



Moranbah North and Grosvenor Mines Rail & Pipeline Realignment

Public Submissions Response for EPBC Act referral 2023/09489

Introduction

The Moranbah North and Grosvenor Mines Rail and Pipeline Realignment (the Project) is currently being assessed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The Project involves the relocation of sections of the North Goonyella Branch rail line and Braeside Pipeline, and associated infrastructure. The Project was determined a controlled action on 15 February 2024, to be assessed via Preliminary Documentation (PD).

A direction to publish the PD, with an invitation for public comments, for 10 business days was issued by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) on 25 August 2025. An invitation to comment on the Moranbah North and Grosvenor Mines Rail & Pipeline Realignment draft PD was advertised in the Courier Mail hard copy paper on 29th September and online from 29th September to 13th October. The advertisement was also run by DCCEEW on their website. The PD was on public display and open to comment from 29 September 2025 to 13 October 2025. Hard copies of the PD were placed in the Moranbah Library and DETSI office in Emerald. An electronic version was available on the Anglo website.

One submission was received within the public comment period. This report contains a summary of the received submission, and outlines the Proponent's response and where changes have been made to the PD.

Overview of public comment

A single public comment was received from a Central QLD association on 13 October 2025. The submission presented an objection to the Project, due to:

- *Unacceptable direct and cumulative impacts on threatened species and communities in an already highly degraded landscape,*
- *the further fragmentation and creation of edge impacts on the habitat in the local area,*
- *the lack of appropriate offsets,*
- *the uncertainty of the future of the associated coal mines, and*
- *the insufficient justification of the benefits of the Project.*

Response to public comment

A summary of the Proponent's response to each of the issues raised within the submission, and any changes that have been made to the PD, is presented in Table 1.



Table 1: Response to public comment

Issue/recommendation	Proponent response / updates to PD
<p>Unacceptable direct and cumulative impacts on threatened species and communities in an already highly degraded landscape</p>	<p>The Project has the potential to impact five threatened species and one threatened ecological community listed under the EPBC Act due to their presence or potential presence within the proposed action area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koala – known to occur, impacts to 1.9 ha breeding/foraging habitat and 46.2 ha dispersal habitat • Greater glider – known to occur, impacts to 1.0 ha denning/breeding habitat and 3.0 ha foraging/dispersal habitat • Squatter pigeon – known to occur, impacts to 0.05 ha breeding habitat and 48.2 ha foraging/dispersal habitat • Australian painted snipe – potential to occur, impacts to 1.9 ha habitat • Ornamental snake – potential to occur, impacts to 0.2 ha habitat • Brigalow TEC – known to occur, impacts to 7.8 ha habitat <p>Impacts to these MNES have been assessed in detail using the <i>EPBC Act Significant Impact Guidelines</i> (DoE 2013), considering each species'/TEC's occurrence, habitat, and ecology (refer PD Section 9). This significant impact assessment determined that the Project would not have significant residual impacts on any MNES.</p> <p>The Project's contribution towards cumulative impacts on these MNES was assessed in Section 10 of the PD. The assessment determined that the Project is unlikely to contribute significantly to cumulative impacts to MNES.</p> <p>No updates to the PD have been made in response to this point.</p>
<p>Further fragmentation and creation of edge impacts on the habitat in the local area</p>	<p>The relevance, extent and severity of impacts from fragmentation have been considered for each MNES in the significant impact assessments in Section 9 of the PD. In most instances, the Project will remove small areas of habitat from the edge of already fragmented patches and is unlikely to increase the fragmentation of this habitat, or impact the functionality of these habitat patches.</p>

Issue/recommendation	Proponent response / updates to PD
	<p>The Project is unlikely to result in an overall change in the edge-to-area ratio of the landscape, which is already fragmented. The extent of clearing required for the Project is minor in the context of the landscape and is unlikely to result in the creation of new, small patches of habitat. The landscape is already largely modified and the Disturbance Footprint has been designed to avoid and minimise intersection with MNES habitat so that it does not create significant new cleared areas or interfaces with vegetated areas.</p> <p>No updates to the PD have been made in response to this point.</p>
Lack of appropriate offsets	<p>Offsets are the final step in the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, offset). As per the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy (DSEWPC 2012), offsets can be proposed if significant residual impacts to MNES occur after appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures have been implemented.</p> <p>The infrastructure has been located to avoid impacting areas of MNES value. This included narrowing the design to the minimum area required to adequately construct the rail and pipeline. The alignment of the rail and pipeline corridor was altered after the Project was referred, to further reduce impacts to MNES by minimising the earthworks footprint and avoiding areas of MNES habitat.</p> <p>The proponent has developed comprehensive mitigation strategies that will reduce the impacts to the environment. This includes measures related to vegetation clearing, construction-related impacts, and weed management.</p> <p>Significant impact assessments (refer PD section 9) concluded that the Project will not have a significant residual impact on any MNES. As such, no offsets are proposed for threatened species.</p> <p>Although the project impact assessment concluded that there will be no significant residual impacts on Brigalow TEC, DCCEEW has determined that an environmental offset is required. A land-based offset for Brigalow TEC will be provided, with a conservation gain to be achieved via improvement in existing habitat and reduction of threats within the offset area. The Offset Area Management Plan (OAMP) details the management actions to be undertaken at the site, and demonstrates how the offset aligns with the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy principles.</p> <p>The following updates have been made to the OAMP:</p>

Issue/recommendation	Proponent response / updates to PD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feral animal control measures, focusing especially on pigs which, of all relevant feral species, have the highest potential to degrade brigalow woodlands, have been increased to provide a greater conservation gain • Weed management target has been increased from <10% to <5% weed cover to provide a greater conservation gain compared to the baseline measurements of weed cover at the offset site. • Provision for grazing to manage buffel grass has been removed due to low presence of the weed, with cattle now excluded from the offset area.
Uncertainty of the future of the associated coal mines	<p>Following temporary mine closures due to underground incidents at Moranbah North Mine in 2025 and at Grosvenor Mine in 2024, both mines are progressing towards re-entry of the mines and re-commencement of longwall mining. Having safely re-entered, we commenced our safe remote restart at Moranbah North Mine in November 2025, with operations proceeding under approved conditions set by Resources Safety & Health Queensland (RSHQ) and Industry Safety and Health Representatives. At Grosvenor Mine, we received approval from RSHQ in August 2025 for first stage re-entry to the mine, marking a significant milestone in the journey towards re-commencement of longwall mining.</p> <p>In May 2024 Anglo American announced its intention to sell its Australian steelmaking coal business, which includes its interest in the Moranbah North and Grosvenor Mines. Preparations are underway for the next phase of the sale process to commence in the coming months.</p>
Insufficient justification of the benefits of the Project	<p>Queensland's coal industry remains a cornerstone of the state's economy, contributing 24% of all government revenue and 14% of all jobs while injecting \$25.7 billion annually into local businesses and community organisations.</p> <p>Anglo American's Moranbah North and Grosvenor mines produce the high-quality steelmaking coal required to support the world's renewable energy transition through wind turbines, solar panel frames, electric vehicles and other infrastructure. Moranbah North Mine has a predicted life extending past 2045 and Grosvenor Mine into the 2040's.</p> <p>Despite short-term price corrections, the International Energy Agency and Wood Mackenzie have forecast the demand for coal by 2050 will increase by 205% and the world will need 173 mt of steelmaking coal for urbanisation and ambitious energy transition targets.</p>

Issue/recommendation**Proponent response / updates to PD**

Queensland Treasury has previously forecast global demand for Queensland's steelmaking coal will extend well beyond 2050. There is significant opportunity for coal to continue to underpin Queensland's economic prosperity for many decades to come.

The Project is to be undertaken to maximise mining of the coal resource underlying sections of the rail line and water pipeline. The resources have an approximate sale value of \$9B.

This will allow the extension of existing Moranbah North Mine by five (5) years with the following benefits:

- Increased term of employment for Moranbah North Employees and Contractors (estimated \$2B of income for the FTE workforce of 1200 and support roles). Associated economic contribution to local and regional community.
- Continued payment of royalties to QLD Government (estimated \$1.5B).
- Continued Tax contributions to State and Commonwealth Government (estimated \$0.45B).

Social and economic impacts are discussed in Section 13 of the PD. No updates have been made.



Conclusion

One public comment on the project PD was received during the public comment period. The comment was read and considered, with no updates made to the main body of the PD. Minor updates were made to the OAMP, including increasing feral animal control measures and weed management target to provide a greater conservation gain for Brigalow TEC.

References

Department of the Environment [DoE] (2013). *Matters of National Environmental Significance – Significant impact guidelines 1.1. Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Commonwealth of Australia.

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities [DSEWPC] (2012). *EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy*. Commonwealth of Australia.