

**Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment
and Water**



Our ref: OUT24/4325

Mr Joe Fittell
Planning and Assessment Group
NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Email Joe.Fittell@planning.nsw.gov.au

27 March 2024

Subject: Hunter Valley Operations North Continuation Project (SSD-11826681) and Hunter Valley Operations South Continuation Project (SSD-11826621) – Response to supplementary advice

Dear Joe Fittell

I refer to your request for advice sent on 11 March 2024 to the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Water about the above matter.

The application proposes the continuation of the life of Hunter Valley Operations (HVO) – North and South. This includes optimising resource recovery through mining previously mined areas and extracting coal from deeper seams at HVO North. Activities at HVO south include a change to mining sequence and a reduction in coal extraction.

DCCEEW Water has reviewed the report and makes a post approval recommendation regarding water licensing for dams. It is also noted the proponent is proposing to seek an amendment to the hydroline dataset to inform the licensing strategy. As the outcome of this is yet to be confirmed, the proponent will need to ensure adequate licensing, exclusions or exemptions are in place.

Please see Attachment A for DCCEEW's detailed recommendation.

Should you have any further queries in relation to this submission please do not hesitate to contact DCCEEW Water Assessments water.assessments@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Rob Brownbill
Manager Water Assessments, Knowledge Division
NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water

Attachment A

Detailed advice to DPHI Planning regarding the Hunter Valley Operations Continuation Project North & South (SSD-11826681 and SSD-11826621) – Response to supplementary advice

1.0 Water licensing

1.1 Recommendation – Post determination

The proponent should update the Water Management Plan to include the licensing arrangements for all dams onsite.

Explanation

DCCEE Water acknowledges the proponent has reviewed and provided information on water diversions, catchment areas and associated licensing requirements for water management structures. This information should be included in the Water Management Plan and clearly identify the relevant licences, exclusions or exemptions that apply.

It is acknowledged that where diversions are in place, watercourses may no longer be located where they are mapped. The proponent is seeking an update to the hydroline layer to reflect drainage configurations within the site which includes stream diversions considered under previous approvals which would reduce stream order or make some dams offline. It is also noted some diversions may have been modified or are not currently in place and sufficient entitlement must be obtained to account for any take unless an exemption applies.

The outcome of an update to the hydroline layer and any implications to licensing requirements is yet to be confirmed. The proponent will need to ensure adequate licensing, exclusions or exemptions are in place.

Further assessment of dams post closure would need to be assessed as part of the final landform design as part of mine closure planning. It is understood mine closure is planned for 2045 for HVO South and 2050 for HVO North.

End Attachment A
