

11 July 2018

Mr Matthew Sprott
Senior Case Manager
Coordination & Oversight – Planning Services Division
Department of Planning & Environment
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Dear Mr Sprott

Mount Pleasant Coal Mine (DA 92/97 MOD 3) – Proposed Amended Conditions of Consent

I refer to your email of 9 July 2018 inviting comment on the proposed amended conditions of consent for the Mount Pleasant Coal Mine Modification 3.

Hunter New England Population Health (HNE Health) has reviewed the proposed amended conditions of consent paying particular attention to the management of air quality, noise, water and issues which may have an impact on public health and we make the following comments.

Air Quality

HNE Health raised concerns about increased impacts on the community from particulate matter (PM) and the proponent's use of PM standards that were applicable at the time of the original approval, rather than the updated standards found in the National Environment Protection Council (NEPC) document *Variation to the Ambient Air Quality NEPM – particles standards*. We note and value that the proposed amendments to the conditions of consent use the current standards for particulate matter that came into effect in 2016.

The project will require close monitoring of conditions of consent to ensure air quality is not further impacted in the Muswellbrook community.

Surface Water

With regards Modification 3, we raised concerns regarding potential impacts on the Muswellbrook town water supply from extraction from and discharge to the Hunter River by the project. In the RTS for Modification 3 the proponent clarified that the current location of the water pipeline was significantly downstream of the town water supply offtake and unlikely to have any impact.

However, the proponent has since submitted another modification for approval (Modification 4), which changes the location of this pipeline, making it much closer to the town water supply offtake. Due to the close proximity, we seek clarification from the proponent regarding how the discharges and extraction of water at the proposed new location may impact on the Muswellbrook town water supply, particularly during periods of low flow in the river.

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Potable Water

In the EA and RTS the proponent stated that, as an alternative to treating Hunter River water to potable standard, they could source potable water from a reputable accredited supplier. Further information provided by the proponent indicates that the pipeline which would extract the water from the river for treatment to potable standards is bi-directional and would also be used to discharge surplus water from the site. Due to the unknown quality of water being discharged via this pipeline, and the risk of contamination, it would be preferable if the proponent opted for an approved potable water carter to supply treated water for potable purposes.

If you require any further information please telephone Carolyn Herlihy, Environmental Health Officer on 4924 6477.

Yours Sincerely



Professor David Durrheim
Director Health Protection
Hunter New England Population Health