



14 July 2021

Mr Stephen O'Donoghue  
Director, Resource Assessments  
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment

via email: [Stephen.ODonoghue@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Stephen.ODonoghue@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr O'Donoghue,

**Hume Coal Project and Berrima Rail Project (SSD 7172 & SSD 7171)  
Second referral**

I refer to the above Projects currently before the Independent Planning Commission (**Commission**) for determination.

Following the questions posed by the Commission to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (**Department**) at the Public Hearing on 12 and 13 July 2021, the Commission would be assisted by the Department providing a response to the following questions:

1. In consideration of potential disruptions, please provide further information regarding the existing and proposed number of additional rail movements per day, the number of 'at grade' level rail crossings between the project site and the Port Kembla terminal and how the potential impacts of train movements were considered in the Department's assessment.
2. In both DPIE's preliminary assessment report and final assessment reports, the Department states that the predicted drawdown impacts on the aquifer would be the most significant for any mining project that has been considered in NSW. Yet in its submission to the Commission, the Applicant stated that the impacts on groundwater were less than other mines taking into consideration peak annual inflow, drawdown, and recovery. Could the Department please confirm its groundwater concerns with reference to the Aquifer Interference Policy, the views of the Applicant, and with particular reference to the predicted groundwater impacts at the recently approved extension to the Tahmoor Mine?
3. How were the potential air quality impacts of windblown coal dust from the project site and the transport of product coal taken into consideration?
4. The Department indicated Hume Coal has offered to enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement (**VPA**) with the Minister. Please confirm the status of this VPA, any information provided by Hume Coal to the Department and whether this information was publicly exhibited.
5. The Commission heard submissions raising concerns about the impact of the Project on the tourism, agriculture and food production industries in the region. Was a quantitative analysis undertaken with respect to the impact of the project on the tourism, agriculture and food production industries in the region?
6. Please elaborate on the Department's concerns regarding the emplacement of mine waste underground.



7. A number of issues were raised in regard to the economics of the Project, in particular the sensitivity of the project's Net Present Value to potential reductions in resource recovery and the need to cost contingencies. Could the Department comment on these matters please?

Please provide the requested information by close of business on **Wednesday, 21 July 2021**.

If you require any clarification in relation to the above, or wish to discuss further, please contact Ms Casey Joshua or Mr Lindsey Blecher on (02) 9383 2100.

Yours sincerely,

Casey Joshua

Planning Director (Acting)