

Summary Sheet

Airly Mine Extension Project (SSD 5581)

The Planning Assessment Commission has granted consent to the State significant development application SSD 5581 from Centennial Airly Pty Ltd for the Airly Mine Extension Project, subject to conditions. The decision follows the Commission's public hearing on 23 September 2015, Review Report dated November 2015 and public meeting on 27 October 2016.

In reaching this decision, the Commission carefully considered the recommendations of the independent expert panel on subsidence predictions and management. The panel recommended a cautious, iterative approach to managing subsidence. This will involve careful monitoring of subsidence early on, with appropriate adaptations to the mine design parameters, before mining toward areas with sensitive landform features.

The Commission is satisfied that the establishment of an independent expert panel before deciding on the development application, as recommended in the Commission's Review Report, provides greater confidence to the evaluation and management of subsidence. An independent expert panel has now been established by the Department, and its role has now been embedded in the relevant conditions of consent for subsidence management. The Secretary of the Department is able to set any specific terms of reference for the independent expert panel that may be necessary for each engagement. The terms of reference and any advice will be publicly available.

The Commission's Review Report also recommended additional consultation with the Environment Protection Authority before deciding on the development application. This has occurred and the Commission is now satisfied that strict conditions of consent are appropriate for governing water quality monitoring and species protection criteria for any mine water discharges.

The Commission has included conditions of consent requiring water compensation to downstream private water users in the unlikely event that compensation is required. The Commission accepts the advice from the various authorities that the groundwater model is fit-for-purpose and will be calibrated with monitoring data throughout the life of the project. The Commission also accepts the advice from the National Parks and Wildlife Service that a compensatory water supply at the Village Spring is unnecessary and impractical having regard to the statutory plan of management which promotes the area as a destination for self-reliant recreation.

The Commission confirms that potential biodiversity impacts, particularly on the Regent Honeyeater and Genowlan *Pultenea*, have been assessed and the conditions of consent provide an appropriate level of protection for all State and national biodiversity matters.

Finally, the Commission has included a condition of consent requiring additional landscaping in locations along the Castlereagh Highway where the new reject emplacement area may be visible.