

Objection to Extension of Wilpinjong Mine at Wollar

I live in Mudgee not too far from the Wilpinjong mine. It beggars belief that the NSW government is still debating the extension of the mine close to the village of Wollar.

On the same day that the PAC hearing was held in Mudgee, an article was published in the Sydney Morning Herald by the CEO of AGL, Andy Vesey, stating that "Renewable energy is now so advanced that it is the cheapest form of large scale generation on an energy-produced basis. The problem is neither the unreliability of renewables, nor the changing generation mix. We simply NEED POLICYMAKERS to update the rules of the game so they are fit for purpose."

So, what is our government thinking if this very approval goes ahead knowing perfectly that the village of WOLLAR will be wiped out for just 7 years of a mine extension! What is the WORTH of some royalties compared to a place with HISTORY, ABORIGINAL HERITAGE (Rocky Hill Complex), a COMMUNITY that used to be vibrant, and not to mention the ENVIRONMENTAL VANDALISM that would ensue. The mine is surrounded by National Parks (Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve, etc.), so surely the local WILDLIFE – included endangered species like the Regent Honeyeater) should require protection before a whole landscape where they feed and shelter is wiped out.

And let's not forget all the RESIDENTS that have been displaced after enduring significant distress and those who have remained, still enduring never ending amounts of NOISE and HARMFUL COAL DUST which exceed the national standard. Peabody should be COMPENSATING these residents big time. Who are they to destroy a community and leave its people to pick up the pieces? Peabody is a morally and financially bankrupt organisation. Why would our government side with such an organisation when its responsibilities are primarily to look after its own citizens, these very same people who have now lost their legal rights. How truly amazing. ICAC has even asked for these rights to be re-instated....

And please do not even contemplate BIODIVERSITY OFFSETS which are simply a joke. How dare Peabody propose an area already mined as an offset!

800 ha of land to be destroyed close to Wollar. Does the panel take into consideration the fact that it takes more than a century to return a mined SOIL to its complexity?

WATER is of the most concern. This is one of our most treasured asset and we know mining needs a lot of it. How irresponsible to expand a mine when our region is vulnerable to salinity. What consequences for the area if the loss of flow of the Wilpinjong Creek continues further?

JOBS cannot be a determining factor for this Assessment. More jobs can be created by developing renewables. Coal mining now belongs to another era.

There should NEVER be any new mine or mine extension approved in Australia if our government is to meet the targets of the Paris Treaty. CLIMATE CHANGE is real. See the devastating fire close to the Wilpinjong mine that broke on an extremely hot windy day in February this year, what about our beautifully Great Barrier Reef being damaged by the ocean warming up, etc.

Today we need a truly INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT for this mine extension. In fact, this proposal has NO MERIT whatsoever. WOLLAR deserves to survive.