



Richard Sheehan
Group Environment Manager
Wollongong Coal Limited

Via email: richard.sheehan@wcl.net.au

03/12/2021

Dear Mr Sheehan

**Russell Vale Underground Expansion Project (MP 09_0013)
Stage 1 Extraction Plan – Panels PC07, PC08 and PC21 to PC25**

I refer to the Russell Vale Colliery Revised Underground Expansion Project Stage 1 Extraction Plan submitted to the Department on 8 October 2021, and subsequent revisions to the plan submitted on 12 October, 22 November and 27 November 2021. I also refer to your responses to the Department and other relevant agencies dated 19 November 2021.

The Department has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the Extraction Plan and associated responses, in consultation with relevant agencies. The Department notes that the adoption of a long term stable bord and pillar mine plan is a highly effective risk control measure that will avoid subsidence related impacts on the surrounding environment.

The Department considers that the impacts of the planned mining on the surrounding environment would be negligible. In particular, the planned mining would have negligible impacts on swamps and a neutral impact on water quality within the catchment. The Department is satisfied that PC07, PC08 and PC21 to PC25 can be extracted with a low risk of exceeding the subsidence impact performance measures under MP 09_0013.

Notwithstanding the above, the Department acknowledges that, while unlikely, there remains a residual risk of increased subsidence associated with areas of the Bulli Seam goaf that are yet to be confirmed as collapsed. The Department agrees that this risk is remote and exists regardless of whether the planned mining proceeds or not, and that the planned mining would not change this existing risk. This risk will be monitored during mining with opportunity for adaptive management through changes to the mine plan if required. The Department has recommended a Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP) be developed to formalise this adaptive management process.

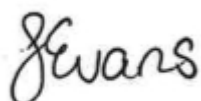
In order to ensure sufficient baseline data can be collected prior to mining, and that key public infrastructure operators are satisfied with proposed risk control measures, a staged approval process has been recommended.

Accordingly, the Secretary grants approval for the secondary extraction of PC21 only, subject to the Extraction Plan and the conditions outlined in the attached **Reasons for Approval**.

Approval of secondary extraction in subsequent panels would be subject to demonstrating to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the conditions outlined in the attached **Reasons for Approval** have been met, and any further agency advice is adequately addressed.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact me on 8275 1374.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jessie Evans
Director

As nominee of the Secretary

Enclosed:

- Russell Vale Colliery Stage 1 Extraction Plan Reasons for Approval