

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS (REF) DECISION REPORT

Proposed STOCKINBINGAL TO PARKES (S2P) HORIZONTAL CLEARANCES

Introduction

I have reviewed the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the proposal known as *S2P Horizontal Clearances*. The REF has been prepared for the proposal by *WSP Australia Pty Ltd* to satisfy ARTC's environmental assessment requirements under Part 5, Division 5.1 the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* ("EP&A Act"). The REF is titled *Horizontal Clearances Stockinbinal to Parkes Review of Environmental Factors* with document number 2-0008-230-EAP-05-RP-0002.

This Decision Report provides a summary of the key environmental considerations and the determination for the proposal consistent with requirements of Section 4.4 of the *ARTC Code of Practice for Environmental Impact Assessment of Development Proposals in New South Wales*.

Project Description

The Stockinbinal to Parkes (S2P) section forms a key component of the Inland Rail program. S2P is an enhancement project comprising 170.3 km of existing rail corridor located in regional NSW between the towns of Stockinbinal and Parkes. The proposal is for works at six enhancement sites to increase horizontal clearances within the rail corridor between Stockinbinal and Forbes to accommodate double-stacked freight trains up to 1,800m long and 6.5m high. These works include alterations to, construction or removal of, various structural and track assets along the alignment to provide the increased vertical and horizontal clearances required for double-stacked freight trains. Ancillary works include establishing construction compounds and laydown, constructing associated drainage, and adjusting signalling and communications.

The key features of the proposal (subject to detailed design) include:

- Forbes Station and Yard: realignment of approximately 500m of the main line by up to 540mm and associated drainage works; realignment of approximately 140m of the goods siding track including installation of a new catch point; and trimming of the platform awning at Forbes Station by 300mm for the full length.
- Wirrinya Yard: realignment of approximately 520m of track by up to 350mm.
- Caragabal Yard: realignment of approximately 250m of track by up to 30mm.
- Quandialla Yard: removal of redundant pipework from a water tank adjacent to the track.
- Bribbaree Yard: realignment of approximately 940m of track by up to 300mm, including formation and associated drainage works.
- Milvale Yard: removal of redundant wiring from a water tank adjacent to the track.

Temporary site compounds and stockpiles would be established at the Forbes Station and Yard, Wirrinya Yard, Caragabal Yard and Bribbaree Yard.

The proposed works will occur within the existing rail corridor as well as use adjoining property. Temporary occupation of grain terminal property would be required during construction at Wirrinya Yard, Caragabal Yard and Bribbaree Yard for up to 11 weeks, including occupation of an open area owned by Hilltops Council between Railway Street and the rail corridor at Bribbaree.

Work is proposed to be conducted during standard construction hours as well as out of hours works during scheduled track possessions from early 2024. EPL 3142 applies to this proposal (maintenance activity).

The duration of construction at each site would be:

- Forbes Station and Yard—approximately six weeks
- Caragabal Yard—approximately six weeks
- Wurrinya Yard—approximately seven weeks
- Quandialla Yard and Milvale Yard water tanks—approximately two days each
- Bribbaree Yard—approximately 11 weeks.

Environmental Considerations	
<p><i>Note: this table summarises key environmental issues by exception. It does not capture routine environmental issues / management measures documented in the REF.</i></p>	
Biodiversity (Flora and Fauna)	
<p>Key issues and management measures proposed</p>	<p>Minor</p> <p>The proposal areas are in a heavily disturbed rail corridor and much of the original vegetation has been cleared.</p> <p>During construction of the proposal, there is predicted to be the loss of up to approximately 3.3ha of native vegetation generally comprising of derived native grasslands, of which 3.2ha corresponds to threatened ecological communities (TECs) that are state and nationally listed. This vegetation also provides potential habitat for a number of threatened fauna species, however, assessments of significance for these species concluded that these impacts are not significant given the small percentage of suitable habitat within the proposal site compared to the local habitat.</p> <p>The biodiversity assessment identified that based on the small extent of native vegetation to be removed and the presence of similar vegetation in the locality, potential impacts to native vegetation as a result of construction works are not likely to be significant.</p> <p>The proposal was referred to the Australian Minister for the Environment for assessment to confirm that approval under the EPBC Act is not required, with a referral decision of not a controlled action.</p> <p>Management measures are detailed in the REF and include exclusion areas would be established and maintained around native vegetation to be retained, particularly areas of biodiversity value adjoining the proposal site that are located in close proximity to work areas.</p>
Indigenous Heritage	
<p>Key issues and management measures proposed</p>	<p>Negligible</p> <p>AHIMS searches did not identify any Aboriginal sites within the proposal sites.</p> <p>Construction would require ground disturbance at all sites, except Milvale Yard and Quandialla Yard, for the purpose of undertaking track works. The aboriginal heritage assessment identified low risk of Aboriginal objects being present within the proposal site due to the history of disturbance and no known objects were identified within the proposal site during the site inspection, therefore, it is considered unlikely that any Aboriginal heritage items would be harmed during construction and operation of the proposal.</p> <p>Management measures are detailed in the REF and include an unexpected finds protocol would be developed and included in the CEMP to provide a consistent method for managing any unexpected Aboriginal heritage items discovered during</p>

	<p>construction, including potential heritage items or objects, and human skeletal remains.</p>
<p>Noise and Vibration</p>	
<p>Key issues and management measures proposed</p>	<p>Minor (Moderate – Forbes Station and Yard)</p> <p>The proposal locations are situated in predominately rural areas. The nearest noise-sensitive receivers vary in distance with the closest being 35m at Forbes Station and Yard, 20m at Bribbaree Yard, 85m at Quandialla Yard and greater than 100m at Wurrinya Yard, Caragabal Yard and Milvale Yard. Due to the location of works within a higher density urban area, the majority of impacted receivers have been identified in the vicinity of Forbes Station.</p> <p>Construction noise impacts are not predicted at Milvale Yard or Quandialla Yard but noise management levels are predicted to be exceeded at Forbes Station and Yard, Wurrinya, Caragabal and Bribbaree Yards, with track works planned to occur out of standard construction hours during a 60-hour rail possession and track occupancy authorisation periods. The rail possession would occur once, and track occupancy authorisation periods would be required multiple times over a period of 6 to 11 weeks. Due to the night works, there is the potential for people's sleep to be disturbed at a number of residential receivers, particularly around Forbes Station and Yard.</p> <p>Operational noise levels would increase due to the increased frequency and length of freight trains through the proposal sites. Feasible and reasonable mitigation measures would be identified in accordance with the outcome of the operational noise and vibration review, and the Inland Rail Noise and Vibration Strategy.</p> <p>The proposed works would use equipment that generates ground vibration, with potential impacts to human comfort at two receivers in Forbes and five receivers in Bribbaree.</p> <p>Management measures are detailed in the REF and include A Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan would be prepared and implemented as part of the CEMP, an out-of-hours work protocol would be developed to define the process for considering, approving and managing out-of-hours work, and building condition surveys would be completed before and after construction works where buildings or structures are within the minimum vibration working distances for cosmetic damage.</p>
<p>Non-Indigenous Heritage</p>	
<p>Key issues and management measures proposed</p>	<p>Minor</p> <p>There are two heritage-listed items that would be directly impacted by the proposed works at Forbes Station and Yard, and Milvale Yard, being the removal of redundant wiring on the heritage-listed water tank at Milvale Yard and modification to the awning of heritage listed Forbes Station.</p> <p>Forbes Station is both a state and locally listed item of heritage significance and is also listed on ARTCs section 170 register. A railway water tank at Milvale Yard is also locally heritage listed.</p> <p>The works at Milvale Yard would have an inconsequential impact on the heritage value of the water tank. The Statement of Heritage Impact prepared for the works identifies the impact as minor.</p> <p>The 300mm trimming of the Forbes Station awning requires an application to Heritage NSW for a Section 60 heritage permit to complete the works. The proposed work to the platform awning at Forbes Station would result in a minor direct impact to the heritage values of the item, as original fabric would be removed.</p> <p>Bribbaree Yard has four locally listed heritage items in close proximity that will not be impacted by works.</p> <p>Management measures are detailed in the REF and include all proposed works at the Forbes Station are to be completed in accordance with the Section 60 heritage permit, and archival photographic recording of buildings and structures would be</p>

	carried out prior to works for the Forbes Railway Station and Milvale Railway water tank.
Community and Visual Impacts	
Key issues and management measures proposed	<p>Minor</p> <p>Most of the proposal sites are characterised by rural landscapes, small rural villages and rail corridor infrastructure, with the exception of Forbes Station and Yard site, which is characterised by a larger regional town.</p> <p>Temporary visual amenity impacts are predicted during construction with the presence of large plant, earthworks and stockpiles. The permanent changes to the rail corridor would result in minimal visual amenity changes.</p> <p>Minimal dust is anticipated to be generated at Milvale Yard, Quandialla Yard, Caragabal Yard and Wirrinnya Yard as earthworks are not proposed and the land disturbance areas will be small. The proposed work at Bribbaree Yard and Forbes Station and Yard are anticipated to generate dust as the work involves earthworks which may impact residential and commercial properties adjacent to these sites.</p> <p>Construction of the proposal would not result in any road closures or detours on surrounding roads and no works are proposed to level crossings. Traffic management would be required on local roads, particularly at Forbes Station and Yard and Bribbaree Yard during the peak material delivery times.</p> <p>Management measures are detailed in the REF and include the community would be notified in advance of any proposed road and pedestrian access changes, and an Air Quality Management Plan would be prepared and implemented as part of the CEMP.</p>
Soil and Water	
Key issues and management measures proposed	<p>Minor</p> <p>No significant waterbodies are located within the proposal site or are likely to be affected by the proposal.</p> <p>Construction would temporarily expose the natural ground surface and sub-surface through the removal of vegetation, and excavations at Forbes Station and Yard, Wirrinnya Yard, Caragabal Yard and Bribbaree. The potential for erosion impacts would be minimised by implementing standard best-practice soil erosion management measures during construction.</p> <p>Management measures are detailed in the REF and include construction planning and the layout of construction work sites and compounds would be undertaken with consideration of overland flow paths and flood risk.</p>
Contamination and Waste	
Key issues and management measures proposed	<p>Minor</p> <p>The NSW EPA Contaminated Land Public Record and the POEO Act Public Register were reviewed and did not identify a registered or notified contaminated sites within 500m of the proposal site, except the Forbes Station and Yard clearances site. Four sites within 500m of the Forbes Station and Yard clearances site have been notified to the EPA as potentially contaminated but have not been regulated under the CLM Act. A review of the ARTC Contaminated Site Register identified four sites in the study area relevant to the Forbes Station and Yard and Quandialla Yard.</p> <p>The review determined a negligible risk of soil and contamination impacts at the Milvale Yard and Quandialla Yard sites, with a greater risk of potential for impacts associated with soils and contamination at the Forbes Station and Yard, Wirrinnya Yard, Caragabal Yard, and Bribbaree due to construction activities at these sites requiring some ground disturbance and earthworks.</p> <p>Approximately 4,010m³ of spoil and 2,500m³ of ballast would be generated by the proposal due to earthworks and track replacement. These materials would be stockpiled onsite and tested for beneficial reuse. Sleepers and rail would be reused</p>

	<p>during track works where they are in a suitable condition. Waste would be reused and recycled where practicable.</p> <p>Management measures are detailed in the REF and include detailed site investigations would be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced consultant to assess exposure risks to site workers and other receptors as a result of ground disturbances at Forbes Station and Yard clearances, and all earthworks materials would be assessed against ARTC's Earthworks Materials Management Guideline which would determine the classification and locating/disposal options for any excess materials.</p>
Other	
Key issues and management measures proposed	There is a potential for cumulative impacts as a result of construction activities occurring simultaneously with other Inland Rail projects, particularly in the Forbes area.

Review of Environmental Factors (EP&A Regulation 2021 - section 171) and Matters of National Environmental Significance (EPBC Act 1999)

Have the section 171 Environmental Factors and Matters of National Environmental Significance been considered?	Yes
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REF Exhibition and Public Submissions

Was the REF publicly exhibited, and were community or stakeholder submissions received?	<p>Yes</p> <p>The REF was publicly exhibited from 3 to 24 February 2022 with two submissions received from stakeholders and no submissions from the community. A response to submissions report has been prepared and accompanies the REF.</p>
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Environmental Approvals and Licences Required

Approval requirements	<p>The proposal can be assessed under Part 5 of the EP&A Act and determined by ARTC. EPL 3142 applies to this proposal (maintenance activity).</p> <p>A Section 60 heritage approval under the Heritage Act is required for works on Forbes Station.</p>
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Operational Requirements

Are there any operational requirements that apply to the proposal post-construction?	<p>No</p> <p>Note that the Inland Rail program has operational review and monitoring requirements that may apply to these proposal sites.</p>
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Reviewer notes

Section 5.7.4.2 Contamination and hazardous materials has a subsection titled environmental protection licences that refers to EPL3142 being varied to include the proposal, however a licence variation is not required.

Conclusion

I have considered the requirements of Part 5, Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act and the ARTC *Code of Practice for Environmental Impact Assessment of Development Proposals in NSW*.

On behalf of ARTC I have determined that:

- The Proposal is subject to Part 5, Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act;
- The environmental impact assessment for the Proposal complies with the requirements of Part 5 of the EP&A Act and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021;
- An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for the Proposal;
- A Species Impact Statement (SIS) is not required for the Proposal; and
- The Proposal should proceed subject to the environmental conditions as set out in Schedule 1.

I make these determinations in reliance on the documents I have reviewed and the advice I have received in relation to the Proposal as summarised above.

I note that I did not prepare the REF and that I am authorised by ARTC to make the determination set out in this Decision Report.

Approval Recommended by:

Name and position: Stuart Ross, Corporate Environment Manager

Signature 

Date 18 May 2022

Endorsed by: Applicable / ~~Not applicable~~

Name and position: Peter Clements, Group Executive Safety and Environment

Signature




Date 20.05.22

Approved by:

Name and position: Stephen Jones, Director Health, Safety and Environment, Inland Rail

Signature


Stephen Jones (May 24, 2022 11:22 GMT+10)

Date

Note: Refer Schedule 1 for environmental conditions.

SCHEDULE 1 - ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

REFERENCE	ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS
1.	GENERAL
1.1	The proposal must be carried out in accordance with the terms of this approval and generally in accordance with the proposal as described in the REF documents.
1.2	All works within the rail corridor must be undertaken in compliance with ARTCs Environment Protection Licence (EPL 3142).
1.3	All mitigation measures recommended in the REF and this Schedule (Schedule 1 Environmental Conditions) shall be applied to the proposal. These Schedule 1 Environmental Conditions will prevail where there is any inconsistency.
1.4	All necessary licences, permits and approvals required by legislation shall be obtained prior to the works commencing. Copies of these licences permits, and approvals shall be kept on site and complied with during works.
1.5	Where proposal construction has not commenced within twenty-four months of REF determination, a Consistency Review will be undertaken.
2.	CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
2.1	A construction environmental management plan (CEMP) shall be prepared addressing all REF mitigation measures, these Schedule 1 Environmental Conditions, and other environmental requirements as applicable.
3.	TRAINING
3.1	A site-specific environmental induction must be prepared and delivered to site personnel and is to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - environmentally sensitive areas and 'no go' zones; - emergency procedures, - complaints handling, - environmental incident recording and reporting, and - site specific environmental controls.
4.	INCIDENT NOTIFICATION
4.1	Environmental incidents shall be reported to ARTC Project Manager (and as applicable to the ARTC Network Controller) as soon as practicable.
5.	COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS

REFERENCE	ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS
5.1	Details of all complaints are to be forwarded to ARTC Enviroline (1300 550 402 or enviroline@artc.com.au) for logging into the ARTC complaints database, unless a project specific contact number has been provided to the community.
6.	OTHER
6.1	ARTC documents ENV-GL-010 and ENV-GL-011 provide guidance on the compliant management of waste spoil and timber.