



Proposed Bourke Small Stock Abattoir

Request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements Supporting Documentation

Prepared for CAPRA Developments Pty Ltd | 8 September 2015



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Final

Report H15101RP1 | Prepared for CAPRA Developments Pty Ltd | 8 September 2015

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Document Control

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

CAPRA Developments Pty Ltd (CAPRA) intends to seek development consent under Division 4.1 of Part 4 of the New South Wales (NSW) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) to allow the construction and operation of a small stock abattoir approximately 14 kilometres (km) north of Bourke in north-western NSW.

CAPRA's primary objective is to develop an abattoir adopting best practice in design, operation and management, to meet the immediate and projected long-term export demand for meat. The abattoir will have the capacity to process up to 6,000 head per day for export, comprising sheep, lambs and goats (herein referred to as the proposal). The proposal will provide up to 200 full time equivalent (FTE) positions when fully operational, along with significant associated flow on benefits to the township of Bourke and the Far West NSW region.

This supporting document is intended to inform the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E) and other relevant government agencies of the proposal, identify and provide an overview of the key environmental issues, and provide sufficient information to allow the preparation of appropriately targeted Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs). On this basis, this supporting document comprises the following information:

- a brief description of the project site and surrounding locality (section 2);
- an overview of the primary components of the proposal (section 3);
- an outline of the applicable legislative considerations (section 4); and
- identification of the key environmental matters (section 5).

Upon receipt of the SEARs, an environmental impact statement (EIS) will be prepared in accordance with the EP&A Act and associated *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (EP&A Regulation) to accompany the development application. The EIS will present a comprehensive and focused evaluation of the matters relevant to the proposal to a level of detail commensurate with the scale of the development, industry standards and the legislative framework under which it is permissible.

1.2 The applicant

The applicant for the project is CAPRA Developments Pty Ltd.

1.3 Project opportunities and benefits

The proposal has been designed to realise a number of opportunities with respect to the goat and sheep markets, whilst providing benefits to Bourke and the farming community, as outlined below.

- There is a significant supply of goats, particularly in the north-western region of NSW, and a current deficit in processing capacity with respect to both the supply of goats and the international demand for goat meat.

- With only one dedicated goat abattoir currently operating in Australia, the construction of another facility at Bourke that can handle goat processing will provide a boost to the emerging goat meat industry and its associated contribution to the NSW economy. Goat meat exports from Australia are currently valued at \$145 million, mostly exported through South Australia, Victoria and Queensland ports (ABS 2012/13). This proposal will result in the growth of Australian goat meat exports by approximately 70 % within three years of commencement, and will be substantially through NSW ports.
- The proposed abattoir will also process sheep and lamb and support producers in NSW by providing an additional processing facility and access to a global market place to destinations including customers in USA, Canada, China and the Middle East.
- The opportunity to provide the Far West NSW region and Bourke with economic and community benefits that deliver a more sustainable economic environment by building economic diversity, infrastructure and capacity for future growth and development. All of these will help ameliorate the negative impacts of prolonged droughts and community and business decline in the region over the last 15 years.
- The establishment of a new industry and the direct creation of up to 200 FTE jobs in Bourke will be a significant benefit to a region that has a high rate of unemployment, particularly within the indigenous community. These benefits are well recognised by Bourke Shire Council who is supportive of the proposal.
- The agricultural grazing sector has invested heavily in broadening and diversifying the sheep base to include goat farming over recent years, providing vital income in times of difficult climatic conditions such as drought. The proposal will add a significant participant in the goat meat processing market to stimulate a more sustainable market for their production.
- The expertise of CAPRA and its related investors and partners in the meat processing industry will enable the establishment of an export abattoir processing business that avoids or mitigates some of the traditional risks in the meat processing sector such as the capital intensive cost and heavy maintenance expenses.

2 Site description

2.1 Project site

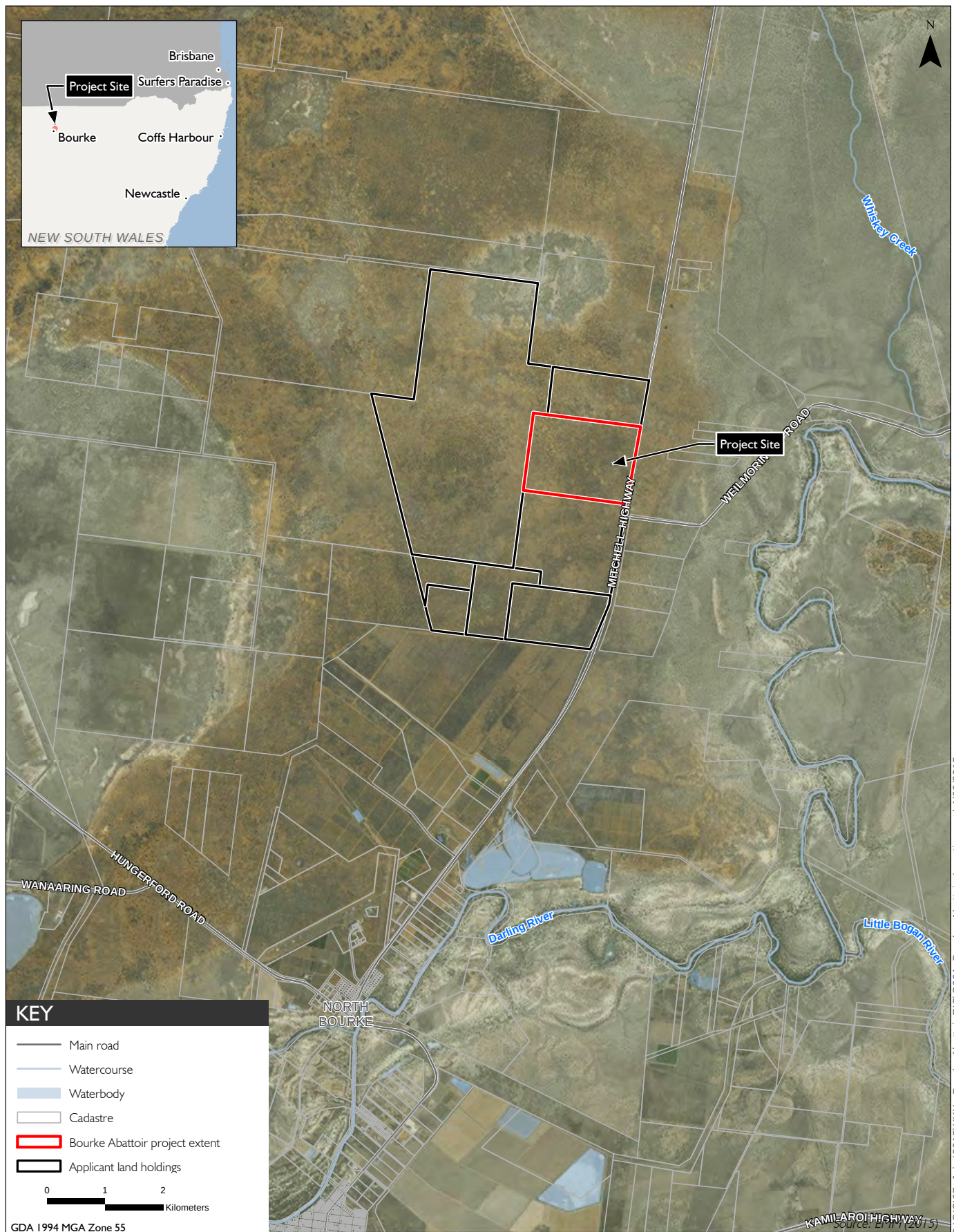
The project site is positioned off the Mitchell Highway and is identified as Lot 17 in Deposited Plan (DP) 753546 within the local government area (LGA) of Bourke. The location of the project site is illustrated on Figure 2.1. The applicant has purchased approximately 2000 hectares (ha) of land, known as the Artisan Block, comprising the project site (Lot 17 DP 753546) as well as Lot 19 DP 753546, Lot 6297 DP 768182, Lot 2 DP 753547, Lot 100 DP 753547, Lot 102 DP 753547, Lot 4 DP 753547, and Lot 3 DP 753547, as illustrated on Figure 2.1.

The project site comprises 246 ha of rural land that has been significantly modified by historic land clearing and agricultural activities, as shown in the photo below (Photograph 2.1). The topography of the area is flat, varying only approximately 1 m across the project site between reduced level (RL) 112 m and 113 m Australian Height Datum (AHD).



Photograph 2.1 **The project site**

The project site is located within the catchment of the Darling River, which is about 4 km to the east of the project site at its closest point, although is not known to be subject to flooding. The Darling River flows through the township of Bourke, flowing in a south westerly direction through western NSW to its confluence with the Murray River at Wentworth.



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2.2 Zoning

The project site is zoned RU1 Primary Production in the *Bourke Local Environmental Plan 2012* as illustrated in Figure 2.2 (Bourke LEP). Within the RU1 Primary Production zone, rural industries are permissible with development consent. Under the Bourke LEP, rural Industry is defined as:

... the handling, treating, production, processing, storage or packing of animal or plant agricultural products for commercial purposes, and includes any of the following:

- a) agricultural produce industries,
- b) livestock processing industries,
- c) composting facilities and works (including the production of mushroom substrate),
- d) sawmill or log processing works,
- e) stock and sale yards,
- f) the regular servicing or repairing of plant or equipment used for the purposes of a rural enterprise

Under the Bourke LEP, a livestock processing industry is defined as:

... a building or place used for the commercial production of products derived from the slaughter of animals (including poultry) or the processing of skins or wool of animals, derived principally from surrounding districts, and includes abattoirs, knackereries, tanneries, woollscours and rendering plants.

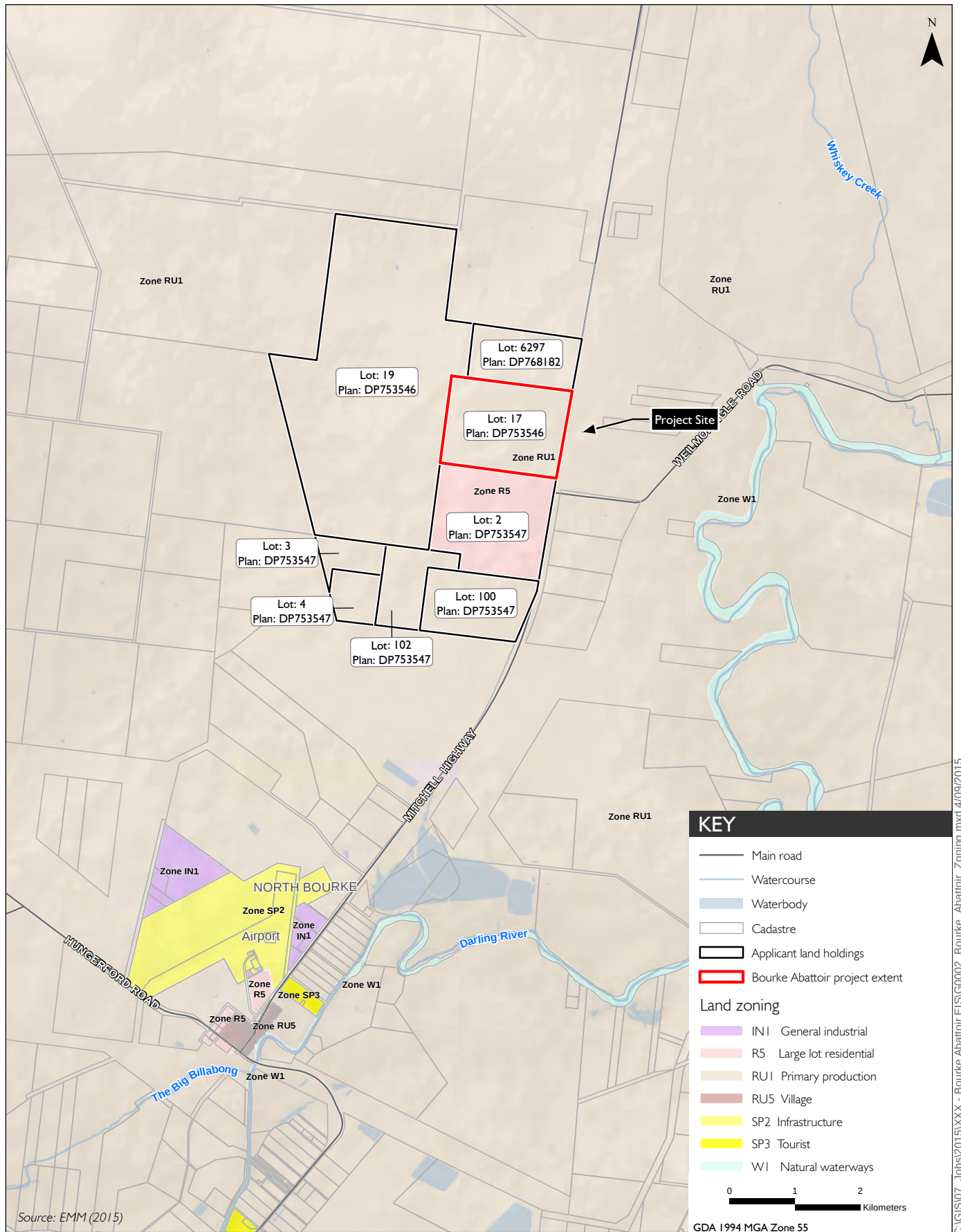
Note. Livestock processing industries are a type of rural industry—see the definition of that term in this Dictionary.

Accordingly, the proposal, which will be a building or place used for the commercial production of meat derived from the slaughter of sheep, lamb and goats, is permissible with development consent.

2.3 Surrounding land uses

As is evident on Figure 2.2, the majority of land surrounding the project site is also zoned RU1 Primary Production, with no major nearby development. The one exception to the RU1 Primary Production zoning is Lot 2 DP 753547 adjacent to the project site, which is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential, although no residential development exists on this lot.

The Bourke airport and the village of North Bourke are located to the south of the project site, approximately 9 km and 10 km respectively from site.



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3 Proposed development

3.1 Overview

The primary components of the proposal are illustrated in Figure 3.1 and include:

- construction of an abattoir with the capacity to process up to 6,000 small stock per day, comprising sheep, lamb and goats;
- construction and provision of ancillary infrastructure to support the abattoir, including reticulation of power and water, vehicular access off the Mitchell Highway, heavy vehicle manoeuvring and turning areas, car parking, services, administration office, staff amenities and a wastewater treatment system;
- livestock will be principally sourced from the surrounding region and trucked to the project site;
- meat products from the abattoir will be chilled to less than 7 degrees Celsius (°C) or frozen for transport;
- four water treatment ponds will be constructed where wastewater will be treated via an anaerobic ponding process, and then utilised for irrigation;
- no rendering will take place on site with all waste products to be transported off site for disposal at licensed facilities;
- employment of up to 200 FTE personnel when operational; and
- the abattoir will operate 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

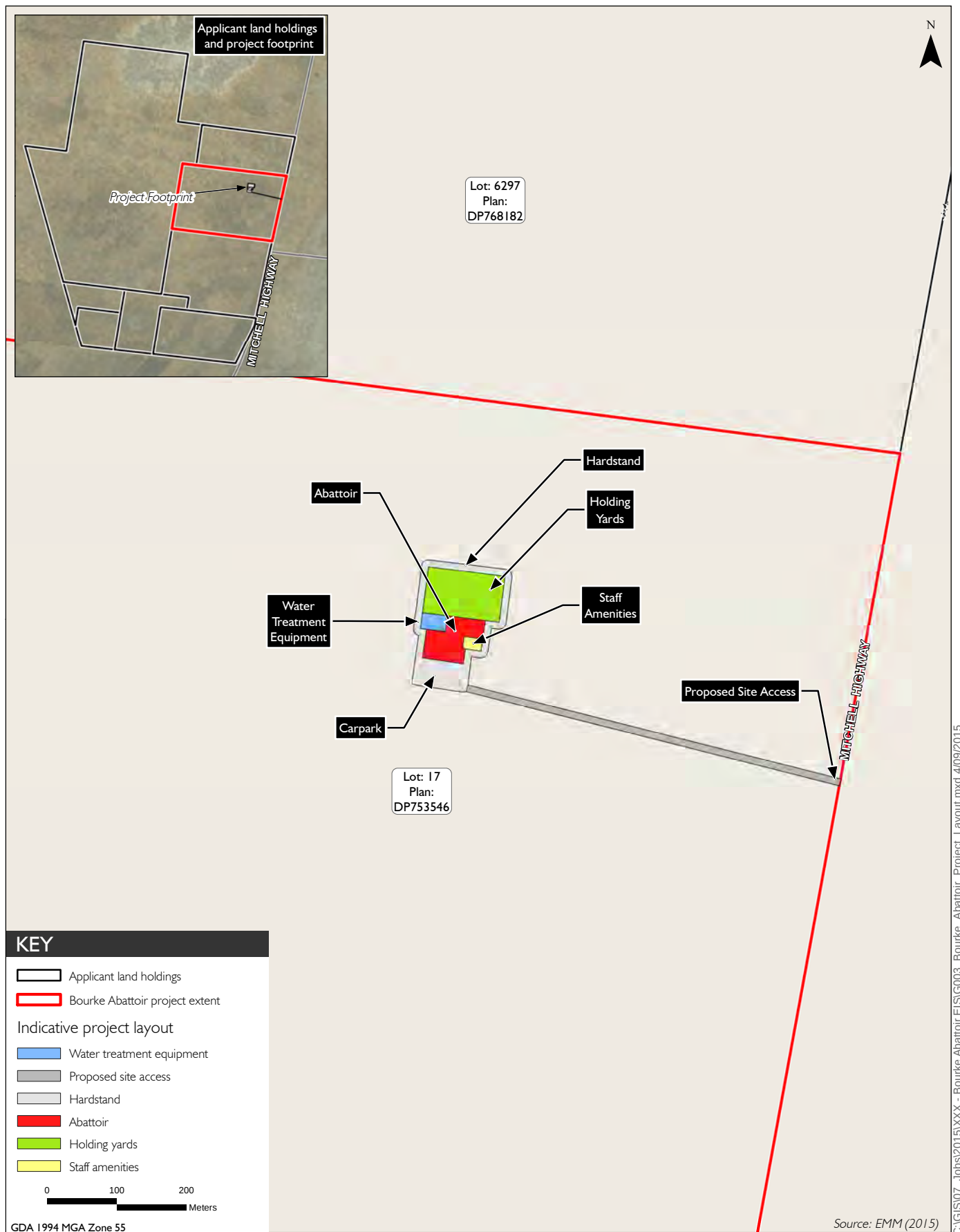
Further details on the proposal are provided in the sub-sections below.

3.2 Products

The abattoir will produce three types of meat products as demanded by the serviced export markets, as follows:

- whole bone-in carcass with skin on;
- whole bone-in carcass with skin off; and
- six way cut of carcass in cartons (skin off).

Edible offal products will also be sold to various export markets.



3.3 Process Description

The disturbance footprint of the abattoir and associated infrastructure will be approximately 5 ha, comprising stock receipt area and holding yards, abattoir, staff amenities and office, vehicle manoeuvring and parking areas, wastewater treatment plant and wastewater treatment ponds.

Livestock will be transported to the abattoir in semi-trailers and/or B-doubles and B-triples and off-loaded into watered receival yards adjoining the abattoir building. When ready for slaughter, the livestock will be moved to the holding pens and then to the kill floor.

After slaughter, stock to be sold as skin on will go to the scald tanks for hair removal, with the remainder proceeding to the processing area for skin removal. All stock will then move through the evisceration area and, if being sold as a whole carcass, chilled ready for transport. Stock to be processed as a six way cut of carcass (skin off) will be transferred to the boning area, packed in cartons, palletised and refrigerated for transport.

Edible offal products will also be packed, chilled or frozen and transported off site for sale.

3.4 Servicing

3.4.1 Electricity

Reticulated electricity will be principal source of energy. Electricity needs will be met via a proposed connection to the reticulated electricity network, with a 3,000 kVa connection.

3.4.2 Water supply

The water requirements of the proposal will include livestock watering, meat processing and staff amenities, and have been calculated at approximately 500 kilolitres (kL) per day. This demand will be serviced via Bourke Shire Council providing a connection to Bourke's reticulated water supply system which can provide up to 500 kL per day, and a water access licence from the Darling River, which can also provide 500 kL per day.

3.4.3 Sewage

Sewage generated by the on-site staff amenities will be appropriately treated and disposed of via an on-site water waste water treatment system in accordance with the requirements of Council and the relevant standards and guidelines.

3.5 Wastewater management

All operational wastewater generated by the proposal will be treated on-site in a specifically designed wastewater treatment system which will include settlement and anaerobic treatment ponds.

Treated effluent from the ponds is anticipated to be utilised for onsite irrigation of paddocks on the project site. A soil and effluent irrigation assessment will be conducted as part of preparation of the EIS to determine the suitability of the site for irrigation.

3.6 Waste management

Appropriate systems will be implemented to ensure that all waste streams generated by the proposal will be effectively managed and disposed of. Specific waste streams will be managed as described below.

- General daily waste - day to day general waste will be placed into enclosed skips and removed from the site by a licensed contractor on a regular basis for disposal to landfill.
- Manure - the undercover stock pens will be dry cleaned (ie racking or scraping), with the collected manure regularly removed and stockpiled on site for reuse. All stock trucks will also be required to be washed down prior to leaving the project site and waste material will be treated and reused where appropriate.
- Raw meat waste products - raw animal waste products from the abattoir (offal, bone, blood, fat and trimmings) will be collected by a licensed contractor for transport to an off-site licensed facility.
- Dead on arrival - any dead on arrival stock will be collected by a licensed contractor (along with the raw meat waste products) for transport to an off-site licensed facility.
- Skins - animal skins from the abattoir will be collected and transported to an off-site skins treatment facility.
- Chemical containers - a chemical supply company will be engaged to provide a chemical delivery and pickup service direct to the project site. At each delivery of new chemical supplies, all empty chemical containers will be retrieved by the company for reuse, recycling or appropriate disposal.

3.7 Traffic movements

The primary operational activities that will generate traffic to and from the project site will be:

- delivery of livestock in semi-trailer and/or B-doubles and B-triples;
- delivery of livestock feed (as needed) in semi-trailers;
- removal of meat products from the abattoir in refrigerated trucks or containers on semi-trailers for distribution;
- removal of meat waste products in enclosed semi-trailers for off-site processing;
- removal of skins in rigid trucks for off-site treatment;
- removal of general garbage in rigid trucks;
- servicing/tradesman visits in utes/vans; and
- staff visits by cars.

Access to and from the project site will be via the Mitchell Highway.

4 Legislative considerations

4.1 Introduction

The proposed development will be assessed in full consideration of the applicable statutory planning instruments and relevant policies and guidelines. The following sub-sections overview some of the primary considerations.

4.2 Approval process

The development assessment and approval system in NSW is set out in Parts 4 and 5 of the EP&A Act. Division 4.1 of Part 4 provides for the assessment and determination of State significant development (SSD).

Pursuant to Section 89C of the EP&A Act, projects are classified as SSD if they are declared to be such by *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (SRD SEPP).

Clause 8 of the SRD SEPP states:

- (1) Development is declared to be State significant development for the purposes of the Act if:
 - (a) the development on the land concerned is, by the operation of an environmental planning instrument, not permissible without development consent under Part 4 of the Act, and
 - (b) the development is specified in Schedule 1 or 2.

Clause 3 of Schedule 1 of the SRD SEPP relates to agricultural produce industries and food and beverage processing. It states:

3 Agricultural produce industries and food and beverage processing

Development that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million for any of the following purposes:

- (a) abattoirs or meat packing, boning or products plants, milk or butter factories, fish packing, processing, canning or marketing facilities, animal or pet feed production, gelatine plants, tanneries, wool scouring or topping or rendering plants,
- (b) cotton gins, cotton seed mills, sugar mills, sugar refineries, grain mills or silo complexes, edible or essential oils processing, breweries, distilleries, ethanol plants, soft drink manufacture, fruit juice works, canning or bottling works, bakeries, small goods manufacture, cereal processing, margarine manufacturing or wineries,
- (c) organic fertiliser plants or composting facilities or works.

Accordingly, abattoirs with a capital investment value (CIV) of more than \$30 are considered to be SSD for the purposes of the EP&A Act.

The proposal has a CIV of approximately \$60 million. As a result, pursuant to clause 8(1) of the SRD SEPP, the proposal is SSD. As outlined in section 2.2, the proposal is permissible with development consent under the provisions of the Bourke LEP.

The Minister for Planning (or delegate) is the consent authority for development applications for SSD. The Minister has delegated the consent authority function for SSDs projects to the NSW Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) and to senior staff of DP&E.

Under the EP&A Act and EP&A Regulation, an application for SSD must be accompanied by an EIS which have been prepared in accordance with the SEARs.

4.3 Other NSW legislation

The provisions and requirements of other relevant pieces of NSW legislation will be considered and addressed within the EIS as applicable.

In particular, the licensing requirements under the NSW Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act) will be addressed. The POEO Act establishes the State's environmental regulatory framework and includes licensing requirements for certain activities. As a result of having the capacity to slaughter more than 750 tonnes live weight per year, the Bourke abattoir will be a premises-based activity under Schedule 1 of the POEO Act and will be required to operate under an environment protection licence (EPL). The proposed irrigation of wastewater on the project site will also be subject to the provisions of the EPL.

The proposal includes construction of an intersection with the Mitchell Highway, and as such the provisions of the NSW Roads Act 1993 (Roads Act) will also need to be considered and NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) consulted. Section 138 of the Roads Act requires consent be obtained prior to disturbing or undertaking work in, on or over a public road.

By operation of Section 89K of the EP&A Act, approval of an EPL under Chapter 3 of the POEO Act and road works Section 138 of the Roads Act cannot be refused if it is necessary for carrying out an approved SSD proposal, and must be granted substantially consistent with the SSD consent.

4.4 State environmental planning policies

State environmental planning policies (SEPPs) are legal environmental planning instruments (EPIs) prepared by the Minister to address issues significant to NSW. The following SEPPs are identified as relevant considerations for the proposal and will be considered in the EIS:

- SEPP (State and Regional Development) 2011;
- SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007;
- SEPP No. 55 – Remediation of Land;
- SEPP No. 44 – Koala Habitat Protection; and
- SEPP No. 33 – Hazardous and Offensive Development.

4.5 Local environmental plans

Local environmental plans (LEPs) are EPIs that guide planning decisions for local government areas. They allow council's to supervise the ways in which land is used through zoning and development controls.

As previously advised, the project site is zoned RU1 Primary Production pursuant to the provisions of the Bourke LEP. Livestock processing industries (or abattoirs) are permissible, with development consent, within the RU1 Primary Production zone.

4.6 Commonwealth legislation

The Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) is administered by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment (DoE) and provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places defined as matters of national environmental significance (NES). An action that "has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance" may not be undertaken without prior approval of the Commonwealth Minister, as provided under Part 9 of the EPBC Act.

While not anticipated, an assessment of whether the proposal may have a significant impact on any matters of NES will be undertaken during the EIS investigations. Once that is complete, a decision on whether referral to the Commonwealth Minister is required will be made.

5 Environmental matters

5.1 Introduction

The key development-related issues warranting detailed assessment and reporting in the EIS will be identified through:

- the existing environmental context of the project site and surrounding locality;
- the legislative framework applicable to the proposal;
- the outcomes of an environmental risk assessment;
- the outcomes of consultation to be undertaken with government agencies and other relevant stakeholders; and
- specialist studies to be completed as part of the preparation of the EIS.

The following sub-sections identify and outline the environmental issues identified during a high level review of the project site and proposed abattoir design.

5.2 Air quality

A range of development design and management strategies will be employed to minimise and manage potential air quality impacts. In addition to these best management practices, several elements of the proposal mean that the risk of offsite odour impacts is anticipated to be very low. Most air quality issues associated with abattoirs revolve around rendering. However, as noted elsewhere in this document, no rendering will be undertaken on the project site. In addition, the abattoir is located in an isolated rural area 14 km from the township of Bourke, and 7 km from the nearest privately owned residence.

An air quality assessment of the proposal will be undertaken in accordance with the *Approved Methods for the Modelling and Assessment of Air Pollutants in NSW* (Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC 2005) and *Assessment and Management of Odours from Stationary Sources* in NSW (DEC 2006).

5.3 Noise

Primary sources of noise from the proposal will include on-site livestock, mobile plant and equipment, and heavy vehicle movements. Due to the isolated nature of the project site, the risk of offsite noise impacts is considered to be negligible.

Accordingly, preparation of a quantitative noise model is not considered necessary as part of the assessment of the proposal. A qualitative assessment and reporting of potential noise issues associated with the proposal, including construction, operational and traffic noise, will be included in the EIS with reference to the Interim Construction Noise Guideline (Department of Environment and Climate Change 2009), NSW Industrial Noise Policy (EPA 2000) and the NSW Road Noise Policy (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW 2011).

5.4 Traffic and transport

The proposal will generate operational traffic amounting to approximately 4-6 heavy vehicle deliveries to the site per day, along with light vehicle traffic (car, van, ute) associated with staff and visitors such as maintenance contractors. All traffic will enter and exit the project site via the Mitchell Highway.

It is anticipated that the vast majority of light vehicles accessing the project site will travel to and from Bourke, with most employees likely to reside in Bourke.

Heavy vehicle movements will result from delivery of livestock to the project site and removal of meat and waste products. Livestock will generally be sourced regionally and delivered via the following routes; Kidman Way, Bourke-Brewarrina Road, Bourke-Hungerford Road and the Mitchell Highway.

Assessment and reporting of traffic and transport issues associated with the proposal will be included in the EIS. This assessment will be undertaken in consultation with Bourke Shire Council and RMS, and with reference to the *Guide to Traffic Generating Developments* (Roads and Traffic Authority 2002). The assessment will include the consideration of peak traffic generation, conceptual design requirements for the new site access from the Mitchell Highway, heavy vehicle route(s) and potential impacts on the external road network.

5.5 Water resources

The proposal is not anticipated to pose any significant impact to local water resources, including the flow and quality of surface water and groundwater. A range of best management practices and mitigation measures will be implemented to minimise potential impacts. The following is also noted:

- the footprint of the proposal does not contain any flood-labile land and is located over 4 km from the Darling River;
- all operational areas will be sealed and graded to drains which will direct all wash down water to the on-site wastewater treatment system;
- the proposal's water requirements will be met via the town water supply and Bourke Shire Council's existing water access licence from the Darling River;
- there will be no underground storage of fuels;
- as advised in section 3.5, all operational wastewater generated by the abattoir will be treated on-site in a wastewater treatment system specifically designed for the abattoir operation. Wastewater treatment ponds will be established where the water will undergo anaerobic treatment prior to being utilised for irrigation within the project site; and
- sewage generated by the on-site staff amenities will be appropriately treated and disposed of via an on-site water wastewater treatment system in accordance with the requirements of council and the relevant standards and guidelines.

An irrigation assessment will be undertaken as part of the EIS to assess the suitability of the site for irrigation of effluent. This investigation will be undertaken accordance with DEC's Environmental Guideline: Use of effluent by irrigation 2004.

5.6 Flora and fauna

Significant disturbance of the natural environment within the project site has occurred as a result of historic clearing and long-term agricultural production, primarily grazing. The modified nature of the site significantly limits its value as habitat for native fauna. Whilst the project site has been heavily cleared paddock trees remain scattered across the site.

Based on the level of existing site disturbance, and the disturbance footprint of approximately 5 ha associated with the proposal, the risk of significant impact to local flora and fauna is considered minimal. The proposal is highly unlikely to impact upon any threatened species, ecological communities or the current biological diversity within the surrounding environment.

A search of the OEHS Bionet Atlas of NSW Wildlife will be undertaken to determine if any threatened species have been sighted within or near the project site. A Protected Matters Search on the DoE's website will also be conducted to ascertain if any matters of NES protected by the EPBC Act have been identified as occurring in or relating to the project site. The results of these searches will be used to inform the design of field surveys.

A range of best management practices and mitigation measures will be implemented to further minimise potential ecological impacts.

5.7 Non-Indigenous heritage

Given the disturbed nature of the site, no historic heritage constraints to the proposal are anticipated. Notwithstanding, an opportunities and constraints analysis will be completed and included in the EIS to identify possibly historic heritage issues based on pre-existing information and database searches including historic heritage registers, accessible previous reports and geospatial information.

5.8 Aboriginal cultural heritage

An Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment of the proposal will be undertaken in accordance with the Guide to investigating, assessing and reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW (DECCW 2011). This investigation will include a search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) database to identify any records of known Aboriginal sites or objects within or near the project site, a field survey to identify cultural heritage items or areas of potential archaeological deposit, and consultation with the Aboriginal community where potential Aboriginal cultural heritage values are identified.

It is noted that Bourke Shire Council has received early letters of support from the local aboriginal community for the project.

5.9 Visual amenity

The large distances from residential properties and isolated nature of the project site are such that no visual amenity impacts on sensitive receptors are anticipated.

5.10 Hazard and risk

A hazard and risk screening assessment of the proposal will be undertaken in accordance with SEPP 33 - Hazardous and Offensive Development. This will comprise a desk-top assessment of the proposed operations and potential impacts on surrounding properties.

5.11 Socio-economic considerations

The proposal will bring a number of significant benefits to the township of Bourke, primarily through the diversification of industry and creation of significant employment opportunities, which are rare in isolated towns such as Bourke. The potential for adverse socio-economic impact is considered minimal. Important points to note are:

- the proposed development presents the opportunity for significant and sustained economic activity within Bourke and the surrounding region. The generated economic activity will be all year round and will be a long term investment in the region;
- the CIV of the proposal is estimated at approximately \$60 million. This capital is a permanent investment within the Bourke LGA;
- the proposal will create up to 200 FTE positions when fully operational;

- various consumable products and services will be required to construct, operate and maintain the abattoir development, providing substantial flow-on economic benefits to the region. Some examples include:
 - annual telecommunications, electricity, water and gas supply costs;
 - opportunities for local transport companies to participate in the haulage of livestock and livestock feed in to the project site, and products and waste materials from the site;
 - opportunities for local growers and suppliers to provide various goods, including livestock feed, fuel, tyres, clothing and groceries; and
 - opportunities for local business to fulfil maintenance and servicing requirements.
- a processing facility for meat products will provide important support to the agricultural grazing sector, who have invested heavily in broadening and diversifying farming in the Bourke district.

5.12 Animal health, welfare and biosecurity

The conditions under which the livestock will be managed during their transportation, holding and slaughter will be in accordance with relevant government and industry endorsed codes of practice designed to safeguard animal health and welfare, including the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines Land Transport of Livestock* (DAFF 2012).

As well as affecting animal health and welfare, disease can significantly reduce production efficiency and economic outcomes. CAPRA will place a high importance on maintaining health through operational hygiene and biosecurity measures. These biosecurity measures, along with the high standards set by the NSW Food Authority and the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, will provide significant protection against disease.

A number of best practice measures will also be implemented to reduce risks associated with Q fever, which is a rickettsial illness caused by the bacterial pathogen *Coxiella burnetii*. Consistent with industry best practice, all regular contractors and employees of the abattoir will be required to undergo Q Fever screening and vaccination by a General Practitioner prior to working at the site. A register of vaccinated personnel will also be maintained at the abattoir.

A qualitative environmental health risk assessment on Q fever will be prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines, and the outcomes and mitigation strategies and actions detailed in the EIS. The risk assessment will focus on the operations of the abattoir site and the management of the risk of Q fever on the project site and amongst contractors, employees, and visitors to the site. Importantly, it is noted with regards to potential offsite impacts that transportation of livestock through communities to existing abattoirs in rural and metropolitan areas across Australia is common place and accepted practice, and regulated by existing compliance frameworks, the risk of disease spread with this activity is considered negligible.

6 Conclusion

CAPRA has undertaken an extensive investigation to find a site for the establishment of a small stock abattoir to meet the immediate and projected long-term export demand for meat that is suitable in terms of location, environmental compatibility and economic viability.

An EIS with requisite technical assessments will be prepared to accompany the development application for the proposal. A Planning Focus Meeting is proposed to be held in Bourke with DP&E and all relevant government agencies to ensure a clear understanding is gained at the commencement of the preparation of the EIS of the issues to be addressed.

CAPRA look forward to receiving SEARs for the project at the earliest possible time following the Planning Focus Meeting, and working with DP&E, regulating agencies, Bourke Shire Council and other stakeholders in preparing an EIS that considers all relevant matters and presents appropriate mitigation measures through project design and environmental management.

References

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