

## NSW Planning Assessment Commission Determination Wambo Coal Mine DA 305-7-2003 - MOD 17

20 December 2017

The Planning Assessment Commission has granted consent to modify the existing approval for underground mining at the Wambo Coal Mine from Wambo Coal Pty Ltd (the proponent), a subsidiary of Peabody Energy Australia Pty Ltd. The modification proposes development of nine additional longwall panels (17-25) in the Whybrow Seam and recovery of an additional 18 million tonnes (Mt) of run-of-mine (ROM) coal, within existing approved limits at the Wambo Mine Complex in Singleton, subject to conditions.

The proposed longwalls are adjacent to the approved South Bates Underground mining area. The Commission acknowledges that the viability of the proposed modification relies on the ability to use the same infrastructure and workforce to extract from the Whybrow seam adjacent to the current workings.

The Commission finds that potential subsidence impacts will be addressed through key performance measures and conditions of consent that require the proponent to limit and monitor subsidence impacts. The proponent is required to develop a detailed Extraction Plan, for approval by the Secretary, to govern the mining of approved longwall panels. Based on the evidence provided, the Commission finds potential subsidence impacts are acceptable.

The Commission acknowledges the Department's assessment of groundwater dependent ecosystems and the need for further monitoring data to verify if vegetation along North Wambo Creek is groundwater dependent. Accordingly, the Commission supports the condition to require a study to determine whether groundwater dependent ecosystems are present within the modification area, and the application of performance measures if groundwater dependent ecosystems are identified. The Commission finds that the imposed 2 years of monitoring would allow sufficient time to inform the preparation of any Extraction Plan for the relevant longwalls.

The Commission finds that potential impacts to surface water, groundwater and Aboriginal cultural heritage would be managed through existing conditions of consent and revised management and monitoring programs.

The Commission acknowledges the economic benefits of the proposed modification and finds that the proposal would utilise the existing Wambo Coal Mine workforce and benefit the local economy through direct employment at the mine and through flow-on contributions to the regional economy.