



Don Harwin

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Resources

Minister for Energy and Utilities

Minister for the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 19 July 2018

SHENHUA WATERMARK EXPLORATION LICENCE RENEWAL

An exploration licence for the proposed Watermark Coal Project on the ridge lands of the Liverpool Plains was renewed by the NSW Government today.

Minister for Resources, Don Harwin, said the renewal allows Shenhua to continue to undertake exploration, environmental management and rehabilitation, and community consultation activities but does not provide approval to commence mining.

“Last year, the prime agricultural land of black soil plains was protected from mining exploration after the NSW Government reached an agreement with Shenhua to scale back the exploration licence area,” Mr Harwin said.

“This government took action to stop mining on the Liverpool Plains, which struck the right balance between protecting the area’s farming future while encouraging investment in the resources sector. We will not release other parts of the Liverpool Plains for exploration.”

The application to renew the exploration licence has undergone a rigorous assessment, and the company’s work and environmental management plans are consistent with NSW Government policy and requirements.

Before mining can begin, the company must apply for a mining production lease from the NSW Government and gain approval for a range of detailed management plans required in the project’s development consent.

In addition, the Federal Government must approve a biodiversity management plan and a water management plan before production can start.

The Watermark Coal Project would be subject to around 100 of the strictest environmental conditions in the country’s mining history.