

**Submission  
No 30**

## **INLAND RAIL PROJECT AND REGIONAL NSW**

**Name:** Ms Susan Wilson

**Date Received:** 8 February 2021

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### **ESI Submission: Susan Wilson**

The last 3 years have been traumatic dramatic for myself and my daughter. I lost my husband to cancer and had to cope with picking up the workload of working the Glen Lee and Kerang properties without him. In addition, I have had my own battle with cancer and, have had maintained the viability of my properties despite the impact of the drought.

My properties are the principal source of my income and I am a successful self-sufficient primary producer. I do not receive any government subsidies. It can be anticipated that the current proposed inland rail routes will have a dramatic and adverse impact on the viability of my properties, not just in terms of their value as assets but also, with regard to their sustainability for the raising of livestock and with regard to welfare of my horse stud stock and that of my client's animals. I hold concerns as to the impact of this project on my family's health and that of my livestock. As well as the issues of pollution, dust and noise that will result from excessive activity around my properties.

Should the rail line be built as proposed, there would also be an ongoing range of issues for me as the landowner. No consideration appears to have been given to the impact on my livestock. As an experienced breeder, I would anticipate that the constant exposure to rail traffic along that line will have an adverse effect on the health of my stock that will be reflected at time of the sale. I do not make this claim lightly. Horses and cattle are 'flight' animals and are stressed by the heavy machinery and noise. Furthermore, I have been informed that the proposed route will necessitate an 'active crossing' on the Oxley Highway. Apart from the noise of the trains, I can therefore expect flashing lights and warning alarms which would further distress my livestock. Recent advice I have from ARTC representatives is that I can expect the noise levels from the trains to be heard for about 700 metres. As I have indicated, the horse I breed are for show purposes and consequently, if they are scarred or marked as a result of running into fences, trees or bushes, their value diminishes considerably. I have no written advice from ARTC as to how they intend to mitigate this risk or, if I am entitled to compensation for (what I would anticipate) would be an on-going concern with the rail line's operation.

While it could be argued that my horses (and for the matter cattle) will over time adjust and be conditioned to the noise, as a horse stud I regularly have client's mares sent to me for servicing. These animals are only on my property for relatively short periods and it would be highly unlikely for them to be able to acclimatize to the noise of the trains (or the active crossing). Many of my client's mares are of considerable value and as breeding stock are also integral to their incomes. I am concerned that clients would be reluctant to use my stud where there is a risk to their animals either being distressed, injured or scarred.

To further illustrate my point, about 18 months ago the Gilgandra Council graded Nancarrow Road. Within a week of commencing that work, my cattle (in the adjacent paddock) dropped half their body weight. At the time this work commenced I was hand feeding my stock due to the drought.

As a result of hand feeding the cattle now associate vehicles with food and, will remain in the vicinity of any vehicle in proximity to them with the expectation of being fed. It could therefore be anticipated that, during the building of the rail line, I can expect considerable difficulty in maintaining the condition of my animals. I would also anticipate that containment of my livestock will also become an issue during the construction phase of this project. Once again, I have no written advice as to mitigation plans from the ARTC regarding this contingency.

The planned route will result in the rail line being within 250 metres of residence on the Kerang property and has the potential to limit access to the property. Currently I have the option of leasing this residence and outbuildings as a viable working property should I find myself in financial difficulty. Should the inland rail route (as proposed) become a reality, the lack of access would impact on my ability to lease Kerang for its true value. I would go further and submit that without a comprehensive mitigation strategy by the ARTC, the Kerang Property would not be viable as a working property for livestock or cropping.

On the issue of the impact of the rail line on the amenity of both my properties, I have been informed that when operational, the line will accommodate trains that are 3 kilometres in length, that are 2 carriages high and travelling at 120 Kilometres an hour, and at **a rate of one train every hour**. Given the proximity of the rail line to both residences I would consider this a major issue, that once again, will impact on the value of my properties with regard to noise.

The proposed 'construction impact zone' that runs next to the Oxley Hwy extends out from the south western corner of Oxley Hwy and Nancarrow Road will impact on my main weaning paddock for young horses. This paddock has been used for this purpose for over 50 years and is sown down to natural and tropical grasses that provide quality feed for foals and broodmares. The placement of this construction impact zone risks the loss or substantially degrading of this feed. Moreover, the location of this paddock is integral to how the property works. As stated, the paddock is used for the safe weaning of new foals and for broodmares foaling in the connecting paddocks. This paddock also connects to our cattle yards which is also extensively used to wean calves for the connecting paddocks as consequence it provided transit access for livestock. It can be anticipated that vehicle activity in a construction zone will be high and I would submit this will stress my livestock (and that of my clients whose broodmares have been serviced) and will impact on their subsequent value

As the laydown site will be right across from one of the two residential houses on my property, I would consider noise pollution and my privacy will also be of concern. Finally, apart from my own issues with cancer I am also an asthmatic. It is highly likely that construction site will generate dust and other airborne pollutants and would expect that these too should be mitigated.

Please see my original submission for further detail.