

14 October 2016

The Director
Resource Assessments
NSW Planning & Environment
P O BOX 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

AMENDED ROCKY HILL COAL PROJECT (SSD-5156)

I refer to the documentation exhibited on the NSW Planning & Environment website in relation to the Amended Rocky Hill Coal Project (SSD-5156).

The Rocky Hill Coal Project (RHCP) was supported by an Environmental Impact Statement and was lodged as Development Application (SSD-5156) in August 2013 by Gloucester Resources Limited. The 2013 project comprised of an open cut coal mine producing up to 2.5 Mtpa of run of mine (ROM) coal, a coal handling and preparation plant (CHPP), an overland conveyor and a rail load out facility.

In June 2015, Gloucester Resources Limited submitted a request to NSW Planning and Environment to place determination of Development Application (SSD-5156) on hold whilst negotiations with the owners of the Stratford Mining Complex took place.

The Amended RHCP involves changes to the operations associated with commercial agreements between Gloucester Resources Limited, owners of the RHCP and Yancoal Australia Ltd, the parent company of Stratford Coal Pty Ltd, owners of the Stratford Mining Complex. The integration involves the development of approximately 5 kilometres of a private sealed haul road to link the two mine complexes together with ROM coal from the RHCP being transported to the Stratford Mining Complex for processing and subsequent transport by rail to the Port of Newcastle.

This commercial agreement negates the requirement for a CHPP, an overland conveyor and a rail load out facility on the site of the RHCP. Transport of ROM coal from the RHCP to the Stratford Mining Complex is scheduled for daytime hours only (7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Saturday).

Documentation for the Amended RHCP has been reviewed by Hunter New England Population Health.

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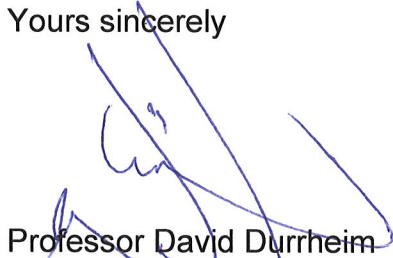
Air Quality

While the cumulative average annual PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ levels in Table 5.5 (page 2B-41) are below the recently amended NEPM standards of $25 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and $8 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ respectively, the background $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} levels are significantly below the levels seen in official NSW Office of Environment & Heritage air quality monitors in similar rural settings. NSW Environment Protection Authority's review of the validity of the background estimates will be important.

As the incremental impact of $PM_{2.5}$ relates to changes in health risk, it is of concern for a community with relatively good air quality where a development is proposed. The incremental impact of the project on $PM_{2.5}$ stated in Table 5.5 demonstrates that some may be exposed to a level of $PM_{2.5}$ of $0.83 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ above what the level would be without the project. This would represent a non-negligible increase in health risk. NSW Health would recommend that all reasonable and feasible measures are taken to minimise exposure of the community.

Should you require any additional information, please contact Mr Philippe Porigneaux, Environmental Health Manager on 4924 6494.

Yours sincerely



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