

Enquiries:



11 November 2022

Assistant Director – Inland Rail Review Secretariat
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development,
Communications and the Arts
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Sent by email to: IR.Review@infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Independent Review into the delivery of Inland Rail Public Submission by Scenic Rim Regional Council

Scenic Rim Regional Council (Council) appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to the Independent Review into the delivery of Inland Rail.

Council supports the Inland Rail project as it will increase the region's economic capacity and will bring prosperity and increased revenue streams, allowing for increases in funding and programs to improve levels of service, achieve positive environmental outcomes and develop cultural initiatives. However, this project will forever change the amenity and character of the areas where the rail will be built.

Council is committed to preserving the region's natural assets and prime agricultural land while encouraging future growth, innovation, economic development and employment opportunities. Council holds a particular interest in the Inland Rail project to ensure we maintain a balance between promoting sustainable farms, businesses and industries that are compatible with our environment and lifestyle and providing rewarding employment and prosperity for residents.

Opportunities to contribute to the freight task at Bromelton State Development Area

The Bromelton State Development Area (SDA) promotes economic development by providing for the growing demand for greenfield land in South East Queensland suitable for medium to large scale industrial activities of regional, state and national significance.

With access to the standard gauge rail network along the Sydney-Brisbane rail corridor, and future connectivity to Inland Rail, the SDA is an ideal location for industries, such as freight and logistics operations, to access intrastate and interstate markets. Declared in 2008 and totalling about 15,610 hectares, the Bromelton SDA is located approximately six kilometres west of Beaudesert township.

Inland Rail could provide a stimulus for business investment resulting in the creation of more than 15,000 jobs within warehousing logistics, freight, building, manufacturing and other businesses by 2035.

Industries considered suitable for the Bromelton SDA include:

- large-lot industrial uses requiring direct access to the national standard-gauge rail network
- freight and logistics operations (major intermodal freight terminal)
- medium- and large-scale manufacturing and warehousing activities with road and/or rail requirements
- industry support services, freight and logistics/transport servicing depots
- high-impact and difficult-to-locate industries that require separation from non-industrial uses due to the potential for off-site impacts (in the Special Industry Precinct).

The Bromelton SDA provides many benefits to business and industry seeking to invest in Queensland including:

- encouraging the establishment of industrial activities of regional, state and national significance and supporting infrastructure
- providing an opportunity for regionally significant bulk freight and logistics operations
- connections to other states and territories and areas of Queensland through the national standard-gauge rail network
- greater planning and development certainty for project proponents
- fast-tracked economic development through efficient processing of applications and requests
- protection for existing and future industrial uses by ensuring industrial areas will not be encroached upon by incompatible and sensitive land uses
- access to a skilled workforce in the Beaudesert and southern Brisbane areas.

\$30 million freight terminal for Bromelton SDA

Bromelton already has an operating intermodal in the SCT Logistics (Specialised Container Transport) intermodal rail freight facility in the Bromelton SDA established in 2017, with the first 46-carriage interstate train laden with grocery lines, beverages and timber products heading for the shelves of major Queensland supermarkets and retail outlets.

SCT Logistics is a national, multi-modal transport and logistics company operating rail and road haulage. It is strategically located on a 130-hectare site at Beaudesert – Boonah Road, Bromelton and adjoins the National standard gauge rail line between Brisbane and Sydney.

The intermodal rail freight facility includes a main transit warehouse, a supporting office, rail sidings and a hardstand area. The facility provides up to 75 local jobs with further employment opportunities to be created as SCT Logistics moves into the next phase of operations.

Community Impacts

The areas impacted by the Inland Rail project will be changed forever and Council is focused on ensuring the impacts of these changes are minimised and mitigated, through robust assessment and rigorous mitigation.

While previous submissions by Council as part of the draft Environmental Impact Statement process for the Calvert to Kagaru and Helidon to Calvert Inland Rail projects have set out details of a wide range of issues, Council has strong concerns in four particular areas which are reiterated below.

Level Crossings

Council and residents have strongly advocated for the use of bridges or road network realignments instead of level crossings, and Council Officers have worked with ARTC to develop designs to remove level crossings. ARTC has recently announced that three of the four proposed level crossings have been removed from the reference design in the Scenic Rim

region, and Council encourages ARTC to continue to review the fourth proposed level crossing and replace it with a bridge.

Level crossings impose increased risk of accidents including fatal accidents, unacceptable delays and risk of isolation to residents' properties where the crossing is the sole access. The long-term nature of this project requires a future proofed solution to allow for predicted future growth over 100 years.

Noise Mitigation

Council and residents remain concerned that the project will adversely affect their quality of lifestyle and that no allowances have been made to mitigate adverse impacts such as noise and air pollution. Community perceptions are that the current plan does not appropriately plan to mitigate against the negative impacts such as noise, air and visual amenity in residential and tourist sensitive areas, in particular the omission of acoustic profiling including the effects of topography and meteorology, and resultant mitigation requirements.

Construction Traffic

A thorough, onsite assessment of local roads is required to understand the impacts on the local road network, road users and local residents and businesses of the significant volumes of construction traffic which will be generated by the project. Multiplying traffic volumes, particularly heavy vehicles, on narrow, winding, hilly local roads requires infrastructure upgrades and other mitigations to avoid significant safety, efficiency and amenity impacts on residents and businesses. The proponent must gain Council's approval and accept the conditions imposed on use of local roads.

Flooding

The Scenic Rim region has been subject to more than 10 major flood events in the last 10 years, as well as numerous minor events. Characteristic of this region is localised, intense rainfall which results in high volume and speed flows, and significant downstream impacts. The Queensland and Australian Governments established the independent Flood Panel, and the proponent must incorporate the conclusions of the Flood Panel in the Project.

Council requires that the engagement of the independent Flood Panel be extended to include review of the Inland Rail detailed design to ensure that all recommendations are implemented appropriately and provide Council and community with confidence that flooding is being managed to prevent worsening flooding in Scenic Rim communities.

Engagement with Council and the Community

ARTC has engaged with Council over several years across a range of disciplines and on a regular basis including weekly meetings with Officers, as well as presentations to the Mayor and Councillors as required. This engagement has included detailed and protracted negotiation to ensure that the project is delivered within Council's Local Government Area in a way which Council is able to support, and which does not introduce new risks or costs to Council.

While ARTC has worked hard to continue to improve engagement with Council and the community, the organisation of meetings and workshops appears to be ad hoc with dates changing at short notice and inadequate advance notice of meetings. Promotion of events has focussed heavily on social media which is not a primary channel for many residents of the region. Better use of community channels such as local notice boards and community groups such as schools and Lions Clubs for example would ensure wider awareness.

A calendar established three months in advance would enable better planning and awareness of events in the community.

Council has more recently been able to share ARTC's posts on social media but more use could be made of Council's e-newsletters and mailing lists.

Regionally Significant Changes

The Inland Rail project through the Scenic Rim region will produce regionally significant changes, both positive and negative. Council considers that regionally significant impacts require regionally significant impact mitigation, at a community level and at an individual level.

ARTC has established many valuable programs covering small grants to community organisations, free mental health support, training programs and business engagement strategies. While these programs provide significant benefits, they are limited to the delivery phase of the project.

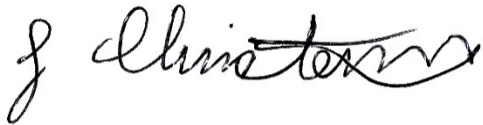
Council requests that ARTC and the Australian Government consider how to deliver regionally significant projects which will continue to provide benefits to the community and individuals beyond the delivery phase.

As an example, both residents and businesses would benefit from strengthening the provision of mobile phone and internet access in areas of the region with poor coverage. Other projects could provide long-term community development projects or leave a legacy of long-term economic growth.

Council will continue to collaborate on potential regionally significant projects to balance the regionally significant negative impacts on the Scenic Rim community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Independent Review into delivery of the Inland Rail project. Should you require any further information, please contact Council.

Yours faithfully



Cr Greg Christensen
MAYOR