

10 April 2018

Jack Murphy
Environmental Assessment Officer – Planning Services
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Emailed: jack.murphy@planning.nsw.gov.au

Your Reference: SSD 6084 MOD 1
Our Reference: OUT18/4505

Dear Mr Murphy,

Re: Austen Quarry Extension Project – Modification 1 (SSD 6084 MOD 1)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Statement of Environmental Effects (SoEE) prepared by R.W. Corkery & Co. Pty Ltd (RWC) on behalf of Hi-Tec Industries (NSW) Pty Limited (Hy-Tec, a fully-owned subsidiary of Adelaide Brighton Ltd) for the application to modify Development Consent SSD 6084 (SSD 6084, MOD 1) for the Austen Quarry. This is a response from the NSW Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) – Division of Resources & Geoscience (DRG), Geological Survey of New South Wales (GSNSW).

The building and construction industries in NSW require the ongoing replacement of supplies as current sources are exhausted. The continued sustainable development of existing and new quarries will facilitate the ongoing supply of construction materials to support affordable housing and infrastructure development for the growth of NSW. The resource in the subject area represents a regionally significant source of hard rock and manufactured sand for the Greater Sydney area.

Austen Quarry is located approximately 3.5 kilometres (km) south-south west of the village of Hartley and 10 km south of Lithgow and produce a range of hard rock aggregate and manufactured sand products for concrete making purposes and road materials to the Lithgow and Greater Sydney areas, with consent to operate until 30 June 2050.

MOD1 involves increasing the annual production limit from 1.1 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) to 1.6 Mtpa, increasing the maximum daily truck dispatch limit from 250 to 300 trucks, increasing the average dispatch limit from 150 to 200 trucks and increasing the hours of operation for truck loading and dispatch. It also proposes to realign the extraction boundary, the approved boundary for overburden emplacement and amend the biodiversity offset strategy. There are no proposed changes to existing extraction methods, processing or blasting frequency or criteria.

GSNSW has reviewed the SoEE for the Austen Quarry MOD 1 and note that the total volume of extractable resources would increase due to the realignment of the extraction boundary and the utilisation of material formerly considered overburden, reducing the disturbance area for overburden emplacement. MOD 1 to the Austen Quarry (SSD 6084) will increase resource recovery and efficiency of approved extractive operations at the subject site. GSNSW supports measures that seek to maximise resource recovery, subject to fulfilling rehabilitation requirements.

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In relation to biodiversity offsetting obligations, under current consent conditions the area labelled "Rehabilitation Area (Offset for Clarity)" on Figure 3.1 (Refer to page 31 of SoEE) was to be extracted. The resources in this area will be sterilised should it be reserved for biodiversity offsetting obligations as proposed by MOD 1. Further, GSNSW notes current consent conditions for SSD 6084 included a 94.3 hectare Biodiversity Offset Area located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Project. MOD 1 proposes to modify existing consent conditions to reflect the retirement of biodiversity credits only.

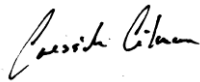
GSNSW acknowledge that the SoEE has sought to design the modification to avoid and minimise ecological impacts including biodiversity offset measures, localised geological/geotechnical conditions and operational safety considerations in the project planning stage with a range of strategies included in MOD 1 to mitigate the impact on biodiversity values, whilst maximising resource recovery.

GSNSW request to be consulted should further modifications be made in relation to the proposed location of any biodiversity offset areas (both on and/or off site) or any supplementary biodiversity measures to ensure there is no consequent reduction in access to prospective land for mineral exploration, or potential for sterilisation of mineral or extractive resources.

Condition 17 (a) of the current development consent requires the proponent to provide annual quarry production data to DRE using the standard form for that purpose. GSNSW require the proponent to provide annual production data for the subject site to DRG as a condition of any new or amended development consent.

Queries regarding the above information, and future requests for advice in relation to this matter, should be directed to the GSNSW Land Use team at landuse.minerals@industry.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Cressida Gilmore
Manager - Land Use