



Brittany Golding
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5 April 2022

Contact: DPE Water Assessments
Email: water.assessments@dpie.nsw.gov.au
Our ref: OUT22/2770

Dear Ms Golding

Re: Northparkes Mine Mod 6 (MP11_0060) E22 Portal, TSF2 Buttressing and E31 Precinct – Response to Submissions

I refer to your email of 11 March 2022 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.

NRAR requests that (post approval) the proponent updates the water balance, addresses water take and licencing where necessary. NRAR also advises that any works within waterfront land need to be in accordance with the “Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land (NRAR 2018)”.

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 black ink, appearing to read 'Priestley'.

Donna Priestley
Acting Manager Assessments, Knowledge Division
Water Group

Attachment A

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

1. Water Balance, Take and Licensing

Recommendation – Post Approval

1.1 The proponent should update the water balance based on the modification proposal to measure actual water take from surface and groundwater sources, and this should include accurate metering where possible.

The water balance should be used in ongoing reviews of actual versus modelled water take and impact predictions. This is to include water take where a Water Access Licence (WAL) is required and where an exemption applies.

NRAR notes that this information will be a key component to confirm impact predictions, the adequacy of mitigating measures and compliance for water take.

Explanation

The additional information is adequate to address the concerns raised by NRAR on review of the EIS. The key aspect was understanding that the potential increase in groundwater take associated with the E22 portal and the pit expansions is anticipated to be minimal and can be accounted for within an existing WAL. This will need to be verified through regular water balance assessments at the site which will require accurate metering and reporting of water inputs and outputs combined with modelling updates during the project's life.

Reference was made in the RTS to the use of net groundwater take and that open cut operations were not active to determine water take. The proponent is advised that water take from an aquifer interference activity is based on the groundwater inflows into the excavation and do not rely on a pumped volume or an active pit. The measurements of water take need to ensure relevant inputs and outputs are considered in the water balance to determine actual water take and that modelling is critical to inform future licence requirements.

2. Works within waterfront land

Recommendation – Post Approval

2.1 Works within waterfront land need to be in accordance with the “Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land (NRAR 2018)”.

End Attachment A