

4<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Submission of response to N2N Inland Rail EIS

Doug and Karen Wilson

"Woodlea" 804 Gilmours Road

Balladoran NSW 2822

Impacted Property owned by us:

"The Wilgas" 1827 Leeches Creek Road Gilgandra NSW 2827

EIS Property ID No 2638898

Lot No 2/752590

Lot Size 1121.9 HA

Other properties owned by Doug and Karen Wilson in close proximity but not in the corridor are :

"Woodlea" 804 Gilmours Road Balladoran NSW 2822

"Treea-Mouia" 806 Gilmours Road Balladoran NSW 2822

"Mirrawonga" 2121 Kickabil Road Kickabil NSW 2822

"Tara" Yungundi Road Collie NSW 2831

## BACKGROUND

Doug has lived his whole life at "Woodlea" and is a fourth generation farmer with our son Clayton now living and working on the farms. Our farms are run as a mixed farming enterprise which consists of grain production, fat lambs and breeding merino sheep for sale and wool. It is imperative to utilise our properties as an amalgamated parcel to optimise the full potential of the farming country.

We have been very involved in trying to make ARTC accountable for all the wrong decisions they have made throughout the last 4 years. We with other farmers in the district formed a group called 'Central West Inland Rail Realignment Group' to have a united front when addressing issues we were presented with from Inland Rail. We have also been active with NSW Farmers Association in lobbying the government for ARTC to be accountable and transparent with decision made with Inland Rail. Countless trips to meetings at various locations including Narrabri, Millmerran, Sydney, Canberra, Pittsworth, North Star, Narromine, Parkes, Coonamble, Curban and Gilgandra all for the purpose of getting answers to our questions. Many of our concerns are disregarded by ARTC and they consider Stage 1 to be a closed book, allowing them to not be accountable for their inadequacies with the design and consultation. ARTC keeps moving forward without being accountable for what

we consider wrong decisions from the start of the project. ARTC Staff are still being paid for doing a job they do not have to be accountable for. Farmers on the other hand spend time, money and countless hours trying to save their livelihoods by protecting their farms but to no avail. At this point we are hoping the Department of Primary Industries and Environment will see the flaws in the design and make rights of all the wrongs.

Please find listed the issues we feel have the potential to affect not only our properties but also landholders adjacent to the corridor and in the surrounding district.

## WATER RESOURCES

There needs to be more transparency into the sourcing of water for the construction of Inland Rail. In the EIS Impact Assessment B2 2.3 it is stated there are 192 registered groundwater bores located within 1km of the proposal site.

Does ARTC realise that the underground aquifers are not limited to 500 mtrs either side of the corridor?

Does ARTC realise the conflict they will create turning neighbour against neighbour if they start trying to acquire water from landholders close to the corridor who do not rely on their bore for their farm to function?

Does ARTC intend to do bore testing at regular intervals to monitor the impact the taking of ground water will have on landholders bores? This needs to be conducted further afield than just within 1km of the corridor. Peoples livelihoods are at stake and to affect their lifeline of water is inexcusable.

Testing should include – water quality

- depth of water availability
- pressure at which the water is pumped
- regular time frames of testing the above

It is stated 4635 megalitres of water is required for construction which is 4.3 megalitres per day, which is almost two Olympic size swimming pools. We would not be given access to these quantities of water even during the worst drought on record.

Who will be regulating how much water will be taken from each of the bores that the ARTC are proposing?

Will they be metered?

Will the water be tested?

Chapter B2 Water Resources, page 15. It is stated 12 Borefields are proposed from Narromine to Narrabri along the corridor spaced about 25km apart. It also states within each borefield the number of bores would range from 4 to 10 averaging about 7 bores in each borefield.

Can ARTC clarify if 7 bores will be at one site or will they be spread along the 25km from one borefield to the next?

At who's expense, if warranted, will the cost of putting these bores down ? Will this be another budget blowing exercise?

## FENCING

### Construction Impact on Farm Operations

Section B12 Mitigation and Management states in 5.1 that - measures to minimise property impacts, including on agricultural operations. Adjustment to affected structures, proposed impact on the land and to operations, compensation may take the form of money or land/works as agreed.

This does not identify how in any way ARTC will address fencing issues.

The Inland Rail corridor is at the eastern boundary of "The Wilgas" and runs through 3 paddocks for a distance of approximately 3.7km. and an area of 240 HA. With the construction of Inland Rail these paddocks will be substantially impacted with no way of containing stock during the construction phase. While the line is being constructed it will be impossible to utilise the grazing land with all the dividing fences taken down for access and the eastern boundary fence probably non-existent.

Please see attached property map outlining the affected area of The Wilgas.

How do ARTC propose to compensate or rectify the issue?  
Will they put up temporary fencing to contain stock?

This part of our farming land has a substantial amount of trees and good water supply which is perfect for grazing stock and lambing ewes to have protection from the elements of heat in the summer and cold winds and rain in winter.

### Corridor Permanent Fences

Section B12 5.2 List of Mitigation Measures Table B12.5 Land Use and Property Mitigation Measures

LP 9 Livestock fencing would be provided in agricultural as (as required) to minimise the risk of livestock – train collision. The preferred fencing arrangement would be confirmed in consultation with landholder.

Why are there no guidelines to what type of fencing along the whole of the corridor, not only to prevent stock from entering the corridor but also native fauna

LP 10 Maintenance agreements would be established. The agreement would include protocol for reporting damage and arranging repairs to shared boundaries.

Who will be responsible for maintenance of fences when it is most likely native fauna that will cause the destruction of the fence, with holes underneath and broken wires from kangaroos jumping over them?

Why does the adjacent property owner have to be accountable for the damages?

What type of reporting protocol is suggested?

What type of time frame will there be for the fences to be repaired due to native fauna busting them or storm damage from trees blowing down across them. Will trees be cleared to eliminate the chance of branches breaking down fences?

## SAFETY

Chapter B12 Table B12.5 Land Use and property Mitigation Measures.

### Mobile Service

LP22 Safety Guidance would be provided to agricultural landholders at the commencement of operations regarding the frequency of train movements to assist with the safe scheduling of routine agricultural activities.

In the corridor from Old Mill Road, Gilmours Road and through to Leeches Creek Road in the Gilgandra Shire, which is approximately 30km there is no reliable mobile service for Telstra or Optus. How does ARTC propose we notify landholders of emergency issues or how will they notify landholders of time delays if there is no reliable form of communication. For example if a tree has fallen across the track or farming implement has broken down on the track. A very reliable mobile service needs to be installed to enable emergencies to be notified to appropriate parties.

### Safety Checks

Have all the staff had the appropriate police checks?

### Security

Will there be security for the lay down and construction areas along the corridor? What precautions will be taken to stop illegal entry from Shire roads onto the corridor and into the adjacent landholder's property? Will the laydown area be fenced?

### Traffic Hazards

What strategies will be implemented to assure there will be every precaution taken to provide safe access to the Inland Rail corridor from Shire Roads? There will be excessive traffic during the construction phase so will the roads be widened significantly to accommodate trucks turning?

Will there be clear signage indicating heavy vehicles turning?

Will the heavy vehicles be limited to a speed limit to restrict the dust and noise impacting the property's adjacent to the line?

## PROPERTY VALUES

There have been landholders who during the drought have suffered extreme income loss and tried to sell their properties. It has been nearly impossible with the threat of Inland Rail impacting their farms to sell their properties with prospective purchasing discouraged by the Inland Rail.

How does ARTC anticipate compensating property owners for the loss of value of their properties due to the impact of the Inland Rail corridor?

## INSURANCE

It has been stated by ARTC Community Stakeholders Engagement Personnel that it would be a requirement to have a Public Liability Insurance cover of \$20 million. The question has been asked on numerous occasions at drop in sessions, CCC meetings and public meetings with no definite response and never an answer in writing.

Who is liable if persons enter the rail corridor during construction then illegally wonder onto the landholders property and injure themselves?

Who is liable if an ARTC employee or contractor, while constructing the Inland Rail, leaves the designated rail corridor or laydown site, and is injured? Eg Someone trips, hits their head on a rock and sustains head injuries or falls into a dam while illegally yabbing and drowns.

## LAYDOWN AREAS

Appendix F Preliminary Land Requirements : Property ID 2638898

2% - 22.81 HA is required for Inland Rail Corridor

<1% 9.71 HA is required for Construction - Laydown

How does ARTC propose to rejuvenate the 9.71HA to its original state? What testing will be carried out prior to commencement of construction to check for compaction that will occur with machinery and materials located in the laydown areas?

What is the protocol for the replacement of trees and vegetation that will be destroyed or removed whilst utilising the laydown area?

## BIOSECURITY

What measure will be undertaken to control and prevent the spread of noxious weeds from vehicles, materials and landfill along the corridor? It is not instantly obvious that these noxious weeds have invaded our farming and with some seeds able to stay dormant for 12 months or more. Some seeds have remained dormant during the drought for 3 years and now after decent rainfall have grown again.

What measures are being taken to eradicate and assure landholders along the corridor that Hudsons Pear that is growing in North Western NSW will not be spread with train movements along the corridor?

## GILGANDRA RESOURCES

The incoming workforce to the Gilgandra Shire Local Government Area will impact the services availability in Gilgandra. How does ARTC anticipate to manage the shortfall of these services being stretched for a short period of time.

Medical Services, Hospital, Dental, Ambulance Service, Tourist Accommodation etc.

## ROUTE SELECTION

Gilgandra Shire Council are very disappointed the EA (Technical Report 14 Economic Assessment) and SA (Technical Report Social Assessment) fail to specifically assess the likely economic benefits or costs of the project to the Gilgandra Local Government area. The Inland Rail is approximately 20km west of Gilgandra, it is beyond comprehension why the track is not incorporating Gilgandra and using existing tracks as a loop for future development.

Inland Rail is supposedly being built as a National Freight infrastructure that is to be beneficial by taking trucks off the roads, connect regional Australia to markets, allow substantial cost savings for producers and deliver significant economic benefits for regional communities along the alignment. How was a project of this magnitude designed to not include regional towns such as Gilgandra and Coonamble and major cities such as Dubbo?

This year Coonamble Graincorp site had in excess of 400,000 tonnes of grain delivered to their site. Gilgandra Graincorp had in excess of 200,000 tonnes and Fletchers Grain in Dubbo has a capacity of 250,000 tonnes of grain. Here is approximately 1 million tonnes of grain, not to mention all the grain that is still stored on farms surrounding these locations. Would this type of freight quantities be substantial enough to warrant their inclusion in this Nation Building Project. On top of the grain there is hundreds of thousands of tonnes of wool that are freighted to wool stores in Sydney and Melbourne, all taken by truck. ARTC state that 9% of the freight on Inland Rail will be Agriculture and 25% will be coal. Is this still correct? Coal is a dying commodity and now that China has stopped buying our coal does this make Inland Rail less viable? Will this train ever pay for itself?

## Green Roads

There is approximately 30km of green roads in our district that run parallel with that Inland Rail track. From the Dubbo/Collie Road all the way over to Gilgandra/Collie Road the track is adjacent to Crown land in the form of Green Roads, which equates to approximately 30km of continuous crown land, which is 10% of the 307km greenfield section of the Narramine to Narrabri corridor.. There would be substantial cost savings by utilising these green roads as it would eliminate the need for compensation to landholders along the corridor.

Why encroach onto viable productive farming land when there is land already there that does not need to be acquired?

Attached is a copy of a map showing how the green roads are on the boundaries of properties.

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

These meetings were established to engage with the community and have them address issues community members are concerned about. I am not on the committee but have attended 3 meetings as an observer and put forward questions through a committee member on several occasions. What is the purpose of these Community Consultative Committee meetings when the committee members are treated with contempt and their issues ignored? As an observer it is extremely frustrating to have no opportunity to have input or express concerns with information that is put forward by ARTC staff. Community members feel they are collateral damage when we know in Queensland observers are given the opportunity to contribute to their CCC meetings and also ask questions at the end of each session. Attached is a letter sent to the chair of the N2N CCC meetings in Gilgandra, expressing my frustration and concerns with the way the meetings are conducted and it also includes Mr Silvers reply. I feel his reply did not address my issues, but this seems to be a standard ARTC type of response. I thought these meetings were set up to allow impacted community members along the route to have their issues addressed, I was WRONG.

## PERMITS FOR STOCK CROSSING

ARTC is dissecting farms with the Inland Rail, it has been stated in Queensland when consulting with ARTC Staff that when property owners that are dissected by the track need to move their stock across the new track that they will be required to have a permit. This permit would have to be applied for and would be required for every movement at a cost to the landholder and owner of the stock. It was suggested that the farmers would have to apply a week in advance. The question has been asked on a couple of occasions at CCC meetings and ARTC have not given a direct response. How can farmers function economically if they have to wait for bureaucratic red tape to go through before they can utilise their grazing land. This is not conducive with how farms work.

## 24 HOUR

It has been confirmed that the 24 hour journey time for the Inland Rail was determined in consultation with freight forwarders and companies such as Woolworths, Coles, Toll etc. (Funny how they have a priority ). A fast and efficient line is essential- but does it come at a cost.

Why has government not considered the costs of a slightly longer journey, particularly if it will mitigate the concerns of communities, farmers and local businesses that will be impaired, or that might help to further develop and sustain our regional communities? Modelling by NSW Farmers (based on ARTC figures) shows that for an additional 24 minutes, far less farm businesses would be impacted by the greenfield route between Narromine and Narrabri.

How many farmers' properties could be spared if we looked closer to existing corridors as has been the case in other sections of the Inland Rail?

## CONCLUSION

I urge the DPIE to make ARTC accountable for all the issues that have been addressed by not only us but other impacted, frustrated and fed up landholders along the Inland Rail Corridor.

Thankyou for the opportunity to respond to the Narromine to Narrabri EIS and we hope there are successful outcomes with your adjudication.

Sincerely

Doug and Karen Wilson

## Copy of Correspondence with CCC Chair Mike Silver

From: N2NCCC N2NCCC <n2ninlandrailccc@bigpond.com>

Date: Fri, 27 Sep 2019 at 9:20 AM

Subject: Re: CCC meeting Gilgandra 24th September 2019

To: Doug and Karen Wilson <woodlea.wilson@gmail.com>

Dear Mr & Mrs Wilson,

Firstly, may I say that the issues and struggles that the rural community across regional New South Wales and particularly west of the Great Dividing Range are currently experiencing are well understood by me. I have lived and worked in North West NSW for 45 years and prior to that was raised in a rural community in the Hunter Valley. So, I am well aware of the challenges that you personally and your community are confronting under the current extended drought conditions.

In terms of the Community Consultative Committee - it is a requirement of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) to ARTC for preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the N2N Inland Rail project require that it establish a community consultative committee to provide interactive advice and comment on preparation of the EIS. The committee membership, through the nomination and appointments process is a representative cross section of community interests. The members of the CCC have a role to provide input from and information to the community on the EIS. I believe the community members are fulfilling this role well.

I appreciate your concerns regarding responses to 'Other Agenda Items' questions placed on the agenda of the CCC meetings this week. It is important to note that the purpose of members' questions under 'Other Agenda Items' is to facilitate external questioning from the community on relevant matters and obtain written responses to those questions from ARTC.

In terms of the Gilgandra Sub-committee, I received the questions on the evening of Wednesday 17 September and forwarded them to ARTC the following morning. I was subsequently informed by ARTC that some questions, given they had multiple elements, would require more research. Prior to the start of the Gilgandra Sub-committee meeting I informed Mrs Deans of this situation and the probability that questions would be taken on notice. I formed the opinion that rather than have just some sections of questions answered that the totality of responses, that could be provided, should be formally forwarded to the CCC in written form when available. This reduces any likelihood of misinterpretation of a response. This is not the first occasion that 'Other Agenda Item' questions have been formally responded to post the meeting. A copy of the formal responses to the 'Other Agenda Items' questions of the September meetings is attached for your information. I have also attached the responses by ARTC (noted in Correspondence) to historical questions previously raised with the CCC.

The primary consideration for me, as the Independent Chair, is that the community is provided with the fullest and most up to date advice possible from the proponent in a formal written manner. Consequently all items presented to and received by the CCC are publicly available. I would also point out that the actions requested by the CCC to be undertaken by ARTC are closely scrutinised by the committee. I refer you to the minutes of previous meetings in this regard - <https://inlandrail.artc.com.au/N2N-ccc>

Finally, I would be pleased to follow up any particular concern or question that you may have regarding the Inland Rail project and the interaction between yourself and the proponent.

Regards,

Michael J Silver OAM  
Chair  
N2NCCC  
P.O. Box 37  
Gunnedah 2380  
New South Wales  
Australia

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E: [n2ninlandrailccc@bigpond.com](mailto:n2ninlandrailccc@bigpond.com)

----- Original Message -----

From: "Doug and Karen Wilson" <[woodlea.wilson@gmail.com](mailto:woodlea.wilson@gmail.com)>

To: n2inlandrailccc@bigpond.com  
Cc: Glenn.Snow@planning.nsw.gov.au; pittwater@parliament.nsw.gov.au; "Alexander Scott" <Alexander.Scott@planning.nsw.gov.au>; glenn.sterle@aph.gov.au  
Sent: Wednesday, 25 Sep, 2019 At 3:15 PM  
Subject: CCC meeting Gilgandra 24th September 2019

Attention : Mr Mike Siler OAM  
Chair  
N2NCCC  
PO Box 37  
Gunnedah 2380

I am contacting you in regards to the Inland Rail CCC meeting conducted in Gilgandra yesterday, 24th September 2019, to inform you of how disappointed community and committee members are with the whole process of these meetings. Committee members became members to be spokespersons for affected farmers and community members and to have our concerns, questions and advice heard by ARTC and the Dept. of Planning. This is a 10 billion dollar project which needs to be conducted to the best of its ability and to the benefit of Australia, not just Melbourne, Brisbane and maybe Parkes. So when it was instigated that a CCC committee be formed we were very sceptical that it was just a box ticking exercise by ARTC. We have been let down so many times and hear the same issues up and down the length of the Inland Rail corridor. We feel we are just collateral damage and nothing we say or do is of any significance.

Last night's meeting was particular upsetting as we are really struggling out here and our time, money, mental status and energy are very precious at the moment and we are all living on a fine line of survival. So we are asked 2 weeks ago if we are able to attend the meeting and if we have any questions that we wish to have addressed. In between feeding stock, worrying about how much water is left in the tanks for drinking and household use, checking that we can cover the bills that keep rolling in, we make the decision to attend the meeting to try and get REAL answers to the many issues we have with a railway line going through our farms. We have asked to be able to have questions taken from the floor over the last few months as we are always thinking of different issues as they occur. It was decided we would be able to if time was permitting. We lived in hope. This meeting started at 4.30pm and finished at 9pm, nobody was paid to attend, nobody was reimbursed for travel and nobody was given the common courtesy of a smile or how are you. We are REALLY struggling. We attended the meeting in good faith but i have never been so disappointed with anything in all my life.

- There were no answers to all the questions we had sent in.

- There was presentation after presentation on ARTC and its benefits to communities. This train is affecting farms not the towns it doesn't go near towns, it destroys farms. We are the backbone of these towns, they exist because we exist.

- When asked to have it noted that Mike Clancy had stated at the previous CCC meeting that there would be no benefit to our region, and this was heard by more than half a dozen people, this request was denied which we were disgusted in.

- It was stated that all the presentations at the meeting were on the website for our information. Well, we didn't need to spend 4 hours hearing it without being able to address issues, as time was limited. Obviously you had to walk around the corner and get to your

motel rooms that are paid for by ARTC with taxpayer's money. While we spent up to an hour driving home dodging kangaroos.

-From the last meeting there were still actions that were not addressed even though they have had months to investigate and provide information regarding them.

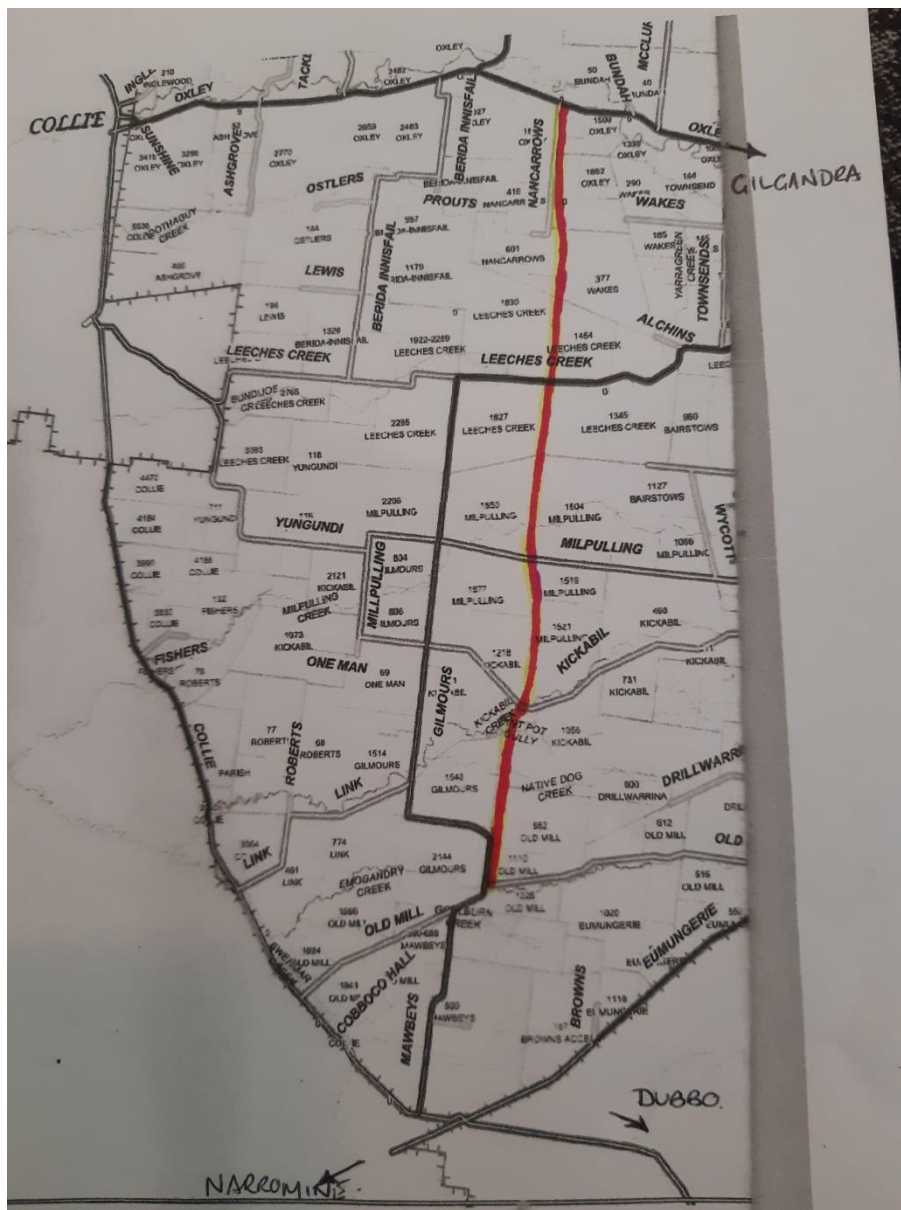
-Why have these meetings if our questions are not answered and we have no opportunity to enquire on the reports that are delivered, while the ARTC staff are there to be accountable for their reply.

This last meeting has infuriated community member and I for one will never attend another one. You have wasted my time, energy and money for the last time and i feel that there will be several others who are of the same opinion. Why conduct COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE meetings if there is no consulting, just ARTC jargon being thrown at us. You don't want our contribution, you just want this built and to collect your pay check.

I hope you take into consideration the issues I have presented and take on board how people affected by Inland Rail feel they are being mistreated.

Regards

Karen Wilson



Green roads in Gilgandra Shire parallel to Inland Rail Track

