

## This community newsletter provides an update on the Mt Piper Ash Placement Project.

**Delta Electricity has lodged an Environmental Assessment with the NSW Department of Planning seeking concept approval and project approval for two new ash placement (storage) areas at Mt Piper Power Station - Lamberts North and Lamberts South. It is also seeking concept approval for the future development of ash placement areas at Neubecks Creek and Ivanhoe No.4.**

### What is the Mt Piper Ash Placement Project?

In 2006 Delta Electricity undertook a study to identify and select potential ash placement sites. All identified sites were assessed against a set of technical, operational, economic and environmental criteria. As a result of these assessments, four broad sites known as Lamberts North, Lamberts South, Neubecks Creek and Ivanhoe No. 4 were identified for future ash placement.

Delta is currently seeking concept and project approval to immediately develop the Lamberts North and Lamberts South sites (east of the power station). These sites have previously been mined for coal, so the ash would be used to fill the existing void.

Delta is also seeking concept approval for Neubecks Creek (north-east of the power station) and Ivanhoe No. 4 (south-west of the power station). These areas will be developed if demand requires.

Delta will continue to use current proven dry ash management practices when operating in the Lamberts North and Lamberts South ash placement areas. These practices help reduce the area needed for ash storage as well as minimise water use and the risk of ground and surface water contamination.

As each proposed area is developed, the method for transportation of the ash will be finalised. These methods will include covered conveyors and truck cartage on private roads on Delta land.

Revegetation of the ash placement sites will be undertaken progressively as part of Delta Electricity's ongoing landscape and revegetation program.

**Consultation with the community is an important part of the environmental assessment process**



Left:  
Mt Piper Power Station

## What is ash and why does it need to be stored at Mt Piper?

At the Mt Piper Power Station, ash is generated as a result of the electricity generation process. When the coal is burnt, the residue of leftover ash is collected and either reused or stored on-site. To date, more than 10 million tonnes of ash has been placed at Mt Piper in an open-cut mine on the north-east side of the power station.

Based on current operations, the existing ash placement area is expected

to be filled by 2015, well before the Mt Piper Power Station reaches the end of its economic life. To maintain power station operations beyond 2015, additional ash placement areas need to be established.

Wherever possible, Mt Piper's ash is sold for re-use, mainly in cement manufacture. This accounts for about 200,000 tonnes per annum or about 18 per cent of the power station's current annual production of ash.

Delta Electricity will continue to actively identify re-use opportunities for the ash generated by Mt Piper. In the absence of significant re-use alternatives however, the only current viable option is to identify new ash placement areas.

**About 200,000 tonnes per annum or 18% of ash from the Mt Piper Power Station is sold for re-use, mainly in cement manufacture**

## Where are the proposed ash placement sites?

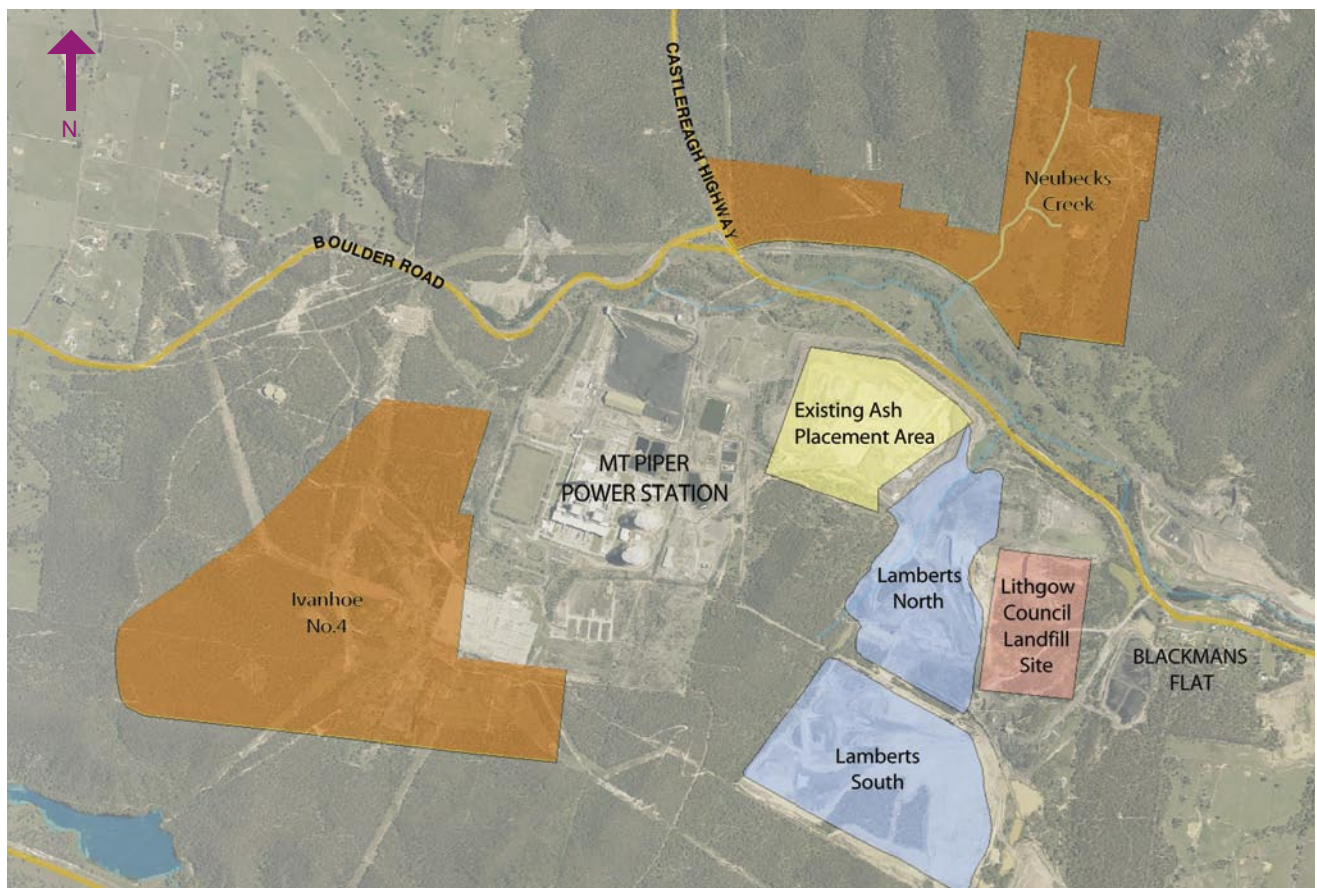
The Lamberts Gully area, which broadly covers both Lamberts North and Lamberts South, lies within the former Western Main Colliery holding, which occupies the land immediately east of the Mt Piper Power Station.

Neubecks Creek is an area to the north-east of the Mt Piper Power Station. Ivanhoe No4 is immediately to the south-west of the Mt Piper Power Station.



### LEGEND

🛣️ Road    🟦 Project approval areas    🟤 Concept approval areas for future development    🟡 Existing ash placement area    🟪 Council landfill site



Above:  
Map of the four proposed ash placement areas

## Environmental Assessment of the Mt Piper Ash Placement Project

The Mt Piper Ash Placement Project has been declared a Major Project and is subject to assessment under the provisions of Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act).

Delta Electricity is seeking concept approval and project approval for two new ash placement areas at Mt Piper Power Station - Lamberts North and Lamberts South. It is also seeking concept approval for the future development of ash placement areas at Neubecks Creek and Ivanhoe No.4.

An Environmental Assessment Report and a draft Statement of Commitments has been prepared and submitted to the Department of Planning for public exhibition and community comment.

### Preparation and Exhibition of the EA

The Environmental Assessment, along with a draft Statement of Commitments, will be made publicly available by the Department of Planning for comment for a minimum of 30 days. Notice of exhibition dates and locations will be given by the Department in relevant newspapers.

The Environmental Assessment will be available for inspection on the Department of Planning Website ([www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au)) and is also available for viewing at the following locations:

- Lithgow City Council  
180 Mort Street, Lithgow
- Lithgow Library and Learning Centre  
157 Main Street, Lithgow
- Portland Library  
65 Williwa Street, Portland

- Department of Planning,  
Information Centre  
23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney

Delta has a 1800 project information line available during the preparation of the EA. This line (1800 257 484 toll free) will remain available throughout the EA exhibition period should any further information be required. The project email address is - [mtpiperashstorage@de.com.au](mailto:mtpiperashstorage@de.com.au). The Environmental Assessment will also be available on the Delta web site ([www.de.com.au](http://www.de.com.au)).

**The Environmental Assessment for the Mt Piper Ash Placement Project is being exhibited by the Department of Planning.**

## Summary of Environmental Assessment findings

- Dust levels are manageable using mitigation methods such as sprays to exposed surfaces and water trucks on unpaved roads.
- Noise is unlikely to exceed current noise goals. Noise mitigation measures such as ash mounds are proposed however they will require more detailed planning.
- Erosion of soil and sedimentation will be controlled by measures implemented prior to construction works, in accordance with the principles and practices in Soils & Construction (Landcom, 2004).
- Water quality in waterways which drain to the Coxs River will be protected by putting measures such as on-site separation of clean and dirty water by bunding and containment of dirty water in sediment ponds. On-site water will also be used to assist re-vegetation.
- Native vegetation is limited to three patches at the southern end of Lamberts South – about nine hectares in total. The proposed ash placement area includes one plant species (*Capertee Stringybark Eucalyptus cannonii*) listed as vulnerable under both the Threatened Species Conservation Act (TSC Act) and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act). While it is likely that three of these trees will be removed this will be offset with similarly vegetated land so there will be no net loss of flora and fauna in the area.
- Previous cultural heritage surveys of the Lamberts North and Lamberts South indicate these areas were used by Aboriginal people. However, as most of this area has been mined, it is estimated that there is now almost zero potential for intact materials remaining.
- It is anticipated that only the top of the proposed ash placement areas would be visible from the surrounding area. Following ash placement, the ash mounds would be capped, revegetated and rehabilitated – so the long term visual impact of the proposed development is expected to be low.
- Current operating hours for ash placement are 6am to 8pm Mon-Fri and 6am to 5pm Sat-Sun. These will remain unchanged.
- Ash is transported on covered belt conveyors or on private roads on Delta land which is inaccessible to the public.

## Environmental assessment process

**Project application and Preliminary Environmental Assessment lodged with Department of Planning. Minister authorises preparation of a Concept Plan**

**Environmental Assessment (EA) requirements issued by the Department of Planning, including key issues to be assessed and consultation requirements**

**Preparation of EA document, including specialist studies**

**Public exhibition of the EA, community consultation and review**

**PROPOSAL AT THIS STAGE NOW**

**Department of Planning considers public submissions and prepares an Assessment Report**

**Assessment Report is sent to Minister for Planning for consideration**

## Mt Piper Extension proposal

In January 2010 Delta obtained concept approval to extend capacity at the Mt Piper site (known as the Mt Piper Extension). Consistent with the NSW Government's dual fuel policy, it is proposed that the extension could be either coal fired or gas turbines. While the proposal has concept approval, the extension of Mt Piper would require specific project approval.

Delta is seeking concept approval for the future development of ash placement areas at Neubecks Creek and Ivanhoe No.4 because these additional areas would be required if project approval was granted for new coal fired generating units at Mt Piper.

### About Delta Electricity

Delta Electricity is the largest electricity generator in Australia, producing electricity using coal, gas, hydro and biomass technologies. It is a NSW State owned corporation and operates in the national electricity market. Delta Electricity operates Mt Piper, Wallerawang, Vales Point and Munmorah Power Stations, and Colongra, a low emission gas fired power station located on the Central Coast.

The Mt Piper Power Station was constructed on part of the former Western Main Colliery. Approval for the development was received in 1981.

The existing Mt Piper Power Station was commissioned in stages over 1992 and 1993. The nearest townships to the Mt Piper Power Station are:

- Portland, approximately 1.5 km to the west of Ivanhoe No. 4 site and 4 km from the western boundary of the proposed Lamberts North and Lamberts South sites
- Blackmans Flat, approximately 1 km from the eastern boundary of the proposed Lamberts North site
- Lidsdale, approximately 3.5 km to the south-east of the eastern boundary of the proposed Lamberts South site
- Wallerawang, approximately 4km southeast of the eastern boundary of the proposed Lamberts South site

Delta Electricity is a major employer in the Lithgow region with more than 120 permanent employees at Mt Piper and many contracts for services with local businesses.

Eleven new first year apprentices started at Delta Electricity's Wallerawang and Mt Piper Power Stations this year taking the Western Region apprentice and trainee count to 35.

### CONTACT

For more information about the Mt Piper Ash Placement Project, please call the toll free project number **1800 257 484** or email [mtpiperashstorage@de.com.au](mailto:mtpiperashstorage@de.com.au)