



Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Major Projects Assessment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

11 September 2026

By Planning Portal

Dear Sir/Madam

Objection to modification application MP07_0143 (MOD 4) - Woodlawn Mine

Veolia Environmental Services (Australia) Pty Ltd (**Veolia**) is the owner and operator of the Woodlawn Eco Precinct, located on Collector Road, Tarago, New South Wales. Veolia is also the owner of the land on which the adjacent Woodlawn Mine is located, which is owned and operated by DEVELOP Global Limited (**Proponent**).

MOD 4

Veolia understands that the Proponent seeks to modify Project Approval PA 07_0143 (as modified) for its Woodlawn Mine under section 4.55(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (**EP&A Act**), being MP07_0143-Mod-4 (**MOD 4**), to include the following elements as part of its development:

- Disturbance and use of material from a 'Material Source Area' within the Project Site, comprising:
 - Works Area 1 – a new area of disturbance (~13ha); and
 - Works Area 2 – an area of re-disturbance (~17ha).
- Works Area 1 is to be disturbed in a single campaign with material sourced from this area as a priority. Works Area 1 is to be rehabilitated immediately after sourcing material and returned to a natural, free draining vegetated landscape. A CEMP would be implemented to manage Works Area 1 during the access and disturbance period.
- A "surface water interface area" will exist temporarily as works transition from Works Area 1 to Works Area 2.
- Works Area 2 would be accessed periodically as needed and remain within the operational area of the site for the life of operation. Works Area 2 would be managed in accordance with existing management plans and be rehabilitated as part of the overall mine rehabilitation at end of life.



Veolia is concerned that MOD 4 seeks approval for the quarrying of material from the surface of its land, in circumstances where the Proponent has not properly or genuinely consulted with, nor sought to compensate, Veolia as landholder.

It is unclear from the MOD 4 application information what material is proposed to be extracted. Veolia is concerned that the Proponent is seeking approval to extract material from Veolia's land that is of value to Veolia and could be required by Veolia for its own operations at the Woodlawn Eco Precinct. Veolia is also seeking further information and clarification regarding the potential impacts on its operations and landholdings, potentially in relation to potential surface and groundwater impacts.

For these reasons, and those detailed below, Veolia submits that the Department cannot be satisfied, on the basis of the information provided and having regard to section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act, that the environmental impacts of the proposed modification have been sufficiently assessed or are acceptable.

Nor can the Department be satisfied, on the basis of the information provided by the Proponent, that MOD 4 will result in 'substantially the same' development as that originally granted. Surface quarrying represents a significantly different activity to that approved (being underground mining), and has the potential for significantly different impacts, due to the surface disturbance footprint and associated environmental impacts.

1. *Inadequate consultation with Veolia as landowner*

The proponent has failed to consult with Veolia in any meaningful way in relation to MOD 4. This is inappropriate, having regard to Veolia's interests as a directly affected landowner, and constitutes a material procedural deficiency justifying refusal of MOD 4.

Veolia is the owner of land on which the Woodlawn Mine site is located and from which the proponent seeks to quarry material via MOD 4. Veolia owns and operates the Woodlawn Eco Precinct on that land, pursuant to separate environmental and planning approvals.

The "consultation" relied upon by the proponent comprised a single overview presentation to the Community Consultative Committee (**CCC**) on 25 February 2026 and an unanswered email sent to the Manager of Woodlawn Bioreactor. Veolia acknowledges that it is a member of the CCC and a representative of Veolia attended that CCC meeting. However, Veolia does not consider that the efforts taken by the Proponent constitute a meaningful, two-way engagement contemplated by the Department's *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (DPHI, 2024), and this is certainly disproportionate to the level of interest held by Veolia as a directly impacted landholder. Veolia had a legitimate expectation that the proponent would consult with it directly and provide opportunities for feedback around the proposed modifications, prior to finalisation and lodgement of MOD 4.

As noted above, the quarrying of material from Veolia's land has an obvious direct impact on Veolia, which could have significant implications for Veolia in carrying out its own operations at



the Woodlawn Eco Precinct. This is not a change which can be made without direct consultation and agreement with Veolia.

In Veolia's view, the absence of substantive engagement is inconsistent with the level of consultation that is required for a proposal of this nature and significance. Veolia submits that the Department should afford substantial weight to the absence of adequate consultation and agreement with stakeholders in its assessment and determination of the proposed modification.

2. *Insufficient information regarding the nature of material sought to be quarried*

It is unclear from the MOD 4 application what material is proposed to be extracted. It is stated that estimated volumes within the Material Source Area are approximately 700,000 m³. However, insufficient information is provided as to the:

- (a) nature of the material sought to be extracted;
- (b) location(s) and volume(s) of material sought to be extracted; and
- (c) period(s) and rate(s) of extraction.

It is also unclear whether any material is proposed to be sourced from offsite. Whilst the Modification Report indicates this is not the case, the Appendix G Groundwater Assessment states "*Minor clay deposits (sourced offsite) may supplement the onsite material to meet geotechnical requirements*". No information is provided regarding the potential quantity of offsite material or associated truck movements, nor has any traffic impact assessment been undertaken in respect of any proposed transport routes.

Veolia is concerned that the Proponent is seeking approval to extract material from Veolia's land without its permission, and that this material is of value to Veolia as it could be required by Veolia for its own operations at the Woodlawn Eco Precinct.

Further, as detailed elsewhere in this letter, the nature of material extracted has implications for surface and groundwater management at the site.

In the absence of further engagement with Veolia and the provision of additional information and updates to the MOD 4 proposal, the Department cannot be satisfied that environmental impacts have been adequately assessed or that appropriate management measures will be implemented to mitigate those impacts to acceptable levels. Accordingly, MOD 4 ought to be refused, or at the very least, determination deferred pending further consultation with Veolia and revision of the proposal.

3. *Water management – insufficient information and potential groundwater impacts*

Veolia is concerned that the assumptions on which the Surface Water and Groundwater Assessments accompanying the Modification Report have been based may not be accurate or sufficiently detailed, and that impacts may be under-estimated.



As noted above, the MOD 4 application fails to detail the nature of material sought to be extracted. This has implications for the management of surface water, and risk of seepage into the groundwater system.

The Appendix G Groundwater Assessment estimates groundwater seepage at < 13ML a year (circa 0.4L/s). This is somewhat significant, and has potential for impacts to groundwater gradients within the vicinity of at Veolia's Eco Precinct facilities, notably the bioreactor. Veolia requires further information regarding the Proponent's groundwater assessment, including underlying assumptions, so it can better understand the implications for its operations.

In addition, insufficient information is provided about the "surface water interface area" which is proposed to exist "temporarily" as works "transition from Works Area 1 to Works Area 2". This does not appear to be mentioned in the Appendix F Surface Water Assessment.

Further, the Surface Water Assessment recommends a CEMP inclusive of a detailed SWMP to manage "significant sediment and associated pollutant loads" for both Work Areas 1 and 2. However, the Proponent's Modification Report only proposes a CEMP in respect of Work Area 1, whereas Work Area 2 is proposed to be managed under "existing management plans". Veolia is concerned with the Proponent's reliance on existing management plans in this regard.

Of further concern is the stated intention that the "surface water interface area" will be incorporated into the Project Site's existing environmental management framework "if the disturbance period is longer than the CEMP lifespan for the use of Works Area 1". The intended management measures for the surface water interface area are insufficiently detailed, and have the potential to impact Veolia land and/or surrounding waterways.

The Modification Report notes that DCCEEW and WaterNSW were consulted on 28 May 2026 and 14 July 2026 respectively with a particular focus on water and groundwater management and the proposal was "generally well received". Veolia would like the opportunity to understand what feedback was obtained from DCCEEW and WaterNSW, given the implications for surface and groundwater management at the Project Site on Veolia's landholdings and operations. Veolia also notes that the NSW EPA does not appear to have been consulted in relation to the proposed modification, despite the current development being licensed under the provisions of the *Protection of the Environmental Operations Act 1997*.

Absent further information, Veolia cannot be assured that MOD 4 adequately addresses the potential for seepage, groundwater gradient changes, runoff or contaminant migration to enter or affect Veolia's land. Consequently, Veolia considers that the proposed amendment should not be approved unless the conditions of consent and approved management plans expressly preserve Veolia's existing rights, approvals and operational responsibilities and clearly provide that no responsibility, liability or risk associated with mine water, seepage, runoff, contaminant migration or rehabilitation may be transferred to Veolia, whether expressly or by implication.

Further, both the NSW Resources Regulator and the NSW EPA have identified the importance of appropriately managing seepage and water quality risks. The NSW Resources Regulator has



indicated in its advice response dated 1 May 2026 that seepage management measures should be clearly documented within the Rehabilitation Management Plan, while compliance with section 120 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (NSW) remains necessary to avoid pollution of waters.

Veolia therefore considers that these proposed amendments cannot be approved unless and until it has been properly consulted on surface and groundwater impacts and management measures, and a comprehensive assessment has been undertaken demonstrating that surface water and groundwater will be adequately protected throughout operations, closure and the post-closure period.

4. Further information

In addition to the above, Veolia also seeks clarification regarding the following:

- (a) The first page of the Modification Report states: "The Woodlawn Copper-Zinc Mine is an existing approved underground mining operation, with approval to operate until 31 December 2034." However, the relevant mining lease, being SML20, expires 16 November 2029.
- (b) Page 2 of the 'scoping letter' to the Department, prepared by the Proponent and dated 27 February 2026, states: "This material could be sourced within the Project Site (in accordance with the land access agreements in place)". There is no land access agreement in place with Veolia that would allow the extraction of material proposed by MOD 4.
- (c) Section 2.3 (Project context) of the Modification Report says: "The Project Site forms part of the broader Woodlawn Eco Precinct", which is not the case – Veolia's Eco Precinct operates independently, under its own approvals.

Requested determination

For the reasons detailed above, the Department cannot be satisfied, on the present material, that MOD 4 would result in a development that is substantially the same development, or is otherwise acceptable having regard to relevant matters contained within section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act.

Accordingly, the Department should defer its determination of MOD 4 until the Proponent provides, at a minimum:

- 1. detailed information regarding the nature, quantum, rates and timing of material proposed to be extracted from Veolia's land;
- 2. evidence of direct consultation with Veolia as landowner and adjoining operator, including provision of all relevant technical material and Veolia's agreement to any extraction of material from its land;



3. revised surface water and groundwater assessments detailing potential impacts on Veolia's operations and landholdings, having regard to feedback received from Veolia; and
4. public exhibition of any revised Modification Report, Response to Submissions or proposed conditions of consent.

Absent this information and consultation, the Department cannot be satisfied that the environmental, rehabilitation, water management and land use implications of MOD 4 have been adequately assessed or that the interests of affected stakeholders have been appropriately considered.

Veolia requests that it is notified of all further steps in the assessment process and provided with an opportunity to comment on any revised material or proposed conditions before determination.

Yours sincerely

Craig Barker, Chief

Veolia Environmental Services (Australia) Pty. Ltd.