

## **Media Statement**

**19 November 2018**

### **EPA recommends approval of expanded nickel mining operations near Leinster**

A proposal to build and operate a nickel sulfide mine near Leinster has been recommended for approval by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

BHP Billiton Nickel West Pty's proposed Mt Keith Satellite Project is located near the existing Mt Keith Mine nickel operation, approximately 80 kilometres north of Leinster.

The proposed mine will produce around 9.6 million tonnes of nickel ore a year for potential use in lithium batteries. The ore will be trucked to the existing Mt Keith Mine for processing.

The proposal includes development of two open mine pits, a waste rock landform and ancillary infrastructure, including two bridge crossings over Jones Creek. BHP Billiton Nickel West will also clear 878 hectares of native vegetation.

EPA Chair Dr Tom Hatton said the project had been subject to a comprehensive environmental assessment process.

"Following assessment, the EPA concluded that the Mt Keith Satellite Project could proceed subject to strict implementation conditions," Dr Hatton said.

"Nickel West demonstrated appropriate engagement with traditional owners during the design of the mine site and developed suitable management procedures for impacts to flora and vegetation including avoidance of clearing in the Wanjarri Nature Reserve."

The new satellite mine is expected to extend the life of the Mt Keith nickel operation by 12 years.

The EPA's report to the Minister for Environment is now open for a two-week public appeal period, from 19 November 2018 to 3 December 2018.

Appeals can be made at [www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au](http://www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au). The Minister for Environment will make the final decision.

EPA Report 1625 is available at [www.epa.wa.gov.au](http://www.epa.wa.gov.au).

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