Independent decision for Stratford mine extension

The final decision on a proposal to establish three new mining areas at Stratford coal mine and extend its life by 11 years will be made by the Planning Assessment Commission.

The Department of Planning and Environment referred the proposal to the PAC for independent determination, with a recommendation that it be approved with strict conditions to control noise, air quality, water, biodiversity and environmental impacts.

“The company says that the proposed mine extension would mean 250 full-time local jobs until 2025, as well as around another 30 construction jobs while the extension is being built,” a Department spokesperson said.

“The project would see $75 million invested in NSW during construction and around $110 million spent in NSW every year the mine operates.

“This includes $45 million per year that will be spent in the Gloucester region, with money channelled to all kinds of local businesses including local equipment suppliers, service providers and caterers.

“As well as the local benefits, NSW would receive around $106 million in royalties from the coal, which could be spent on vital services across the state, such as schools and hospitals.”

The extension proposal was put on exhibition for community feedback between November 2012 and January 2013 and received 295 submissions were received, including 214 supporting the project and 65 that objected.

“The Department carefully considered the submissions and the applicant’s response, as well as analysis by independent experts, while assessing the proposal,” the spokesperson said.

“We believe that the impacts of the mine can be managed by applying strict conditions to the project and our compliance officers are there to ensure that the company abides by the rules.”

A previous review of the project by the PAC found that the project was approvable, as long as the impacts could be controlled.

The PAC will now make the final determination, taking into account the Department’s recommendation, community feedback and its own expert analysis.

To read the Department’s assessment of the proposed extension, visit www.majorprojects.nsw.gov.au.

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