



**Commission's 2017 Review Fact Sheet
Bylong Coal Project (SSD 6367)**

The Planning Assessment Commission has delivered its Review Report into the Bylong Coal Project in accordance with the Minister's terms of reference dated 9 January 2017. The project has been returned to the Department of Planning and Environment for consideration of the Commission's findings.

The Commission finds that doubts persist about the potential benefits and impacts of this project, despite extensive research and peer assessment. As a result, all aspects of the project will need to be comprehensively and cautiously considered, carefully weighted, and balanced one against another at the determination stage.

In summary of its review, the Commission found uncertainty and incomplete information about the risks and benefits of the project. The Commission concluded that, for a greenfield proposal in a location recognised for its agricultural capacity, exceptional scenic value and heritage importance, caution and great care will be required in weighing the benefits and costs of the project, in order to arrive at a balanced decision about competing land uses and interests in the Bylong Valley.

The Commission recognised the competing land-use objectives in the Bylong Valley, which place a high value on maintaining agricultural land, cultural heritage and landscape values, as well as the development of mineral resources. The Commission found in the material presented for review: uncertainty regarding the availability of water resources to satisfy the potential needs for the project and while sustaining other land uses; risks associated with proposed agricultural impact mitigation strategies; the potential for greater heritage significance than previously assessed for the Tarwyn Park and Iron Tank properties; limited scope for addressing the social impacts of the project and incomplete information to enable accurate estimation of its benefits, costs and risk.

Overall, the Commission was unable to find in the material presented for the review, recognition of the accumulation of, and interaction between, various impacts to the local community and the Bylong Valley. The effect of many step changes, albeit argued to be individually acceptable, may, when taken together, constitute a profound and substantial transformation of the valley's social, economic, heritage and landscape values.