

**Project Name**

Scenic Rim Trail – Thornton Trailhead to Spicers Canopy Nature Reserve, Queensland

**Proponent**

Spicers Retreats Hotels and Lodges Pty Ltd  
ABN 22 137 592 593

**Action**

Spicers Retreats Hotels and Lodges Pty Ltd (Spicers) has developed a 53 km multi-day walk from the privately-owned Thornton View Nature Refuge to the privately-owned Spicers Peak Nature Reserve, via the Main Range National Park and Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area. The walk, named the Scenic Rim Trail, follows a series of existing tracks in the Park connected by a new series of tracks established by Spicers. Two Eco Camps have been constructed in the Park (outside of the World Heritage Area).

**Date of Preparation**

28 November 2024

**Declaration of accuracy**

I declare that all the information and documentation supporting this environmental return is true and correct in every particular. I am authorised to bind the approval holder to this declaration and that I have no knowledge of that authorisation being revoked at the time of making this declaration.

Signed



Kira Klein

General Manager – Scenic Rim Trail

Spicers Retreats Hotels and Lodges Pty Ltd

28 November 2024

**Document Preparation History:**

Version No.	Date of Issue	Issued by
V 1	29/11/2024	Kira Klein

# Scenic Rim Trail- Thornton Trailhead to Spicers Canopy Nature Reserve, Queensland

## 2023/24 Annual Environmental Return

9 December 2023 – 8 December 2024



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### ***Table of Terms and Abbreviations***

ALA	Atlas of Living Australia
BAAM	Biodiversity Assessment and Management Pty Ltd
BDCP	Baseline Data Collection Plan
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
DAWE	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
GRAWHP	Gondwana Rainforest of Australia World Heritage property
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
PWaSM	Plan for Wastewater and Sewage Management
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
SRT	Scenic Rim Trail - Thornton Trailhead to Spicers Canopy Nature Reserve
SRTMP	Scenic Rim Trail Management Plan
SWMP	Sewage and Wastewater Monitoring Plan

## 1.0 PURPOSE

This document sets out the status of compliance with the conditions imposed by the Queensland Government within the required reporting period of 9 December 2023 to 8 December 2024 for the Scenic Rim Trail (SRT) - Thornton Trailhead to Spicers Canopy Nature Reserve, Queensland (the Project).

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

On 18 January 2019, the Minister for the Environment and Energy (now Minister for Agriculture, Water and the Environment) (the Minister) approved the construction and operation of the Scenic Rim Trail subject to conditions under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) through Approval EPBC 2016/7847. The Minister, through EPBC 2016/7847, approved the proposed action of:

*To construct and operate a five to six day supervised bush walk trail and four associated campsites from Mt Mistake to Spicers Peak Nature Refuge, within and adjacent to the Main Range National Park, Queensland.*

Building approval under Section 63 of the *Planning Act 2016* was granted for the construction of the Woodcutters (now Timber Getters) and Amphitheatre ecocamps on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019. The project commenced construction on 21 September 2019 and construction was completed in April 2020. Commercial operation of the walking trail commenced on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

## 3.0 SCOPE

This Annual Environmental Return outlines key areas of works and activity in relation to Queensland Government approval conditions that are outlined in Table 1 of the *Scenic Rim Trail Management Plan (State): Scenic Rim Trail – Main Range National Park*. This Report assesses:

- Compliance with the Queensland Government conditions listed by Spicers and its contractors.
- Records of any unavoidable adverse impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) or Matters of State Environmental Significance (MSES) in the Main Range National Park (MRNP) and Gondwana Rainforest of Australia World Heritage property (GRAWHP), mitigation measures applied to avoid adverse impacts and rehabilitation work undertaken in connection with any unavoidable adverse impacts.
- Non-compliance with the Queensland Government approval conditions.
- Amendments to plans needed to achieve compliance with the Queensland Government approval conditions.

This Annual Environmental Return covers the period of 9 December 2023 to 8 December 2024.

## 4.0 CONDITION COMPLIANCE

### 4.1 Compliance

The status of compliance with the conditions of approval of the Queensland government are set out in Appendix 1.

#### 4.1.1 Unavoidable Impacts on MNES and MSES

##### **World Heritage Properties and National Heritage Places**

No known unavoidable impacts have occurred to World Heritage Properties or National Heritage Places during the reporting period.

##### **Listed threatened species and communities**

No known impacts on listed threatened species and communities are considered attributable to the Scenic Rim Trail Project during the reporting period.

#### 4.1.2 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures have been required or implemented as a result of unavoidable impacts on MNES or MSES.

#### 4.1.3 Plan Amendments

No amended plans have been resubmitted to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEE) or the Queensland Government as a result of an identified non-compliance or a request made by DCCEE or the Queensland Government.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. State Approval Compliance Status – Active Conditions

No.	Condition	Status	Comment
1	The grantee must meet all of the conditions of their EPBC approval.	Compliant	
2	The Grantee will continue the monitoring plan outlined for the EPBC for the term of the Ecotourism lease.	Compliant	The results of monitoring during the reporting period are published on the approval holder's website at: <a href="#">Environmental protection and biodiversity - Scenic Rim</a>
3	The Grantee must adhere to the Fire Management Plan.	Compliant	
4	The Grantee must brief all guests on the fire plan and evacuation procedure, prior to entering MRNP.	Compliant	Guests are briefed on the fire evacuation plan on arrival at Amphitheatre and Timber Getters Ecocamp by the Guides.
5	Any tree removal must be in line with the QPWS procedural guide – risk management of hazardous trees and cannot be actioned without prior consent from the department.	Compliant	
6	Environmental works and monitoring may need to be amended to align with any new Management Statement/Plan or World Heritage Management Framework if necessary.	Not applicable	No changes have been advised.
7	The Grantee must ensure they maintain all proper registration of the All-terrain Vehicle (ATV) and provide up-to-date copies to the State.	Compliant	The ATV registration is current. <b>Refer to Appendix. 4</b>
8	The Grantee must ensure all drivers of the ATV and other vehicles hold a current Queensland drivers licence or equivalent licence.	Compliant	
9	The Grantee must ensure the ATV used under this authority, are used in accordance with the manufacturer's operating and safety instructions, and owner's manual including the wearing of seatbelts and personal protective equipment.	Compliant	
10	The drivers of the ATV must not exceed a speed limit of 30 km/h speed limit when in MRNP.	Compliant	
11	The Grantee must ensure the use of all vehicles do not impede the access to the	Compliant	

	publicly available sections of the Scenic Rim Trail.		
12	The Grantee must ensure all vehicles are clean and free from any weed seeds or soil pathogens, prior to entering the National Park.	Compliant	Operational vehicles are gurnied after use to reduce risk of transfer.
13	The Grantee must ensure that all vehicles including the ATV are operated in a manner that minimises damage to roads, tracks and harm to the environment.	Compliant	
14	The Grantee must ensure the operation and maintenance of the ATV is in accordance with the department's procedural guide, 'use of all-terrain vehicles'.	Compliant	
15	QPWS reserves the right to amend the Commercial Activity Agreement (CAA) to reduce or stop ATV usage if there are reasonable grounds to do so, such as higher than expected damage to tracks.	Compliant	No changes have been made by QPWS.
16	The Grantee must ensure the generator is operated at low dB levels (65dB9(A)) and is situated and operated in such a way to minimise impacts on native flora and fauna and other users of the area.	Compliant	Generators at both Ecocamps are Genelite GKM30S-1 and operate at maximum db level of 61dBA. Generators are serviced annually.
17	The Grantee must ensure all hazardous materials are stored in accordance with the supplier or manufacturers guidelines and have any certificates and certifications that may be required.	Compliant	
18	The Grantee must ensure that buildings remain in a safe and habitable condition for the life of the Ecotourism Lease.	Pending	Ecotourism Annual inspection was scheduled for 21/11/2024 however due to wet weather conditions was postponed to a future date by mutual agreement.
<b>Additional commitments under the Scenic Rim Trail Management Plan, State Version</b>			
A1	QPWS to receive copies of all reports required under the EPBC 2016/7847 approval. Reports required within 60 business days of every 12-month anniversary of commencement of action	Compliant	All reports to the State and Federal Government are submitted simultaneously to both levels of government. It was agreed the State reporting periods for SRTMP compliance would align with Federal periods. These reports will also be uploaded to the website on the same day as report submissions.
A2	Monitor riparian vegetation at the crossings of Dalrymple and Blackfellow Creek, annually, using fixed photo points.	Compliant	Fixed photo-point monitoring is included in the monitoring of riparian habitat conditions to fulfill conditions 8.d and 14.c.IV of EPBC 2016/7847. <b>Refer to Appendix. 4.</b>

A3	Monitor transects established at representative sites along the existing and re-opened Winder management track, annually, to establish vegetation response to track construction and SRT operation.	Compliant	Four monitoring transects have been established at representative sites along the existing (two transects) and re-opened Winder management track (two transects). <b>Refer to Appendix. 7.</b>
A4	Monitor track erosion and vegetation response, at representative sites along the SRT.	Compliant	Natural Values Survey has been undertaken (agreed with QPWS) – <b>refer to Appendix. 8.</b>  Annual Trail Monitoring Photopoint Report has been undertaken - <b>refer Appendix 9.</b>

## Appendix 2. Ecology Reporting Summary - EPBC

14.c	Specify the details of a 10-year annual ongoing monitoring program (including methodology, effort, timing, frequency and responsibilities) capable of predicting and detecting:	Compliant	The SRTMP required under conditions 10-13 has specified the details of a 10-year annual ongoing monitoring program under Sections 9, 9.2, 9.3, 9.5 and 9.6 of the SRTMP.
	i. a decrease of the population of Hastings River Mouse at the Woodcutters Ecocamp compared to the baseline population established under condition 8.a.;	Compliant	<b>Refer to appendix 5.</b>
	ii. a decrease of the population of Fleay's Frog and Mountain Frog at each crossing of the new trails at Blackfellow Creek and Dalrymple Creek compared to the baseline population established under condition 8.b.;	Compliant	<b>Refer to appendix 5.</b>
	iii. changes in water quality compared to the baseline established under condition 8.c. at either crossing of the new trails at Blackfellow Creek and Dalrymple Creek; and	Compliant	<b>Refer to appendix 6.</b>
	iv. a decrease of riparian habitat quality at either crossing of the new trails at Blackfellow Creek and Dalrymple Creek compared to the baseline established under condition 8.d.	Compliant	<b>Refer to appendix 5.</b>

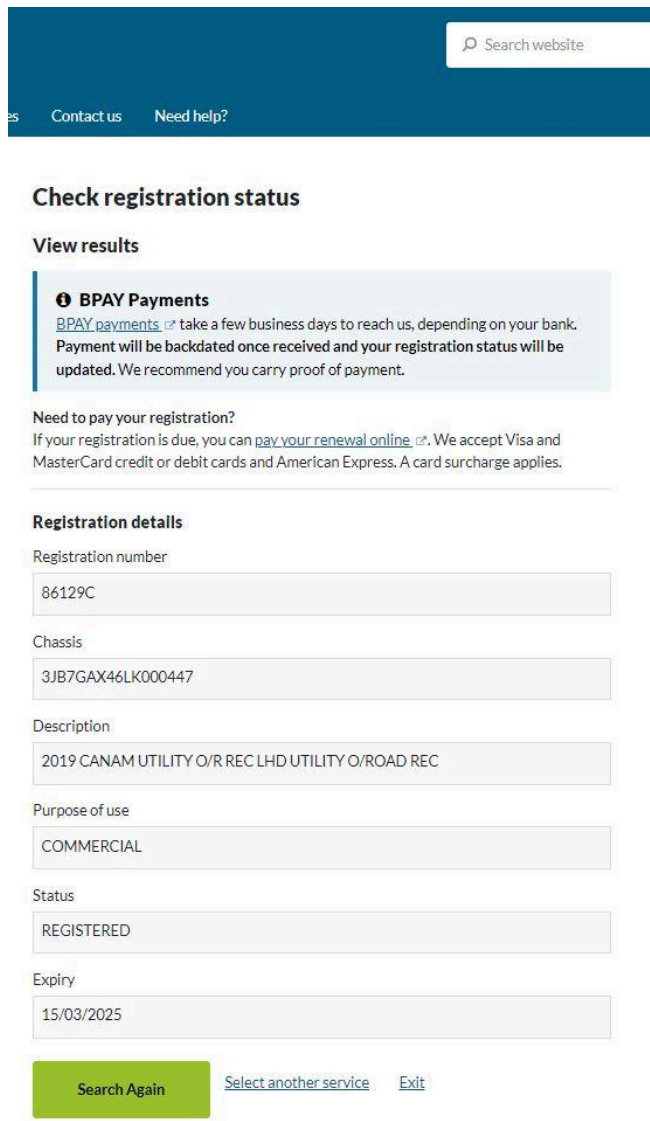
## Appendix. 3 Baseline Data 8A

*The approval holder must not implement any onsite disposal of sewage or wastewater until the Minister has approved a Sewage and Wastewater Monitoring Plan (SWMP). An application for*

the approval for dispersal of sewage or wastewater has not yet been lodged. To provide supporting information to accompany the approval application, Morton Environmental and Health Pty Ltd was engaged to conduct a hydraulic assessment of the irrigation area to determine if the application of treated effluent would lead to excessive deep drainage and subsequent impact to Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) values.

Two assessment trials were conducted on 22nd July and 5th September, during which treated effluent was applied to the irrigation area at a sustained rate and groundwater movement was monitored by a series of piezometers. Results from both trials indicated the application of treated effluent to the irrigation field created no contribution to an increase in piezometric head down-gradient of the irrigation area and therefore, does not interact or contribute to local groundwater. Furthermore, sampling of treated effluent was conducted within proximity to both assessment trials, which returned Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus results not considered to be excessive and unlikely to impact on MNES values.

## Appendix 4. All-Terrain Vehicle Registration



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Registration number  
86129C

Chassis  
3JB7GAX46LK000447

Description  
2019 CANAM UTILITY O/R REC LHD UTILITY O/ROAD REC

Purpose of use  
COMMERCIAL

Status  
REGISTERED

Expiry  
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**Appendix 5. Ecology Monitoring Report 2023/24**

[Scenic-Rim-Trail-Ecological-Monitoring-Report-2024\\_Version-0-1.pdf](#)

**Appendix 6. Water Monitoring**

[2024\\_Water-Quality-Monitoring.pdf](#)

**Appendix 7. Vegetation Transect Survey**

[0435-005TM4-Winder-vegetation-transect-survey-technical-memo\\_2024.pdf](#)

**Appendix 8. Natural Values Health Check Report**

[Natural Values Health Check 2024.docx](#)

**Appendix 9. Trail Monitoring - Annual Photopoint Audit**

<https://scenicrimtrail.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/SRT-TRAIL-AUDIT-2024-1.pdf>