



## Department of Primary Industries

OUT21/2350

Ms Lauren Evans  
Environmental Assessment Officer  
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Major Project Portal

Dear Lauren

### **Review of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Of Mount Pleasant Optimisation Project (SSD-10418)**

I refer to your request for advice on 2 February 2021 to the Department of Primary Industries, Agriculture (DPI NSW) regarding a review of the EIS for the above mentioned Project.

The majority of the Project area has been cleared and used for agricultural grazing purposes for well over 100 years. The landform in the Project area consists of undulating hills with open paddock grazing land and intermittent creeks and unnamed ephemeral drainage lines. The EIS states that biodiversity in the form of open woodland communities will be the majority final land use for the Project. DPI NSW recommends, that given the agricultural presence prior to the mining disturbance, that more land be restored to an agriculture land use. This need to be established early in the planning stage as converting proposed biodiversity rehabilitated lands to potential grazing lands requires some minor changes to the rehabilitation program. For example:

- a) no construction of rockpiles as this creates a hazard to mustering;
- b) a change to the seed species used in rehabilitation, as per Attachment 8 Section 7.6 of the EIS;
- c) identification and establishment of water source points ie dams for stock.

The land mapped within the infill disturbance areas associated with the Project and relinquishment areas has been mapped as Land and Soil Capability (LSC) Class 3 - 4. However, the EIS states that rehabilitated land will be a mix of classes 4 – 6. DPI NSW recommends that a stronger focus be made on rehabilitating land to its original LSC with targets of classes 3 - 4.

The EIS also states that the proponent will decommission and remove all project infrastructure unless intensive agriculture is proposed post mining in consultation with the Resources Regulator and Muswellbrook Shire Council. DPI NSW recommends that it too be consulted to help guide what may be required for agribusiness.

Please contact Helen Squires if you have further queries 0437 645 719.

Yours sincerely

25/2/21

Tamara Prentice  
**Manager, Agriculture Land Use Planning**