

Alternative Alignment for River Release Pipeline – Frequently Asked Questions

July 2026

1. Alternative Alignment for River Release Pipeline

Why is an alternative alignment being proposed?

Sydney Water is proposing an alternative alignment for the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula Water cycle management (GPOP) river release pipeline for advanced treated water.

We've undertaken a range of technical capability investigations, and an alternative alignment has been identified using the latest tunnelling methods. This option also addresses many of the community concerns raised during the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), such as construction impacts and environmental impacts. Sydney Water has refined the alignment to better respond to this feedback.

We are pursuing this option through a change to the EIS, via an Amendment report. We are also undertaking additional community consultation to promote the updated alignment and understand community views.

Why is this new pipeline and new water resource recovery facility (WRRF) needed?

This project is essential to support wastewater services for the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) area, including supporting projected population and employment growth.

Wastewater from the GPOP area is currently transported via the Northern Suburbs Ocean Outfall Sewer (NSOOS) to the North Head Water Resource Recovery Facility, which services around 1.7 million people across Sydney's northern and western suburbs.

With the projected population and employment growth, these critical assets are expected to reach capacity in the early 2030s. The project will help alleviate pressure on the NSOOS, strengthening the reliability, efficiency and sustainability of the Sydney Water network, and helping to provide dependable services for the growing local community and surrounding region.

What is the alternative alignment?

The alternative alignment differs from the alignment that was displayed in the EIS. It would be built largely through deep underground tunnelling, reducing the construction impacts to many local communities at the surface.

The alternative alignment would tunnel from the Camellia–Rosehill Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) to Silverwater Park. From Silverwater Park, the alignment would tunnel beneath the Parramatta River to George Kendall Riverside Park. From there, it would continue alongside the Parramatta River through to Meadowbank Park. From Meadowbank Park, the pipeline will be above ground, and continue along Meadow Crescent through to Memorial Park, ending at the river release point near the John Whitton Bridge.

The alignment from Meadowbank Park through to Memorial Park and to the river release location remains unchanged.

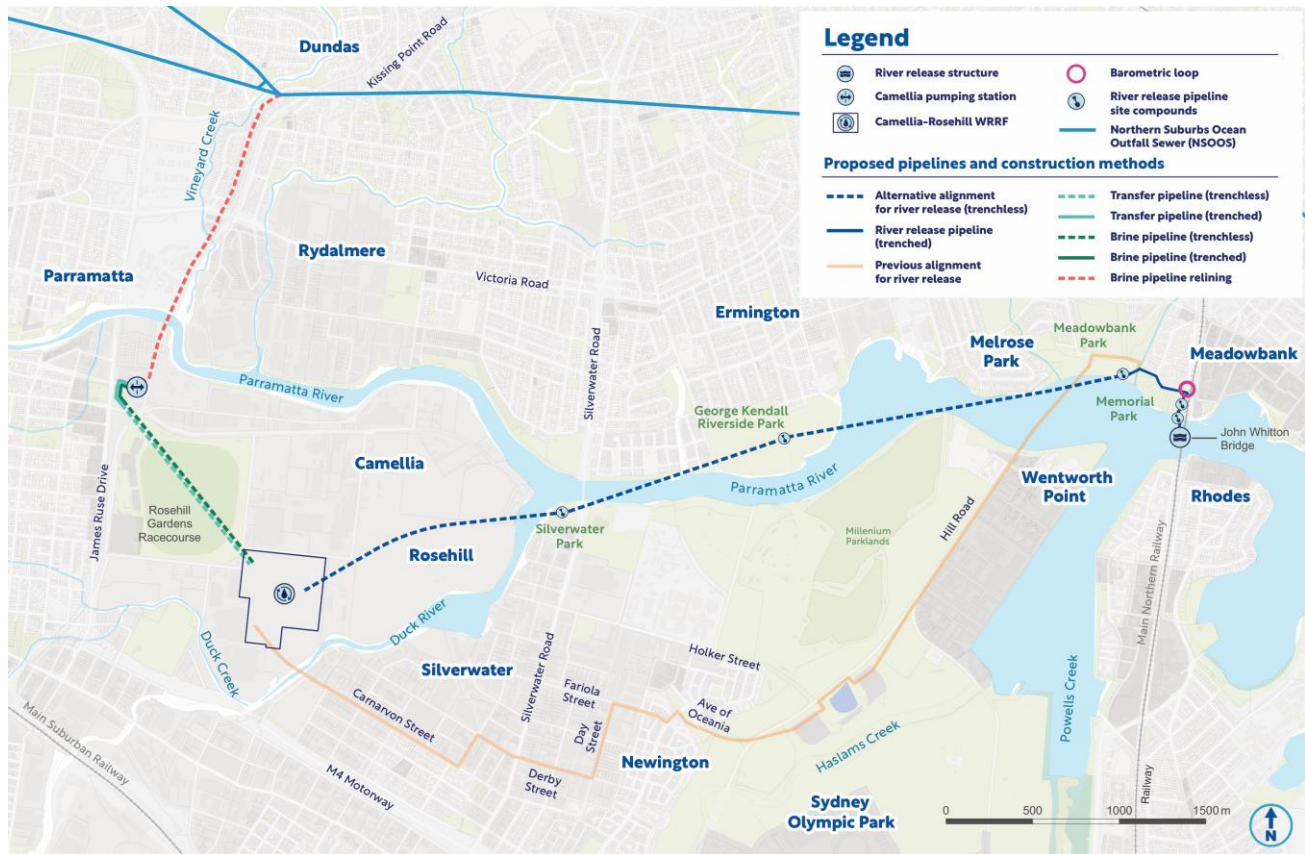


Image: map of the Alternative Alignment for River Release Pipeline

Why is Memorial Park still impacted by the alternative alignment?

Memorial Park remains impacted because it sits in a location where surface works are required to construct the infrastructure to the river release point next to John Whitton Bridge.

It is also the best location for the river release of the advanced treated water due to the greater depths in the Parramatta River. Locations to the west and south of this were deemed unsuitable due to shallower depths and greater risk of disturbing contaminated sediments on the river floor.

How is it different from the alignment for the river release in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

The previous alignment proposed in the EIS was primarily designed to use open trench construction through local streets in Silverwater and Newington. That meant sections of the road would be dug up so the pipeline can be laid from the surface. From Newington, construction of the pipeline was primarily proposed as a tunnel, located deep underground from Pierre De Coubertin Park to the Sydney Olympic Park (SOPA) carpark on Hill Road and from there tunnelling would continue under Hill Road, Wentworth Point, Parramatta River to Meadowbank Park.

The alternative alignment moves to a primarily tunnelled construction methodology and sees the alignment largely moved underground on the north side of Parramatta River. Instead of working along local streets and close to homes and businesses, more of the construction would be localised to parks.

What are the benefits of the alternative alignment?

The alternative alignment shortens the pipeline by around 2.3 kilometres and allows significantly more of the construction to be carried out underground using tunnelling.

It also reduces the number of temporary construction compounds along the route compared to the original alignment in the EIS.

Tunnelling means less above ground work in neighbourhood areas and more of the project happening out of sight underground. This reduces surface disruption on most neighbourhood streets and has less impact on traffic and the environment

The alternative alignment will also reduce:

- Overall cumulative impacts for the area by reducing interactions with other major infrastructure projects along the current alignment, such as Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 and Sydney Metro
- Less traffic and noise impacts for the community by keeping majority of construction in public open space areas
- Overall cost of the project providing greater value for money for Sydney Water and our customers

How does the alternative alignment reduce impacts on the community?

The alternative alignment reduces impacts on much of the community in several ways, including:

- Reducing disruption during construction, with a shorter pipeline that makes better use of open space along the Parramatta River and reduces impacts on the number of local parks from seven to four.
- Reducing the number of construction sites, with temporary site compounds decreasing from fifteen to six.
- Minimising impact on streets and neighbourhoods, with more tunnelling and less open trench work on local roads.
- Reducing impacts on parks, vegetation and surrounding areas, with less construction space needed and lower visual impacts
- Delivering better value for money for Sydney Water customers

Why wasn't this alignment originally included in the EIS?

The alternative alignment was not included in the EIS as it emerged following further technical investigations on the latest tunnelling capabilities undertaken after the EIS was prepared. These investigations identified the alternative alignment as a feasible option.

Community and stakeholder feedback gathered during the EIS engagement and exhibition period has also led Sydney Water to refine the alternative alignment to minimise community and environmental impacts.

As a result, the alignment is now being progressed through an amendment to the EIS that will be exhibited for community feedback toward the end of 2026.

Could the previous alignment still be approved?

Sydney Water is seeking approval by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) for the amended project scope related to identified alternative alignment.

What was the key feedback received in the EIS?

Most community EIS submissions objected to the proposal. Key issues that were raised included pipeline alignment, vegetation removal, contamination, property impacts, construction traffic, parking and pedestrian safety, park access, and consultation approach.

A response to the submissions will be published as a Submissions Report in late 2026. The report will respond to feedback from community and government agencies and identify actions taken since exhibition.

What are the construction impacts?

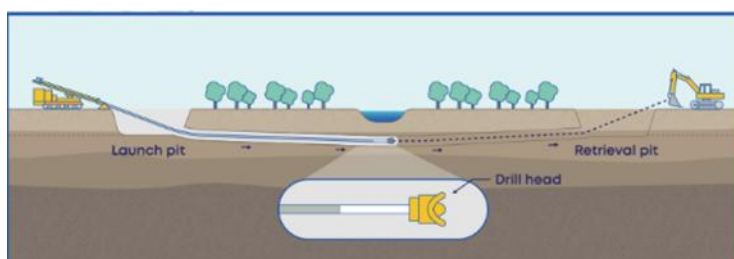
Although the alternative alignment has been designed to reduce construction impacts, we know construction near homes and in public spaces can be disruptive. We'll work with communities to manage impacts and put practical mitigation measures in place. All areas will be restored once work is complete.

- Temporary site compounds

Construction compounds are planned for sections of Silverwater Park, George Kendall Riverside Park, Meadowbank Park, Memorial Park, the Bowden Street car park near John Whitton Bridge, and the Camellia WRRF site.

- Tunnelling (trenchless)

Most of the pipeline will be built underground using tunnelling. Work will take place up to 55 metres below ground. Tunnelling at these depths significantly reduces overall construction impacts. Launch and retrieval pits for the drills have localised impacts at compounds where this work is taking place.

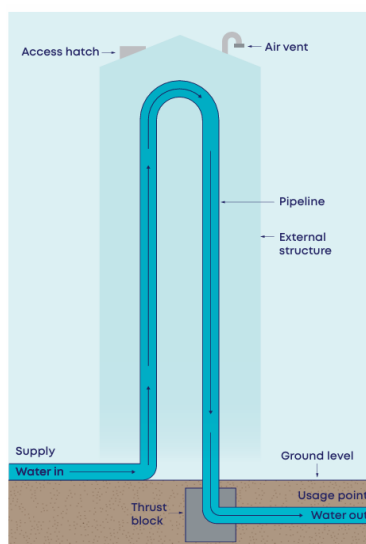


- Open-trench construction

A short section of the pipeline will be built using an open trench. This involves digging a trench, installing the pipe, then backfilling and restoring the area once work is complete. Construction impacts include noise, dust and traffic disruption. However, this method is typically quicker than tunnelling, with progress of around 10 to 25 metres per day. This section remains unchanged from the EIS.

- Barometric loop

A barometric loop is planned near the existing toilet block in Memorial Park and would be 3 metres below ground and 5 metres above ground, including its casing. A barometric loop is a section of pipe that rises above ground and loops back down in an upside-down u-shape. It is used on pressurised pipes to stop draining from a high point when pumps are turned off. This will be a permanent fixture.



How will we reduce construction impacts?

We will use a range of measures to reduce disruption, including:

- temporary noise barriers around work areas
- monitoring noise and vibration levels
- scheduling breaks between higher-impact activities
- limiting the amount of equipment operating at the same time and location
- using quieter, non-tonal reversing beepers on vehicles
- turning off equipment when not in use
- giving advance notice of noisier works.

Where higher noise is expected, we will contact nearby residents to explain what's happening, how long it will last, and what we are doing to minimise impacts.

What parks are impacted by the alternative alignment?

The alternative alignment has been designed to minimise impacts as much as possible. It reduces the number of local parks that are impacted from seven to four.

Four local parks will have temporary site compounds. These include:

- Silverwater Park, Silverwater
- George Kendall Riverside Park, Ermington
- Meadowbank Park, Meadowbank
- Memorial Park, Meadowbank

How will parks be impacted?

Parks along the updated pipeline alignment will be temporarily impacted during construction. This is mainly to support construction compounds, drilling activities and pipe installation. Impacts will vary by location, but will generally include:

- Temporary construction compounds erected in areas within parks. These compounds will be used for site offices, storing equipment and materials to support tunnelling and pipeline installation.
- Construction activity. Works will occur during standard construction hours (typically 7am–6pm weekdays, with some Saturday work), with some activities such as pipe installation operating 24/7 during certain periods. Construction may be in place for up to 20-24 months depending on the location.
- Temporary changes to access and use such as partial closure of sections of parks or sports fields
- Temporary detours for pedestrian and cycle paths
- Temporary changes to parking or vehicle access
- Managed interactions between park users and construction traffic where required

How long will the parks be impacted for?

Depending on the location and construction activity, site compounds may be in place for up to 2 years (including site establishment, tunnelling activities and park restoration).

Tunnelling activities in parks will take around 18-24 months and will operate during standard construction hours – 7:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday, with periods of night works.

How will the community be kept informed?

We will continue to keep the community informed through a range of regular and accessible engagement activities throughout the project.

This includes:

- Community information sessions and webinars to share updates, explain the proposed alignment and answer questions directly
- Ongoing face-to-face engagement, including doorknocking homes near the proposed alignment to provide information and discuss impacts with residents [
- Project updates and key reports, including the Response to Submissions report and the Amendment Report, which will be publicly exhibited and available on the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's Planning portal
- Online information and resources via the project website, including timelines, updates and technical information
- Direct notifications to the community ahead of construction or any higher-impact works, including details on timing and mitigation measures

We also encourage ongoing feedback from the community, which will continue to inform planning, design and delivery of the project.

How can I find out more about the alternative alignment?

We are hosting a number of events which you are invited to attend.

In person information sessions will be held at:

- Thursday 16 July 2026 1:00pm – 4:00pm, George Kendall Riverside Park, Ermington
- Saturday 18 July 2026 10:00am – 2:00pm, Silverwater Park, Clyde Street, Silverwater
- Saturday 1 August 10:00am – 2:00pm Memorial Park, Meadowbank
- Thursday 6 August 1:00pm – 4:00pm Meadowbank Park, Meadowbank
- Saturday 8 August 10:00am – 2:00pm Meadowbank Park, Meadowbank

Online information sessions will be held:

- Community webinar Wednesday, 15 July 2026 7:00pm – 8:00pm
- Community webinar Monday 27, July 2026 12:00pm – 1:00pm

For more information on our events, please visit the website www.sydneywater.com.au/gpop

We're here to answer your questions and hear your feedback on this important project. Please email us at gpopproject@sydneywater.com.au or call 1800 172 263 during business hours.

We'll continue to work with local communities and keep you updated as the project progresses

Is there an opportunity for the community to comment on the alternative alignment?

We encourage stakeholders and the community to provide feedback on this project so we can deliver it in a way that meets expectations. Please email us at gpopproject@sydneywater.com.au or call 1800 172 263 during business hours.

The Amendment Report is expected to go on public exhibition on the Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure's Planning Portal in late 2026, giving the community another opportunity to review the updated proposal and provide formal feedback.

2. GPOP Overview

What is the Project?

As part of the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) Integrated Water Cycle Management project, Sydney Water is proposing a new Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) and an integrated pipe network to enable local wastewater treatment and the production of advanced treated recycled water. Subject to approvals, construction is expected to begin in 2029 and be operational in 2033.

The project involves:

- a new WRRF within the Camellia industrial precinct to treat wastewater and produce advanced treated water
- upgrades to the existing pumping station at Camellia
- a new wastewater transfer pipeline from the Camellia pumping station to the WRRF
- a new brine* pipeline and relining of an existing pipeline to transfer brine from the WRRF to the Northern Suburbs Ocean Outfall Sewer (NSOOS)
- a new river release pipeline to transfer advanced treated water from the WRRF to Parramatta River
- a new river release structure in Parramatta River at Meadowbank
- a range of ancillary infrastructure.

*Brine is the by-product of the advanced water treatment process.

What are the benefits to GPOP?

Through the GPOP Water Cycle Management Project, we're taking the opportunity to shift away from our reliance on coastal treatment and ocean discharge of wastewater. This work will help to manage water as a precious resource through more integrated water cycle management.

The Project aims to address a critical service delivery challenge. The current wastewater system does not have the capacity to meet expected growth.

The Project will deliver a reliable, efficient and financially responsible solution that provides strong value to the community by:

- avoiding unnecessary or early costs for customers
- making the best use of capital and operating funds over the life of the asset
- ensuring long-term financial sustainability in line with Sydney Water's risk appetite

As critical state significant infrastructure this Project is essential to ensure reliable water services for the region beyond 2032.



Efficient and cost-effective wastewater services



Providing enabling infrastructure to support the potential future re-use of recycled water



Reducing reliance on ocean discharge and the need to transport wastewater across Sydney by localising treatment



Delivering wastewater services to enable housing and growth now and for the future.



Supporting the improvement of the water quality of Parramatta River through the release of advanced treated water

When was the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) displayed?

In February 2026, Sydney Water lodged the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI).

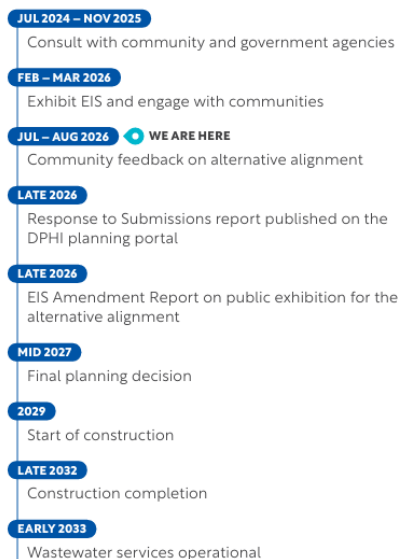
The EIS was placed on public exhibition from 11 February 2026 to 18 March 2026, during which community members and stakeholders were able to review the proposal and lodge a formal submission through the DPHI's planning portal.

The EIS can still be read on DPHI's website [Greater Parramatta, Olympic Peninsula Water Cycle | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment](#)

What are the project timeframes?

Construction is anticipated to commence in 2029 through to 2033. This is an estimated timeframe as we're still in early stages of planning the project.

Project timeline*



*Timeline is subject to change

How can the community engagement team be contacted?

At Sydney Water, we work closely with community and stakeholders to minimise impacts on residents and businesses. We will continue to provide updates as the project progresses. Our Community Engagement team are available to discuss any questions you may have. The team can be contacted on:

Phone: 1800 172 263

Email: gpopproject@sydneywater.com.au

Project website: www.sydneywater.com.au/gpop