



COMMISSION TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING ON BYLONG COAL PROJECT

Tuesday 9 October 2018

The state's Independent Planning Commission will hold a public meeting next month to listen to the community's views about revised plans for a coal mine at Bylong.

The former Planning Assessment Commission (PAC)* conducted a Review with a Public Hearing in relation to the Bylong Coal Project last year which found substantial doubts persisted about the risks and benefits of the proposal.

The Review raised concerns about potential impacts on water and agricultural resources, social impacts on Bylong Village and its surrounds, and impacts on the heritage value of the Tarwyn Park property as well as the broader landscape values of the Bylong Valley.

The PAC sent the project back to the Department noting "all aspects on the project will need to be comprehensively and cautiously considered, carefully weighted, and balanced one against another at the determination of the stage."

In response, the applicant, KEPCO Bylong Australia Pty Ltd, lodged revised plans with the Department of Planning and Environment in July this year. The Department has now completed its assessment of the proposal and referred it to the Independent Planning Commission for a decision.

Chair of the Commission, Professor Mary O'Kane AC, has appointed a three-member Panel, comprising Mr Gordon Kirkby (Panel Chair), Ms Wendy Lewin and Mr Stephen O'Connor, to scrutinise the state significant development application and make a determination.

As part of their decision-making processes, the Commissioners are expected to meet with the applicant, representatives of the Department and Mid Western Regional Council. Given the changes to the application, they'll also hold a public meeting at Parklands Resort and Conference Centre, Mudgee, from 10am on Wednesday 7 November 2018 to hear the community's opinions on the Department's final assessment report.

Members of the public who wish to apply to speak at the meeting are required to complete a registration form, available on the Commission's website, and return it by 5pm on Monday 29 October 2018. The Commission will accept written comments on the proposal up to one week after the public meeting (Wednesday 14 November 2018).

Because the former PAC has already held a Public Hearing in relation to this project, merit appeal rights in relation to any future determination by the IPC have been extinguished.

** The Planning Assessment Commission was replaced by the Independent Planning Commission under changes to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act which came into effect on 1 March 2018.*