

## Planning Assessment Commission Review Wilpinjong Extension Project RO39-16

From Phyllis Setchell

28.11.2016

To David Kloppers [pac@pac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pac@pac.nsw.gov.au)

I object to the extension of Wilpinjong Mine and urge the PAC to recommend against its approval for the following reasons:

### 1. Social Impacts

- The conclusion that the population of the Wollar district will continue to decline even if the mine extension was not approved is not based on any evidence. Many locals have creative ideas for the Wollar community to bounce back if the mine is not extended. Those who still live in the village and surrounding areas have a strong commitment to the village's survival.
- DPE & Social Impact Assessment have failed to recognise the increased isolation, loss of emergency services and stranded assets impacts on remaining residents outside Wollar village.
- The Voluntary Payment Agreement with Mid-Western Regional Council cannot lessen the predicted impacts such as the loss of the local shop and the loss of Bushfire Brigade volunteers with local knowledge.

### 2. Dust

- Dust emissions are predicted to increase and exceed the 24 hr PM10 criteria. Protecting community health should be a prime consideration of decision-makers.

### 3. Noise

- Noise has been the biggest impact from the mine.
- There was no assessment of Low Frequency Noise (LFN) impacts of the current mine or the proposed extension. EPA noise monitoring conducted in June 2016 demonstrated that LFN is an issue. The noise assessment must be redone to include LFN predictions.
- Shifting \$42m of noise mitigation costs onto community health impacts is irresponsible and should not be approved.

### 4. Biodiversity

- The Biodiversity Offsets will not meet the requirements for the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater.
- To open cut the very narrow valleys protruding into the Mugnhorn Gap Nature Reserve without buffers should not be approved.
- It is not acceptable for current mine rehabilitation to be counted as an offset.
- The proposal will have a cumulative impact on threatened species habitat that cannot be offset.

### 5. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

- The Office of Environment and Heritage has identified that the cumulative impacts of mining on cultural heritage is approaching unacceptable thresholds in the region.
- The proposed destruction of an ochre quarry and Aboriginal artwork on Rocky Hill should not be approved.
- The mine extension will destroy 92 artefact sites and put another 138 at risk.

### 6. Final Voids

- All final voids should be backfilled.
- The argument that a third void in Pit 8 is necessary because it will cost \$15m to backfill is ridiculous.

### 7. Planning Process

- During the assessment process there has been unfair access to information biased in favour for the proponent. Whereas the community has only had access to the DPE assessment report & expert review reports since 7 November with one month to make submissions. Also Peabody Energy has been provided opportunities to review and respond to the additional expert reviews throughout the assessment process and prior to the public release of reports.