



Department of Primary Industries

OUT13/31632

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Department of Planning & Infrastructure
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Dear Mr Sprott

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 October 2013 seeking a response to comments on the Agricultural Impact Statement for the proposed Drayton South project.

The Office of Agricultural Sustainability & Food Security (O AS&FS) has reviewed the AIS responses provided by Hanson & Bailey (May 2013) and provides advice on specific issues in Attachment 1.

The following agricultural related issues remain:

- *the management of topsoil regarding influence of sodic material; and the*
- *process for dispute resolution with equine industry.*

This advice from the O AS&FS is forwarded direct to the Department of Planning & Infrastructure in accordance with agreed arrangements for mining applications that affect agricultural land. It includes comments provided by officers in Agriculture NSW and NSW Trade & Investment. Additional advice from the other divisions within the Department of Primary Industries may be forwarded by separate letter.

If you wish to discuss the issue further please call Rob Williamson on telephone 02 6391 3166 or by email robert.williamson@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Dr Regina Fogarty
Director Office of Agricultural Sustainability & Food Security
Encl

ATTACHMENT 1

Specific Agricultural Issues

Response to Submissions and Preferred Project Report

Soil Agricultural Impact Assessment Issues

There is insufficient information in the soil results to ensure that topsoil is retained and stored in a stable condition. In particular, soil type 1 (Mottled and Pedaric Brown Sodosol) may contain significant amounts of sodic soils in places.

Recommended Condition of Consent

Topsoil from soil type 1 should be ameliorated with gypsum before being stockpiled.

Socio-economic assessment of the Drayton South Coal Project

The Response to Submissions (RTS) and Preferred Project Report (PPR) have addressed most of the socio-economic concerns raised in the DPI OAS&FS submission.

The proponent has not prepared an assessment of “the cumulative impacts of agricultural land resources and enterprises foregone in the region” on the basis of the “uncertainty of the assessment methodology and the impracticality of obtaining all relevant information by a single proponent” (RTS Main Report, Part 3, Section 4.16.1, p.196).

The proponent has addressed concerns regarding visual amenity by redesigning the Houston Visual Bund (PPR Part 1, Section 2.2). The amended design will “enable its construction to be completed within 8 months which is a significant improvement from the Environmental Assessment design which was estimated to take 16 months to complete” (PPR Part 1, Executive Summary, p.ii).

In the Revised Statement of Commitments, the proponent states that should the Project proceed, the proponent “will support the continuation of working groups with Coolmore Australia and Darley Australia with regard to the construction and operation of the Project” (PPR Part 4, Table 7, Ref. 44, p.62). The terms of reference of these working groups should be formalised and include mechanisms for dispute resolution.

Recommended Condition of Consent

The terms of reference of the equine working groups should be formalised and include mechanisms for dispute resolution.

In relation to the DGRs Key Issue - Social and Economic

The RTS and PPR raise no further issues that require socio-economic assessment.