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MEDIA RELEASE

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WALLARAH 2 TO BE REVIEWED BY PLANNING ASSESSMENT COMMISSION

The independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) will review the Wallarah 2 coal project near Wyong.

Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, said the review would inform the Department of Planning's assessment of the \$700 million mining proposal, which is to extract up to 150 million tonnes of coal over a period of 28 years using longwall methods.

"The NSW Government is well aware of the community's concerns about the potential impacts of the Wallarah 2 proposal, particularly regarding subsidence," the Minister said.

"That's why, in August last year, Kristina Keneally committed to sending the proposal to the PAC for an independent review of the project's merits.

"As part of the PAC's review, I have also required public meetings be held.

"The PAC will consist of three highly-regarded technical experts in fields of subsidence, groundwater and surface water and I have asked for its report by 15 October."

PAC Chairperson, Gabrielle Kibble, and regular member John Court will be joined on the panel by:

- Emeritus Professor Jim Galvin – Managing Director of Galvin and Associates, Visiting Professor at the University of NSW and an expert in mine-related subsidence;
- Dr Lloyd Townley – Managing Director of NTEC Environmental Technology and a specialist in groundwater science and engineering; and
- Dr Steve Perrens – Principal of Evans & Peck engineering consultancy and an expert in water management on mine sites.

The panel has been asked to:

- Review the Environmental Assessment for the Wallarah 2 Coal Project, taking into consideration any issues raised in submissions, the findings of the strategic review into the *Impacts of Potential Underground Coal Mining in the Wyong LGA*, the Wyong Water Study and international peer review of the Wyong Water Study;
- Hold public hearings during this review;
- Assess the potential subsidence-related impacts of the project, paying particular attention to its ability to adversely affect the Central Coast's drinking water supply and any other potentially significant impacts of the project;
- Recommend appropriate measures to avoid, minimise or offset these impacts; and
- Provide advice on the merits of the project as a whole.

The proposal was placed on public exhibition for 60 days earlier this year, double the usual exhibition period.
