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By email: pamela.morales@planning.nsw.gov.au

EPA Advice on Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms Morales

I am writing in response to your request for the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to review the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Tangaratta Feedmill (Application SSD-58801472) at 771 Wallamore Road, Wallamore NSW 2350

The EPA has reviewed the following documents:

- Tangaratta Feed Mill Environmental Impact Statement (Version 7)- PSA Consulting- 12 September 2024,
- Stormwater Management Plan, Tangaratta Feed Mill (Issue A)- MPN Consulting- 5 April 2024,
- Tangaratta Stockfeeds Pty Limited, Contaminated Site Investigation (Version 3)- SMK Consultants- March 2024,
- New Tangaratta Feedmill, 771 Wallamore Road, Wallamore NSW (Report No. 23-2874-R1)- Reverb Acoustics- June 2024, and;
- Air Quality Assessment- Baiada Tangaratta Feed Mill (Version R1-2)- Astute Environmental Consulting- 27 March 2024.

The EPA understands the proposal is for:

- the development of a purpose-built poultry feed mill, including:
 - two 30.3m tall mill towers and supporting conveying system,
 - 25 x grain and meal silos,
 - an out loading building and 7 buffer storage silos, a truck intake and storage buildings, and;
 - ancillary workshop, boiler shed, office and amenities.

Based on the information provided, the proposal will require a variation to the current environment protection licence no. 2775 under section 58 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) for the inclusion of scheduled development works as required by section 47 of POEO Act for activities under clause 2 of Schedule 1 of the POEO Act.

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The EPA has reviewed the EIS and notes that it does not provide the information required to allow us to complete our assessment. The EPA has the following comments and recommendations:

1. Matters to be addressed prior to determination

a. Air impacts

The EPA recommends that further information be provided. The Level 1 assessment of 24-hour PM_{2.5} predicts an exceedance of the impact assessment criteria. No further refined assessment is presented to evaluate 24-hour PM_{2.5} impacts and demonstrate compliance. Further, the EPA have identified multiple issues with the methodology of the AQIA that lead to uncertainty regarding the results of the predicted impacts. The EPA's detailed comments and advice are provided in **Attachment A**.

b. Stormwater Management

The EPA recommends that further information be provided in relation to stormwater management. The information provided does not allow the EPA to adequately assess impacts from the proposal. The information requiring clarification is outlined in **Attachment A**.

2. Matters to be addressed with conditions

a. Noise impacts

In addition to the existing conditions within environment protection licence no. 2775, the EPA recommends that the conditions outlined in **Attachment B** be included in the approval.

It is noted that the proposed use of the existing mill at times of contingency, in the event of a breakdown of the new mill, is likely to result in exceedances of the noise limits during the evening and night periods and the temporary use of the existing mill would be dependant on the extent of the breakdown and repair timeframe. Conditions have been proposed within **Attachment B** to manage the potential for this to be a source of community concern.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Kharl Turnbull on (02) 6773 7000 or via email at info@epa.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Lindsay Fulloon
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Attachment A: Matters to be addressed prior to determination

1. Noise Impacts

a. Unexplained additional PM_{2.5} 24-hour additional exceedance

The cumulative impacts for Stage 2 (final design) predict an additional exceedance of 24-hour PM_{2.5} (Table 6.12). The cumulative 24-hour PM_{2.5} impacts are presented as a Level 1 assessment (max background + max incremental) with a background of 19 µg/m³ and an increment of 7.9 µg/m³ (at worst affected R10). Where dispersion modelling indicates an exceedance for Level 1, further refined assessment is required until compliance is demonstrated.

Further, the Stage 2 worst-case scenario where only predicted increments are presented (Table 6.15) indicates even higher PM_{2.5} 24-hour concentrations at the receptors (9.7 µg/m³ at R10). Stage 2 worst-case was not considered in a cumulative assessment which could potentially predict more additional exceedances.

The EPA recommends the AQIA be revised to include a refined cumulative assessment for PM_{2.5} for the Stage 2 worst case scenario.

b. Unclear point source emission concentrations modelled

Table 4.5 includes emissions parameters for the point source emissions for the site. It is unclear which emission scenario, and which point source this data applies to. Section 4.5 states that Stage 2 will include two gas fired boilers and 6 cyclones and emissions for the boilers have been taken from the licence and stack testing reports. Section 4.4.2 states that maximum POEO emission concentrations were used in the Stage 2 worst case scenario while Section 4.5 states only the cyclones have used the POEO emission concentrations.

Table 4.5 only includes three point sources (identified as “boiler”, “exiting” and “proposed mill”) and as such it is unclear which point sources they specifically relate to. Further, the emission concentrations, which do not align with the POEO Clean Air Regulation are not justified with supporting information.

The EPA recommends the AQIA be revised to clearly identify all point source emissions used in the Stage 2 worst case scenario.

The EPA recommends all emission concentrations need to be justified and supporting stack test data and manufacturer guarantees of emission performance must be provided.

c. Unsupported background air quality

Table 5.2 states that Beresfield air quality data was used for 24-hour PM_{2.5} background which is over 200 km away and despite Tamworth air quality data used for annual PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀.

Additionally, annual PM_{2.5} data is identified to be the average of 2021, 2022 and 2023 despite 2014 meteorological data being used. As 2021 and 2022 were exceptionally wet years the use of those years as background are likely to underpredict particulate impacts and not be representative of long-term characteristics of the area. Further, the average of three years is not an annual average as per the impact assessment criteria.

The Approved Methods states that in the absence of site-specific data, background data is obtained as close as possible to the location where the sources resemble existing sources at the site.

The EPA recommends that the AQIA be revised to include appropriate site-representative and time averaged background air quality data.

d. Unclear mitigation measures to be implemented

Section 8 of the AQIA outlines “recommended” mitigation measures to ensure compliance. These include sealing roads and watering roads. The emission inventory has used the emission factor for paved roads (Section 4.4.3) and accounts for a significant proportion of particulate emissions

(Tables 4.6 and 4.7). As such, actual emissions from roads may be much higher than those modelled.

It is unclear what emission mitigation measures the proponent is committing to implementing and whether they have been appropriately considered in the model and results.

The EPA recommends the proponent clarify whether roads are or will be sealed and accurately reflect that emission source in the modelling of impacts.

The EPA recommends the proponent provide a clear statement of commitment for all emission control and mitigation measures.

2. Stormwater Management

a. Boiler blowdown

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) states that: *"No trade waste is generated by the mill activities."* The 2023 Annual Environmental Management Report (AEMR) states that there is a boiler blowdown water daily volume of 7.5 kilolitres per day. It is unclear how this is currently managed or if the new development increases this volume.

The EPA recommends that the above issue be clarified.

b. Music modelling

The MUSIC model was used to predict the performance of the proposed stormwater treatment train. The EIA states that: *"In the absence of specific Water Quality Objectives from Tamworth Regional Council, the industry standard pollutant reduction targets have been adopted."*

Tamworth Regional Council objectives and general urban stormwater objectives are not relevant to the site. As it will be a licensed premise, the relevant water quality objectives are set out in the NSW Water Quality Objectives framework which refers to ANZG (2018) water quality guidelines. MUSIC modelling involves targets for percentage reductions in pollutants which are not appropriate, for example:

- if car or truck washing occurs on site within the bunded area where surfactants will be captured and treated prior to discharging into the stormwater network, a percentage reduction in chemicals and nutrients may still leave environmentally significant concentrations of pollutants in discharges above ANZG (2018) water quality guidelines.
- It is not clear if process inputs or outputs from the feedmill operation could end up in stormwater, e.g. uncovered areas, spills, internal truck cleaning, cleaning runoff from factory floors, etc. A percentage reduction in these types of pollutants may still be significant and above ANZG (2018) water quality guidelines the aim should be to prevent these types of pollutants from entering stormwater at all and achieve best management practice.

Alternatives to discharge to stormwater should also be assessed first such as irrigation onsite or recycling wastewaters such as the truck wash water. The EIA states that rainwater in potential liquid waste bunded areas is collected in the outside bund and pumped into IBC's and disposed of by irrigation on the property indicating available area for managing wastewater onsite.

It is stated in the EIA that: *"Transfer of grains and meals to the new mill will occur within the enclosed intake buildings."* It is not clear if storage is in covered areas, however, the AEMR indicates that: *"All feed storage facilities are covered or enclosed and a pest management program is being maintained."* This should be confirmed for all inputs and outputs to the process including if the bulk storage in the existing grain bunkers (behind the existing mill) is uncovered or there could be regular spills that could enter stormwater.

The EIA states that: *"If car or truck washing occurs on site it will be within a bunded area where surfactants will be captured and treated prior to discharging into the stormwater network"*. This should be further clarified, as it is uncertain if truck washing will occur or not, what pollutants it may produce (e.g. washing out the inside of grain trucks); or whether the stormwater system is designed to treat the additional loads.

Overall, it may be the case that there is limited chance of process inputs and outputs entering stormwater if all areas are covered or enclosed and there are clean up procedures for any spill. In this case the proposed controls may be adequate if there is a post approval assessment of reuse options and a monitoring program with contingencies for the detention basin discharge point.

If there is a chance that a range of process inputs and process wastewater can enter stormwater then it is recommended that at source controls should be assessed; alternative to discharge incorporated where possible, such as reuse or irrigation on site; and specific treatment systems assessed based on meeting the NSW Water quality objectives and ANZG (2018) guideline values and best practice.

The EPA recommends that the above issues be clarified.

c. Overflow frequency

The overflow frequency of the existing basins or proposed basins is not assessed. If there are pollutants from process inputs and outputs that may enter stormwater then the sizing of the basins may need to be larger to reduce the frequency of overflows and allow reuse options.

The EPA recommends that the above issue be clarified.

d. Evaporation ponds

The EIA refers to two evaporation ponds in the southwest corner near the rendering plant. It is unclear whether these form part of the ongoing wastewater management system, and if so, what is their sizing, overflow frequency and water quality of any discharges considering that evaporation ponds would concentrate pollutants.

The EPA recommends that the above issue be clarified.

e. Appendix M Stormwater Management Plan

Appendix M lists the pollutants generated but does not indicate the sources of those pollutants, e.g. carparking clean hardstand vs areas that may include, for example, process water or run off from feed input stockpiles. Percentage reduction targets are not useful in this context.

The EPA recommends that the above issue be clarified.

References

ANZG (2018) *Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality*. Australian and New Zealand Governments and Australian State and territory governments, Canberra ACT, Australia. Available at www.waterquality.gov.au/anz-guidelines.

Attachment B: Noise Limit Conditions

- L6.1** Noise generated at the premises must not exceed the noise limits at the times and locations in the table below.

Location	Noise Limits in dB(A)			
	Day	Evening	Night	Night
	L _{Aeq} (15 minute)	L _{Aeq} (15 minute)	L _{Aeq} (15 minute)	L _{AFmax}
821 Wallamore Road, Wallamore (Lot 1, DP 552296)	40	35	35	52
823 Wallamore Road, Wallamore (Lot 2, DP 552296)	40	35	35	52
824 Wallamore Road, Wallamore (Lot 22, DP 733610)	40	35	35	52
720 Wallamore Road, Wallamore (Lot 1, DP 755342)	40	35	35	52

- L6.2** For the purposes of condition L6.1:

- a) Day means the period from 7am to 6pm Monday to Saturday and the period from 8am to 6pm Sunday and public holidays.
- b) Evening means the period from 6pm to 10pm.
- c) Night means the period from 10pm to 7am Monday to Saturday and the period from 10pm to 8am Sunday and public holidays.

- L6.3** Noise-enhancing meteorological conditions

- a) The noise limits set out in condition L6.1 apply under the following meteorological conditions:

Assessment Period	Meteorological Conditions
Day	Stability Categories A, B, C and D with wind speeds up to and including 3m/s at 10m above ground level.
Evening	Stability Categories A, B, C and D with wind speeds up to and including 3m/s at 10m above ground level.
Night	Stability Categories A, B, C and D with wind speeds up to and including 3m/s at 10m above ground level; or Stability category E and F with wind speeds up to and including 2m/s at 10m above ground level.

- b) For those meteorological conditions not referred to in condition L6.3(a), the noise limits that apply are the noise limits in condition L6.1 plus 5dB.

- L6.4** For the purposes of condition L6.3:

- a) The meteorological conditions are to be determined from meteorological data obtained from the meteorological weather station identified as **Bureau of Meteorology AWS at Tamworth Airport (Station ID: 055325)**
- b) Stability category shall be determined using the following method from Fact Sheet D of the *Noise Policy for Industry* (NSW EPA, 2017):
 - i. Use of sigma-theta data (section D1.4).

- L6.5** To assess compliance:

- a) with the $L_{Aeq(15 \text{ minutes})}$ or the L_{Amax} noise limits in condition L6.1 and L6.3, the noise measurement equipment must be located:
 - (i) approximately on the property boundary, where any residence is situated 30 metres or less from the property boundary closest to premises; or where applicable,
 - (ii) in an area within 30 metres of a residence façade, but not closer than 3 metres where any residence on the property is situated more than 30 metres from the property boundary closest to the premises; or, where applicable,
 - (iii) in an area within 50 metres of the boundary of a National Park or Nature Reserve,
 - (iv) at any other location identified in condition L6.1
- b) with the $L_{Aeq(15 \text{ minutes})}$ or the L_{Amax} noise limits in condition L6.1 and L6.3, the noise measurement equipment must be located:
 - (i) at the reasonably most affected point at a location where there is no residence at the location; or,
 - (ii) at the reasonably most affected point within an area at a location prescribed by condition L6.5 (a).

L6.6 A non-compliance of conditions L6.1 and L6.3 will still occur where noise generated from the premises is measured in excess of the noise limit at a point other than the reasonably most affected point at the locations referred to in condition L6.5 (a) or L6.5 (b).

NOTE to L6.5 and L6.6: The reasonably most affected point is a point at a location or within an area at a location experiencing or expected to experience the highest sound pressure level from the premises.

L6.7 For the purpose of determining the noise generated from the premises, the modifying factor corrections in Table C1 in Fact Sheet C of the *Noise Policy for Industry* (NSW EPA, 2017) may be applied, if appropriate, to the noise measurements by the noise monitoring equipment.

L6.8 Noise measurements must not be undertaken where rain or wind speed at microphone level will affect the acquisition of valid measurements.

d) **M8 Requirement to Monitor Noise**

- e) **M8.1** Attended noise monitoring must be undertaken in accordance with Condition L6.5 and must:
 - a) occur at each location specified in Condition L6.1;
 - b) occur quarterly in a reporting period;
 - c) occur during each day, evening and night period as defined in the *Noise Policy for Industry* for a minimum of:
 - 1.5 hours during the day;
 - 30 minutes during the evening; and
 - 1 hour during the night.

d) occur for three consecutive operating days.

Note: The frequency of noise monitoring in M8.1 may be reduced by the EPA where noise monitoring results demonstrate compliance with noise limits for both Stage 1 and Stage 2. It is noted that different noise impacts may be associated with Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the development.

Note for suggestion: The EPA has published an [Approved Methods for the Measurement and Analysis of Environmental Noise](#) that set out minimum requirements and good practice methods.

Formal licence conditions referencing these Approved Methods are yet to be added to Environment Protection Licences. The EPA may consider adding the following condition to the licence: *Subject to any express provision to the contrary in this licence, measurement and analysis of noise required by this licence must be done in accordance with the Approved Methods for the Measurement and Analysis of Environmental Noise in NSW.*

Reporting Conditions

R4 Noise Monitoring Report

A noise compliance assessment report must be submitted to the EPA within 30 days of the completion of the quarterly monitoring. The assessment must be prepared by a competent person and include:

- a) an assessment of compliance with noise limits presented in Condition L6.1 and L6.3; and
- b) an outline of any management actions taken within the monitoring period to address any exceedences of the limits contained in Condition L6.1 and L6.3.

Note: The frequency of noise monitoring report submissions in R4 may be reduced by the EPA where noise monitoring results demonstrate compliance with noise limits for both Stage 1 and Stage 2. It is noted that different noise impacts may be associated with Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the development.

Additions to Definition of Terms of the licence

- Noise Policy for Industry - the document entitled “*Noise Policy for Industry*” published by the NSW Environment Protection Authority in October 2017.
- Noise – ‘sound pressure levels’ for the purposes of conditions L6.1 to L6.8.
 - L_{Aeq} (15 minute) - the value of the A-weighted sound pressure level of a continuous steady sound that, over a 15 minute time interval, has the same mean square sound pressure level as a sound under consideration with a level that varies with time (Australian Standard AS 1055:2018 *Acoustics: description and measurement of environmental noise*).
 - L_{AFmax} – the maximum sound pressure level of an event measured with a sound level meter satisfying Australian Standard AS IEC 61672.1-2013 *Electroacoustics - Sound level meters - Part 1: Specifications* set to ‘A’ frequency weighting and fast time weighting.

Construction Noise

Hours of Construction

L6.11 All construction work at the premises must be conducted between 7am and 6pm Monday to Friday and between 8am and 1pm Saturdays and at no time on Sundays and public holidays.

Exceptions to construction hours

The following activities may be carried out outside the recommended construction hours:

- a) for the delivery of materials required by the police or other authorities for safety reasons; or
- b) where it is required in an emergency to avoid the loss of lives, property and/or to prevent environmental harm; or
- c) as approved through the process outlined in “Variation of construction hours” of this approval.

Post Stage 2 use of Existing old mill

L7.1 In the event of a breakdown at the new mill post Stage 2 and the existing old mill is to be used as a contingency, the existing mill is permitted to be used during the day-time only.

L7.2 In the event of a breakdown at the new mill post Stage 2 where the existing old mill needs to be used as a contingency, during evening or night-time operations to produce sufficient feed to meet the demands of the poultry farms it supplies, prior written approval from the EPA will be required.

L7.3 For the EPA to provide written approval under condition L7.2, the licensee would need to:

- a. provide details about the breakdown and repair timeframe required to return the new mill to full operations, and;
- b. demonstrate to the satisfaction of the EPA, that the local community has been consulted about the incident and timeframes associated with the need for the existing mill to be used during the evening or night times, the duration of time during which this will be necessary, and provided with a site contact number that can be reached during the night-time hours.