

11 April 2018

Mr Iwan Davies
Planner
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Davies

**HILLGROVE MINE – DA 98/35, MODIFICATION 4 – 130 BRACKIN STREET,
HILLGROVE**

I refer to my recent correspondence dated 22 February 2018 and a subsequent teleconference held on 6 April 2018 between Mr Matthew Riley and Mr Iwan Davies of Department of Planning & Environment with Mr Philippe Porigneaux of this office.

My previous correspondence was in relation to health commentary as part of submissions to the Environmental Assessment exhibited on the NSW Department of Planning & Environment website in relation to the proposed modification of DA98/35 Condition 4. The proponent sought modification of their DA to enable an extension of operations to 31 December 2023.

Previous correspondence recommended that the proponent consider the preparation of a Water Management Plan, a Tailings Management Plan and an Air Quality Management Plan. It was unclear in the Environmental Assessment that these areas were adequately covered in the exiting statutory controls on the operations at Hillgrove Mine.

I'm now of the understanding that the Hillgrove Mine site has an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that incorporates the aspects that were requested in my previous correspondence. The EMP includes erosion controls, water quality monitoring (including weekly and monthly monitoring of discharges), tailings management and air quality controls (with respect to dust management).

During the teleconference, it became evident that the Hillgrove Mine site operators have worked to address issues impacting on the environment over several years. We were informed that the EMP for the site was externally audited in August of 2016 with a finding that the mine operators are substantially complying with requirements contained in the EMP.

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It would also appear that the operators have a complaints mechanism which is reactive to issues as demonstrated through the issues of dust complaint around 2014/15. As you advised, this lead to additional dust suppression on haul roads through water cartage.

Overall, it appears that the Environment Protection Authority is satisfied with the current practice of operation and management of the Hillgrove Mine site.

Considering the sensitivities associated with mining operations in the area of Hillgrove and past years environmental issues associated with the site, the proponent may have benefitted by contacting agencies to inform of the proposed modification along with outlining the improvements made in operations and management.

It is still recommended that the proponent conducts effective and genuine community consultation to appropriately inform the community on the management and continued operations of the site.

Should you require any additional information in relation to the above, please contact Mr Philippe Porigneaux, Environmental Health manager on 4924 6494.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Durrheim', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Prof David Durrheim
Service Director – Health Protection
Hunter New England Population Health

**Hunter New England Local Health District
Hunter New England Population Health**

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Health
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22 February 2018

Mr Iwan Davies
Planner
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Davies

**HILLGROVE MINE – DA 98/35, MODIFICATION 4 - 130 BRACKIN STREET,
HILLGROVE**

I refer to the Environmental Assessment (EA) exhibited on the NSW Department of Planning & Environment website in relation to the proposed modification of DA 98/35, Condition 4. The modification is to extend the prescribed term for the authorised development to operate until the 31 December 2023 at 130 Brackin Street, Hillgrove.

Hunter New England Population Health has reviewed the EA and provides the following discussion below for your consideration:-

The commissioning of effective and genuine community consultation with active involvement of the community in this process is recommended. There is some sensitivity in the community associated with this development, and as a result, your community consultation should continue up to and if approved, during the ongoing operation of the development.

The development has a long history of pollution, especially offsite into downstream waterways. A Water Management Plan should be prepared and implemented. The Plan should contain a complete water management risk assessment and control strategies that addresses surface water (on and off-site), potable water, groundwater, process water and wastewater associated with this project and its ongoing operation. The Plan should also include strategies for current and long-term monitoring, a description of the analytes included in the sampling programs and should describe remediation actions.

A Tailings Management Plan should also be prepared and implemented which addresses issues such as tailings dam levels, mitigation of overflows, effluent quality, odours such as hydrogen sulphide and any other historic issues which led to previous events and complaints.

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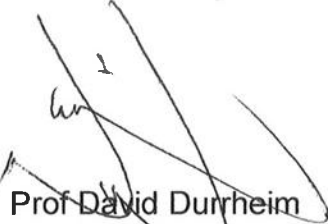
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The Air Quality Management Plan should include measures to monitor and reduce the generation of particulate matter and indicate how particulate matter generation will be managed in relation to the proposed extension to the term of operation, adverse weather conditions or community complaints. The plan should also include condition/s for comprehensive ongoing and continuous monitoring for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.

Given the regulatory authority of the NSW Environment Protection Authority, it is essential that there is full compliance with all of their requirements.

If you require any further information, please contact Chris Williams, 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. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Prof David Durrheim
Service Director - Health Protection
Hunter New England Population Health