

5 February 2018

Tertius Greyling  
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer  
NSW Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Greyling

### **Mount Pleasant Coal Mine Modification 4 (DA 92/97 MOD 4) – Modification Proposal**

I refer to your email of 15 January 2018 inviting comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA) exhibited on the NSW Department of Planning & Environment web site in relation to the Mount Pleasant Coal Mine Modification 4 (the Modification).

The Mount Pleasant Coal Mine is located approximately 3 kilometres north-west of Muswellbrook in the Upper Hunter Valley area. The Modification consists of:

- Relocation of the rail infrastructure, including rail spur, rail loop, and loading facilities.
- Relocation of the Hunter River water supply pump station, water pipeline and associated electrical supply.
- Demolition and removal of the existing rail and water supply infrastructure.

The Project modification would not increase already approved annual maximum or total coal that would be produced throughout the life of the operation.

Hunter New England Population Health (HNE Health) has reviewed the EA report paying particular attention to the management of air quality, noise, water and issues which may have an impact on public health. The following points are discussed and should be considered in the approval process for this project.

#### **Air Quality**

The EA states that the Modification would not significantly change the dust and particulate emission levels modelled for the previous proposed modification (Modification 3 - which is awaiting determination), and that no additional privately-owned receptor locations are predicted to exceed any of the relevant air quality criteria as a result of this Modification. The EA also states that any potential emissions during construction would not be significant, and would be effectively managed through standard mitigation measures.

As there is no evidence of a threshold below which exposure to particulate matter (PM) is not associated with health effects, it is important that all reasonable and feasible measures are taken to minimise human exposure to PM, even where assessment criteria are met.

Hunter New England Local Health District  
ABN 63 598 010 203

Hunter New England Population Health  
Locked Bag 10  
Wallsend NSW 2287  
Phone (02) 4924 6477 Fax (02) 4924 6490  
Email HNELHD-PHEquiries@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au  
www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/hnep

**Noise**

It is noted that the EA states that all privately-owned receivers are expected to achieve the recommended noise criteria for project only emissions and cumulative noise emissions.

**Surface Water**

The Modification includes the relocation of the Hunter River water supply pump station and water pipeline. The new location is approximately 1km downstream of the Muswellbrook town water supply pumping station.

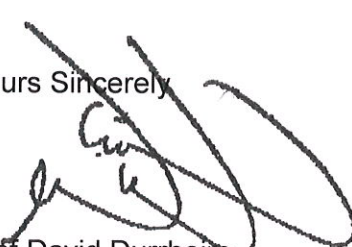
It is unclear from the EA whether the discharge point for the surplus water from the mine is the same location as the offtake point from the Hunter River, or another location. It is also unclear whether there are separate offtake and discharge pipes, or if just one pipe is used for both purposes.

We have concerns about the quality of discharged water, specifically what potential contaminants it may contain, and whether there is potential for this water to impact on the Muswellbrook town supply. If only one pipe exists, then this may also be an issue for the onsite potable water supply.

We request that the proponent address these issues further for clarification.

If you require any further information please telephone Carolyn Herlihy, Environmental Health Officer on 4924 6477.

Yours Sincerely



**Prof David Durrheim**  
**Service Director – Health Protection**  
**Hunter New England Population Health**