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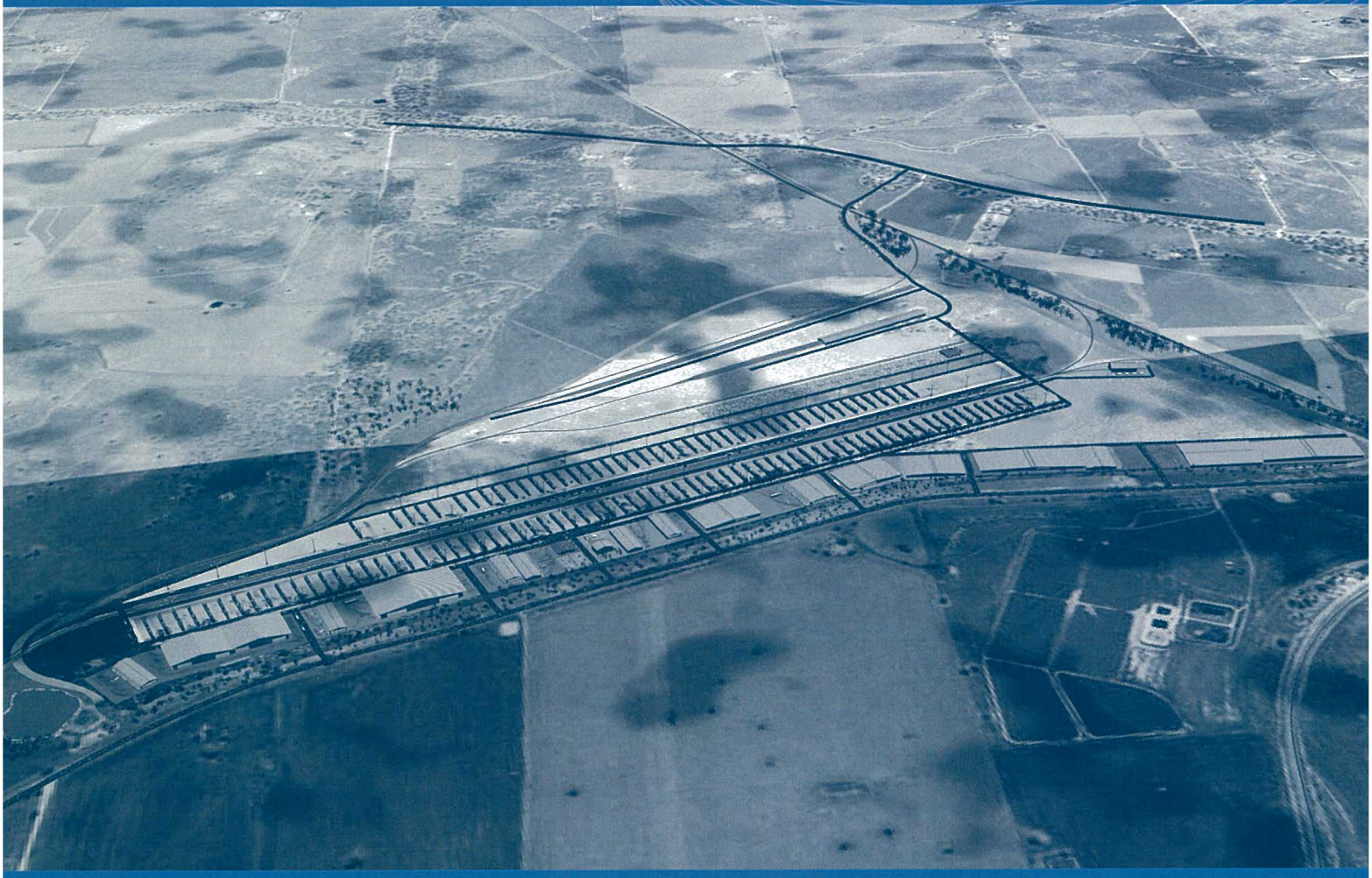
Parkes LOGISTICS AXIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive summary

What is the proposed Intermodal Terminal?

Terminals Australia Pty Ltd (Terminals Australia) seeks concept approval to develop an intermodal terminal in Parkes, western NSW. The Parkes intermodal terminal (PIT) would provide a facility for the large-scale transport and warehousing/storage of freight and 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-funcion 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. The 'Ultimate Stage' would provide ancillary infrastructure, which would permit increased throughput and provide supplementary services for freight operators and would be developed depending on demand and growth in the freight sector over a 10 – 15 year period. Although the Concept Layout Plan (see Figure 6-2) currently provides for a total of 26 hectares the proponent notes that the site has the potential to support approximately 60 hectares of warehousing should market demand warrant. Appropriate planning processes would be followed at the time should this expanded scenario come to fruition.

This is a concept plan submitted in accordance with Part 3A of the New South Wales *Environmental Planning and Assessment 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 concept approval that is being sought for this plan.

A summary of key features of the proposal is provided below:

Table ES 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	» 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

	container storage area » Road infrastructure » Administration building » Warehousing facilities » Plant refuelling facility	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

Where would the Intermodal Terminal be located?

The site for the proposal, which fronts Brolgan Road, is located approximately 5 kilometres west of the urban centre of Parkes. The total area of the site is 365 hectares, most of which would be required for the proposal.

The 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.

Why is the Intermodal Terminal needed?

One of the purposes of the proposal 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 storage facilities and refuelling facilities.

With predicted increases in freight haulage within Australia, an intermodal terminal in Parkes would provide an efficient multimodal freight logistics solution for the storage, handling and distribution of freight to key destinations throughout Australia. Parkes is a logical and suitable location for this facility due to its unique position at the intersection of the north-south and east-west Australian inland freight corridors.

What are the major environmental impacts?

A brief summary of the potential environmental impacts is provided below. Mitigation measures have been developed to minimise these potential impacts and have been provided in Table 9.1 of the Environmental Assessment.

Traffic

Parkes has established transport connections with a State Highway, two key national rail lines and a regional airport located in the Local Government Area in close proximity to the urban centre. The road and rail networks offer connections to Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth making Parkes strategically important for the transporting of freight around Australia and to overseas destinations.

The township of Parkes has good access to the regional road network with numerous roads designated as having the ability to accommodate B Double vehicles.

In general, a rural road with an operating performance (Level of Service) of A or B is desirable and a rural road section with an operating performance of Level of Service C is viewed to be acceptable. Based on this evaluation criteria, it appears that all rural road sections that have the potential of being impacted by traffic generated from the PIT are currently operating with satisfactory performance levels.

The following construction traffic impacts are envisaged:

» External construction traffic movement is unlikely to conflict with peak hour road or Initial Stage operating periods and can be managed;

» The majority of traffic generated during the staged construction periods would be internal movements at the time of excavating material to provide a suitable building platform for the structures and hardstand areas; and

» The assessment of the throughput of 530,000 TEU per annum is the worst-case evaluation of external road network impacts for both construction and operations. This is because the traffic movements during the construction periods are likely to be lower than those experienced during operation of the PIT at a throughput of 530,000 TEU per annum.

During operations the following daily and peak hourly trips are proposed during the Initial and Ultimate Stages:

» a total of 852 two way daily vehicle trips or 171 two way peak hour vehicle trips are expected to be generated in the Initial Stage; and

» a total of 2,148 two way daily vehicle trips or 458 two-way peak hour vehicle trips are expected to be generated in the Ultimate Stage.

It is apparent from the traffic assessment that all identified road freight routes will operate with a satisfactory level of service in the future with or without the development.

The following level crossings situated around the site would be impacted by general growth in rail and road movement generated by the site:

» The existing level crossing situated along Brolgan Road to the east of the site;

» A new level crossing to be situated along Brolgan Road to the west of the site; and

» The existing level crossing situated along Condobolin Road to the west of the site access.

Noise

Unattended noise monitoring was undertaken to determine the existing background and noise environment in the vicinity of the proposed facility. Detailed noise modelling was undertaken based on the predicted maximum sound power levels of primary noise sources for the facility. The noise model undertook a worst-case scenario with all plant items listed operating at their maximum sound power levels with wind directed at the nearest residences.

Results of the noise modelling suggest that noise emanating from the proposed Parkes intermodal terminal will meet the DEC Industrial Noise Policy (INP) project specific noise goals.

Construction noise has the potential to exceed the project specific noise criteria in a worst-case scenario, however this can be mitigated through the utilisation of best management practices as outlined in this assessment.

Results of the noise modelling based on the increase in expected rail movements at the site suggest that 24hr L_{Aeq} levels in the vicinity of the intermodal terminal will remain below the NSW DEC 24hr recommended guidelines.

Predicted future traffic noise resulting from the haulage routes associated with the proposed terminal were modelled using information for future traffic counts. Based on the information provided and modelling under various day and evening scenarios, it is unlikely that traffic noise levels due to the predicted haulage routes associated with the proposed terminal will exceed the noise guidelines.

Therefore, based in the findings of this acoustic assessment, it is considered that operational, construction and traffic noise generated from the proposed Parkes intermodal terminal can meet the relevant noise guidelines.

Water

The catchment is predominantly cleared rural farming and grazing land. Stormwater runoff from the existing site flows in a southwesterly direction and discharges into a number of small farm dams. These dams discharge into Goobang Creek, west of Parkes. The Parkes weather station (065026) records a mean annual rainfall of 585mm.

Development results in increased impermeable surfaces, which affect the hydrological cycle. This 'hardening' of the surfaces results in reduced infiltration of rainfall to the soil and more rainfall becoming runoff. The could result in impacts to the water balance, pollution of stormwater discharging from the site, stormwater peak flows and flood risk and impacts during construction.

Construction phase impacts can be managed by implementation of a Soil and Water Management Plan. During operations a stormwater management strategy was developed to mitigate potential impacts.

Land use safety

The methodology for the preliminary risk screening is presented in the Department of Planning document entitled "Applying SEPP 33 – Hazardous and Offensive Development Application Guidelines" (1997). The preliminary risk screening concentrates on the transportation and storage of specific dangerous goods classes that have the potential for significant off-site effects.

Given the separation distance of approximately 400m from the proposed containerised fuel facility to the site boundary, correlated with the approximate 1,000m^3 storage volume anticipated results in a screening value were well below the specified storage screening threshold. Hence this storage facility is considered unlikely to present a significant off-site risk.

Diesel is classified as a class C1 material. As it is the only flammable material within the respective storage areas, it is not considered to be potentially hazardous.

Based on the dangerous goods storage screening process it is believed that none of the proposed hazardous material storage situations at the PIT exceed the storage screening threshold specified under SEPP 33. Hence, it is assumed that these storage situations are unlikely to pose a significant off-site risk.

The proposed total annual and peak weekly movements of class 3PGII hazardous materials (ULP and LP) would not exceed the transport screening thresholds specified under SEPP 33. Hence, the proposal is not considered to be potentially hazardous with respect to transportation.

The PIT does not exceed the storage threshold or transport threshold for Class 3PGII hazardous materials and hence is not considered as potentially hazardous. Therefore, a Preliminary Hazard Analysis is not required for the anticipated substance volumes for the containerised fuel storage facility or the permanent on-site fuel storage tanks proposed.

Heritage

A late Nineteenth Century farm complex is located at the site however it is not listed on any statutory or non-statutory heritage register. The PIT would result in the demolition of this complex.

No items of Indigenous heritage were located at the site and as a result of previous farming activities, it is unlikely that any would be present.

Ecology

Most of the site has been previously cleared as a result of farming activities with the exception of a small area in the north western corner of the site and a small parcel of land in the north east. The north western corner of the site supported a remnant of open woodland vegetation characteristic of the endangered ecological community White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland. This community is listed under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. The community is also potentially characteristic of a disturbed remnant of the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* listed Grassy White Box Woodland. This area would not be impacted as a result of the PIT.

Given that the site is highly disturbed and in most areas the soil has been sown with crops, it is unlikely that any threatened plant species would occur.

The site supports limited habitat for fauna as the majority has been cleared of vegetation and only scattered tree cover remains. Given that the woodland at the site would not be removed as part of the proposal and some areas of pasture would also remain, it is considered unlikely that the removal of a small number of scattered trees have a significant impact on any fauna species or their habitats.

Bushfire assessment

The PIT does not require referral to the NSW Rural Fire Service under the EP&A Act or the Rural Fires Act as neither residential nor rural residential development are proposed for the study area. The slope of the site, and the vegetation present, is not considered to significantly affect fire behaviour at the site.

Visual

The size of the development and the proposed external lighting would be the major visual impacts of the PIT. Mitigation measures proposed to minimise these impacts include landscaping around the perimeter of the PIT and use of cut-off floodlights that limit the upward light and provide glare control.

Air quality

Construction of the PIT has the potential to cause impacts on air quality, particularly during earth moving activities or during dry, windy conditions.

The facility is generally designed for the handling of non-bulk freight. This type of freight is considered to have minimal contribution to air quality impacts when compared to the potential for impacts from bulk freight (eg. coal, sand and grain in its natural state and which is not packaged). The storage and handling of bulk freight is not proposed for the PIT. Therefore, emissions from the freight itself are assumed to be negligible with the exception of fuel.

Socio economic

Approximately 600 jobs would be created during the construction of the PIT. Similarly, the operation of the PIT would provide employment opportunities for the population of Parkes and would stimulate local business on both a local and regional scale. At the Ultimate Stage of the development, at least 600 full time jobs are anticipated in multiple freight logistics functions.

How would environmental impacts be managed?

A draft statement of commitments has been developed as part of this environmental assessment that outlines measures for environmental mitigation, management and monitoring for the construction and operation of the project.

What happens next?

The proposal is subject to Part 3A approval under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979* (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.

The Director-General's Requirements for the proposal were issued on 24 November 2005. These identify key issues to be addressed and the level of assessment required. If the Environmental Assessment is considered to meet the requirements, the Department would place it on public exhibition for at least 30 days, during which time submissions would 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 were 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.

Following this period, the Department will 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.