

Innovation

Collaboration

Networking

01/11/ 2018

To the Independent Planning Commission

Re: Letter of Support for the Bylong Valley Coal Project

HunterNet is widely recognised within Australian manufacturing and academia as the most successful industry 'cluster' of its type nationally. Incorporated in 1992, HunterNet is a network of small and medium-sized manufacturing, engineering and consulting companies located in the Hunter and Central Coast Regions of NSW. Formed as a non-trading, not for profit Co-Operative, it engages with over 200 companies, active in national and international markets in defence, power generation, mineral processing, transportation and major resource projects. Through its membership, HunterNet represents over 70,000 employees. Given such a broad base of representation, HunterNet is committed to the principles of ecological sustainable development.

We respect the views of all and we advocate for what we see as in the best interest of the community and region. We understand that the proponents of this project have invested time, money and goodwill to ensure they have received the best advice possible to make sure the project meets all of the stringent requirements that are layout in the process. We also understand that the proponents take very seriously the objections to the project and that they are endeavoring to make certain every possible scenario that is presented is mitigated with the facts that they have before them. The dealings we have had with the project thus far, has shown a commitment to the region that goes beyond what is required. It is through these actions that we have formulated our view on this project.

We do not profess to be the experts, but we know the ones that are. We understand that both sides have a story and that each side has their own experts and views on this issue. That is understandable and respected, however we encourage all to find the common ground that will best suit the community, the region and the project.

The Bylong Valley is a wonderful area, with so much potential to be a real destination for the tourism industry. Having a stable employment base will help other industry sectors to flourish in the region. Businesses will crop up to take advantage of a stable stream of people through and within the region, thus providing some security and cash flow for a fledging business. Nobody is in business to go broke, therefore if the numbers are encouraging, I am sure an entrepreneurial brain will come up with a way to utilize the natural beauty for many and create more opportunities for employment and further enhance the economic growth of the region.

Kepeco Bylong Australia is seeking development consent for the Bylong Valley Coal project Northeast of Mudgee NSW. I am not a local I do not profess to be an expert on this region. HunterNet does however represent a large number of Mining Equipment Technical Services (METS) providers. Of which we see the benefits that will flow from the utilization of their expertise and security for their workforce to provide ongoing benefits to the region.

Mines, Vines and Bovine can co-exist, employment opportunities sealed roads and advances in agricultural processes will assist in the co-existence philosophy and provide a mandate for growth. Sustainability is front and center for the community, the mine and all stakeholders engaged in the region. We know more about sustainability now than we ever have; it's with this in mind that this project cannot deviate from the path they have laid out and the community will and should be a part of the process with continued consultation throughout the life of mine.

We have heard that the concerns in the region have been around water security, dust suppression and ensuring that employment opportunities are weighted towards the local community. Throughout our conversations with the proponents of the project; these issues have been front and centre of their assessments.

We wish to submit HunterNet's support for the project for the following reasons:

- The project will provide significant economic benefit to not only this region, Newcastle the Hunter, NSW and Australia will also benefit. Generating local employment throughout the region and beyond.
- This will stabilise the economy and generate opportunities for businesses. It is expected to enhance the growth prospects of the local and wider community.
- Up to 470 jobs, money staying in the area, opportunities for the youth of the region. In the form of apprenticeships, not just in the mining sector, but in the supporting businesses in the area. From Hairdressers, Butchers, Bakers, Mechanical, Electrical and other trade based functions. It's an enormous flow on and one the region can be justly proud of.
- The project is targeting local recruitment and an indigenous workforce. Approximately \$550 million will go back into the economy over the life of the mine.
- After reviewing the assessment paperwork and the mitigation strategies, HunterNet is confident that the Bylong Valley Coal Project team has in place a process to deal with any issue that may arise. This is reinforced by a robust community consultation and communication process.
- We have confidence in the management processes that will be put in place. Management that will improve their decision making process using a scientific approach and most importantly applying common sense.
- HunterNet has a great deal of confidence and trust in the proponents. The Bylong Valley Coal Project team has shown through various engagements with HunterNet and the greater business community that they are committed to the communities in which they work. The opportunity they provide as a large employer for training and jobs for young people and security for families cannot be understated.
- We stay close to these projects because we understand the benefits they bring to the whole community. We understand the flow on that significant projects bring to the majority. We also understand that these projects will not always appease everyone, compromise is a great leveller.
- The coal industry has historically made a significant contribution to the economic development of NSW and Australia. These benefits will flow into the community and will accommodate continued growth for now and into the future.

In closing, I would like to emphasise that the need for Projects of this nature are of paramount importance to the surrounding communities. The economic benefits, the mitigations put in place have been scrutinized reviewed and reviewed again to ensure public, environmental and community needs have been taken into account.

In this regard, HunterNet believes that the issues/views of objectors have been taken seriously by the proponent. As such, it is HunterNet's position that the project will indeed result in a net surplus of benefits to the Region

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne H Diemar', written in a cursive style.

Wayne H Diemar
Senior Project Director