

6 September 2019

Genevieve Seed
Senior Planning Officer
Resource Assessments
NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ms Seed

Mangoola Coal Continued Operations Project

I refer to your email of 15 July 2019 inviting NSW Health - Hunter New England Local Health District (HNELHD) to review and comment on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) submitted for the Mangoola Coal Continued Operations Project (the Project).

Mangoola Coal Mine is an open cut mine located approximately 20km west of Muswellbrook and 10km north of Denman within the Muswellbrook Local Government Area of NSW. The Project involves the extraction of approximately 52 Million tonnes (Mt) of additional coal from a new mining area to the north of the existing mine, and an extension in time of one year beyond that already approved. Annual production will not exceed the 13.5 Mt per annum already approved.

The comments provided in this letter are contingent on confirmation by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) that the methods employed to assess air quality and noise impacts are appropriate. If this was found not to be the case, our comments would need to be considered in light of the methodological issues identified by the EPA.

HNELHD has reviewed the EIS concentrating on the human health, air quality and noise assessments, and would like to provide the following comments:

Air Quality

From a health impact perspective, the annual particulate matter (PM) criteria are more important than daily PM criteria. While the air quality assessment predicts occasional 24 hour PM₁₀ exceedances at a single receptor, it finds that no private receptors will exceed the annual criteria.

We await the EPAs overall review of the AQIA to confirm the validity of the air quality assessment and the predicted impacts. We note that there is no evidence of a threshold below which PM is not associated with health effects and so HNELHD supports best-practice interventions to minimise PM emissions.

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Noise

Environmental noise can have negative impacts on human health and well-being and trigger ongoing community complaints about annoyance, sleep disturbance and stress. Evidence concerning the adverse health effects of environmental noise, which includes cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment and tinnitus, is detailed in a number of publications, including the following publications from enHealth and the World Health Organisation (WHO):

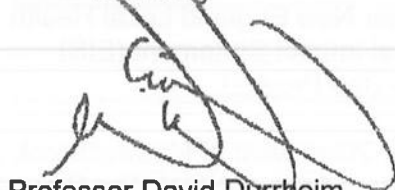
- *The health effects of environmental noise, enHealth (2018)*
- *Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region, WHO (2018).*

The Noise Impact Assessment in the EIS predicts that the Project will increase noise levels such that voluntary acquisition rights will apply to seven residences, and acoustic treatments will be required at nineteen residences to reduce noise levels inside the homes.

It is advised that the proponent engage in clear and open consultation with the owners/occupiers of these residences to ensure they are aware of the additional impacts and their options.

If you require any further information please telephone Carolyn Herlihy, Environmental Health Officer on 4924 6477.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Durrheim', is written over a horizontal line.

Professor David Durrheim
Director Health Protection
Hunter New England Population Health