

Introduction:

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC) wishes to state its approval for the Inland Rail Project and supports the construction of the Illabo-Stockinbingal link. So far during the planning stage Council has fully cooperated with the ARTC Inland Rail project team and formed a great working relationship. That team has been available for consultation and briefing of Council at numerous times over the last few years which has enabled issues to be questioned and resolved. Council also has actively participated in the Inland Rail Consultative Committee.

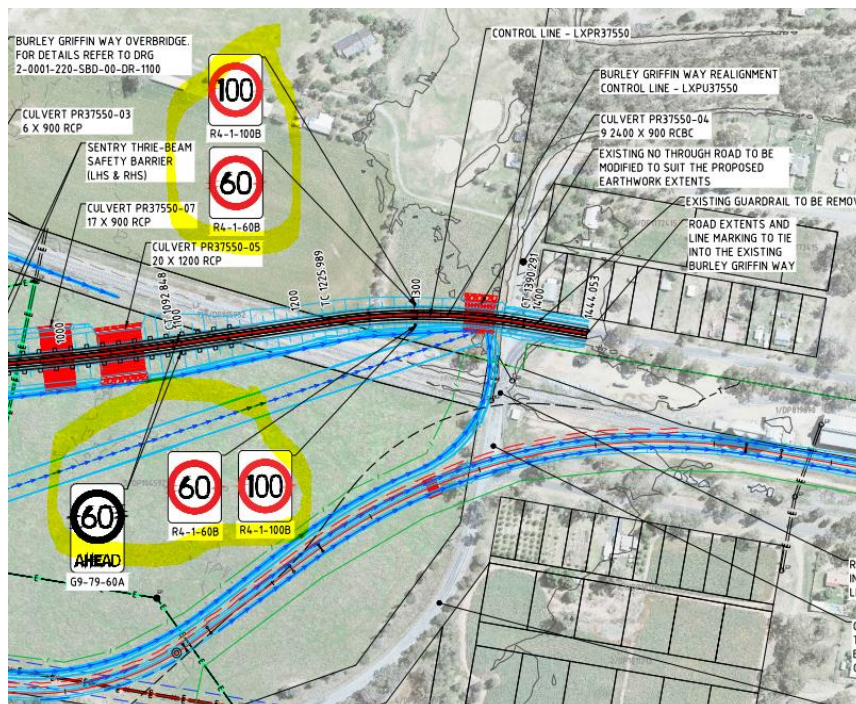
It would now be remiss of Council not to respond to the request for submissions to the EIS.

Throughout this submission, reference has been made to items in the EIS, the 100% Reference Design of the proposed railway, Google maps and individual photographs.

Transport and Access:

The route along the western side edge of CGRC is considered the most suitable with little impact of Council's Road structure in terms of level crossings. In fact, there will only be one new level crossing on Council's Road, one over pass and the other crossing being an existing crossing north of Stockinbingal.

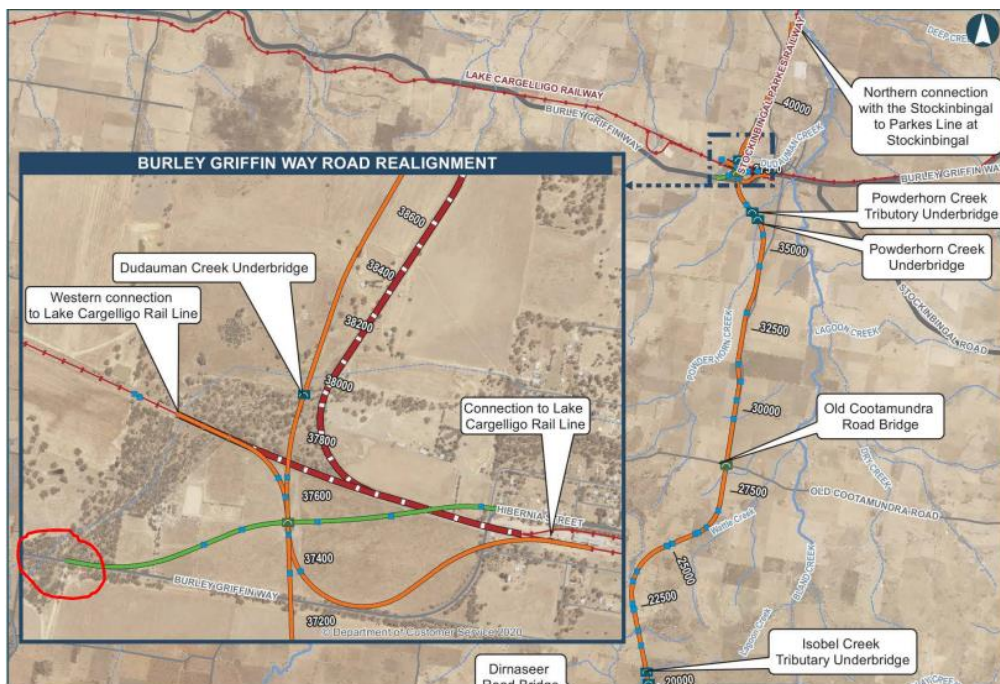
Major works are planned with the realignment of the Burley Griffin Way to create an overpass over the new railway line. While Council is happy with this proposal, consideration should be given with Transport for NSW to reconsider the speed limits coming down into Stockinbingal from the overpass. Council believes 60K/h is too fast with a 50k/h urban to be considered by Transport for NSW for the entire Burley Griffin Way through Stockinbingal. See extract from Plan 2-0001-220-DAL-00-DR-102.



Plan 2-0001-220-DAL-00-DR-102



Council also has concerns about the reconnection of the realigned Burley Griffin Way back to the existing road at Dudauman Creek - as circled below on the lower LHS and as noted in the photograph below.



Concerns are expressed that the existing pavement width of the Burley Griffin Way and the bridge over Dudauman Creek is not sufficient width and of suitable geometry to accommodate vehicles coming down from the overpass (travelling west) and re-joining the Burley Griffin Way. Council believes there is potential for vehicle roll over or collision with other vehicles travelling east.

Photos 1 and 2 (Page 3) illustrate this concern.



Photo 1



Photo 2

Road Conditions:

Council has made note with ARTC Inland Rail during our various discussions that Council will be requesting that all roads carrying traffic to and from the proposed construction site be reinstated to prior construction condition, at the end of the project. Also depending on works, some road damage which is attributed to traffic travelling to and from the site may be required to be repaired during the duration of the works.

Council would consider damage attributed to any works associated with the construction be fully repaired and compensated by Inland Rail or their contractors.

It is noted that traffic maybe diverted to Dudauman and Troy Streets during construction of the Burley Griffin Way. With the increase in traffic volume along Troy Street, Council would request some upgrades of the Street and intersections to be undertaken prior to the traffic being diverted. Discussion with residents of that area should also be undertaken prior to the detour.

Consideration of how the western end of Troy Street reconnects into the Burley Griffin Way is unresolved at the time of writing. Council wishes that Troy Street not be terminated but needs to be connected back to the Burley Griffin Way or Hibernia Street. Currently the Rural Fire Service has a shed on Troy Street and their emergency response to fires to the west of Stockinbingal could be slowed by not being able to travel that direction.

Road Safety

Council considers road safety of critical importance to the residents, travelling motorists and all other road users during the construction of the project. We wish to ensure that all motorists can travel to and from their destination with no increased risk to safety.

Council also requests that all level crossings are built considering all potential safety impacts for road users and that appropriate safety measures are undertaken to cover these needs.

Drainage and Flooding

Council has been informed of the Hydrological Study done for the proposed new railway line and in particular what happens around the Stockinbingal township. Council is concerned that some areas will be adversely impacted by higher water levels. Several Stockinbingal residents have also expressed concern to Council about possible changes to flood heights, to which Council has advised it would mention in our submission. Those residents have also been advised to submit their own submission voicing their concerns.

Stockinbingal is a generally flat area and even with heavy rainfall the lack of drainage causes issues for residents. Quite often the existing drainage, which is generally open table drains, is overtopped and washes into neighbouring properties. Due to the poor grade of this open drainage many issues of water ponding occur.

With this damp environment there is then issues with household septic systems (there is no sewer network in Stockinbingal) which overflow and the absorption trenches don't effectively work.



One note of concern is the issue of drainage at West Street Stockinbingal. This area is circled in the image and Photo 3 below.

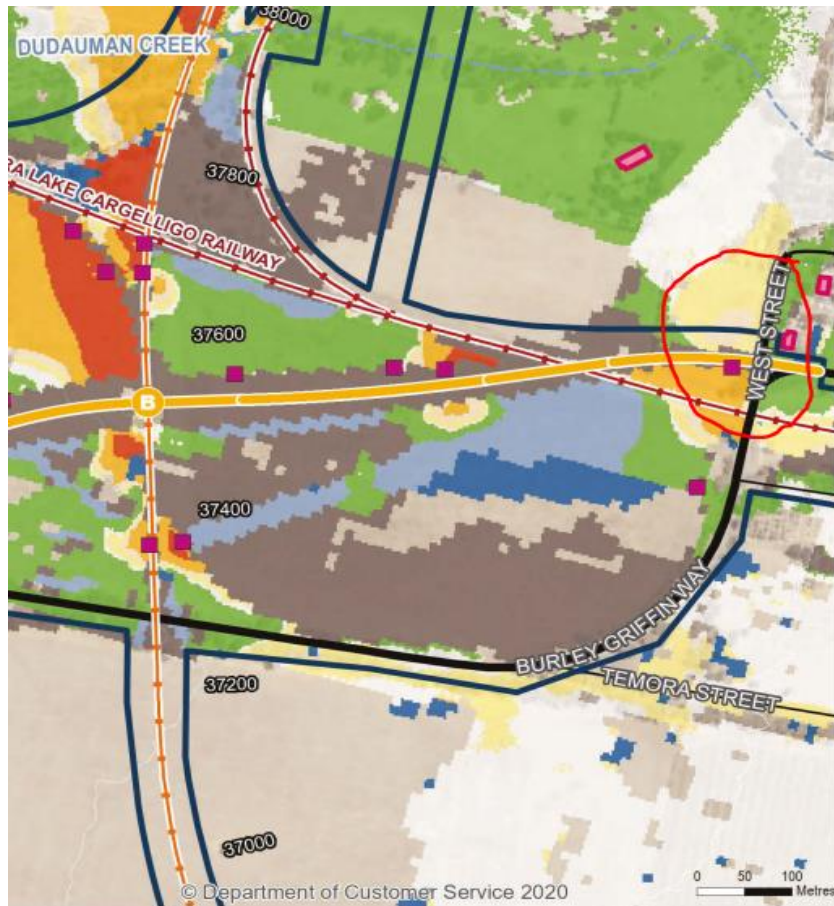
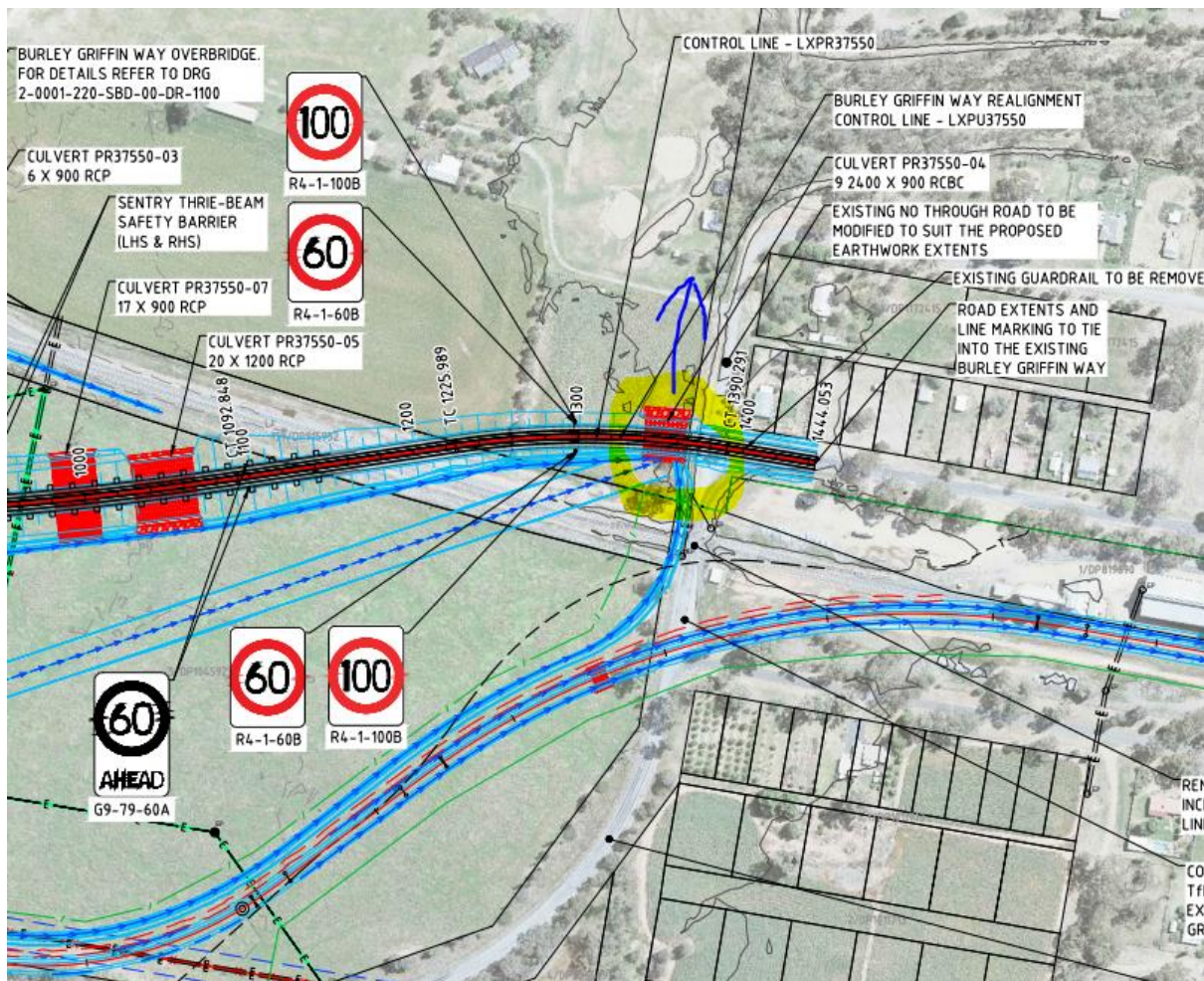


Photo3

Council does not believe the existing drainage line will be sufficient to carry the flow of water from under the railway line and the proposed Culvert PR37559-04 being a 9 x 2400 x900 RCBC, see highlighted on Plan 2-0001-220-DAL-00-DR-102 below. The current open drain is shallow and the lower end is overgrown with vegetation which will impact the water flow. The driveway culverts as highlighted also don't seem large enough to carry the volume of water through them, creating additional overland flow into the neighbouring property. The residents of this property are concerned that they will have restricted access during rain events. Figure 12.8 from the EIS shows at this particular gateway there will be an increase in water level of approximately 50 to 100mm.

There is also concerns that the outlet pipe at the end of this open drain where it runs through the levee bank is undersize. Furthermore, flow thought this pipe needs redefining between the outfall and Dudauman Creek.



Plan 2-0001-220-DAL-00-DR-102

Other residents around Stockinbingal have expressed concern that the extra water height may impact on their properties. While Council has noted the higher degree of flood modelling used in the study other concerns about this have been expressed by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), who Council believe is also making a submission. As Council has a close working relationship with the DPE on other flooding projects, Council values their opinion and comments.

Workplace Accommodation and Camp

Initially, Council expressed a desire with Inland Rail that some positive legacy would result from the workplace accommodation site. Unfortunately, none has been able to be identified but Council is willing to consider options.

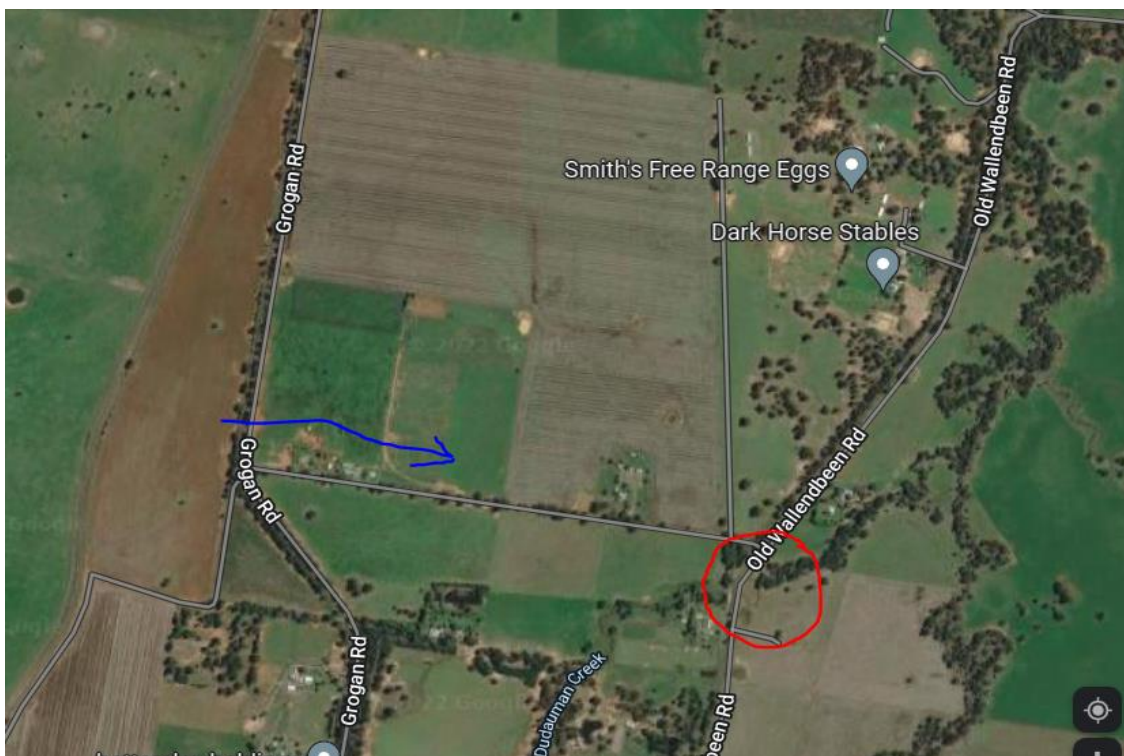
All planning requirements with such would need to be adhered to.

Council acknowledges that all wastes will be managed onsite and then transferred to a licenced facility.

Council would need to consider the adequacy of the road access along Grogan Road, prior to approval, as the existing road width maybe inadequate and require widening. Council will assess this after the application is received for the construction of the accommodation camp. Should road widenings and pavement reconstruction be required this shall be borne by the applicant/developer.

As noted in the EIS, noise and other environmental factors shall be considered. Council would like to include that no adverse effect is created to impact the general amenity of the area including residents from this camp.

Any stormwater captured on the site of the proposed camp, shall be captured in onsite retention ponds to allow minimal discharge to Grogan Road or other water pathways and neighbouring lands. Council raises this issue as the local area is relatively flat and drains slowly. Drainage issues/flooding currently occur at the eastern end of Racecourse Road at the intersection of Old Wallendbeen Road - any additional stormwater directed in an easterly directly (blue Arrow below) could impact on the current flood heights along Old Wallendbeen Road (Red Circled area below).



Council does not wish for any excess stormwater to build up in the table drains along Grogan Road which could impact flooding across the road or drainage ponding.

Potentially any onsite storage could be used for construction purposes along the new railway line.



General Region Facilities

Cootamundra being a small rural community, fears are that the increase in numbers of workers (and families) that are locating to the area for the works will have a huge impact on the current level of community, social, medical, educational, and policing services. There would also be a certain number of these employees requiring more substantial housing in the local community.

Cootamundra has a real shortage in the provision of these services now. For example, to get a doctor's appointment could take days to arrange, calling an ambulance may require a vehicle from a neighbouring township, policing is in short supply, Cootamundra Hospital has limited services, not to mention the shortage of accommodation.

Furthermore, while it is not an effect of the Inland rail construction, Cootamundra is expecting its local abattoir to reopen in 2023, which is expected to employ another 250 workers, with a substantial number of them expected to be new people to the area.

Council feels a thorough investigation into the level of services in the whole region needs to be undertaken to assess the needs/shortage and means to address these shortfalls. Such an investigation would be a broader governmental task, but the outcomes of such would be of wider and longer benefits to larger region/community.

Potential Freight Hub

Council in March 2021 was fortunate to have been accepted in Round two of the inland Rail Interface Improvement Program which was to investigate a proposal for a Rail Interface and Loading Facility at Stockinbingal. This was in partnership with a local freight/courier service.

As a result of the program, a proposed site was identified which would use some of the decommissioned rail line north of Stockinbingal and construct a freight hub at that location. At this stage this proposed project is awaiting further assessment to determine if it proceeds.

When talking about Inland Rail leaving a 'legacy' for the future, then consideration could perhaps be given to this project if it proceeds.

Conclusion

Council is grateful for the opportunity to make this submission on behalf of its ratepayers and the general community.

While this submission may be selective in its content in relation to issues, these issues are ones that have raised concern, from either the public or through Council staff involvement in the proposal so far.

Council would be only too happy to answer and provide further advice on any matter raised in our submission.

Please direct requests through Council's general email address for attention Manager Civil Works, Mr Mark Ellis at mail@cgrc.nsw.gov.au