains important information about transport investigations in your area. If you require the services of an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call the Corridor Investigation Office on **1800 837 511**. The interpreter will then assist you with translation.



MAX. WT.
TARE WT.
PAYLOAD
CU. CAP.

MAX. WT. 30,480 KG
TARE WT. 3,980 KG
PAYLOAD 26,500 KG
CU. CAP. 33.71 CU.M
1.190 CU.FT.

CAUTION
9' 2.9m
HIGH

MAX. WT.
TARE WT.
PAYLOAD
CU. CAP.

CAUTION
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MAX. WT. 30,480 KG
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CU. CAP. 33.71 CU.M
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CAUTION
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MAX. WT.
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PAYLOAD
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transport.nsw.gov.au

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