

Environmental Impact Statement Submission from Tim Logan

I am a small businessperson whose family have lived in Narrabri for five generations. We have nothing directly to gain or lose by the route the Inland Rail takes.

The concept of using rail to **economically** transport goods within Australia **I fully support**. With this project, the organisers must resolve the conflict of getting the project completed in as short a time as possible versus asking the many customers/stake holders what they want and economically satisfying their needs. This project is not a stand-alone one. It should take into consideration other projects that will hang off it, while minimising the overall cost of the total operation.

The proposed route is too close to the township of Narrabri for the following reasons:

1/ The currently proposed route leaves the Narrabri Shire Councils proposed Industrial Inland Port marooned with expensive development cost to access the Inland Rail line.

2/ It will disturb the citizens of the town with the noise it makes – particularly at night.

3/ It is unsightly and too industrial looking. It destroys the peaceful and visual amenity of the town.

4/ The route through the town looks more expensive than the alternative offered.

5/ Access to the IR line by local businesses is restricted: -

a/ The height of the line is proposed to be 6.5m above ground, therefore any train wishing to join the line would have to build an access track up to that height and it would necessitate a gradient that would start perhaps a kilometre away from the point of joining the line. This would be expensive to build.

b/ The access line would mean more land would need to be resumed. This would be expensive.

6/ A spider web of rail lines and roads would be expensive and unsightly. Movement around the western part of the town would be difficult, time consuming and possibly more dangerous.

7/ Prospective industrial businesses choosing to locate in the Inland Port may wish to access the inland rail. They could be asked to pay high charges for this use of the “first few kilometres of transport” due to the high-cost recovery charges a commercial infrastructure firm or cost-conscious Government agency, would wish to charge. In other words, spending say, \$15 million to build the curved rail line with ascending loading ramp would need to charge a lot to get a 10% return on their building outlay. Say 2 trains a week use it then (10% return=) \$1,500,000 divided by 104 trains is \$14,423 per train to just get on to the line. That is too much. They will not build their plant here if they have these costs.

8/ Increased severity of flooding which Jim Purcell is addressing. Most people do not realise the large catchment area of Boheena Creek. It is a cone shape extending to within 20km of Coonabarabran, approximately 110 kilometres away. If global warming means more high-volume storms/ downpours occurring, then quite significant flooding may occur at Narrabri, worse than what has happened in the recent past.

9/ Fifty-three homeowners are apparently affected by the route and that's not including others who would be affected should the access line be built from the proposed Narrabri Industrial Hub. The compensation being offered is not yet revealed and probably will not be enough.

10/ This rail route possibly has implications for the defence of northern Australia. Some foreign powers to our north may wish to attack us in the future because that has been the nature of humans since time began. This is a bit out of left field but should be considered when we are talking about a rail line that will last for hundreds of years.

Due to the railway's possible importance delivering vital war goods, Narrabri could well be a target for bombing due to the many bridges over the Namoi River. It would take months to rebuild the footings, piers and line to reinstate the line to being operational again. Secondly, movement of our troops and their machines of war would have lost a valuable route and must travel up the congested coastal route or by road up the Newell highway.

11/ Not much discussion has been held about the need for bi-directional parallel lines, one going south and one going north. Eventually, as Australia's population increases it is almost certain this very logical inland route will get busier to the point it will not be able to safely move the trains. The first thing to suffer will be the time it takes to move goods between Brisbane and Melbourne due to waiting for trains travelling from the opposite direction. At that point Woolworths and Coles will resort to the road transport again. The way to prevent this is to have parallel sets of lines. So, is there enough space/ width capacity to allow for the extra line? Adjustments to widen bridges and mountain cuttings, moving obstacles on the side of the routes etc? Now is the time to be thinking about making it cheap and easy to be able to add the extra line. Realignment while adding in the line is almost impracticable and expensive with the proposed route! There is not enough room at Boheena Creek.

12/ Some people have said to me, "anything can be done if enough money is spent and time allowed". Money is scarce and time a luxury that should not be squandered. Even Governments should be looking at the return on investment of the infrastructure they construct.

13/ Loss of good cotton growing country – the Dampney's property. New difficulties of moving farm equipment around the fields, disrupted irrigation channels, GPS sowing of crop lines disrupted, visibility of what is happening on the farm disrupted, spray plane routes disrupted making them unsafe. See the Dampney's submission.

14/ The decades of noise and extra fuel needed to climb up Knight's Hill could easily be avoided by going behind it. One off capital expenditure should be done to save reoccurring costs.

15/ A significant amount of the state's water run off goes down the Namoi from its upper catchment areas. With climate change we should be allowing for more extremes of water deluges. The flood waters must pass between Little Mountain near Narrabri's airport and Narrabri West. It is a choke point constriction. It regularly floods in Narrabri and we cannot usually get flood insurance or pay an exorbitant amount for it. Why make it possibly worse?

But we should not be building great big earth walls – like that proposed behind the Auscott cotton storage sheds. Water engineers argued about the sheds obstructing the flow of flood waters. They are shaking their heads in disbelief at the ARTC proposed levy banks. We understand the EIS does not investigate the number and optimum size of culverts to allow water through the earth bank.

16/ The Narrabri Shire Council will receive less rate revenue from the land holders and adjacent properties due to the Valuer General down grading the property values and new purchasers of

properties in the area will be discounting the values they would otherwise have paid. A 10% drop in values would likely occur and this translates into approximately (\$10,000,000 x 1.9%) value of rates revenue lost of \$190,000 each year. Over a century that is \$19 million less rates.

17/ The growth of the town of Narrabri, over time, will inevitably move away from the invasive railway, probably towards the mountains of Kaputar. There are problems with that, in that Shire Council services are not currently provided out there. Who will pay for the water and sewerage works?

18/ Attracting medical doctors and highly qualified staff is already difficult for country towns. If the railway makes Narrabri a more unattractive town, then we will have an uphill battle attracting and keeping these people.

The Alternative.

Turning the route to pass down Kiandool Lane (which is 7.6 km from the Yarrie Lake road near the garbage dump) – is still reasonably close to town. It solves nearly all the problems.

Jim Purcell's suggested this route, too, which results in the length of the railway line being only 0.2km longer than the Inland Rail's proposed 38km route- an infinitesimal difference. The ARTC route twists and bends over much more river country. The costings on the build may not be assessed yet, but they would be horrendous. The Kiandool Lane route could have the train on a small (?1m) embankment passing over sandy, stable soils – much cheaper! One bridge over the Namoi compared with five bridges over water ways as proposed. Jim's and my suggestion are similar.

The route would be out of town- saving the amenity of the town. Disruptions would be minimised. Less people affected by noise, less diminishing of people's property values, less shattering of dreams, less rendering portions of properties as useless or unsaleable, less causing of depression which diminishes mental health.

With good route selection there would be no loss of valuable cotton growing country. For the community good, they might just accept a sale of some of their land without much fuss.

Other advantages of this Kiandool route are: -

1/ Kiandool Lane is a sleepy, hardly used roadway, ideally located out of the way from road traffic and ideal for the Inland Rail to be built upon. The roadway would still be needed for access to the few properties along the route and for bush firefighting services etc. It is relatively straight and heads in the right direction. The sandy soil is not that good for cropping but useful for grazing. Pier foundations would not need to be as deep as is necessary for the watercourse black soil areas. Boheena Creek will be a real challenge for the engineers if that route is endorsed.

2/ Nowhere have I seen the possibility of turning trains off the IR route towards Newcastle. Trains that can come into the back of Newcastle from Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth or even Brisbane may be a major source of revenue for the IR system. It may be vital to the economics of constructing the line. This could all fall into place with the ability to bring the trains through from Narrabri. A

relatively cheap right hand turn from off the Kiandool rail line area can enable this. But this is not easily done if the proposed route near town is chosen.

3/ Santos has an expandable power station out in the vicinity of Kiandool road. One day the rail line might be electrified using Santos electricity. Proximity and an area presently undeveloped, allows for the most efficient building of such an asset.

4/ There is plenty of room to add in the extra rail lines for the bi-direction rail travel if Kiandool Road is used.

5/ Santos may get their coal seam gas project going. The pipeline to their current electricity plant is out there close by. Keeping all their pipelines together would be neat and tidy and cheaper to service and maintain, while close to the NSC Inland Port.

6/ Narrabri Shire Council's Inland Port has carefully selected the area for utilising the CSG to bring businesses to town. The triumvirate of Santos's gas, NSC Industrial hub and good Inland Rail transport infrastructure makes a powerful NSW state asset. We need the IR to site itself to play its part.

7/ The Kiandool Lane area can be of great commercial value if, as part of the NSC Inland Port, adjacent to the railway line, big storage sheds can be erected that do not get flooded. The area can look at such businesses as recycling plastic waste. Trains could cart the waste from the cities.

8/ Narrabri needs to have a bypass for trucks and road transport generally. Location of this route along side the rail line is most efficient for servicing the to assets with just one services road. If one bridge is built over the Namoi River that accommodated two lanes of road transport and two lanes of rail transport (to accommodate bi-directional lines north and south), economies of construction could be made.

This submission is being made because I love Narrabri and wish it to remain a good town in which to live, as well as having a vibrant economic future. I originally put this proposal forward as early as 2018.

Tim Logan