

Our ref: OUT23/12181

Mr Joe Fittell
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NSW Department of Planning and Environment
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10 August 2023

Subject: Hunter Valley Operations North Continuation Project (SSD-11826681) and Hunter Valley Operations South Continuation Project (SSD-11826621) – Environmental Impact Statement – clarification of DPE Water advice

Dear Mr Fittell

I refer to a meeting held on 25 July 2023 about the above matter and a request to clarify DPE Water's advice (OUT23/3591) on the Environmental Impact Statement in relation to the boundary that should be used for determining the setback distance from the Carrington West Pit, which was included as part of recommendation 2.1 of DPE Water's advice.

DPE Water has reviewed the boundary reference which defines the edge of the Hunter Regulated River Alluvial Water Source. The Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022 defines the following water source: "*The Hunter Regulated River Alluvial Water Source – (a) extends from the top of the high bank of the Hunter Regulated River Water Source to the boundary of the alluvial aquifer covering the unconsolidated alluvial sediments, and (b) includes all groundwater contained in unconsolidated sediments.*" The Carrington West paleochannel deposits comprising unconsolidated alluvial sediment is considered to be part of the Hunter Regulated River Alluvial Water Source.

The intent of an option of a 150 m setback from the Hunter Regulated River Alluvial Water Source was for discontinuation of any mining in unconsolidated sediments, which would be inclusive of the paleochannel deposits. This would limit enhancing a hydrological connection from the Hunter River and associated alluvial aquifer with the HVO mining activities, negating the need to construct the West Carrington low permeability barrier.

DPE Water's recommendation of a 150 m setback from the Hunter Regulated River Alluvial Water Source applies at the boundary of the unconsolidated alluvial sediments and the hard rock material of the North Coast Porous Rock Groundwater Source.

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

Yours sincerely



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