Independent planning review for Mount Owen

An application to extend mining operations at the Mount Owen Complex, located 20 kilometres northwest of Singleton has been referred to the independent Planning Assessment Commission for review.

Glencore’s proposal seeks to expand or deepen three existing mining pits to extract an additional 92 million tonnes of coal and to extend the completion date of the project by approximately 12 years until 2030.

The application was exhibited for community feedback from 20 January to 6 March 2015 and received 233 submissions.

“The Department has completed its assessment report and has sent its findings and draft conditions to the Commission,” a spokesperson for the Department of Planning and Environment said.

The Department’s preliminary assessment has found that the project could be approved, subject to strict conditions including environmental controls for:

- water resources
- biodiversity – including strict performance measures for the proposed offset and rehabilitation areas
- European and Aboriginal heritage and infrastructure.

The recommended conditions of consent also protect nearby residents from potential dust and noise amenity impacts and allow the owner of any nearby privately-owned land to request an independent review of the amenity impacts of the project on their property, if they consider the project is not complying with the consent's relevant criteria.

The Planning Assessment Commission will now undertake its review of the project and hold public hearings as part of this review.

“The Planning Assessment Commission is an important part of the NSW Planning system, ensuring that major developments are subject to expert, independent review and assessment,” the spokesperson said.

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