



Consultant brief: Bylong Coal Project

Overview

On 4 October 2018, the Independent Planning Commission (The **Commission**) received the Bylong Coal Project application from the Department of Planning and Environment (the **Department**) for determination. The application was submitted by KEPCO Bylong Australia Pty Ltd (the **applicant**). The applicant is seeking approval for greenfield integrated open cut and underground thermal coal mine in the Bylong Valley, east of Mudgee NSW.

The application follows a public hearing and merit review completed by the then Planning Assessment Commission.

The IPC is seeking the services of a highly qualified groundwater expert to assist the Commission with reviewing the water quality assessment information submitted by the applicant, the independent water quality studies considered by Department in its assessment of the project, and the independent reviews of groundwater impacts provided through community submissions, including the predicative groundwater modelling which has been undertaken.

Scope of works

The Commission is seeking an expert to undertake the following:

1. Review the relevant groundwater assessment documentation (attachment 1) and other relevant documentation.
2. Review the groundwater assessment documentation considered by the Department in its assessment of the project (attachment 2) and the Department's assessment report.
3. Review the independent groundwater assessments undertaken by the Bylong Valley Protection Alliance and other community submissions (**BVPA**) (Attachment 3).
4. Summarise the key inconsistencies within the reviewed documentation. Identify which approach to assessment is most appropriate, based on accepted best practice, published scientific literature and evidence, with reference to the request for consideration of groundwater model parameters as set out in submission by the BVPA (attachment 4).

Deliverables

1. Two video briefing sessions, including one prior to undertaking the review of assessment documentation and one to discuss the findings of the review.
2. A report that addresses the points identified in the scope of works.

The consultant's response to the brief should include a timeframe of delivery and contingency for consultation with Commission staff as necessary. The Commission does not expect the project to take longer than 3 weeks to complete.

The services to be provided are to be agreed and confirmed with the Director Secretariat and/or the Panel Chair.

The services are to be scoped as an upper limiting fee.

Attachment 1:

Applicant reports (water related components): the *Bylong Coal Project Environmental Impact Statement* (in particular sections 3.7, 7.6 and 9.4.1), dated September 2015 and prepared by Hansen Baily Environmental Consultants, and its accompanying appendices:

- a) Appendix M: *Bylong Coal Project Groundwater Impact Assessment*, Australian Groundwater and Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd, June 2015;
- b) Appendix N: *Peer Review of Bylong Coal Project Groundwater Impact Assessment*, Hydro-Simulations, dated 17 July 2015
1. *Bylong Coal Project Environmental Impact Statement Response to Submission* (in particular sections 4.2.16, 4.3, 4.11.7, 4.15, 4.16, 4.18.3, 5.9, 5.28 and 6.0) dated March 2016
 - a) Appendix H – Response to Submissions on Groundwater
2. Supplementary RTS (Hansen Bailey, 2016) and its accompanying appendices:
 - a) Appendix J: Response to DPI-Water – Water Submission received 12 May 2016,
 - b) Response to Submissions on Groundwater (AGE, September 2016); and
 - c) Water Balance Modelling for Revised Groundwater Inflows (WRM, 2016)
3. *Bylong Coal Project Response to PAC Review Report January 2018* (in particular section 4.2) and its accompanying appendices:
 - a) *Appendix K* Bylong Coal Project Response to Planning Assessment Commission (AGE 2017).

Attachment 2:

Reports/studies considered by the Department in its assessment of the project:

1. The Department's *Preliminary Assessment Report for State Significant Development Assessment Bylong Coal Project (SSD-6367)*, dated 31 March 2017
 - a) Appendix F: Additional Information
 - b) Appendix G: Peer Review Reports and Response from KEPCO
 - i. Kalf and Associates Review of Age Groundwater Modelling Impact Assessment, 17 November 2015; and
 - ii. Kalf and Associates Bylong Coal Project KA Comments on the HydroSimulations Model Audit and AGE RTS2 Groundwater Modelling Assessment
2. *Bylong Coal Project State Significant Development – Final Assessment Report (SSD 6367)*

Documents associated with Attachment 2 and 3 available online at:

http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6367

Attachment 3:

Reports/studies commissioned by the Bylong Valley Protection Alliance and other community submissions:

1. NSW DPE State Significant Development Proposal 6367: revised Bylong Coal Project – Response to EDO NSW brief, dated 14 November 2018- authored by Doug Anderson
<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/resources/pac/media/files/pac/projects/2018/10/bylong-coal-project/presentations-and-comments/doug-anderson.pdf>
2. Bylong Coal Project – Comments on PAC final Assessment Report and Responses Relating to Groundwater – Authored by Steven Pells and reviewed by Philip Pells
<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/resources/pac/media/files/pac/projects/2018/10/bylong-coal-project/presentations-and-comments/steven-pells.pdf>