

Professor Mary O'Kane AC  
Chair - Independent Planning Commission  
Via email: [REDACTED]

Received by IPC  
Wednesday 1 June 2022

31 May 2022

Dear Professor O'Kane

**Mount Pleasant Optimisation Project (SSD 10418)**

The Department has completed its assessment of the merits of the Mount Pleasant Optimisation Project (SSD 10418). The application is referred to the Independent Planning Commission (the Commission) for determination as the Minister has requested the Commission to hold a public hearing into the carrying out of the project and to determine the applications. The Commission is the consent authority for the project (SSD 10418), as more than 50 unique submissions in the form of objections were made.

The project involves optimisation of the existing Mount Pleasant mine to extract an additional 247 million tonnes (Mt) of run-of-mine (ROM) coal, by deepening (by approximately 85 metres) and extending part of the open cut areas. The project also involves increasing the mine's production rate to 21 Mt per annum of ROM coal, and extending the mine life by 22 years, to December 2048.

The Department publicly exhibited the application from 3 February 2021 until 17 March 2021. The Department received 250 public submissions on the project, comprising 140 (56%) opposing, 106 (42%) supporting, and 4 (2%) in the form of comments.

Submissions in support generally pointed to the employment and economic benefits of the project and the existing mine, as well as related social benefits for the region. Submissions objecting to the project raised a number of concerns, with the main issues including air quality, noise and related health impacts, as well as greenhouse gases and climate change impacts, water resource impacts, visual and land use impacts, socio-economic impacts and biodiversity impacts.

The Department's detailed assessment of the project has been informed by expert advice from Government agencies, the Commonwealth Independent Expert Scientific Committee and independent experts in the field of air quality and groundwater.

Overall, the Department considers that, on balance, the benefits of the project outweigh its costs, and that the project is approvable subject to the recommended conditions.

I have attached a copy of the Department's assessment report and recommended conditions of consent for the Commission's consideration. The project will also be referred to the Commission through the major projects portal.

If you have any questions or wish to arrange a briefing, please contact me on [REDACTED] or by email at [stephen.odonoghue@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:stephen.odonoghue@planning.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



Steve O'Donoghue  
**Director Resource Assessments**