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Your Ref: DA-305-7-2003

Director – Resource Assessments
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention; Melanie Hollis
Via Email: melanie.hollis@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Wambo Coal Mine – South Bates – Modification 17 (DA 305-7-2003)

I refer to your email dated 28 March 2017 inviting comments on the above Development Application modification. It is noted that the proposal involves:

- development of nine underground longwall panels in the Whybrow coal seam;
- recovery of an additional 18 million tonnes of run-of-mine coal;
- associated increase in the production of coarse coal rejects and tailings and emplacement in existing storage facilities;
- extension of the approved underground mine life by 7 years until 2039; and
- construction and operation of new ventilation shafts, gas drainage infrastructure and other ancillary infrastructure within the approved surface development area.

The exhibited EIS for the proposal and the specialist Statement of Heritage Impact (Appendix G) have been reviewed. The SOHI by EJE Architects notes that the proposed Modification relates to the previously approved and currently operating South Bates Underground Mine at the Wambo Coal Mine, Near Warkworth NSW. The Modification involves establishment of new Longwall type underground mining excavations. The Longwalls will undermine and cause potential subsidence damage to the 'Whynot Homestead' an item assessed to be of limited local heritage significance that is not protected under the Singleton Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013. No other items of potential heritage significance were identified in the Modification area.

Although the land holding for the Whynot Property is adjacent to the Wambo Property which is of State level significance, the Whynot property does not share in its associations or significance. It was never part of the Wambo Estate, and was only established from about 1906 by the Long family. The Whynot homestead and outbuildings are not rare or exceptional examples of their type. They are simple timber slab construction dating from soon after 1906.

Advice from Subsidence Engineers, indicates that the expected effects of the mining activities will adversely affect the Whynot homestead and could affect the outbuildings detrimentally due to their existing poor condition. Distortion of the structures and even collapse of the structures is a possibility. Visual monitoring of the structures is recommended by the engineers in order to arrest such collapse. The HIS suggested that demolition of the structures of the Whynot Property is also an option which could be considered by the landholder should the instability of the structures result in safety concerns.

'This course of action is justifiable due to the following factors:

1. the Whynot homestead and associated structures are not a heritage item and bearing little significance do not warrant such protection,
2. the Whynot homestead and associated structures are already in a state of degradation and some portions are partially collapsed due to environmental and pest factors, and

3. the homestead has been altered unsympathetically in recent times now incorporating anodised aluminium sliding windows, modern plasterboard lining and cornices, modern architraves and skirtings, modern flush panel doors and hardware, modern electrical switchgear.

The pens and sheds may be removed as exempt development, however the homestead will require authority approval before removal can be undertaken.' (HIS, page 30).

The HIS also found that 'the proposed South Bates Extension Modification will have no effect on the State listed Wambo Homestead Complex on the nearby property. The proposed South Bates Extension has given great consideration to the effects possible upon the Whynot Homestead and Outbuildings despite them not being a heritage item nor of heritage significance, and any effects from undertaking these works have been considered, pre-empted and minimised. EJE Heritage believe that the proposed works the predicted effects of subsidence, and even the potential demolition of the structures should that be deemed necessary are acceptable from a Heritage Point of View.' (HIS page 30)

In reviewing the EIS and the SOHI the Heritage Division of OEH concurs with the findings reported by EJE Heritage.

It is recommended that any issued approval from DPE should include a Condition of Consent requiring that an Archival Recording of the Whynot Homestead and Outbuildings is completed before the mining operations likely to cause subsidence in this area commence and that copies of that record should be deposited with the Local Council and the relevant Local Historical Society.

If you have any questions regarding the above advice, please contact me at the Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage, at email: siobhan.lavelle@environment.nsw.gov.au or on telephone: 9873 8546.

Yours sincerely



2 May 2017

Dr Siobhan Lavelle OAM
A/Manager Conservation
Heritage Division
Office of Environment & Heritage
As Delegate of the NSW Heritage Council