Dear Commissioners,

I am writing this submission in support of the Bylong Coal Project.

As a Mudgee resident and community member, I think the project will provide numerous benefits to the wider Mid-Western region.

These include:

* The creation of hundreds of jobs not only at the mine but also many more within the supporting industries and within the community shops and retailers.
* Financial gains for the region associated with job creation, population increases and use of local suppliers.
* Opportunities for youth to train and be employed within the mine and associated industries. This is particularly crucial for Kandos and Rylstone where a generation of youth see no future opportunities unless they leave the area. Future opportunities have the opportunity to keep families together. The social and economic fabric of Kandos and Rylstone has changed for the worse since a number of industries and employers have left the area. The Bylong Coal Project will provide an opportunity for these communities to become thriving and diverse communities once again.
* Long term opportunities for jobs, career development and a level of certainty for local residents and businesses.
* The direction of future workers and contractors to live within the local towns rather than in a worker’s accommodation facility. More local residents over extended periods means more opportunities for better services to move into the area such as doctors and health providers, teachers, pre-schools, banks and Government providers.
* Investment within the community provided by Kepco. They have provided generous support to local events, community groups and even the Mid-Western Regional Council via subsidising a dedicated Youth Officer to work with local youths. I believe these types of contributions will only get stronger as they become an operating mine.

I believe that there is large support for this project amongst the region. This is not always captured due to the nature of the development process and perhaps the nonchalance of supporters versus the “noise” of the anti-mine/coal brigade.

In essence, Kepco have bought exploration licences from the NSW government to explore for coal, they have found the coal and over numerous years been able to establish a mineable resource. They have spent years and hundreds of millions of dollars following the necessary processes towards development and the NSW Department of Planning & Environment have deemed this project “approvable” twice. It’s now time to create certainty for all involved and approve this project.