Tuesday, 3 November 2015

**Independent planning review for Russell Vale Colliery**

Public hearings will be held as part of the independent Planning Assessment Commission’s second review of Wollongong Coal’s application to expand Russell Vale Colliery.

The review will take into consideration changes to the planning policy governing mining in NSW and additional information provided by the company.

The Commission completed its first review in April of this year, raising several issues the company needed to address.

Wollongong Coal provided its final response to this review at the end of September, including a detailed independent risk assessment focussing on subsidence and water impacts.

The Department is now completing its review of this information and will then provide it to the Planning Assessment Commission.

The second review will provide the Commission an opportunity to review the project in light of recent changes to the State Planning Policy for Mining (the Mining SEPP).

The change means that environmental, social and economic considerations are all given equal consideration under the policy.

Wollongong Coal is seeking approval to expand its mining operations at Russell Vale by extracting 4.7 million tonnes of coal over five years from eight new underground longwall panels.

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