Independent decision for T4 coal loader

The final decision on the T4 coal loader approval will be made by the independent Planning Assessment Commission.

“The application has been carefully examined through multiple, extensive reviews involving analysis by independent experts and community consultation,” a Department spokesperson said.

“We are satisfied that with strict conditions to ensure biodiversity, air quality, noise and other impacts are managed, the project would be in the public interest and should be approved.

“The Department has recently increased the number of compliance officers covering Newcastle, so if the project is approved it would be closely monitored to ensure it was meeting these important conditions.

“When the majority of major projects do the right thing, compliance officers work with the community and industry to fix any issues quickly and have the power to issue orders, fines and penalty notices.”

The spokesperson said the proposal would bring significant economic benefits to the region in terms of employment and investment.

“The project would create 1,500 construction jobs and operating the coal loader would mean 80 ongoing positions,” the spokesperson said.

“Building the coal loader would bring $4.8 billion of investment to the region.

“The proposal also involves upgrading local roads, fixing up contaminated land and committing significant sums of money to protect biodiversity areas to compensate for construction impacts.”

The spokesperson said that the company’s recommended contribution to Newcastle City Council had been calculated based on the project’s impacts.

“The Department has recommended the company pay more than $528,000 in developer contributions,” the spokesperson said.

“On top of this, the applicant has agreed to enter into an agreement directly with the Council regarding contributions to infrastructure.
“Given the limited impacts the project will have on local infrastructure funded by the Council, the Department’s assessment found it would be unreasonable to ask the company to pay any more.”

“The PAC will now make the final determination on the projects, taking into account the Department’s assessment and community feedback.”

For more information about the proposal and to view the Department’s assessment of the projects, visit www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au.

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