

**Submission to the Independent Planning Commission Hearing**  
**Hume Coal Project**  
**26 February 2019**

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[REDACTED]

1. My name is Kim Martin. My husband Peter and I have owned a farm on [REDACTED] Road in Sutton Forest since 2002. We've developed the property extensively, planting 2400 oak trees to produce black truffles, growing and selling Lucerne and also growing vegetables. Gardening is my passion. Over the years, we've planted over 30,000 natives, over 300 introduced trees plus endless shrubs and plants in free form gardens we've created. We have a large lake which provides irrigation to the truffiere, our special trees and gardens. The proposed Hume Coal mine will go right under the farm. It will drain our bore and destroy our water supply if it is ever built.
2. My husband and I arranged the first of many community meetings on August 18, 2010 after we found out that Anglo American was selling the local exploration licence AU349 to a consortium of POSCO and Cockatoo Coal. Our local member Pru Goward, the Council and the community were completely unaware of the threat. Over 300 locals attended the meeting in the pouring rain! The representatives from Cockatoo Coal explained to all the locals that they bought the licence 'sight unseen' and we shouldn't be concerned! The Southern Highlands Coal Action Group was set up and promptly began campaigning against the mine. A 9-year saga had begun.
3. I still remember the first meeting we had with the Chairman and CEO of Cockatoo Coal and the senior executives in Sydney in late 2010. We were told in no uncertain terms that the mine would be in full production by 2016 and 'if the community didn't like it there would be trouble'. We weren't impressed! Unfortunately for POSCO and Cockatoo there was trouble; Cockatoo Coal is no longer in existence and the POSCO mine hasn't seen the light of day...and never will.
4. When we started, we had no idea what we and the local community would have to endure. It has been incredibly unpleasant and relentless. POSCO has been a ruthless and uncompromising opponent. The bullying and intimidation have at times been unbearable. POSCO has waged a campaign of 'divide and conquer' within the local community.
5. Against our will, POSCO forced my husband and I along with our neighbours, into years of land access arbitration to try to get onto our properties for exploration. They denied us legal representation in the process. They knowingly forced our elderly neighbour who was undergoing chemotherapy into arbitration despite her illness. In 2016, five long years and four court cases later, we won a comprehensive legal victory in the Land and Environment Court which stops POSCO from getting access to a large part of the exploration licence area. *At the time Hume Coal's Project Manager*

*Greig Duncan said that 'the court decision would have severe ramifications for exploration and mining in NSW'. How right he was!*

6. Over the years POSCO has also purchased local land holdings by stealth with their agents posing as pastoral company representatives and using law firms as fronts. They have tried to ingratiate themselves into the local community by sponsoring everything in sight; football clubs, soccer teams and garden centres to name a few. This has caused real divisions sometimes setting neighbour against neighbour. They have used social media to denigrate local land owners and opponents of the mine, labelling us 'anti-coal activists' and the like. It's been an unrelenting war waged on local landowners and objectors.
7. I spent 12 months researching POSCO and its track record around the world. What I discovered was that this behaviour was just the norm for this company. POSCO has a shocking international environmental and human rights track record and it's all documented. There are too many examples to mention; endemic bid rigging and bribery in South Korea, human rights violations in Odisha in India, rain forest destruction in West Papua and forced labour in the cotton fields in Uzbekistan amongst others. Why the government should consider allowing them to mine in such an environmentally sensitive area is beyond me.
8. Fortunately, the beleaguered Southern Highlands community has held together through thick and thin although the social impacts have been chronic and severe. The symptoms we've seen across the district have included:
  - Physical illness;
  - Alcohol abuse;
  - Marital stress;
  - Anxiety and depression;
  - Constant feelings of uncertainty and hopelessness;
  - Financial worries; and
  - The inability to plan for the futureAll of this with zero support from the state government bureaucrats who insisted that 'we just had to go through the process.' Seven years after it started, when the EIS was finally lodged we were told that we were now eligible for mental health assistance. This was far too late as the damage had already been done.
9. It's hard to estimate the amount of time, money and energy that has been put in to this campaign by our volunteers and local community. It's immeasurable. Hours, weeks, months and years have gone into this fight:
  - Endless meetings, rallies and fundraisers;
  - Managing the press and social media;
  - Researching, writing submissions & documents, formulating technical reports and running information sessions
  - Attending local markets and events, creating marketing materials and collateral;
  - Relentless networking and attending forums all over NSW and Australia;

- Preparing legal cases, arranging experts, constantly lobbying of state and federal politicians; and
  - The list goes on!
10. This campaign has been a fulltime job for my husband for years. It has taken him away from our family. We both had to put our lives on hold. I have watched him spend endless hours hunched over the computer when he should have been outside spending time on the property doing all the things that he loves. He's always been very positive and has always believed we would win this fight whatever the obstacles. However from my perspective we'll never get that precious time back.
11. The one upside from the coal fight has been the people we have met and befriended. We now have a wonderful extended community who have supported one another every inch of the way. They've dedicated so much time, money and effort to fight POSCO's plans over a very long time. Had we not taken on the campaign, we would just be another rural community whose environment has been destroyed by a large foreign-owned multinational corporation in the pursuit of corporate profit. We're not about to let that happen.

THANK YOU