

Mr Cyril Giraud
National Approvals Manager
Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd
Level 8, 799 Pacific Highway
CHATSWOOD NSW 2067

Your Ref:
Our Ref: CMS15253
Enquiries: Richard Sutherland, 6145 0800
Email: Richard.Sutherland@epa.wa.gov.au

Dear Mr Giraud

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 39A(3)
Environmental Protection Act 1986

PROPOSAL: Air Core Drilling Programme on M70 1248 and M70 1250
LOCATION: City of Wanneroo
PROPONENT: Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd
DECISION: Not Assessed: Public Advice Given

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) understands that you wish to undertake the above proposal which has been referred to the EPA for consideration of its potential environmental impact.

This proposal raises a number of environmental issues. However, the overall environmental impact of the proposal is not so significant as to require assessment by the EPA, and the subsequent setting of formal conditions by the Minister for Environment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Accordingly, the EPA has determined not to assess this proposal.

Nevertheless, the EPA has provided the attached advice to you as the proponent, and other relevant authorities, on the environmental aspects of the proposal.

The EPA's decision to not assess the proposal is open to appeal. There is a 14-day period, closing 30 November 2015, during which, on payment of the appeal fee, an appellant may ask the Minister to consider directing the EPA to reconsider this decision or conduct a formal assessment.

Information on the outcome of the appeals process is available through the Appeals Convenor's website, www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au, or by telephoning 6467 5190 after the closing date of appeals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Sutton', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Anthony Sutton
Director
Assessment and Compliance Division

Delegate of the Chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority
Under Notice of Delegation No. 33 published 17 December 2013

16 November 2015

Encl: Public Advice

**PUBLIC ADVICE UNDER SECTION 39A(7)
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986**

AIR CORE DRILLING PROGRAMME ON M70/1248 AND M70/1250

Summary

Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd proposes a drilling programme consisting of 36 air core drill holes on M70/1248 and six air core drill holes on M70/1250, two kilometres south east of Pinjar to assess sand reservoirs (see Attachment 1).

The drilling programme is expected to take two days. The proposed drill holes will have a depth of up to 18 metres with a 100 metre spacing. Drill holes will be established on drill pads five metres in length and width. The proposed depth of drilling will be three metres above the maximum groundwater level. A total of 8,400 metres of access tracks (10 metre width) and 42 sumps (one cubic metre) are required to support the drilling programme.

The proposal was advertised for public comment and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) notes that nine public comments were received. Key issues by the public included the following:

- the proposal occurs within a Priority 1 Water Protection Areas used for public water supply;
- potential impacts on soils and groundwater such as from spillage of fuel and hydrocarbons from vehicles and machinery, and acid sulphate soils;
- potential noise impacts to residents in Jandabup and surrounding areas;
- details on monitoring or mitigation for groundwater have not been described; and
- assessment is required to provide a better understanding of environmental issues at the site.

The EPA has considered the proposal in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) and the *Environmental Impact Assessment Administrative Procedures 2012*. In making its decision on whether to assess the proposal, the EPA considered the 10 aspects of the significance test as set out in clause 7 of the *Environmental Impact Assessment Administrative Procedures 2012*:

1. values, sensitivity and quality of the environment which is likely to be impacted;
2. extent (intensity, duration, magnitude and geographic footprint) of the likely impacts;
3. consequence of the likely impacts (or change);
4. resilience of the environment to cope with the impacts or change;
5. cumulative impacts with other projects;
6. level of confidence in the prediction of impacts and the success of proposed mitigation;
7. objects of the Act, policies, guidelines, procedures and standards against which a proposal can be assessed;
8. presence of strategic planning policy framework;

9. presence of other statutory decision-making processes which regulate the mitigation of the potential effects on the environment to meet the EPA's objectives and principles for EIA; and
10. public concern about the likely effects of the proposal, if implemented, on the environment.

In considering the potential direct and indirect impacts of the proposal on Flora and Vegetation, and Inland Waters Environmental Quality, the EPA has had particular regard to:

- the relatively small scale of the impacts and short duration (two days) of planned activities;
- the mitigation strategies proposed by the proponent to avoid and minimise impacts, for example
 - ensuring the depth of drilling will be three metres above the maximum groundwater level;
 - ensuring management of hydrocarbons to protect groundwater;
 - ensuring removal of all wastes from the site; and
 - decommissioning and capping of the drill holes.
- the presence of other statutory processes, including Part V (Clearing of native vegetation) of the EP Act and the *Mining Act 1978*. The proponent is also reminded to satisfy its obligations to obtain a Development Application from the Western Australian Planning Commission.

In summary, although the proposal raises a number of environmental issues, the EPA considers its objectives for Flora and Vegetation, and Inland Waters Environmental Quality can be met. The EPA considers that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on the environment and does not warrant formal assessment. The potential impacts from the proposal can be adequately managed through the implementation of the proposal in accordance with the referral documentation and regulated and managed by other statutory processes. These include through Part V Division 2 (Clearing of native vegetation) of the EP Act and the *Mining Act 1978*.

1. Environmental Factors

The EPA has identified the following preliminary environmental factors relevant to this proposal:

- a) Flora and Vegetation; and
- b) Inland Waters Environmental Quality.

There were no factors that were determined to be key environmental factors that would require formal assessment under Part IV of the EP Act. The EPA considers that the mitigation of the potential effects on the environment can be regulated by other statutory decision-making processes and through the implementation of proponent commitments and best practice measures in accordance with this advice.

2. Advice and Recommendations regarding Environmental Issues

a. Flora and Vegetation

The proposal occurs within State Forest 65 in an area of the Gngangara pine plantation. A recent flora survey (EnviroWorks Consulting, 2015) did not identify any significant flora or vegetation, and found the area to have limited fauna habitat value. The EPA is aware the DER has already issued a Part V clearing permit.

Given that the proposed exploration programme mostly occurs within cleared land, the EPA considers that potential impacts to Flora and Vegetation are not so significant and can be being dealt with under Part V (Clearing of native vegetation) of the EP Act to meet the EPA's objective.

b. Inland Waters Environmental Quality

The exploration is located within a Public Drinking Water Source Area, within the *Environmental Protection Gngangara Mound Crown Land Policy 1992* (Gngangara Policy).

The Department of Water has advised that it is satisfied with the proponent's proposed mitigation measures, but has recommended the following constraints to provide further assurance that groundwater is adequately protected:

- No air core drilling to occur within three metres of the current water table (which the proponent already previously committed to); and
- No ground disturbing activities are to occur within 250 metres of Water Corporation production bores.

These recommendations can be addressed through the provisions of the *Mining Act 1978*.

The EPA considers that the proposal is not likely to have a significant impact on the environmental factor of Inland Waters Environmental Quality and can be adequately regulated and managed under the *Mining Act 1978*.