



EXPANDED UNITED WAMBO MINE ‘HAS MERIT’ BUT MORE INFORMATION ON IMPACTS NEEDED: REVIEW

27 March 2018

A review by the state’s Independent Planning Commission has found the proposed expansion of United Wambo’s open cut coal mine in the NSW Hunter Valley “has merit” but more work needs to be done to address community concerns.

The Commission was asked by the Minister for Planning last December to examine the proposed modifications to the mine, 16km west of Singleton, which would enable the extraction of an extra 150 million tonnes of coal over a 23-year period.

Three Commissioners – Mr Gordon Kirkby (Chair), Mr John Hann and Mr Tony Pearson – were appointed to review the merits of the project and examine the likely economic, environmental, social and other impacts.

As part of its review, the Commission examined the Environmental Impact Statement, Response to Submissions and all other documentation relating to the project.

It also met with the applicant and Department of Planning and Environment, held a public hearing in Singleton to listen to affected residents’ views, and visited the mine site and surrounding areas. It received and carefully considered public submissions.

The Commission has today released the final report from its review which identifies key issues which require more information or consultation before a full and thorough assessment of the project can be completed:

- air quality
- noise
- vibration and blasting
- biodiversity
- final land form and rehabilitation
- water resources
- visual impacts
- transition to joint venture

.../2

The Commission's preliminary view is that "subject to a satisfactory response to the findings and recommendations made in its (review) report, the project has merit".

However, "the Commission notes that its views may change on any determination decision, including because of the provision of additional information provided in response to this review, and the final assessment of the project or other relevant factors. The Commission also notes that conditions of consent have not formed part of this review and would need to be given detailed consideration at the determination stage."

The project now returns to the Department for final assessment. It will come back to the Commission at a later date for determination.

The Commission's Review Report is available here:

<http://ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2017/12/united-wambo-open-cut-coal-mine-project-mod-3-and-mod-16>

(END OF STATEMENT)

Please note: Changes to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 which came into effect on 1 March 2018 removed the Independent Planning Commission's review function. However, the Commission's review of the United Wambo project was not affected because the Minister's request for a review predated the legislative changes.