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The Director – Resource Assessments
Planning and Assessment
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Our Ref:
File:
Date:

Z21/42055
MP-2009/161
2 March 2021

Attention: Mr J Turner

Dear Mr Turner

WONGAWILLI COLLIERY MODIFICATION 2 – NORTH WEST MAINS DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Wongawilli Colliery Modification 2 to Project Approval MP-09-0161– North West Mains Development.

The proposed five year extension as part of this modification request to the existing Project Approval is supported to enable the development of the North West Mains Development to access the existing Wongawilli Ventilation Shaft 1. However, Council reserves its rights to consider its position on any future application for the actual North West sector mine layout, based on merit assessment of the accompanying Environmental Impact Statement.

From Council's perspective, noise emissions from the colliery pit top should be minimised with respect to the surrounding residential community in Wongawilli. It is noted that the colliery has previously implemented noise mitigation measures at the site including: (i) all conveyors and transfer points being enclosed (ii) a 6 metre high concrete barrier adjacent to the rail line (iii) upgrading of the screen / sizer enclosure and (iv) preference for all coal product to go directly to rail loadout bins and avoid stockpiling of product, which in turn, minimises the use of the dozer in the stockpile area.

Based on the Wongawilli Colliery Modification Report by EMM dated December 2020, the main identified operational noise sources at the site contributing to off-site noise levels are the screen and sizer building and elevator, rail load out bin, locomotives, dozer and front-end loaders. In this regard, Council agrees with the proposed noise mitigation measures in Table 7.5 of the Wongawilli Colliery Modification Report, including: (i) rail load out improvements by way of new or improved enclosure(s) or engineering design solutions to reduce noise emissions from coal leaving bin and entering wagons (ii) a noise suppression kit for dozer or a new dozer to reduce mine noise to all neighbouring residences (iii) relocation of the sizing and screening infrastructure underground (iv) improvements to the elevator enclosure and (v) extension of the existing 6 metre high concrete rail barrier further north to the rail loadout bin. These noise mitigation measures are recommended to be subject to appropriate conditions of consent.

The Wongawilli Colliery pit top is situated on the eastern edge of the Illawarra Escarpment and is within the catchment of Robin's Creek. Robin's Creek is a tributary of Mullet Creek which flows into Lake Illawarra. Runoff from the catchment flows either north or south around the pit top areas to tributaries of Robin's Creek. In our view, the management of stormwater runoff is critical to ensure that coal and sediment laden waters do not enter Robin's Creek, Mullet Creek or Lake Illawarra. It is noted that the existing surface water management system is proposed to continue as part of this modification request and is divided into two systems, namely: (i) disturbed areas at the Wongawilli pit top and access tracks which have surface drainage infrastructure to direct disturbed area runoff to the on-site water management system and (ii) undisturbed areas of the Wongawilli pit top outside of the existing cleared mine benches, work areas and access tracks have surface water drainage infrastructure to direct undisturbed area runoff to local surface water systems and off-site.

Council further notes the existing internal drainage system is designed to capture and direct runoff that potentially contains coal fines and sediment from the pit top operations. Runoff from the coal stockpile area passes through two sediment ponds (a primary treatment settlement pond and a secondary treatment settlement pond), before discharging to the filter lagoon. Excess water stored in the filter lagoon is discharged to Robin's Creek via Licenced Discharge points 3 & 4 in accordance with the Environment Protection Licence 1087 (EPL 1087) issued by the NSW Environment Protection Authority. In this regard, Council requests that the Department ensure that the NSW Environment Protection Authority supports the project and specifically, the continuance of the existing surface water management system as part of the EPL 1087. Council also requests that appropriate conditions of consent be imposed which require the ongoing maintenance of the surface water management system, including the two sediment treatment ponds and the filter pond.

Should you have any enquiries or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Mr Ron Zwicker, Special Projects and Planning Support Manager on telephone (02) 4227 7111 or via email rzwicker@wollongong.nsw.gov.au .

Yours faithfully

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