

Further response to Newcastle Herald on Greta train approval

Further response to questions about a petition lodged against the project and timing of the decision

Re: the petition

The current delegations from the Minister to Departmental officers are available on the Department's website at:

http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=xbl_mYjFLqo%3d&tabid=203&language=en-US

Criteria relating to the number of public submissions apply to the Minister's determination role for projects under both Part 3A and Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

This document also states that "a petition or a single submission that is signed by multiple parties is taken to be one submission".

The issues raised in a petition are considered by the Department in its assessment in the same way as issues raised in any other submission.

On 15 December 2010, the Department received a copy of a petition which was addressed to the Legislative Assembly regarding the Greta facility. The petition recorded an overall objection from the signatories and suggested an alternative site be found. The suitability of the site was one of the issues addressed in the Department's assessment.

Re: the approvals

As indicated in our previous responses, the Director-General's approval of this project on 18 March was entirely appropriate and clearly in line with the relevant advice from the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the delegation of the Minister's determination role.

The Department's records indicate that this was one of two development proposals determined by the Director-General during the two month period indicated in your question.

Officers of the Department determined 12 Part 3A proposals (excluding modifications) during this time under delegation from the Minister. A number of Part 4 projects were also determined during this time.

All this information is publicly available on the Department's website.

Clearly the determination of the Greta train support facility is an example of the carrying out of routine business by the Department and the Director-General.