



Ms Lynelle Briggs
Chair
Planning Assessment Commission
GPO Box 3415
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Briggs *Lynelle*

Bylong Coal Project (SSD 6367)

On 9 January 2017, the former Minister for Planning directed the Planning Assessment Commission to carry out a review of the merits of the Bylong Coal Project and to hold a public hearing during the review.

The Department has now completed its comprehensive whole-of-government assessment of the project in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and applicable NSW Government policies and guidelines. I have attached a copy of the Department's assessment report for the Commission's consideration.

The assessment incorporates the advice of relevant NSW Government agencies, Mid-Western Regional Council and a range of independent experts in groundwater, social and economic impacts.

The Department has also consulted extensively with the local community, including a community information session during the exhibition of the EIS, a number of site visits, and a workshop with members of the local community in regard to social impacts.

During the assessment of the project, the Department received 364 submissions, including 14 from government agencies, 35 from special interest groups and 315 from the general public.

Of the public and special interest group submissions, 336 formally objected, 12 were supportive, and the remaining 2 made comments on the project, noting that 14 of the submissions were from the local area and 66 from the broader region.

In accordance with the Minister's terms of reference for the project, the Commission is requested to hold a public hearing as soon as practicable, and provide its final report to the Department within 12 weeks of the date of this letter, unless the Secretary agrees otherwise.

If you require any further information or would like the Department to provide a briefing to the Commission, please contact David Kitto, Executive Director, Resource Assessments & Business Systems, on (02) 8274 6487.

Yours sincerely

Marcus Ray
Deputy Secretary
Planning Services

31/03/2017