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Attention: Ms Clibborn

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EPA Advice on Modification – Ashton Coal Project, DA 309-11-2001-i Mod 11

Thank you for the request for advice from Public Authority Consultation (PAE-32270949), requesting the review by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) of the Ashton Coal Project Integration Modification (DA 309-11-2001-i Mod 11).

This application is part of the larger Ashton-Ravensworth Underground Mine Integration Modification, and involves a separate application relating to the Ravensworth Mine Complex (DA 104/96).

The EPA has reviewed the report titled 'Ashton Coal Project Modification Report' (Modification Report) and associated appendices. The EPA understand the proposal is for:

- Underground connection from the existing Ashton Underground Mine workings to the Ravensworth Underground Mine (RUM) coal seams via first workings;
- Run-of-mine coal from the RUM Pikes Gully and Middle Liddell coal seams received at the Ashton Coal Project site for handling, processing and transportation;
- Run-of-mine coarse rejects and tailings emplaced in the North East Open Cut Void and the Ravensworth Void 4 Tailings Dam;
- Receipt and management of water and gas from the Ashton Coal operated portion of the RUM;
- Extensions of mining until December 2035; and
- Integration of environmental management plans and other minor administrative changes.

The Modification Report details how the RUM has been in care and maintenance status since 2014 and that Ashton Coal propose to access and extract the already approved (but unmined) RUM resource, via the Ashton Coal Underground Mine.

The EPA has reviewed the Modification Report and notes that if approved the modification is not anticipated to result in a significant increase in environmental impact at the sites involved. Given that the proposal is to for an existing approved underground coal mine area within the RUM to be mined by Ashton Coal Operations, there is expected to be minimal changes or impacts if approval was granted and Ashton Coal Operations extracted from the then former RUM Pikes Gully and Middle Liddell coal seams.

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The EPA does not have any recommended conditions to provide in response to this application. If approved both Ravensworth Operations and Ashton Coal Operations will be required to submit licence variation applications to the EPA for Environment Protection Licences 2652 (Ravensworth Operations) and 11879 (Ashton Coal Operations) respectively. The EPA believes that appropriate limits, controls, and monitoring measures can be implemented through the licence variation process, and does not have any specific conditions to provide at this time.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Michael Howat on (02) 4908 6819 or by email to info@epa.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KAREN GALLAGHER'.

KAREN GALLAGHER
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