



The Hon. Rob Stokes, MP
Minister for Planning
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

16 February 2016

Dear Minister

Subject: Review of the Mount Owen Continued Operations Project (SSD 5850)

I refer to your request dated 18 November 2015 that the Planning Assessment Commission carry out a review of the Mount Owen Continued Operations mine project.

Ms Lynelle Briggs AO, Chair of the Planning Assessment Commission, nominated Mr Garry West, Mr Roger Fisher and myself to constitute the Commission. I chaired the Commission for the project.

In accordance with the Terms of Reference for the project, the Commission reviewed the information available to it, and held a public hearing in Singleton on the 15th of December 2015. 19 verbal presentations were made to the Commission at the public hearing and a total of 31 written submissions were received before and after the public hearing. The Commission also visited the site, met with the Applicant, the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department), Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and Singleton Council.

The Commission has now completed its review of the proposal and the Commission's Review Report is enclosed. The Commission notes that the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Report (SEAR) for this project does not present a full assessment or final position on a number of key areas, particularly in relation to air quality impacts, biodiversity offsets and final landform. The Commission has also found that there are residual concerns in relation to surface water impacts and the cost-benefit analysis. In relation to these issues, the Commission has made recommendations to the Department to seek further information, and undertake additional consultation with relevant agencies, prior to determination.

As new information will be required to address the recommendations, the Commission has recommended that the community be provided with a further opportunity to review and comment on supplementary inputs and the Department's findings on these issues.

In brief, the Commission considers that the recommendations of the report must be satisfactorily addressed before the project can be further considered.

Yours sincerely

Ms Abigail Goldberg
Commission Member
Planning Assessment Commission

cc. Ms Carolyn McNally
Secretary
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001