

### **Disclosure Log**

*Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (the GIPA Act)*

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<b>Date of decision</b>	23 March 2018
<b>Availability of information</b>	Refer attached

# Community Consultation Report

## New England Rail Trail



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## Executive Summary

The NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet has undertaken community consultation on the potential closure of the currently disused Armidale to Wallangarra rail corridor in the New England area of NSW.

The consultation involved two public consultation sessions, one in Tenterfield and one in Guyra; additionally, an invitation for public feedback was issued seeking email or written submissions for those unable to attend the sessions in person.

The aim of the community consultations is to:

- inform the NSW Government on whether there is support for the potential closure of a section of the rail line to progress the New England Rail Trail (NERT) project, and the entire rail line to enable the development of other rail trail projects in this region, and
- share information and gain understanding of local perspectives, opportunities and concerns in relation to the proposed rail trail.

The community consultation process aimed to balance the provision of information to the community with an opportunity for the community to voice opinion, raise their concerns and ask questions.

A total of 211 people attended the two consultation sessions - Tenterfield = 62, Guyra = 149, with a number of people attending both sessions. Attendees known to own land directly adjacent to the proposed rail trail numbered 38 people (representing 18% of attendees).

It was evident from the tone and nature of questions raised and from the sentiment discovery exercises undertaken in both sessions that many attendees had formed a strong view either in support of or against the concept of a rail trail prior to these sessions.

Of the questions raised a large proportion (79%) were focussed on specific aspects of the NERT Inc. project or other similar projects that may be put forward. As specifics of the proposed project (or other potential future proposed projects) were not available, in many cases definitive answers could not be provided and instead answers reflected the NSW Government's general position or approach. Further detailed engagement with the community in relation to specific characteristics and undertakings for each project may therefore be necessary.

A variety of organisations from the region were represented at the community consultation sessions (35% of attendees). These organisations also appeared to represent a range of views in relation to the closure of the rail corridor and its potential repurposing as a rail trail or similar.

Several key subjects emerged from the consultation that could, with further detailed analysis and consultation, assist the community to understand the potential risks and benefits of the rail trail proposal.

Broadly they are:

- A thorough economic analysis of the project as proposed, examining all claims relating to the economic opportunities and risks arising from the project.
- A complete investigation into the viability (or otherwise) of restoring freight/passenger services, and/or the plausibility of reserving the rail corridor for other future uses.
- Establishment of a detailed plan for the proposed project, dealing with the wide range of subjects pertinent to the community, including physical access management, biosecurity management, transition arrangements for existing uses (grazing and heritage), emergency response arrangements and the implications for adjacent land-holders.

Written submissions from people local to the region indicated support levels of 56% for the rail trail, whereas 41% objected to the closure of the rail.

## Introduction

The New England Region of NSW has a disused railway corridor running from Armidale to Wallangarra on the Queensland border. The corridor has not been used for regular freight or passenger services for many years.

In other jurisdictions around Australia and internationally, such disused rail corridors have been repurposed for 'rail trails' or similar purposes – essentially adjusting the use of rail corridors for non-rail purposes, usually as a passage way for recreational use by people wishing to hike or ride bicycles.

A proposal has been put forward to the NSW Government to repurpose a section of the Armidale to Wallangarra rail corridor as a rail trail.

In NSW, the repurposing of the Armidale to Wallangarra rail corridor (and many others) would require a legislative amendment to the *Transport Administration Act 1988*.

Before any legislative amendment is considered by the Parliament, the NSW Government's Department of Premier and Cabinet has undertaken a process of community consultation in the New England region on the subject of the potential closure of the rail corridor.

As part of that consultation two sessions were held in the region to provide the community with information about what might be involved in such a repurposing of the rail corridor, to gather direct input from the community and to capture community perspectives on the subject.

Sessions were held on Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at the Tenterfield Golf Club, and Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at the Guyra Bowling and Recreation Club. In addition to the two sessions, community members, particularly those unable to attend in person, were invited to provide written feedback to the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet.

This report outlines the nature and outcomes of the consultation, and summarises the perspectives captured through the consultation process.

## Purpose

The consultation aimed to:

- Gauge community sentiment on the subject of formally closing the rail corridor
- Explain the process being undertaken by the NSW Government in relation to a third party rail trail proposal, and
- Respond to questions from the community and stakeholders on the subject.

Attendees were informed that the session was not aimed at:



- Discussing the merits of the New England Rail Trail project
- Making decisions on closing a section of the rail corridor for a rail trail project

## Facilitator assessment of sentiment

It is clear from discussions with people at the sessions and the collated material set out in this report that strongly felt views exist both in support of and against the concept of rail trails being established along the rail corridor.

A proportion of the community feel that the rail service could and/or should be restored. Regardless of whether the project being put forward was for repurposing the corridor specifically for 'rail trails' or for any other use, this portion of the community will not support the closure of the corridor because they see it as a long-standing and irreplaceable asset that should retain its current designation as a corridor for rail only.

Another portion of the community view the long dis-used rail corridor as an asset ready for renewal. They see a great potential to yield a positive contribution to the economic prosperity of the region by replicating what other jurisdictions have achieved via tourism and associated visitation that a rail trail may bring.

The positions of these two groups are unlikely to change, however there is a third group that remains undecided or is more likely to have views that lean one way or the other. This group, having heard the discussions and points put forward by both the 'for' and 'against' groups, are still not completely convinced one way or the other. Their position it seems is borne out of a desire for a well-informed definitive case to be made in one direction or the other. That case will need to address a range of subjects, including those detailed below:

Validating the economic opportunity and risks of a rail trail: A detailed analysis surrounding the financial model of establishing and maintaining the necessary infrastructure so that all stakeholders can gain a clear-eyed view of all financial aspects. This should include the economic modelling of all aspects of the project, including predicted economic impacts from tourism for the region, down to details such as cost of weed control management regimes over the long term.

Restoration of a railway service/retention of rail corridor: There is a strong desire within the community for freight and/or passengers service to resume on the railway corridor. This desire persists despite the fact that there has been no service for more than 20 years, and a general acknowledgement that, due to this lack of use, significant investment would be required to restore the rail corridor to operational condition. Modelling that makes clear the extent of the investment required and the implications of that investment (for example "Would passenger travel cost per ticket cost more than an air flight to the same destination?" or "Would freight transport costs on a restored line be less than the cost of road transport?") would help build community understanding of the viability and likelihood of restoration of services.

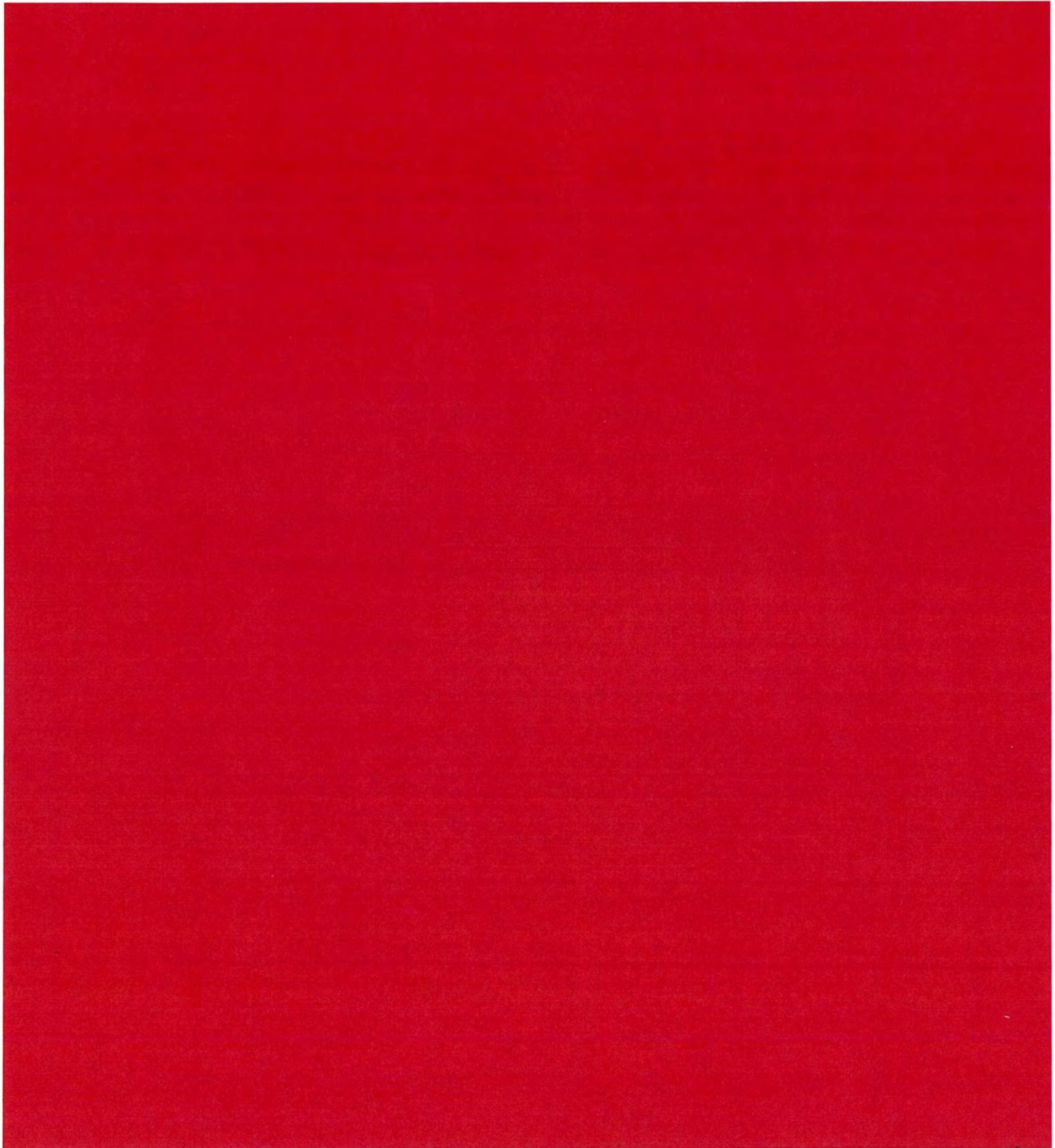
Some consultation participants believe there is value in retaining the rail corridor for future strategic purposes such as mass mobilisation for National defence purposes or use as a corridor for drone-based freight movement. These purposes and others put forward as reasons for retaining the rail corridor would need to be assessed to determine likelihood and viability.

Rail Trail operational management model details: Much of the interest and commentary at consultation sessions and in written contributions centred on issues associated with the management of the rail trail, should it be established. Given the significant contribution of the agricultural industry to the region's economy, and the interface between agricultural land and recreational land use that could be brought about by rail trails, it is understandable that these questions require further exploration, in particular the following subjects should be subject to detailed analysis:

- Biosecurity (in particular, weed management, which was raised repeatedly),
- Physical access controls (to the trail itself and unauthorised entry onto adjoining properties),
- Landholder amenity impacts (including anti-social behaviour and litter prevention measures),
- Council's role (if any) in any rail trail development and their capacity to manage the recurrent cost burden that may arise from a rail trail facility,
- Transition/cancellation of current stock grazing arrangements in the corridor,
- Transition/accommodation of current railway heritage sites/arrangements, and
- Emergency services (health and fire) access and response arrangements.



## **Tenterfield Consultation Session**



## **Tenterfield Community Consultation Process**

The community consultation agenda was divided into two parts. The initial part of the process was focussed on the provision of information and providing an opportunity for attendees to ask questions about specific aspects of the project and related matters. It included:


- NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet presentation on the roles and responsibilities of State Government in rail trails, and
- Unlimited questions from the floor put to the presenter in the public forum. All questions were written down by the attendee before being asked and were retained and recorded by the facilitator (Table 1)

The second part of the agenda was centred on capturing community perspectives. It involved an open and participatory process including the following steps:

- Attendees were invited to individually document their views on the rail trail and provide some insight into the reasoning behind their views.
- The views of attendees were grouped into a number of broad themes and attendees were invited to validate the themes as being an accurate reflection of the views expressed.
- Attendees were then each invited to indicate which of the themes they personally considered their top five priorities.



Image: The Tenterfield Community Consultation Session agenda:

<b>Agenda</b>		 Premier & Cabinet
Meeting: Stakeholder consultation – Tenterfield Rail Trail		Date: 11 December 2017
Location: Tenterfield Golf Club, 169 Pelham Street Tenterfield		Time: 12pm – 3pm
Chairperson: Samantha Muller   Facilitator   R & S Muller Enterprise Pty Ltd		
Item no.	Description	Responsible
1.	Acknowledgement of Country	Samantha Muller
2.	Introduction	Samantha Muller
3.	Process for today's consultation	Samantha Muller
4.	Presentation – Rail trails and NSW Government	Chris Hanger – NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
5.	Questions	All
6.	Community perspectives	All
7.	Next steps	Chris Hanger – NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
8.	Close	Samantha Muller

## Tenterfield Consultation Attendance

Invitations were issued to 447 stakeholders and the opportunity to attend was advertised via a range of channels including local media. The invitee list was prepared by the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and DPC's Office of Regional Development.

In total, the Department received 70 acceptances, 28 apologies and 349 invitees did not respond to the invitation.

On the day, there were a total of 62 attendees. Of these, 42 had indicated they would be attending and ten had not notified of their intention to attend. There were 16 people who had intended to attend but did not.



Of the 62 workshop attendees, 15 were landholders and 12 of those were from the DPC invitation list.

Scot McDonald, Member of the Legislative Council, Parliamentary Secretary for Planning, the Central Coast and the Hunter, was also in attendance.

Organisations in attendance included:

- Crown Land and Water
- Elders Real Estate
- Glen Innes Cyclists
- Granite Belt Bicycles
- Heelersridge Australian Cattle Dogs
- New England Rail Trail (NERT) Incorporated
- Save the Great Northern Railway
- Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party NSW
- Tally Ho Motor Inn
- Tenterfield Railway Museum
- Tenterfield Chamber of Tourism Industry and Business
- Tenterfield Railway Station Preservation Society
- Tenterfield Shire Council
- Wallangarra Railway Museum and Café
- Wallangarra/Jennings Progress Association

Of the 62 workshop attendees, the following postcodes were collected:

- 2372 Tenterfield, 30 attendees
- 2371 Deepwater, 6 attendees
- 2370 Glen Innes, 5 attendees
- 2365 Guyra, 3 attendees
- 4383 Jennings/Wallangarra, 2 attendees
- 2340 Tamworth, 1 attendee
- 2358 Uralla, 1 attendee
- 4380 Stanthorpe, 1 attendee
- Not provided, 13 attendees

## **Tenterfield: Questions to the presenter**

Fifty-five questions were asked to the presenter during the Tenterfield Community Consultation session. The full list can be found in Table 1.

In general, attendees wanted to know more detail about the planning and operational details of the specific New England Rail Trail project. Questions reflected concerns regarding:

- Decision making processes: how will decisions be made and who will be consulted, contributing or deciding?
- Economic considerations: who will carry expense, who will make economic gain and how will the economy be impacted?
- Insurance, public liability and public risk: how will subjects such as policing, accidents, damages and liability be dealt with?
- Nature of rail trail facilities: what facilities will be directly or indirectly created or required along the rail trail?
- Ongoing management of a rail trail: how will the rail trail be managed, how will biosecurity and physical security of property be managed and how will access be managed and controlled?
- Passenger/freight service restoration: comparing and contrasting potential alternative or combined uses for the corridor.

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Table 1. Questions asked of the presenter

Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
<i>Note: The wording provided in the table below has been faithfully transcribed from each of the written questions provided by the attendees, however in some cases, where short-hand, abbreviations, grammar and/or handwriting made it difficult to read, some edits have been made to aid readability.</i>			
	Re: insurance on bicentennial trail. All liabilities are covered by Government Department.	✓	
Not provided	The population in the Tenterfield, Glen Innes and Guyra areas as a percentage is more elderly people. What benefit will a rail trail be to them? A passenger service for medical treatment would be more beneficial, wouldn't it?	✓	
Not provided	What happens when there is a change of Government? Will the project go ahead?		✓
	Is the ratepayer liable for insurance claims from rail trails? Or does NSW Government cover them?	✓	
Not provided	If an individual is injured along the rail trail by stock or farming requirements is the grazier liable or the rail ie Government?		✓
Not provided	Has Tenterfield Shire Council been consulted about this proposal?		✓
Not provided	The area in question between Ben Lomond and Black Mountain along the railway does not have any tourism such as cafes and B&Bs along the actual rail corridor. It is only the township of Guyra. So how will it be beneficial to the area?		✓
Not provided	Why is the Environment and Tourism fund not allocated to bring the trains back to regional area, which would be much more beneficial to the communities to bring more money, employment and tourism to these areas?	✓	
Not provided	In the respect to farmers along the line, is each individual farmer or land holder notified when people will be on the part of rail trail running through their land so they are able to move stock or spray the area and other farming requirements?		✓



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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	Sheep and cattle get spooked by push bikes and as we have to cross over the line and then the highway, is fencing going to be paid for, to us to control them? Will dogs be allowed to run with their owners? If so those with their livestock beside the line, especially sheep will get stressed by them. If there are lambing could leave their babies.		✓
Not provided	With biosecurity being so important for farmers and graziers, who is going to keep our land clear of rubbish and weeds brought by the users?		✓
Not provided	Our councils can't keep weeds and animal pests under control along our roads. How are they going to cope with more area? Landowners adjoining the lines keep weeds under control at present.		✓
	Supposing we manage to get agreement from all councils to propose a rail trail from Armidale to Wallangarra, would the Government be inclined to provide camping areas or other facilities on Crown Lands along the trail?	✓	
	What happens in other rail trails? Are there access fees/entry fees – similar to National Parks etc. Or are permits to use TSR reserves ie that generate funds/pay for insurance/maintenance or registration? Or is it free entry?	✓	
Not provided	What about light rail? How much would that cost?	✓	
	Is there an itemised break down available for estimated capital costs of \$4.08M for Black Mountain to Ben Lomond rail trial proposal?		✓
Not provided	A great place for motorbikes		✓
	Who will pay for maintenance of the rail trail?		✓
Not provided	Could a paper be produced that describes how the concerns raised are covered in existing rail trails eg New Zealand?	✓	
Not provided	Within the 34km is the town of Guyra – who do offer experiences, farm stays and B&Bs. Transport between town and Costa Tomatoes		✓

**Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017**

Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	Application to Council for showground to allow camping		
	Of the \$400 million fixing country rail fund announced in 2016, how many projects have been received by New England?	✓	
Not provided	If the proposal is for the 34kms between Black Mountain and Ben Lomond, why is the corridor between Tenterfield to Wallangarra under discussion?		✓
	If rail trail was opened it would not be long before rail bikes, big dogs and fire arms. Who would police this?		✓
	What happens to properties that are spilt by rail corridor? Do we have to get a permit to cross the corridor?		✓
Not provided	Has anyone looked at where the highway at Bolivia is going to upgrade to. One proposal is going where the railway line is.		✓
Not provided	Development of camping areas along the rail trail?	✓	
Not provided	Who will run the rail trail? A contractor? Lessees?		✓
Not provided	How is a rail trail more beneficial to any community than a passenger train? You yourself stated rail trail is an idea to boost tourism, how is passenger trains not considered to also boost tourism in the same way without allowing people to 'freely' wander along the track.	✓	
Not provided	Exactly who is permitted to use the rail trails? Walkers, cyclists, horse riders, motorcyclists?	✓	
	Glen Innes rail trail proposal – Ben Lomond to Glen Innes – biosecurity		✓
Not provided	If the corridor is closed, what are the implications for Council re: lease? Is it likely to be just a token lease so what expense there given Councils will need to maintain the corridor?		✓
Not provided	Is the area in the Northern part considered or does it need a separate proposal? Who does that?		✓

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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
Not provided	Proposal, fix the railway line from Wallangarra to Tenterfield to at least take a rail motor when the steam trains come to Wallangarra. Who does the business case?		✓
██████	Will you be beautifying the line running North from Tenterfield to Wallangarra by planting trees to hide what is now an eyesore? A lot of this line runs parallel to the highway. Irrespective of the final outcome this will enhance tourism. The trees would have to compliment what has been planted around Tenterfield.		✓
██████	Will you be opening the section from Tenterfield to Wallangarra? At least to rail motor capabilities, this would enhance the Queensland steam train to Wallangarra.		✓
██████	Will the heritage listed bridge at Sunnyside? Irrespective of what is happening this should be done.		✓
Not provided	Is there any economic data available from other regions (Queensland, Victoria or New Zealand) that could quantify the benefits of a rail trail corridor?	✓	
Not provided	What will be the cost to local Council? Co-funding and maintenance?		✓
██████	Does a rail trail mean that the rail and sleepers get packed up? If a community wants to use part of a line to run a rail trail for example can it leave the line on?		✓
██████	Legislation is not required to facilitate a rail trail within a corridor where railway is retained. ie rail-with-trails or trail alongside railway. Why is that compromise not being pursued?		✓
Not provided	Council maintain rail trail?		✓
Not provided	Is it envisaged at this stage the rail trail will extend beyond Black Mountain/Ben Lomond?		✓
Not provided	How can they justify closing the whole railway line from Armidale to Wallangarra for a 34km section? This would render the corridor useless for future use as railway.		✓
Not provided	Why is there an emphasis on passenger trains not returning?		✓
Not provided	Why is there no emphasis of freight trains sharing disused NSW lines?		✓



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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
Not provided	Is there funding for Councils to maintain from Government?		✓
██████	If it's built, will the people come?		✓
██████	How much does a tourist spend on each trip on the trails?	✓	
██████	What is the benefit of the trail to the community?		✓
Not provided	Biosecurity is just a matter of risk assessments – a long a rail trail should not be any different risk to an adjacent road or travelling stock reserves even the bicentennial rail trail – why is it raised as a major concern if it is just a risk assessment.		✓
██████	If only the 34kms section is established and I presume it is in the Guyra Shire, will there be any financial responsibility on the Tenterfield Shire Council?		✓
██████	Wouldn't it be preferable to look at one submission that covers the whole length from Armidale to Wallangarra rather than several small proposals?		✓
██████	As the market for active tourism is growing at a great rate of knots, does the government have figures on how much tourist has increased in places like Victoria and New Zealand?	✓	
Not provided	The area needs to be maintained to prevent weed spread		✓
██████	The New England area is a gem! I have walked quite a distance on the existing rail corridor, the areas are beautiful. Why not use the experiences and studies of New Zealand and Victoria to answer concern questions e.g. access by farmers etc. The rail trail will bring in eventually millions of dollars to the area as it does in Victoria. The project will only perpetuate. We must move ahead.		✓

Of the 55 questions asked in the Tenterfield community consultation session, 15 (27%) were on the subject of rail trails in general while 40 (73%) were on the subject of the specific New England Rail Trail proposal/project.

## Tenterfield: Community perspectives

Attendees were asked to write down any comments or concerns about the rail trail. They were then asked to place each note on three boards labelled 'support', 'do not support' or 'neutral' to reflect their general sentiment towards the rail trail.

Table 2 outlines all attendee comments cross-referenced to sentiment.

A total of 95 comments were made in this exercise. Comments of a similar theme were clustered together, which resulted in nineteen themes. These were:

- |  |                                       |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ▪ More information needed                    | ▪ Biosecurity concerns                | ▪ Re-open railway for freight only    |
| ▪ Economic opportunities                     | ▪ Explore other tourism opportunities | ▪ Re-open railway for passengers only |
| ▪ Re-open railway for freight and passengers | ▪ Active lifestyle                    | ▪ Biosecurity addressed               |
| ▪ Fix/maintain existing infrastructure       | ▪ Litter/rubbish                      | ▪ General comments                    |
| ▪ Length of trail                            | ▪ Economic concerns                   | ▪ Tenterfield Railway Museum          |
| ▪ Security/trespass                          | ▪ Use of asset                        | ▪ Farming and livestock               |
|  | ▪ Business cases from other trails    |                                       |

For those not supportive of rail trails, most comments related to the following themes (refer to Graph 1 for detail):

- General comments (no specifics provided ...examples were: "No rail trail" or "No")
- Economic concerns
- Re-open railway for passengers only

For those neutral toward rail trails, most comments related to the following themes (refer to Graph 1 for detail):

- More information needed
- Re-open railway for freight and passengers
- Fix/maintain existing infrastructure
- General comments (no specifics provided ...example was: "Note sure")

For those supportive of rail trails, most comments related to the following themes (refer to Graph 1 for detail):

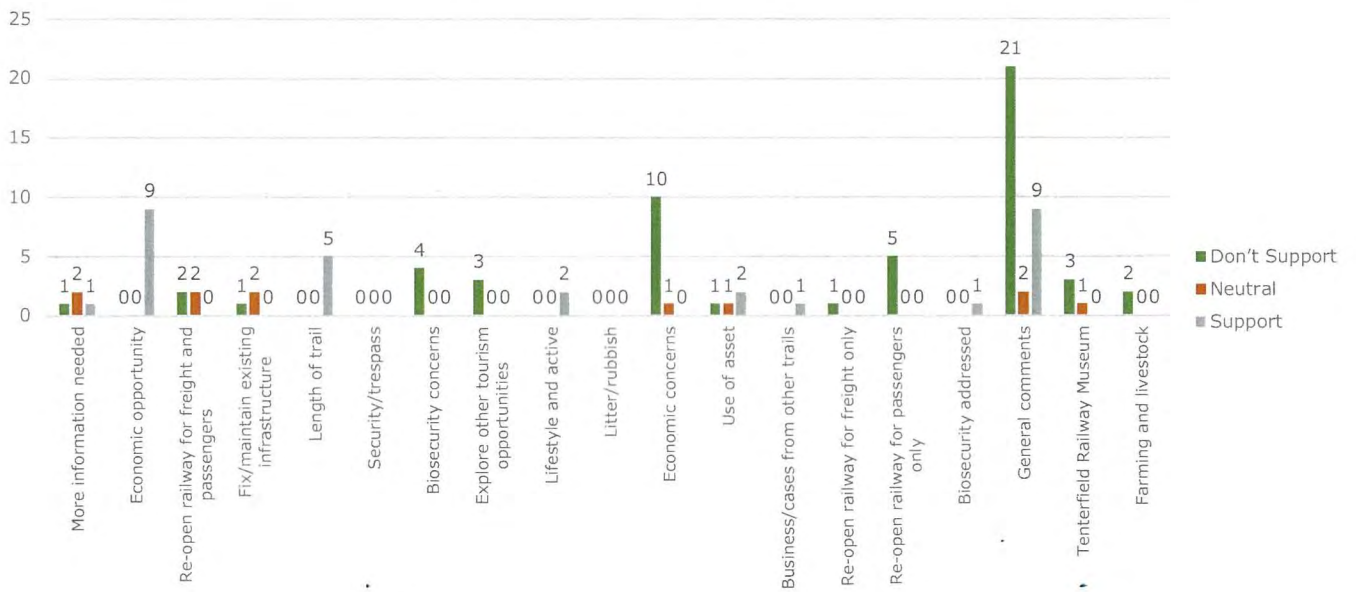
- Economic opportunities
- General comments (no specifics provided ...examples were: "Yes" or "Support")
- Length of trail

When comments were tallied regardless of sentiment towards rail trails, the majority of attendees' comments reflected the following themes (refer to Graph 2 for detail):

- General comments
- Economic concerns
- Economic opportunities

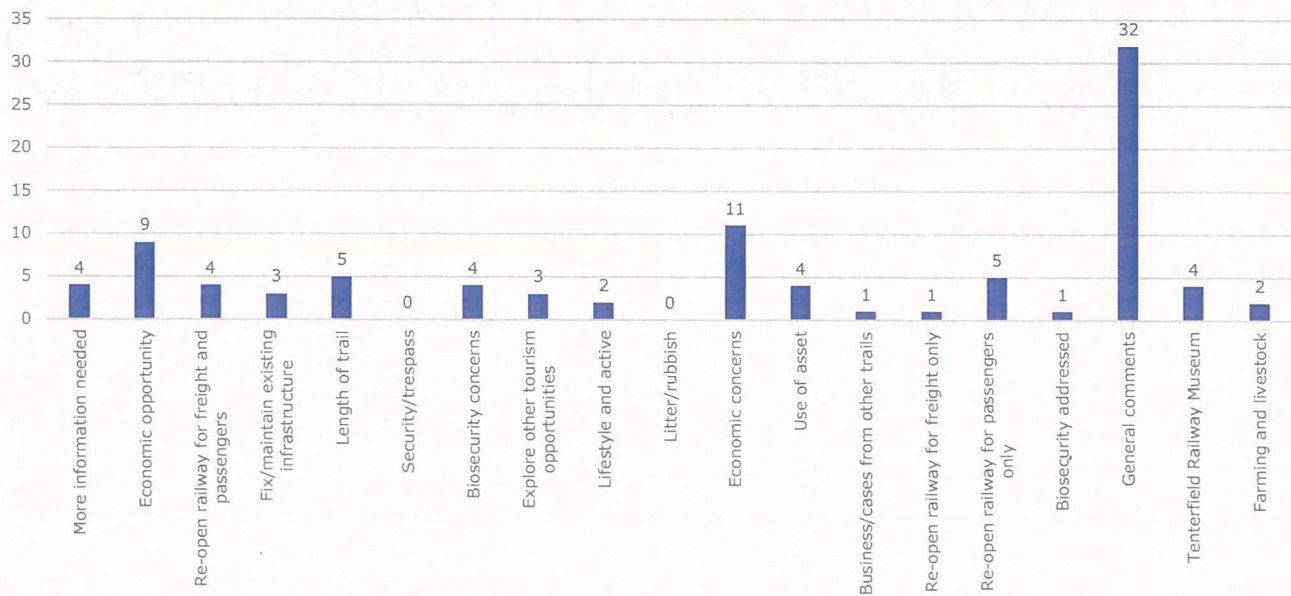
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Graph 1 – Comments by theme by sentiment





Graph 2 – Comments by theme regardless of sentiment



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Table 2. Tenterfield Community perspectives

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
53	12	30
<i>Note: The wording provided in the table below has been faithfully transcribed from each of the written comment cards provided by the attendees, however in some cases, where short-hand, abbreviations, grammar and/or handwriting made it difficult to read, some edits have been made to aid readability.</i>		
There is a perceived conflict of interest with some rail trail proponents	Would need more information before I would be able to decide one way or the other	More details required but has potential
New England needs to be connected to inland rail by redirect rail way, North of Armidale	Had a volunteer wanted to help open line to Wallangarra	Yes, tourism needs a big boost
Reopen the entire link to bring freight and passengers back on rail to reduce pressure on local roads	Open line Tenterfield to Wallangarra rail motor	Build the trails and people will come and spend
Infrastructure must be retained - must not close	The National Multi-gauge rail system should be standardised and this line thru to Brisbane is an ideal site to start - reopen it and a through rail from Wallangarra to Brisbane	The opportunity to show the world some of the most beautiful scenic country side in NSW. We need to share its diversity, beauty and natural assets
Biosecurity is a real concern. Weeds and animal escaping down corridor	Fix our heritage listed bridges	Great opportunity for increased visitors to towns, increase tourism revenue
Biosecurity problems. Weeds, pests and rubbish	Clean up railway yards at Jennings	Bring money and jobs to the New England region
Biosecurity	It all depends on the commitment made by local Council	More jobs for locals/kids who have to leave town to get work
Biosecurity	Leave tracks in place irrespective	All in favour - the economic opportunities are boundless
Steam train would have more tourists in one weekend than 6 months' worth of bikes.	Not sure	Opportunity for new businesses
A rail trail bike track would have no significant economic benefit in New England	How does trail cross New England highway?	Creating a different type of tourism experience for New England

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Don't Support	Neutral	Support
A lot better way of spending this massive amount of money	How will this project affect the Tenterfield railway museum?	I'm in support of the closure and the establishment of an end-to-end rail trail
Ratepayers should not be liable for NSW owned infrastructure		Better if from Wallangarra to Armidale - National/later national destination
Council maintaining costs and increase to Council rates		Whole-hearted support for a rail trail for the whole length from Armidale to Wallangarra
The economic gain from extra visitors will be minimal compares with the costs of establishment, maintenance and supervision		I would like from Tenterfield to Armidale rail trail in one proposal
Ratepayers already pay enough rates for roads and all existing public places. We should not be charged more for something that benefits a few		Support idea for whole section to convert over to rail trail
It puts extra financial stress on an already stretched Council for very little return		Health active lifestyles
Council can't afford more maintenance costs		Active tourism, active communities, active main streets "funded by wallets on wheels"
Cost of project		The rail corridor is an underutilised deteriorating asset. Best public benefit is to respectfully repurpose
No rate increase to pay for trail		Recognise historical and natural assets of area
De-value our property		Look at the success of other rail trails
No. Need weed maintains, and extra funding to council.		Biosecurity no different to just road or TSR or bicentennial trail through property
Crown Land is being sold, what is to say once converted that land wont also be sold?		I fully support the Black Mountain/Guyra rail trail. It has been demonstrated that all concerns raised can be accommodated on existing Rail Trails

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Don't Support	Neutral	Support
We need freight on rail, not roads		Finally, something new to bring people to our town - best idea Council should look forward and not back
Tourism is one element, what about transport for disables, elderly and children?		Yes, tourism!
Passenger trains would be a much better investment for tourism and local transport for regional areas		Yes
Passenger trains would benefit rural people better than a bike track		Allow everyone to see the good parts of the area that are missed on road and only property owners or grazing lessees get to see
I want passenger trains to come back		Benefits outweigh the disadvantages to all communities involved.
Light rail maybe		Yes - there are actually tourism businesses at Black Mountain. B&Bs, camping grounds, nursery and national running event
No		Yes - tourism services are increasingly home based. A rail trail gives locals options, B&Bs, galleries, breweries, vehicles
No		Breathe new life into country towns
Don't want at all		
Don't like		
I don't like the idea		
Leave it alone		
Sell all lawns and assets		
Not much was done to answer questions. The process seems very biased to close the line.		



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Don't Support	Neutral	Support
No go		
No way		
No to closure. Too many reasons to list. Hands off the great northern rail		
Small electric vehicles to use trail will probably double usage		
Councils are for maintaining roads not railways		
Weed control, hunting, motor bikes and vandalism		
Conversion of rail corridor to Crown Lands compromises long-term public ownership of former corridor		
There are limitations on travelling with bikes on train link. Why not also focus on transporting tourist here first?		
In not open to the idea of a rail trail and don't support it 100%. I would support a rail with trail concept however.		
Access to and from		
Too disruptive of rail precinct		
Rail cruising e.g. trikes or small light vehicles shouldn't give way to cycles i.e. leave rail in		
Petitions have been submitted for people		
Want to see trains return to regional NSW. Rails trails will interfere with our wonderful museum and will cost me as a ratepayer. But the line must not be closed		
Not practical may be the end of our rail museum		

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Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Livestock get spooked by bikes		
Farming is already stretched financially without having more pressure to maintain biosecurity		

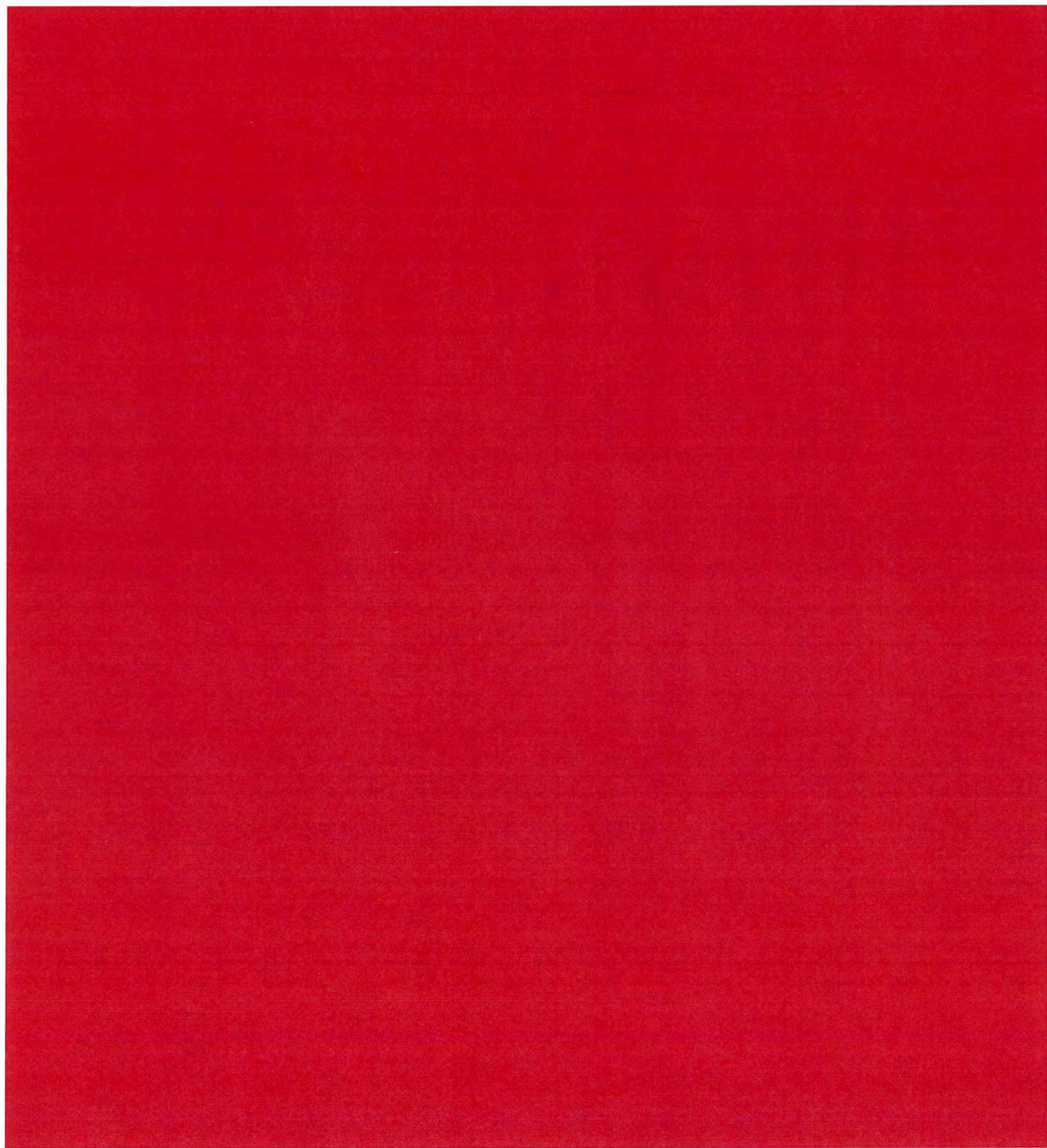
After attendees were asked to provide written comments/concerns under the headings of 'Support', 'Do Not Support' or 'Neutral', it was clear that a range of common themes were emerging. Those themes were identified openly in the forum by the facilitation team with attendees' participation and validation in real time.

Once themes were identified, attendees were asked to indicate the themes which reflected their five (5) highest priorities. Results are shown in Graph 3





## Guyra Consultation Session



## Guyra Consultation Process

The community consultation process for Guyra was largely the same as that for Tenterfield, and again the agenda was divided into two parts. The initial part of the process was focussed on the provision of information and an opportunity for attendees to ask questions about specific aspects of the project and related matters.

- NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet presentation on the roles and responsibilities of State Government in rail trails, and
- Questions from the floor (as many as time permitted) put to the presenter in the public forum. All questions were written down by the attendee before being asked and were retained and recorded by the facilitator (Table 3).

The second part of the agenda centred on capturing community perspectives. It involved an open and participatory process for attendees, including the following steps:

- Attendees were invited to individually document their views on the rail trail and provide some insight into the reasoning behind their views.
- The views of attendees were grouped into a number of broad themes and attendees were invited to validate the themes as being an accurate reflection of the views expressed.
- Attendees were then each invited to indicate which of the themes they personally considered their top five priorities.



## Agenda



Premier  
& Cabinet

Meeting: Stakeholder consultation – Guyra Rail Trail Date: 12 December 2017

Location: Guyra Bowling and Recreation Club  
192 Bradley Street Guyra Time: 12pm – 3pm

Chairperson: Samantha Muller | Facilitator | R & S Muller Enterprise Pty Ltd

Item no.	Description	Responsible
1.	Acknowledgement of Country	Samantha Muller
2.	Introduction	Samantha Muller
3.	Process for today's consultation	Samantha Muller
4.	Presentation – Rail trails and NSW Government	Chris Hanger – NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
5.	Questions	All
6.	Community perspectives	All
7.	Next steps	Chris Hanger – NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
8.	Close	Samantha Muller

## Guyra Community Consultation Attendance

The NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) invited 493 stakeholders to attend the consultation session based on a list prepared by DPC's Office of Regional Development. The opportunity to attend was also advertised via a range of channels including local media.

In total, the Department received 131 acceptances and 17 apologies. In total, 345 did not respond to the invitation.

On the day, there was a total of 149 attendees. Of these, 113 had indicated they would be attending, with the remaining ten having not notified of their intention to attend. However, 17 who had intended to attend did not.

Of the 149 workshop attendees, thirty-one attendees were from the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet's invitee list.



Organisations in attendance included:

- Armidale Business Chamber
- Armidale Regional Council
- Ben Lomond Land Care Group Inc.
- Black Mountain Preservation Society
- Brown and Krippner Surveyors and Planners
- Crown Land and Water
- Elders Real Estate
- Glen Innes Severn Council
- Glen Inness Rail Trail Committee
- Guyra and District Chamber of Commerce
- Guyra Business Chamber
- High Country Productions
- New England Rail Trail (NERT) Incorporated
- New England Railway Inc.
- New England South East Queensland Infrastructure Authority
- NSW Farmers – Guyra Local Branch
- NSW Parliament
- Rail Corridor Graziers
- Rail Group Guyra
- Rail Trails NSW
- Regional Australia Bank
- Regional Development Australia, Northern Inland (RDANI)
- Save the Great Northern Railway Group
- Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party NSW
- Strong Art Group
- The Old Convert Gardens
- Wild Garden Eco Tours

Of the 149 workshop attendees, the following postcodes were collected:

- 2365 - Guyra, 102 attendees
- 2350 - Armidale, 21 attendees
- 2370 - Glen Innes, 6 attendees
- 2358 - Uralla, 2 attendees
- 2372 - Tenterfield, 1 attendee
- Not provided - 17 attendees

## **Guyra: Questions to the presenter**

170 questions were asked to the presenter during the Guyra consultation session. The full list of these questions can be found at Table 3.

Of those 131 questions were rail trail project specific, with the remainder being focused on Government decision making and rail trails more broadly.

A significant portion (30%) of the questions could be grouped under the broad subject of the decision-making process – with interest in how decisions have been or will be made, who will be involved and what information will be taken into account.

A further 23.5% of the questions were on the subject of alternative (to a rail trail) uses for the corridor. Many of these centred on the restoration of passenger and/or freight services to the region or different ideas and concepts that may or may not have been considered in relation to use of the rail corridor and/or the provision of a suitable corridor for cycling.

About 18% of the questions from attendees were on the subject of the ongoing management of the rail trail if it should proceed; this included subjects such as biosecurity, fencing, physical access, insurances/liability and neighbouring property implications.

About 18% of the questions raised touched on the economic considerations relating to rail trails. This included interest in economic modelling and cost/benefit analysis, upfront capital expenditure and operational expenditure. The basis for understanding tourism impacts was also raised a number of times through attendee questions.

The remainder of questions centred on the nature of the facility, such as provisions that would be made for sanitation or camping arrangements. Attendees were also interested in the exact nature of the physical trail, and whether the trail's construction necessitated the entire or partial removal of rail infrastructure such as tracks, sleepers, stations and sheds.

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**Table 3. Questions asked of the presenter in Guyra**

Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
<i>Note: The wording provided in the table below has been faithfully transcribed from each of the written questions provided by the attendees, however in some cases, where short-hand, abbreviations, grammar and/or handwriting made it difficult to read, some edits have been made to aid readability.</i>			
Not provided	Restore railway. What happened when Guyra abattoirs reopen		✓
██████	Why is it more financially viable to develop a tourism feature benefiting 'few' instead of putting funding back into rebuilding the railway line and associated jobs and development benefiting 'many'.		✓
██████	What will happen to the physical structures i.e. station buildings and goods sheds adjacent to the line? Will they go for public 'auction' for lease and development?		✓
██████	Did anybody investigate what potential growth and income revenue for opening rail between Armidale and Wallangarra?		✓
Not provided	Need the railway open. Will get some trucks off the road, stop accidents. Send freight by rail. Also need a bike track for Guyra people made elsewhere.		✓
Not provided	Are there council reps here today? If someone from Council is here, do they think at this early state Council can afford to upkeep this proposal (insurance, fence lines, weeds, biosecurity)? When do they propose to provide answers to these questions?		✓
Not provided	What has the current State Government done to encourage/discourage the use of our rail infrastructure for passenger tourism/livestock/fuel/material?	✓	
Not provided	We heard all this before with forced mergers against the majority people's wishes based on a KPMG Report. Delegates never seen. We don't trust you.	✓	
Not provided	I hope that the organisation takes note 75% of Guyra don't want the rail line closed and why was ██████ driving around with ██████ today?		✓
Not provided	If we are on a growth trajectory in this region, how are we going to get passengers and freight to Brisbane, Toowoomba and Wellcamp in the future?		✓
Not provided	Will the legislation guarantee return of rail corridor immediately if rail service is approved?	✓	
Not provided	Why are you not scoping the need for public transport in the future – passenger services, small business freight, possibility of tilt trains like they have in Spain and Finland to get us and grow GRP and access markets and hubs, Wellcamp, Brisbane and Toowoomba?	✓	

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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
Not provided	Chris Hanger, do you undertake to advise T4NSW Future transport that we are not necessarily against bike tourism but we want investment by T4NSW to re-open GNR trains for regional growth potential.		✓
Not provided	Why is it necessary to close the Great Norther Rail corridor to have a bike track? What opportunity is there present technically?		✓
Not provided	Has estimated costs of railway line update been done from Guyra to Armidale to Ben Lomond accurately?		✓
Not provided	Who will manage the grant money for the project for the next 5-10 years? Council? Government doesn't like failure.		✓
Not provided	Fencing needs to be stock proof, as straying stock would camp on the dry road trail each night especially in wet weather		✓
Not provided	High risks at railway crossings e.g. first one north of Llangothlin		✓
Not provided	Rest areas may need to be put in place with toilets and bins (costs)		✓
Not provided	Why couldn't this meeting have been held in the evening so people who work during the day could attend?		✓
Not provided	If a rail trail is built Armidale and Guyra will benefit hugely from the increase in tourist numbers visiting the region. It will benefit cafes, motels, restaurants, bike shops, farmers markets, retail business and art galleries. It will create new activities for local residents as well		✓
Not provided	Given the corridor will be transferred to Crown Lands, are their implication we should know about given the recent changes to Crown Lands legislation. Open use of Crown lands to council, private enterprise- any project of merit	✓	
Not provided	National trail – completion unsuitable for riding a pushbike. Has the person who suggested this ever been there? Way too steep for even walking (only suitable for horseback)		✓
Not provided	What is the value of the land being leased (money to gut, costs of maintenance) vs what is the value of the rail trail where money will come to local community?		✓
Not provided	Do you feel that the timing of today's meeting allowed true consultation? Caters for flexibility of grazers/farmers time but not for working people?		✓



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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	Is it true that the line was original closed because only 4 carriages was not enough to make the line viable?	✓	
	When the corridor is leased to local Government, will the State Government place guidelines and conditions on how Local Government re-negotiates leases with existing landholders? Will the lease holder have an opportunity to suggest to the State Government what constraints should be put on Local Government?		✓
	During World War 2, the Great Northern Rail was used to move troops and is considered by the deployment of defence being inland the safest.		✓
Not provided	Asset – to be maintained, councils struggle to maintain existing roads etc.		✓
Not provided	Feasibility – the Black Mountain to Ben Lomond is the cheapest part in the rail trail. What happens when the trail is more challenging?		✓
Not provided	What happens to the existing rail steel and sleepers?		✓
Not provided	When will we see initial cost/benefit analysis?		✓
Not provided	Can the current graziers that have grazing/maintenance agreements with URH continue them with a new entity i.e. Local Government?		✓
Not provided	Given the worldwide success why has it taken so long for NSW to move forward?	✓	
	Current legislation makes firefighting on the corridor difficult. Will the change of use reduce the impediments to firefighting?		✓
	Our community needs more support to process the pros and cons of a rail trail. We need the rail trail project for Guyra economic benefit. Can you please provide the necessary resources to enable our community to support this project and answer all questions?		✓
	A disused overgrown rail link will not attract many proposals for use. The railway needs to be operational prior to expressions of interest		✓
	Where do rail trail proponents get data from? How do we know it is reliable?		✓
Not provided	Are rail trails initially funded by State Government? And is it up to councils to maintain the trails?		✓

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
Not provided	Crown Lands in NSW are currently being sold off. How can you guarantee this will not be sold off once transferred?	✓	
██████	There has been some talk about rail economics and projects to reinstate rail services but has there been any proposal for rail services on this line received at all?		✓
██████	Given the state's rail trail pilot at Tumbarumba hasn't been constructed, let alone evaluated, why is there such a push to formally close the railways, north of Armidale?		✓
██████	Will rail trail proponents nationally work to share (safely) the existing corridor (with light rail traffic)?	✓	
██████	Why so much emphasis on rail trail option for the rail corridor? Given that the introduction of a tourism rail project has already been raised with NSW Government for rail services in the corridor?		✓
Not provided	How can it be stated that there is no demand or that the train service is not viable where there is no service available. Where do you get your information from? How can there be a demand for no service?		✓
Not provided	Why won't Government reopen rail as state rail cooked the books to close the rail		✓
Not provided	Why did the Government accept an offer from the wind farm company to repair the rail corridor and use it to transport the wind farm construction materials?	✓	
Not provided	Why did rail department fudge figures to close the railway in the first place? Do we need a senate inquiry or royal commission into corruption within state rail?	✓	
Not provided	Why don't cyclists use roads that basically run beside rail line for nearly all of the proposed trail or add a section beside the road?		✓
Not provided	Will there be night time meeting for workers who cannot attend day time meetings?		✓
Not provided	What happens if change of Government?	✓	
Not provided	Loss of revenue for leaseholders		✓
Not provided	Sanitation – water ways		✓
Not provided	Council doesn't have money to maintain roads – so how could council maintain a rail trail?		✓
Not provided	Cannot justify cost e.g. hospitals in dire straits		✓
Not provided	Will whole corridor be closed or only a strip – if a strip what happens to remainder?		✓

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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
Not provided	How will access be to prevent cattle being boxed up (cattle crossing)?		✓
Not provided	What sanitation stations will be put in place?		✓
Not provided	How is the proposed prevention of weed seed e.g. Needle Grass going to be implemented?		✓
Not provided	If proposed rail trail is successful how is it intended to control weeds? That is the spraying of noxious weeds?		✓
Not provided	Sanitation stations		✓
Not provided	Biosecurity? Agriculture major industry		✓
Not provided	Difference spoken of - our hospitals require upgrading as opposed to tourism costs		✓
Not provided	No mention of proposal to put train back on the line – why is it all about bikes?		✓
Not provided	34kms BM-BL line follows the road the whole way, why not a cycle way beside the road?		✓
	Opinion, not a question		✓
	Local community events have tried hard to bring people down into the main street but local shop owners seem to have no interest in staying open or welcoming tourist into the town.		
	Is it heritage listed and how does this affect rail trail proposals?		✓
	Where do you get the information that there is no inquiring about transport goods and people from Armidale to Wallangarra?		✓
Not provided	Why is there so many weeds, pests and ugliness on the disused line?		✓
	Some biosecurity issues, how will these be addressed? Can we investigate the use of exclusion fence between rail trail line and farms and planting of natural habitat along corridor for natural barrier to make the rail trail work?		✓
	Will the 'for and against vote' take into account the postcode for the supporters and opponents have. The supporters of New England rail trail have prosperity of this area foremost in our minds.		✓



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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	I am pro rail trail. Is it true that towns along the route of rail trails in other parts of Australia and overseas have recorded a boost to their economies?		✓
	I feel that the corridor may as well be used for something to benefit this region. Our town has built along railway line. When the trains were running our town thrived. Since there have been no trains it hasn't. Maybe a rail trail could bring back some prosperity to our town. Can we shut the railway?		✓
	We are trying to beautify out town. Are the groups who put signs along the corridor allowed to do so on Government owned land?		✓
Not provided	What else is there to do in this town for kids? No much! We need a bike/walk trail.		✓
Not provided	As a business owner, what else will bring tourism to our region?		✓
	How many local people are part of the 'save the Great Norther Rail Line Inc.' group? As I know majority of members are not local.		✓
Not provided	Can we have a show of hands from local community members of who is for and against to gauge the percentage of people for and against (rather than the 'vocal' people reflecting what is disproportionate)		✓
	What does save the rail group want to use the line for and how will it be maintained if trains aren't coming back?		✓
	I would love to see a cost benefit analysis for a community loving a rail trail.		✓
	What is the maintenance cost that will be developed to council on an annual per km.		✓
	Due to the fencing issue, does the cost of \$4.08 million need to be reassessed? Current costs of fencing \$5 per meter x 35 km's each side		✓
	No rail trails. Trains for the people	✓	
	Does the local council have the finance to do this? We are still waiting on promises from the amalgamation		✓



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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
██████	Is it not true the coast line is 100% full and inland rail still coming why not open the Great Northern for relief of the coast line.	✓	
██████	Who maintains structure?		✓
██████	Where are your figures knowing how many bikes will use a rail trail as you state there are not the figures to have trains back so why are we having this discussion before we know the cycling usage?		✓
Not provided	Open the line for the defence of this country. Trains are the only way to move large amount of goods and machinery quickly over long distances.	✓	
██████	If as repeatedly said, there is long term lack of demand for freight and passenger rail, is there any evidence for realistic demand for rail trails se for economic benefit.		✓
Not provided	How does the cost per km for rail trail cost to establish compare to 1km for rail way restoration?		✓
██████	How do landholders divided by the rail corridor, who currently hold leases (which will be rescinded) carry out stock movements if the rail trail proceeds?		✓
Not provided	Regarding the use of rail corridor for transport use – how can you successful assess demand when the service isn't available?		✓
██████	████████████████████ over the past 5 years, I have never seen one of the anti-rail trail proponents use that service. The rail trail would not only bring tourists it would provide a safe place for cyclists and pedestrians. If footballers, golfers, tennis players etc. have designated sporting ground, why not cyclists?		✓
Not provided	Why is there a need for a closure of the rail line when "the National Trail" runs parallel? This trail was mapped by R.M Williams in construction with the Federal Government and runs from Cooktown QLD to Melbourne VIC.		✓
██████	If this project gets the green light what happened if the project fails? Who is going to be held responsible for its failure?		✓
██████	Has John Holland Group been invited to consult on this matter?		✓
██████	Why does the rail line have to be removed? Could it not just be covered up (as done in New Zealand)?		✓

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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	Other rail trails mentioned are disused spur lines. This rail line is a major public asset once it's gone its gone!		✓
Not provided	Is it correct when something isn't used it deteriorates? When the rail corridor was closed the number of road transport multiplied considerably. Wouldn't reopening the Northern corridor reduce the number of road transport vehicles?		✓
	What is the likely hood of the inland rail planning process failing - this creating the demand to use the Great Northern railway?	✓	
	How much consideration has the Government given to redeveloping the railway line for trains north of Sydney to Brisbane using the corridor north of Armidale?	✓	
	How did the rail trail group assess \$4m for cost of this proposal? How do they know how many people will use the rail trail?		✓
	How do you know there has been no interest in opening the railway line north of Armidale? What evidence do you have?		✓
Not provided	As stated in the proposal the maintenance of weeds and the line is being proposed at the expense of the farmer. Is NERT Inc. or Government willing to financially subsidise the extra costs to the farmer?		✓
Not provided	Has Government considered that because the line isn't operation that fright companies have no choice but to use the road transport instead for rail transport?	✓	
	riding on unmarked country roads are very unsafe. Drivers drive very very fast and close to cyclists – it really is quite a scary experience. Cannot take my kids riding or running on the road.		✓
	The rail trail would provide a wonderful safety facility for the students at Ben Lomond Public School. Our roads are unsafe for the students to ride on/run or walk on so a rail trail would allow the students to ride their bikes, run their cross country safely. Healthy kids!		✓
	The rail trail would be a fantastic facility to have for safe riding and running for all enthusiastic active people. It would get bike riders away from the dangers of riding along side of trucks etc.		✓

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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	What a wonderful facility rail trail would be to have for school student to safely ride and run to help combat the obesity epidemic. The schools in the area could potentially use the rail trail for duathlons, cross country and running training		✓
Not provided	Surely the environmental impact of roads is far greater than rail – so why has Government allowed deterioration of rail lines in preference to road transport?	✓	
Not provided	The bulk of Guyra/Tingha communities are still reeling from the LACK of listening in recent merges. Why would we believe the Government actually cares about our views?	✓	
Not provided	Currently, access to walking along rail line is easily obtained from lessees. If it becomes Crown land/council responsibility – how easy will access be?		✓
Not provided	It has taken some years to get an inspection of facility, any acceptant by division of responsibility between John Holland and council and get any work done. Why would we believe a closure would be different?		✓
Not provided	BL Landcare introduced a stargazing event this year which we envisioned as an annual event, This was done with no financial assistance from council and was extremely successful. If tourism money already given to big projects the smaller projects (and their communities) are prevented from increasing tourism, which would justify not funding the rail trail project. Why?		✓
Not provided	BL already have some farm stay B&Bs plus an active catering group for tourism plus the highest status in the state. So would not a rail trail increase opportunities?		✓
Not provided	The rail closure appears to be following off expenses for maintenance to (already underfunded) council. Likely has it not been maintained previously and how?		✓
Not provided	What are the points that differentiate between what is a service and what is tourism?	✓	
Not provided	In terms of costs/benefit analysis, what role does environmental costs and benefits play?	✓	
	However feel benefits to the local community would far outweigh any inconvenience and we are in favour of closure of corridor and the building of rail trail		✓
Not provided	When will our local government show leadership and promote the rail trail development concepts		✓



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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
[REDACTED]	What projects have "save the Great Northern rail group Inc." put forward to develop for the line north of Armidale? And how many are fully funded and are ready to go?		✓
[REDACTED]	If the corridor is closed and a rail trail is established, does this prevent the rail ever coming back?	✓	
[REDACTED]	Should we require people from the opposition of rail trail to show proof that they actually use the train service that is provided between Guyra to Sydney		✓
Not provided	When abattoir resumes, transport for meat by rail only		✓
[REDACTED]	Are there any other application for funding from this pool of funds the Guyra region	✓	
Not provided	Where have you received your information about insufficient freight on rail as I believe the figures are incorrect	✓	
Not provided	If you and your team haven't seen any other rail transport surveys and proposals already put to State Government bodies, we must have a problem. At the top end in Macquarie Street dare I suggest there is a Liberal party influence on this?	✓	
[REDACTED]	What cost benefit analysis has been undertaken in the current use of the corridors?		✓
Not provided	What are the costs of developing a rail trail per kilometre		✓
Not provided	Where is the funding for insurance, weeds etc. Council has not got the funds now. Will it increase council rates?		✓
[REDACTED]	How long since the railway was used? [REDACTED] These trails were highly used by bike riders and walkers. They provided safe pleasant trails to use		✓
Not provided	How much of the rail trail in New Zealand is rail way line?	✓	
Not provided	You say there is not enough. What about the number of trucks on the road.	✓	
Not provided	Has anyone ever got a map from LLS (PP Board) and looked at the stock routes that could be used for this purpose. Could be 100's of KMs vs a few	✓	
Not provided	If the rail goes, will we build a road for all the massive big trucks on our roads, which are the cause of many accidents?		✓

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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
Not provided	Was the Tumbarumba rail trail on a major corridor between Sydney and Melbourne, where this corridor is on a major rail line between Sydney and Brisbane?	✓	
Not provided	The public liability insurance. Where does that money come from each year?		✓
████████	Following this consultation today, what is the importance of the value of community members writing to the Minister for transport and members of NSW Parliament and local council reps to voice their concerns/opinions about this proposal?		✓
████████	Is it true that the line is only designed to carry the weight of only 4 carriages?		✓
████████	What is current cost of maintenance on the existing closed line compared to potential rail trail maintenance which brings some potential tourism?		✓
Not provided	What is the reality of transport use of the corridor in the future when current transport investment focuses on inland rail and joining freight lines on the Tamworth/Werris Creek/Narrabri line		✓
Not provided	If there is to be a rail trail, start it from the Northern rail crossing in Guyra and end it north. These are not as steep. Those deciding have they walked the proposed trails?		✓
Not provided	Who will carry the \$30m liability insurance?		✓
Not provided	If the rail trail goes north at the Ben Loman turnoff, the track goes with highly wooded areas, with steep embankments. If a cyclist has an accident, who would see them?		✓
Not provided	Between Black Mountains and Guyra there are very steep embankments of at least 60 degrees. The rail trail will only be 3 meters wide this trail is not safe.		✓
Not provided	There is already a proposal to offer the line to Brisbane held for over 10 years		✓
████████	Could Chris Hanger (or his Department) tell us why the entire rail corridor is actually out of service (we could already be using sections)?	✓	
████████	How will the Guyra machinery grant tourists train and station be affected as ██████████		✓
████████	After mentioning local group proposing for a rail trail. Are you aware of the far bigger community group opposing the closure of GN railway called the "save the great northern railway group Inc."		✓

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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	Do land owners that currently grazes and look after the corridor still have the right to graze on the corridor? I am excited about use the abandoned asset as a rail trail.		✓
	How ugly do the signs look on the highway? Did they get permission are they part of council?		✓
	If the corridor is not closed and passenger services are not returned and there aren't any projects approved through the "fixing the country rail" funding – what happens? In other words, if nothing happens does nothing happen to the corridor?		✓
	Will NSW Farmers (local branch) be consulted re biosecurity issues for whatever the trail may be used for?		✓
Not provided	Does the government have any 'fall back' plans for the corridor if no proposals are viable?		✓
Not provided	Given the NERT proposal includes the local stakeholders and societies, do you see a problem in transferring these agreements so they are continued as they have for decades?		✓
Not provided	Does the Government have any other proposals for the rail line north of Armidale?	✓	
Not provided	Armidale – Wallangarra rail corridor closure. 3 LGAs involved, if 2 out of 3 support (communities) what are the next steps i.e. do you need 100% to close a full corridor or do you only close sections?		✓
Not provided	What merits contribute to the more successful rail trail currently operating in your experience	✓	
Not provided	What are the experiences of communities in Victoria and Tasmania who leave directly established rail trails?	✓	
Not provided	What are the chances of the rail way between Armidale and boarder being opened in the future?		✓
	Can councils close a rail corridor if operating costs become too high?	✓	
	Is this consultation the same as the amalgamation consultation?	✓	
Not provided	Will the leases currently in operation be renegotiated (by council)?		✓
	If the Government legislation to close the corridor, can that corridor be re-opened by another act of parliament? Show that need arise at some future date?		✓
Not provided	If there is an overlap between service providers and tourism, will funding be split between these two divisions of Government?		✓



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Name	Question	Rail trails in general	New England rail trail project specific
	Has Government assessed the financial benefits of rail trail in Tasmania and Victoria?	✓	
	We already know the benefits of rail trails from the Victoria experience so why do we go through TAS experience? Could we not simply put out an explanation to the community on why the corridor is being closed and a rail trail built?	✓	
	How much of the \$4.08 million that the rail trails is estimated to cost will be covered by Government?		✓
	Is there enough funding available to cover the costs of all the currently proposed rail trails (Guyra, Murwillumbah, Tumbarumba)? Or is it a case of first in best dressed?	✓	
	Does the process factor in the considerable health benefits of a facility such as the rail trail? 40% of concerns can be avoided by healthy living, by maintaining a healthy weight and maintaining a reasonable level of fitness. This facility will provide a safe environment for our community to cycle. How does the process ensure benefits such as the healthy benefits are accessed and considered?		✓

## Guyra: Community perspectives

Attendees were asked to write down any comments or concerns about the rail trail. They were then asked to place each note on three boards labelled 'support', 'do not support' or 'neutral' to reflect their general sentiment towards the rail trail. Table 4 details all comments received cross-referenced with attendee sentiment towards rail trails.

A total of 335 comments were posted by attendees in this exercise. Comments of a similar theme were clustered together, which resulted in twenty-five themes. These are:

- |                                       |                               |   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| ▪ Restore rail (public transport)     | ▪ Explore other options       | ▪ Collaboration with stakeholders           |
| ▪ Tourism economic benefits           | ▪ Current use impacts         | ▪ Diversity                                 |
| ▪ Health and fitness                  | ▪ Safety                      | ▪ Economic concerns                         |
| ▪ Biosecurity                         | ▪ Use of public resources     | ▪ More information needed                   |
| ▪ Recreational opportunities for kids | ▪ Cost calculation concerns   | ▪ General comments                          |
| ▪ Maintain current infrastructure     | ▪ Proven success/case studies | ▪ Abattoir return                           |
| ▪ Trespass                            | ▪ Environmental matters       | ▪ Livestock                                 |
| ▪ Showcase the area                   | ▪ Preserve history            | ▪ Restore rail (for freight and passengers) |
|                                       |                               | ▪ Security                                  |
|                                       |                               | ▪ Government Concerns                       |

For those not supportive of rail trails, most comments related to the following themes (refer to Graph 4 for detail):

- Restore rail (for freight and passengers)
- General comments (no specifics provided ...examples were: "Register of bikes to use" or "Future use")
- Economic concerns

For those neutral toward rail trails, most comments related to the following themes (refer to Graph 4 for detail):

- General comments (no specifics provided ...examples were: "Why are only BIG projects considered for tourism?" or "Cannot see tourists coming here due to climate and a lack of things to do")
- More information needed
- Explore other options

- Collaboration with stakeholders
- Use of public resources

For those supportive of rail trails, the most comments related to the following themes (refer to Graph 4 for detail):

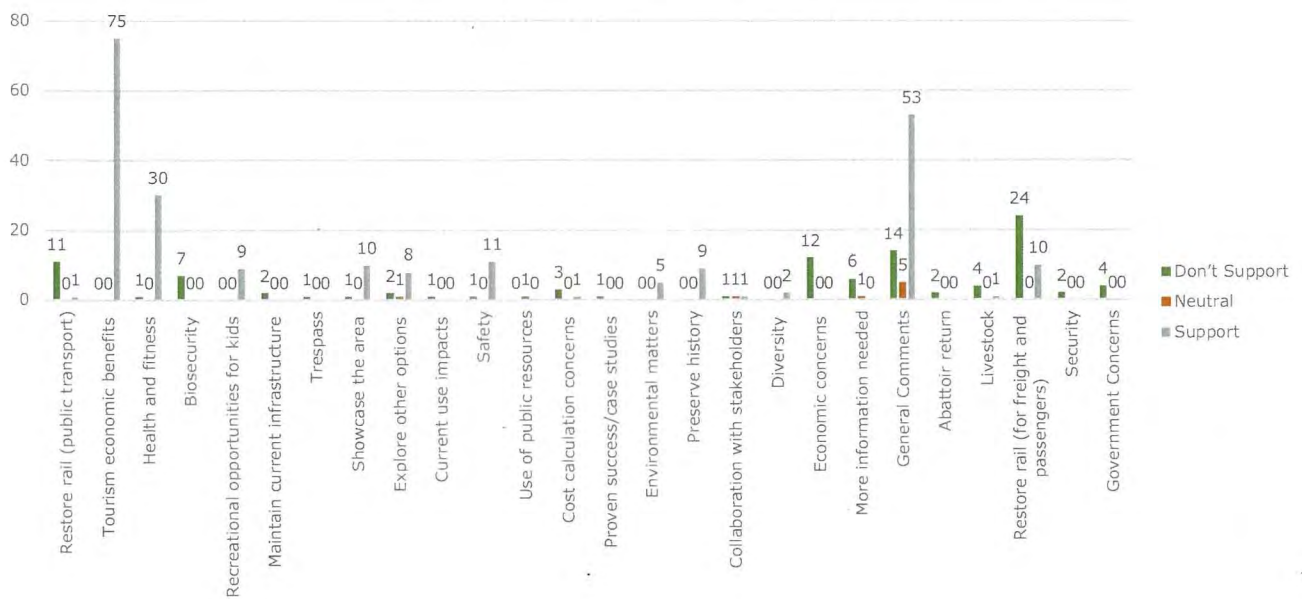
- Tourism economic benefits
- General comments (no specifics provided ...examples were: "Operating events" or "Rail trails are the future")
- Health and fitness

When comments were tallied regardless of sentiment towards rail trails, the majority of attendee comments reflected the following themes (refer to Graph 5 for detail):

- Tourism economic benefits
- General comments
- Restore rail (for freight and passengers)



Graph 4 – Comments by theme by sentiment



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Graph 5 – Comments by theme regardless of sentiment

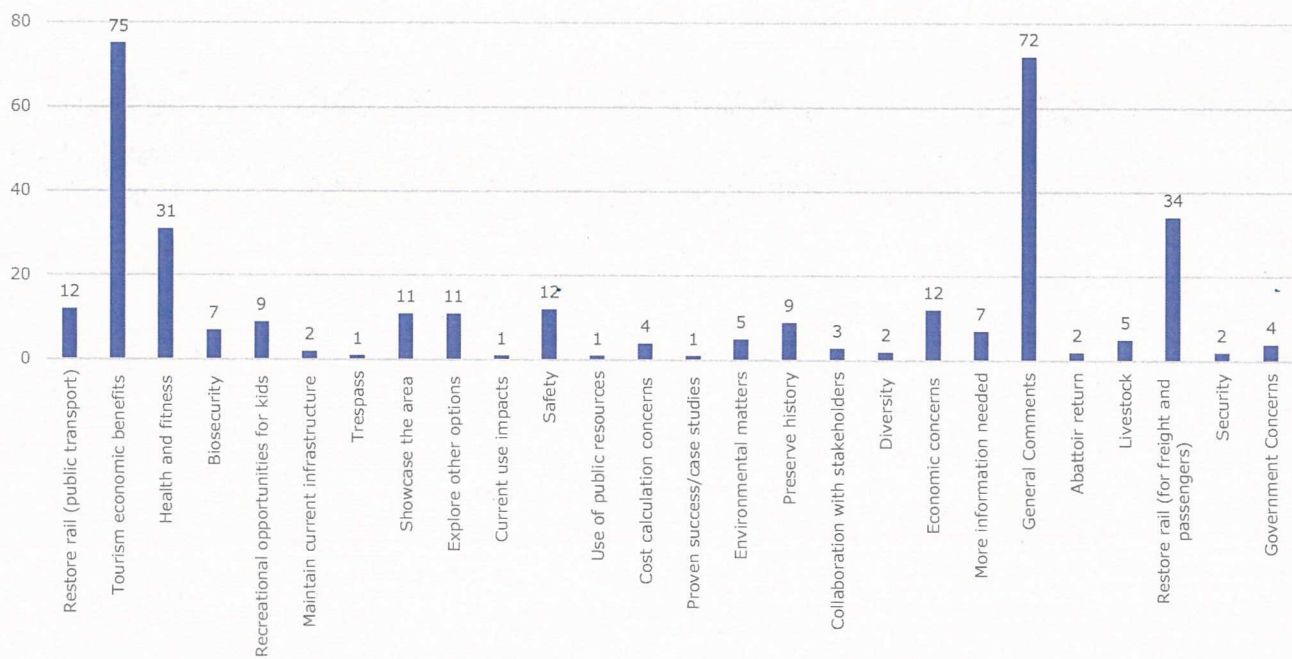


Table 4. Guyra Community perspectives

The following table includes the comments/points that were hand-written by attendees. The comments/points were placed on one of three boards, being 'Don't Support', 'Neutral' and 'Support'.

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
100	9	226
<i>Note: The wording provided in the table below has been faithfully transcribed from each of the written comments cards provided by the attendees, however in some cases, where short-hand, abbreviations, grammar and/or handwriting made it difficult to read, some edits have been made to aid readability.</i>		
Disadvantages the users/potential users of public transport	Would rather see bike/walking tracks around current locations like Mother of Ducks Lagoon or Little Llangothlin Lagoon	There is a need for all passenger light rail service to the North of Armidale as there us to the South
Aging community, needs a train service to attend specialist services	What facilities would be made available as we already get bike riders weeing on our fence?	In favour of the line being closed for a rail trail to be established. The region need the tourism dollars
Not in favour of closing and conversion - not other options considered for rail trail or re-established light rail services (can complement rail trains)	Sounds like stakeholders really need to work together	Give the community a tourism opportunity
I'm in favour of bringing back essential service such as rain services to the New England region. We have insufficient transport a growing and aging population and saying the demand is not there is not true.	I walk along line with permission of lease holders - how will this change if it reverts to Council?	Active tourism
No, leave the railway intact. The Great Northern line is already in place to link Victoria to Queensland now. What an asset to have!	We distrust Government because they have betrayed us over merges! Why trust now?	In favour, maximising full use of an asset and a great chance for development of economy and tourism
Open railway. Better for tourism	Hasn't been used for 30 years. Time to move on	Wallets on wheels
Return heritage/tourism rail services	Cannot see tourists coming here due to climate and a lack of things to do	Business will come to town and existing business will grow with a rail trail



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Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Reopen the line to provide a transport service to attract growth in the area	Why are only BIG projects considered for tourism?	I agree, because of benefits to local small communities as in B&Bs etc.
Like to have a rail for passengers from Glen Innes to Armidale.	New England highway is a major interstate route, yet is more like a back water road - why? If roads are like this, what hope for rail trail?	I have seen the benefits to communities when there is a rail trail
No to rail corridor closure. This is not a Guyra matter. It is for Armidale and all the communities in New England. We want our railway back. Public transport!		Creates growth
No to closure of rail corridor. We need train public transport within the region		In favour because of tourism
Don't quote health benefits please. More sun equals, more skin cancer.		The rail trail will provide much needed tourism health and eco benefits to Guyra. We need this rail trail
Biosecurity for farmers (both building the trail and usage)		Guyra needs the increase in business. Start the rail trail from the lamb.
Biosecurity, no information for either side. Where is the LLS on this?		The State Government is already promoting our region as a wine/food tourism area. This rail trail = wallets on wheels
Biosecurity issues		I see great economic benefits to the region resulting from a rail trail
Biosecurity		Great for tourism to our region
Biosecurity, not enough information		Great way to grow the local economy
Biosecurity risks		Guyra needs every economic opportunity to survive. Rail trail may provide this. The corridor has not for 25 years

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Biosecurity and weeds.		I see lots of bicycles on the back of caravans etc. passing through town. It would be nice to see them stop a little longer and spend some tourist dollars
Why throw away infrastructure that shared such vision?		It provides an economic growth future for generations to come
Fix/maintain current infrastructure		I am happy for a rail trail to be considered for the future viability of our town for the next generation
Trespass issues for adjacent farms		Rail trail will enhance shopping opportunities in Guyra - improve business
There aren't the supporting cafes restaurants etc. in Armidale. Most close on weekend.		Promotes economic development
Use existing "natural trail"		Good for tourism and bring more funds into community
Yes, to bike trail off the corridor. We already have the basic infrastructure on rural road network.		Rail trail in Guyra would be positive for new businesses to the town, which is slowly dying especially now. Guyra has lost its independent council.
Black Mountain is a wonderful village. Do not destroy it with a rail trail		Good for economy
I am concerned about safety on our roads. The amount and growing sizes of trucks are a real danger that is only getting worse. These freights could and should use rail corridors and trains.		Rail/walk trail would increase tourism opportunities
No. The costs are not proven. Weeds are not funded now.		People returning to town
Can costs be justified?		Tourism a large part of the economic future of the region
No rail trail. estimated costs can't be substantiated		We have lots of tourism opportunities that can be utilised to support rail trail

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Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Is there any evidence to real economic benefits from a rail trail?		We need more tourism in Guyra. The rail trail will provide this
Sounds like all the stakeholder need to communicate and work together		Rail trails provide much needed economic benefits to the Guyra community. Our communities need more customers.
Cost/benefit analysis		Increased paid accommodation rates
Maintenance, emergency procedures?		I see opportunities to open farm stay accommodation [REDACTED]
Due to financial matter these things need to be economically viable		Opening up for accommodation
Why should rate payers pay for a cycle way?		More tourism dollars
Cost of maintenance		Isn't investment and tourism the best way to preserve the heritage of the Great Northern line
Insurance etc.?		Possibility of reopening of village shops and accommodation
Costs of, less of revenue for adjoining land holders		Tourism is the future
Maintenance of weeds		Creates new business opportunities
As a rate payer, I do not want to be paying for a rail trail.		[REDACTED] and talking to locals in those areas. I believe a rail trail will bring tourist dollars to Guyra
Council cannot afford to maintain roads so how could rail trail be maintained?		Brings people into town
A waste of money for a few that will use it sometimes		Tourist dollars are worth as much as any other dollar
There is not a large enough population base within a reasonable distance for this project to be viable.		Help many businesses expand. Increased employment. More opportunities
Will rail trail provide vehicular access to the corridor aside from council trucks for maintenance?		Chance for Guyra to grown on increased economic activity from cyclists



Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Where rail and road cross - what is to stop vehicles driving along the rail trail?		This is a great opportunity to promote tourism and development in New England. How do we ensure a fear of change view is outweighed by reach for opportunities and growth?
Rail trail proponents' facts are not yet supported and may be guess work. No rail trail		Guyra needs economic growth for all residents and tourism via a rail trail will provide this
There is no credible feasibility study for rail trail proposal		Supports community and business in area
Perceived conflicts of interest of proponents of NERT		Rail trails deliver significant economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits to regional areas. Visitors using the rail trail bring money to a region and drive local economy
We need more important information for our area		Great place for visitors
Maybe		I want a rail trail. Close the line for beautification and bring people to town
Future generations will not have access to fuel, no way Government not considering this now?		Growth for dying town and surrounds
Only opposed if it stops the grazing leases.		Opening of new businesses in town
Weeds		It will turn a rural town into a tourist and local asset
Future use		Rail trail would keep small towns alive
Conversion of rail corridor to Crown Land compromises public ownership of former corridor as Crown Land can be disposed of with authority from Parliament		Potential extension of rail trail right to the Queensland border will enhance tourism for the Northern Tablelands as a whole
Register of bikes to use		Guyra needs tourism not trains
Rail with trail concept		To bring tourism

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Sanitation		Brings much needed people to the line area, which in turn creates jobs. We need jobs to keep our young people in the country
Because the railway line is 'generally' in total disrepair, could this be the harbouring factor as to why there has not been any recent proposals to use the rail for freight or public transport? If it was in working order, would this promote/encourage it to be used as a railway line		Jobs and growth
Why is there no night time consultation for working people who cannot get away for the day		More exposure for Guyra and Black Mountain. More tourists and spending
Conflict of interest [REDACTED]		Yes, to trail. Promotes tourism for small country towns e.g. Glencoe
Ripping up a railway line just for a few cyclists is ludicrous		In favour because it will increase tourism, thus increasing income to town, B&Bs and restaurants along the way
Have authorities done census from Wallangarra to Armidale residents who may want the line back?		100% of the under 20 families that have visited us this year would have used the rail trail (I asked them all)
When we get out abattoir up and going work for 400, they will need the rail		Provides business opportunities e.g. B&Bs, stores
I want the trains returned. What happens when the abattoir reopens?		Employment opportunities provided by a rail trail
What about stock movements across the rail trail?		Makes good use of a currently unused facility, creates visitation, good for businesses
Cattle crossing over		Towns like Guyra need extra tourists, rail trail will attract additional tourists
Have had stock on line who keeps the weeds down. Ride on back roads		Rail trail would promote new business and economic opportunities

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
and don't have to pay for it or maintain it		Creates tourism
Do not wish rail line to be pulled up as could be used in the future for transport, stock and fodder etc. not on roads		I strongly believe in the economic benefits that a rail trail could bring to our region - Guyra. Businesses are desperate for extra tourist dollars. Healthy benefits that come from cycling are keeping me mobile. Please close the corridor so people can have somewhere to ride
Leave rail way line in place for the future. It is a major interstate line and I am sure that it will be needed in the future. To rip it up for a few tourists it is irresponsible		Guyra needs to develop/create employment. Rail will not deliver a benefit to Guyra
We need our rail trail for future transport needs		We need the rail trail for the growth of the community
Open the rail for transporting goods and people from Armidale to Wallangarra		Without tourism, this region will just die. We need a rail trail yesterday. Our small towns cannot survive on agriculture any more
Open the rail for transporting goods and people from Armidale to Wallangarra		Boost economy of area, new businesses, attract new residents
Trains would increase tourism (as well as freight)		We need to boost the local economy. Need the development within the community
No to closure of rail corridor. Tourism should never destroy gross regional product infrastructure and regional economic growth		Health issues/benefits from rail trail are worth pursuing
Put trains back on the rail take trucks off the roads		Huge socioeconomic/health benefits
A railway line used for trains is of more benefit than a rail trail		I like the opportunity to do exercise with all my family in a safe (no cars and traffic) setting



Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Open the line		The trail will bring more positive health benefits to our regions families, kids and aged
No to the rail corridor closure - the network to Sydney is blocked by Werris Creek, Maitland coal traffic. Our train services must now go north to Queensland port and cities		Cycling events are well supported. Rail trail could facilitate even more
Open the rail from Armidale to Wallangarra		I support the rail trail. Guyra needs this project for health, tourism and economic benefits
Reopening the line gives access to the inland rail		Safety fitness areas
No to rail closure. We need NSW Government to reopen the rail for passengers and non-containerised freight to Brisbane port, Brisbane, Toowoomba and Welcamp		Social and health benefits
Reopen the line to create local jobs i.e. track maintainers		Encourages health and wellbeing by providing active activity for families and people of all ages
I'm in favour of retaining our railway and keeping the rail corridor open because to close it risks losing it and saying it will be reopened will never happen		Health benefits for local community and visitors of rail trail
Maintain the rail line. Reopen the line for freight and people. Export will come if the line is open.		In favour because of reduction of health care costs to Government
No rail trail. Bring back the rail as it failed 40 years ago and nothing has changed.		Rail trail will provide recreational, health and sporting benefits to the region
Reinstatement of rail services is a vital necessity. No to closure. Hands off the Great Northern railway Reopen the line to reduce pressure on local roads		Healthy benefits of outdoor activity for people
Rail has a much greater environmental benefit so why have they been neglected for so long?		We received funding for "healthy highlanders" for a number of years, this will continue the healthy lifestyle people adopted

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
Open the rail for transporting goods and people from Armidale to Wallangarra		Healthy activities for families, bring children and young parents as well as grey nomads
Return passenger and freight services		Rail trail provide much needed health benefits to the Guyra community
The rail line is still an asset even if it is not being used. Trains are still the most cost-effective transport.		Health benefits will be great for the community
As a rural resident, [REDACTED] my concern is that the rail trail will jeopardise my security and privacy		Health benefits for rail trail users fit people - less cost to the health system
Security to railway station currently preserved along line - I can see this being compromised		Increase in physical activity
Change of Government		I am in favour of a bike trail on the existing rail corridor
No real belief that the Government will keep ownership. Past history would give this out. Land titles office, electricity network, public housing.		Apart from the pool, there is not much to do in Guyra for families and teenagers. A rail trail would be great for health and to enjoy the outdoors
Can Government accurately fund costs to update railway line from Armidale to Glen Innes?		Great place to exercise safely for families
What happens if change of Government?		Health probably costs billions. Exercise saves billions
		Health benefits
		Health
		Health benefits of a rail trail
		Greatest obstacles to healthy lifestyle is lack of infrastructure
		Health and fitness corridor
		Health benefits
		Health benefits
		For our children's future

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		To add recreation for our kids in a safe place
		Our children need more recreational activities. The rail-trail will provide this
		We have an opportunity for our children and grandchildren. Let's take it
		As a family with children, the rail trail would be a wonderful recreational resource. It is flat and passes through some beautiful countryside
		I would love to use a rail trail with my kids many times each year
		I want my children to be able to stay here and work and live, if they choose
		Think of our kids and the younger generations who will only benefit (both physically and economically) from the rail trail
		Great resource for the students at Ben Lomond Public School
		I want other people to see, experience and enjoy our area
		People can experience our incredible array of produce
		I would like to see visitors riding through our beautiful region and spending time
		Showing our region
		Rail trails, great way for urban people to reconnect with their rural cousins
		People can experience our amazing four seasons
		Our region is beautiful and to see it by bicycle would be a joy - not threatened by cars or trucks



Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		Rail trail would preserve and showcase the local history/rail history
		Increased exposure to Black Mountain. Safe unsold blocks of land will occur
		Great way to enjoy the beauty of the great New England region and its climate
		No revenue of present corridor use, why not be innovative and give cycling a go
		Using abandoned asset in positive way
		The line is not in use. Let's do something for our town to stimulate the economy
		Rail trails are shared, use paths recycled from abandoned railway corridors for the enjoyment of all
		Other users, horse, mobility scooters etc.
		Yes because we need to use existing assets
		If it isn't being used for something it is wasted
		Yes, to trail let's use an unused resource
		Safe place to teach children to ride bikes - off the major highway
		Safety - removes a portion of road cyclists from roads (dangerous) to rail trail (safe)
		Safety is the biggest reason children and women does use cycling to improve health
		Roads kill kids on bikes
		Safe place to ride for families
		Safe place for families to stay active
		Safety for kids

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		I have had dozens of mums share their concerns about having a safe place for their children to ride, please close the corridor for a rail trail
		Safer bike riding zone
		Rail trails provide safe areas for all kids to ride and walk
		Provides safe place to exercise walk/ride
		Rail trail sounds very good idea for a small proportion of the population. But costs are way too low
		Rail trail will see that corridor is managed and weeds controlled
		A rail trail would keep the corridor in "better" condition than it is at present (weeds etc.)
		Yes because all issues raised i.e. grazing and weeds can be solved
		Close railway to then be able to make rail trail maintain rubbish, weeds and wild animals
		Beautification of the corridor. E.g. money raised from possible rail trail could go towards weed control, fencing etc.
		Showing our rail heritage
		Reconnect our towns and villages with Heritage
		People need a reason to come visit our fantastic region and celebrate our history
		Rail trails, history being told
		The opportunity to highlight historical aspects of railway (bridges, cuttings etc.) on bike trail - preservation of rail corridor

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		Will preserve the history of rail through museums and such
		Preservation of rail corridor by establishing a rail trail
		A rail trail would preserve the corridor
		Rail trail brings own rail heritage to a much bigger audience
		Can include all groups and stakeholders
		Rail trail would promote cultural and social opportunities and diversity
		Adds diversity to our community
		The future generations demand for local development outweigh the nostalgia and romanticism of past days glory of rail in New England that is uneconomic and unrealistic dreams
		By riding NERT you reconnect urban dwellers to their food/fibre production systems that NSW farmers are willing to showcase
		A rail trail would include participation from many community sectors
		Close the corridor between Armidale and Wallangarra. Bring on the rail trail
		To make history we need to move forward
		Creating vibrancy for towns and villages
		The money is there from Government, lets use it.

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		Unleash the opportunity. Expenses, history, heritage, increase in economic activity, opportunities, healthy options and social interaction.
		I want a positive future for the Guyra area
		This could be the start of something big for Guyra
		Rail service figures - Glen Innes Vic 12th largest train link agency in NSW sell \$80,000 tickets, collect \$35,000 rent concession. 4034 passengers, 304 buses a year
		Growth for dying town and surrounds
		City dwellers can get the train to Armidale and then ride a great rail trail Black Mountain to Ben Lomond (would be good if it could go all the way to Wallangarra), then buses can take tourists on into Queensland
		I would love for our visitors to extend their stay in the Guyra area and use the rail trail
		Cycleway capital cost is way less than railway capital costs
		You don't protect whaling heritage by reopening whaling stations. You don't protect rail heritage by opening uneconomic rail lines
		You have to build for further building to occur
		I want businesses to open in Guyra
		Operating events
		Footballers have footy fields, golfers have golf courses etc. Bike riders should have safe place to ride
		Know they work



Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		Why not start the rail trail from the Northern level crossing?
		Rail trail provides great link between road and mountain bike tracks
		Rail trails are shown to be viable in many parts of Australia and the world
		This is a positive solution for Guyra
		More children into schools
		Community programs/schools/families/tourism can all utilise
		Legacy for next generation
		40 years of data for trails, let's do it!
		I want my children and business to stay in Guyra and succeed
		We need new activities for our small community to survive. The corridor is closed to current rail use, it in conjunction with farmers
		Keeping young people in the town
		Rail trails are the future
		Economic stimulation
		Creates interest and fun
		What is the cost of current maintenance by John Holland?
		Maybe
		<div style="background-color: black; height: 1em; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 1em; width: 100%;"></div> A rail trail would be an enormous benefit for our business and the regional wine and food trail

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		Save our rail corridors with rail trails
		Rail trail should start in Armidale
		Need to look at making longer rail trail
		Everything else is closing why not the corridor
		Keeping in public ownership
		We will all meet lots of new people
		Because corridor remains Crown Land and can be returned to rail anytime
		Why not have a go
		A rail trail will ensure the corridor stays open by housing a used through link
		To be handed back as a dedicated rail corridor if needed
		How much of the current grazing is covered by legal agreement now?
		All parts of community can be catered for with parameters as well with configuration of corridor
		I want to see the Guyra region grow and thrive
		I am for rail trail because of financial impact available for communities
		<p>██████████ to see local rail trails and talk to the locals. We were very impressed by the rail trails. The social and economic benefits it has provided. Local people told us it was worth about 1 million dollars each month extra into the economy. Every person we spoke to was in favour. When many had not been prior. Lets get a rail trail and the sooner the better.</p>

Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017

Don't Support	Neutral	Support
		Farmers do not own the land therefore may need to move stock elsewhere (or de-stock)
		[REDACTED]
		A rail trail needs to be established as there is not adequate demands for passengers and freight for the reopening of the line for a train service
		This line has not been used in 30 years and is redundant when compared to existing and proposed lines of inland rail and connecting existing lines of Werris Creek to Narrabri/Moree that will join.
		Reality is that rail line development of GNRL will be very very unlikely in any 30-year future
		If the trains come back, what would be put on as freight
		[REDACTED] and over the past five years, I have never seen one of the anti-rail trail proponents use that service
		I agree with the rail trail going ahead. The existing rail line would have to be replaced if the rail corridor was to be reopened
		Yes because the line is unlikely to open to trains
		Rail transport would be great but there is no demand
		The rail and sleepers are no longer useable for a current rail line. It would be pulled up anyway

After the attendees were asked to provide written comments/concerns under the headings of 'Support', 'Do Not Support' or 'Neutral', it was clear that a range of common themes were emerging. Those themes were identified openly in the forum by the facilitation team with the attendees' participation and validation in real time.

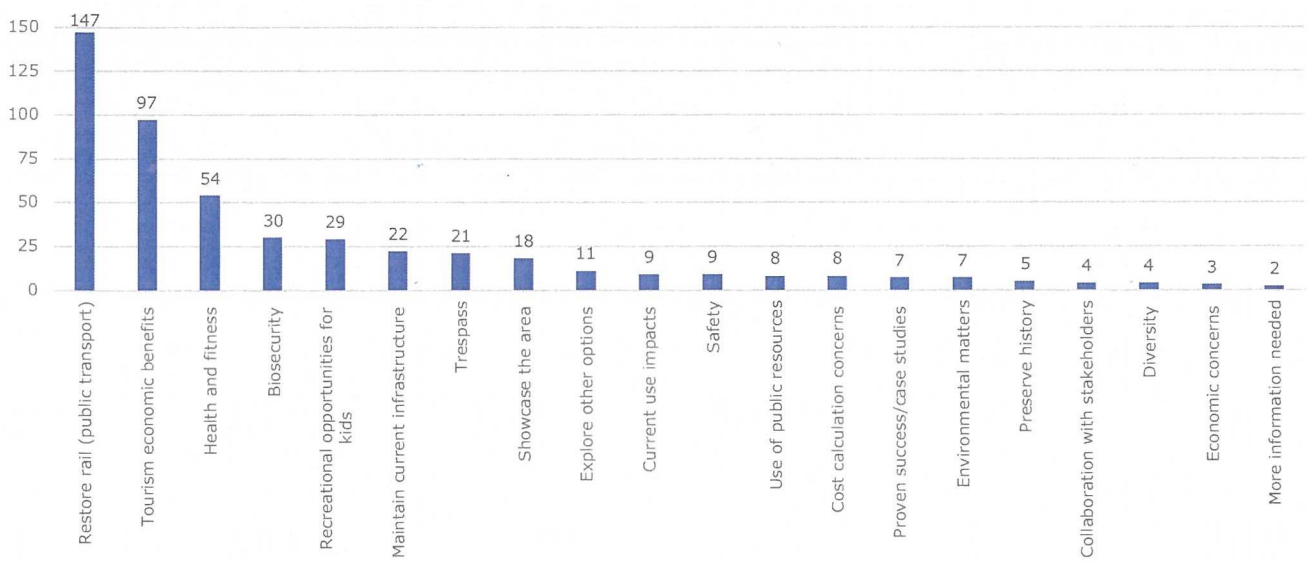
#### **Community Consultation Report | New England Rail Trail | December 2017**

Once the themes were collated, the attendees were then asked to indicate their views on which themes were their five (5) highest priorities. The graph below shows the result.

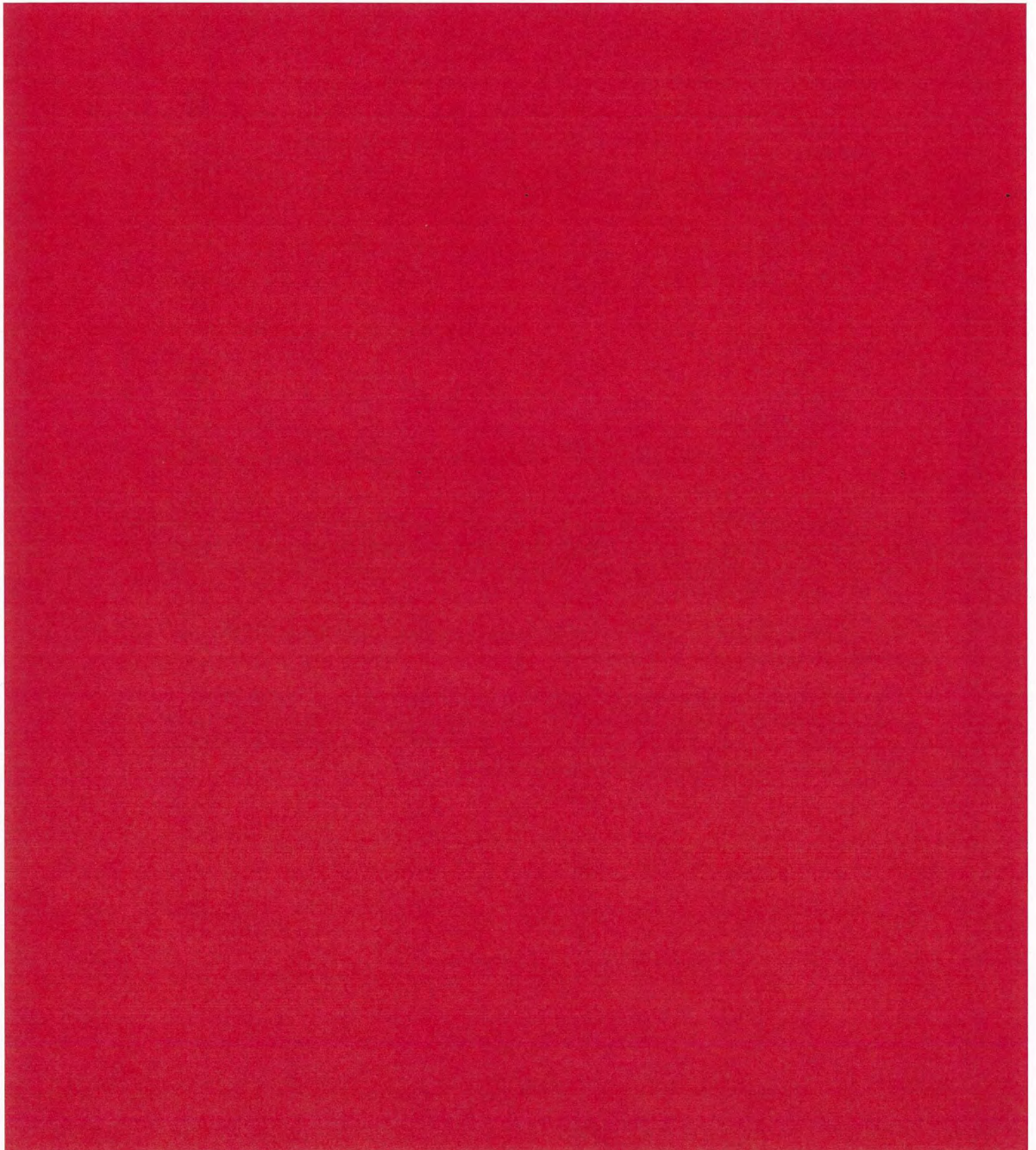
It should be noted that despite attendees being asked to only indicate their 5 highest priority themes during this session, a number of people were witnessed doing far more, this has distorted numbers for this section of the data analysis, but when both the questions and prioritisation of the themes from this session are brought together it is clear that a proportion of the attendees do have concerns about the aspects show in the graph below.



Graph 6 – Guyra Top 5 priority themes regardless of sentiment



## Written Submissions





## Written Submissions Analysis

Before during and after the Tenterfield and Guyra consultation sessions, people with an interest in the subject were invited to provide feedback to the Department of Premier and Cabinet. A total of 166 written submissions were received.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet has been made aware of two petitions via the consultation process – one online (<https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/save-the-great-northern-railway.html>) and one a traditional paper-based petition (with 55 signatories).

A summary of written feedback is provided in the table below:

<b>Written Feedback Sum and Categorised</b>	<b>Object to rail corridor closure</b>	<b>Supportive of rail trail</b>	<b>Other feedback</b>
Locals to New England and Northern Tablelands	41	55	3
Location not stated	37	6	1
Not located in New England and Northern Tablelands	22	1	0
<i>Totals</i>	100	62	4

The written submissions raised a range of issues similar to those raised in the consultations sessions and, in some cases, included provided commentary and background on historical, political, social, financial and environmental dimensions that were not provided through the consultation sessions.

In some instances, authors put forward alternatives to the outright closure of the rail corridor to accommodate a rail trail.

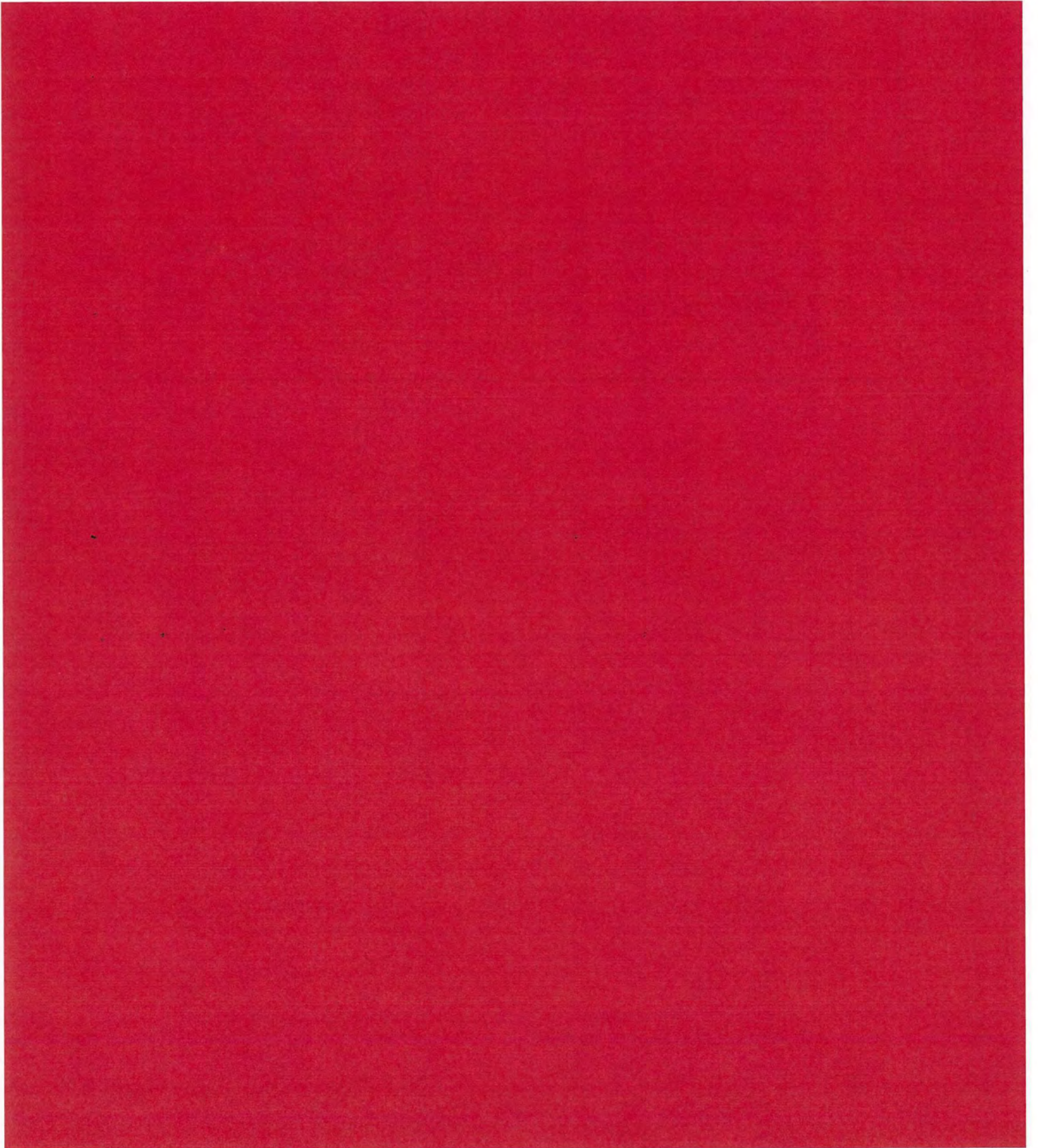
These alternatives included 'hybrid' suggestions that sought to accommodate the preservation of the rail infrastructure along with the installation of facilities that would accommodate rail trail-like pathways or for bicycle pathways to be considered on other routes (for example [The Bicentennial National Trail](#)).



# Appendices

Appendix 1: Word clouds

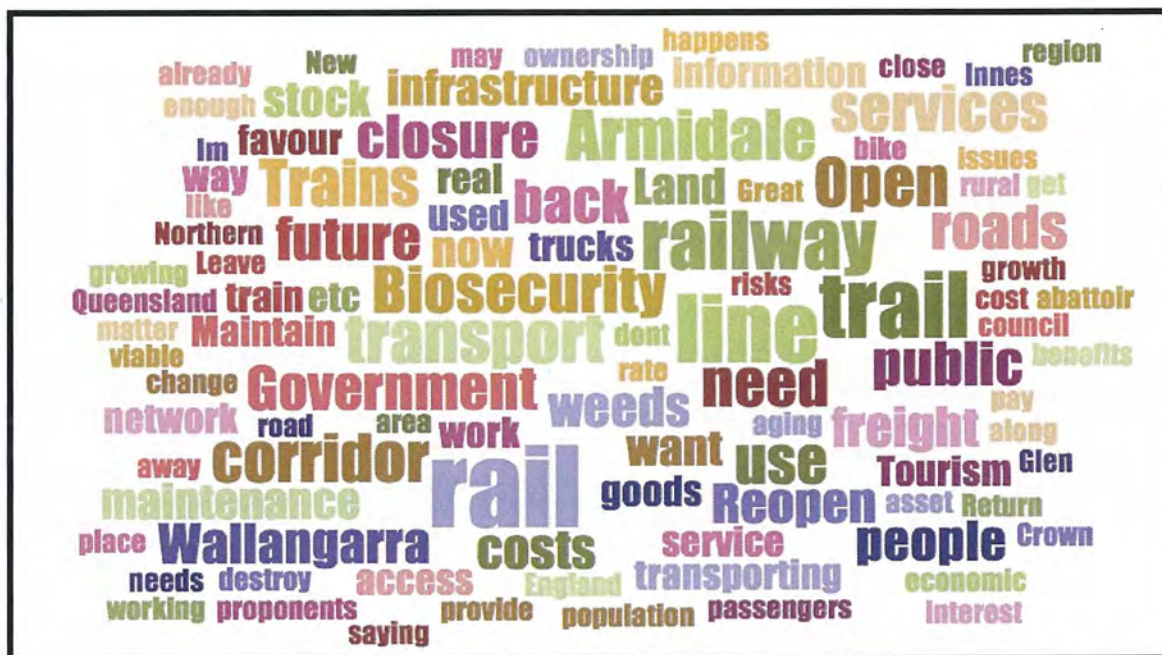
Appendix 2: Written Submissions (separate file)



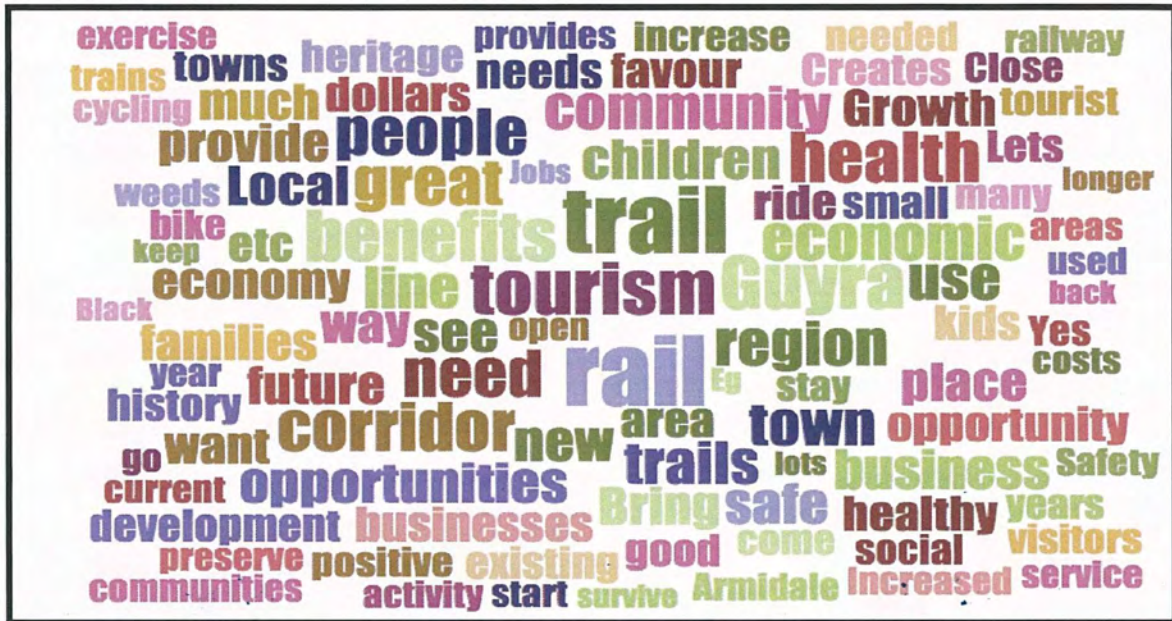


## Word Clouds

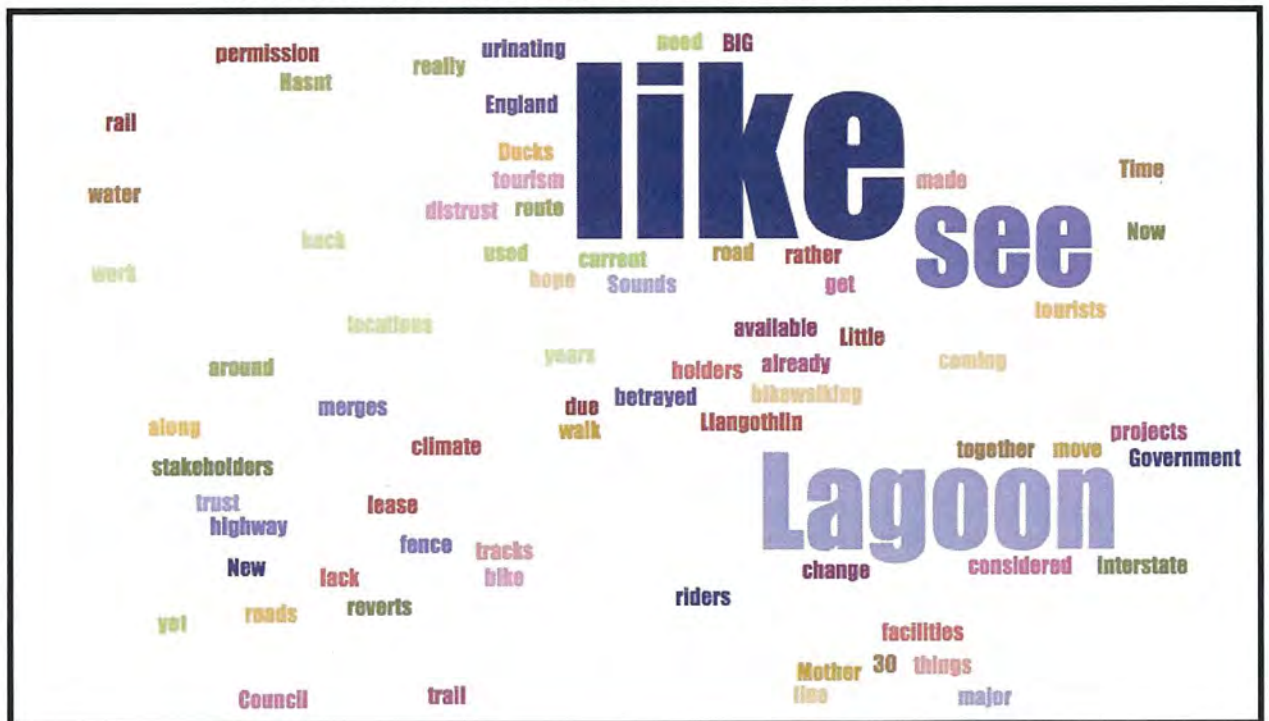
**Image:** 'Word-cloud' representation of the community consultation participant comments negative towards the NERT from both sessions.



**Image:** 'Word-cloud' representation of community consultation participant comments positive towards the NERT from both sessions.



**Image:** 'Word-cloud' representation of community consultation participant comments neutral towards NERT from both sessions.





**Image:** 'Word-cloud' representation of written submissions:

