



OUT21/5670

Jack Turner
Planning and Assessment Group
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

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Dear Mr Turner

**Hunter Power Project (Kurri Kurri Power Station) (SSI-12590060)
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

I refer to your email of 5 May 2021 to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Water and the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) about the above matter.

The above proposal is for the construction and operation of a 750 megawatt (MW) gas fired power station, electrical switchyard and ancillary infrastructure.

DPIE Water and NRAR's recommendations regarding groundwater take, minimal impact considerations of the NSW Aquifer Interference Policy (AIP) and controlled activities on waterfront land are in Attachment A.

Any further referrals to DPIE Water and NRAR can be sent by email to landuse.enquiries@dpie.nsw.gov.au or to the following coordinating officer within DPIE Water:

Alistair Drew – Project Officer
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Yours sincerely

Liz Rogers
Manager, Assessments, Knowledge Division
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment: Water
10 June 2021

Attachment A

Detailed advice to DPIE Planning & Assessment regarding the Hunter Power Project (Kurri Kurri Power Station) (SSI-12590060) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

1.0 Groundwater Take

1.1 Explanation

Groundwater levels vary across the site between 1.2 – 4 metres below ground level and, based on the proposed design, interception of groundwater is inferred during construction of bored piles (approximately 18m in depth), a stormwater basin, and some footings, and the proponent asserts that '*significant inflow or requirement for substantial dewatering is unlikely*'.

DPIE Water notes that a quantified estimate of groundwater inflows during construction was not provided, however, information presented in Table 12.3: *Groundwater mitigation measures*, suggests the proponents is planning a subsequent body of work, potentially including a dewatering plan. This suggests the proponent does not currently have sufficient confidence in the estimate of the volume of take to adequately assess potential impacts during construction.

The proponent intends to adopt '*means to minimise water ingress during construction*' of a stormwater basin and other services with potential for intercepting groundwater. Consideration should also be given to preventing seepage and/or ingress during construction and operation to prevent contamination of groundwater or unnecessary take.

The proponent identified the project site as located within the *Wallis Creek Water Source* of the *Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2009*, however, DPIE Water notes that the site lies within the mapped extent of the *Sydney Basin-North Coast Groundwater Source* of the *Water Sharing Plan for the North Coast Fractured and Porous Rock Groundwater Sources 2016* – identified as a *less productive groundwater source*.

1.2 Recommendations

Prior to Approval

- The proponent should demonstrate a reasonable quantified estimate of groundwater take for the proposed development.
- The proponent should refer to the *Sydney Basin-North Coast Groundwater Source* of the *Water Sharing Plan for the North Coast Fractured and Porous Rock Groundwater Sources 2016* in the Response to Submissions and any future documents.

Post Approval

- The proponent must ensure that any groundwater take is appropriately licenced unless eligible for an exemption. For take less than 3 megalitres per year (ML/yr) during construction, the proponent is referred to Division 3 Exemptions, Clause 21 of the *NSW Water Management (General) Regulation 2018* regarding relevant conditions.
- Detailed design should include methods of preventing ingress and/or seepage during construction and operation – e.g. with impermeable linings – for stormwater basins, and pits with inverts below the high groundwater level.

2.0 Minimal impact considerations of the NSW Aquifer Interference Policy (AIP)

2.1 Explanation

The proponent assessed the impacts of the development against the minimal impact considerations of the NSW AIP, however, DPIE Water considers the assessment as unsatisfactory based on the lack of quantifiable inflow estimates.

2.2 Recommendation

Prior to Approval

- After demonstrating a reasonable quantified estimate of groundwater take (as recommended in section 1.0 Groundwater Take above) provide additional evidence to support an assessment of the impacts of proposed take against the minimal impact considerations of the NSW AIP and rules of the relevant Water Sharing Plan.

3.0 Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land

3.1 Explanation

Proposed works including vegetation clearing, earthworks and heavy vehicles are likely to cause mobilisation of sediments. Controls are to be implemented before construction activities occur. This includes a sediment basin during the construction phase and water quality basin during operation to reduce sediments before water is released into the stream. Stormwater is to be directed into a stormwater basin with an outlet into the tributary of Black Waterholes Creek. The design is yet to be confirmed.

3.2 Recommendation

Post Approval

- Outlets onto the adjacent watercourse must be designed and constructed in accordance with the NRAR Guidelines for Controlled Activities on Waterfront Land. The NRAR Guidelines can be found <https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/licensing-trade/approvals/controlled-activities/guide>

4.0 Acid Sulfate Soils

4.1 Explanation

DPIE Water notes nearby mapped potential for Class 2 and 4 Acid Sulfate Soils and the proponent's intent to prepare and implement an Acid Sulfate Soils Management Plan in the event that Acid Sulfate Soils are disturbed during construction.

4.2 Recommendation

Post Approval

- As suggested by the proponent, if Acid Sulfate Soils are encountered prior to or during construction, the proponent should prepare and submit an Acid Sulfate Soils Management Plan.