



NSW Planning Assessment Commission Determination Invincible Coal Mine - Southern Extension Modification (07_0127 MOD 5)

2 February 2018

The Planning Assessment Commission has granted consent to Invincible Coal Mine - Southern Extension Modification near Lithgow, subject to conditions.

The Commission has determined the proposal is in the public interest. The creation of up to 32 operational jobs along with the investment in the local area will have important benefits for the community. The mine will also generate royalties for the State and the people of NSW while providing a source of specialty product coal to assist in the continued operation of the Shoalhaven Starches Plant, a significant provider of regional employment.

The Commission considers the impacts and potential risks from the development can be appropriately managed through the framework of rigorous controls and requirements in place to manage, mitigate, minimise, compensate and offset those impacts.

In considering the suitability of the site for open cut mining the Commission acknowledged its location adjacent to sensitive landscape features, including internationally recognised sandstone pagodas and areas of important conservation value. In particular, the proposed mine plan does not include high wall mining, and establishes a 300 metre minimum buffer between mining activities and the identified pagoda structures.

The Commission heard and acknowledged strong calls for it to consider the scale of the likely impacts within the context of the important positive contribution the project would make to the local economy, which has deteriorated as a result of continuing downturns in mining. The impacts have been assessed in detail and any negative impacts were considered to be small and manageable. The Commission sought increased certainty through the conditions of consent that the required management actions, including the rehabilitation of historic mining impacts, would be implemented in a timely fashion and where feasible before the recommencement of mining activities.

The proponent is committed to implementing a whole of site rehabilitation program that includes the proposed Southern Extension area, and all existing historically disturbed areas through reshaping mining areas to remove voids and revegetate the reshaped landforms with locally endemic woodland and forest communities.

In reaching this decision, the Commission considered carefully the application under section 75W of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, the concerns raised by the community in written comments and at the public meeting conducted at the Lithgow Workies Club on 29 November 2017, the views of the Lithgow City Council, relevant government agencies and the Department of Planning and Environment's assessment report.