

ASSESSMENT REPORT

CADIA EAST GOLD/COPPER PROJECT Administrative Modification (06_0295 – MOD 8)

1 BACKGROUND

Cadia Holdings Pty Ltd (Cadia) owns and operates the Cadia Valley mining complex, located approximately 25 kilometres southwest of Orange in the Cabonne and Blayney local government areas.

The mining complex includes the Cadia Hill open cut mine (which ceased operations in 2012), the Ridgeway underground mine, the Cadia East underground mine, and the Blayney Dewatering Facility. The mining complex is collectively known as the Cadia Valley Operations.

The mining complex currently operates under the Cadia East project approval (06_0295), granted by the then Minister for Planning on 6 January 2010. This approval consolidated and replaced four previous Ministerial consents regulating open cut and underground operations since 1998.

The Cadia East project approval has been modified seven times, and allows Cadia to undertake the following activities until 30 June 2031:

- extract ore from the Cadia and Ridgeway mines;
- process up to 27 million tonnes of ore a year; and
- transfer processed ore via a pipeline to the Blayney Dewatering Facility, where it is dewatered and transported via rail to Port Kembla for export.

2 PROPOSED MODIFICATION

Cadia is seeking to modify the project approval to correct a minor administrative error relating to the land associated with the Cadia Valley Operations (see **Appendix A**). Specifically, Cadia is seeking to update the Schedule of Lands (Appendix 1) of the Cadia East project approval to include the following land associated with the Cadiangullong Dam inundation area:

- Lot 13, DP 750371;
- Lot 22, DP 750371;
- Lot 82, DP 750415;
- Lot 123 DP 750415; and
- Lot 169, DP 750415.

This land was previously referenced in the Cadia Hill Mine *Environmental Impact Statement* and in Schedule 1 of the associated development consent (DA 44/95) dated 6 September 1996.

3 STATUTORY CONTEXT

3.1 Section 75W

The Cadia East project was originally approved under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). Although Part 3A was repealed on 1 October 2011, the project remains a 'transitional Part 3A project' under Schedule 6A of the EP&A Act, and hence any modification to this approval must be made under the former Section 75W of the Act.

3.2 Approval Authority

The Minister for Planning was the approval authority for the original project application, and is therefore the approval authority for this modification application. However, under the Minister's delegation dated 16 February 2015, the Director, Resource Assessments, may determine the application. This is because there were no public submissions in the way of objection to the proposal received, Blayney Shire Council and Cabonne Council did not object to the proposal, and Cadia did not make any reportable political donations.

3.3 Modification

The Department is satisfied that the application can be characterised as a modification to the existing approval (rather than a new project in its own right) as the proposal is considered a minor administrative matter that would not increase the environmental impacts of the project.

Consequently, the Department is satisfied that the proposed modification is within the scope of Section 75W of the EP&A Act.

4 CONSULTATION

The Department made the modification application and accompanying information publicly available on its website from 14 April 2016. Due to the minor administrative nature of this modification, exhibition of the proposal was not undertaken.

5 ASSESSMENT

In assessing the merits of the proposed modification, the Department has considered the:

- existing conditions of approval and the conditions of approval for the original project;
- the modification application and supporting information (see **Appendix A**);
- relevant environmental planning instruments, policies and guidelines; and
- the requirements of the EP&A Act.

This modification application seeks to correct a minor administrative error in the Cadia East project approval by updating the Schedule of Lands (Appendix 1) to reinstate references to the land associated with the Cadiangullong Dam inundation area that was identified in previous approvals for the Cadia Valley Operations.

This modification does not involve any physical changes to the project, and would not alter the approved mining footprint or increase production rates. Consequently, it would not result in any changes to the predicted environmental impacts, which have already been assessed and approved.

6 RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

The Department has prepared a Notice of Modification (see **Appendix B**) and consolidated approval (see **Appendix C**) for the proposed modification.

Cadia has received a copy of the recommended conditions and has no objections.

7 CONCLUSION

The Department has assessed the modification application and supporting information in accordance with the relevant requirements of the EP&A Act.

The Department believes it is in the public interest to correct a minor administrative error in the Cadia East project approval. As the proposed modification is administrative in nature, the Department is satisfied that the proposed modification would not result in any environmental impacts beyond those already approved under the existing project approval.

Consequently, the Department supports the proposed modification and believes it should be approved.

8 RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Director, Resource Assessments, as delegate of the Minister:

- **considers** the findings and recommendations of this report;
- **determines** that the modification is within the scope of section 75W of the EP&A Act;
- **approves** the application under section 75W, subject to conditions; and
- **signs** the notice of modification (**Appendix B**).

 . 24/4/16

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 28/4/16

Clay Preshaw
A/Director
Resource Assessments

APPENDIX A: MODIFICATION APPLICATION

Refer to: http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=7591

APPENDIX B: NOTICE OF MODIFICATION

Refer to: http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=7591

APPENDIX C: CONSOLIDATED PROJECT APPROVAL

Refer to: http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=7591