

SOMR Presentation to ARC

1st March 2017

Introduction

I am speaking on behalf of Save Our Macleay River, an incorporated community association, based in the lower half of the catchment, we are concerned with the health of the river and work to inform the community and to represent them. Residents of the Macleay are living with an historic legacy of arsenic and antimony contamination, in our river and on our floodplain. These contamination issues have largely been caused by past mining practices at Bakers Creek. Hence our significant interest in current and future mining operations and the impact that those operations will have on the natural environment. Of particular concern is the proximity of mining operations to the escarpment.

The proposed mine site is located in the headwaters of the Macleay River; 300kms long, the river passes through the environmentally significant Oxley Wild Rivers National Park World Heritage area, the villages of Bellbrook and Willawarrin, and the towns of Kempsey, Gladstone and South West Rocks. We are concerned that Council's planning report, which recommends deferred commencement conditions, acknowledges that the environmental impact assessment of the proposed mine is inadequate. We urge Council to delay determination of the DA until it has sufficient information to assess the environmental impacts of the mine.

We are also concerned that a decision today to approve the DA with "conditional deferred commencement consent" for the mine expansion at Clark's Gully will exclude the community from further information, scrutiny and process. If, as we recommend, the DA is deferred until the conditions are met, the community and submitters would be 'in-the-loop' (informed and involved).

The EIS is the document which is assessed by the public and agencies for review of adequacy and submissions. Most reports and submissions agree that it has some significant omissions and flaws, and additional conditions have been imposed.

Conditions

- We strongly support that a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan, and an Environmental Management Plan be prepared.

We support the requirement for a Stormwater Management Plan, engineered against the possibility of exceeding capacities in extreme rainfall events. - 1 in 100 year 72 hour rainfall event - the Australian standard, as an absolute minimum.

We support the development of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan and of a detailed on-site water management plan.

we support the requirement of a detailed Mine Closure and Rehabilitation Plan;

we support the condition that baseline environmental data be collected, but strongly suggest, as does Coucil's independent expert, including a condition of ' ongoing sampling, analysis and reporting.'

All conditions requiring the preparation of plans must ensure that the plans are to be fully complied with and implemented.

We ask that DA approval be deferred until these Conditions are met and assessed by submitters as well as Council.

Tailings Storage Facility 3

It is broadly acknowledged operations at Clark's Gully and Hillgrove Mine are intrinsically linked. When constructed, we understand TSF3 is proposed to be used for tailings from Clark's Gully and Metz operations. We ask that the TSF3 construction plan be developed, and considered with this DA and approval process.

We ask that Council, in recognition of the operational link between HG and CG, consider integrating the assessment and Approvals for the two mines, including construction of TSF3 and the rehabilitation of TSF1 as part of this development application.

Summary

Our concern today is that "Conditional deferred commencement consent" is equivalent to a "closed shop", excluding the concerned community who have made submissions, such as ourselves.

We ask that approval be deferred until detailed plans for water management, mine rehabilitation, environmental monitoring and reporting are assessed and in place.

If the DA is approved today, we understand that it is possible to file a merits appeal in the Land & Environment Court within 28 days of approval notification. We will consider exercising our right of appeal, but we hope that we don't need to go down this path.

As there are a number of significant issues yet to be finalised, we strongly urge that the DA as it currently stands, be deferred

|
|