

Andrew Forrest

I'm a newly arrived resident of Berrima, I moved from a farming background situated on the western side of Young in NSW, we were also in hospitality owning a restaurant, café and a catering business. I am asking the IPC Commissioners to consider very carefully the possible problems that could be caused by this project and to act against its approval.

We came to Berrima because of the village atmosphere, it has a sense of family, community history and pride. This could all be swept away by the activity of a Coal mine just down the road.

I have noted that Hume Coal now own the land that is part of "The Remembrance Driveway", a tree drive along the Old Hume Highway, that was setup to remind people of the sacrifice of our soldiers during World War 2 and subsequent wars.

This site is in great decline due to some minor maintenance that could be done by repairing some fences it not a good start to Hume Coal showing the community that they have not got the land and community in mind or that they will look after it.

As mentioned earlier I was a farmer, the property that they own looks over grazed and in a poor state, the use of untested procedures for their mining especially for the used water this sounds very dangerous, our water that is used for farming or our own use does not need to be contaminated because of untested procedures.

And if this is a small example of the way they are going to mine it is not a good start.

The Coal dump despite having precious water sprayed on it to stop the dust, from what I understand will surely not control the dust on hot summers days when the winds are blowing from the west, the dust is going to settle all over the Southern Highlands especially our very precious Berrima.

This dust which will fall on our properties and the environment, this surely will have a detrimental effect on the things that sustain this region such as farming and tourism, all for a short-term gain for an overseas company and a minimal benefit for the Southern Highlands.

I have flown over and driven around the Hunter Region only to see those ugly holes from mining, that has destroyed that once pretty area.

We do not want the Berrima district to end up like that unfortunate area with no way back from the environmental damage that has been caused. Despite being a different mining technique, this could open the way for many more projects in the district.

It is estimated that a quarter of a million visitors come to Berrima a year and that could grow. Tourism will employ more people and bring more income to the Highlands, but this is put in jeopardy by having an 800-metre-long six storey high stockpile in our back yard, this is a short-term gain for some at the expense of the Greater community

I came to Berrima because of the climate and its clean atmosphere, this is now put at danger due to the coal dust potential. The fine invisible particles of dust seem to cause health problems like asthma even lung cancer, it lodges in the lung and you cannot easily expel them. I do not want anyone or my family to suffer these conditions in the Berrima district, so why would anyone put us in that danger.

There is a lot that can go wrong with this project, being damage to human health or to the environment.

So you the IPC Commissioners please consider this project carefully and do not approve it.