Proposed Olympic Dam Expansion

Public comments now invited

BHP Billiton is currently seeking approval from the Australian, South Australian and Northern Territory governments to significantly expand its mining and processing operations at Olympic Dam in northern South Australia. The main objective of the proposed expansion is to unlock the full potential of the deposit to meet increasing world demand for copper and uranium.

The expansion centres on the creation of an open pit mine, which would lift ore production six-fold and require expanded mineral processing facilities. The open pit mine would operate simultaneously with the existing underground mine. New and expanded infrastructure, and facilities to accommodate an expanded workforce will also be required.

The public is now invited to comment on two documents:

– BHP Billiton’s Environmental Impact Statement
– The SA Government’s Development Plan Amendment

The Olympic Dam Expansion Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes the project and why it is needed; the potential environmental, social, cultural and economic issues that might arise during the project’s construction, operation and eventual closure; and how these issues would be managed.

Elements of the Olympic Dam Expansion are subject to the legislation of three jurisdictions: the Commonwealth, South Australia, and the Northern Territory (in relation to product transport options). As the majority of operations associated with the mine are located in South Australia, the Government of South Australia is coordinating the EIS public submissions process on behalf of the three governments. All three governments will have access to all public submissions, and undertake their own assessments of the EIS.

The Roxby Downs and Environs Development Plan Amendment (DPA) describes the land use policy and zoning changes proposed to enable:

• the rezoning of land to allow the Roxby Downs township to expand
• the establishment a new temporary workers’ village for up to 10,000 people
• the establishment of a new airport.

The DPA is a South Australian Government process only, with consultation conducted by the SA Development Policy Advisory Committee (DPAC) on behalf of the SA Minister for Urban Development and Planning.

The following pages outline the separate processes for making a submission on the EIS or the DPA. It is important that you follow the process that is relevant to your concerns, clearly identifying whether your submission is on the EIS or the DPA.
The Environmental Impact Statement

Given the size and complexity of the proposed Olympic Dam Expansion project, BHP Billiton has been required to prepare an EIS based on detailed guidelines published in February 2006 and November 2008. An EIS is the most comprehensive level of assessment available.

The EIS addresses issues relating to the expansion of the Olympic Dam development and the potential impacts on the region. It is required to be released for public comment for at least six weeks; however, in this case, a total of 14 weeks has been provided to allow for proper consideration of the document. During this period, the public is invited to comment on the EIS.

Where you can see the EIS


In person - at numerous locations including:

• SA: Department of Planning and Local Government, Level 5, Roma Mitchell House, 136 North Terrace, Adelaide
• NT: Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport, Level 2, Darwin Plaza, 41 Smith Street Mall, Darwin
• ACT: Commonwealth Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Central Library, John Gorton Building, King Edward Terrace, Parkes, Canberra
• Relevant local council libraries in SA and NT
• SA libraries - the State Library and libraries of the University of Adelaide, University of South Australia, and Flinders University
• NT Library - Parliament House
• The Conservation Council of South Australia, the Environment Centre of the NT, and the Environment Hub, Millner, NT

There are also several options for obtaining a copy of the EIS:

• Internet download: www.olympicdameis.sa.gov.au or www.bhpbilliton.com/odxeis
• Free ‘Stakeholder Kit’, which includes the EIS Executive Summary and an electronic copy of the EIS (in PDF format on DVD). Available via phone: (08) 8303 0752. Packs will also be available at the public meetings.
• Hard copies of the EIS are available to buy. The main report is $50; individual appendices cost $20 each; and a complete set of the EIS and all 21 appendices is available for $300. Hard copy reports can be obtained via the SA Department of Planning and Local Government, the Municipal Council of Roxby Downs, the Port Augusta City Council, and the Corporation of the City of Whyalla.

A complete list of all relevant locations in South Australia and the Northern Territory is available:
on the web www.olympicdameis.sa.gov.au or via phone on (08) 8303 0752.

To have your say

Please make your submission in writing during the public consultation period: 1 May 2009 to 7 August 2009.

Submissions should be typed or neatly handwritten on A4 paper, and may include further information, options or suggestions; or identify errors or omissions in the information presented by BHP Billiton. It is helpful if submissions refer directly to the EIS, identify the section(s) being addressed, and include the sources of any relevant additional information.

All submissions will be referred to BHP Billiton for a formal response and be considered by the three governments. All submissions should be clearly marked ‘Submission on the proposed Olympic Dam Expansion EIS’, and be sent by close of business on Friday 7 August 2009 to:

Olympic Dam EIS Submissions
GPO Box 1815
Adelaide SA 5001

or via email to: OlympicDamEIS@state.sa.gov.au

Acknowledgement letters will be sent - submissions made on behalf of two or more people should nominate one contact person and an address for this purpose. Submissions will be available for public inspection at the SA Department of Planning and Local Government (Level 5, 136 North Terrace, Adelaide). Please indicate if you want your submission to be confidential.

Will there be a public meeting about the EIS?

Several public meetings will be held across South Australia and the Northern Territory, at which BHP Billiton will explain their proposal and answer questions. The time and location of these meetings will be advised in local newspapers and on the web at www.olympicdameis.sa.gov.au
You've submitted comments, what happens next?

BHP Billiton will prepare a response to the comments received during the public consultation period. This Response Document, also called the Supplementary EIS, will be released publicly. The response document may include amendments to the EIS or flag changes to the original proposal in response to issues raised. If substantial changes are made, further public exhibition of the EIS may be required.

The three governments will then assess the proposal and each produce an Assessment Report. In light of the Assessment Reports and other relevant documents, the governments will then each make a decision on the final proposal. The decisions will be published in the relevant Government Gazettes, on the web at www.olympicdameis.sa.gov.au, and via relevant media outlets. The governments may approve or reject the proposal, or approve it with conditions attached. Some matters of detail may also be reserved for a later decision. There are no appeal rights against the decisions for either BHP Billiton or the community.

The Development Plan Amendment

If the expansion is approved, it is estimated that the population of Roxby Downs could jump from 4500 to over 10,000 residents, and that the mine could operate for 40 years or more. To support these levels of growth, it is necessary to amend land use policies and zoning in the two relevant South Australian Development Plans:

- the Roxby Downs (Municipality) Development Plan; and
- the Land Not Within a Council Area – Eyre, Far North, Riverland and Whyalla Development Plan.

The proposed amendments focus on zone changes to make more land available for residential and industrial land uses in Roxby Downs. In addition, zoning and policy changes are proposed to allow for a new village for temporary workers and a new airport, both to be developed approximately 17 km east of Roxby Downs on Andamooka Road, midway between Roxby Downs and Andamooka.

The areas that would be affected by the proposed changes are shown below.

Proposed DPA zoning outcomes for Roxby Downs and environs

Continued on back page
Where can you see the Development Plan Amendment?
You can view the Development Plan Amendment (DPA) document online at:  
or in hard copy at:
- the Municipal Council of Roxby Downs,  
  Richardson Place, Roxby Downs
- the Department of Planning and Local Government,  
  Level 5, 136 North Terrace, Adelaide

To have your say
Please make your submission on the DPA in writing during the public consultation period 1 May 2009 to 7 August 2009. Submissions should be typed or neatly handwritten on A4 paper. All submissions will be referred to the Development Policy Advisory Committee, an independent statutory committee which provides advice to the SA Minister for Urban Development and Planning on planning and development issues. Written submissions should clearly indicate whether you wish to be heard at the scheduled public meeting.

All submissions should be clearly marked ‘Submission on the proposed Roxby Downs and Environs DPA’, and be sent by close of business on Friday 7 August 2009 to:

The Presiding Member, Development Policy Advisory Committee  
Department of Planning and Local Government  
GPO Box 1815  
Adelaide SA 5001

or via email to: plnsa.dpac@saugov.sa.gov.au

Acknowledgement letters will be sent - submissions made on behalf of two or more people should nominate one contact person and an address for this purpose.

As prescribed under the Development Regulations 2008, all public submissions will be made available for viewing at the SA Department of Planning and Local Government, Level 5, 136 North Terrace, Adelaide until the public meeting has been held.

Will there be a public meeting?
A public meeting at which submitters can present verbally is scheduled for Roxby Downs on Tuesday 8 September 2009. A second meeting may be held in Adelaide on Monday 14 September 2009 if required. The public meetings may not be held if no submissions are received or if no-one requests to be heard by the committee. Please check the Department of Planning and Local Government website or phone (08) 8463 7180 before the scheduled dates of the meetings to confirm they are being held.

If you wish to make a verbal submission you must state this in your written submission, and identify your preferred meeting location.

You've submitted comments, what happens next?
The Development Policy Advisory Committee will consider the submissions and will provide advice to the SA Minister of Urban Development and Planning about the DPA. Following the receipt of the Development Policy Advisory Committee's report, the Minister will decide whether to make the proposed policy and mapping amendments to the relevant Development Plans.

For further information

on the EIS:
Enquiries about the EIS can be made to the SA Department of Planning and Local Government on ph. (08) 8303 0752  
or via email: OlympicDamEIS@state.sa.gov.au

on the DPA:
Enquiries about the Development Plan Amendment can be made to the Department of Planning and Local Government on ph. (08) 8463 7180  
or via email: plnsa.dpac@saugov.sa.gov.au

Printed on 100gsm Revive Silk, using vegetable based inks