

**Resource Assessments**

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Ms Anna Summerhayes  
A/Executive Director  
Independent Planning Commission  
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth St  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ms Summerhayes

**Boggabri Creek Coal Mine Modification 7 (09\_0182 MOD 7)**

I write in response to your letter dated 14 May 2019 seeking clarification about whether the above modification includes seeking approval to undertake exploration activities within the native vegetation corridor.

As identified in the Department's assessment report, exploration is a standard practice for mining operations and implicit in the project approval. Boggabri Coal is seeking to explicitly include this activity in the project approval.

The exploration activities would be undertaken within the approved mine disturbance area excluding the 250 metre wide native vegetation corridor along the Boggabri Coal and Maules Creek Coal mining lease boundary.

Condition 7 of Schedule 2 of the existing approval specifically prohibits clearing in the native vegetation corridor, as follows:

*"The Proponent shall not clear native vegetation from any land within 250 metres of the adjoining Maules Creek Coal Mine mining lease boundary, except with the approval of the [Secretary](#), following endorsement of OEH."*

*Notes: The purpose of this condition is to ensure that a 500 metre wide native vegetation corridor is maintained between the open cut pits of the project and the adjoining Maules Creek Project, if it is approved. However, alignment of this corridor directly along the lease boundaries may not be its most efficient location, from either an environmental or economic perspective. Consequently, with the endorsement of OEH, the [Secretary](#) may approve substitution of an alternative native vegetation corridor of at least 500 metres width and equivalent or better ecosystem value, within the general vicinity of the lease boundary. See also condition 51 of Schedule 3.*

As detailed in the note below the condition, the then Planning Assessment Commission contemplated in its decision making that the corridor could be relocated subject to the approval of the Secretary with the endorsement of OEH.

The Department can confirm that there would be no change to the impacts or management of the vegetation corridor as a result of the modification, and that the modification would not permit clearing of vegetation for the purposes of any project related activities — mining or exploration.

Yours sincerely



15/5/19

Stephen O'Donoghue  
**Acting Executive Director**  
**Resource Assessments and Business Systems**