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NSW Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Mr Thomas Watt

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**MOUNT OWEN CONTINUED OPERATIONS PROJECT – SSD 5850
PROPOSERS RESPONSE TO PAC REVIEW REPORT**

I refer to your email to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), dated 1 June 2016, regarding Glencore's response to the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) review report for the Mount Owen Continued Operations Project application, reference SSD 5850.

The proposers response report is titled '*Mount Owen Continued Operations Project – Response to PAC Review Report*' (response to PAC review), dated May 2016 and prepared by Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited.

The EPA previously provided our comments in relation to the Environmental Assessment for this application, and subsequent comments dated 28 August 2015 to the proposers Response to Submissions report.

The response to PAC review report details alterations to the original proposal, with the key amendments being the applicant no longer proposes coal mining in the Ravensworth East Resource Recovery (RERR) mining area, instead undertaking rehabilitation of the area, and changes to the Bayswater North Pit and the North Pit final void landforms.

The EPA has reviewed the information provided in the response to PAC review report in relation to our previous comments regarding potential air quality, noise, and surface water matters.

Noise

Based on the information provided the changes proposed in the Glencore response to the PAC review are not predicted to significantly affect the potential noise impacts of the project. The mitigation and management measures previously proposed for the project have not changed.

The removal of proposed mining in the RERR area is expected to result in some noise predictions for year 10 of the project being reduced by 1 dBA from the previous predictions.

Noise levels predicted for winter evenings and night times have not changed, as mining was not proposed in the RERR area during adverse weather conditions in winter night times.

The proponent has adopted new project specific noise levels which were suggested by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). The number of residential sensitive receivers expected to receive operational noise from the project above project specific noise levels has reduced by two, from 21 to 19.

Air Quality

The EPA has reviewed the response to the PAC review and the information provided in Appendix 2 of the response to PAC review, which is the report titled '*Mount Owen Continued Operations – Refined Project*', dated 26 May 2016 and prepared by Pacific Environment Limited.

The response to the PAC review resolves the outstanding matters regarding the assessment of impacts to the air environment from the proposal. In response to the revised information the EPA provides recommended conditions of approval in **Attachment A** in relation to air quality matters.

The EPA notes that DPE provided draft recommended conditions of approval, as Appendix G to the Project Assessment Report, dated November 2015, which was provided to the PAC. Condition 19(a) of Schedule 3 requires the proponent to "*implement all reasonable and feasible measures to minimise the off-site odour, fume, spontaneous combustion and dust emissions of the development*".

Condition 2 of Attachment A of this letter is similar in content to that draft condition however specifically refers to PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. The EPA believes that condition 19(a) of Schedule 3 of the draft recommended conditions of approval should include a specific reference to PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.

Surface Water

The EPA previously noted that with the removal of the licensed discharge point at the Mount Owen Coal Mine in November 2014, any direct discharge from the premises to surface waters would require a licence variation application and subsequent assessment.

As detailed in the response to the PAC review the proposed water sharing arrangement will be operated in accordance with the Greater Ravensworth Water Sharing Scheme (GRWSS) currently in place. The EPA understands the proposal does not involve the direct discharge to surface water from the Mount Owen complex and that any surplus water will be managed through the GRWSS and is not predicted to result in any alteration to the existing regulatory arrangements in relation to the GRWSS.

The EPA considers the matter of potential surface water discharges has been adequately addressed in the proponent's response to the PAC review.

If you require any further information regarding this matter please contact Michael Howat on 4908 6819.

Yours sincerely



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Encl: **Attachment A – Recommended Conditions of Approval**

ATTACHMENT A

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL MOUNT OWEN CONTINUED OPERATIONS PROJECT (SSD 5850)

Air Quality

1. Emissions from Diesel engines

The proponent shall estimate emissions of $PM_{2.5}$ from all diesel engines used for the project.

2. Minimise emission of particulate matter

The proponent shall take all reasonable and feasible measures to minimise the emission of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ from the project. Measures should include both proactive and reactive management, for all emission sources (crustal and combustion) to ensure that impacts from the project are minimised to the maximum extent achievable.