

27 November 2019

Mr Peter Duncan AM
Panel Chair
Independent Planning Commission
Level 3
201 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Duncan

Earing Ash Dam Augmentation Project – (MP 07_00874) MOD 1 Submission

We refer to the application by Origin Energy Eraring Pty Limited (Origin) to modify the Project Approval for the Eraring Power Station Ash Dam under section 75W of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act), which is known as the Eraring Ash Dam Augmentation Project (the Augmentation Project). The Augmentation Project has been referred to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for determination. This submission supplements the submission provided by Centennial Coal Company Limited (Centennial) to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 7 February 2019.

Background

Centennial Newstan Pty Limited (Centennial Newstan), a subsidiary of Centennial, is the operator of the Newstan and Awaba Collieries, which are existing underground coal mines located in the Lake Macquarie Local Government Area (LGA). The Newstan and Awaba Colliery's operate within the boundaries of Consolidated Coal Lease 746 (CCL 746) held by Centennial Newstan. The existing Eraring Ash Dam, and proposed expansion area, are predominantly located within the area covered by CCL 746.

Newstan Colliery has at various times mined the upper coal seams (Great Northern and Fassifern coal seams) and lower coal seams (West Borehole, Borehole, Young Wallsend and Yard seams) to produce both semi-soft coking coal and thermal coal for the domestic and export markets. Awaba Colliery has historically extracted coal from the Great Northern seam however, it ceased operating as a producing mine in March 2012 following mineable coal reserves being exhausted.

The proposed Eraring Ash Dam extension area lies above mineable coal reserves within the West Borehole seam which are proposed to be extracted by Centennial Newstan in the future as part of the Newstan Mine Extension Project (State Significant Development Application SSD-10333). Centennial is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Newstan Mine Extension Project in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 13 June 2019.

Project Interactions

As noted above, Centennial Newstan proposes to undertake coal extraction from within the West Borehole seam that directly underlies the proposed Eraring Ash Dam expansion area and, in some areas, the historical workings of the Awaba Colliery. The Augmentation Project has the potential to sterilise the extraction of coal by Centennial Newstan in the West Borehole seam as a result of the potential impacts of subsidence on the grouting areas and stability of the Western Saddle Embankment.

Grouting of mine workings

The Awaba workings are within CCL 746. In accordance with the Mining Act, Centennial Newstan holds the exclusive right to carry out mining (including rehabilitation), within the area of CCL 746.

As detailed by Origin, a range of remedial approaches will be required to mitigate subsidence risks identified for the expanded Ash Dam, which would include the following techniques:

- filling of mine voids with stabilised fill material;
- excavating and controlled collapsing of shallow mine workings; and/or
- installing an impervious barrier using clays or suitable stabilised fill materials.

Centennial notes that the preferred strategy may employ all or a combination of the above techniques.

Origin's proposed actions to grout, excavate and/or fill the Awaba workings within CCL 746 can only be undertaken by Centennial.

Proposed Offset Areas

Origin has identified land-based offset opportunities in the vicinity of the Augmentation Project, including 500ha of potential offset site within 10km of the Augmentation Project site. While the site of the offset has not been finalised, the three proposed sites identified in the Environmental Assessment encompass some or all of the area bound by CCL 746.

Centennial is concerned that the establishment of a Stewardship site over any area of CCL 746 may impact future exploration and extraction of coal as well as restrict access for the implementation of mining related activities including subsidence and environmental monitoring.

Conclusion

Origin is a long standing and valued customer of Centennial. Centennial currently supplies coal to Eraring Power Station predominately from Myuna Mine at Wangi Wangi and Mandalong Mine at Morisset.

There are complex interactions between the proposed Augmentation Project and Centennial's Newstan Mine Extension Project and engagement and consultation between both parties will be ongoing.

Centennial requests the IPC recognise these complex interactions in the final determination report.

If you have any questions or require any further information in regards to the matters outlined in this submission, please feel free to contact me on [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



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Centennial Coal