

Mr Andrew Speechly
HV Operations PTY LTD

18/10/2021

Dear Mr Speechly

**Hunter Valley Operations North Coal Project (DA 450-10-2003)
Staging of Final Void Management Plan**

I refer to your letter dated 21 June 2021 requesting a further extension of time to develop a Final Void Management Plan in accordance with condition 28 of Schedule 2 of the development consent for Hunter Valley Operations (HVO) North Coal Project (DA 450-10-2003). I also note you are seeking the Secretary's approval to prepare the Final Void Management Plan on a staged basis in accordance with condition 3 of Schedule 5 of DA 450-10-2003

I understand that HV Operations is in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the HVO Continuation Project which, if approved, would substantially alter the currently approved final landform at HVO North. As such, HV Operations considers that development of a detailed Final Void Management Plan for the current mine design would be premature and unnecessary.

Despite this, I understand that the EIS for the HVO Continuation Project is required to consider alternatives to the project, including the possibility of not proceeding (as described in the HVO Continuation Project Scoping Report). With this in mind, the Department considers that a detailed Final Void Management Plan, addressing all requirements of DA 450-10-2003, would better inform the consideration of this alternative, rather than a high-level conceptual plan only.

Accordingly, the Secretary has granted approval for the Final Void Management Plan to be prepared on a staged basis in accordance with condition 3 of Schedule 5 of DA 450-10-2003. Stage 1 will comprise a high-level conceptual plan as proposed, while Stage 2 will comprise a detailed Final Void Management Plan as required by DA 450-10-2003.

In light of the above, the Secretary has also granted an extension of time until **31 December 2021** for HV Operations to prepare the first stage (conceptual design) and requires that the second stage (detailed plan) be prepared by **30 June 2022**.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Joe Fittell on (02) 4908 6896.

Yours sincerely



Stephen O'Donoghue
Director
Resource Assessments (Coal & Quarries)
As nominee of the Secretary