

# Notice of decision

## Section 2.22 and clause 20 of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

<b>Application type</b>	Critical State significant infrastructure
<b>Application number and project name</b>	SSI-9487 Inland Rail – Narromine to Narrabri
<b>Proponent</b>	Australian Rail Track Corporation
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Minister for Planning

### Decision

The Minister for Planning has, under section 5.19 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (**the Act**) approved the infrastructure application subject to the recommended conditions.

A copy of the infrastructure approval and conditions is available at

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/inland-rail-narromine-narrabri>

A copy of the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report is available at

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/inland-rail-narromine-narrabri>

### Date of decision

21 February 2023

### Reasons for decision

The following matters were taken into consideration in making this decision:

- the matters listed in the statutory context section of the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report;
- the objects of the Act;
- all information submitted to the Department during the assessment of the application;
- the findings and recommendations in the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report; and
- the views of the community about the project (see **Attachment 1**).

The findings and recommendations set out in the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report were accepted and adopted as the reasons for making this decision.

The key reasons for approving the application are as follows:

- the project would:
  - improve freight transport outcomes and travel times between Melbourne and Brisbane by increasing the capacity of the freight network as part of the Inland Rail program;
  - remove approximately 160 trucks for every train minimising congestion and improving safety for road users;
  - provide a new, efficient connection between regional farms in the area and international export markets; and
  - encourage growth and investment in the surrounding area, expanding on regional economic and development opportunities in logistics and agriculture.
- the project has been endorsed by the NSW Government and is a key component of:
  - *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2012-2042*
  - *Future Transport Strategy 2056*
  - *Regional NSW Service and Infrastructure Plan*
  - *NSW Freight and Ports Plan 2018-2023*
  - *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041 (NSW Government, 2022)*
  - *New England North West Regional Plan 2041 (NSW Government, 2041)*

- the impacts on the community and the environment can be appropriately managed, minimised, or offset to an acceptable level, in accordance with applicable NSW Government policies and standards;
- the issues raised by the community during consultation and in submissions have been considered and adequately addressed through the Proponent's response to submissions and environmental management commitments, and the recommended conditions of approval; and
- weighing all relevant considerations, the project is in the public interest.

## **Attachment 1 – Consideration of Community Views**

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was made publicly available from 8 December 2020 until 7 February 2021 (62 days) on the Department's website.

Notification of the public exhibition of the EIS was advertised in The Australian, Sydney Morning Herald, Daily Telegraph, Coonabarabran Times, Gilgandra Weekly, Narromine News, Narrabri North West Courier, Dubbo Mailbox Shopper and Coonamble Times newspapers on 8 December, 9 December and 10 December 2020. The Department notified relevant State and local government authorities of the exhibition.

Departmental officers attended virtual community consultation events and a meeting with the Toomelah Local Aboriginal Land Council during the exhibition period.

During assessment, the Department officers met with Narrabri Council and Warrumbungle Council officers, Narrabri Local Aboriginal Land Council members and landowners in the northern part of the proposal area on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2021. The Department also attended the Proponent's Narrabri community engagement session on 4 February 2021.

Advice from ten Government Agencies was received during the exhibition period. 108 submissions were received during the exhibition of the EIS as follows:

- 88 from community members;
- five from local Councils; and
- 15 from special interest groups

Within the proposal area 50 community members objected to the proposal, 14 commented on the proposal and 5 supported.

Following the exhibition of the EIS, the Department provided the Proponent with all submission and requested the Proponent prepare a response to submissions,

On April 2021 the Department required the Proponent prepare a Preferred Infrastructure Report (PIR) to address the hydrology and flooding impacts raised by submissions.

The Proponent submitted a combined Preferred Infrastructure Report and Amendment Report (PIAR) in August 2022 which the Department made publicly available between 31 August 2022 and 23 September 2022 (24 days) on the Department's website.

The Department advertised the exhibition of the PIAR in the Coonabarabran Times, Gilgandra Weekly, Sydney Morning Herald, Narrabri North West Courier, Dubbo Mailbox Shopper, Daily Telegraph, Coonamble Times and The Australian newspapers on 30 August, 31 August and 1 September 2022. The Department also notified State and local government authorities of the exhibition of the PIAR.

Advice from 10 Government Agencies was received during the PIAR exhibition period. 56 submissions (41 objections) were received as follows:

- 43 from community members;
- 9 from special interest groups; and
- four from local councils;

Departmental representatives attended community information sessions organised by the Proponent between 5 September 2022 to 8 September 2022, during exhibition of the PIAR.

The Department attended all sessions in person and met with Narrabri Council and Gilgandra Council officers, Narromine Local Aboriginal Land Council, as well as local landowners, both at the Proponent's sessions or separately. Issues raised included construction management plans, alternative alignments, flooding impacts and property impacts.

The key issues raised by the community and considered in the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report and by the decision maker include flooding and hydrology; biodiversity; noise and vibration; traffic, transport and access; Aboriginal cultural heritage; visual impacts; soils, agriculture and land use and social impact.

Issue	Consideration
<p><b>Route Selection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project does not align with the original project intent of supporting the economic development and export potential of rural areas</li> <li>• The alignment through the Pilliga is in the private interest and not the public interest</li> <li>• Concern for the lack of connectivity with existing rail lines</li> <li>• The route should not go through the Pilliga and existing rail lines should be considered to avoid impacts to both the unique and diverse environment, and to landholders</li> <li>• Concern for the rail alignment through travelling stock reserves</li> <li>• Concern for the restricted future development of rural towns</li> <li>• Lack of benefits to regional communities under the proposed alignment and lack of accessibility for regional produce</li> <li>• Concern that the project is not justified, has inappropriate impacts, an inadequate assessment and does not demonstrate regard for the objects of the EP&amp;A Act and the precautionary principle</li> <li>• Concern for property severance and impacts to agricultural land, adequate compensation, and loss of access to private property</li> <li>• Concern for a thorough cost/benefit analysis for the project, as well as a proper economic analysis</li> <li>• Inadequate environmental risk assessment and underestimation of direct and indirect impacts</li> <li>• Concern that the project does not achieve compliance with legislative and planning requirements</li> <li>• Need to consider an electric train to reduce climate impact, as well as construction of an asset that does not rely on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Proponent's route selection process is discussed in <b>Section 3.2</b> of the Planning Secretary's Assessment Report (the Report).</li> <li>• The Department acknowledges community concerns regarding the route selection.</li> <li>• It is not the Department's role to comparatively assess the proposed route against other potential routes or variations to the proposed route. Route selection is a matter for the Proponent, and the Department must assess the environmental impacts route as proposed. The Department has assessed these impacts.</li> <li>• The merits or otherwise of the project's business case are not a matter for the Department. The Department notes concerns raised about a lack of benefits to regional communities through connections to the project. While the project does not include rail sidings or intermodal facilities, the project does not preclude development and rail network access of such facilities by others.</li> <li>• The Department notes concerns about impacts on future development of rural towns. If the project is approved, future development near the rail line would need to incorporate appropriate noise mitigation and respond to any changes to flood levels and hazards.</li> <li>• The Department has assessed the impacts of the selected route. Submissions raising concerns the proposed use included concerns about property and land use impacts, particularly those related to agriculture, biodiversity impacts in the Pilliga, and benefits to communities. These are assessed in <b>Section 6.4, 6.2</b> and <b>6.8</b> of the report.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See conditions relating to land use, biodiversity and social impacts.</li> </ul>

Issue	Consideration
diesel, to remain competitive (eg. electric trucks).	
<p><b>Alternate route</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to consider the alternative alignment to the west of Narrabri</li> <li>Concern for the lack of consideration of the alternate route option using the existing track at Coonamble</li> <li>Concerns with the eastern alignment of Narromine</li> <li>Concerns for the route selection process and necessity for an independent review and evaluation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Proponent's route selection process is discussed in <b>Section 3.2</b> of the report.</li> <li>The Department acknowledges the extent to which Narrabri community members have sought an alternative alignment, as well as concerns raised over property impacts caused by the greenfield alignment rather than using existing rail corridor.</li> <li>It is not the Department's role to comparatively assess the proposed route against other potential routes or variations to the proposed route; route selection is a matter for the Proponent.</li> <li>The Department must assess the environmental impacts of the proposed route, and has conducted a thorough assessment of these impacts.</li> <li>Submissions requesting an alternative route raised concerns about flooding and property and land use impacts of the proposed route. These are assessed in <b>Sections 6.1</b> and <b>6.4</b> of the report.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <p>See conditions relating to flooding and land use impacts of the project.</p>
<p><b>Traffic and transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate traffic and transport assessment and absence of traffic and access management plans</li> <li>Impacts to local roads during construction and operation</li> <li>Inadequate consideration of level crossing impacts</li> <li>Insufficient grade separation</li> <li>Concern for increased traffic during construction of the project</li> <li>Potential road safety impacts during construction.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department's has assessed traffic and transport impacts at <b>Section 6.5</b>. The Department is satisfied the Proponent's traffic assessment is adequate.</li> <li>There will be approximately 1000 construction vehicle movements per day along the alignment, two-thirds of which are heavy vehicles.</li> <li>Construction traffic will affect the Narromine, Gilgandra and Narrabri town centres, as well as rural roads. Considered management of construction traffic is required to mitigate traffic and safety impacts.</li> <li>The project includes eight grade separated crossings, 49 new public level crossings and approximately 30 private level crossings.</li> <li>These installations will affect public and private access, land use, travel times and road safety during the project's operation.</li> <li>The Department considers delays at levels crossings are acceptable but acknowledges their road safety risks.</li> <li>Grade separated crossings are proposed at the two busiest roads affected by the project (the Mitchell Highway and Kamilaroi Highway). In addition, Transport for NSW is planning grade separations at the Castlereagh Highway and Tomingley Road, the next busiest crossings.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Traffic, Transport and Access Management Plan developed in consultation with councils and TfNSW. This plan must consider seasonal traffic variations, inform road users of changes to traffic conditions and reduce noise of construction vehicles.</li> <li>A Road Dilapidation Report to record existing conditions of roads, informing a requirement for the Proponent to make good damage to roads following construction, as well as repairing road damage affecting safety or trafficability as soon as practicable.</li> <li>A Level Crossing Treatment Report that justifies level crossing treatments in terms of road safety. This report must be endorsed by the relevant roads authority.</li> <li>A Level Crossing Performance Report once the project is operational that reviews level crossings' traffic and road safety performance.</li> </ul>

Issue	Consideration
<p><b>Noise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern for operational noise and vibration impacts to business, livestock, sleep disturbance, noise impacts during construction and inadequate criteria to assess actual noise impacts experienced by receivers</li> <li>Concern for the assessment of noise and vibration impacts and the subsequent acoustic treatments, as well as the commitment to deliver noise treatments for sensitive receivers</li> <li>Adequacy of the noise assessment and consideration of low levels of background noise</li> <li>Need for more detailed identification of construction and operational noise mitigation measures, including where the construction and condition of buildings limits architectural treatment</li> <li>Concern for vibration impacts on neighbouring buildings and infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department's noise and vibration assessment is provided in <b>Section 6.3</b> of the report.</li> <li>Construction noise will exceed guideline levels at 2,894 residential receivers. This number reflects low background noise levels in the project's largely rural environment, and the majority of receivers will not experience construction noise that will significantly affect their day to day life.</li> <li>17 receivers will experience construction noise above the highly affected level of 75 dBA, which typically triggers more intensive mitigation, such as respite and alternative accommodation.</li> <li>Operational noise will exceed guideline noise levels at up to 53 residential receivers. These receivers will be investigated for noise mitigation. The Department acknowledges community concerns that mitigation types has yet not been adequately resolved and considers that mitigation must consider buildings of construction types, building conditions and cooling types that limit typical architectural treatment.</li> <li>The Department is satisfied vibration impacts during construction and operation can be appropriately managed</li> <li>A Construction Noise and Vibration Management Sub-Plan would outline measures to mitigate noise impacts during construction, and include measures such as machine shielding, and at-receiver noise treatment for those impacted by both construction and operational noise.</li> <li>The Proponent seeks to minimise impacts through developing specific mitigation measures during detailed construction planning, agreements, or alternative mitigation measures and respite developed in consultation with affected receivers.</li> <li>The proponent responded that the potential risks for liquefaction at foundations from train-induced vibration would be considered as part of the detailed design.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Construction Noise and Vibration Plan that details construction practices to reduce noise and vibration impacts and mitigation impacts when noise exceeds guidelines.</li> <li>An independent Acoustic Advisor to review the Proponent's construction noise management processes, particularly in relation to out of hours work, and assist the Proponent and Planning Secretary in responding to noise related complaints.</li> <li>Limits on hours and duration of highly intensive noise.</li> <li>An Operational Noise and Vibration Review that confirms modelled operational noise and vibration impacts (including additional technical requirements for modelling), the receivers eligible for noise mitigation and the types of noise mitigation. Noise mitigation must consider building conditions, cooling devices and all feasible barrier options.</li> <li>An Operational Noise Compliance Report once the project is operational that compares modelled and actual impacts and informs any additional mitigation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Amenity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern for air quality impact and visual impacts</li> <li>Inadequate visual impact assessment in consideration of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department's assessment of air quality and visual impacts is provided in <b>Section 6.9</b> of the report.</li> <li>The Department is satisfied the Proponent's air quality impact assessment adequately considers construction and operational impacts.</li> </ul>

Issue	Consideration
<p>the high visual amenity of the project area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate air quality impact assessment and the scope of consideration of emissions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction impacts are within air quality guideline levels at nearly all receivers and acceptable subject to mitigation.</li> <li>Operational impacts are within guideline levels and are acceptable.</li> <li>While the visual impact assessment identifies the aspects of the project that will cause impacts, the Department considers that it understates the level of impact and requires the Proponent to consult with neighbouring residents about landscaping and screening.</li> </ul> <p>Recommended conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Visual and Landscape Impact Management Plan to mitigate impacts is required to be prepared, in consultation with landowners and residents within 500 m of the project in rural areas and 100 m in towns.</li> <li>Preparation and implementation of an Air Quality Management Plan as part of the CEMP.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Flooding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern for the flooding assessment at Narromine regarding the unusual hydraulic characteristics of the area</li> <li>Concern for the flooding impact at Narrabri and the modelling and assessment undertaken</li> <li>An alternative route to the west of Narrabri would improve flood outcomes</li> <li>Flood modelling is inconsistent with council modelling</li> <li>Increased flood risks and impacts, including impacts on flood evacuation routes</li> <li>Inadequate flood mapping, flood modelling, lack of clarity on input data/omission of data in the EIS, as well as the lack of information in the EIS to enable an independent review of the modelling assumptions and for individual property owners to determine impacts to properties</li> <li>Flood modelling underestimates Warrumbungles runoff</li> <li>Insufficient number of drainage structures</li> <li>Flood impacts on soil erosion</li> <li>Concern for construction in flood prone areas and increased flood risk</li> <li>Proposal does not comply with Quantitative Design Limits</li> <li>Maintenance of culverts during operation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department thoroughly assessed flooding impacts in <b>Section 6.1</b> of the report.</li> <li>The project traverses three significant floodplains and is expected to increase flooding in its vicinity.</li> <li>The Department required remodelling of flooding and hydrology impacts through a PIAR.</li> <li>The Department has engaged in a detailed and incremental review of the Proponent's flooding assessment through a Hydrology Working Group, including the Department's independent hydrology expert, relevant Government agencies, and the Proponent.</li> <li>The Department is satisfied that the flood modelling and presentation of its results in the PIAR is adequate to allow the project's determination.</li> <li>The project will result in flooding exceeding the afflux (increased flood height) Quantitative Design Limit (QDL) at 51 buildings, compared to the 6,198 buildings currently at risk of above flood flooding in a 1% AEP flood event. Afflux will also exceed the QDL at 2,196 hectares of non-urban land (1.8% of the land area currently flooded in a 1% AEP event), and 52 km of roads (11% of current flooding).</li> <li>Linear transport infrastructure projects rarely meet flood performance criteria at all locations. For this project, QDL non-compliance would trigger a requirement for the Proponent to reach agreement with the landholder about the non-compliance, including mitigation measures.</li> <li>The Department does not consider the Proponent's assessment of velocity increases and potential soil erosion demonstrates the project's expected impacts and need for mitigation with necessary precision.</li> <li>Maintenance of culverts during operation would form part of the required Operational Environmental Management Plan.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department has set stringent requirements for the project's flood impacts and detailed conditions to manage the project's flood impacts.</li> <li>The Department requires and has nominated specifications for further flood modelling to determine the project's QDL compliance based on detailed design. This includes finer grained modelling to show velocity impacts with further precision than provided in the PIAR.</li> <li>The Department requires that the revised flood modelling of the final design of the CSSI be independently peer reviewed by a suitably qualified and experienced hydrologist.</li> <li>The Department recommends a condition requiring the Proponent to prepare a Flood Design Verification Report (FDVR) for the Planning</li> </ul>

Issue	Consideration
	<p>Secretary's approval prior to the commencement of construction. The FDVR documents the project's QDL compliance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the event of QDL non-compliance, the Proponent must make reasonable endeavours to redesign drainage structures to ensure compliance. If that is not practical, the Proponent must obtain landholder agreement to non-compliances, including any mitigation measures located outside the rail corridor.</li> <li>• If agreement is not reached, either party can refer the disagreement to an Independent Flood Impact Assessment Panel (IFIAP), comprised of a hydrologist, agronomist and professional mediator. The IFIAP will determine the material impact of QDL non-compliance on affected properties and appropriate mitigation. If the Proponent does not act on the IFIAP's recommendation, it must acquire land (or an interest in it) to the extent of the non-compliance.</li> <li>• The Department has recommended that a Flood Design Consultation Protocol be prepared and made publicly available, to outline the steps the Proponent will take where there are expected to be non-compliances with the QDLs regarding consultation with landowners and road authorities.</li> <li>• The Department has also recommended that an Erosion Threshold Velocity Report (ETVR) is prepared to determine flow velocities likely to cause soil erosion. This Report must be prepared by a suitably qualified geomorphologist or scour/erosion specialist with experience in calculating ETV of erosive floodplain soils.</li> <li>• The stringent velocity QDL, finer grained modelling required in the Proponent's further modelling, and the ETVR, will manage uncertainties about the project's velocities, potential for erosion, and land required to mitigate impacts by setting an expected outcome and detailing how the Proponent must demonstrate this.</li> <li>• To provide a further safeguard against erosion impacts, the Department has required ongoing operational monitoring against baseline conditions through the Operational Erosion Mitigation and Monitoring Program.</li> <li>• The Department has recommended conditions requiring a Flood Emergency Response Plan and collaboration with emergency services regarding their flood response plans.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Biodiversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The potential mortality impact for fauna along The Pilliga alignment</li> <li>• Concern for biosecurity and weed impacts to The Pilliga</li> <li>• Concern for the impact to threatened flora and fauna and ecological communities through The Pilliga</li> <li>• The need for adequate rehabilitation plans and management</li> <li>• Inadequate cumulative impact assessment and inability to achieve appropriate offsets</li> <li>• Concern for the lack of consideration in the ecological assessment with regard to the footprint identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department's assessment of biodiversity impacts is provided in <b>Section 6.2</b> of the report.</li> <li>• The project also affects Matters of National Environmental Significance and therefore requires assessment under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cth) (EPBC Act). The Department has assessed the project against this legislation in accordance with the Bilateral Agreement between the NSW and Australian Governments.</li> <li>• The Department notes concerns about the weighting of biodiversity impacts on the Proponent's route selection. While that is ultimately a matter for the Proponent, the Department notes a direct route through the Pilliga was preferred as it provided reduced transit times, property impacts and construction costs.</li> <li>• The Department is satisfied that the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report accurately assesses biodiversity impacts in accordance with the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> and the Biodiversity Assessment Method, and the EPBC Act.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department has recommended conditions that specify the ecosystem credits and species credits required to offset the project's impact on relevant entities, the preparation and implementation of a Biodiversity Management Plan to manage impacts on biodiversity values during the construction and operation of the project, and implementation of a fauna connectivity strategy.</li> </ul>



Issue	Consideration
<p><b>Property and land use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal negatively affects existing property access</li> <li>• Negative impacts on farm operations</li> <li>• Insufficient rail crossing points within properties</li> <li>• Impacts on travelling stock route access</li> <li>• Suggestion to use Baradine Showground as an accommodation camp site</li> <li>• Impact on current and potential future rural-residential developments</li> <li>• Proposed fencing is not appropriate for agricultural uses</li> <li>• Property access during construction</li> <li>• Impacts on property values.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department's assessment of property and land use impacts is provided in <b>Section 6.4</b> of the report.</li> <li>• The project will acquire all or part of 310 properties. Acquisitions will reduce the size of properties and in some cases bisect them. This will affect access to and within properties, including the ability to move livestock and specialised agricultural equipment across the rail line. The Department acknowledges this may impact on the efficiency or viability of farm operations.</li> <li>• Property impacts would be considered through the acquisition process under the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms) Compensation Act 1991</i>.</li> <li>• Property impacts are inevitable for a project of this scale. The Department considers that the Proponent should make all reasonable accommodations for landholder preferences for access and fencing.</li> <li>• The project will affect nine travelling stock routes (TSRs). TSR 27999 (north of Narrabri) will be particularly affected as its width will be reduced by the rail corridor.</li> <li>• The location of proposed temporary accommodation facilities is a matter for the Proponent.</li> <li>• Impacts on existing rural-residential development has been considered in this assessment and any future such development would need to respond to the project.</li> <li>• Impacts on property values are not a planning consideration, although matters that affect values, such as amenity and the productive capacity of land have been considered in this assessment.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Proponent must consult with affected landholders, make reasonable accommodations and document agreements in Individual Property Management Plans to complement the property acquisition process.</li> <li>• The Proponent must provide alternative convenient property access where access is temporarily changed during construction.</li> <li>• The Proponent must work with North West Local Land Services and TSR users to relocate or appropriately redesign TSR R27999 to ensure safe operation for stock and stock managers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Water supply for construction and groundwater bores</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clarity on the number of bores required, location of bores, and the construction water supply/volume and sources, and if water would be sourced from the Great Artesian Basin</li> <li>• Concern for the lowering of the water table and the subsequent operation of existing bores</li> <li>• Concern for the assessment and impacts of construction water use on water drawdown and groundwater</li> <li>• The need to mitigate impacts on the local groundwater supply</li> <li>• Concern in relation to operational vibration impacts on existing bores and the potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department's assessment of groundwater impacts is provided in <b>Section 6.6</b> of the report.</li> <li>• The project will use approximately 4,635 megalitres of water for construction and will likely source this from deep aquifers. There is sufficient unallocated capacity in these aquifers to service construction while maintaining water availability for other users and environmental purposes.</li> <li>• The Proponent's assessment indicates drawdown of up to four metres at an existing bore near bore field PB2. This may affect water availability for users of that bore.</li> <li>• The Proponent would be required to obtain licences to use groundwater, which would require further consideration of impacts.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department requires further modelling to confirm groundwater impacts and document mitigation and management measures.</li> <li>• The Department has conditioned a Soil and Water Management Plan, which includes a Construction Groundwater Management Plan and a Borefield Management Plan, to confirm bore locations and water take and quality and minimise impacts.</li> <li>• Other conditions require further groundwater monitoring and if necessarily changes to extraction rates to minimise impacts, and provision of alternative</li> </ul>

Issue	Consideration
<p>need for new bores and compliance requirements that would be less productive.</p>	<p>water supply or compensation to users of licensed bores affected by the proposed groundwater use.</p>
<p><b>Heritage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate assessment of Aboriginal heritage with regard to the significance of the landscape as opposed to individual sites.</li> <li>• Concern for the cumulative impact to Aboriginal cultural heritage</li> <li>• Concern for the impact to non-Aboriginal heritage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department's assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage is provided in <b>Section 6.7</b> and non-Aboriginal heritage in <b>Section 6.9</b> of the report.</li> <li>• The project will impact or potentially impact on 48 Aboriginal heritage items and six Potential Archaeological Deposits. Of these, five items are considered by the Proponent to be of medium to high overall significance. It will also impact upon cultural values embedded in waterways, plants and animals, pathways and tangible and intangible relations within Aboriginal culture and dreaming.</li> <li>• The Proponent has not had access all the project's alignment. Further investigation post-determination may find more items. The Proponent's predictive model has targeted ten locations for further investigation.</li> <li>• Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) have been involved in reviewing the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report and informing the cultural values assessment and will be involved in further investigation and salvage.</li> <li>• The Department acknowledges the Proponent's collaboration with Aboriginal stakeholders and considers this an essential component of management of impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage.</li> <li>• The project will partially impact two non-Aboriginal items of local significance. The Proponent has committed to avoiding these impacts in its detailed design where feasible.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Construction Heritage Management Plan will provide for salvage of impacted items and their long term care, protection of sensitive areas and an unexpected finds protocol.</li> <li>• An Aboriginal Cultural Values Plan to minimise impacts on cultural values and reflect these values in the project.</li> <li>• An Aboriginal Engagement Strategy that guides Aboriginal engagement about cultural and heritage management and social and economic impacts and opportunities of the project.</li> <li>• The Department considers a holistic strategy is important to ensure effective involvement of Aboriginal people in impact mitigation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community and stakeholder consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superficial consultation, lack of meaningful engagement and consideration of local knowledge</li> <li>• Concern for lack of transparency and discussion of potential issues with the public</li> <li>• Concern for lack of transparency from the Proponent and the involvement of the Community Consultative Committee in meaningful discussions</li> <li>• Inadequate communication of the route selection and discussion with the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department's community and stakeholder consultation is discussed in <b>Section 5</b> of the report.</li> <li>• The Department acknowledges community concerns about the Proponent's engagement and provision of information about the project's impacts.</li> <li>• The Department acknowledges the Proponent's program of community consultation before and during the EIS and PIAR exhibitions and through the Community Consultative Committee (CCC), notwithstanding community concerns about information presented at these forums.</li> <li>• The Department exhibited the EIS in accordance with legislative requirements, and extended the minimum exhibition timeframe to account for the Christmas and New Year holiday period.</li> <li>• The Department exhibited the PIAR given the significant community interest in the additional flooding assessment flooding impacts and route selection justification.</li> <li>• Departmental staff attended the Proponent's exhibition consultation sessions and some CCC meetings to provide advice on the Department's assessment process and how to make submissions.</li> </ul>

Issue	Consideration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern for the disregard of community suggestions and the ability to have an open discussion and ask questions</li> <li>Concern for the lack of involvement and consultation in selecting appropriate mitigation measures.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the Department cannot change consultation that has occurred to date, it has recommended a comprehensive suite of conditions to ensure meaningful community consultation about construction and environmental impacts.</li> <li>A Communication Strategy that details who will be consulted about the construction and initial operation of the project and how they will be consulted, including mediation of unresolved complaints.</li> <li>A Complaints Management System, including mediation of unresolved complaints through a Community Complaints Mediator.</li> <li>A Flood Design Consultation Protocol for negotiating agreements and mitigation measures where there are QDL non-compliances.</li> <li>Individual Property Management Plans to record agreements about mitigation for property access or productive use.</li> <li>An Aboriginal Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to guide the consultation process for managing impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Construction impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to clarify location for temporary workers accommodation and reach an agreement with affected stakeholders</li> <li>Inadequate consideration of the impact on housing and accommodation in consideration of the anticipated four years of construction, and the availability of workers for other local employment</li> <li>Concern for the impacts on local emergency and health services with additional construction workers</li> <li>Concern for the operation of temporary workforce accommodation sites and the rehabilitation of construction areas.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impacts of temporary and permanent accommodation of the project's workforce is discussed in <b>Section 6.8</b> of the report.</li> <li>Temporary accommodation facilities would provide an attractive alternative to the local rental market for construction workers.</li> <li>The operation of mechanical plant at the accommodation and vehicle travel between the accommodation and construction sites has potential noise and traffic impacts.</li> <li>The construction workforce would include appropriately skilled local workers, which would reduce housing pressures.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended conditions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Temporary Accommodation Facility Management Plan will finalise the layout of facilities, shield noisy plant from neighbouring land uses, outline health and security provision on-site in consultation with emergency services, limitation on hours of use of outdoor recreation areas, and waste and water servicing.</li> <li>A requirement for construction areas to be rehabilitated as soon as practicable following cessation of use.</li> </ul>