

Request to the Planning Assessment Commission Watermark Coal Project

Section 23D of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

Clauses 268R and 268V of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*

I, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure request the Planning Assessment Commission to:

1. Carry out a review of the Watermark Coal Project, and:
 - a) consider the EIS for the project, the issues raised in submissions, the formal response to submissions, any advice from the Gateway Panel on the project, and any other relevant information provided on the project during the course of the review;
 - b) consider the Department of Planning and Infrastructure's preliminary assessment report,
 - c) assess the merits of the project as a whole, paying particular attention to the:
 - impacts of the project on strategic agricultural land, as identified in the *New England North West Strategic Regional Land Use Plan*, including the impacts on existing agricultural land use in the areas surrounding the project;
 - water resource impacts of the project, including direct and indirect impacts on the Upper Namoi alluvial aquifer and downstream surface water resources;
 - health and amenity impacts of the project, with a specific focus on whether all reasonable and feasible noise and dust mitigation measures are being employed to avoid and/or minimise these impacts;
 - long term land use impacts of the project and the suitability and feasibility of the proposed rehabilitation strategy, including the final landform, final void and the proposed rehabilitation of agricultural land; and, if necessary,
 - d) recommend further measures to avoid, minimise and/or offset the potential impacts of the project.
2. Conduct public hearings during the review as soon as practicable after the Department of Planning and Infrastructure provides a copy of its preliminary assessment report for the project to the Planning Assessment Commission.
3. Submit its final report on the review to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure within 6 weeks of the public hearings, unless the Director-General of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure agrees otherwise.



The Hon Brad Hazzard MP
Minister for Planning and Infrastructure