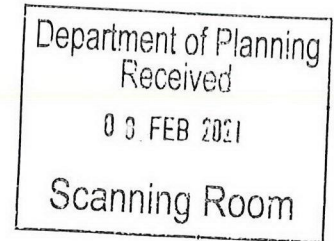


Richard Shepherd  
Box Flat  
3902 Castlereagh Highway  
Armatree 2828



Submission to DPIE in response to Inland Rail Environmental Impact Statement Narromine to Narrabri (SSI 18\_ 9487).

As the owner of farmland through which the Inland Rail will be built I OBJECT to its construction on what is flood plain country.

The railway track will alter natural flows across my farm, which is a flood plain, exacerbating historical issues with flooding. Planned culverts will alter natural flows leading to ponding on the eastern boundary and scour and erosion to the west. I believe that flood damage will inevitably lead to disruption to the line at times of torrential rain.

- My property, Wyuna, which is situated east of Gulargambone and west of the Warrumbungle Mountains, is subject to flooding from the east. This flooding is disruptive to farming, grazing and human movement. The severity of flooding and its impact on access to the homestead led to my decision to move away from the property and live nearby where I have 24/7 access to essential services such as health and education.
- During periods of heavy rain the Yarrandale Road, which provides access to Wyuna, becomes a natural watercourse and provides an example of flooding relevant to the area where the railway line will be constructed. To divert water and prevent it from gouging out the roadway, the Gilgandra Shire Council built a levee bank and channel to the borrow pit adjacent to the front gate access to Wyuna and to the property directly opposite on the southern side of the Yarrandale Road, Karoona. This infrastructure is vital to ensure the road remains open. Even so in times of heavy rain flood water crossing the Yarrandale Road reaches dangerous levels causing hazardous conditions and, despite depth indicators, near fatal outcomes for light traffic.

In November 2019 a rain event, amounting to 80mm, had water running from the Yarrandale Road past the farm buildings in a north westerly direction. This is a distance of over 3kms. This running water lasted for a week, caused erosion issues and is an example of flooding which has occurred on a number occasions during the years I have lived there. **Currently it occurs more frequently due to changes in land use from grazing to cropping, a change which, brought about by technological change, has occurred during the time our family has owned the property (86 years).**

Significantly while ARTC flood maps based on modelling show flood water from the Yarrandale Road travelling some distance towards the farm buildings, the maps are conservative, and do not reflect the true situation of how far the water travels.

- There is a lack of data regarding flooding in the Gulargambone area east of the Castlereagh River. Gilgandra Council does not hold any information of the impact of even the 1955 flood east of the river in the Armatree area. This lack of data has been acknowledged by ARTC staff. In a CCC meeting which my wife, Desley Shepherd, attended on 8.12.2020 the speaker when discussing issues relevant to flooding stated, in regard to planned mitigation strategies, they were the "best we can do with the data available". This is a risky strategy in the development of an undertaking which is presented to us by government and the ARTC as a vital "nation building project".
- Culverts along the approximately 6km of planned track through Wyuna need to be of sufficient capacity to enable the water to flow through and down the slope without banking up. This could require continuous installation of culverts as concentrating the flow will not only cause erosion but also undermine the rail track, as occurred on the Coonamble Line along Balladoran Railway Road east of Gilgandra in 2010.
- I also wish to express dismay in the loss of the stand of Weeping Myalls, an endangered species, which is to be lost to the construction of the rail track. Weeping Myalls only grow in top quality soils and in deference to their endangered status this area has never been cropped and remains a rare native vegetation area. These trees and their understorey will be lost to future generations.
- The construction of the rail track will see the destruction of a number of hollow bearing trees, Bimble Boxes, which could be over 100 years old and have hosted successive generations of native fauna including wedgetail eagle. Is the Inland Rail really worth such long term environmental destruction?