



13 August 2021
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Attention: Rose-Anne Hawkeswood
Team Leader Energy, Climate Change and Sustainability

Dear Rose-Anne

Application Number: DA374-11-00-Mod-7
Applicant: Clean TeQ Sunrise Pty Ltd
Description of Proposed Modification: The proposed modification includes changes to the mining schedule, mine site infrastructure, accommodation camp, and rail siding

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission in relation to the abovementioned project.

The documentation submitted with the modification application has been reviewed and a number of comments/observations are made below in relation to specific aspects of the proposal.

Social Impact Review

The identified potential social impacts of the modification include:

- *“additional employment and business opportunities associated with the increased construction workforce;*
- *additional pressures on local housing markets from the increased construction workforce during the initial construction phase;*
- *additional demand for community facilities from the increased construction workforce during the construction phase;*
- *impacts to people’s way of life and sense of safety from changes to traffic volumes during the construction and operational phases; and*
- *amenity impacts from changes to the mine and processing facility and rail siding layout and activities”.*

The Social Impact Review report, prepared by Square Peg Social Performance, states:

“additional pressures on local housing markets arising from the increased construction workforce (prior to construction of the accommodation camp) which benefits landlords and short-term accommodation providers.

...

The risk of cumulative social impacts of the Modification, in conjunction with other projects, is considered manageable, due to the small scale of the other projects and their distance from the Project.”

There is limited housing supply in Condobolin and in other areas of the Shire and the project will have a cumulative effect on housing availability and affordability when coupled with other projects which are being carried out within the Lachlan Shire or surrounding Local Government Areas (e.g. Inland Rail, East Coast Gas expansion, other mining exploration activities, Mineral Hill Gold Mine, Evolution Gold Mine expansion, Parkes Special Activation Precinct, Parkes By-Pass, etc.). The Western Slopes Pipeline proposal has been lodged and is on public consultation. However, the social impact review did not consider this project in calculating the cumulative effects. Mineral Hill Gold mine is not considered at all in the social impact review and other mining exploration projects have also not been considered.

Whilst landlords and short-term accommodation providers may benefit, other people within the community looking for accommodation will be affected by the lack of housing options and affordability of those options. Access to good quality, affordable housing is fundamental to wellbeing. We could not see a reference to the impacts of COVID-19 on the housing market in the regions, within the Social Impact Review. As outlined by the NSW Government through the establishment of the Regional Housing Taskforce, the COVID-19 pandemic is causing a shift with people moving to the regions from the city. House prices have jumped by 16 per cent in regional NSW over the 12 months to April 2021. The median established house price for NSW (outside Sydney) has jumped from \$462,500 in the first quarter of 2019 to \$585,000 in the first quarter of 2021¹. As outlined in the Social Impact Review, Lachlan Shire has lower median personal, family and house incomes than the rest of NSW and therefore has a lower ability to afford increases in housing / rental prices. In addition, we note that the social impact review has highlighted the reduction of short term accommodation across the social locality. Particular concern is raised with the initial construction period, before the construction camp can accommodate people. During this time it was anticipated that an additional 30 units of accommodation for families and 135 for singles would be required during the initial three-month phase and that most of these would be accommodated in Condobolin. However, the initial construction period is now six (6) months and 270 units are now required and then the report talks about availability in Parkes and Forbes but does not mention Condobolin.

The proposal seeks to essentially double the construction workforce and extend the construction period from two (2) to three (3) years and whilst we recognise that this will have economic benefits for the Shire (although the number of local jobs is expected to decrease), there will be increased pressures on housing availability and affordability as well as on health/medical services. We note the benefits provided by SEM (Clean TeQ) through the current VPA. However, the social impacts associated with the proposal may need to be addressed through changes in the Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with the three (3) Councils.

Some caution needs to be taken when looking at the 2016 Census data for Lachlan Shire as the boundaries of the local government area have changed since 2016 and the Shire now includes the village of Murrin Bridge. The Social impact review refers to an Aboriginal population in Lachlan of 18%. However, the Aboriginal population in Lachlan is closer to 20-21%.

¹ Australian Government – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
<https://www.housingdata.gov.au/dashboard/x8j99pyn6wnq4ke>

The social impact review suggests that employment opportunities for local residents is likely to be lower than originally proposed, due to the nature of work undertaken and the training provided. Given that no final financial investment decision has been made, what are SEM doing to try and train local residents in the skilled roles. There is a lag between this proposal and actual construction. Are SEM planning to engage training providers to upskill local unemployed people to perhaps fill some of the roles required for the project?

Noise Impacts

The noise assessment report, prepared by Renzo Tonin and Associates states:

“Five privately-owned receivers (M08 [Currajong Park 2], M22 [Brooklyn], M23 [Currajong Park 1], M28 [Rosehill] and M29 [Slapdown]) were predicted to experience moderate and significant exceedances of the PNTLs (i.e. greater than 3 dB[A] above the PNTLs).

Modelling and evaluation of a range of potential noise mitigation benefits, capital and operating costs of mitigation and impacts on related modified Project metrics was undertaken. From this it was identified by SEM that an appreciable noise reduction of up to 2 dB(A) could be reasonably achieved albeit at significant operating cost to SEM, by modifying mining operations during the evening period during various wind enhancing conditions. The following reasonable and feasible mitigation measures were identified and adopted in the noise modelling for the Modification (Section 9.5):

Year 10

- Ceased operations on the north-eastern waste emplacement and ceased operation of an excavator in the eastern pit during south-southwest, south-west and west-southwest wind conditions in the evening period.*
- Ceased haulage on the north-western waste emplacement during south wind condition in the evening period.*

Year 17

- Ceased haulage on the north-eastern waste emplacement during south-southwest and south-west wind conditions in the evening period.*

The resulting achievable maximum intrusive noise levels of up to 40 dB(A) would result in a “moderate” exceedance of the PNTL of 35 dB(A) at two receivers. In accordance with the VLAMP (NSW Government, 2018) these receivers would be afforded noise mitigation measures upon request rights.

Given the considerable operating costs associated with significantly modifying mining operations during adverse meteorological conditions, SEM will seek to enter into negotiated agreements with the owners of the two receivers with predicted moderate exceedances in accordance with the VLAMP (NSW Government, 2018).

In accordance with Condition 7, Schedule 3 of Development Consent (DA 374-11-00) (Section 4.1.2), if negotiated agreements were to be put in place with the owners of the five receivers, or these receivers were to become mine-owned, significant modifications to mining operations would not be considered reasonable, and modifications to mining operations would be less significant, with a noise reduction of less than 2 dB(A) (e.g. ceasing operation of a small number of noisy

equipment such as drills, moving such equipment to more sheltered areas, or avoiding the use of intermittently operating auxiliary equipment).

However, if negotiated agreements with the owners of the five receivers are not achieved or are only achieved for a subset of the five receivers, SEM would significantly modify mining operations during the predominant south, south-southwest, south-west and west-southwest wind conditions in the evening period as required to reduce noise levels by up to 2 dB(A).

...

In accordance with the NSW Government's Voluntary Land Acquisition and Mitigation Policy – SSD Mining (NSW Government, 2018), negligible exceedances would not be discernible by the average listener and would not warrant receiver based treatments or controls. The potential treatment for moderate exceedances would be to provide mechanical ventilation / comfort condition systems to enable windows to be close without comprising internal air quality / amenity and also upgraded façade elements such as windows, doors or roof insulation, to further increase the ability of the building façade to noise levels, if requested by the landholder."

What consultation has been undertaken with affected community members to identify and respond to the potential impacts? Have any negotiations taken place prior to the lodgement of the modification application? What are the financial impacts, in terms of a \$ value, of the modified mining practices which cannot be carried out due to the cost? The application of voluntary acquisition rights through a development consent, which is essentially what is being proposed here, should be seen as a last resort to ensure landowners have the option to avoid noise impacts without incurring financial costs. It is suggested that more work is done or information provided demonstrating that the application of voluntary acquisition rights is the only available measure in this instance.

Traffic/Road Impacts

We have noted the comments from Parkes Shire Council in their submission (dated 9 August 2021) and support those comments and recommendations as Lachlan Shire Council has similar concerns.

If you should have any further enquires with regards to this matter please contact the undersigned on 02 6895 1950 during office hours.

Yours sincerely



Jon Shillito
Director
Environment, Tourism and Economic Development