

19/05/2017

Reference: 0-2500-ENG-00-LT-0001_GH

Executive Director Resource Assessments and Business Systems
Department of Planning and Environment
PO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: SSD APPLICATION NUMBER SSD 6456 NARRABRI GAS PROJECT

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed Narrabri Gas Project.

As a brief background to the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail ('Inland Rail') Programme, the Australian Government, through the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), is delivering the multi-billion dollar infrastructure in partnership with the private sector. The Government has committed \$8.4 billion to deliver Inland Rail, on top of the previously funded \$900 million.

The dedicated freight network will transform the way we move goods between Melbourne and Brisbane, connecting our farms, mines, cities and ports to global markets. It will support Australia's four richest farming regions; provide supply chain benefits and substantial cost savings for producers.

This new 1,700km line is the largest freight rail infrastructure project in Australia. Early construction works will start in 2017, and based on the 10-year delivery schedule developed in 2015, the first train is expected to operate in 2024/25.

Inland Rail is divided into 13 projects, seven of which are located within New South Wales. For each of these projects ARTC will seek to obtain an individual NSW planning approval via the Department of Planning and Environment State Significant Infrastructure process, and be delivered with tie-in points on the existing railway network.

Inland Rail and Narrabri Gas Project

Reference to the Inland Rail Programme is noted in Chapter 29, *Cumulative Impacts* (Section 29.2.1). ARTC has two Inland Rail projects that are within the vicinity of the Narrabri Gas Project; the Narrabri to North Star project and Narromine to Narrabri project.

Chapter 29 states that at the time of submitting this EIS, the Inland Rail alignment detail was only publically available for the Narrabri to North Star project. This project is approx. 15km north of the Narrabri Gas Project boundary.

With regards to any potential cumulative impacts affiliated with the Narrabri to North Star project, the EIS stipulates that due to the location, relatively low volume of traffic potentially generated by this Inland Rail project section and that the proposed construction period of this Inland Project section is not expected to align with the proposed construction timing of this Narrabri Gas Project the potential for any cumulative impacts is considered negligible. ARTC's current assessment agrees with this comment.

The Narromine to Narrabri section of Inland Rail may interface with the Narrabri Gas Project with the base case alignment and associated study area being shown in the attached map. With regards to potential cumulative

impacts associated with the Narromine to Narrabri Inland Rail project section, ARTC is still in the early planning stages for this section with the route selection process still underway. The attached map illustrates the location of the study area in the context on the location of the Narrabri Gas Project boundary.

As per the attached map, the study area currently being considered intersects the Narrabri Gas Project boundary. Should ARTC decide on a preferred route within the study area and progress this route to the formal planning assessment stage (via the NSW Department of Planning and Environment – State Significant Infrastructure) the potential cumulative impacts will be further defined and assessed in discussion with the Narrabri Gas proponent, “Santos” and with the relevant Government agencies.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and should you have any queries or require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact our Inland Rail NSW/Victoria Environment Manager – Geoff Hudson on 0437 187 113

Sincerely,



Olivia Newman
Programme Delivery Manager NSW/VIC
ARTC-Inland Rail