To the Independent Planning Commissioners:

Re: United Wambo Open Cut Project Determination

 This submission is in support of the United Wambo Open Cut project. I am an employee of Peabody Energy Australia and my family derives its primary income source from the Wambo Open Cut Mine, having also been employed by Glencore Australia, I have witnessed first-hand, the environmental stewardship and good corporate citizenship of both Peabody Energy and Glencore Coal Assets Australia. Both companies have a genuine regard for the local communities their businesses operate within. The Hunter Valley community has had a long-standing relationship with the Wambo Open Cut Project over several decades and the flow on effect within the local Hunter community is evident within the economic figures for 2018:

* $39.9 million in direct royalty payments to the NSW state government, paying for vital state infrastructure such as front-line emergency services, schools, hospitals and road networks throughout the region and the state.
* $68.5 million spent within 194 local Hunter businesses supporting local Hunter Valley families.
* $141.9 million spent within other NSW businesses
* $52.7 million in employees’ wages and salaries which then is reinvested within local Hunter communities. 390 employees currently reside predominately within the communities of Singleton, Cessnock, Maitland and Newcastle.

It is of great concern to my family and myself that outside parties are endeavouring to skew the obvious benefits of this project by citing pseudoscience and false claims to validate the claims of groups such as Lock the Gate, history has shown that many members of these organisations are professional environmental campaigners without any local ties to our community or this project.

I simply ask that your commission would award approval for this project to proceed as a further 250 local long-term jobs will directly be created by this project as well as many jobs created during the construction of the infrastructure required to facilitate the joint venture project. This project unlike many other mining proposals is a brownfield project and both leases have been subjected to previous mining activities, the final landform will be more aesthetically pleasing single form rehabilitation project rather than two individual landforms if the mines rehabilitate the sites individually and the final void count remains unchanged. Thank you for taking the time to review my submission, I look forward to this project being awarded approval based on merit and my continued employment at the site.

 Regards

 Michael Wood