

Media release



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INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION TO RULE ON BYLONG

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment has completed its comprehensive assessment of the Bylong Coal Project referring to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) for approval, subject to stringent conditions.

Acting Executive Director of Resources Assessments, Mike Young, said the Department believed the applicant KEPCO had, in its latest application, further reduced the environmental impacts of the project to address community and government concerns.

“KEPCO applied in 2014 for a new open cut and underground coal mine in the Bylong Valley that would extract up to 6.5 million tonnes of coal a year over 23 years,” he said. “After years of rigorous assessment, public consultation and after last year’s IPC review, KEPCO’s latest application removes mining from Tarwyn Park and the former Upper Bylong Catholic Church and cemetery, as well as ensuring minimal impact on water resources.

“The Department considered carefully community concerns and advice from key government agencies, independent experts on water, social and economic impacts and from Mid-Western Regional Council which is supportive of the project.

“Based on the advice of the Department of Industry – Lands and Water and independent expert advice, the Department’s assessment found the mine will not impact other water users’ entitlements, including farmers.

“The Department believes its recommended conditions provide a comprehensive, strict and precautionary approach to ensuring the project can comply with relevant performance measures and standards,” he said.

Mr Young said the project would directly employ up to 665 people during construction and up to 450 people during operations and KEPCO would also spend around \$1.3 billion in capital investment, providing economic benefits to the regional economy. “Council and KEPCO have also signed a Voluntary Planning Agreement which would provide around \$7 million to Council for community works under its *Towards 2030 Community Plan*,” he said.

All the information relied on in the Department’s assessment and its final report are available on the NSW Major Projects website at:

http://www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6367

Media: mediaunit@planning.nsw.gov.au