



CHANGES TO SUNRISE MINE APPROVED WITH STRICT CONDITIONS

19 December 2018

The Independent Planning Commission has approved with strict conditions a modified nickel, cobalt and scandium mine in the state's Central West, to mitigate against impacts on the community and environment.

Clean TeQ applied to the Department of Planning & Environment to modify its 2001 development consent for its Sunrise Project – a nickel, cobalt and scandium mine near Fifield, northwest of Condobolin. It comprises:

- an open cut mine and processing facility in Lachlan local government area (LGA)
- a limestone quarry and rail siding in Parkes LGA,
- a borefield near Lachlan River in the Forbes LGA, and
- ancillary infrastructure, including accommodation camp, a water supply pipeline and natural gas pipeline.

The project was physically commenced in 2006 with partial development of the borefield; however, further work was suspended due to unfavourable economic conditions.

Clean TeQ is now planning to progress development of the mine following a big surge in demand for nickel and cobalt – and is seeking to modify its original development consent to improve efficiency.

The Department referred the case to the Commission for determination after receiving 39 public submissions objecting to or raising concerns about the proposal.

Chair of the Commission, Professor Mary O'Kane AC, appointed a three-member Panel, comprising Mr Ross Carter (Panel Chair), Professor Alice Clark and Dr Ian Lavering, to scrutinise the application and make a final decision.

They met separately with the applicant, the Department, and representatives of Forbes, Lachlan and Parkes Councils, and carried out an inspection of the site and surrounding areas.

A public meeting was also held in Parkes to listen to the community's views on the proposed changes to the project.

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Many of the speakers at the meeting acknowledged the importance of the project to the Region in providing diversification of industry and broad and social and economic benefits; however, concerns were raised about potential adverse environmental impacts, including on air quality, groundwater and surface water.

Having carefully considered all the evidence before it and weighed the community's views, the Commission has today (Wednesday 19 December 2018) approved CleanTeQ's modification application but with strict conditions. Of note, the Commission has reinstated 'noise acquisition criteria' to the conditions of consent, giving local landowners the right to request that CleanTeQ acquire their property if noise generated by the mine causes sustained exceedances of the noise criteria.

"The Commission finds that the proposed modification to the development ... would not change the key element of the Project (including mining methods or production rate) and would not significantly increase the environmental impacts of the approved Project," the Commission concluded in its *Statement of Reasons for Decision*.

The modification application conditions of consent "are designed to prevent, minimise and/or offset adverse environmental impacts and impacts on the community," the Commission stated.