



**Westminster Street and Railway Terrace intersection upgrade,
Schofields
North West Growth Centre Short-term Traffic Improvement
Projects**

Community Consultation Report

January 2016

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Executive summary

The North West Growth Centre Road Network Strategy

The NSW Government confirmed the North West Growth Centre (NWGC) Road Network Strategy in July 2015. This strategy identified five grade separated crossings of the Richmond rail line to effectively manage traffic across the Richmond rail line within the NWGC. These are:

- Bandon Road, Vineyard (currently a level-crossing)
- Garfield Road, Riverstone (currently a level-crossing)
- Westminster Street bridge, Schofields (existing two lane local bridge)
- Schofields Road, Schofields (underpass currently being built as part of the Schofields Road Upgrade)
- Burdekin Road, Quakers Hill (proposed by Blacktown City Council)

To implement the NWGC Road Network Strategy, Roads and Maritime Services identified the road network upgrades needed to support the development of the area. The upgrades aim to improve traffic flow and access within the Riverstone town centre and Westminster Street in the short-term. They also aim to begin to provide alternative crossings of the Richmond rail line in the short to medium-term, and manage future traffic impacts in the long-term.

More detailed information can be found on the project web page, <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/projects/sydney-west/north-west-growth-centre-strategy/index.html>

New traffic lights at the Westminster Street and Railway Terrace intersection

Roads and Maritime sought feedback on a proposal to install a new set of traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace in July 2015. The new traffic lights aim to improve traffic flow and access to the Westminster Street bridge as part of the short-term works of the NWGC Road Network Strategy. This Report provides a summary of the community consultation carried out by Roads and Maritime to support the first stage of the short-term works to relieve congestion within the Riverstone town centre and improve access to the Westminster Street bridge.

The Westminster Street bridge is currently the only grade-separated rail crossing of the Richmond rail line in the NWGC. This is a popular route for motorists to cross the Richmond rail line. The proposed traffic lights would make it easier for vehicles turning from Bridge Street onto Railway Terrace in peak times. Roads and Maritime propose to restrict the right-turn from Railway Terrace into Westminster Street during peak times to reduce congestion for vehicles travelling northbound on Railway Terrace. Motorists would still be able to turn right at Kensington Park Road and St Albans Road as alternative routes.

The new traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace would improve safety and traffic flow at the intersection, and make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists to cross at this location. The new traffic lights would also align with Blacktown City Council's proposal for a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists along the western side of Railway Terrace.

Community response

Roads and Maritime delivered a community newsletter to over 700 households in the Riverstone and Schofields area and also provided community information via the Riverstone – North West Growth Centre Strategy webpage.

Roads and Maritime considered all the submissions and responses are included in this report. Eleven (11) responses were received from the community and stakeholders. Key issues raised by the community include traffic congestion, alternative traffic measures and access to property.

The decision

Roads and Maritime has carefully considered all the submissions received from the community and has decided to build the traffic lights at the intersection of the Westminster Street and Railway Terrace. This would include some of the suggestions from the community to improve the outcomes of the proposal. With the significant number of other projects within the NWGC, traffic lights would allow Roads and Maritime with more flexibility to adapt this intersection as future demands and usage patterns change with development in the NWGC.

Contents

- Executive summary 3
 - The North West Growth Centre Road Network Strategy 3
 - New traffic lights at the Westminster Street and Railway Terrace intersection 3
 - Community response 4
 - The decision 4
- Contents 5
- Introduction 6
 - Background 6
 - The North West Growth Centre Road Network Strategy 6
 - The current situation at the intersection of proposed project site 7
 - Options considered by Roads and Maritime at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace. 7
- Consultation approach 8
 - Consultation objectives 8
 - Values 8
- How consultation was done 9
 - Consultation summary 10
 - Overview 10
 - Feedback summary and Roads and Maritime response 11
 - The decision 16
 - Next steps 16
- Appendix A – Have your say letter 17
- Appendix B – Letterbox distribution area 19

Introduction

Background

The North West Growth Centre Road Network Strategy

The NSW Government has prepared the North West Growth Centre (NWGC) Road Network Strategy in response to growth in (NWGC), which is expected to expand to about 200,000 new residents in the next 20-30 years.

The NSW Government confirmed the NWGC Road Network Strategy in July 2015. This strategy identified five grade separated crossings of the Richmond rail line necessary to effectively manage traffic across the NWGC. These include:

- Bandon Road, Vineyard (currently a level-crossing of the rail line)
- Garfield Road, Riverstone (currently a level-crossing of the rail line)
- Westminster Street bridge, Schofields (existing two lane local bridge)
- Schofields Road, Schofields (underpass currently being constructed as part of the Schofields Road Upgrade)
- Burdekin Road, Quakers Hill (proposed by Blacktown City Council)

Roads and Maritime has identified the road network upgrades needed to implement the NWGC Road Network Strategy and ensure the development of the NWGC is supported. Upgrades identified in the strategy are planned to be delivered in short, medium, and long-term packages subject to funding availability.

In the short-term, Roads and Maritime is:

- Working with Blacktown City Council to investigate and develop local strategies to improve traffic flow within Riverstone town centre and access to Westminster Street bridge.
- Installing traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace (this project) is part of the short-term stage.
- Planning for the Bandon Road underpass / link between Windsor Road and Richmond Road.
- Working with the Department of Planning and Environment and Blacktown City Council to reserve a road corridor along Garfield Road between Richmond Road and Windsor Road for future widening.
- Completing work on Stage Two of the Schofields Road upgrade between Tallawong Road and Veron Road which will create an underpass of the Richmond railway line for traffic travelling east-west.
- Completing Stage Three of the Schofields Road upgrade between Veron Road and Richmond Road. Linking the underpass provided in Stage Two of the Schofields Road upgrade to Richmond Road.
- The short-term work is expected to take place within the next five years.

In the medium-term Roads and Maritime proposes to provide alternative routes for heavy vehicles. This will include:

- Constructing the Bandon Road underpass and creating a new road connection between Richmond Road and Windsor Road.
- Closing the railway level crossings at Bandon Road and Level Crossing Road.

The medium-term work would take place when about 25 percent of the NWGC is developed which is expected to be in about 5 to 10 years.

In the long-term Roads and Maritime would work to manage future traffic impacts of the NWGC, by:

- Upgrading Garfield Road between Richmond Road and Windsor Road
- Constructing a grade separated rail crossing in the Garfield Road corridor to facilitate the removal of the existing level crossing on Garfield Road at Riverstone.

The long-term work would take place in approximately 20 years time when about 75 per cent of the NWGC is forecasted to be developed.

More detailed information can be found on the project web page, www.rms.nsw.gov.au/nwgc

The current situation at the intersection of proposed project site

Currently, the Westminster Street Bridge is the only grade-separated rail crossing of the Richmond rail line in the NWGC. This is a popular route for local motorists to cross the Richmond rail line. As part of ongoing upgrades in the NWGC, the function of the Bridge Street/Grange Avenue corridor will evolve to meet the ultimate planning needs of the area.

Intersection options considered by Roads and Maritime

A number of alternatives (including a roundabout) were considered as part of environmental assessment for the project. As a result of this process it was determined that traffic lights represented the optimal solution for this project.

Roads and Maritime has consulted with relevant stakeholders including Blacktown City Council and Department of Planning and Environment in deciding to adopt traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace, Schofields.

Consultation approach

Roads and Maritime sought feedback on new traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace in July 2015. The new traffic lights would improve traffic flow and access to the Westminster Street bridge as part of the short-term works of the NWGC Road Network Strategy. This Community Consultation Report provides a summary of the community consultation carried out by Roads and Maritime to support the first stage of the short-term works

Consultation objectives

We consulted with the community during July and August 2015 to:

- Seek comment, feedback, ideas, and suggestions for Roads and Maritime to consider when developing the proposal to upgrade the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace to have traffic lights. This included consultation outcomes into the environmental impact assessment known as a minor works review of environmental factors (Minor Works REF)
- Build a database of interested and concerned community members with whom we can continue to engage during the proposal's development.

Values

Our values underpin our decisions and behaviours when working with customers, colleagues, stakeholders and partners.

- **Customer focus** - We place the customer at the centre of everything we do
- **Collaboration** - We value each other and create better outcomes by working together
- **Solutions** - We deliver sustainable and innovative solutions to NSW's transport needs
- **Integrity** - We take responsibility and communicate openly
- **Safety** - We prioritise safety for our people and our customers

How consultation was done

Community members were encouraged to provide their feedback via mail, email or phone contact with the project team.

Our key consultation tools are listed below:

Local media Media Release	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rouse Hill Courier on 19 August
Community letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered to 700 households in Riverstone and Schofields area (see Appendix B)• Direct mailed to emergency services, schools and universities, large businesses, religious centres and community groups in the local area
Webpage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project webpage updated with latest project information including community notification letter
Stakeholder briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blacktown City Council• Department of Planning• Department of Transport• Sydney Trains

Consultation summary

Overview

Roads and Maritime delivered a community letter to around 700 households about its proposal to provide traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace. Roads and Maritime received comments from eleven (11) people with eight (8) comments not in support of the proposal. There were two (2) people who supported the proposal and one (1) who was neutral and made request for more information.

The following table includes the key items raised by members of the public during the consultation process.

Feedback summary and Roads and Maritime response

Issue category	Issues raised	Roads and Maritime response
Delay & congestion	<p>There is existing delay along Bridge Street</p> <p>Traffic lights would cause further delays</p> <p>Traffic lights would not improve congestion</p>	<p>Roads and Maritimes' traffic modeling used to inform the development of options for this proposal indicated that the proposed traffic lights would significantly reduce the delay to the commuters currently using Bridge Street. This traffic is currently experiencing delay while waiting to turn onto Railway Terrace. Vehicles coming off Bridge Street are currently finding it difficult to turn at the intersection Westminster Street and Railway Terrace, due to the dominant traffic movement along Railway Terrace, especially during peak periods.</p> <p>However, Roads and Maritime understands that the traffic on the Railway Terrace would experience a small increase in travel time compared to the existing free-flowing situation along Railway Terrace due to the placement of traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace. Once the traffic lights are operational, vehicles on Bridge Street would have a reduction in delay that they currently experience waiting to turn onto Railway Terrace.</p> <p>The use of traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace would ensure transport equity to the users of this intersection, and would provide improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists at this location.</p>
Intersection design	Install a roundabout instead of traffic lights	<p>In the short-term, placing either a set of traffic lights or a roundabout would perform at a similar level in terms of traffic management at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace.</p> <p>However, a roundabout would provide a worse outcome in the long-term as the road network expands with continued development of the surrounding areas. Once the full Schofields Road upgrade is complete, the traffic along Railway Terrace would dominate the traffic flows at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace and it would be very difficult for drivers from Bridge Street or Westminster Street to enter the roundabout outside of the occasional left or right turn movement on the roundabout. A set of traffic lights would provide Roads and Maritime with an opportunity to ensure safe access is provided to these side streets.</p> <p>The area required to provide a roundabout require full property acquisition on both the north-eastern and south-eastern corners of the intersection. There would also be a greater effect on existing utilities than for a set of traffic lights.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime has consulted with Blacktown City Council on its plans for Railway Terrace. Traffic</p>

	<p>The new traffic lights will result in restricted parking on Westminster Street making it difficult to park</p>	<p>lights are consistent with Blacktown City Council's requirements to upgrade the length of Railway Terrace between Riverstone and Schofields in the future. Some works have already been undertaken by Blacktown City Council from Riverstone heading south along Railway Terrace.</p> <p>Traffic lights located at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace intersection would also provide a safe crossing location for pedestrians wishing to cross at the intersection. It would also provide a safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists wishing to use a Blacktown City Council proposed shared use path that was identified as running along the western (rail) side of Railway Terrace between Riverstone and Schofields.</p> <p>There would be some restrictions in parking in the vicinity of the new traffic lights. These restrictions are necessary for safety and operational considerations. Roads and Maritime has tried to minimise the impact to existing parking wherever possible. The potential impacts to parking would be greater for a roundabout option than the traffic light proposal.</p>
Existing bridge	<p>Would the bridge be removed in the future?</p>	<p>The existing bridge over the Richmond rail line at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace is owned by Sydney Trains. Roads and Maritime does not currently have any plans to remove this bridge.</p>
Project need	<p>Why are traffic lights being installed at this intersection?</p> <p>Heavy traffic is only a major issue when commuters are leaving the western side of Schofields Station in peak periods</p>	<p>Roads and Maritime's traffic modeling used to inform the development of options for this proposal indicated that the proposed traffic lights would significantly reduce the delay to the commuters on Bridge Street. Traffic is currently experiencing delay while waiting to turn onto Railway Terrace. Vehicles coming off Bridge Street are currently finding it difficult to turn at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace due to the dominant traffic movement along Railway Terrace, especially during peak periods.</p> <p>The use of traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace would ensure transport equity to the users of this intersection and would provide improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists at this location.</p>
Safety	<p>Motorists would detour to Princes Road to gain access to Westminster Street. This would cause significant safety issues to all residents of this street. Princes Road has not been built to maintain such heavy traffic flow. Overloading on narrow quiet</p>	<p>As part of the community consultation process Roads and Maritime has been requested to reconsider the proposed right turn ban from Railway Terrace into Westminster Street.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime has reviewed concerns with this proposal and would incorporate a time-based right turn ban.</p> <p>This would permit the right turn movement outside of morning and afternoon peak periods.</p>

	streets is a safety concern. The proposed 'No Right Turn' into Westminster Street would force more traffic onto St Albans Road	
Driveway access	Concerned that the traffic lights would impact driving into and out of driveways on Westminster Street	There may be periods during the traffic peaks where it may be difficult to access driveways near the intersection along Westminster Street. A driver waiting to access a driveway near the traffic lights would need to wait for a gap to occur to allow them to turn into that driveway.
Lack of alignment with NSW government strategy	The proposal may conflict with the Sydney Growth Centres Riverstone Precinct Plan from the Department of Planning and Environment	The proposal is consistent with their planning requirements.
Pollution	Concerned that there would be an increase in pollution from traffic idling while waiting for the traffic lights to change	The minor works Review of Environmental Factors has addressed this issue and the specialist advice confirms that the impact of such pollution is not significant.
Request for information	<p>Who is responsible for policing the use of Trucks weighing over 5 tonne regularly using the bridge?</p> <p>Has the proposal been put through the Council traffic committee, and if so has a resolution to support the proposal been obtained?</p> <p>Was a traffic study commissioned as part of this project?</p> <p>What is the proposed timing for the provision of the shared user path by Council</p>	<p>Blacktown City Council is responsible for the enforcement of the five tonne load limit.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime has provided information to Blacktown City Council to use in Council's committees.</p> <p>A traffic study was commissioned to inform the options assessment and development of this proposal.</p> <p>Blacktown City Council has already upgraded a section of Railway Terrace to the south of Riverstone, which includes a shared path on the western (rail) side of Railway Terrace. Further information of the timing of this shared path development can be obtained from Blacktown City Council.</p>

	<p>along Railway Terrace?</p> <p>What legislation covered the 5t load limit?</p> <p>Why is there a left turn lane in Westminster Street?</p> <p>Why is there a left turn length limit for the vehicles wanting to turn left from Railway Terrace to the bridge over the railway?</p> <p>What approvals has Roads and Maritime obtained in relation to this project?</p>	<p>Information on the vehicle load limits can be found in NSW Government legislation titled Road Rules 2014.</p> <p>The alignment of vehicles that cross from Westminster Street across Railway Terrace and over the bridge across the Richmond rail line to Bridge Street needs to be straight. This leaves residual space available in Westminster Street that can be utilised for a left turn bay. Providing both a left turn bay and through / right turn lane improves traffic operational efficiency on the Westminster Street leg of the intersection, and is consistent with other similar traffic signal sites.</p> <p>A left turn length limit from Railway Terrace onto Bridge Street across the bridge over the Richmond Rail line is required due to the proximity of Railway Terrace and the subsequent tight radius from Railway Terrace that was needed to make a connection with the existing bridge. Motorists that have vehicles that are longer than the length limit would still be able to turn right at Kensington Park Road or St Albans Road, and then utilise Princes Road then Westminster Street to get access over the bridge across the Richmond Rail line.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime has obtained the environmental approval to upgrade the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace with traffic lights. The funding has already been approved. Also Roads and Maritime is working with the Blacktown City Council regarding the upgrade.</p>
<p>Other suggestions to address the traffic issues at this intersection</p>	<p>The issue at this intersection has only become a problem due to the sequencing of the existing lights at the Garfield Road and Railway Terrace intersection</p> <p>Has Roads and Maritime considered placing a Give Way sign at the end of Grange Avenue at the intersection with Bridge Street?</p>	<p>Roads and Maritime notes the issues with the existing Garfield Road corridor through Riverstone, and has been working to look at a number of options to address the impacts on traffic in the short, medium, and long-term.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime is investigating the phasing of the lights at the intersection of Garfield Road and Railway Terrace as part of the short-term measures for the NWGC. These lights are already working at near to optimal capacity based on the competing demands at that intersection, therefore improvements to it alone will not improve the current traffic impacts appreciably.</p> <p>The option to place a Give Way Sign at the end of Grange Avenue at the intersection with Bridge Street was considered and concluded as undesirable for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It could lead to confusion for drivers not familiar with the area as it would indicate that Bridge Street is a through road, not Grange Avenue. • It would provide benefits to commuters and residents in Bridge Street, though at the expense of drivers using Grange Avenue which is currently the more dominant traffic route. As such it would

	<p>Does Roads and Maritime have any plans to widen the bridge at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace and make the bridge dual lanes</p> <p>The Schofields Road underpass, when complete, will alleviate congestion</p> <p>There is no pedestrian footway over the bridge, and the new electrical light pole and guardrail prevents pedestrian access from the new development on Bridge Street</p> <p>Are larger vehicles proposed to be accommodated on the bridge as part of this proposal?</p>	<p>lead to a worse traffic outcome than the current situation.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime does not have any plans to widen the Sydney Trains owned bridge across the Richmond rail line at Westminster Street.</p> <p>Operation of the Schofields Road underpass is still some time off. Even when underpass is open, until the final section (Stage 3) of the Schofields Road upgrade is complete traffic is expected to favour crossing the Richmond rail line at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace. The full upgrade of Schofields Road is still several years from completion.</p> <p>Blacktown City Council has been informed of the issue with lack of pedestrian facilities along the eastern side of Bridge Street, and is considering this issue further. Please refer further enquiries to Blacktown City Council.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime does not plan to upgrade the bridge over the Richmond rail line at Westminster Street. Roads and Maritime would retain the existing five tonne load limit on this bridge, and in addition would add a new restriction to not permit vehicles over six metres to turn left into Bridge Street from Railway Terrace. Motorists with vehicles that would be longer than the length limit would still be able to turn right at Kensington Park Road or St Albans Road, and then utilise Princess Road then Westminster Street to get access over the bridge across the Richmond Rail line.</p>
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The decision

Roads and Maritime has carefully considered all the submissions received from the community and has decided to implement the traffic light upgrade of the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace. Roads and Maritime have incorporated some of the suggestions from the community to improve the outcomes of the proposal. Traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace would:

- Provide a suitable upgrade to address the access and congestion issues that are currently experienced by motorists wishing to turn out of Bridge Street onto Railway Terrace
- Be consistent with upgrade requirement of Blacktown City Council and Department of Planning and Environment for Railway Terrace, between Riverstone and Schofields
- Provide safe crossing opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists
- Afford Roads and Maritime much more flexibility to adapt this intersection as future demands and usage patterns change, particularly with the number of projects that are currently being constructed and proposed within the NWGC.

Next steps

We have considered all submissions and will ensure our team is aware of concerns raised by the community. We will ensure that issues highlighted by stakeholders and the community are appropriately addressed throughout the delivery of the project or next phase.

During the next phase of the project Roads and Maritime would:

- Undertake detail design and construction
- Inform the residents along Railway Terrace directly impacted by the construction
- Advise forthcoming traffic management measures during construction (e.g. temporary detours)
- Provide updates on the project via letterbox drop
- Provide website updates.

We would continue to keep the community informed as the project progresses.

Appendix A – Have your say letter



July 2015

Have your say – new traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace, Schofields

The NSW Government is funding this proposal to improve travel times and safety.

Roads and Maritime Services is seeking your feedback on new traffic lights at the Westminster Street and Railway Terrace intersection. This proposal aims to improve traffic flow and access to Westminster Street bridge and is part of the North West Growth Centre Road Network Strategy's short-term work. The Strategy was developed in response to existing congestion and to address future growth in the area. For more information about the North West Growth Centre Road Network Strategy, please visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au/nwgc

The proposed traffic lights would make it easier for vehicles turning from Bridge Street onto Railway Terrace in peak times. We are also proposing to remove the right-turn from Railway Terrace into Westminster Street. This would reduce congestion for vehicles traveling northbound on Railway Terrace. Motorists would still be able to turn right at Kensington Park Road and St Albans Road as alternative routes.

The attached map helps to better explain the proposal. The work will include:

- Installing traffic lights at the intersection of Westminster Street and Railway Terrace
- Installing a 'No Right Turn' sign for traffic turning right from Railway Terrace into Westminster Street

The existing five tonne weight limit will remain on Westminster Street bridge.

How can you give feedback?

We encourage you to send us your comments by Monday 24 August to:

Riverstone NWGC
Roads and Maritime Services
PO Box 973
Parramatta CBD NSW 2124
or
RiverstoneNWGC@rms.nsw.gov.au

We will carefully consider your feedback and continue to keep you updated as the project progresses.

Field investigations

Roads and Maritime will be carrying out field investigations to help us develop the proposed traffic light design. The investigation will include some survey work and minor excavation.

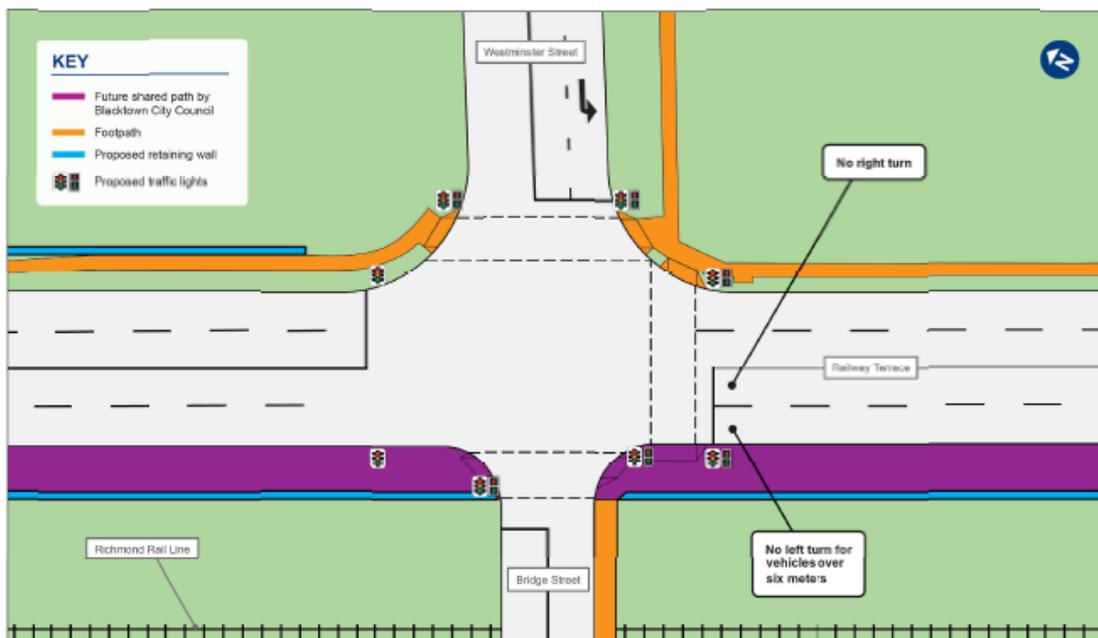
This work will be carried out from Monday 3 August until Monday 5 October excluding weekends, weather permitting. Our working hours will be 7pm to 6am.

Traffic changes

There will be some temporary traffic changes to make sure the work zone is safe. Lane closures will be in place and may affect travel times. Please keep to speed limits and follow the direction of traffic controllers and signs. For the latest traffic updates, you can call 132 701, visit livetraffic.com.



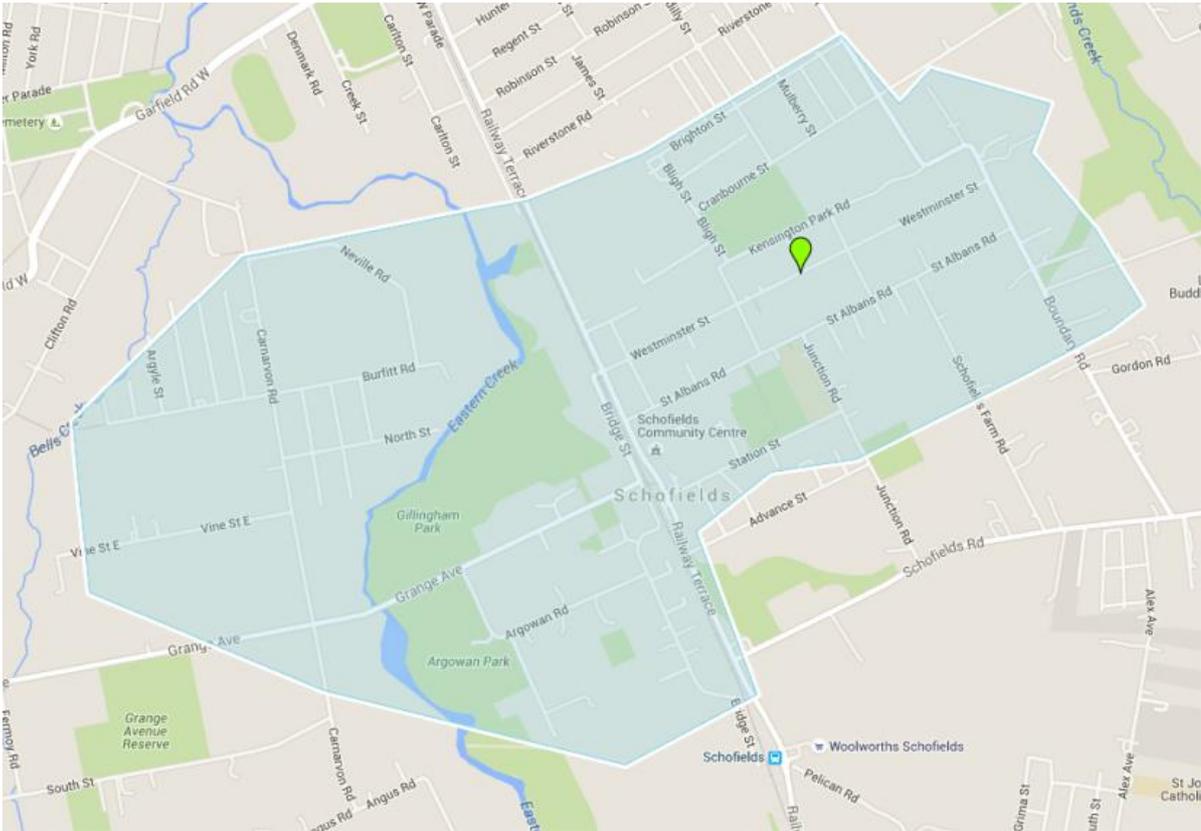
Proposed changes to the Westminster Street and Railway Terrace intersection



Contact

If you have any questions, please contact our Project Engineer on 02 8849 2991 or email ari.sitinamaluwe@ms.nsw.gov.au For more information on our projects, visit ms.nsw.gov.au

Appendix B – Letterbox distribution area





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