

12 September 2019

Mr Stephen O'Donoghue  
Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Mr O'Donoghue

**RE: Major Projects – New Request for Advice - Vickery Mine Extension (SSD-7480) (Narrabri Shire, Gunnedah Shire)**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Submissions Report for the proposed extension of the approved Vickery Coal Mine (SSD 7480 Narrabri/Gunnedah).

Hunter New England Population Health (HNEPH) has reviewed the Submissions Report concentrating on water quality, noise and air quality.

The comments provided are contingent on confirmation by the NSW EPA that the methods employed to assess water quality, noise and air quality are appropriate and should be considered in light of any methodological issues identified by the NSW EPA.

**Water quality**

HNEPH had requested that a Water Management Plan including a complete water management risk assessment should be prepared, implemented and regularly reviewed to inform control strategies to protect groundwater, surface water, potable water, process water and waste wastewater. In response the proponent advises that water quality will be monitored for pH, TSS, EC, turbidity, alkalinity/acidity, sulphate, aluminium, arsenic, molybdenum, selenium, oil, grease, and total organic carbon at selected locations and sediment dams. Sewage and waste water will be collected and treated in a biocycle treatment system with effluent irrigated at the waste disposal area by the Environmental Guidelines. The Management Plan and a Water Management Risk Assessment were not provided, although referred to in the Submissions Report.

**Noise**

HNEPH requested that a Noise Management Plan, including control and avoidance measures noting details of noise level triggers, should be prepared. The proponent has provided noise modelling predictions and proposed noise monitoring and mitigation measures. HNE has no further comments provided the EPA requirements are fully met.

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## **Air Quality**

HNEPH requested that the proponent prepare an Air Quality Management Plan including measures to monitor and reduce the generation and emission of Total Suspended Particulates, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> particulates due to mining operations, coal haulage, spontaneous combustion of coal stockpiles and adverse weather conditions. HNEPH notes the Management Plan and commitment to comprehensive ongoing continuous monitoring of particulates and community complaints. HNEPH has no further comments provided the EPA requirements are satisfied.

## **Community consultation**

HNEPH requested community engagement throughout the approval process and during ongoing operations of development. The proponent has indicated continued engagement with the community regarding the Project during the assessment process and throughout the construction and operation of the Project. Community consultation would primarily occur through the Vickery Community Consultative Committee. HNEPH has no further comment.

If you require further information, please contact Fidelis Jaravani, Environmental Health Officer on 67648020.

Yours sincerely



Professor David Durrheim  
Director Health Protection  
Hunter New England Population Health