



Independent Planning Commission

Level 3, 201 Elizabeth St

Sydney 2000

19/1/19

Hume Coal Project (SSD 7172) and Berrima Rail Project (SSD 7171)

It is reasonable to believe that promises made by our government ministers and leaders are gold plated. Society operates on such commitments, plans are made based on what is guaranteed by such leaders.

In 2008 the leader of the Liberal party, and later Premier of NSW, Barry O'Farrell, unequivocally stated on national television that under a Coalition government "Mining will not occur in any water catchment area.....no ifs, no buts, I guarantee".

We have now seen how unreliable (dare I say untruthful) such promises were. The NSW Planning Assessment Commission has just green-lighted the go-ahead of another Korean coal mine in the water catchment area of the Central Coast known as Wallarah 2, despite the Commission conceding there was likely to be loss of water from the aquifer.

We now have a similar situation in the Southern Highlands with Hume Coal trying to get approval for another Korean coal mine in the Sydney water catchment basin. The risks to the aquifer are significant, and there is also an acknowledged, by Hume, loss of water to the bores of 93 local landholders. And if the proponent of the project concedes that, how much worse is the likelihood going to be.? The experience of the Berrima coal mine at Medway where both loss of water and toxic run off resulted in its closure is a guide to what could happen with the ten-times larger proposed Hume coal mine.

In an incredibly insensitive comment, the Hume EIS suggests that the drawdown of water will last for up to 65 years, as if this is insignificant.

This submission will not repeat all the technical evidence provided by many experts which is held by the Independent Planning Commission when reviewing the Dept of Planning and Environment's evaluation of the Hume Project.

Suffice to say that our main concerns, as evidenced by experts are:

- Loss of water to the aquifer and to landholders
- Injection of toxic waste and water to the aquifer
- Unproven, and potentially unsafe, mining via the 'pine feather' method
- Risk of subsidence as the proposed mine is shallow beneath the surface and immediately below the aquifer
- Tourism, a major economic contributor in the Southern Highlands, will be negatively affected
- The proposed stockpile of coal, situated down the prevailing wind near the tourist town of Berrima, will result in coal dust covering the area

On a personal note we lived in Sutton Forest for over 25 years on a property within the licence area. We had this project hanging over us for 8 years without knowing what will happen. This stress resulted in us having to sell our farm and move. The price we had to accept was well below what it would have been if this proposed project had not existed.

in Queensland, in 2017, an application to expand a coal mine was rejected by the State Government on the basis of the loss of ground water which would take hundreds of years to recover. At last this risk has been recognised by a Government and I urge you to reject the Hume Coal project.

Finally we refer to the item in newspapers on 7 January 2019 reporting that the NSW Chief Scientist's Independent Expert Panel for Mining in the Catchment found it plausible that the underground Dendrobium mine was diverting 3 million litres of water a day into its workings. WaterNSW said it had long opposed "the unacceptable risk posed by longwall mining" in the catchment.

After years of uncertainty and stress for many hundreds of people, we urge you to put the final nail in the coffin of this project and let the Southern Highlands once again reflect what most of its residents desire: beauty and enjoyment of the peaceful country ambience

Yours

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