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NSW Major Projects  
Department of Planning and Environment  
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Attn: Belinda Scott

## Submission of the North Star to the Border Segment – Inland Rail Proposal

### Introduction

This submission has been prepared by Amy Beutel, Engineering Projects Officer on behalf of Gwydir Shire Council. While it is noted that Council strongly supports the overall project and considers that it is a significant project that will improve job availability and economic development, Council has a number of concerns that it requests be fully addressed in the Government's consideration of the project and the application of relevant conditions.

### Proposed Route

Council requests that the alignment of the rail line and North Star Road between North Star and the Bruxner Way is reviewed. By realigning approximately 13km of road or rail in this area, four public level crossings could be eliminated. Council has received several representations from residents of the Local Government Area raising concerns for the safety of road traffic and the potential traffic and freight delays given the number of crossings within a short distance. While Council acknowledges that Inland Rail's safety modelling of these four levels crossings has shown that the proposed treatments are adequate, it is of the view that the aggregation of risk from the crossings warrants further investigation into the road-rail alignment.

## Traffic Impact Assessment

### Section 4.1.4 – p31

Most of the traffic count data collected for the GSC roads is from 2018, which was during a significant drought. These traffic counts would be significantly lower than that of a normal season on all routes analysed. New traffic count data should be collected during harvest season.

### Section 5.5.6

This assumption states that all quarry materials will be supplied from quarries south of North Star. However, Appendix E shows most quarries being north of North Star. Is the intention to pull from all quarries provided? If so, what additional impact will this have on the local roads?

### Section 6.4.3.1 – P92

This section lists the design vehicle as being a B-Double. However, the majority of routes being assessed are approved for Type 1 Road Trains. Will this change the results of the analysis? Will it affect queue times at level crossings?

### Section 6.4.3.3 – P95

The queue lengths calculated look to be that for cars and light vehicles only. As both North Star Road and Forest Creek Road have a high percentage of Heavy Vehicles on this route, the suggested queue lengths seem to be inadequate. Were these calculations done using type 1 road trains as the design vehicle?

## Economic Impact

A cost benefit Analysis ought to be provided regarding:

The nature and magnitude of the impact of the Project on travelling stock reserves and informal stock routes is currently unknown. ARTC will continue its ongoing consultation with landholders to manage any impact on stock routes, and consultation has been incorporated into the feasibility design.

### Improvements in supply chain efficiency

Following construction, the buildings and infrastructure established for the accommodation camp may be left for community use.

The impact of poorly utilised infrastructure remaining after project development could have a negative impact rather than a positive one, therefore the community ought to be supported to take advantage of this potential.

### Supply opportunities

Anecdotal feedback regarding supply opportunities includes concerns that tender compliance requirements are likely to exclude many local suppliers. Local suppliers may need support and or special consideration in the tender process to avoid a disproportionate level of supply opportunities being won outside the region.

Local food, accommodation and retail businesses should be supported to engage with the project workforce with the potential for the major towns and tourist facilities in the region to gain mutual benefit by providing social benefit to the project workforce. A series of workshops with business owners in the major towns would increase the likelihood of this benefit being realised.

### Cost Benefit Analysis: Inland Rail Program Business Case

The costs will most likely be realised regardless of the actions of local communities, however the potential benefits will only be realised through an appropriate response by local communities. Therefore an understanding of the costs and benefits during construction phase is critical to assisting those communities impacted most significantly to offset the costs by realising the benefits.

The likelihood of maximising the overall benefit, particularly during the construction phase would be greatly increased through the provision of a series of community development based workshops to ensure they understand the opportunities before them and are equipped to respond effectively to these opportunities.

The EIS appendix I states that: NS2B will result in a number of economic impacts, with potential economic benefits realised at a local and regional level. In order to maximise the positive outcomes of the Project, a number of strategies to avoid, reduce or mitigate the negative economic impacts, and enhance and facilitate the capture of positive impacts have been proposed by ARTC. NS2B will result in a number of economic impacts, with potential economic benefits realised at a local and regional level. In order to maximise the positive outcomes of the Project, a number of strategies to avoid, reduce or

mitigate the negative economic impacts, and enhance and facilitate the capture of positive impacts have been proposed by ARTC. What are they?

## Surface Water and Hydrology

### Section 13.8.2.1

This section identifies numerous points along North Star Road where the change in peak water levels during a 1% AEP event are significant. The inspection location of most concern is Access Road 3, where the afflux will be increased by 302mm. Are there any mitigation measures in place for this spot? Have additional culverts been investigated? An increase of 302mm is unacceptable at this spot, and there needs to be a way to reduce this amount.

### Section 13.8.2.2

This section identifies changes in inundation for the route. Table 13.27 identifies time of submersion for a 1% AEP event. It identifies inspection locations North Star 1 and North Star 2 as having a significant change of 2.75hrs and 3.05hrs respectively. This is unacceptable, as the pavement is not designed to withstand this level of water submersion. Has any investigation into mitigation measures to reduce this time been completed? Could extra culverts be used in these areas to reduce this time?

Table 13.28 identifies the difference in submergence in hours per year. For locations NS1 and NS2 the submergence hours per year increases 2.11hrs/yr and 5.86hrs/yr respectively. This is also unacceptable; the existing pavement would not withstand the extra time under water. This needs to be mitigated in some way.

### Section 13.8.2.3

While Back Creek has been identified on the map and is the site of significant increase in afflux mentioned in section 13.8.2.1, it is not included in Table 13.29. This needs to be rectified so the change in flow can be commented on.