

# Captains Flat Land Management Project

## Online information session - summary report

August 2024



Transport for NSW (Transport) held an online community information session on 9 April 2024 to update the community on remediation planning for Captains Flat, including the rail corridor and former Stations Masters Cottage (FSMC). The community was also invited to provide feedback on the Tarago Rail Corridor Remediation Options Assessment (ROA).

At the online event, Transport confirmed that procurement for the remediation of the Captains Flat Rail Corridor had been completed. Over the coming months, engineers and specialist consultants will be seen in the rail corridor as they conduct relevant investigations needed to reach the project milestones outlined in this report.

Demolition works are also planned to occur in the first quarter of 2025 for the FSMC. The community will be notified about specific timelines once they are confirmed.

Transport also presented the preferred Remediation Option for Tarago Rail Corridor, which is to remove the contaminated waste from Tarago and take it to the containment cell at Lake George Legacy Mine in Captains Flat.

The Remediation Options Assessment (**ROA**) was on public exhibition between **10 April** and **7 May 2024**. The event agenda, questions asked at the event and next steps for the project are summarised on the pages that follow.



## Summary of the online community information session

- A total of 24 community members attended the community information session, held online via Microsoft Teams.
- There were 91 registrations. 24 people were in attendance at the online session.
  - The Captains Flat Community Association attended with six residents.
- Paul McBain from Legacy Mines and Melinda Corey from Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council also presented and participated on the Q&A panel.
- The Q&A session ran for 50 minutes. The key questions raised and their corresponding answers have been captured below.
- Prior to the event, the community were invited to direct any questions about the project to [landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au) in advance of the meeting. Ten questions were received and responded to via email after the event.
- There was neutral sentiment at the meeting with positive engagement from the community throughout the Q&A session.

### Event agenda – 9 April 2024

The meeting agenda is outlined below. The [presentation slides](#) are available on Transport's [website](#).

Item	Time
Status update on the Captains Flat Remediation Options assessment (ROA) and Remediation Action Plan (RAP)	5 mins
Overview of works to occur in 2024 - 2025	5 mins
Related projects, including Bungendore and Bungendore to Captains Flat	5 mins
Captains Flat former Station Masters Cottage – future heritage interpretation and consultation.	5 mins
Presentation with guest speakers	15 mins
Tarago Remediation Options Assessment	10 mins
Q&A with audience	45 mins

### Awareness of the online community information session

Information regarding the online event and public exhibition were communicated via the following channels.

- Direct emails:
  - Emails to community subscriber database
  - Email to Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
  - Email to State Member for Monaro, Steve Whan MP
  - Email to The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP (Minister Regional Transport and Roads)
- Targeted paid Facebook promotion to Captains Flat region for the online event between 2 – 9 April:
  - Reach: 23,319
  - Engagements: 117
  - Clicks to registration page: 792.



## Community consultation

Transport invited feedback from the community on the preferred option for the Tarago Rail Corridor Remediation Options Assessment (ROA).

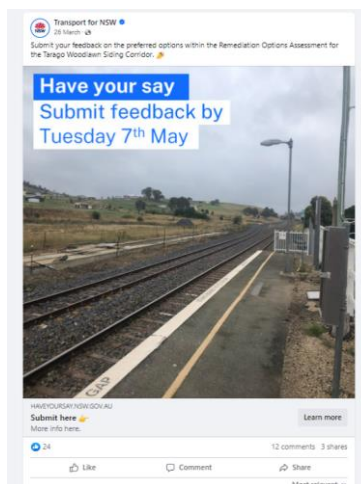
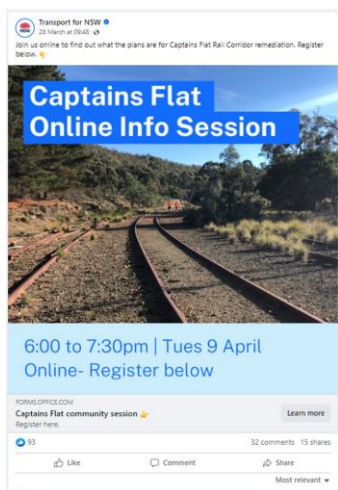
The findings from the consultation can be found in *Appendix One: Tarago Rail Corridor ROA public exhibition feedback summary*.

The ROA was open to the public for feedback for 28 days from 10 April – 7 May 2024. A total of 37 submissions were received.

Feedback was submitted via [landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au) or online via [www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/tarago-rail-corridor](http://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/tarago-rail-corridor).

## Promotion of public exhibition

- Direct emails:
  - Emails to community subscriber database
  - Email to Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
  - Email to State Member for Monaro, Steve Whan MP
  - Email to The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP (Minister Regional Transport and Roads)
- Targeted Facebook posts to Captains Flat and surrounding region between 30 April – 7 May 2024, promoting the Tarago Rail Corridor ROA public exhibition:
  - Reach: 18,857
  - Engagements: 40
  - Link clicks to Have Your Say website: 466.



## Questions raised at the community information session

A mix of questions were received during the Q&A portion of the information session, both verbally and in the meeting chat. The following questions were verbally raised by attendees at the meeting.

**1. What remediation work is being planned for the south end of Foxlow Street, from the RSL to the Kindergarten?**

Council is considering the individual lead abatement plans and remediation options for public land in Captains Flat. This includes working with Regional NSW around timeframes for the waste disposal cell. Further community engagement will occur prior to works commencing.

**2. The original reports were drafted back in 2021 - why has it taken so long to provide these reports to the community?**

All reports have been distributed through the Taskforce and Transport's website. We are aware that the reports may not have been easy to find in the past. This issue has been resolved and all reports can be found in the reports tab on the Transport website.

**3. How can Transport justify remediating private land in Tarago but not private land in Captains Flat? You have established a precedent of buying private land.**

Transport takes responsibility for the contamination of Tarago former Station Masters Cottage. It was Transport's activities that caused the contamination of the Site, as evidenced in the Detail Site Investigation and technical report. As the polluter, Transport works under *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997* and is responsible for cleaning up any offsite migration. As such we went through a series of investigations and did negotiate to acquire in this instance. However, there is no evidence that the contamination from the rail corridor has migrated to other private land holdings within the community.

**4. Now that the mine no longer exists, are Legacy Mines responsible for remediating private land?**

No, the Legacy Mines Program assists land managers with reducing public safety and environmental risks of historic and abandoned mines. Remediation projects facilitated by the Legacy Mines Program are undertaken in partnership with landowners and managers. It is the landowner's responsibility to address the remediation of the land.

**5. Given that 73% of community were against the demolition of the cottage, how can Transport justify the preferred option?**

While not preferable, there were concerns for the ongoing structural integrity of the cottage. Constraints include asbestos in the walls, lead, dust, and the associated health risks with moving the structure. It is impractical for Transport to fully remediate the site.

**6. Have you budgeted for damage to the road by trucks transporting the contaminated waste? Council has just upgraded that road.**

Transport is currently in discussions with Council to determine what assessments are required and possible costings associated with the use of Council-owned roads. The outcome of these meetings will help us determine the next steps including suitable arrangements to manage potential impact to the roads and community resulting from additional traffic.



**7. Is there enough space in the containment cell for both Tarago and Captains Flat contamination?**

The current cell is designed for 100,000m<sup>3</sup> and allows for the known sites around Captains Flat, including the areas of priority for Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council. There may need to be a redesign of the containment cell to add the quantity of contaminated soil from Tarago, if that option is progressed.

Transport does have alternate options if the preferred option within the Tarago Rail Corridor Remediation Options Assessment is not approved.

**8. Given that there is an ongoing risk due to lead, asbestos, and animals grazing, are there any plans in approaching the corridor remediation in stages rather than waiting for the assessment for the whole rail corridor?**

The regulatory framework is set by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and Transport does not have the authority to influence it. We need to follow the approval process to understand and delineate each site before we can move to remediation. We have identified a certain level of risk and need to do further analysis before any remediation can occur. We are working as quickly as possible and are looking into water courses and conducting ecological risk assessments, and the like to determine the full impact. We understand that the process does take some time.

**9. Why can't Transport just go on site and put in a sealant now?**

A bitumen seal doesn't necessarily stop site migration. The *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997* requires that Transport fully understands what is happening before we can do remediation or any other activity. This is set by the legislation and enforced by the NSW EPA and site auditor.

**10. The local pool works will include the removal of contamination near verges. Where is that contamination going to go?**

Council is looking at remediation options. The final option will likely include capping and containment works.

**11. We don't have a lot of information on the Southern dump and there is a lot of disjointed land. Will there be another session with Legacy Mines to help the community understand what you are doing?**

The Legacy Mines Program will contact the Community Association and discuss the technical information required and future community sessions.

**12. Who is remediating the old preschool?**

Council is looking at remediation options for the old preschool. For any council managed Crown Lands, we will consult with the community on the remediation options.

## Online chat questions

The questions below were asked within the chat function of the online event and verbally responded to during the event.

**13. Will the other areas within the village that were indicated in the report with high levels of lead found be remediated?**

This will depend on whether it's Crown land or Council land. Council and Crown Lands are looking at the options.



**14. What implications are there for any future rail trail on the old rail line? Might've missed it but didn't hear any specific mention of rail corridor remediation.**

Transport plans to finish remediation investigations by first quarter 2025. Rail trails must go through a Council approval process. If you would like to see a rail trail at the site in the future, you will need to engage with Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council.

**15. Why was the option to demolish (and rebuild after remediation) the former station masters house not really considered when the former owners raised it? Now it seems like a forgone conclusion despite the community's resistance to it and our desire to remain on site and continue living in the community we loved.**

There were concerns for the ongoing structural integrity of the cottage. It is not practical for Transport to fully remediate the site.

**16. Is the containment cell going to be big enough for all the soil from Captains Flat and the additional soil from Tarago? Or is a bigger cell planned if the Tarago waste is approved to come to Captains Flat?**

The current cell is designed for 100,000m<sup>3</sup>. A redesign of the containment cell may need to occur in order to add the quantity of contaminated soil from Tarago, if that option is progressed.

**17. How is the road going to hold up with that many truck movements? Is Transport including the cost of road restoration into the budget?**

Transport will consider the potential impacts to the roads. We are currently in discussions with Council to determine what assessments are required and possible costings associated with the use of Council-owned roads. The outcome of these meetings will help us determine the next steps including suitable arrangements to manage potential impact to the roads and community resulting from additional traffic.

**18. Have you considered a second cell for private land?**

Council is working with Regional NSW (RNSW) regarding the existing capacity at the current cell, the size of which is a current constraint. Council recognises this a critical issue for the community. Council will continue to work with RNSW and relevant agencies to secure the cell for the remediation of private land in Captains Flat.

**19. What testing did EPA complete on private residences?**

You will need to contact the EPA for information relating to testing on private residences. They can be reached at [info@epa.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@epa.nsw.gov.au) or call 131 555.

Results from EPA testing on private properties will be shared with the landowner and resident, and with the local council and the Department of Regional NSW for specific purposes if consent is provided.

General information regarding testing be found on the Captains Flat Taskforce website: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/captains-flat>

**20. Where are you proposing to dig the containment cell?**

The containment cell is proposed to be located on the Northern Dumps. This is the large grass area opposite (north) of the lookout car park.



**21. How deep will the containment cell be and what are you going to do with the contaminated material that is dug up to construct it?**

The top one to two metres of the Northern Dumps is clean material imported when remediation of the site occurred in 1976. Approximately one metre of this soil will be excavated and reused in the capping of the containment cell. The cell will be mainly built above the current ground level and then contoured back into the landform and revegetated. The design is currently being finalised and will be available on the Legacy Mines Program website once complete.

**Next steps for Captains Flat Remediation Planning**

The following works are planned to progress the remediation of Captains Flat Rail Corridor and former Station Masters Cottage. Timeframes may be subject to change, depending on weather and planning approvals.

Works	Due date
Third party access approval from UGL	Completed
Public exhibition of the Review of Environmental Factors and Statement of Heritage Impact for the cottage	November 2024
Biodiversity management	January 2025
Supplementary Site Investigation and Interim Audit Advice	February 2025
Detailed design and engineering	March 2025
*Completion of the Review of Environmental Factors and Statement of Heritage Impact for the rail corridor	March 2025
Remediation Action Plan for the corridor and cottage, and Interim Audit Advice	April 2025
Remediation works commence	December 2025 – April 2026

\*The Review of Environmental Factors and Statement of Heritage Impact for Captains Flat Rail Corridor is managed by Regional NSW. Details regarding consultation of the Review of Environmental Factors have not been confirmed by Regional NSW.

**Appendix One: Tarago Rail Corridor Remediation Options  
Assessment public exhibition feedback summary**

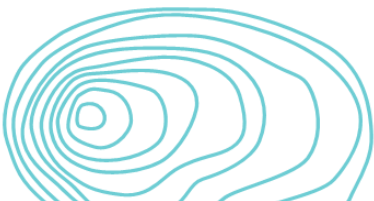
Transport for NSW (Transport) hosted an online information session for the Captains Flat community on the 9 April 2024.

At the event, Transport invited feedback on the Tarago Rail Corridor Remediation Options Assessment (ROA) and announced Transport’s preferred option of taking the contaminated waste from Tarago Rail Corridor to the containment cell at Lake George Legacy Mine in Captains Flat.

The community was invited to provide written feedback on the preferred remediation option during a public exhibition phase which ran from the 10 April to 7 May 2024.

Transport received a total 37 submissions during the public exhibition phase:

- 27 submissions were received via online via the Have Your Say website
- 10 submissions were received via [landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au).



The majority of feedback received opposed Transport's preferred option to take the contaminated waste from Tarago to Captains Flat containment cell, although some support for the preferred option has been received. Community sentiment and feedback received during the public exhibition period has been summarised below.

### Positive/neutral sentiment

A total of six (6) submissions either supported Transport's preferred option or were neutral. Three (3) of these submissions did not object to the preferred option, under the proviso that the condition and safety of the roads were considered and well maintained, particularly following the recent investment in upgrading local infrastructure.

Overall, key themes in the feedback included:

- Concerns for negative impact on recently upgraded roads (3)
- Support for the containment cell as the most cost-effective remediation option (2)
- Support for the containment cell as the safest remediation option (1)
- Would like to see remediation happen so that development can occur (1)
- Concerns that actual project costs will be vastly different when compared to projected costs (1).

### Negative sentiment

A total of 31 submissions opposed the preferred remediation option in the Tarago Rail Corridor ROA. Key themes in the feedback were:

- **Impacts on town infrastructure (21 comments)**
  - Concerns for the negative impact on recently upgraded local roads (21).
- **Impacts on remediation of private land (20 comments)**
  - Concerns that the preferred option will impact residents' ability to dispose of residential contamination at the containment cell. (11)
  - Want the removal of local residential waste to take priority of place at the containment cell. (9)
- **Impacts on the health and wellbeing of Captains Flat community (16 comments)**
  - Concerns for additional pollution and health risks associate with the preferred option (7)
  - Concerns for that the preferred option is insensitive to locals and that their town is being treated as dumping ground for contaminated waste (7)
  - Concerns for how the preferred option will impact on property prices (2)
  - Would like homes to be cleaned once remediation has occurred (1)
  - Request for a rail trail between Captains Flat and Bungendore to be prioritised (1).
- **Suggestions for alternative remediation options (9 comments)**
  - Would prefer the Tarago contamination to be remediated onsite at Tarago (8).
  - Supports Transport's second preferred option or relocating the contaminated waste at Tarago to a suitably licenced facility (1)
  - Suggestions for ways to expedite the remediation process (1).
- **Community consultation (6 comments)**
  - Not enough consultation undertaken with the community to develop the Tarago Rail Corridor ROA (5)
  - Would prefer simpler communications regarding the matter (1)
  - Request to consult on a proposed extension of the Heritage Trail to Beverly Hills Road crossing (1).



## Other feedback

Additional feedback was received in relation to the contaminated land management project at Tarago. Comments included:

- Opposition to demolishing the Tarago former Station Masters Cottage (3).
- Requests for Transport to clean and maintain the assets within the Tarago Rail Corridor (1)
- Suggestions for waste train logistics and placement at Tarago (1)
- Requests to move the Tarago Stockpile contaminated waste by sequestering it within a tailing pond at Woodlawn Eco Precinct (1).

## Contact us



Project Infoline **1800 491 566**



**landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au**



**<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/captains-flat-contamination>**



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