

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

8 December 2020

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

8 December 2020

Document Preparation History:

| Version No. | Date of Issue | Reviewed by | Issued by |
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| | | | |

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

2019/20 Annual Environmental Return

16 September 2019 – 7 December 2020



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Table of Terms and Abbreviations

| | |
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| 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 16 September 2019 to 7 December 2020 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 bushwalk 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 eco camps on 20th 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 21st 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 16 September 2019 to 15 September 2020.

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 additional mitigation measures have been 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 Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) or the Queensland Government as a result of an identified non-compliance or a request made by DAWE or the Queensland Government.

New and revised plans have been submitted to DAWE as per condition requirements. These are set out in Appendix 2.

APPENDICIES

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 | Compliance with all of the conditions of EPBC 2016/7847 is summarised in Appendix 2. |
| 2 | The grantee must ensure they have all the State and local government approvals, and meet the conditions of those approvals. | Compliant | |
| 3 | 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: https://spicersretreats.com/scenic-rim-trail/about-us/environmental-protection-biodiversity-conservation-response/ |
| 4 | The Grantee must adhere to the Fire Management Plan. | Compliant | |
| 5 | 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 lead guide. |
| 6 | 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 | Tree removal associated with the construction of the Ecocamps was undertaken in accordance with QPWS protocols. |
| 7 | 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 to existing Management Plans have been made since commencement of action. |
| 8 | The Grantee must meet obligations under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 and the Burra Charter in relation to the Timber Getters Hut for the term of the lease. | Compliant | |
| 9 | The Grantee must not erect any temporary or permanent structures, outside of the lease areas on MRNP unless authorised in writing. | Compliant | |
| 10 | 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 | A copy of the registration details for the ATV is provided in Appendix 3. |
| 11 | The Grantee must ensure all drivers of the ATV and other vehicles hold a current | Compliant | All ATV drivers hold relevant licences and have had adequate training. |

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| | Queensland drivers licence or equivalent licence. | | |
| 12 | 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 | |
| 13 | The drivers of the ATV must not exceed a speed limit of 30 km/h speed limit when in MRNP. | Compliant | |
| 14 | The Grantee must ensure the use of all vehicles do not impede the access to the publicly available sections of the Scenic Rim Trail. | Compliant | |
| 15 | The Grantee must ensure all vehicles are clean and free from any weed seeds or soil pathogens, prior to entering the National Park. | Compliant | Vehicles destined for the National Park are washed down when leaving Spicers property. ATV is cleaned after each use and does not leave the National Park. |
| 16 | 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 | |
| 17 | The Grantee must ensure the operation and maintenance of the ATV is in accordance with the departments procedural guide, 'use of all-terrain vehicles'. | Compliant | |
| 18 | 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 | QPWS has not amended the CAA to reduce or stop ATV usage. |
| 19 | The Grantee must ensure the placement of the generator does not create a safety hazard i.e. power leads connecting the generator to the cabins does not become a safety hazard. | Compliant | Both generators at Amphitheatre and Timber Getters Ecocamps have subsurface power cabling connecting to the cabins. There is no exposed cabling. |
| 20 | 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. The generators have not been required to top up the batteries this season. |
| 21 | The Grantee must ensure all hazardous materials are | Compliant | |

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| | stored in accordance with the supplier or manufacturers guidelines and have any certificates and certifications that may be required. | | |
| 22 | The Grantee must notify the Ranger in Charge of all hazardous materials being stored on the lease areas. | Compliant | Email '201124 Spicers Scenic Rim Trail Ecocamps_Storage of Hazardous Materials' was sent to Steve Finlayson on 24/11/20 outlining locations of gas bottle and generator diesel fuel storage on site. |
| 23 | The Grantee must ensure that buildings remain in a safe and habitable condition for the life of the Ecotourism Lease. | Compliant | |
| Additional commitments under the Scenic Rim Trail Management Plan, State Version | | | |
| 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 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 condition to fulfill conditions 8.d and 14.c.IV of EPBC 2016/7847. Refer to Appendix 4. |
| 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). The results of this monitoring are reported in Appendix 5. |
| A4 | Monitor track erosion and vegetation response, at representative sites along the SRT. | Compliant | Natural Values Survey has been undertaken at 5 key points (agreed with QPWS) – refer Appendix 6. |

Appendix 2. Commonwealth EPBC 2016/7847 Compliance Status – Active Conditions

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-3xTRvJcPAkWvojZe8S-I0hBPawv5I5a/view>

Appendix 3. All-Terrain Vehicle Registration

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wGrCNLTad91eHQ1ZEfKU6cfzBHbqpJcy/view>

Appendix 4. Water Monitoring

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1miqFjcDDP_hUyF74y7JjCd70eiyLLF2l/view

Appendix 5. BAAM Technical Memorandum: Vegetation Transect Survey

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10kSsC7CqgLU09YZ5MuRO5ie2AXcDfWu6/view>

Appendix 6. Natural Values Survey

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DJ9xNxRAJbqh8zIPuyPWsHWB9Ucbdzzi/view>