Investigation report into Dendrobium Mine released

The Department of Planning and Environment today released a report on its investigation into the impacts of longwall mining at the Dendrobium Coal Mine.

Planning Minister Rob Stokes requested the Department investigate claims made regarding impacts of the mine on water and swamps in an area known as Area 3B.

The Department led a joint-agency investigation, including a site visit to inspect the impacts on 8 September 2015.

The report found that there had been no breach of the strict performance measures in place to manage environmental impacts.

It also found that the majority of impacts were low-level and consistent with what had been predicted in environmental studies considered by the Department prior to approval of mining in Area 3B.

However, the impacts of longwall mining on one tributary to Wongawilli Creek (known as WC21) were greater than had been predicted.

As a result, the Department required Illawarra Coal to provide the Department with a remediation plan for the tributary, to be prepared in consultation with WaterNSW.

The Department has recently received and is currently considering this plan.

The Department will closely monitor the implementation of the plan to ensure that the impacts of mining in this area are properly remediated.

Other actions required by the Department to address community concerns and findings of the report include:

- engaging an independent water expert with a view to strengthening modelling and management of ground and surface water impacts
- requiring the company to expand and improve its water and swamp monitoring systems to inform the assessment of further mining in the area

A copy of the report can be found at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/compliance.

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