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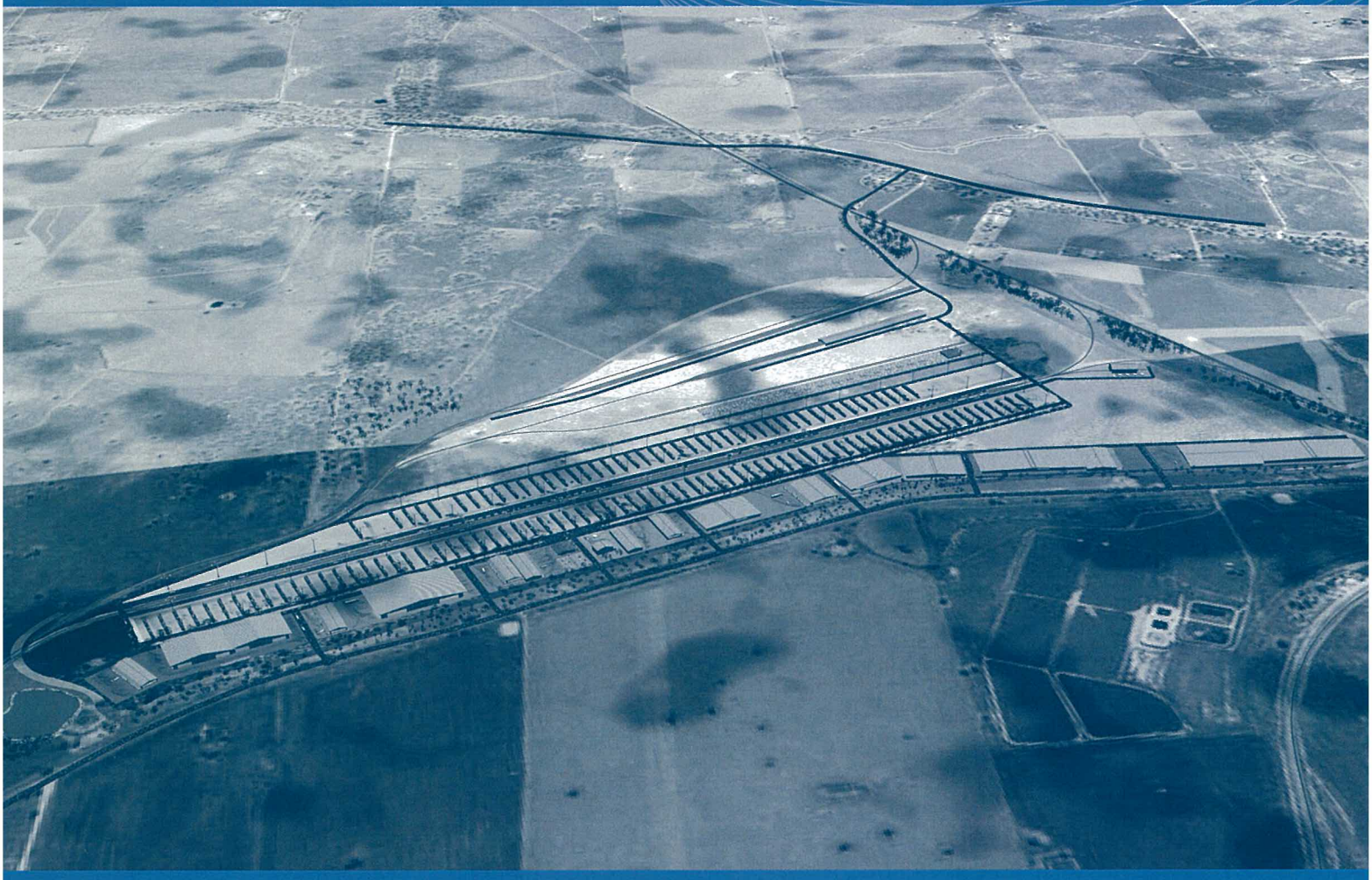
Parkes LOGISTICS AXIS

PART A
INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT



1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Terminals Australia Pty Ltd (Terminals Australia) seeks concept approval to develop an Intermodal Terminal in Parkes, in western NSW (referred to as the 'proposal' for the purposes of this assessment). The Parkes Intermodal Terminal (PIT) would provide a facility for the large-scale transport and warehousing/storage of freight. This Terminal would permit transfer of freight containers between trucks and trains via the national road and rail network. The objectives is to add value and efficiency to Australia's freight logistics industry by locating a 'world's best practice' multi-function complex at the intersection of Australia's major freight flows.

The site would be developed in stages. The 'Initial Stage' would involve development of key infrastructure to enable Terminals Australia to commence operations over a five-year period. Subsequent stages would provide ancillary infrastructure, which would permit increased throughput and provide supplementary services for freight operators and would be developed over a 10 – 15 year period.

The development of subsequent stages is dependent on demand and growth in the freight sector and would occur progressively when market forces dictate.

This is a concept plan submitted in accordance with Part 3A of the New South Wales *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (EP& A Act). As such it establishes the framework for the more detailed plans which will be developed for each of the main elements of the total plan. These plans will provide design and operational detail, including, but not limited to, the traffic flows and associated impacts of each element. Under the provisions of the Act it is a concept approval that is being sought for this plan.

GHD Pty Ltd (GHD) was commissioned by Terminals Australia to prepare an Environmental Assessment for the proposal. This Environmental Assessment has been prepared in accordance with Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) to address the requirements of the Director General of the Department of Planning (the Director General's Requirements) issued on 24 November 2005.

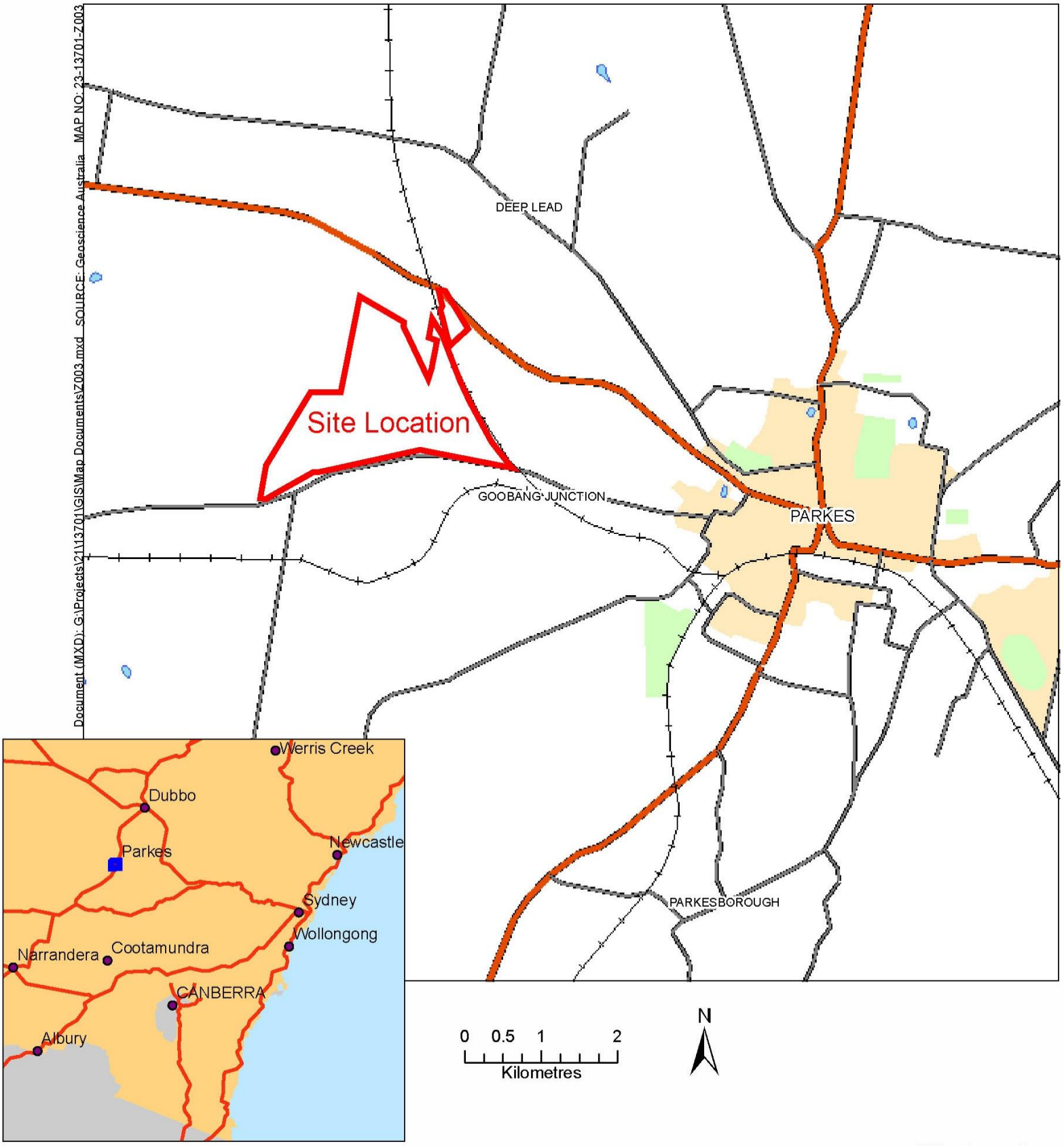
1.2 Location of the proposal

The site for the proposed facility (referred to as 'the site' for the purposes of the Environmental Assessment) is located at Lot 1 DP 859593, Lot 1 DP 1082995, Lot 6 DP 857631, Lot 98 & 99 DP 750179, Lot 360 DP 750179 and Lot 200 DP 627302 which fronts Brolgan Road, approximately 5 kilometres west of the urban centre of Parkes. The total area of the site is 365 hectares, approximately 50% of which would be required for the proposal. The site is owned by Terminals Australia, with the exception of an easement through Lot 200 DP 627302 and

Terminals Australia has negotiated a lease agreement over the use of this land with the owner.

The proposed site is strategically located at the junction of the national road and rail corridors of the Newell Highway, connecting Melbourne and Brisbane, the Main Western (Sydney-Perth) and proposed inland (Melbourne-Brisbane) rail routes, and the transcontinental railway linking the eastern seaboard to Perth.

The location of the proposal is shown in Figure 1-1.



Site location
Figure 1-1

1.3 Key features of the proposal

A summary of key features of the PIT is provided in Table 1.1.

Further detail is provided in Chapter 6.

Table 1.1 Key features of the proposal

	Initial Stage (0-5 years)	Ultimate Stage (10-15 years) (in addition to Initial Stage)
Intermodal Terminal	» Master rail siding (connecting the Parkes - Broken Hill line to the Parkes – Narromine line) » Parkes – Narromine Mainline siding » Two intermodal rail sidings » Shunting/passing siding on the Parkes – Narromine line » 14 hectare hardstand container storage area » Road infrastructure » Administration building » Warehousing facilities » Plant refuelling facility	» Two rail sidings » 10 hectare hardstand container storage area » Access Roads » Heavy engineering / rollingstock maintenance facility » Train refuelling and sanding facility » Containerised fuel storage facility » Warehousing facilities » Heavy engineering facility » Wagon storage facility » Rollingstock storage sidings
General Utilities/Services	» Stormwater reticulation system » Electricity » Sewer » Town Water » Gas » Telecommunications	» Stormwater reticulation system » Electricity » Sewer » Town Water » Gas » Telecommunications
Transport movements	» Trains – 2 inbound per day (12 per week based on a 6 day week) » Vehicles – 852 per day (comprising 502 heavy vehicle movements and 350 light vehicle movements) -	» Trains – 4 inbound per day (24 per week based on a 6 day week) » Vehicles – 2,148 per day (comprising 1,178 heavy vehicle movements and 970 light vehicle movements)

Capital value		»	$150 million
Employment for multiple logistics functions (estimate max)	Initial Stage: approx 300 employees	»	Ultimate Stage: approx 600 employees

1.4 The proponent

Terminals Australia Pty Ltd was established in 2003 to take over from Mountain Industries Pty Ltd their proposed Parkes Intermodal Terminal project. Mountain Industries Pty Ltd is a privately owned transport company based in Newcastle. It operates out of three terminals in NSW (Kooragang Island, St. Marys and Forbes).

1.5 Purpose and benefits of the proposal

The proposal capitalises on the benefits of the site by locating the PIT at the junction of two main rail routes. The proposed location allows access to the site from either rail line and provides good road links to the major highways.

The proposed site would take advantage of the existing and any future upgrades to national road and rail transport infrastructure.

As the site selected for the PIT is a greenfield site, there are excellent operational advantages with regard to the flexibility of rail movements and access to either the east-west rail line or the proposed inland rail corridor. The size of the site means that a terminal operation could be established and be progressively developed without operational compromise or hindrance.

One of the purposes of the PIT is to provide a strategic location between the freight service user and the operator, such as a port, whereby the freight operators can take advantage of road/rail transport modes. Additionally, the freight operator can utilise terminal facilities such as cold storage, refuelling facilities and both short-term and long-term storage.

For rail operators, the PIT would also provide a facility to reconfigure, cross-load, maintain and service trains. The site also provides rolling stock storage as well as maintenance facilities.

Terminals Australia has determined that developing the PIT in a number of stages would provide a financially viable way of meeting short-term demands, whilst providing the option to fast track the development of a 'one-stop shop' facility when required.

Further information on the strategic justification for the proposal is provided in Chapter 5.

1.6 Guide to the approval requirements and environmental assessment

1.6.1 Summary of approval requirements

The proposal is subject to Part 3A approval under the EP&A Act. The environmental assessment and approval requirements specified by Part 3A of the EP&A Act apply to proposal as a whole.

The Minister for Planning is the approval authority for the proposal, and an Environmental Assessment (this document) is required to support the application for development approval in accordance with the requirements of the EP&A Act. Terminals Australia intends to seek concept approval for the proposal, in accordance with clauses 75M-P of the Act, for the reasons outlined in Section 3.2.1.

Further information on the assessment requirements for the proposal is provided in Chapter 3.

1.6.2 Purpose and scope of the environmental assessment

The Environmental Assessment supports an application for concept approval for the proposal from the Minister for Planning under Part 3A of the EP&A Act. It has been prepared in accordance with the EP&A Act. The Environmental Assessment provides:

» Information on the proposal, including its strategic context and justification and the alternatives considered;

» An assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the proposal, with a focus on the key assessment requirements (see below); and

» Measures proposed to minimise and manage potential environmental impacts where necessary.

The Environmental Assessment focuses on the key assessment requirements specified by the Director General's Requirements. These are summarised below, together with where they are addressed within this document (a full copy of the Director General's Requirements are included in Appendix A):

» Strategic assessment (Chapter 5);

» Traffic and transport impacts (Section 7.1);

» Noise impacts (Section 7.2);

» Water quality impacts (Section 7.3);

» Land use safety (Section 7.4); and

» General environmental risk analysis (other potential environmental issues) (Chapter 8).

1.6.3 Contents of the Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Assessment is structured as follows:

Volume 1

» **Part A Introduction and context** – provides an introduction to the Environmental Assessment (Chapter 1); a description of the location and existing environmental features of the site and surrounds (Chapter 2); information on the assessment requirements under relevant legislation and environmental planning instruments (Chapter 3); and a summary of the consultation that has occurred and is planned (Chapter 4).

» **Part B Information on the proposal** – contains the strategic assessment of the proposal and alternatives considered (Chapter 5) and the features of the proposal (Chapter 6).

» **Part C Environmental assessment** – describes the results of the assessment of key environmental issues as identified by the Director-General's Requirements (Chapter 7) and considers how other environmental issues would be managed (Chapter 8).

» **Part D Conclusion** – provides a draft statement of commitments made by the proponent in relation to the mitigation, management and monitoring of potential environmental impacts (Chapter 9) and provides the project justification and conclusion to the Environmental Assessment (Chapter 10).

Volume 2

» **Specialist technical reports** – This contains the following specialist technical/background reports prepared as part of the environmental assessment process:

  – Design brief for road traffic infrastructure (GHD);
  – Noise assessment (GHD);
  – Water management assessment (GHD);
  – Preliminary risk screening (GHD-Qest);
  – Indigenous heritage assessment (B cubed sustainability (BCS));
  – Non-Indigenous heritage assessment (B cubed sustainability (BCS)); and
  – Ecological and bushfire assessment (GHD).

2. Location and setting

2.1 Strategic setting

Parkes is situated 365 km from Sydney, 995 km from Brisbane, 1067 km from Adelaide and 306 km from Canberra on the western edge of the Great Dividing Range in western NSW (Tourism NSW, 2005). The town centre of Parkes is the major urban centre in the Parkes Shire Local Government Area (LGA).

Parkes is located at the junction of several national freight corridors, the main southern railway and a high capacity rail and road network, which is experiencing a high rate of growth as a freight corridor (refer to Figure 1-1 for regional location). Parkes is strategically located on the north/south road and east/west rail corridor. As reflected in Parkes Shire Council's Parkes Transport Hub Local Environment Study (LES), Parkes is the logical location for a national transport hub.

The Parkes LGA, with an area of approximately 5919 km^2, is located on the western edge of the Great Dividing Range within the Central West Slopes and Plains region of New South Wales. Parkes is the major urban centre, followed by Peak Hill. There are a number of smaller villages throughout the Shire including Bogan Gate, Trundle and Tullamore.

Parkes LGA lies within the catchment for two main river systems, the Bogan and the Lachlan Rivers, which are major tributaries of the Murray-Darling Basin System (Parkes Shire Council website).

2.1.1 Industry

The district has some of the richest and most productive agricultural and grazing land in the State (Parkes Shire Council website). Major industries in the area include wheat-storage, metal mining (copper and gold) and wool combing. Tourism is one of the top five industries in Parkes LGA.

Aside from agriculture, mining and manufacturing activities, most employment opportunities are located in townships across the LGA, particularly the township of Parkes. Parkes is strategically located at a junction of several national freight and railway corridors lending itself to a good level of regional accessibility.

2.1.2 Employment

The traditional economic base of Parkes LGA is agriculture with approximately 95% of the Parkes Shire used for agricultural purposes. However, between 1991 and 2001, there has been a decline in the proportion of people employed in the agriculture industry with a growing proportion of the population employed in tertiary industries. The diversifying employment base is demonstrated by a high proportion of the population employed in retail trade (15.2%), and health and education services (15.9%). Other key sectors for employment were manufacturing (6.37%), transport (6.25) and construction (5%).

The Parkes urban centre supported higher participation rates than the LGA average for employment in the retail (18.5%), health and community services (9.4%) and transport and storage (7.8%) sectors.

Parkes LGA contains a high proportion of low-income earners with 29.4% earning less than $400 per week compared to 20.8% over NSW. The population of Parkes also has a notably lower proportion of persons having attained a postgraduate degree, graduate diploma or certificate (1.3%) compared to 11.36% in NSW, however, attainment of an advanced diploma, diploma or certificate of 20.8% was comparable to NSW (22.5%).

The majority of positions held by the Parkes LGA population are of a managerial level (16.2%), however, a notable proportion of the population are professionals (11.8%), tradesperson (13%) and clerical positions (13.7%). The labour force participation rate was 91.5% with 65% being employed full-time and 32% employed part-time. The unemployment rate in 2001 was 8.5% of the labour force. The Parkes LGA Social Plan identifies employment opportunities for youth to be of particular importance in addressing unemployment and associated social problems in the area.

Most visitation to the Shire is generated from business/work related travel and access provided by the Newell Highway. Parkes is not a predominant destination for the holiday/leisure market (Parkes Shire Tourism Strategy Discussion Paper).

2.1.3 Population

The population of Parkes LGA is approximately 14,433 (ABS 2001). Between 1996 and 2001, there was no population growth and projections indicate that the population will remain steady over the next twenty years. This slow population growth is in line with overall trends of declining populations in rural areas of NSW and increasing immigration of people from the shire's rural/village areas and recent development in the mining industry. Overall, the growth rate of the Central West is expected to be slower than growth in the previous 20 years with an increase of 12,400 people by 2031. It is estimated that annual population growth over the next decade will be 0.2%.

2.2 The existing environment

2.2.1 Land uses

Existing land uses

Site for the proposed facility

The site is typical of agricultural land of the area. It lies between gentle hills to the north, east and south-east. A prominent ridge runs across the site in a north-east/south-west direction. The site contains open cypress woodland along the western edge and scattered areas of grassland along the southern and eastern boundaries. Two derelict dwellings exist on the site, which are in an extremely

poor condition. There are also a number of ancillary structures including sheds, tanks and other buildings and some cultural plantings including Pepper and Currajong trees. The site is currently being agisted to local farmers. The majority of the site has been cleared in the past for livestock grazing and crops. The south eastern and central parts of the site have recently been sown for crops and other areas are heavily grazed.

In summary, the existing visual qualities of the site are:

» Low lying flat topography with slightly undulating hills;

» Large expanses of dry grasslands that have been used for agistment;

» Scattered and sparse vegetation and trees, particularly along the periphery;

» Open box/cypress woodland running north-south; and

» Few isolated residential dwellings and dilapidated buildings.

Surrounding land uses

The site is bounded to the north by Condobolin Road and grazing land, to the east by the current existing railway, grazing land lies to the east of the existing railway and part of the south by Brolgan Road.

The landscape of the study area is dominated by gently undulating agricultural country. Remnant vegetation is scattered across the landscape, predominantly lining the roads, rail lines and some residential dwellings, whilst low lying boundary fences mark the various land allotments.

Dominant features of the study area landscape are:

» Parkes-Narromine rail line;

» Sydney–Adelaide–Perth rail line;

» Brolgan Road and scattered grass areas to the south;

» Condobolin Road and open box/cypress woodland to the north;

» Hills to the north, south-east and east of the site;

» A low ridge lying in the north-east, south-west direction;

» Residential dwelling to the south-west;

» Residential dwelling to the north-east;

» Residential dwelling to the north;

» Residential dwellings scattered along Condobolin Road; and

» Parkes township (5km to the east).

2.2.2 Climate

The nearest weather station to the site is located at Macarthur Street, Parkes, approximately 5km from the study area. Average daily maximum temperatures

recorded at the Parkes weather station range from 32.1ºC in January to 15.8ºC in August. Average minimum temperatures range from 17.8ºC in January to 4.0ºC in July.

Rainfall records indicate that December through March are the wettest months with April recording the highest monthly rainfall of 299 mm. October, December, January, February, March, April and May have all recorded the lowest monthly rainfall of 0.0 mm (www.bom.gov.au).

2.2.3 Topography

The site is predominantly open and flat to undulating, with a small ridge in the north of the site. The site naturally drains southwest to Goobang Creek. Included on the site are hills up to 320 metres Australian Height Datum (AHD), with most of the site at approximately 300 metres AHD.

2.2.4 Geology and soils

The site is underlain by Goonumbla Volcanics of the early Palaeozoic Period[1]. These include phyllite, schist, micaceous and silty sandstone and siltstone, andesite and limestone lenses.

The Parkes Shire Council's LES describes the subsurface materials as 'consisting of red-brown earths with small areas of red soils and shallow soil (lithosols)'. [2]

The red-brown earths are a 'dark and reddish brown sand clay loam, massive to weakly pedal, earthy topsoil with a clear boundary change to the subsoil consisting of dark reddish brown clay, moderately pedal, few calcareous segregations'.

The red earths are a 'dull reddish brown sandy loam, massive and earth topsoil with common quartz fine to coarse gravels and abrupt boundary to reddish brown sandy clay loam, massive to weak pedal, earthy subsoil with few quartz fine to coarse gravels'. Shallow soils (lithosols) cover small part of the site consisting of brown loam over rock.

The bedrock underlying the soils is primarily 'highly to extremely weathered shale, pink brown and/or yellow-brown, low in strength. Andesites, tuffs and limestones underlie part of the site'. These subsurface materials were confirmed during the recent geotechnical investigations (GHD, 2006) and are summarised in Table 2.1.

[1] Forbes geological sheet

[2] Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation of Parkes Transport Hub Development – Envirowest Consulting Pty Ltd (August 2003).

Table 2.1 Subsurface materials [3]

Depth	Soil Material
To ~0.5m	TOPSOIL - Silty Loam, moist to wet and soft to firm.
To ~1.2m	Red clay, medium to high plasticity, moist and generally firm to stiff.
To ~4.0m	Gravelly Clay, medium plasticity, quartz and ironstone gravel, typically brown in colour, moist and stiff.
To ~6.0m	Either red and grey clay, medium plasticity with trace fine gravel, moist and stiff; or, Gravelly grey clay (decomposed claystone/ shale), medium plasticity, moist and very stiff.
At ~ 6.0m	BEDROCK - Highly weathered claystone, white with red brown iron stained seams, moist and stiff to hard.

Preliminary soil testing undertaken as part of the Parkes Transport Hub LES 2003, found that soil samples were non-saline in the topsoil and increasing to slight salinity with depth (Terra Consulting, 2003).

2.2.5 Hydrology

The site is situated in the catchment of the Lachlan River, which is a major tributary of the Darling River, within the Murray-Darling Basin System.

The catchment is predominantly cleared rural farming and grazing land. The LES describes the area as “rural landscape, undulating agricultural country with timbered galleries along old stock routes, road reserves, ridges and waterways that are remnants of the original vegetation communities of the locality.”

The terrain of the land to be developed is predominantly open and flat to undulating. Included on the site are hills up to 320 metres Australian Height Datum (AHD), with most of the site at approximately 300 metres AHD.

Stormwater runoff flows in a southwesterly direction and discharges into a number of small farm dams. These dams discharge into Goobang Creek, west of Parkes.

During recent geotechnical investigations, groundwater was confirmed, at approximately 0.9m below natural surface level.

[3] Parkes Intermodal Terminal Development – Geotechnical Investigations Report – GDK Keighran Geotechnics (December 2005).

2.2.6 Ecology

Flora

Much of the site has been cleared and is currently used for crops or livestock grazing. The only vegetated areas of the site are the north-western corner and a small parcel of land in the north east.

Open woodland supporting a canopy of Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus meliodora*), White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*) and White Cypress Pine (*Callistris glaucophylla*) occurs in the north-western corner of the site and supports a heavily grazed understorey, dominated by exotic species. The small parcel of land in the north east of the site supports White Box, with a highly disturbed understorey and very little ground cover. In areas not grazed by sheep along Brolgan Road native grass species such as Wallaby Grass (*Austrodanthonia bipartita*) occur.

The majority of the soil across the remainder of the site has been sown with crops and therefore does not contain any native groundcover. However, native trees such as White Cypress are scattered across these areas. A row of Yellow Box also occurs along the western boundary and Yellow Box and White Box trees are scattered throughout the disturbed and sown areas.

Endangered ecological communities

The site supports a remnant of open woodland vegetation, characteristic of the endangered ecological community White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland, which is listed under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act). The community is also potentially characteristic of a disturbed remnant of Grassy White Box Woodland listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (*EPBC Act). Although named differently under State and Commonwealth legislation, these communities have similar characteristics. White Box and Yellow Box are present at the site and are key diagnostic species for these communities. The understorey is largely absent and the ground cover appears to support a mixture of native and exotic species. However, the drought conditions and heavy grazing made species identification difficult.

Threatened flora

A number of threatened flora species have been recorded within the locality. Given that the site is highly disturbed and in most areas the soil had been sown with crops, it is unlikely that any of these species would occur.

Fauna

The site supports limited habitat for fauna as the majority of the site has been cleared of vegetation and only scattered tree cover remains. However, the woodland area on the north western part of the site is likely to provide potential nesting and foraging habitat for a variety of bird species. No habitat for ground-dwelling or arboreal mammals was recorded at the site as the site did not support an understorey and the woodland area was sparse. However, the few hollow-

bearing trees scattered across the site may provide habitat for some species of bats and birds. Two dams are present at the site and these have the potential to provide habitat for common frog species.

A small rocky area occurs south of the woodland along the western boundary of the site and may provide potential habitat for some reptiles such as skinks.

Threatened fauna

A number of threatened fauna have been recorded within the locality and some have the potential to occur at the site. The woodland in the north-western corner may provide foraging habitat for a number of threatened birds including the Grey Falcon (*Falco hypoleucos*) which has been recorded north of the site along Condobolin Road (Birds Australia 2005).

Corridors

The site does not form part of any recognisable fauna corridors throughout the locality. The site is isolated and disturbed, as is the majority of the vegetation around the site. Limited connectivity to vegetation along Condobolin Road is evident in the north. The woodland in the north western part of the site is likely to provide some connectivity in the form of stepping-stones for mobile species such as bats and birds throughout the locality.

2.2.7 Air quality

The proposal site is located in a rural area with no obvious significant impacts on air quality. Hence, the air quality can generally be described as good.

The main sources contributing to local air pollution (for the existing environment) are generally limited to vehicular emissions (particularly road vehicles) and other domestic / rural type sources (eg. wood fires).

2.2.8 Noise

The proposal is located in a rural area. Background noise measurements were undertaken and were found to be low.

2.2.9 Cultural heritage

Indigenous heritage

There are no permanent water courses located within the study area, and it is a modified landscape through intense agricultural activities over the past 150 years. Both these factors reduce the likelihood of occurrences of Indigenous archaeological sites.

Non-Indigenous heritage

The Parkes area has a long history of intense agricultural use. The majority of the site has been utilised for grazing and crop production since European settlement in the 1830s-1840s. The key features on the site are the remains of a

late Nineteenth Century farm complex, comprising the original farmhouse of Pisè (rammed earth) construction, numerous timber outbuildings and another farmhouse, severely damaged by fire. Both the Pisè structure and the fire ruins are unrepairable and a potential hazard to squatters and the like.

Although these non-Indigenous elements are worthy of consideration and impact assessment, the study area does not include any places listed on any statutory or non-statutory heritage registers.

Research has drawn very little information on the farm complex. It is likely that the Massurit Family, a prominent local family, built the farm house and associated out buildings, which is known as “Innesvale”, during the 1880s. The building is in extremely poor condition and is structurally unsound, with most of the exterior walls partially or wholly collapsed.

3. Statutory framework

3.1 Permissibility of the proposal

3.1.1 Parkes Local Environmental Plan 1990

The Parkes Local Environmental Plan 1990 (the LEP) governs land use in the Parkes LGA. The site is zoned 4(a) (Industrial ''Hub" Zone) under the LEP. The site to which the proposal applies was subject to an amendment to the LEP (Amendment No. 4, gazetted 11 November 2004).

The 2004 amendment rezoned the site from 1(a) (Rural 1 "A" Zone) to 4(a) (Industrial "Hub" Zone) to facilitate the construction and operation of the facility. The objectives of this zone are to:

> "*(a) to recognise the Parkes "Hub" as a special industrial enterprise area, specifically to nurture a multi-modal freight and transport interchange, and*
>
> *(b) to designate land for the accommodation of key industrial uses which are linked to the freight logistics industry, and*
>
> *(c) to encourage the growth of the freight logistics industry and capture consequent economic benefits for Parkes, and*
>
> *(d) to enable the continuation of agricultural land use within the zone.*"

Within this zone, the proposal would be permissible with consent of Council.

3.2 Approval authority

3.2.1 Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The EP&A Act forms the statutory framework for planning and environmental assessment in New South Wales. Implementation of the EP&A Act is the responsibility of the Minister for Planning, statutory authorities and local councils.

The EP&A Act contains three schemes which impose requirements for planning approval:

- Part 3A provides for control of 'major infrastructure or other projects' that require development consent or other approval from the Minister for Planning;
- Part 4 provides for control of 'local development' that requires development consent from the local Council; and
- Part 5 provides for control of 'activities' that do not require development consent or approval of the Minister for Planning.

The need or otherwise for development consent is set out in environmental planning instruments – State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP), Regional Environmental Plans (REP) or Local Environmental Plans (LEP).

Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Part 3A of the EP&A Act commenced on 1 August 2005. The new part of the Act consolidates the assessment and approval regime for all major projects that need the approval of the Minister for Planning. Previously these were dealt with under Parts 4 and 5 of the Act. The new Part 3A applies to State government infrastructure projects, developments previously classed as State significant, and other projects, plans or programs declared by the Minister. It provides a separate streamlined and integrated development assessment and approvals regime for major infrastructure and other projects of significance to the State.

Clause 75B of the EP&A Act states:

> *'(1) General*
>
> *This Part applies to the carrying out of development that is declared under this section to be a project to which this Part applies:*
>
> *(a) by a State environmental planning policy, or*
>
> *(b) by order of the Minister published in the Gazette.'*

According to Clause 75D, the Minister is the approval authority for Part 3A projects:

> *'(1) A person is not to carry out development that is a project to which this Part applies unless the Minister has approved of the carrying out of the project under this Part.*
>
> *(2) The person is to comply with any conditions to which such an approval is subject.'*

Terminals Australia is seeking concept approval for the project in accordance with clauses 75M-P of the Act. A concept plan assessment and approval process provides for a proponent to obtain an approval for the concept of a major, complex project prior to undertaking more detailed studies in relation to implementing the various components of a project (as required). This provides for matters such as the overall justification of the project, suitability of a site/route and environmental issues to be resolved early and provides for the simplification of subsequent approvals where environmental impacts can be avoided or minimised.

Concept plan approvals are used for the assessment and approval of more complex projects where there is a benefit in having strategic issues (including the overall justification of the project and suitability of the site) determined up-front, prior to undertaking more detailed assessment if required.

Terminals Australia is seeking a concept approval for the PIT as there is uncertainty regarding timing of the development of the site. Written notification, dated 22 December 2005, was received by the Department of Planning, stating that they could submit an application for concept approval. Development of the PIT would be determined by market forces and as such, there are currently no

designs of additional infrastructure, warehousing facilities, possible fuel storage facilities or engineering workshops.

3.2.2 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005

State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 (the Major Projects SEPP) was gazetted on 25 May 2005. The Major Projects SEPP clarifies what constitutes a major project for the purposes of Part 3A of the Act.

The aims of the SEPP are:

> *'(a) to identify development to which the development assessment and approval process under Part 3A of the Act applies,*
>
> *(b) to identify any such development that is a critical infrastructure project for the purposes of Part 3A of the Act,*
>
> *(c) to facilitate the development, redevelopment or protection of important urban, coastal and regional sites of economic, environmental or social significance to the State so as to facilitate the orderly use, development or conservation of those State significant sites for the benefit of the State,*
>
> *(d) to facilitate service delivery outcomes for a range of public services and to provide for the development of major sites for a public purpose or redevelopment of major sites no longer appropriate or suitable for public purposes,*
>
> *(e) to rationalise and clarify the provisions making the Minister the approval authority for development and sites of State significance, and to keep those provisions under review so that the approval process is devolved to councils when State planning objectives have been achieved.'*

Clause 6 of the SEPP defines Part 3A projects:

'(1) Development that, in the opinion of the Minister, is development of a kind:

> *(a) that is described in Schedule 1 or 2, or*
>
> *(b) that is described in Schedule 3 as a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies, or*
>
> *(c) to the extent that it is not otherwise described in Schedules 1–3, that is described in Schedule 5,*
>
> *is declared to be a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies.'*

Schedule 1, Clause 23 identifies the following rail related projects that are considered to be major projects:

(1) Development that has a capital investment value of more than $30 million for the purpose of:

> *(a) heavy railway lines associated with mining, extractive industries or other industry, or*

(b) railway freight facilities or inter-modal terminals.

(2) Development within a railway corridor or associated with railway infrastructure that has a capital investment value of more than $30 million and that the Minister determines is of strategic State or regional planning significance, and is for the purpose of:

(a) commercial, residential or retail development, or

(b) container packing, storage or examination facility, or

(c) bus interchange development."

The proposal, at its Ultimate Stage, would have a capital investment of $150 million and, as such, is classified as a major project under Part 3A of the EP&A Act. Therefore, the proposal will be assessed under Part 3A of the EP&A Act and will be determined by the Minister for Planning.

3.2.3 Summary

» The PIT is a project to which Part 3A of the EP&A Act applies.

» Under clause 75B(3) of the EP&A Act, the other parts of the development (that is, the subsequent developments leading to the Ultimate Stage) are also subject to Part 3A.

» The environmental assessment and approval requirements specified by Part 3A of the EP&A Act applies to the proposal as a whole.

» The Minister for Planning is the approval authority for the proposal, and an application for approval must be made to the Department of Planning.

» Terminals Australia intends to seek a concept approval for the proposal.

3.3 The application process

3.3.1 Assessment requirements

Planning Focus Meeting

A Planning Focus Meeting (PFM) was convened by the then Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR), now Department of Planning (DoP), on 25 October 2005 to discuss the project with representatives from statutory authorities prior to finalising the Director General's requirements for the Environmental Assessment. The following organisations attended the meeting:

» Department of Planning (DoP) (Convenor);

» Terminals Australia (Proponent);

» Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC);

» Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA);

» Parkes Shire Council; and

» Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC).

The PFM provided statutory authorities with the opportunity to be briefed on the project to help them identify key environmental assessment issues. Attendees discussed key technological and environmental issues associated with each of the main components of the proposal. Participants were invited to identify any additional key issues that would need to be addressed in the Environmental Assessment (see Chapter 4 for stakeholder consultation).

Following consideration of these issues the Director-General issued requirements for the Environmental Assessment. The preparation of the Environmental Assessment has been guided by the outcomes of the PFM and comments from the Department of Planning on key issues consistent with the issued Director General's requirements.

Director General's Requirements

Under clause 75F of the Act, the Director-General is required to prepare and issue the proponent with requirements for undertaking the Environmental Assessment. These identify key issues to be addressed and the level of assessment required.

The Director-General's Requirements for the proposal were issued on 24 November 2005. A copy of the requirements is included in Appendix A. The matters raised by the Director-General for consideration are outlined in Table 3.1 together with a reference to the section of this report that addresses the matter.

Table 3.1 Director-General's Requirements

Issue category	Requirement	Document reference
General requirements	Executive summary	Executive summary
	Description of the proposal	Chapter 6
	Assessment of impacts with a focus on the key assessment requirements	Chapter 5 and 7
	Justification for undertaking the project with consideration of the benefits and impacts of the proposal	Chapter 10
	A draft Statement of Commitments (mitigation, management and monitoring)	Chapter 9
	Certification by the author	Front of Document
Key assessment requirements	Strategic assessment	Chapter 5
	Traffic and transport impacts	Section 7.1

Issue category	Requirement	Document reference
	Noise impacts	Section 7.2
	Water quality impacts	Section 7.3
	Land use safety	Section 7.4
	General environmental risk analysis (in relation to all components of the project)	Chapter 8
Consultation requirements	Appropriate level of consultation with the following parties: » NSW Department of Environment and Conservation; » NSW Roads and Traffic Authority; » The Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd; » Parkes Shire Council; and » The local community.	Chapter 4

Exhibition

If the Environmental Assessment is considered to meet the requirements, the Department will place it on public exhibition for at least 30 days. During the exhibition period, submissions will be invited from relevant agencies and members of the public.

The Department will provide Terminals Australia with a copy of the submissions or a summary of the issues raised in the submissions. Terminals Australia will be asked to respond to the issues and may modify the project and the draft Statement of Commitments to minimise impacts on the environment if required.

If the proposal or Statement of Commitments is modified in response to issues raised, a Preferred Project Report would be prepared to describe the scope of the revised project. The Director-General would make this report public.

Assessment and determination

Following the exhibition period, the Department will, on behalf of the Minister, review the Environmental Assessment, any Preferred Project Report, and submissions received. Once the Department has completed its assessment, a draft assessment report will be prepared for the Director-General, which may include recommended conditions of approval.

The recommended conditions will refer to the Statement of Commitments and may modify them and/or add additional provisions.

The assessment report will then be submitted to the Minister for determination. The Minister may refuse the project, or approve it with any conditions considered appropriate.

The Minister's determination and the Director-General's report will be published on the Department of Planning's web site immediately following determination.

3.4 Other relevant environmental planning instruments

3.4.1 Regional Environmental Plans

No Regional Environmental Plans (REPs) apply to the site or the proposal.

Orana REP No. 1 - Siding Spring covers the area around Siding Spring Observatory in Coonabarabran and is designed to deal with the problem of light emission interfering with the effectiveness of the telescopes. Coonabarabran Council has prepared a development control plan to implement the necessary lighting codes. Although the PIT is well outside the restricted distance from the Observatory, the intent of the REP will be considered by ensuring that external lighting is designed to minimise artificial sky glow. This would be achieved by utilising environmentally friendly full cut-off floodlights that limit the upward light and provide good glare control.

3.4.2 State Environmental Planning Policies

State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) control matters and elements of development that are of state significance. These Policies often require an applicant to consider certain matters not usually within the development process. They can apply to the State or a certain development.

Other SEPPs that are considered to apply to the proposal are discussed below.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 11 – Traffic Generating Developments

SEPP 11 requires consultation with the RTA for certain development that will have a traffic generating potential;

The aims, objectives, policies and strategies of this Policy are to ensure that the Traffic Authority:

(a) is made aware of, and

(b) is given an opportunity to make representations in respect of,

development referred to in Schedule 1 or 2.

Clause 7 states that development applications are to be referred to the Traffic Authority when:

(1) Subject to subclause (2), this clause applies to applications for development consent to carry out development specified in Schedule 1 or 2.

Subclause (2) states: *Where the Traffic Authority has notified a consent authority that this clause does not apply to a development application (whether by reference to the type, purpose or location of the development*

the subject of the application or otherwise) this clause shall not apply to that development application.

Schedule 1 includes:

> *(j) transport terminals, bulk stores, container depots or liquid fuel depots or the enlargement or extension of any existing transport terminal, bulk store, container depot or liquid fuel depot by increasing by more than 8 000 square metres the area of land or the gross floor area of buildings used for that purpose,*

As the proposal can be defined as a transport terminal and would be used as a storage facility and a container depot, the development application would be referred to the RTA by the consent authority.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 44 – Koala Habitat Protection

SEPP 44 applies to the study area. This SEPP aims to encourage the conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to ensure a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline.

The Ecological and Bushfire Assessment found that there was no potential habitat for koala's at the site (see Section 8.4).

Other SEPPs that were considered in relation to the project but deemed to be not applicable include:

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land

SEPP 55 applies to the whole of the State. Clause 2 states the object of this policy as:

(1) The object of this Policy is to provide for a Statewide planning approach to the remediation of contaminated land.

(2) In particular, this Policy aims to promote the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment:

(a) by specifying when consent is required, and when it is not required, for a remediation work, and

(b) by specifying certain considerations that are relevant in rezoning land and in determining development applications in general and development applications for consent to carry out a remediation work in particular, and

(c) by requiring that a remediation work meet certain standards and notification requirements.

As the proposal does not require a development application, and the proposal is not for the zoning or rezoning of land, nor for remediation work, SEPP 55 would not apply.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 34 – Major Employment Generating Industrial Development

SEPP 34 applies to development that employs over 100 people, or has a capital cost (excluding land) of $20m. The policy would only apply if liquid fuels were to be stored on site. The policy makes the Minister the consent authority for applicable development.

The Initial Stage would not include a fuel storage facility and as such, this SEPP is not applicable. However, SEPP 34 would need to be considered in any future development of the site that would include fuel storage.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 33 – Hazardous or Offensive Development

SEPP 33 requires that a risk analysis be undertaken for potentially hazardous development and requires an assessment of certain impacts for potentially offensive development.

A hazard assessment was undertaken by GHD-Qest. The study found that transportation and on-site storage of hazardous materials is to remain below SEPP 33 storage and transport thresholds for Class 3PGII hazardous materials and hence would not trigger the requirements of SEPP 33.

3.5 Other legislative requirements

3.5.1 NSW Legislation

Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995

Section 5A of the EP&A Act lists a number of factors to be taken into account in deciding whether there is likely to be a significant impact on threatened species, populations or ecological communities or their habitats. Should a threatened species or community be impacted, an assessment must be completed to determine the significance of the impact. A Species Impact Statement (SIS) is required if there is likely to be a significant impact on a threatened species, population or ecological community or its habitat.

The potential impact of the proposal on threatened species and communities has been assessed in Section 8.4. This assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on any species or communities listed under the TSC Act and a SIS is not required.

Heritage Act 1977

The NSW *Heritage Act 1977* constituted the Heritage Council of New South Wales, which is a broadly based statutory body. It gives advice and makes recommendations to the Minister on matters affecting environmental heritage and on the implementation of the Heritage Act.

For the purposes of the Heritage Act, the term "environmental heritage" describes those buildings, works, relics or places of historic, scientific, cultural, social,

archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic significance for the State of New South Wales.

The Heritage Act is concerned with all aspects of conservation ranging from the most basic protection against indiscriminate damage and demolition of buildings and sites, through to restoration and enhancement.

Heritage places and items of particular importance to the people of NSW are listed on the State Heritage Register. The key to listing on the State Heritage Register is the level of significance. Only those heritage items that are of state significance are listed on the Register. Section 60 of the Heritage Act lists activities requiring approval.

In addition, the Heritage Act contains provisions relating to relics. The term "relic" under the Heritage Act "means any deposit, object or material evidence: (a) which relates to the settlement of the area that comprises New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and (b) which is 50 or more years old."

Section 139 of the Heritage Act prohibits a person from disturbing or excavating any land on which the person has discovered or exposed a relic, except in accordance with an excavation permit.

As well, a person must not disturb or excavate any land knowing or having reasonable cause to suspect that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed unless the disturbance or excavation is carried out in accordance with an excavation permit.

There are no listed heritage items at the proposal site, however, there are some items of potential heritage interest. Non-indigenous heritage impacts of the proposal are discussed further in Section 8.2.

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act) among other things, provides the basis for legal protection and management of Aboriginal sites in NSW. The implementation of the Aboriginal heritage provisions in the NPW Act is the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).

This Act, together with the policies of the DEC provide the following constraints and requirements on land owners and managers:

» It is an offence to knowingly disturb an Aboriginal artefact or site without an appropriate permit;

» Prior to instigating any action which may conceivably disturb a ‘relic’, archaeological survey and assessment is required; and

» When the archaeological resource of an area is known or can be reliably predicted, appropriate land use practices should be adopted which would minimise the necessity for the destruction of sites/relics, and prevent the destruction of sites/relics which warrant conservation.

Section 8.3 of this report discusses the potential for the proposal to impact on items of Aboriginal significance and concludes that it is unlikely to impact on any such items. Accordingly, an approval from DEC would only be required if items of significance were discovered during construction of the terminal.

Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997

Activities required to obtain a licence under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) are detailed in Schedule 1 to the Act.

Schedule 1 includes:

"***Railway systems activities***

(1) A railway systems activity is any one or more of the following:

- *(a) installation of track,*
- *(b) on-site repair of track,*
- *(c) on-site maintenance of track,*
- *(d) on-site upgrading of track,*
- *(e) construction or significant alteration of any of the following, but only if it is connected with an activity listed in paragraphs (a)–(d):*
  - *(i) over track structures,*
  - *(ii) cuttings,*
  - *(iii) drainage works,*
  - *(iv) track support,*
  - *(v) earthworks,*
  - *(vi) fencing,*
  - *(vii) tunnels,*
  - *(viii) bridges,*
  - *(ix) level crossings,*
- *(f) operation of rolling stock on track.*

(2) The following activities are not railway systems activities:

- *(a) activities in railway workshops (including the use of fuel burning equipment),*
- *(b) re-fuelling of rolling stock,*
- *(c) activities at railway fuel depots,*
- *(d) repair, maintenance or upgrading of track away from the track site,*
- *(e) activities at railway station buildings (including platforms and offices),*

(f) loading of freight into or onto, and unloading of freight from, rolling stock,

(g) activities at freight depots or centres,

(h) operation of signalling, communication or train control systems.

***track** means railway track that forms part of, or consists of, a network of more than 30 kilometres of track and that is not solely used for heritage value rolling stock.*

As the PIT is for the loading of freight and unloading of freight, as well as activities at freight depots or centres, the proposal is not considered to be a "railway systems activity" under the POEO Act and a licence would not be required.

Roads Act 1993

The *Roads Act 1993* contains provisions to regulate the carrying out of various activities on public roads, among other things.

Section 75 of the Act states:

"A public authority may not carry out road work on a classified road, being work that involves:

(a) the deviation or alteration of the road, or

(b) the construction of a bridge, tunnel or level crossing in the road,

unless the plans and specifications for the proposed work have been approved by the RTA."

Section 138 of the Act relates to other works and structures on public roads and states:

"(1) A person must not:

(a) erect a structure or carry out a work in, on or over a public road, or

(b) dig up or disturb the surface of a public road, or

(c) remove or interfere with a structure, work or tree on a public road, or

(d) pump water into a public road from any land adjoining the road, or

(e) connect a road (whether public or private) to a classified road,

otherwise than with the consent of the appropriate roads authority.

Maximum penalty: 10 penalty units.

(2) A consent may not be given with respect to a classified road except with the concurrence of the RTA.

(3) If the applicant is a public authority, the roads authority and, in the case of a classified road, the RTA must consult with the applicant before deciding whether or not to grant consent or concurrence."

The proposal involves connecting to Brolgan Road and a possible alternative northern access to Condobolin Road and consent under Section 139 is therefore required from RTA in the case of classified roads and from Parkes Shire Council in the case of all other roads.

Rural Fires Act 1997

The proposal does not require referral to the NSW Rural Fire Service under section 79BA of the EP&A Act nor section 100B of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* (RF Act) as neither residential nor rural residential development are proposed for the study area.

However the Department of Planning may choose to refer the application to the Rural Fire Service. Further discussion on bushfire risk is included in Section 8.4 of this report.

Native Vegetation Conservation Act 1997

The Parkes Transport Hub – Local Environmental Study states that the Mid Lachlan Regional Vegetation Management Plan (MLRVMP), prepared under the *Native Vegetation Conservation Act 1997*, applies to the local government areas of Parkes, Forbes, Weddin, Bland and part of the Lachlan.

The MLRVMP covers the management of all native vegetation in the Region that exists on the rural land and applies to land zoned 1(a) (Rural "A" Zone) under the Parkes Local Environmental Plan 1990. The MLRVMP requires the prior assessment of native vegetation clearing to determine whether the nature and scale of proposed clearing is appropriate. Although the proposal would not be undertaken on land zoned 1(a) (Rural "A" Zone), the potential flora and fauna impacts have been discussed in this Environmental Assessment (see Section 8.4).

3.5.2 Commonwealth legislation

Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The primary objective of the EPBC Act is to "provide for the protection of the environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are matters of national environmental significance."

Environmental approvals under the EPBC Act may be required for an "action" that has, will have or that is likely to have a significant impact on:

(a) matters of national environmental significance (known as 'NES matters'), or

(b) the environment on Commonwealth land (whether or not the action is occurring on Commonwealth land).

Approval for such an action may be required from the Commonwealth Minister for Environment and Heritage.

An “action” is considered to include a project, development, undertaking, activity or series of activities. NES matters include:

» World Heritage Areas;

» National Heritage Places;

» Ramsar wetlands of international importance;

» Nationally listed threatened species and ecological communities;

» Listed migratory species;

» Nuclear actions; and

» Commonwealth marine areas.

As outlined in Section 8.4, no endangered ecological communities or threatened species listed under the EPBC Act were recorded at the site and it is unlikely that they would occur.

There are no National Heritage Places in the vicinity of the project.

There is no Commonwealth land affected by the project.

Therefore, a Referral to the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) is not required as the project does not constitute a controlled action.

3.5.3 Statutory Approvals, Licences and Permits

Specific approvals / licences from statutory authorities and other organisations as listed in Table 3.2 would also be required prior to construction and operation of the project:

Table 3.2 Statutory approvals, licences and permits required for the project

Legislation	Authority	Approval / Licence	Criteria
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)	DoP	Determination under Part 3A	Major commercial and industrial development as defined in SEPP (Major Projects) 2005
Heritage Act 1977 (NSW)	NSW Heritage Council	Exception notification to be lodged with the NSW Heritage Office seeking exception under Section 139(4a)	The farm complex located on the site is not considered to have heritage significance
Roads Act 1993	RTA and Parkes Shire Council	Approval under section 138 for works on public roads	The project involves connecting to a Council road and possibly connecting to a classified road

The construction contractor would also be required to comply with all statutory requirements which relate directly to work practices such as:

» Trade Practices Act;

» Construction Safety Act; and

» Occupational Health and Safety Act.

4. Consultation

4.1 Background

An extensive community consultation process was undertaken by Parkes Shire Council in 2002 as a result of Council's rezoning proposal (refer to Section 3.1.1).

The draft LEP went on display in 26 August 2002 to 7 October 2002 at Parkes Shire Council Administration Centre as well as the town libraries of Bogan Gate, Parkes, Peak Hill, Trundle and Tullamore. Closing dates of submissions were 7 October 2002.

A Local Environment Study (LES) was prepared in 2003 and the rezoning of the subject site resulted in an amendment to the LEP (Amendment No. 4, gazetted 11 November 2004).

As a result of the display and consultation process undertaken by Parkes Shire Council in 2002, the preparation of the LES in 2003 and the LEP Amendment in 2004, the community has been aware for some time of the planned development of a multi-modal freight and transport interchange in the new Industrial Hub Zone.

Key issues raised

The submissions received as part of the abovementioned consultation, were in relation to Parkes Shire Council's rezoning proposal for an industrial hub zone, which aimed to create a relatively compact industrial area. Although the consultation was not specific to this proposal, some of the issues raised are relevant to the PIT.

While many submissions acknowledged that the HUB would provide many long term opportunities for the community through employment generation and growth in the local economy, there were also several concerns with development within this area and development of an industrial Hub.

Issues raised that are relevant to the PIT include:

- Zoning and planning issues;
- Visual impacts;
- Noise levels;
- Pollution (dust, fumes);
- Soils;
- Traffic movements;
- Fuel storage;
- Waste;
- 24-hour operation;
- Illumination;
- Stormwater quality; and
- Utilities.

These issues have been addressed as appropriate throughout this Environmental Assessment.

4.2 Community consultation

4.2.1 Consultation activities

Consultation with landowners

The three residences situated in the vicinity of the site have been consulted at various stages of the projects development. Noise monitoring was undertaken at two residences north and south of the site (see Section 7.2.1) and occupants were consulted at this time regarding the location of the noise loggers. A commercial agreement has been reached with the residents of the "Stanleigh" property, near Brolgan Road to the south-west of the site, should those residents wish to re-locate.

In addition, Terminals Australia held numerous discussions with the property owner to the east of the site.

Exhibition

As discussed in Section 3.3.1, a Part 3A project requires a public exhibition process prior to determination. The Environmental Assessment will be exhibited by the Department of Planning for at least 30 days. The Department would be responsible for informing the public on the display locations and times.

During the public exhibition period, written submissions on the Environmental Assessment can be forwarded to the Department of Planning. Terminals Australia will be asked to respond to the issues and may modify the project and the draft Statement of Commitments.

The Department of Planning will then prepare Preferred Project Report. The Environmental Assessment report and any Preferred Project Report will be submitted to the Minister for Planning for determination of the project. This report and the Minister's determination will be published on the Department of Planning website (www.planning.nsw.gov.au).

In addition to the formal exhibition process facilitated by the Department, Terminal Australia propose to hold an information day in the early stage of this exhibition period where the community can come and discuss any concerns they have about the project and view the 3D modelling for the PIT which would include fly overs and still images (day and night) from selected high use locations near the site.

4.3 Statutory consultation

4.3.1 Development of the operational and functional brief

Consultation was undertaken for assembling the operational and functional brief. The stakeholders involved in these meetings included:

» Parkes Shire Council;

- NSW RTA;
- ARTC; and
- Country RIC.

A background meeting was held with Parkes Shire Council on 29 April 2005 to gain an appreciation of the site constraints, planning issues, and engineering infrastructure issues.

Subsequent to the background meeting, GHD held two workshops. The first workshop was held on 29 April 2005 and was attended by Parkes Shire Council and the RTA. The second workshop was held on the 2 May 2005 and was attended by ARTC and RIC.

A review of the key findings from the consultation process has identified the following expectations and concerns:

Parkes Shire Council

- Seeking to improve road infrastructure in Parkes by developing a bypass system around Parkes CBD to cater for the future growth in road freight;
- Recognises that both Brolgan and Condobolin Roads currently accommodate low volumes of heavy vehicle traffic and that any future increase in road freight may require the upgrading of certain sections of these road links in order to support this type of movement;
- Requires the report to provide an understanding of the potential increases or change in heavy vehicle traffic movement through Parkes as a result of the staged development of the PIT;
- Requires the study to investigate the potential benefits from constructing an alternative local road route through the site for Brolgan Road traffic when the proposed western level crossing is fouled by a freight train;
- Requires the masterplan study to review the minimum upgrade requirements for Brolgan Road from West Lime Road to the western side of the proposed site as a result of its proposed use. Council have suggested that as a minimum two 3.5m wide traffic lanes and 1.5m wide shoulders should be provided;
- Requires the study to provide an understanding of upgrade requirements at the Brolgan Road level crossing with the Parkes-Narromine Rail line;
- Requires the concept design for the proposal to ensure that there is no fouling of Brolgan Road by trucks entering and exiting the site;
- Wants the study to minimise both road safety risks and loss of amenity along Brolgan Road through investigation of the possible benefits from reducing the current signposted speed limit; and
- Siding Springs Observatory to be considered regarding illumination of site.

Roads and Traffic Authority

- Requires the design to consider access to the site via a single point of access located along Brolgan Road;
- Requires the study to investigate the potential benefits from providing a northern access point to Condobolin Road and the possible timing. However, the authority does not consider that an access to MR 61 (Condobolin Road) would be necessary as the number of trucks moving west are minimal and could be adequately served by a Brolgan Road access;
- Requires the study to investigate the minimal level crossing upgrade requirement as a result of the development. The authority suggested that it expected that a type F level crossing was required as a minimum at level crossing points adjacent to the site. Consideration for boom gates and advanced warning systems should be based on a risk assessment of approach sight distances and heavy vehicle volumes. The authority also indicated that the existing Brolgan Road level crossing is known to be narrow with poor sight distances to the west as a consequence of the angle that the rail line and road cross. This presents a potential need for an early warning system;
- That the '*RTA Guide to Traffic Generating Developments*' be used in the assessment of road infrastructure needs as a result of developing an intermodal facility at Parkes; and
- Requires the study to provide future traffic volumes and freight tonnage values for consideration in the upgrade of Brolgan Road.

Australian Rail Track Corporation

- Prefer proposal to have through road as a common user road under the ownership and responsibility of ARTC. A shared funding arrangement for this section of track would be considered;
- If the proposed Y-link is a private siding then Terminals Australia would need to obtain connection agreements and operational interface agreements. These agreements would be necessary even if the Y-link is a common user track, the agreements would be at the connections from the Terminal into the Y-link at the southern end, and back in from the crossing loop on the northern line (i.e. three connection agreements in total plus necessary interface agreements);
- Interface and connection agreements are to be applied for during the design phase (i.e. following receipt of DA conditions of consent);
- If the connections to the western and northern mainlines are to be private sidings, then ARTC would own (and maintain) the turnouts. ARTC confirmed that the turnouts required do not have to be 1 in 18.5. This is negotiable and can be 1 in 15 or 1 in 10.5;
- A long crossing loop (>1800m in length) is required at the proposed rail entrance to the Terminal on the Parkes- Narromine rail line;
- All rail shunting must be within the Terminal; and

» Control of interlockings for all mainline connections would need to be able to accommodate the proposed changes to the control centre. Signal systems for the site are to be developed in consideration of this.

Country RIC

» Pleased with proposed "through-road" as a means of providing direct access from Western Rail Line to Parkes- Narromine rail line (creating a Y-Link) and also suggested that the Y-Link be a common user track;

» Existing 'time sensitive' trains run from Parkes to Sydney via Lithgow (i.e. road railers and premier freight), otherwise the majority go through Forbes/Cootamundra and into Sydney via the Southern line;

» Perceived potential growth in traffic due to the Terminal would be sustainable given the existing track infrastructure, and assuming that the development of the Country Residual Network (CRN) is supported by future government funding; and

» Long term goals of running 1800m configurations across the state would require some key areas of rail infrastructure to be upgraded and extended to permit this.

Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council

The Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council were consulted as part of the Indigenous Heritage Assessment. No concerns were raised during this process (see Section 8.3.1).

4.3.2 Environmental assessment requirements

As detailed in Section 3.3.1, a number of statutory authorities were consulted about the proposal. They were provided with a background report, which outlined the proposal, and asked to identify key issues for consideration in the Environmental Assessment. This information was supplied to the Department of Planning and formed part of the Director-General's Requirements.