



Illawarra Innovative Industry Network (i3net)

Post: PO Box 1300 | Wollongong NSW 2500

Phone: 0401 030 023

Email: i3net@i3net.com.au

Web: www.i3net.com.au

19 April 2022

Director, Industry Assessments
NSW Planning
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124.

Re – Letter of Support. Blast Furnace 6 Reline Submission. SSI-22545215.

Dear Director,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the Blast Furnace 6 Reline, SSI-22545215

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support for BlueScope in their application for the Blast Furnace 6 (6BF) reline. I am writing this letter on behalf of the Illawarra Innovative Industry Network – i3net.

i3net, the Illawarra Innovative Industry Network, is a network of industry-based companies working from the Illawarra. Our members represent some of the largest companies in Australia & all the way through to SMEs and supply organisations, with over 20,000 employees. From bolts to submarines, i3net provides access to the Illawarra's vast range of manufacturers, engineering service providers and industrial suppliers. The network was established 20 years ago to promote the collective capability of industry to local, national and international markets. The power behind the network is the depth of capability and skills that can be provided by one powerful industry resource.

The purpose of this submission is to support and emphasise the significant decision the approval of this project is for the region, the state and for the sovereign capability for Australia.

We understand from BlueScope that scope of work of the project includes a capital investment to reline the 6BF of approximately \$1 Billion, which includes a significant upgrade of the furnace, supporting infrastructure and greater than \$100 million in environmental improvements.

BlueScope have shared that ~250 new jobs will be created during construction, and the project will support up to 10,000 direct and indirect jobs in the region. We also understand that unlike BlueScope's No.5 Blast Furnace Reline, which took around 200 days to complete, the project plan of the reline of No.6 Blast Furnace involves a three-year timeframe to execute and is expected to be completed in 2026. i3net supports this and commends BlueScope on this approach as it means greater local employment opportunities with more certainty over a longer timeframe. This is an important approach as the reline is one of many proposed projects for the region and the retention of local skilled trades, engineers and many other disciplines is needed to ensure the economic strength of the region and national supply chains are assured.

With a Blast Furnace life of approximately 20 years, the investment of ~\$1B sets up the positive direction for the future of Illawarra Industry into the mid 2040's. Additionally, as a region, state and nation, we are standing at an exciting and pivotal crossroads of traditional Steelmaking technologies and what lies ahead in the future if we commit to the transition to green hydrogen and low emission



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steelmaking technology. We understand from BlueScope's shared plans that they are excited to be part of the solution.

Due to the investment and plans of BlueScope, the proposed Blast Furnace reline is a solid bridge to transition to low emission steelmaking, and with BlueScope's commitment to be net zero by 2050, this secures the commercialisation of low emissions technologies. This project will ensure the region, state and country has the manufacturing capability to meet the demand for renewable energy projects in the future.

The events of the past years of fires, floods, pandemics and growing defense concerns has shown that NSW and Australia must invest in its sovereign capabilities if it is to survive, thrive and advance. As the industry representative for small, medium and large businesses in the industrial supply chain, the flow on effect for not approving this project would be devastating for the immediate 526 Wollongong manufacturing businesses (Business count ABS June 2018 cat. 8165), and the 10,000 individuals (.id, June 2019) who work in the local Manufacturing Professional, Scientific & Technical services. In fact, BlueScope generates ~\$6.5 billion in regional economic output, which is 24% of the Illawarra total output and directly employs 3,500 workers. Accordingly, community support for steelmaking and industry is strong in the Illawarra. It's in our DNA and a proud part of our heritage.

As the premier network of industry-based companies working from the Illawarra, i3net fully supports BlueScope's Blast Furnace 6 Reline.

At a local level, BlueScope continue to show their commitment to the Illawarra region by participating in i3net events and giving keynote presentations. The openness and approachability of BlueScope is appreciated and to be commended.

For further information, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate me on the below mentioned details.

Yours Sincerely,

B. Perry

Bianca Perry
Chief Executive Officer
i3net
M: 0401 030 023
E: i3net@i3net.com.au
W: www.i3net.com.au