

3 August 2021



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Dear Alexander,

**CSSI 7474 Narrabri to North Star, Phase 1 (N2NS) Project  
Transport Network and Connectivity Analysis (Jones Avenue Overbridge)  
Minister's Conditions of Approval E56 - E59**

I refer to the Minister's Conditions of Approval (**MCoA's**) issued for the Critical State Significant Infrastructure (**CSSI**) Project No 7474 Narrabri to North Star, Phase 1 on 13 August 2020 (**N2NS Planning Approval**), and specifically the Transport Network and Connectivity Analysis required by MCoA's E56 – E59.

Further to the consultation required by MCoA E59, on 12 July 2021 ARTC participated in discussions with you and other representatives of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (**DPIE**) involved in determining the MCoA's for the N2NS Planning Approval, as well as key DPIE representatives from the Moree Special Activation Precinct (**Moree SAP**) team to discuss work undertaken by the Moree SAP team in relation to the location of the Moree Intermodal Overpass (**MIO**) and compliance with MCoA's E56 - E59 generally.

**MIO Background**

When the N2NS Planning Approval was initially sought by ARTC, the key features of the preferred infrastructure included the provision of a new road bridge over the existing rail corridor at Jones Avenue in Moree (the **Jones Avenue Overbridge**).

Following further consultation with Moree Plains Shire Council (**MPSC**), it became evident that the proposed Jones Avenue Overbridge was not MPSC's preferred location for a grade-separated overpass across the Newell Highway and Inland Rail corridor.

MPSC has, over recent years, developed a wider transport program for the Moree Plains Shire, particularly in relation to the intermodal facilities located to the south of Moree.

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partnership with the private sector.

As part of this program, an alternative more suitable location for a grade-separated overpass was sought. An alternative location was identified (to the south of Moree, near the Moree Regional Airport) as well as the necessary supporting new road infrastructure connecting the Newell Highway on the West and Bullus Drive on the East, providing connection to the North South Link and the Shire's intermodal freight centre. The program aims to construct key road infrastructure that provides safe and efficient heavy vehicle connectivity to the Inland Rail via Bullus Drive, forming part of an holistic infrastructure framework optimising ARTC's investment.

At the time the MCoA's for the N2NS Planning Approval were being finalised, the Moree SAP was in its early stages of enquiry and concept development, and in contemplation of the likely outcomes of the Moree SAP, MCoA's E56 - E59 were included in the N2NS Planning Approval to allow consistency and flexibility for all stakeholders.

## Moree SAP

The Moree SAP draft Masterplan was released for public comment in May 2021, with submissions closing on 15 June 2021. The Moree SAP draft Masterplan was accompanied by a number of technical reports, in support of the draft Masterplan including the:

- Moree Special Activation Precinct Structure Plan, prepared by WSP and Elton Consulting (the **Structure Plan**); and
- Moree Special Activation Precinct, Assessment of refined land use – transport and traffic plan, prepared by the Principal Transport Planner of Arcadis (the **Transport Plan**).

Since February / March 2020 and during the development of the Moree SAP draft Masterplan, ARTC has been consulted and involved with the Moree SAP technical experts with respect to the location of the MIO.

The Moree SAP draft Masterplan identifies a preferred location for the MIO, being a grade-separated overpass across the Newell Highway and Inland Rail corridor, south of the Moree Regional Airport with future connection to the north west and north east, and providing direct connection to the proposed internal road network on the eastern side of the Newell Highway within the Moree SAP<sup>1</sup>. For further information, refer to Attachment 1.

In the selection of this location, the MIO was confirmed to enhance the operation of the intermodal facility proposed for the Moree SAP, reduce freight traffic traversing the Moree township, and integrate with a future east-west connection.

The Moree SAP team have confirmed that no submissions were received in relation to the MIO.

## MCoA's E56 and E57 N2NS Planning Approval

A copy of MCoA's E56 and E57 are attached to this letter for ease of reference as Attachment 2.

## Comparative analysis undertaken as part of Moree SAP investigations

In determining the optimal location of the MIO, six (6) alternative location options were assessed in a qualitative multi criteria assessment (**MCA**), in collaboration with DPIE, MPSC and Transport for NSW (**TfNSW**)<sup>2</sup>.

The six options were as follows:

- Anne Street – Extends on both sides of the Newell Highway, and connects to the Gwydir Highway east of Moree Station;
- Jones Avenue – An option of an overpass across the Newell Highway road and rail corridors;

<sup>1</sup> Section 10.2 Moree Intermodal Overpass Location, Structure Plan, p91.

<sup>2</sup> Section 7.1.5 Moree Intermodal Overpass Location, Transport Plan, p52.

- Amaroo Drive – Located south of the Moree township, the Amaroo Drive, it provides the advantage of avoiding existing urban roads with urban development fronting;
- Blueberry Road – North of the Moree Regional Airport, and is located close to DieselGas Moree;
- Airport South – Located south of the Moree Regional Airport, the proposed overpass option avoids the Moree township and allows for further, longer future east-west connector;
- Wallanol Road – Located 10 kilometres from the Moree township, it is the furthest option considered in this analysis.

The MCA considered<sup>3</sup>:

- Highway connectivity – Suitability of access to traffic to the Newell Highway to the Moree SAP;
- Freight access – Freight accessibility to intermodal terminals and Moree SAP precincts;
- Emergency access – Current and projected incident response times and entries / exits from the precinct;
- Travel time savings – High-level and long-term benefits of the proposed option and movement efficiency;
- Alignment and integration with MPSC's future town planning – Minimises impact on the township social amenity;
- Heritage impact – Minimising impact on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage;
- Biodiversity – Minimising impacts on biodiversity in the Moree SAP and Moree township; and
- SAP integration – Ability to activate land, improve traffic functionality in the Moree SAP, and provide benefit to the Moree SAP when constructed.

The assessment criteria were allocated weightings based on the collective agreement of the relative importance of each criterion, based on previous studies carried out by MPSC, as well as the role and vision for the Moree SAP.

The options were then qualitatively scored based on their ability to meet the criteria using a traffic light system, where green represents the ability to best achieve the criterion and red for options that do not meet the criterion. Options that partially met, or by comparison to another option did not meet the criterion as well, were scored orange.

As noted in Section 7.1.5.1 Analysis outcomes of the Transport Study, the Airport South MIO option was selected for the Moree SAP Structure Plan, since *"it met the criteria the best out of the options and aligns with the vision and objectives for the Moree SAP"*.

Consistent with our positive discussions of 12 July 2021, ARTC hereby requests formal confirmation from DPIE that the work undertaken in developing the Moree SAP draft Masterplan and the associated outputs which identify the Airport South MIO as the preferred option for the location of a new overbridge to ensure the necessary future connectivity, would satisfy the intent of, and thereby close out, MCoA's E56 and E57 (excluding MCoA E57(e) and (g)). To assist your consideration of this request, and for ease of reference, please refer to the attached Table 1 which documents where and how the individual MCoA requirements are addressed in the Moree SAP masterplan and its supporting technical documents.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Tina Stewart, Environment Manager Delivery, ARTC on 0438 339 075 or [TStewart@ARTC.com.au](mailto:TStewart@ARTC.com.au) or myself.

Yours sincerely



Peter Borrelli

**Project Director**

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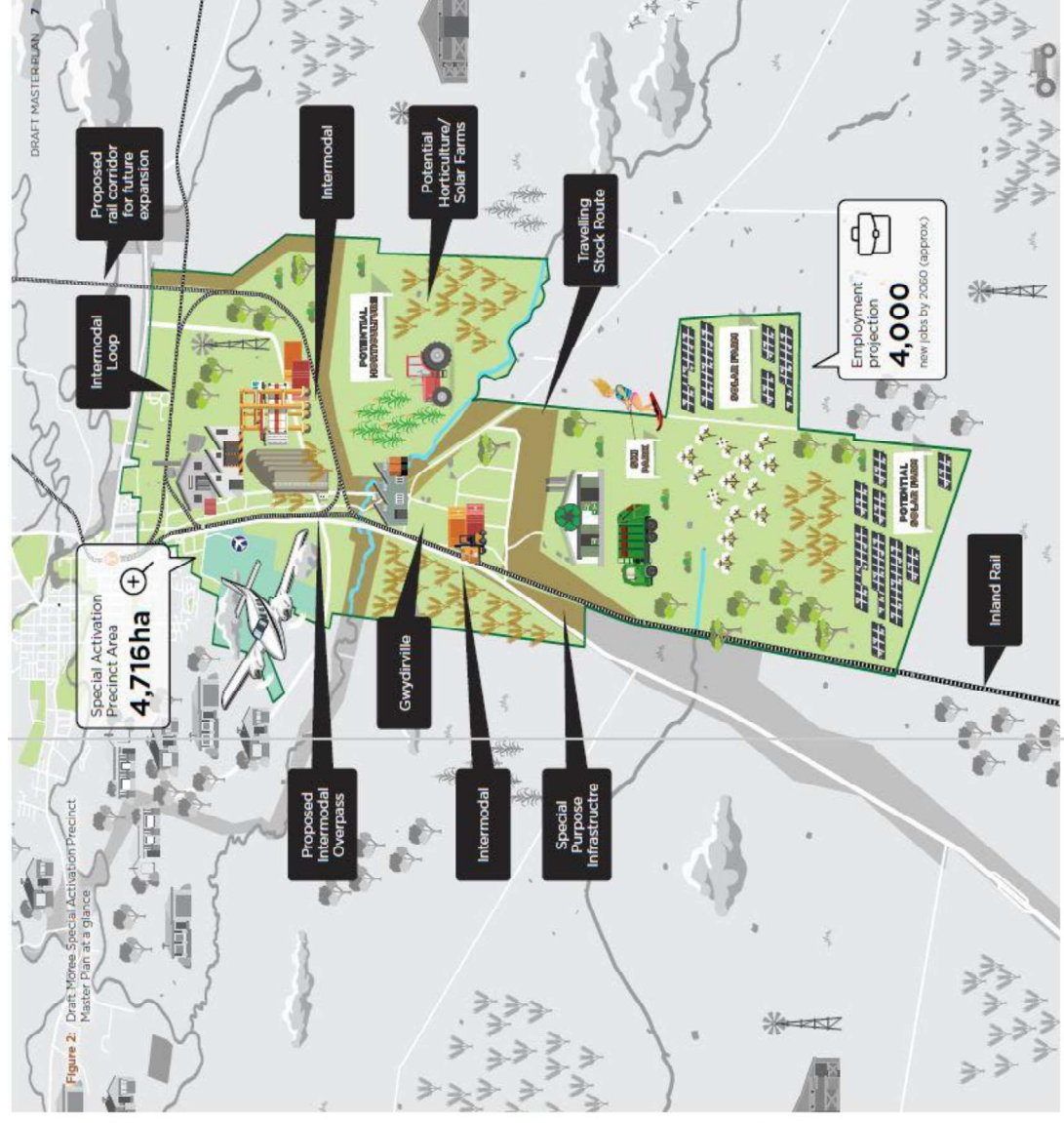
<sup>3</sup> Section 7.1.5 Moree Intermodal Overpass Location, Transport Plan, p52-53

## Attachment 1 – Location of MIO<sup>4</sup>

### 6 MOREE SPECIAL ACTIVATION PRECINCT

#### The draft Master Plan at a glance

- 1** A range of industrial jobs premised on Moree's agricultural base, whilst allowing for higher value processing, movement of freight and green energy production.
- 2** The Regional Enterprise Zone will allow for a broad range of industrial and employment uses.
- 3** A Rural Activity Zone will act as a buffer between industry and rural land to the west, providing a long-term strategy for reducing land use conflict and prohibiting any new residential uses in this zone.
- 4** The Precinct will provide for 40 years of demand and will be staged over time with initial development leveraging off existing road, rail and utility infrastructure in the north east and central areas.
- 5** A new planning framework will see most development be Exempt or Complying Development, where it meets the requirements of the Activation Precincts State Environment Planning Policy (SEPP) established under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, master plan and the Delivery Plan.
- 6** The Activation Precincts SEPP which will apply to the precinct identified in the structure plan will replace the *Moree Plains Local Environmental Plan 2011*.
- 7** Detailed performance criteria for noise, air quality, odour, gal-water management and protecting biodiversity.
- 8** Strategies for greening the precinct - revegetation, connecting habitat and greening riparian corridors, roads and private lots.
- 9** Controls for the protection of sensitive sites and strategies for the interpretation and celebration of Gamilaroi culture and history.
- 10** New streets, services and infrastructure to support sustainable growth over time.
- 11** Enable around 4,000 jobs by 2060, and generate opportunities for Aboriginal employment.
- 12** Protection of Moree Regional Airport within a Special Activities Zone and part of the Travelling Stock Reserve within a Special Purpose Zone.



## **Attachment 2 - MCoA's E56 and E57**

### *Condition E56*

*The design and location of new road and road bridge components of the CSSI must not introduce into or increase by way of redistribution heavy vehicle movements through the residential and commercial areas of Moree. This objective must inform the comparative analysis of alternative overbridge locations required by Condition E57.*

### *Condition E57*

*The Proponent must undertake a comparative analysis of an alternative location(s) for grade-separated road and active transport crossings of the rail corridor as an alternative(s) to the Jones Avenue overbridge.*

*This analysis must focus on the area to the south of Moree Airport, or other location(s) identified through the Moree Special Activation Precinct (SAP) investigations and as agreed by the Planning Secretary.*

*The analysis must consider:*

- (a) consistency with future land use planning for Moree, with a particular focus on the proposed Special Activation Precinct and Moree Intermodal projects to the south of Moree;*
- (b) the local and regional traffic network, including operational efficiency, and connectivity to existing and future local and regional road networks;*
- (c) the ability for use by a range of heavy vehicles and compliance with relevant road design standards;*
- (d) community safety and severance impact of formal or informal changes to heavy vehicle routes;*
- (e) a risk assessment of the impacts on emergency services in accessing the community in required timeframes in the event level crossings are blocked in Moree;*
- (f) consideration of the environmental impacts of a relocated bridge, having regard to the CSSI's Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) dated 8 November 2016; and*
- (g) the requirements of Condition E58.*

**Table 1**

CONDITION REFERENCE	REQUIREMENTS	WHERE ADDRESSED
Transport Network and Connectivity Analysis (Jones Avenue Overbridge) Minister's Conditions of Approval E56 - E59		
E56	The design and location of new road and road bridge components of the CSSI must not introduce into or increase by way of redistribution heavy vehicle movements through the residential and commercial areas of Moree. This objective must inform the comparative analysis of alternative overbridge locations required by Condition E57.	Structure Plan: Section 10 Movement and Section 11 Infrastructure  Transport Plan: Section 7 Transport Assessment
E57(a)	The Proponent must undertake a comparative analysis of an alternative location(s) for grade-separated road and active transport crossings of the rail corridor as an alternative(s) to the Jones Avenue overbridge.  This analysis must focus on the area to the south of Moree Airport, or other location(s) identified through the Moree Special Activation Precinct (SAP) investigations and as agreed by the Planning Secretary.  The analysis must consider:  consistency with future land use planning for Moree, with a particular focus on the proposed Special Activation Precinct and Moree Intermodal projects to the south of Moree;	Moree SAP draft Masterplan: 5 Transport, 7 Staging and Development  Structure Plan: Section 10 Movement and Section 11 Infrastructure  Transport Plan: Section 7 Transport Assessment
E57(b)	the local and regional traffic network, including operational efficiency, and connectivity to existing and future local and regional road networks;	Structure Plan: Section 11 Infrastructure  Transport Plan: Section 4 Key Findings and Section 5 Stakeholder Liaison
E57(c)	the ability for use by a range of heavy vehicles and compliance with relevant road design standards;	Transport Plan: Section 5 Stakeholder Liaison, Section 7 Transport Assessment, Section 8 Recommended Objectives and Controls – Master Plan
E57(d)	community safety and severance impact of formal or informal changes to heavy vehicle routes;	Structure Plan: Section 10.1 Overview, Section 10.5 Active Transport and Section 10.6 Public Transport
E57(e)	a risk assessment of the impacts on emergency services in accessing the community in required timeframes in the event level crossings are blocked in Moree;	Yet to be satisfied
E57(f)	consideration of the environmental impacts of a relocated bridge, having regard to the CSSI's Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) dated 8 November 2016; and	Structure Plan  Transport Plan
E57(g)	the requirements of Condition E58.	Yet to be satisfied