Queensland Government

Department of
State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

Our ref: OUT21/828 ; RPI21/001

22 February 2021

Brett Garner
BM Alliance Coal Operations Pty Ltd (BMA)
c/- Haidar Etemadi
Environmental Planner (AECOM Pty Ltd)
GPO Box 1389
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Email: Haidar.Etemadi@aecom.com

Dear Mr Etemadi

Requirement notice

RPI21/001 BMA – Saraji East
(Given under s44 of the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014)

I refer to your application of 8 February 2021 for a regional interests development approval (RIDA) under section 29 of the *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* (RPI Act) for the Saraji East Mining Lease Project. The application seeks approval to allow the construction and operation of resource activities: mining and other resource activities, being a new overhead 66 kilovolt powerline for the project, over Lot 101 SP310393 within a strategic cropping area (SCA) under the RPI Act.

Application details

Applicant	BM Alliance Coal Operations Pty Ltd (BMA) ABN 67 096 412 752
Project	Saraji East Mining Lease project

Site Details

Street address	540 Lake Vermont Road, Dysart, QLD 4745
Real property description	Lot 101 SP310393
Local government area	Isaac Regional Council
Area of regional interest	SCA
Proposed area of SCA to be disturbed	1,965 ha

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Website www.dsdilgp.qld.gov.au
ABN 25 166 523 889

Public notification requirement

Pursuant to section 34(4) of the RPI Act, it has been determined that the application requires notification. The reason for the decision is that the delegate for the chief executive has determined that it is in the public interest for the application to be publicly notified.

In accordance with section 35 of the RPI Act, the applicant is required to publish a notice about the application in the way prescribed in section 13 of the Regional Planning Interests Regulation 2014 (RPI Regulation) and give the owners of the land notice about the application.

Public notification must commence within 10 business days of providing the information required to assist in the assessment of the application, as set out below.

The notification period is 15 business days, with the closing date being the day that is after the end of the notification period. The approved form for public notification is available on the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning's website at https://planning.dsdmip.qld.gov.au/planning/regional-planning-interests-act/rpi-act-forms-and-guidelines

You are also referred to the RPI Act Statutory Guideline 06/14 Public notification of assessment applications at https://dsdmipprd.blob.core.windows.net/general/rpi-guideline-06-14-notification-requirements-under-rpi.pdf for further information.

Information requirement

Pursuant to section 44(1)(b) of the RPI Act, you are advised that further information is required to assist in the assessment of the application against the assessment criteria contained in the RPI Act and RPI Regulation.

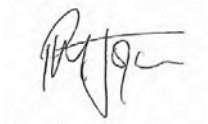
The further information required in detailed in **Attachment A**.

The period in which you must provide the information is a maximum of three months from the date of this notice. You may request an extension to this period if necessary.

Another requirement notice may be given if, for example, the response to this requirement notice does not provide sufficient information to assess and decide the application.

If you require any further information, please contact Ms Morag Elliott, Manager, Planning Group, Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, by telephone on (07) 3452 7653 or by email at morag.elliott@dsdmip.qld.gov.au who will be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely



Phil Joyce
Director
Development Assessment Division
Planning Group

Enc Attachment A

ATTACHMENT A

Information required for assessment against SCA criteria

In relation to the Schedule 2, Part 4 of the RPI Regulation

1.	**Issue:** Table 1 'Assessment application details' in the Regional Interests Assessment Application Report dated 28-Jan-2021 (Assessment Report) states that the area of SCL within the assessment area within Lot 101 SP310393 is 1,965ha. The response to RO2, PS(d) in Table 6 'Response to SCA assessment criteria' states that the total strategic cropping land (SCL) on the property is 3,306ha. **Actions:** Clarify the total mapped SCL within Lot 101 on SP310 393, the property subject to this application, as per the Department of Resource SCL trigger map.
2.	**Issue:** There are discrepancies in the Strategic Cropping Land Assessment prepared by GT Environmental dated June 2020 (SCL Assessment report) between: • soil profile descriptions (particularly for soil structure, soil texture, surface condition) • laboratory results • Soil Classification (ASC) and • photographic evidence provided. These discrepancies make it more difficult to confirm whether many of the soils are rigid versus non rigid. This is an important issue to resolved, due to the different pH cut off for rigid versus non-rigid soils. At times, there appear to have been errors in ASC determination e.g., N4, N19, N41 and N42, and new terms have been introduced (e.g.," humid" in relation to the "Moisture, Drainage" column) in detailed soil descriptions of Appendix A. At times, laboratory results for Exchangeable Sodium Percentage (ESP) and Ca:Mg results have been swapped. Results obtained from ESSA Pty Ltd are stated to comply with an outdated laboratory methods guideline, i.e., Australian Laboratory Handbook of Soil and Water Chemical Methods (Rayment & Higginson 1992) while the RPI Act Statutory Guideline 08/14 How to demonstrate that land in the strategic cropping area (RPI Act Guideline 08/14) does not meet the criteria for strategic cropping land specifies Soil Chemical Methods – Australasia (Rayment & Lyons 2011). At times photographic evidence of surface does not match the descriptions provided. For example, N26 appears to have a crusting surface, but is described as cracking. It is noted that several map units are multi-part features, especially map unit 6 and 14. There is a lack of sites in some parts of these map units.

	These issues make it difficult to confirm the accuracy of the conclusions drawn for some of the Map Units, particularly Map Unit 6. The conclusions of SCL Assessment Report regarding the extent of compliant SCL and non-SCL along the infrastructure corridor are however supported. **Actions:** (a) Confirm ESP and Ca:Mg for map units 2, 6, 10, 11 and 14 as summarised in the SCL Assessment Report, as the values appear to be reversed in the Report's tables compared to laboratory certificates. (b) Provide further evidence to support the inconsistencies between the surface photographs showing that there is potentially a cracking vertosol (non-rigid soil), soil classification and laboratory particle size distribution for N5, N8, N9, N24, N25, N26, N27, 32-SCL, 80-SCL. (c) Revise all sites and define which ones are cracking according to (NCST 2009) to clearly determine which soils are rigid and non-rigid. This will enable a reliable Australian Soil Classification to be assigned to all sites. Any changes to the current report classifications will need to be reflected in any revised Restoration Plan. (d) Confirm or clarify why sample depths do not match laboratory depths for N37, sampling appears to have occurred across horizon boundary of A11/A12 (report Appendix A surface horizon is 0.0-0.04, report table is 0.00-0.10 and laboratory certificate is 0.0-0.1). Additionally, samples recovered at non-standard depths 0.55-0.65m and 0.75-0.85m are not reflected in Table 3-31. (e) Confirm or clarify why sample depths do not match laboratory depths for N9 (report Appendix A surface horizon is 0.0-0.09, report table is 0.00-0.10 and laboratory certificate is 0.0-0.05). (f) Clarify why non-standard sample depths were chosen for analysis at sites N19, N25, N26 and 102-SCL as descriptions of horizon depths (Appendix A) do not appear to have required them, e.g., at N26 a sample was taken at 0.83-0.9m from a horizon described as extending from 0.33-0.9m. (g) Clarify the rigid/non-rigid status of sites N24 and N25 in map unit 11. Both are described as having cracking surfaces and N25 appears to be exhibiting vertic properties in photographic evidence provided. (h) Provide further evidence of the presence/absence of SCL in map unit 14. Provide clarity about the SCL status of sites 9-SCL and 97-SCL as they are not discussed in the SCL Assessment Report.
3.	**Issue:** Map Unit 6 is a complex map unit, with the evidence provided by some of the check sites in the SCL Assessment Report not providing conclusive evidence to confirm the presence/absence of SCL. For example, the check site photographs of NC11 (classed as non-compliant SCL by the SCL Assessment Report) appears to be similar to the soil surface photograph of 77-SCL which is classified as compliant SCL.

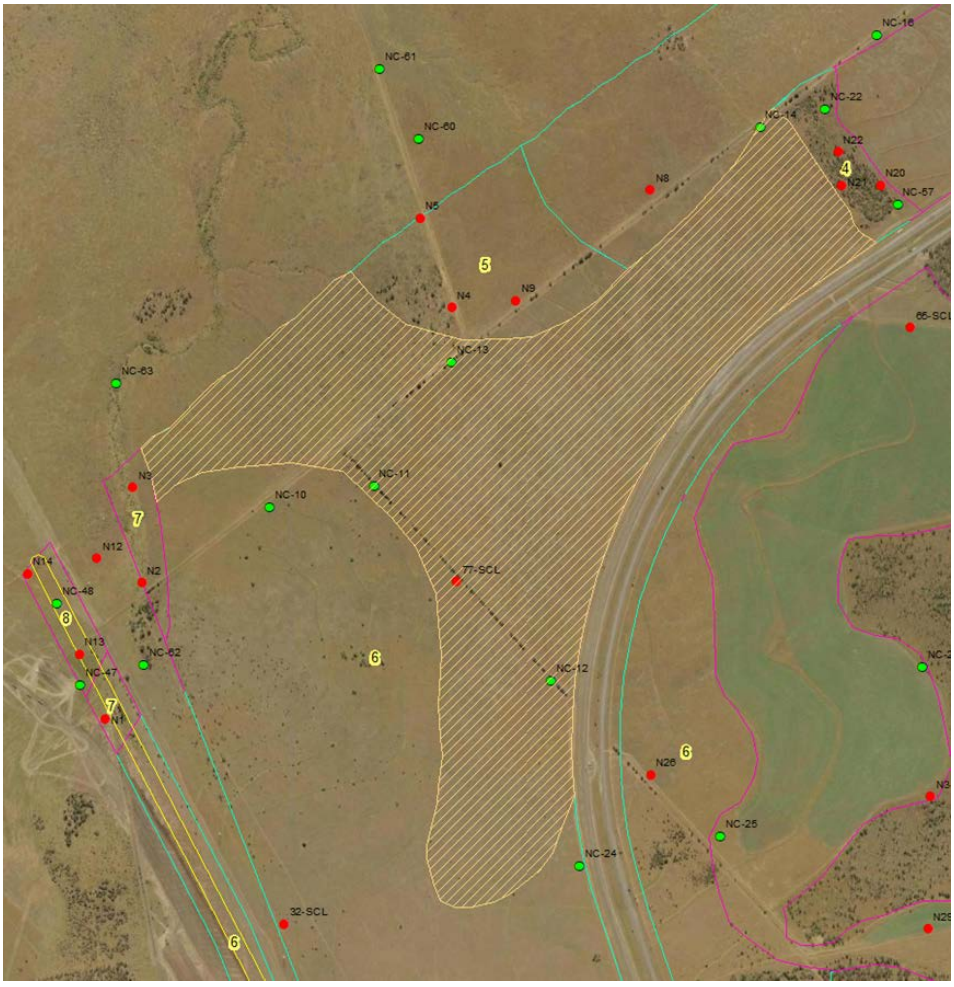
Due to the complex nature of Map unit 6, more information is required to assess the extent of non-compliant SCL. In particular, the area surrounding site 77-SCL (compliant SCL) requires additional analytical sites to delineate the SCL extent.

As the minimum map unit area for the Western Cropping Zone is 10 ha, additional sites are required to accurately delineate the extent of the compliant SCL. Given the inconsistencies described above between the field descriptions (e.g., in particular the field texture, surface characteristics and soil structure, laboratory particle size analysis, ASC and photographic evidence), it is difficult to confirm the field textures and structure described in detailed sites and particularly the field textures and surface condition of the check sites.

Actions:

(a) Confirm the extent of compliant SCL and non-compliant SCL within Map Unit 6, focusing the additional analytical sites within the area depicted in Figure 1 (see below). All map units still need to conform with the required site density of Table 3 of the RPI Act Guideline 08/14.

(b) If additional areas of SCL (more than 10 ha) and map units are identified within Map Unit 6, provide additional analytical sites to confirm the SCL compliance of the remaining areas of the Map Unit.



4.	**Issue:** As advised previously during pre-lodgement discussions, a LiDAR DEM provides a useful tool for defining landform change, particularly in gently undulating landscapes, such as this. In these landscapes, a hill shade generated from LiDAR helps to better define soil boundaries and confirm landscape features. While it is agreed that a LiDAR DEM is not required as the assessment has not challenged the slope criterion, it would be a useful tool to confirm the conclusions of the SCL Assessment Report. **Actions:** Provide a LiDAR DEM for the assessment area to enable a more accurate assessment of the soil boundaries (only if already in existence for the assessment area).
5.	**Issue:** Schedule 2 Part 4 of the RPI Regulation identifies the ROs and the prescribed solutions (PSs), against which all applications in SCA are assessed. The Assessment Report states that: • the application does not meet RO1 ie the proposed activity will be carried out on SCL that meet the relevant criteria • the proposed resource activity is located on a 'property (SCL)' • '*the application is subject to Required Outcome 2 only'* and an assessment against RO2 is provided. The application does not provide an assessment against RO3, for those parts of the proposed resource activity located on areas of mapped SCL that meet the criteria ie where the application does not meet RO1. *Note: s12 'Required outcome 3 – managing impacts on strategic cropping land for a region' of the RPI Act states that this section 'applies if the activity –* *(a) does not meet required outcome 1; or* *(b) is being carried out on 2 or more properties (SCL)'* in the SCA. *Refer to 'Determining the applicable required outcome and prescribed solution' in RPI Act Statutory Guideline 03/14 Carrying out resource activities in the strategic cropping area.* **Actions:** Provide an assessment of the proposed activity against: (a) RO3, to demonstrate the proposed activity will not result in a material impact on SCL in SCA.
6.	**Issue:** The supporting information in the Restoration Plan prepared by GT Environmental dated 27 January 2021 Ref Final V3 (Restoration Plan) includes: • supporting data which does not form part of the document. This includes field data and site observations in the appendix, which is not attached • a brief description of soils which will need to be updated and expanded once the technical issues with the soil descriptions are amended. For

example, Polygon 2: black dermosols are not duplex dark grey sands with sandy loam subsoils

- a land suitability assessment. The Strategic Cropping Land Assessment prepared by GT Environmental dated June 2020 (SCL Assessment report) is not a land suitability assessment, and there is no evidence provided in the Restoration Plan to support the conclusions for Table 4

- Table 4, which refers to outdated map units that have not been updated in accordance with the latest report. The limitation values and subclasses rules for the land management options have not been included

- defining restoration criteria on the overall suitability classes of Table 4 which are not supported, particularly if the aim is to restore land confirmed as SCL that is also Class A agricultural land to Class 4 (Unsuitable agricultural land, Class C1/C2)

- a land suitability assessment that has not adhered to the methodology documented in the Guidelines for Agricultural Land Evaluation in Queensland (DSITI & DNRM 2015)

- Table 7, which requires updating to be consistent with all the soils data available. Some of the conclusions regarding suitability of topsoil and subsoil are not substantiated by the evidence provided, and do not appear to take into consideration salinity issues and to a lesser extent soil erosion and compaction. For example, it is unclear why topsoils from E1r are unsuitable.

Actions:

(a) Provide all supporting information referred to in the Restoration Plan, and include:
   (i) maps identifying the location of the field sites used to collect data.
   (ii) maps identifying the location of the footprint of disturbance at a local and property level scale, stockpiling locations over the 30-year period including relevant map layers and associated GPS points i.e. The Department of Resources' SCL Trigger Map and proposed Trigger Map
   (iii) all laboratory analysis of soil data in the rehabilitation plan. This can form part of the Appendix as required.

(b) Update Table 4 to be consistent with any updated mapping, and fix errors and inconsistencies between the SCL Assessment Report and the Restoration Plan.

(c) Provide the limitation values and subclass rules for the land management options that have been used to formulate Table 4 and specify which specific crops have been assessed in the land suitability assessment.

(d) Confirm the extent of the actual disturbance footprint (i.e., roads, temporary and permanent which may cause compaction) for installation and removal of the powerline to ensure that the footprint does not extend into compliant SCL (outside of the disturbance footprint).

	(e) Update Table 7, and incorporate more accurate recommendations regarding land degradation issues, particularly erosion, compaction, and salinity. An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan designed by a suitably qualified and experienced person which outlines proposed measures during the construction and operation phases of the disturbance is recommended as a component of the Restoration Plan.
7.	**Issue:** Additional detail summarising each of the field sites referred to Section 3 Site Environment of the Restoration Plan should be structured as per the RPI Act Statutory Guideline 09/14 How to determine if an activity has a permanent impact on Strategic Cropping Land when describing the condition of the land to provide context. **Actions:** For each of the sites referred to as pre-clear reference sites, consider including in section 3 a summary of the following from the field data collected and lab analysis: (a) terrain, landform, and slope (b) site lithology (c) current land use (d) previous site disturbance and modification (e) site and soil hydrology (f) soil surface condition (g) vegetation and groundcover, including crops (h) microrelief (i) soil depth (including depths >1 metre) (j) soil profile descriptions, incl. for each horizon or layer.
8.	**Issue:** Section 3.4 Soil Mapping Units of the Restoration Plan does not include maps and associated GPS locations to provide context. **Actions:** Include in the Restoration Plan, representative maps and GPS data where each of the polygons were taken from. *Note: Consider referring to the field data in support of the soil types noted in this section for each of the polygons referenced.*
9.	**Issue:** There is inconsistency between the information in Table 2 of the Restoration Plan with information provided in the Assessment Report. Table 1 Assessment Application Details of the Assessment Report states that the total mapped SCL, as per the SCL trigger map for Lot 101 SP310393 is 1,965ha, whereas Table 2 of the Restoration Plan states that the total SCL on the property is 3,306ha with a proposed impact of 21ha, resulting in a total SCL impact of 0.63%. **Actions:** Confirm the correct figures and amend the reports as required.
10.	**Issue:**

	Section 4.2.1 Proposed Disturbance Activity of the Restoration Plan does not provide adequate detail of the potential impacts of the proposed activity on the SCA. **Actions:** Provide: (a) designs of the proposed infrastructure as well as proposed laydown areas for the construction of the infrastructure if any of the works falls outside of the transmission corridor (b) mapping of the proposed alignment and placement of poles (c) provide GPS data, if available, of location of transmission poles (d) proposed access routes to and from the site (e) likely risks to SCL, including for example, compaction, weed introduction, erosion, mixing of soil profile and any other state or federal values which may be impacted to which an authority applies or is required.
11.	**Issue:** The Restoration Plan references the incorrect government department acronym. **Actions:** Amend references to 'DNRM' and 'DNRME' to the Department of Resource (Resources).
12.	**Issue:** Table 6 Restoration Milestones, Actions, Estimated Schedule and Cost Estimates of the Restoration Plan does not include adequate information to assist in the assessment of the application. **Actions:** Include in Table 6: (a) in the Estimated Time Frame (Months) column, the Restoration Plan should clarify when the associated restoration milestones will commence. For example, are the works proposed to commence once the mining operations associated with an Environmental Authority cease (b) evidence as to the source of the estimated costs to ensure costing reflects current rates. (c) the proposed interest rate within the estimated costs, indexing to adequately cover costs in 50 years' time (d) further information on proposed vegetation restoration reference sites in which rehabilitated vegetation will be restored to. Further information should be included to identify possible reference sites, which will be used to inform when the restoration milestones will be met. This additional information could be included in greater detail in section 4.4.5 Revegetation of the Restoration Plan

	(e) contingency costs if any of the sites are unable to be rehabilitated to their preclear condition.
13.	**Issue:** Table 8 Monitoring Program for Restoration Plan does not provide sufficient information. **Actions:** Amend Table 8 to include: (a) time frames for the reporting associated with the monitoring. These timeframes need to be auditable (b) the sites where the monitoring is to take place. These should be representative of the area (c) notification to the Department of Resources when the restoration works are to commence (d) Annual monitoring reports to be submitted to the Department of Resources (e) Alternate mitigation strategies committed too, if any of the restoration sites are unable to be restored, to their pre disturbance condition.