

Mr Nicholas Bates
Project Manager – Water Resilience
Hunter Water Corporation
36 Honeysuckle Drive
Newcastle NSW 2300

Via email: Nicholas.Bates@hunterwater.com.au

23 December 2019

Dear Mr Bates

Belmont Drought Response Desalination Plant (SSI 8896)
Response to Submissions

The exhibition of the development application including the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the above proposal ended on Thursday 19 December 2019. All submissions received by the Department during the exhibition of the proposal are available on the Department's website at <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/10546>.

The Department requires that you provide a response to the issues raised in those submissions, in accordance with clause 85A(2) of the Environment Planning and Assessment Regulations 2000. Please provide a response to the issues raised in these submissions within three months / by Friday 20 March 2020.

You are also requested to provide a response to the issues included at Attachment 1.

Note that under clause 113(7) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*, the days occurring between the date of this letter and the date on which your response to submissions is received by the Secretary are not included in the deemed refusal period.

If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Sommer who can be reached on 02 9274 6184 or at Rebecca.Sommer@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Lloyd Eley-Smith
Senior Case Manager
Social & Infrastructure Assessments

Lloyd-Eley Smith
Acting Director
Social and Infrastructure Assessments_

as delegate for the Secretary

Enclosed: Attachment 1

Attachment 1: Key Issues

If any changes to the design of the Belmont Drought Response Desalination Plant are proposed, the Department requests the Applicant consult with the Department prior to lodgement of any further documentation.

The Department requests additional information and/or clarification on the following:

Detailed design

- Provide a detailed drawing/plan set that accurately depicts the proposal.
- Confirmation as to whether the proposed desalination plant infrastructure will be built on hardstand or whether infrastructure will be on the existing surface of the disused evaporation ponds.

Subsidence

- Consideration of subsidence areas to be impacted by water intake infrastructure and how any impacts will be mitigated and managed.

Surface water, stormwater and drainage

- Based on Concept Design drawings provided, a significant proportion of the disused evaporation pond area will be utilised for the purposes of the desalination plant, as such additional detail is required in relation to stormwater and drainage flows around the proposed infrastructure.
- Consideration of *Guidelines for development adjoining land and water management by DECCW* (OEH, 2013).

Groundwater

- Section 7.2.3.2 contradicts some information presented within the EIS. Confirmation is required on the intake volumes via the seawater intakes and the anticipated drinking water yield.

Consultation

- Provide detail of the feedback received during consultation (both prior to lodgement of the EIS and following exhibition of the EIS) (as detailed in Section 6.5) and elaborate how this feedback was used to refine the design of the proposal.

Consideration for future developments

- Demonstrate consideration of any cumulative impacts associated with the proposal.
- Consider any upcoming (or planned) large-scale projects within the immediate vicinity that may be impacted by the proposed development, particularly during construction.

Crown ownership

- Provide detail of ownership of the parcels of land affected by the proposal and any management measures proposed, specifically in relation to Crown Lands.

Decommissioning

As the proposal is considered to be a temporary response, provide details of the deconstruction process and how this would be managed. Additionally, what would trigger the need for deconstruction?