



Our reference: CTS 05005/25

28 March 2025

Department of the
**Environment, Tourism,
Science and Innovation**

Dr Coral Rowston
Director
Environmental Advocacy in Central Queensland Inc
EnvA.CQ@outlook.com

Dear Dr Rowston

Thank you for your letter of 5 March 2025 regarding public notification of the Lake Vermont Meadowbrook environmental authority (EA) amendment application.

As you are aware, the Lake Vermont Meadowbrook Project (the Project) has been subject to an environmental impact statement (EIS) process. As the EIS process included public notification, the amendment application for the same project does not undergo public notification under section 150(1)(c) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act).

However, I can advise that any properly made submission to the EIS for the Project is considered a properly made submission to the EA amendment application (section 150(3) of the EP Act). As such, within five business days after deciding the draft EA, the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (the department) provides all submitters to the EIS a written notice of the decision and a copy of the draft EA.

I note from your correspondence that you were a submitter to the EIS for the Project and that a decision to approve the draft EA amendment application for the Project was made on 19 March 2025.

I am advised rehabilitation requirements for the Project have been included in the draft EA. As a submitter, you would have received a copy of the draft EA and notice of decision to review and determine if you would like your submission to be taken to be an objection and referred to the Land Court.

With regard to your concerns about the opportunity to comment on progressive rehabilitation and closure plans (PRCP), an existing coal mine, as is the case with Lake Vermont, is subject to the transitional provisions with regard to developing a PRCP. The intent of the transitional provisions is to preserve existing rights and already approved disturbance within an EA and as such, does not require public notification.

New disturbance approved post the approval of the transitional PRCP is not covered by the transitional provisions. As such, an application to amend a PRCP to include new disturbance areas would be necessary, potentially triggering a public interest evaluation and public notification if applicable.

I am advised the existing Lake Vermont mine transitional PRCP (not including the Meadowbrook amendment) was approved on 30 August 2024. In this instance, the applicant, Bowen Basin Coal Pty Ltd, made a decision to object to the transitional PRCP. Unfortunately, as the matter is currently before the Land Court, I am unable to provide any further comment at this stage.

I was pleased to hear that Environmental Advocacy in Central Queensland Inc and several environmental non-government organisations have been meeting with representatives of the Coal Business Centre within Environmental Services and Regulation (ESR) to discuss a number of important matters including the PRCP process. I encourage you to continue these discussions.

Should you wish to discuss the matter further or require any additional information, please contact Juliana McCosker, Acting Director - Coal, ESR of the department on 0436 607 932 or by email at juliana.mccosker@des.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia O'Callaghan', with a stylized, flowing script.

Patricia O'Callaghan
Director-General