

Mr Chris Lauritzen  
General Manager – Resource Development  
MACH Energy Australia Pty Ltd

Via email: [Chris.Lauritzen@machenergy.com.au](mailto:Chris.Lauritzen@machenergy.com.au)

02/10/2020

Dear Mr Lauritzen,

**Clarification of the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements  
Mount Pleasant Optimisation Project (SSD 10418)**

I refer to your letter dated 25 June 2020, seeking clarification regarding traffic, transport and land resource requirements outlined in the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Mount Pleasant Optimisation Project, issued on 17 February 2020.

As you are aware, the SEARs require the preparation of an Agricultural Impact Statement (AIS). MACH Energy has indicated that, with the exception of the revised Northern Link Road alignment, the Project would be wholly contained within the boundaries of existing mining leases and there would be no significant net increase to the total disturbance footprint approved under DA 92/97. However, the Project Area adjoins mapped Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) and is in proximity to areas mapped as being part of the Upper Hunter Equine and Viticulture Critical Industry Clusters (CICs).

On this basis, the Department considers that the assessment of the Project's potential agricultural impacts should include consideration of nearby Strategic Agricultural Land and associated agricultural operations. The Department notes that MACH Energy proposes to address the Project's potential impacts on land resources through:

- completion of a Land and Soil Assessment;
- quantification of direct impacts on mapped Equine CIC land associated with the revised Northern Link Road alignment and nearby relinquishment area;
- consideration of potential indirect impacts on adjoining agricultural land uses and CICs in the vicinity of the Project, including air quality, noise and blasting impacts, impacts on water resources and visual impacts; and
- consideration of land use compatibility under clause 12 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007*.

The Department acknowledges that some impacts on CICs and agricultural operations may be addressed to varying extents in the technical assessments for air quality, noise and blasting, groundwater and surface water and visual impacts. Nonetheless, the Department considers that a consolidated summary and analysis of these impacts should be provided in a single chapter or appendix to the Environmental Impact Statement. This assessment does not necessarily need to be a standalone specialist assessment, but should bring together the above potential sources of impacts into a considered and consolidated assessment of the Project's potential to impact on agricultural and land resources.

The Department also draws your attention to the *Strategic Regional Land Use Policy: Guideline for Agricultural Impact Statements* (2012), which states that if a Project is located on within 2 kilometres of any Strategic Agricultural Land it should include consideration of relevant Gateway Criteria, including potential impacts on agricultural scenic and landscape values and access to agricultural resources and infrastructure. For further information, please see:

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/~media/Files/DPE/Guidelines/strategic-regional-land-use-policy-guideline-for-agricultural-impact-statements-2012-10.ashx>

In addition, the Department wishes to emphasise the importance of effective and genuine consultation with affected stakeholders, including relevant equine, viticulture or other agricultural operations in the vicinity of the Project.

Finally, the Department has reviewed MACH Energy's proposed scope for the Road Safety Audit which is also a requirement of the SEARs. The Department considers that the proposed scope is appropriate for assessing the traffic and road safety impacts of the Project.

If you have any enquiries about these requirements, please contact Tegan Cole on the details listed above.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Sprott', written in a cursive style.

Matthew Sprott  
**Director**  
**Resource Assessments**  
as delegate for the Planning Secretary