

NSW Planning Assessment Commission Determination
Springvale water treatment project (SSD 7592)
Springvale mine extension project MOD 2 (SSD 5594 MOD 2)
Western coal services Project MOD 1 (SSD 5579 MOD 1)

19 June 2017

The NSW Planning Assessment Commission has granted consent for the Springvale water treatment project (SSD 7592), Springvale mine extension project (SSD 5594) MOD 2 and Western coal services project (SSD 5579) MOD 1, subject to conditions.

The Department referred the three projects conjointly to the Commission. The Commission notes that although the three projects are inter-related, they have been assessed individually and on their own merit as stand-alone applications. Taken together, the three projects are designed to respond to the Commission's 2015 findings by improving Springvale mine water treatment arrangements and delivering improvements to water quality.

The Commission determined that the three projects will improve environmental outcomes and have a beneficial impact on the Sydney drinking water catchment. Under these projects:

- Springvale mine will no longer discharge water through License Discharge Point 009 into the Cocks River from 30 June 2019,
- the Springvale Mine waste water will be treated for beneficial re-use at Mount Piper Power Station at a newly constructed water treatment facility, which will reduce the need for Mount Piper Power Station to draw raw water from the catchment, improving environmental flows and providing drought proofing for the power station;
- the salinity levels in the discharge from Springvale mine will be reduced by around a third over the life of the mine; and
- pollution reduction works at the Western Coal Services site will see a reduction in the total volumes of water and salt being discharged through Licensed Discharge Point 006.

The Commission acknowledges that up to 0.43ML/day of residual waste by-product from the water treatment plant will be transferred to the reject emplacement area of the Western Coal Services site. The applicant's efforts to reduce the discharge from the Western Coal Services site will be reflected through the implementation of the Pollution Reduction Program in conjunction with the EPA to reduce discharge at Licensed Discharge Point 006. The Commission notes that physical works outlined within the Pollution Reduction Plan will be completed prior to the water treatment facility's commencement of operations in June 2019.

The Commission finds that each of the three projects will have a neutral or beneficial impact on the Sydney drinking water catchment in accordance with the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Drinking Water Catchment) 2011. The Commission also recognises the overall benefit on the Sydney drinking water catchment resulting from the delivery of the three projects.

The Commission recognises the importance of the projects to the residents of the Lithgow community. A number of speakers at the public meeting in Lithgow on 17 May 2017 raised concerns over the future of Springvale Mine should the projects not proceed and the impacts on jobs within the local community. The significance of the loss of a range of mines and other industries from Lithgow in recent years was also emphasised. Furthermore, concerns were raised over the

capabilities of Mt Piper Power Station to supply energy to NSW should its sole source of coal no longer be operational. Council also emphasized the importance of the 600 jobs at Springvale mine and Mt Piper Power Station to the economic and social well being of the Lithgow community.

The Commission had regard to the applicant's Environmental Impact Assessment, the Department of Planning and Environment's (the Department) assessment report and submissions made to both the Department and Commission, and presentations at the public meeting. The Commission has balanced the economic, social and environmental factors in its determination of the proposals.

The Commission is satisfied that the Springvale water treatment project (SSD 7592), Springvale mine extension project MOD 2 and Western Coal Services project MOD 1 projects' benefits outweigh the potential impacts and has, subject to conditions, determined that the three projects should be approved.



Ross Carter (Chair)

Member of the Commission



Lynelle Briggs AO

Member of the Commission



David Johnson

Member of the Commission