



OUT17/13064

Ms Megan Dawson
Resource Assessments
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Megan.dawson@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Dawson

**Hunter Valley Operations South (MP 06_0261 MOD 5)
Comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA)**

I refer to the email of 8 February 2017 to the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) in respect to the above matter. Comment has been sought from relevant divisions of DPI. Views were also sought from NSW Department of Industry - Lands that are now a division of the broader Department and no longer within NSW DPI. Any further referrals to DPI can be sent by email to landuse.enquiries@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

DPI has reviewed the modification application and EA and provides the following recommendations with further detail at **Attachment A**:

- The proponent should update the Water Management Plan in consultation with DPI Water.
- The proponent must clearly report on extraction of water in accordance with the Department of Planning & Environment's Annual Review Guidelines, including clear indication of water taken under each Water Access Licence (WAL), and distinguishing between direct and indirect take.
- The proponent must ensure that they hold sufficient WAL to account for all take of water and where required adjust the scale of operations to meet available water supply.
- In accordance with the NSW Aquifer Interference Policy, the proponent should ensure that sufficient WAL for each relevant water source is surrendered to DPI Water to ensure that post closure impacts are sufficiently accounted. This surrender should occur upon cessation of rehabilitation activities and must retain sufficient entitlement to offset loss of catchment from relevant water sources.
- The Water Balance Modelling Report (HATCH 2016) notes in the executive summary *Investigations have identified five nominal locations where sediment dams are proposed for construction*, also detailed in section 3.4.72. The proponent should provide further information on these proposed sediment dams at the design stage so that DPI Water can provide further advice on possible exemptions.

- Drainage lines in the final landform should comply with [DPI Water Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land \(2012\)](#).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Isaacs', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mitchell Isaacs
Director, Planning Policy & Assessment Advice
28 March 2017

DPI appreciates your help to improve our advice to you. Please complete this three minute survey about the advice we have provided to you, here:

<https://goo.gl/o8TXWz>

Attachment A

Hunter Valley Operations South (MP 06_0261 MOD 5) Comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA) Detailed comments – DPI Water

Water Management Plan (WMP):

- In preparation of a draft update to the WMP for consultation with DPI Water, the following should be considered:
 - The updated WMP should include a comprehensive monitoring and management program for Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE).
 - This WMP should detail, in a prescriptive manner, how the flora assessment in conjunction with surface and groundwater (water levels, flow gradients and water quality) will be used to assess and report on vegetation health of these important ecosystems such as the River Red Gum, Hunter Flood Plain Red Gum Woodland and Hunter Valley River Oak communities.
 - The WMP should monitor:
 - mine spoil leachate;
 - salt load changes in line with conclusions made in section 6.4.4 of the surface water assessment.
 - The Sediment and Erosion Control Plan should be updated as part of the WMP update. This should include detail on proposed dam decommissioning.
 - Section ES6.4 of the main text notes that the proposed modification will not cause drawdown of any private bores by more than 2 m. The WMP must include make good provisions whereby any mining related drawdown inhibits a private user from extracting for either licensed purposes or basic landholder right.

Additional Information Required for Assessment:

- The proponent should provide further information as outlined below:
 - Table 4.5 in the surface water assessment should describe the trigger level and its impact on dam capacity.
 - Sediment Dam and Subzero's Dam are noted in section 5.2.1 as storages proposed to be decommissioned. Further detail is requested on these dams as they are not clearly listed in Table 4.5 or shown in Figure 4.1.
 - It is unclear whether a survey of surface water extractors has been undertaken. As basic landholder rights extractors from surface water sources do not require an approval it is recommended that the Community Consultation Committee may be an appropriate mechanism to survey potential extractors.
 - Figure 10.3 (Groundwater users) should be updated to include all 43 bores surveyed. This figure should colour code the different categories of bores as described on page 144 and note the target aquifer. This figure should also underlay predicted drawdown contours. It is also recommended that further commentary be included in this section regarding the incremental drawdown on private extractors from the proposed modification.

- Detailed information describing clean water catchment dams to assist DPI to provide advice on whether these storages require offsetting via the appropriate WAL.
- Details of the impacts of the final landform on water source catchment areas.
- Detailed justification for changes to the Statement of Commitments regarding surface and groundwater.

End Attachment A