

25 August 2015

Mr Kane Winwood
Team Leader, Mining Projects
NSW Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Mr Winwood

SSD 5850 - MOUNT OWEN CONTINUED OPERATIONS PROJECT - RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

I refer to your email of 6 August 2015 inviting Hunter New England Health (HNEH) to review and provide comment on the Response to Submissions (RTS) by Mount Owen Pty Limited (the proponent) for the Mount Owen Continued Operations Project.

The RTS has been reviewed with particular attention being paid to issues HNEH raised in relation to air quality, noise and blasting, and rainwater tanks, which may have an impact on public health.

Air Quality

We were concerned that the environmental assessment used the current annual PM₁₀ goal of 30 µg/m³ rather than the goal of 20 µg/m³ that is being adopted internationally and expected to be applicable during the operation of this mine. The proponent's response to this concern was that air quality was assessed against current standards and not against the future standards to be implemented during the lifetime of the mine.

Noise and Blasting

We were concerned that the majority of complaints received during the 3 years to June 2014 related to noise and blasting, despite approved limits for blasts being met. The RTS did not address the fact that approved limits are still having an impact.

Rainwater Tanks

The revised commitment to inspect rainwater tanks at privately owned residences within four kilometres of the approved mining limit at least every two years, with cleaning being carried out should the inspection identify this requirement is accepted. However, there was no comment in the RTS regarding the possibility of installing rainwater tank first flush diverters to reduce the amount of sediment entering the tanks.

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Should you require any additional information in relation to the above, please telephone Ms Carolyn Herlihy, Environmental Health Officer on (02) 4924 6477.

Yours sincerely

Dr David Durrheim
Service Director - Health Protection

