



# Weealla

MERINOS & POLL MERINO STUD

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Submission for Inland Rail EIS Inquiry.

Background. The Inland Rail proposed from Melbourne to Brisbane.

This submission relates to the section from Narromine to Narrabri our section is Burroway to Curban we are ratepayers in the Gilgandra Shire Council.

## **WE OBJECT TO THE PROJECT.**

- **Background.**

Let us introduce ourselves we are David & Karen McBurnie of Weealla (our property is in the study area of Inland Rail) Our second property “Brooklyn is across Milpulling Road from” Weealla” it is in partnership with our son Stuart McBurnie, which is in the focus area. David is a third-generation farmer, farming for 50 years farming and Stuart is a fourth-generation farmer. We are a family operation running a Merino & Poll Merino Stud, Raby Stud has been in existence for 100 years, a well-known Merino Stud we also grow barley wheat oats and sell Rams, Ewes & Semen internationally we have sold a ram for \$43000. and have won the Australian Supreme Merino Ram twice, this is a prestigious award among the Merino Stud Industry An overview of our farming operations, these two properties are jointly farmed together, utilizing sheep feed and machinery for cropping. with the focus route going across Milpulling road, which we use to get from one property to the other, the interruption of having a train running through our property will be the detriment to our lambing ewes with the miss mothering of lambs, worth many thousands of dollars.

- **Experience with Inland Rail.**

I’m the chairman of the Central West Inland Rail Realignment Group. I attend CCC Meetings and I have been to Millmerran QLD, to the Senate Enquiry. I have attended numerous Inland Rail Meetings only to see a change of staff, and having to go over what was already said at the last meeting, there is no continuity between the staff that has left and the staff left behind. We both spoke at the Canberra Senate Enquiry. Karen has availed herself to be a member of the Gilgandra Community Consultative Committee where we meet every three months to listen to ARTC propaganda, without them answering our questions for months later. These meetings are run like a series of lectures and any community questions, which do not suit ARTC are deemed to be “historical,

part of Phase 1 and we are now in Phase 2” in nature therefore not relevant to the project. This as far as I can see is a box ticking exercise for ARTC.

Appendix C. Consultation Report 3. 3.1 Public Participation.  
Promise to the public == We will implement what you decide,  
This is nowhere what ARTC do.

- **Stock Crossings/ Fencing.**
- ***B12.5.2 List of Mitigation measures.***
- **LP9** Impacts on livestock fencing would be provided in agricultural areas (as required) to minimise the risk of livestock-train collisions. The preferred fencing arrangements would be confirmed in consultation with landholders.
- **LP10** Maintenance of fencing Maintenance agreements would be established for fencing along the rail corridor located within private properties. The agreements would include protocols for reporting damage and arranging repairs of shared boundary fencing.

While constructing Inland Rail, will ARTC build the fence as they put the tracks up. If not, how are we suppose to run our paddocks with stock in them? Our Biosecurity status is that We are MN3 accredited which means free of Johnes Disease and Brucellosis free, we can not have neighbours stock straying on to our property. There needs to be an agreed fencing standard with each landholder, that would be suitable for the type of livestock to be held on their property. There needs to be a clear understanding that ARTC will maintain the fences into the future. During construction phase how are ARTC going to conform with our biosecurity status?

- **Additional costs to producer.**

Moving sheep is usually a one-man operation. With the rail line coming across the road this will make it a three-man operation, which will be at a cost to us. ARTC need to build sheep yards on both sides of the road, to make the operation more efficient.

- **Mobile Coverage.**

Mobile coverage in this area is very low, are ARTC going to increase our coverage by installing phone towers, so we have coverage on phones to know when a train is in the area.

- **Construction of the proposal Chapter A8 section A8 10.2.**

Reads that the four quarries are in the Dubbo LGA, so the haulage which is 1 million cubic metres, will be coming some distance away, coming down Milpulling Road using Shire roads, this is a school bus route as well. What are ARTC going to do about the dust this will create with continuous trucks on the road. We have just been through the worst drought, with massive dust storms, which in turn has cost thousands of dollars to our wool clip, now we will have trucks putting dust back into the sheep.

- **Public Liability Insurance.**

It has been discussed that landholders should have a \$250 million public Liability coverage, ARTC are forcing the train track on us, why should we be the brunt of all costs.

- **Police Checks on all employees.**

In the alignment there are many young families with children, will all employees have police checks, this is a concern.

- **Environmental Studies.**

How can ARTC have done all environmental studies when the last three years have been drought. ARTC installed road monitors on roads weeks after harvest had started and took them off before harvest was finished, how can they get a real assessment of the traffic on these roads in this situation.

- **Water.**

During the last prolonged drought water was one of the main problems that was mentally straining, so where is ARTC going to extract the water from and what guarantee have we got that it will not interfere with our aquifer.

- **Social and Health Impacts on the Community.**

With the influx of five hundred plus rail workers, the schools, sporting facilities, within Gilgandra Shire will not have the ability to cope, with a 20% increase to the current population. With the inability to attract doctors to country areas, how is our health system with only having an MPS Hospital going to sustain adequate health services to the community. In the last few months, we have had a Medical Practitioner, a Tea Shop cafe, two Nurseries, Poultry farm and processing facility, and Target Country Store close, all up employing around 30 families. This is why the Inland Rail needs to be on the existing line, to attract businesses.

**SA table 6.6 Gilgandra LGA- key population and demographic 2016**

It shows that the population decline of approx. 900 people by 2041. We believe by having the rail line close to the town, wouldn't it be a future benefit to the town, maybe a passenger train for tourists etc.

- **FORG.**

This is a group of Rail freight companies consisting of Pacific National, Aurizon. ARTC, Arc Infrastructure, Qube Holdings, One Rail Aust, SCT Logistics, Southern Short haul Railroad, Watco Aust. These companies employ 20000 employees and inject \$11 billion into the economy, they own 1600 locomotives and 34000 wagons. Who will not be using Inland Rail, they have forwarded a letter to the Deputy Prime Minister stating this fact?

- **We object to the Inland Rail route selection**

- We disagree with N2N greenfield section it will destroy our business, destroy our community, devalue our region with no benefit. It is in the wrong place: the economic and social benefits studies have never been done and reports should as far as we can see be done independently. The route selected is at odds with community preferences. The local knowledge and input by landholders have been ignored.

**Attached is a map from the Options Report November 2017 showing Option 101 which is on existing Coonamble track going thru Gilgandra township it has the best MCA of all the options. Option 113 is an option running west of the highway, skirting around the town joining the Coonamble track it also has a good MCA. This loop could be used as a passing intermodal track helping both Coonamble and Gilgandra.**

\$4million has been spent on upgrading the Coonamble line which isn't going to be utilized for Inland Rail.

Due to the drought and Inland Rail farmers and community members are suffering from depression, anxiety and feeling isolated and ignored by the government. Emotional impacts and fatigue on farming families over this issue cannot be underestimated. Grass-roots, down to earth Australians are struggling to come to terms with the dictatorial approach on the selection of inland rail alignment from Narromine to Narrabri when there are alternate, viable routes available. The farming families affected have attempted to respectfully engage with the ARTC and the Federal Government at every opportunity afforded to them. On most occasions they have left meetings feeling disillusioned, abandoned and worthless. This has led to a level of exhaustion and depression which is reflected in their view not to engage in further consultation. Many have joined with NSW Farmers Assoc & CWA to employ Holding Redlich to work on our behalf.

Political interference and grandstanding must stop.

This enquiry is critically important to unearth and remove political bias, big business influence and undue process to ensure the most sustainable, economically viable and beneficial social outcomes can be achieved on this major federal government infrastructure project. It gives us great relief that our concerns are been heard by Government and not just have the opinion of *JUST GET IT DONE! The selected route is the one that will go ahead! which is the catch phase of Federal Member Mark Coulton.*

ARTC needs to return to the alignment route selection phase and undertake an independent, transparent, unbiased evaluation of all study areas, concept and alternative options. This information and the underlying data must be made available to community. Any evaluation must provide equal opportunity for impacted landholders and community to be consulted. It must base its decisions on sound scientific assessments of all impacting factors. It must clearly and consistently inform the community of all potential impacts and provide fair hearing opportunity for residents to discuss impacts, issues and resolutions.

In Conclusion ARTC have failed to make a case for the approval of Inland Rail N2N in its current form. We rely greatly on the good governance of the Minister and his Department to ensure that we, our land and our community are properly considered and protected from damage from this project. It is imperative that ARTC be made to look beyond their own commercial imperative and build the Project responsibility. Our experience to date, where our concerns and suggestions have been rejected or ignored, give us little faith that things will change for the better should the Project be approved without amendment or conditions applied.

Thank you for the opportunity to table our response and I wish you well in your deliberations

Yours

DK & KA SD McBurnie

# Attachment MCA Workshop Report (15 December 2016)

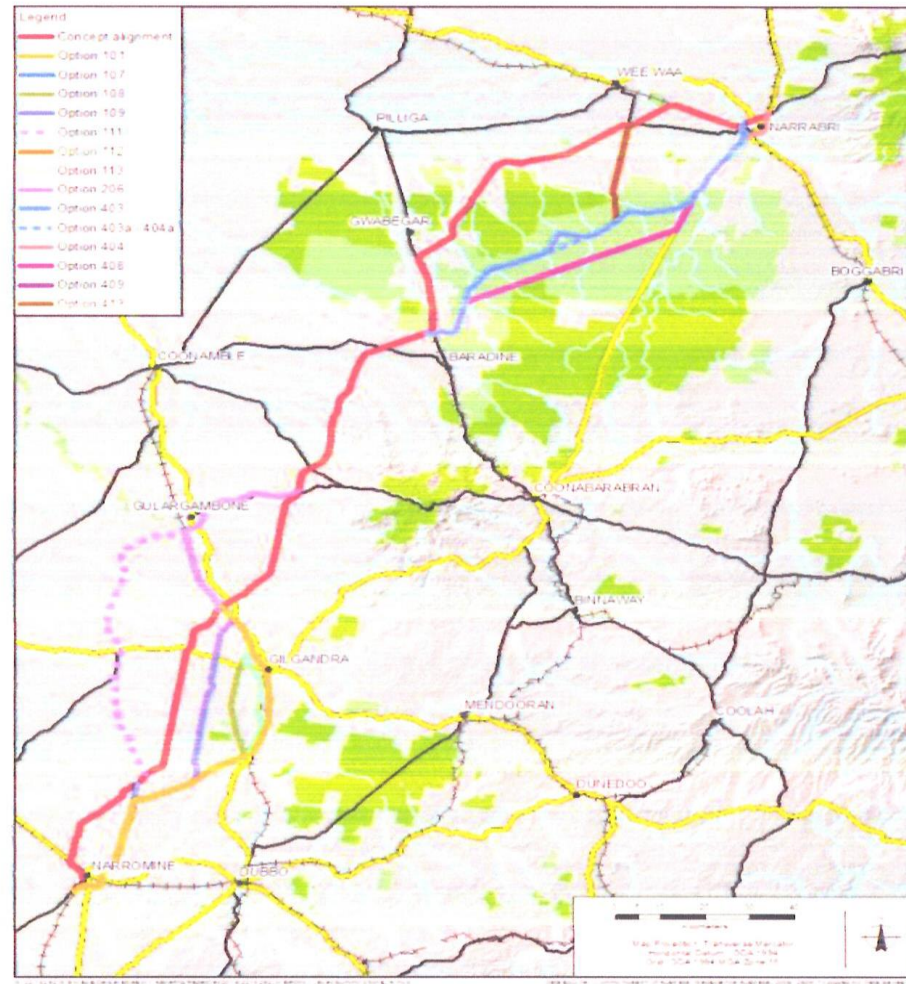


Figure 5-2 M2M 2016 Concept alignment and additional options

MCA WORKSHOP REPORT (15 DECEMBER 2016)  
MARCH 2017  
OPTION 113.

