

Submission to the INLAND RAIL EIS

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Objection

The present route misses the opportunity to grow inland Australia and fails to go from Melbourne and Brisbane. Trucks will be needed from Tottenham Vic and Acacia Ridge Qld to distribute freight adding more traffic to the busiest of roads. Rail allows for no flexibility! Building a super highway for trucks alone with suitable rest stops would be money better spent.

BACK GROUND

Our names are Gordon & Noeline Lummis, Gordon is almost 84 years old and Noeline was 77 in January. The property we own is "Wilga View" 598.7 ha. DP Lot No. 231639/4 and 753375/51 the farm is situated at 415 National Park Road Curban. Gordon has lived at Wilga View all of his life and Noeline for the last 57 years where we raised our 3 children. "Wilga View" was part of the holding purchased by Gordon's grandfather Arthur Lummis in 1913 and has remained in the family until this day. Wilga View was named because of the wilga trees and the magnificent view of the Warrumbungle Mountains. We built our house and garden in 1975 with the mountain view and the peace and quiet of the district at the center of the plan. All will be destroyed with noise and vibration from trains running all hours of the day and night and blocking the view. Noeline has moved to Dubbo for medical reasons.

The property next door is "Waverley Downs" 215 National Park Road Curban which belongs to our son and his wife. "Waverley Downs" is the property next to the East Coonamble Road which runs along the Castlereagh River. Our succession plan was in place for our son to purchase Wilga View and with a son of his own continue the family tradition. All our lives were turned upside down with the information the Inland Rail would be running through both properties. Our son and family have health issues and plans to move as their house will be unlivable and the property will be unviable.

At our age we need to retire! Our property is unsaleable and has been for almost 10 years since we found our land was identified by ARTC for the Railway Line. Because we still own the asset, we are unable to get a pension. Life has not been easy at our age still having to work the farm and to deal with the trauma of the Inland Rail issues.

Both properties are run as mixed farms, growing winter cereals and legumes. A third of the properties are sown down to tropical and legume pastures as fodder for the sheep and cattle. A tree planting project was conducted over the last 20 years planting corridors of native trees. We stopped planting when our succession plan was overturned. There will be a dam lost to the rail line and no way of replacing the dam in the paddock as the water course will be changed that filled the dam.

FLOODING & HYDROLOGY

The Castlereagh Highway once ran along the western side of the Castlereagh River until it was washed away numerous times from the watershed from the Warrumbungle Ranges and was moved to the eastern side of the river where the railway is also situated. A lesson learned all those years ago.

Now ARTC plan to put a huge levy bank along and channel the water into culverts. Nature and farming practices have provided well for this water shed over many years. We have great concerns for the erosion that will occur due to the water being channeled into these culverts.

ARTC EXPERIENCE

We found out purely by accident about 10 years ago, when a friend of my daughter in law's suggested she look at the ARTC website as she lived at Curban. The inland rail route showed clearly where it would go, you could enlarge the site and it showed the route going right through our properties. The site was quickly taken down once we started asking questions. We have experienced numerous {approximately 12} different Community and Stakeholder Engagement Teams as wells as Engineers and Project Managers. We have attended so many presentations I've lost count, mostly telling you the same thing and when you ask questions, you are told that they will get back to you. which never happened! I have attended three CCC meetings as an observer, asking questions through a member of the committee. Still waiting on answers. I have sat in meetings with our local member, the deputy PM and ARTC and have been assured the Inland Rail will be a wonderful asset to the country and yes, we will suffer for the good of the Nation. Cold comfort after 10 years! With still years to go!

One of the main issues of concern for "Wilga View" is that the proposed railway line will landlock the farm unless we are provided with a crossing. For years we have been told by numerous ARTC teams we would not get a crossing at Wilga View, however we were assured by ARTC they would assist us in obtaining a way out of the farm through either of our neighbor's property. Maybe someone did listen when we explained either way was in a swamp! Our last map has a cross on our existing road, which apparently couldn't possibly happen. The disclaimer on the map still leaves us with an uneasy feeling.

SOCIAL IMPACT

The social impact was not addressed by the EIS. The properties along the National Park Road are between 400 and 800ha, highly productive mixed farms. The disruption to the families in this district has been immense. Especially when there is an existing railway line on the

western side of the river, that would not have to be purchased and would cause much less disturbance to landholders and would have the opportunity to grow the district and was ruled out for a matter of a few minutes.

Agriculture and how to manage stock and large agriculture machinery with a railway line running through the farm hardly gets a message in the EIS.

BORROW PIT

There is a borrow pit on Wilga View which the Gilgandra Shire Council have been using for many years with good quality road building gravel. ARTC have tested close to this pit as well as numerous other pits in the district at great expense. We were then told the pit would not be needed; however, the contractor may decide because of its proximity to the rail bridge over the Castlereagh River and other major constructions, it may be needed. That means we will be dealing with a contractor NOT ARTC. Once again it means that anything, we are told by ARTC can be dismissed as it is no longer relevant as we will be dealing with a completely different identity.

WATER TABLE

The potential lowering of the water table by 1 meter as explained as acceptable in the EIS book page 40, is totally unacceptable. Many bores in the Curban area that are used for stock and domestic water will be affected by this. Water is the most precious commodity on the farm. Lowering of the table could mean the homestead would be unlivable and running stock would be impossible. Farming also depends on bore water for spraying in preparation of ground for sowing and for spraying crops on emergence and through their growing period.