

I wish to make a submission to OPPOSE the EOI related to the ARTC's Inland Rail (Albury to Illabo) project.

I have very serious concerns on a number of issues:

Pre-construction will impact Wagga Wagga from the beginning of Q1 2024 right through to Q2 2025 as materials will need to be moved down the line for all southern works. Then, during construction, an estimated time of 18month, but more realistically 24 months there will be disruption in traffic flow, available accommodation in the city and environmental impacts (i.e. sound and air pollution) AS WELL AS continued disruption due to long slow-moving trains through the city itself.

Pearson St bridge (high-traffic area from Ashmont, Glenfield, Lloyd, Tolland, Mt Austin and large industrial area) will be closed for **16 MONTHS**. Some of these suburbs are low-SES resulting in increased financial burden of extensive detours.

Edmondson St Bridge. This is a massively high traffic area centrally located to four schools and a TAFE, many childcare centres, and is one of three main conduits to the CBD. Educational facilities accommodate several thousands of students daily. This is the main tributary to Central Wagga from Mt Austin, Tolland, Bourkelands, Hilltop, Lake Albert, Tatton & Koorlingal and more as families and buses drop children at the schools and parents continue on to work. Will be closed for **11 MONTHS** – the whole school year, but realistically this could be even longer.

I seriously query the validity of a train 1.8km long travelling at 80km per hour through a major city. While 80km/hour may be the average for a train travelling through a regional area, this would be extremely unlikely and safe to do so through the middle of a major city. This would have to go slower, thereby taking longer and causing more traffic disruption as well as greater noise levels.

In relation to certain points in the EOI, I also have a number of concerns and questions:

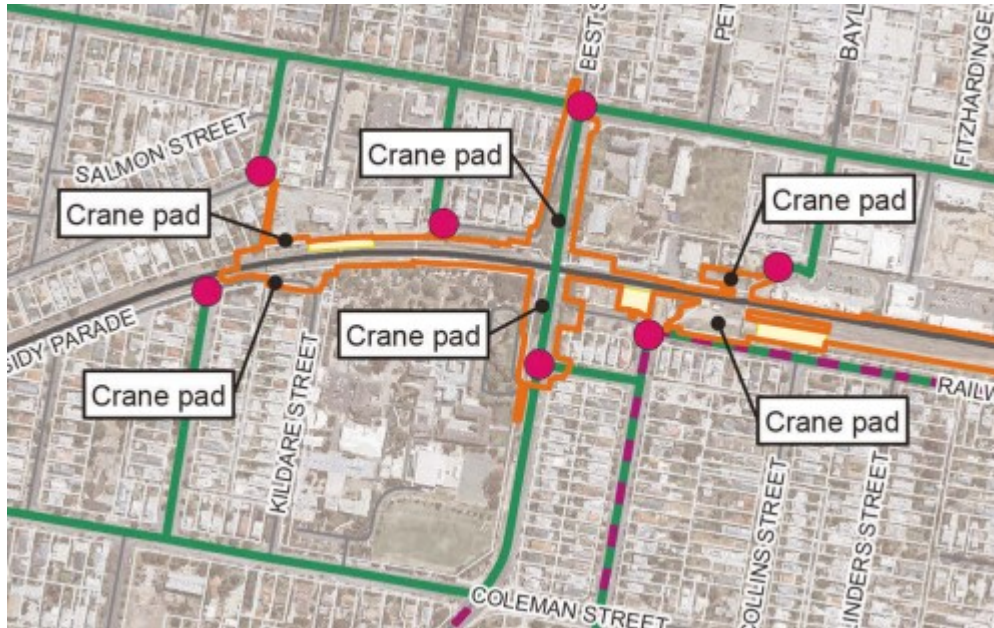
8.2.1 How impartial will the surveyors who do the initial building inspections be?

- Who is responsible for remediation where damage is shown to have occurred?
- What is the time period afterwards to make claims?
- How will this be done?

8.2.2 how will noise and disruption of piling rigs in track lowering phase be mitigated? This activity would be undertaken within metres of people's homes, with heavy machinery, noise and air pollution a daily disruption to residents.

8.2.4 Actual locations for the cranes and crane pads north & south of Edmondson Street bridge, including perimeter fencing – how will that encroach on the surrounding street/s and school yard/s?

Also, how will noise and disruption related to installation of cranes and crane pads north & south of Edmondson Street bridge be mitigated?



Will all excavated materials be removed from the site, or stockpiled on site (eyesore; attract undesirable persons/children; environmental hazard re dust/mud)

The EOI should have included detailed multidimensional plans and sketches to show the new Edmondson Street Bridge and its impact on the highway intersection, Erin Street and Little Best Street, including access after any construction. This should be known in this preliminary phase.

8.2.5 Similar concerns per those expressed at 8.2.4

8.2.6 Level Crossing works at Docker/Bourke Streets and Fernleigh Road – what is the proposal for new signals: will they be improved from the existing boom-gates?

Why not construct a bridge over this, with the opportunity this project brings? That would provide longer-term improved infrastructure to make these works more beneficial

How are structures (homes) quite close to Docker/Bourke Street to be managed?

8.2.7 Rehabilitation of sites – how long after the works would this be completed?

What say will close-by residents have in this?

To what standard will it be done?

Who determines 'as required'?

8.3 There is a large gap in this plan related to 'may involve additional rail possessions'. What is to stop this blowing out to be both longer (more than 60-hour) and more frequent?

Wagga Wagga Station pedestrian bridge "Mother's bridge" has historical value. The proposed design is unsightly and does not fit with the heritage precinct the NSW Government and local council spent millions on in recent years.

8.4 Hours of construction: 6am to 6pm seven days a week. These are not feasible on the front doorsteps of residences. In Donnelly Avenue and Little Best Street this work would be carried out for 11 months less than 100metres from front doors in ALL residences.

Will there be any consultation related to the timing of 'large concrete pours' at the Edmondson St Bridge? Will they be planned for school holidays or PH or weekdays?

Again, 60-hour 'rail possessions' are additional to this time period

Delivery of plant/equipment would also be disruptive and dangerous in these small streets, which are frequently used by both primary school and high school-aged children as they move to their schools and home, as well as downtown and to the McDonald's restaurant in Fox Street.

What mitigation for damage to the existing roads' surface due to this additional traffic movement, or to properties due to pollutants and vibration damage?

8.5.1 Workforce – will approaches be made to 'short-term property market' at commercial or reduced rates?

8.5.3 does not include any vegetative materials for 'rehabilitation' – trees, shrubs, grasses, etc for landscaping

8.7 *Where are site compounds for vehicles to be stored overnight?* "The proposed temporary occupation and use of these areas are subject to further engagement and agreement with landowners." [fig 8.1 – 8.14]

Road occupancy given by Councils, but no mention of consultation with residents.

The entire roadway that provides access to all houses in Little Best Street is proposed to be used as a compound. This will cause serious inconvenience for those residents and could cause serious financial loss for anyone in the short-term accommodation market.



12.4.2 does not mention this loss of vehicular access to the homes in Little Best Street. This street is also used as a collection/drop-off point for scores of infants and primary school children during the four school terms. Access for these families will be pushed into Best Street or other more distant locations on the opposite side of the highway to the school. While there is an oblique referral to this at 12.5.1, this paragraph does not take into account the residents/road users, but only the Council who owns the road.

8.8.1 Worker parking near Edmondson Street Bridge. As Donnelly Avenue is a small local street, a guarantee that workers will not park along this street would be necessary. There is little availability for residents or any persons visiting or accessing home-businesses already and increased traffic in this area would pose a danger to resident children as well as local school children.

Table 8-10 clarification regarding the scope of access that would continue to be available along Little Best Street during construction (p.8-31) is required. Further, while foot traffic being diverted to Mother's Bridge sounds reasonable, this would require that the construction of the Mother's Bridge replacement does not overlap with the Edmondson Bridge closure.

8.9 Could a copy of the proposed disruptions to services such as water, electricity and telephone be provided to all affected residents?

9.1 Summary – "The closure of the Edmondson Street bridge in Wagga Wagga in particular would result in significant delays during peak-hour periods (based on worst-case assumptions) due to increased road congestion at intersections that are already constrained." This is of concern to families beyond the envelope suggested in this EIS. A large proportion of Wagga's population lives south of Edmondson Street Bridge. Similarly a large proportion of students at the schools on the South side of ES Bridge travel in from the North side and therefore must cross the railway line. The impact this will have on families will be immense.

12.6.4 residual risk mitigation section identifies a 'high' risk that, at best, is brought to a 'medium' risk through 'appropriate means', which could mean anything or nothing. A medium risk is still above acceptable levels of risk.

At 11.1 (Summary) minimises the heritage status of the Wagga Railway Station and surrounding buildings which will be visually impacted by the proposed new pedestrian bridge replacing Mother's Bridge. As noted, "across all enhancement sites, there would be a major cumulative impact due to the collective impact on railway heritage values" yet this is minimised in the summary.

As can be seen, the railway line runs directly through the centre of the Wagga Wagga Conservation Area which covers both commercial and residential areas – the individual heritage value of each of the individual residences is being discounted in this general mention. This is particularly pertinent to



comments made at 11.3.5 which minimises the visual impact on all homes in Donnelly Avenue that immediately face the railway line and those in Little Best that face the Edmondson Street Bridge and are all within 50-100m of the site with uninterrupted views. Houses along Donnelly (facing the line) & Little Best Street (facing Edmondson Street Bridge) will have their 'view scape' impacted, thereby coming under the 'moderate' impact category of risk, which appears to be discounted in importance. It is noted in Table 17-3 that the change in lighting and view would be considered 'moderate' to 'high' for residents of Little Best Street.

Those residents are not permitted to do major works that would impact on their properties and environs in relation to their heritage value. Why is Inland Rail allowed to build non-heritage constructions in this area? Further, the Edmondson Street Bridge requires further investigation as a heritage listable item. The bricks are germane to Wagga Wagga and the style is also unusual – as identified in the documents. Further, Cassidy Parade and Brookong Avenue footbridge has been identified as 'unique' (11.12) – I would not say the graffiti is 'damage'.

I am considerably concerned regarding the finding that “This includes potential impacts from vibration, demolition, archaeological disturbance, altered historical arrangements and access, aesthetic changes, changes to visual amenity, viewsheds and vistas, and at-property noise treatments” (11.14) that are not included in the summary. Further, the lighting from nightworks around the bridge reconstruction will be very disruptive for young people and may attract undesirable people into the area (refer Table 17-17).

There would need to be better, specific, one-on-one consultation with residents that are immediately impacted.

I also note at 17.4.1 that ‘trees or open spaces adjacent’ to the works will not be impacted, and this will be closely monitored, particularly in light of the recent and sudden death of a row of cedar trees alongside the Edmondson St Bridge site. The potential for high-moderate adverse impact during construction is also noted at Table 17.12, however I cannot see where feasible remediation being undertaken.

Wagga Wagga precinct				
Uranquinty Yard clearances	Uranquinty rural town centre	Local	Low	Minor adverse
Pearson Street bridge	Pearson Street and rail corridor	Neighbourhood	Low	Negligible
Cassidy Parade pedestrian bridge, Edmondson Street bridge, Wagga Wagga Station pedestrian bridge and Wagga Wagga Yard clearances	Cassidy Parade and Brookong Avenue residential area	Local	Moderate	Moderate adverse
	Edmondson Street bridge landscape	Local	Moderate	Moderate adverse
	Wagga Wagga Railway Station heritage landscape	Regional	Moderate	High–moderate adverse
Donnelly Yard clearances	Donnelly GAP industrial area	Neighbourhood	Negligible	Negligible
Cassidy Parade pedestrian bridge, Edmondson Street bridge, Wagga Wagga Station pedestrian bridge and Wagga Wagga Yard clearances	Viewpoint 14: View north west from Cassidy Parade	Local	Moderate	Moderate adverse
	Viewpoint 15: View south from Brookong Street	Local	Moderate	Moderate adverse
	Viewpoint 16: View north along Edmondson Street	Local	Moderate	Moderate adverse
	Viewpoint 17: View south from Best Street	Local	High	High–moderate adverse
	Viewpoint 18: View east along Railway Street	Local	High	High–moderate adverse
	Viewpoint 19: View south west from Station Place.	Local	Moderate	Moderate adverse

I note that the visual renderings are selective (i.e Viewpoint 18 (p. 17.12). A very large number of people travel along Railway Street from east to west and would view both Mother’s Bridge and the Edmondson Street Bridge in the one viewing. Why was this sketch not included? Also, a number of homes directly view the line at the Edmondson Street Bridge from Donnelly Avenue. A view should also be supplied of what their immediate outlook would be. Further, it is noted that there is a high-moderate adverse impact to this landscape visually at Table 17-16

According to KPMG’s report, there is ZERO economic benefit to the community:

Table 22: Results of the economic benefits assessment (\$2021)

BENEFITS	Discount Rate		
	4%	7%	10%
Freight Benefits	\$365.33 m	\$179.80 m	\$103.14 m
Travel Time Savings	\$25.42 m	\$13.82 m	\$8.66 m
Operating Cost Savings	\$37.46 m	\$21.83 m	\$14.42 m
Improved Availability	\$235.50 m	\$110.87 m	\$60.68 m
Improved Reliability	\$66.95 m	\$33.29 m	\$19.36 m
Community Benefits	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m
Crash Reduction	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m
Environmental Externalities	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m
Road Decongestion Benefits	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m	\$0.00 m
TOTAL BENEFITS	\$365.33 m	\$179.80 m	\$103.14 m

Source: KPMG

I note that, at Figure F1-3 a number of smaller regional towns are being bypassed with new line, rather than carve their towns in half. I suggest that the ARTC review this document and the potential impacts on the residents of Wagga Wagga city and consider the more future-friendly, sustainable option to carve a railway line around the city to re-join at Bomen. It appears to be very short-sighted to push this through a major city centre to no gain to the residents either in the short-term or longer-term.

I would also object to the ‘community engagement’. Calling a public meeting with only a couple of days’ notice is unacceptable. Often meetings were held at 4pm – during business hours – when many people could not attend. My residence is immediately affected. No-one doorknocked or left a note in the mailbox. Public meetings were not promoted well. I expect that the ‘Empower’ component of your graph at Figure E F3-1 IAP2 is implemented.

15.5.1

Edmondson Street bridge	NCA10/ NCA11/ NCA 12	Construction would occur over 11 months. Most works would typically occur during the primary construction hours, demolition, piling and installing the bridge deck would each require nine-hour TOAs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction at this enhancement site would result in low-to-high impacts at up to 1,758 residential receivers during standard and OOH periods. The predicted exceedances are similar across most activities (refer to Appendix C of Technical Paper 6: Noise and vibration (non-rail)). For the majority of the residential receivers, the proposal would result in low-to-moderate impacts; however high impacts are predicted at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> up to 25 residential receivers during daytime (Standard) period during all activities up to 85 residential receivers during OOH (daytime, evening) periods during all activities up to 102 residential receivers during night (OOH) periods during all activities. Up to 34 residential receivers would be highly noise affected during daytime (standard) hours. No receivers would be highly noise affected during OOH periods. Up to 1,301 residential receivers would exceed the sleep disturbance criterion (bridge furniture and bridge deck installation scenarios). During other activities, this would reduce (up to 868 residential receivers or lower). Up to 1,031 residential receivers would exceed the sleep disturbance criterion (deck and road furniture installation). During other activities, this would reduce (up to 868 residential receivers or lower). Exceedances are predicted at nearby commercial, industrial, places of worship and educational facilities during most construction scenarios.
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As one of the ‘residential receivers’ who will be impacted all day, OOH and overnight, I am seriously concerned at the above section of the table. This street has young families, working and stay-at-home parents, short-term accommodation and small home business operators. Audible disturbances at unacceptable levels over long periods of time with no respite, increased traffic movement, increased air pollution, and increased lighting during night-time works are serious considerations and should not be dismissed readily. What mitigation and/or compensation will be in place while construction works are ongoing? I will add that both the Mother’s Bridge and Cassidy Parade Bridge are only 200m in either direction from Little Best/Donnelly Avenue residences, meaning the impact from those works will also be felt among this cohort of people.

I am further concerned that the noise from the road detours is very high – 5.7 for two primary tributaries, Macleay and Railway Street (Table 15-14), and the noise from Edward Street/Sturt

Highway will also be audible from our premises. As noted in Table 28.2.2 these are only some of the high impact social issues identified: "Adverse amenity impacts would be experienced in some areas due to increases in operational rail noise, the presence of permanent proposal features and more frequent level crossing closures potentially exacerbating social severance across the rail corridor" (p. 28.4). Will there be any raising of the banks to lessen the ongoing noise from the trains, in particular in central Wagga where the track cannot be lowered due to the water table? I am not sure how you can include a statement such as "The alterations to rail bridges to accommodate track realignment would be minimal and would not result in a prominent visual change to the structures." (p. 17-21) in light of all the comments made to date.

I take issue with the description of the changes around the Edmondson Street Bridge in particular the description of the landscape changes as 'moderate adverse' having a 'minor adverse' impact Table 17-24. The changes will drastically impact the view scape of the five houses that face this bridge: The loss of established trees and smaller foliage plants; a large concrete wall that will attract graffiti; increased overshadowing / reduced morning sunlight due to a rise in the height of the bridge by 2.8m; increased pedestrian views into the properties and, I have heard, the inclusion of a permanent maintenance area – a fenced cage area under the bridge that will attract undesirables and rubbish.

I am concerned at the "replacement of the Edmondson Street bridge over the rail corridor with a road bridge 2.8 m higher than the existing, including:

- completion of road tie-in works and adjustments on Erin Street and Best Street
 - reduction in area available for roadside vegetation the western side of Edmondson Street"
1. why are there no anti-throw screens?
 2. What changes in access will there be around Little Best Street?
 3. What remediation will be done in this area so it is not an ugly eyesore with no vegetation, extremely hot in summer, and causing more dense shadow in winter?

I would like to see artists impressions of what the landscape for Little Best and Donnelly Avenue will be once these works are done, showing proposed vegetation and road treatment post-construction.

It is also misleading to discuss 770 potential employees as if they will all be working at once in a local area (p. 28-5). KPMG indicate that in the Riverina region there will be about 28 positions in a 'tight' labour market such as we have now. At best it would be 110 people in this region. I am concerned that the citizens of Wagga are expected to negatively impact their long-term future for the short-term gain of additional retail and hospitality sales in the short-term (6.1.2). And these are not so great, nor so widespread as to be of great benefit.

A further concern rests on the proposed speed of these trains. You are indicating at several points that the trains will travel at 80km/hour through the centre of Wagga Wagga. This seems unrealistically and dangerously high for movement of such heavily laden vehicles through the middle of a regional city. Is this speed picked to reduce the time the intersections will be closed? i.e. only 2 minutes for a 1.8km long train? If they travelled through the city at 40km/hour (a more safe speed), the crossing would be shut for 4 minutes per train, but this would not sound as good for the project. I understand, too, that there is a proposal for 45 trains per day by 2040. That's two per hour, and a total of 180mins (3hrs) each crossing would be closed – and by then the population and local traffic would also have increased. I would like to see a review of the accuracy and feasibility of these figures. I do understand and expect the trains would travel faster in open/agricultural areas.

Tech Paper 1 – Transport & Traffic. You make the comment at 3.1.2 that COVID19 is “unlikely to affect” the traffic levels during the site surveys, however this does not take into account that MANY staff were not required to be back in the office during the survey periods, and that there was generally reduced traffic as people were not travelling in the region due to the pandemic.

I trust you will take these and other comments into serious consideration in the review of this EIS as the project as currently proposed will cause extreme inconvenience during construction, but also leave the Wagga community divided and waiting for massively long trains to traverse through the centre of the city.

Regards,

Monique Shephard

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