



Office of
Environment
& Heritage

DOC17/329143-10
DA 92/97 MOD 3

Mr Matthew Sprott
Team Leader - Resource Assessments,
Resource Assessments & Compliance Division
Department of Planning and Environment
matthew.sprott@planning.nsw.gov.au

Attention: Director – Resource Assessments

Dear Mr Sprott

Modification Proposal - Mount Pleasant Coal Mine (DA 92/97 MOD 3)

I refer to your email dated 19 June 2017 seeking advice from the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) on the proposed modification of the Mount Pleasant Mine Project (DA 92/97 MOD 3). The project is described in the Mount Pleasant Operation Mine Optimisation Modification Environmental Assessment (the EA). One of the key changes is the extension of existing overburden and waste rock emplacement areas to the east of the previously approved development footprint.

OEH reviewed the EA for impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage and threatened biodiversity. All Aboriginal heritage sites within the emplacement extension footprint are appropriately managed under existing permits and management plans. In relation to threatened biodiversity, the proposed land swap offers a larger area with greater biodiversity values for the new area to be developed. Therefore, OEH has no concerns with the proposal. Further details are provided in **Attachment A**.

If you require any further information regarding this matter please contact Robert Gibson, Regional Biodiversity Conservation Officer, on 4927 3154.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Molloy 10/7/2017

SHARON MOLLOY
Director, Hunter Central Coast
Regional Operations

Enclosure: Attachment A

ATTACHMENT A: OEH REVIEW OF MOUNT PLEASANT OPERATION MINE OPTIMISATION MODIFICATION (DA 92/97 MOD 3)

OEH reviewed the Mount Pleasant Operation Mine Optimisation Modification Environmental Assessment (the EA) prepared by Mach Energy dated 31 May 2017. OEH focused on Aboriginal cultural heritage and threatened biodiversity matters.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment

OEH notes that the management of all the Aboriginal cultural heritage at the Mount Pleasant Operation is undertaken in accordance with:

- Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) C0002092 (issued by OEH 23 December 2011)
- AHIP C0002053 (issued by OEH 24 November 2016), and
- An approved Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan, endorsed by OEH 2016.

OEH acknowledges that 74 known Aboriginal sites are recorded within the emplacement extension footprint being sought for this modification. All recorded Aboriginal sites are either isolated finds or artefact scatters, and have been classified as being of low archaeological and cultural significance. However, OEH recognises, as does the assessment for this modification, that the Aboriginal community representatives identify that all cultural heritage material is culturally significant as it provides a tangible link to their ancestry and to Country.

The management of all Aboriginal heritage sites located within the emplacement extension footprint will be managed in accordance with the requirements of AHIP C0002053 and the relevant approved Aboriginal Heritage Management Plan for the Mount Pleasant Operation. OEH is of the view that the mitigation, monitoring and management measures already in place at the Mount Pleasant Operation will ensure that the Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and values within the emplacement extension area footprint will be appropriately managed in consultation with the Aboriginal community. OEH has no additional concerns with respect to Aboriginal cultural heritage and the modification being approved.

Threatened Species

OEH reviewed the Biodiversity Assessment (Hunter Eco, 2017) provided in the EA. The proposed development involves the clearing of an additional 61 ha of land in the Eastern Out of Pit Emplacement area. To compensate, the proponent is offering to relinquish 65 ha of land in part of the South Western Out of Pit Emplacement area that would otherwise be developed. The proposal is effectively a land swap; the relinquished land is not being offered as a biodiversity offset (Mach Energy, 2017: p. 53).

The original consent was granted in 22 December 1999. It pre-dated the use of biodiversity offsetting policies in New South Wales. This proposal would result in a 4 ha reduction in the approved development footprint. Biodiversity surveys of the new area for development and the relinquished area have demonstrated that the relinquished lands have higher biodiversity value than the land now to be developed. Therefore, OEH is of the view that the proposed land swap has merit as described in the EA.

References

Hunter Eco (2017) *Mount Pleasant Operation – Mine Optimisation Environmental Assessment – Biodiversity Assessment*. May 2017. Hunter Eco, Toronto. In Mach Energy, 2017: Appendix D).

Mach Energy (2017) *Mount Pleasant Operation Mine Optimisation Modification Environmental Assessment*. May 2017. Mach Energy, Brisbane. http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=8555