

January 2014

Frequently Asked Questions Critical Industry Clusters Upper Hunter

WHAT ARE CRITICAL INDUSTRY CLUSTERS?

- Critical industry clusters (CICs) are concentrations of highly productive industries within a region that are related to each other, contribute to the identity of that region, and provide significant employment opportunities.
- Two critical industry clusters – for the equine and viticulture industries – have been identified in the Upper Hunter region.
- Coal seam gas activity is now prohibited in the mapped CIC areas. State significant mining development in these areas will be subject to the Gateway process – an independent, upfront and scientific assessment of the land and water impacts of the proposal.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR?

- Maps showing the clusters of the two industries in the region were produced as part of the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan in 2012. As this mapping was done at a broad regional scale, a commitment was made in the Plan to verify the location of specific enterprises in the clusters.
- In 2013, an independent consultant conducted the regional verification process, with input from industry members. The consultant used evidence of current commercial activity.
- These maps were exhibited in October and November 2013 to ensure that the process captured all relevant enterprises. Landholders were given the opportunity to nominate their land for inclusion if it met certain criteria.
- Mining and coal seam gas companies were also given an opportunity to identify properties that they owned as at the date of release of the Strategic Regional Land Use Plan (10 September 2012) to have these properties removed from the CIC mapping.

Strategic Regional Land Use Policy



WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE EXHIBITION OF THE DRAFT CIC MAPS?

- The exhibition of the draft CIC maps closed in mid-November. The NSW Department of Trade and Investment, on behalf of the Government, collated these submissions - which amounted to over 1500 parcels of land - and consulted with an interagency committee to determine which were eligible based on the agreed criteria.
- These maps are now complete and have been given legal effect via an amendment to the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007* (the Mining SEPP).
- The maps are available at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/oasfs/resource-planning>. Through this website, landholders can view the maps and search for their lots.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF MY PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE CRITICAL INDUSTRY CLUSTER AREAS?

- New coal seam gas activity is now banned within the mapped CIC areas.
- State significant mining projects proposed within the mapped areas must go through an additional level of scrutiny via the Gateway process, prior to the lodgement of a development application.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE AS A RESULT OF THE NOMINATION PROCESS AND PUBLIC EXHIBITION?

- The combined area of the CICs has been increased by 20,700 hectares or 7.7%.
- The size of the equine CIC has been increased by 22,320 hectares or 9.6 per cent to 254,900 hectares, while the size of the viticulture CIC has been decreased 3,250 hectares or 5.2 per cent to 60,000 hectares.
- Some additional properties were added to the CIC as a result of eligible nominations for inclusion. Reductions in area resulted from eligible resource companies nominating for removal from the cluster area.

Strategic Regional Land Use Policy



HOW WILL PROPERTY OWNERS BE INFORMED ABOUT THE NEW CICs?

- The NSW Department of Primary Industries will write to property owners and other stakeholders who made submissions on the draft maps. The information will include advice on the CIC maps which will enable property owners to identify their properties.
- The maps are available at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/oasfs/resource-planning>. Through this website, landholders can view the maps and search for their lots.
- The Department of Primary Industries will brief the peak industry associations and a technical inquiry telephone line - (02) 6391 3644 - has been set up.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Visit the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure's website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/srlup