Guidelines for the Economic Assessment of Mining and Coal Seam Gas Proposals

October 2015

What are the Guidelines for?

- All major mining and coal seam gas proposals require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). An EIS considers a broad range of issues including biodiversity, water management and alternative uses of the land to help authorities determine whether the proposed development is in the best interests of NSW.
- Economic assessment of the project is one of the components of an EIS. It is used to help inform the community and government about the economic impacts of a major project on NSW and the local community.
- The Guidelines have been developed to ensure economic assessments are robust and consistent across the state.
- The revised Guidelines do not reduce environmental standards or community consultation requirements.

Why is there a need for the Guidelines?

- The new Guidelines provide more detail to applicants and outline methodologies for delivering an economic assessment. This will ensure future economic assessments provide more consistent and robust information to help government and the public weigh up the economic, community and environmental concerns associated with a project.
- The new Guidelines have a much greater focus on the effects that a project may have on the local community and provides a methodology for assessing these impacts.

How and when will the Guidelines be used?

- EIS submissions for all new major mining and coal seam gas proposals will need to comply with the Guidelines once they are finalised. Applications that are very close to being lodged may be submitted under the previous guide.
- The Department of Planning and Environment is also establishing a panel of independent reviewers with expertise in undertaking cost benefit analysis for the resources sector.
- The independent reviewers will evaluate the quality of economic assessments submitted by proponents and will provide advice to the Department of Planning and Environment on whether they meet requirements.

How will the community benefit from having new Guidelines?

- Economic assessments of mining and coal seam gas proposals will now include an appraisal of the impacts of a project in the local area as well as state-wide benefits.
- The economic assessment report will be reviewed as part of the full EIS by Government agencies and placed on public exhibition for community comment. This will allow for consistent information to be provided to the community.
How is the Government consulting with stakeholders?

- The Guidelines and their associated workbooks will be on public exhibition from 14 October 2015 to 24 November 2015.

How can I comment on the draft Guidelines?

- We welcome your feedback on these new Guidelines. Submissions can be made up to 24 November 2015:
  - online at: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/proposals
  - by mail to: Deputy Secretary, Growth, Design & Programs Division, Department of Planning and Environment, GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001.
- Submissions will be made public in line with the Department of Planning and Environment’s objective to promote an open and transparent planning system. If you do not want your name published, please state this clearly at the top of your submission.
- Before making a submission, please read our privacy policy at: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/privacy

What happens next?

- At the end of the consultation period we will prepare a report for the Minister for Planning.
- Once the Minister makes a decision about the proposed changes, we will publish an update on our website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/proposals. We will also provide an update to anyone who made a submission.

Where can I get more information?

- Call our Information Centre on 1300 305 695. If English isn’t your first language, please call 131 450. Ask for an interpreter in your language and then request to be connected to our Information Centre on 1300 305 695.
- Email us at information@planning.nsw.gov.au