



Department of Planning and Environment

OUT22/17737

Rose-Anne Hawkeswood
Planning and Assessment Group
NSW Department of Planning and Environment

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Dear Ms Hawkeswood,

Northparkes Mine extension MOD 6 – E22 Portal, TSF2 Buttressing and E31 (MP11_0060)
Modification report

I refer to your email of 3 December 2021 to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) Water and the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) about the above matter.

China Molybdenum Co Ltd (CMOC)-Northparkes Mines (the Proponent) is seeking to modify existing SSD Development Consent approval (PA 11_0060) for the Northparkes copper-gold mining operations, 27 km Northwest of Parkes in Central West New South Wales.

DPE Water and NRAR requests that the proponent provide further evidence to confirm groundwater take and that adequate entitlement is held. Please note our advice is provided in Attachment A.

Any further referrals to DPE Water and NRAR can be sent by email to water.assessments@dpie.nsw.gov.au or to the following coordinating officer within DPE Water:

Simon Francis – Senior Project Officer
E: simon.francis@dpie.nsw.gov.au
M: 0428 926 117

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Liz Rogers".

Liz Rogers
Manager Assessments, Knowledge Division
Department of Planning and Environment: Water
8 February 2022

Attachment A

Detailed advice to DPE Planning & Assessment regarding the Northparkes Mine Mod 6 (MP11_0060) E22 Portal, TSF2 Buttressing and E31 Precinct

1.0 Groundwater take and entitlement

1.1 Recommendation – Prior to Determination

That the proponent:

- provide a table comparing actual groundwater inflows to predicted groundwater inflows to the pits E31 and E31N for the period April 2015 to present.
- Provide a copy of the Northparkes Mines Site Water Balance (GHD, 2020) to support the revised forecast for groundwater take from all workings including the E 22 Portal
- confirm whether the groundwater take predictions include the maximum annual water take from all water take points included in the modification.
- where additional take points are identified the proponent will be required to quantify the water take and demonstrate sufficient entitlement is held or can be acquired.

1.2 Recommendation – Post approval

- Update the Water Management Plan in accordance with Schedule 5 Condition 5 of the Consent Conditions
- That the proponent ensure that the relevant management plan consider the final landform storages requirement for water licensing or exemption.

1.3 Explanation

- The Groundwater Impact Assessment for MOD 6 (AGE, 2021) is limited to qualitative analysis and relies heavily on a 2013 Groundwater Assessment and numerical groundwater model, prepared by Golder to support a previous modification (MOD 3).
- The MOD 6 Report indicates that the potential impacts of the proposed modifications are unlikely to be materially different to the predicted impacts of the currently approved operations. The Department considers the use of the 2013 numerical model results to assess the potential impacts of the proposed modifications as acceptable, also taking into consideration historical depressurisation and minimal nearby groundwater users.
- The MOD 6 Report asserts that mine inflows are less than predicted, however little supporting evidence has been provided. Forecast groundwater inflows reference a 2020 revised water balance assessment, prepared by GHD, that was not available at the time of the review.
- Confirmation is requested that the predictions of groundwater take include all relevant water take. The modification report refers to groundwater inflows, however it is not clear whether this includes water take from points such as pumped water from an aquifer, seepage from an aquifer, evaporation off pit walls, water entrained in removed material or groundwater inflows induced via evaporation.
- The report has identified the proposal to use borrow pits as water storages in the final landform. The proponent needs to be aware that these storages would need to be considered for water licensing or a relevant exemption and/or be redesigned to meet relevant regulatory requirements. This can be addressed in a management plan.

2.0 Surface disturbance and watercourse management

2.1 Recommendation – Post Approval

- Works within waterfront land need to be in accordance with the “*Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land* (NRAR 2018)”.
- The proponent must update the Soil and Water Management Plan to address clean and dirty water management and sediment and erosion control during construction and operation. The plan is to address the requirements of the guideline *Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction* (Landcom 2004).

2.2 Explanation

- Significant surface disturbance will be required to establish new and relocated infrastructure such as the new E22 portal, borrow pits, waste rock stockpiles, water pipeline realignment and the TSF buttressing. This will result in the need to address clean and dirty water management and to implement measures to mitigate sediment loss and erosion control. These works will need to be in accordance with relevant industry standards eg. Landcom (2004).
- Works within waterfront land to construct the new water pipeline alignment across Goonumbla Creek and to remove the old pipeline, if required, will need to address the requirements for design, construction and rehabilitation in the “*Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land* (NRAR 2018)”.

End Attachment A