

Presentation to IPC Bylong Coal Project D532-18 John Krey [REDACTED]

Good afternoon Commissioners

The Decision Making process

Commissioners, I live in Bulga so you will understand my view that the community has no confidence in the assessment process you are part of and that's not being unkind you personally. It is a view of our community that if Government pays the piper then the Government calls the tune.

Subsequent to the Land & Environment Court and the Supreme Court rejecting the Warkworth Mine expansion in 2103, the State Government, working closely with the Minerals Council, has altered policies and regulations to reduce the standards of protection for communities.

Also as a result of those Court decisions, the Government has removed merit based appeals to prevent to Courts from hearing our arguments. However, I think the time is coming when community will be looking to the Courts to adjudicate on these matters.

Commissioner Haynes in the Banking Royal Commission says "*Legitimacy and authority cannot survive without trust*". Government and the Coal industry in this valley are not trusted and Mines have lost their social licence to operate.

Justice Preston Chief Judge of the Land and Environment Court noted in the Financial Review recently that "*constitutions or statutes may provide for certain rights such as the right to life or right to a clean and healthy environment. Such rights may provide the basis for climate change litigation*".

Clearly, the community has had enough and it is only the Courts who can be trusted. The Courts may decide the future of some of these basic rights issues and protect us from local impacts and global climate change.

The Environmental Impact Statement

In the past I have commented on the technical issues in an EIS, believing the communities' experts on the technical issues would bear some weight and sway your decision making process. History has shown they have not and it has been a waste of time and money.

The Environmental Impact Statement you have reviewed for this application is prepared by consultants who have only one role and one instruction and that is to get this mine approved.

The Department of Planning is compromised because they take instructions from the State Government to get mines approved and many of their officers are ex mining executives. And it these people you look to for advice.

Air pollution and health (reality and not computer modelling)

Both the State Government and the IPC are ignoring the impacts of mining pollution on the health of the communities

The cumulative impacts of dust and diesel in the Hunter Valley are felt every day. The prevailing winter North Westerly winds blow the pollution from this end of the Valley, down through Muswellbrook, into Singleton and beyond.

The five-year review of pollution in the Hunter Valley the EPA states that this Valley has the worst polluted air in the state (PM10s). And yet the State Government is recommending another source of pollution be approved.

The pollution of our air is not just an issue of complying with some rules. This is an issue of health for children.

If you approve this mine you are contributing to shortening the life of the residents of the Upper Hunter Valley. Reports from the Government's own Health Department and research paper such as Ruth Colagiuri from the Department of Public Health University of Sydney and many others.

"Research papers including the World Health Organisation states "there is no safe level of dust".

Then, why are you and the Government not taking heed of this research and the warnings it contains?

Conclusion

With the continuing deterioration of our planet and our health, actions will soon be taken to hold to account those organisations and people who through their actions or inaction continue to ignore the warnings of the scientists.

Justice Preston's warning applies not only to business but to Governments

Commissioners you have the opportunity here to slow the destruction of this valley and to start the reduction of the pollution of the air that we breathe. There is one very important step to help improve our air quality in the Hunter and that is to stop mine expansions and stop new mines.

You must reject this application.

Thank you