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# EVOLVE PASTORAL CO PTY LTD

## DINYAH – AMAROO – TRURO

Dinyah, 315 Berthong Rd  
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15 October 2022

**RE: Submission to NSW Government - Major Projects  
Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) Inland Rail -  
Illabo to Stockinbingal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)  
Sub – 49378956**

### **Introducing Ourselves**

Evolve Pastoral Co Pty Ltd is the operating entity for three farms in the Cootamundra District owned by Peter & Monica McClintock and entities controlled by them. Peter & Monica represent the Sixth generation of the McClintock family who have been farming in the district since 1878. One of our daughters, Anna, is currently working with us and it is expected she will carry on the family's operations for a further generation.

McClintock's Daughters Pty Ltd as trustee for CGA Trust owns one of these farms - **Truro**, 1570 Old Cootamundra Road Cootamundra NSW 2590. Truro is approximately 970 Ha and is operated as a Mixed Farm with outputs including Lamb, Wheat, Canola and Barley. The mixed farm operation is approximately 50% cropping and 50% grazing. We make this submission on behalf of McClintock's Daughters Pty Ltd, the affected landholder.

This farmland will be impacted by the ARTC Inland Rail Project – Illabo to Stockinbingal at approximate chainage 28,250m – 30,250m. Approximately 16 Ha is subject to compulsory acquisition for the rail corridor and a further 4 Ha is subject to compulsory Lease by ARTC for a “Construction Compound” (#18 in the EIS). This compound will be used to stockpile materials, store fuel and water, house staff facilities and offices, and used for construction of the Rail over Road Bridge across Old Cootamundra Road.

For context, **Attachment A (Plan of Land) and Attachment C (Plan of Temporary Land) from ARTC's Letter of Offer** are attached to this submission.

## **Submission**

The following are our objections to this project and the reasons for them:

### **1. Route Selection.**

- 1.1. Much has been said about the current route of the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail Project. The priorities chosen by ARTC for the route selection, with high emphasis on traversing Melbourne to Brisbane in under 24 hours (whether, in practice, that will ever be achieved), have resulted in a route that does not provide the greatest economic, social and environmental benefits to regional NSW. Our family farm will learn to live next to the new rail corridor provided we are adequately compensated for the issues it creates. We will forever feel however that this nationally significant project could achieve so much more in terms of economic, social and environmental benefits for regional NSW and Australia.
- 1.2. This project does little to engage with the communities through which it passes. It will be a rail corridor from Melbourne to Brisbane benefitting businesses and communities at either end. With the exception of a potential intermodal hub at Parkes there is very little benefit for those of us who live along it's corridor.
- 1.3. As this is the subject of a current Federal Government Enquiry, we will refrain from expanding further.

Route Selection does need to be addressed more objectively and comprehensively in the EIS.

### **2. ARTC Engagement to Date.**

- 2.1. ARTC have instilled little confidence in us with their approach to provision of information and negotiations to date:
  - 2.1.1. Time frames are set and revised constantly as they underestimate the procedures and overwork their own staff.
  - 2.1.2. They come at us at a million miles an hour to get things done then we don't hear from them for months on end.
  - 2.1.3. Queries are sent, replies sometimes inadequate, are received after much badgering and significant delays.
  - 2.1.4. They want us to work to their time frame but vital information we require to prepare ourselves to meet their demands takes far too long to be received.
  - 2.1.5. Payments for compensation (legal costs) incurred have taken over 6 months to be received.

These issues and more have made ARTC a very difficult organization to deal with. As such, we have little confidence that the current EIS provides us with everything we need to adequately address impacts on us.

### **3. Property Impacts.**

- 3.1. Limited detail:
  - 3.1.1. The EIS provides very general information regarding the impacts on our property.
  - 3.1.2. Some of the assumptions and conclusions bear little relevance to the practical future outcomes we will experience because of this project. Farm Specific issues need to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

### 3.2. Loss of Farmland:

- 3.2.1. We will lose 16 ha of quality farmland. We will still require the same number of staff and quantity of machinery to carry out our operations resulting in inefficiencies for our business at Truro.
- 3.2.2. Efficiency gains are always an incremental thing, with small gains over many years providing us with competitive advantage in a highly competitive sector where cost control is the answer to success. This project will set back our efficiency gains and thus reduce our competitiveness compared to our unaffected business peers.

Economic impacts on affected landholders need to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

### 3.3. Loss of Access Point:

- 3.3.1. We currently have a gate on Dudauman Road which provides us with more direct access to Grain Facilities at Stockinbingal and the Burley Griffin Way. We have an internal laneway system on farm which provides access from Old Cootamundra Road to these paddocks, however a significant creek (Powderhorn Creek) across the lane prevents truck movements from the Eastern paddocks through the main access at 1570 Old Cootamundra Road. We cannot take grain and produce via this laneway out past the house, even if we could, there would be significant extra cost and time delays in doing so.

- 3.3.2. We will need to construct a new lane connection from the existing laneway to the Old Cootamundra Road enable truck access from affected paddocks. This laneway will be over 1 km long and will require significant construction (gravel and formation) to make it all-weather proof for trucks. Quotes for it's construction and economic impact from loss of further farmland come in at over \$400,000.

This farm specific issue needs to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

### 3.4. Loss of Stock Water Dam:

- 3.4.1. The new rail corridor will eliminate one of our stock water dams for which we will need to have a new dam sunk, at significant expense and taking out further productive farmland.

Issues related to stock water need to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

### 3.5. Impact on Livestock:

- 3.5.1. The EIS provides very limited detail concerning the impacts on livestock of operating trains on the proposed new rail corridor. We will have highly productive ewes lambing in the paddocks adjacent to the passing trains.

We would like significantly more information in the EIS about this issue to allow us to make an informed assessment of the impact on our business.

### 3.6. Loss of Biodiversity:

- 3.6.1. Tree removal along the rail corridor will result in loss of biodiversity. This will have a negative impact on bird flight paths (including rare and endangered species like the Superb Parrot) as these trees provide connective corridors which protection for them from predatory species as they move about the countryside.

Biodiversity issues need to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

### 3.7. Bush Fire Concerns:

- 3.7.1. The complete isolation of our property from Dudauman Road created by the rail corridor with no crossings will add a further level of complexity to any operation to control bush fires which may either be on our property and travelling East or on neighboring properties headed West toward our property.

- 3.7.2. The time wasted in getting across the rail corridor via the public or private crossings provided for in the current EIS could be the critical difference in preventing significant damage from bush fires and controlled burns in the affecting our farm.

Bush Fire Management issues need to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

### 3.8. Biosecurity Impacts – Construction and Operation:

- 3.8.1. Construction and other ARTC Traffic travelling along the proposed rail construction corridor creates biosecurity risks for our farm, with the potential for weed seed, plant pathogens and animal health issues (lice, footrot, disease, etc.) to be transported on vehicles, machinery and persons working on the construction project.

- 3.8.2. Ongoing rail operations after completion will see trains from all over Australia traversing the line with the potential for weed seeds, plant pathogens and animal health issues to be dispersed on our property by passing trains.

Biosecurity is one of our main priorities because of the economic and animal welfare impacts caused by a breach. Biosecurity issues need to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

## 4. Design Issues.

### 4.1. Boundary alignment:

- 4.1.1. The current boundary of proposed land to be acquired for the rail corridor does not follow a straight line. We use GPS equipment (set on A-B lines) to conduct our farming operations more efficiently. The creation by ARTC of a boundary which is not straight from A to B will create inefficiencies on our business. Time, chemical, fertilizer, and fuel usage inefficiencies will be a cost to us.

The EIS needs to address inefficiencies created by poor planning and design.

#### 4.2. Egress of Water from Property:

4.2.1. The rail proposed corridor traverses our Eastern boundary across which significant water drains in at least five locations. Any impediment to this water flow will affect productivity of our farmland. It will also cause trafficability issue for machinery used in these areas.

4.2.2. The current water egress design and culvert placement shown in the EIS does not provide us with enough information to determine the overall impact of the rail embankments and cuttings on:

4.2.2.1. Water movements

4.2.2.2. Flooding impacts

4.2.2.3. Water Velocity (and potential scouring of soils) through the currently proposed culverts.

Drainage issues need to be addressed more comprehensively in the EIS.

#### 4.3. Fencing:

4.3.1. With valuable livestock grazing adjacent to the new corridor, we will require adequate fencing suitable for our livestock and terrain to prevent any movement of livestock onto the corridor. The adverse costs and animal welfare issues for us and ARTC of livestock accessing the line are significant.

The EIS does not adequately provide information about who will provide this fencing, the type and construction methods to be used for proposed fencing.

### 5. Visual and Noise Impacts.

#### 5.1. Rail Line:

5.1.1. Sections of the embankments for the rail line to be constructed through our property are reportedly going to exceed 8m in height, with double stacked train heights on top of that. The number of viewpoints and receptors provided in the EIS do not provide us with sufficient information to allow us the confidently predict the visual impact of the rail embankments, and the noise emanating from the extra height of trains traversing these embankments, on both staff working on our day-to-day operations and the people living in the Main Homestead and Cottage on Truro.

#### 5.2. Rail Bridge over Old Cootamundra Road:

5.2.1. The Rail over Road bridge to be constructed across Old Cootamundra Road will provide 5.5m clearance above the road. The trains traversing this bridge will be higher still. Whilst the EIS provides a viewpoint at the site of the bridge it does not provide any further information of either the visual impact for our homestead and cottage, or the noise impact from trains travelling at height along the corridor.

More receptor montages and viewpoint information need to be provided in the EIS to provide information on visual and noise impacts.

## **6. Use of Goldenfields Water County Council (GWCC) Water.**

6.1. The EIS contemplates ARTC connecting into the existing GWCC pipeline adjacent to the Old Cootamundra Road from which we and our neighbors draw water for domestic and stock use.

The EIS does not report the impact on current GWCC water users of ARTC drawing significant quantities of water from a pipeline that was not constructed for such high-volume water usage. This needs to be addressed.

## **7. Personal Time Input.**

7.1. We have had to invest significant amounts of our own time in meetings, discussions, negotiations and preparation of documents for which we are unable to recover compensation from ARTC.

The EIS makes no reference to the costs incurred and inconvenience caused to landholders along the proposed corridor.

## **Conclusion**

The ARTC Inland Rail – Illabo to Stockinbingal Project EIS is significant. If it is determined that the corridor which is the subject of the current EIS provides Australia and, more importantly, regional NSW with significant economic, social and environmental benefits then we have no problem with its construction on the proviso that:

1. Issues mentioned above are adequately dealt with, and
2. We are provided adequate compensation for the economic, social and environmental impacts it will have on our business, our staff and ourselves.

We implore you to ensure that all the issues that we have raised are dealt with by ARTC prior to approval of this project.

Yours Faithfully,



Peter McClintock  
B.Comm., CA, GAICD, Adv.Dip.Farm Mgmt  
Director  
Evolve Pastoral Co Pty Ltd  
McClintock's Daughters Pty Ltd

# ATTACHMENT A- Plan of Land



# ATTACHMENT C - Plan of Temporary Land





