Hume Coal Project – Submission from John Horwith

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We live in the Southern Highlands for tranquillity, health and an enhanced lifestyle quality in a beautiful environment. Our home is in a fairly close proximity to the railway line that Hume Coal proposes to use to transport coal. With the addition of several more goods trains per day, both ways, the noise and filth currently experienced will be significantly increased, impacting health and lifestyle quality. Shunting and operating noise throughout the day and night is already at a disturbing level, so additional traffic will exacerbate the situation.

The Hume Coal impact on the environment will be considerable, despite claims to the contrary. Already we experience pollution from cement processing and uncovered coal waggons, vastly in excess of the visible surface pollution that we experienced living in Sydney. Add to that the fact that the proposed mine is located within the Sydney Water Catchment and the potential for future impact is undeniable.

Bearing in mind that the coal is for export to Korea, Hume Coal, (which is a Korean company using a classic and trusted Australian heritage name to disguise that fact), will inflict considerable negatives on the local residents who will reap absolutely no benefits. Hume Coal claim that they will provide jobs for locals. The truth is that there are very few ‘locals’ that have, or desire to have, the mining expertise required, so they will be bringing people from outside the area to fill these jobs.

The infrastructure of the Southern Highlands is currently at bursting point with people who want to move to the region because of the lifestyle quality, not to become coal miners. In a setting as beautiful as the Southern Highlands, there are infinitely more suitable businesses that should be developed rather than coal mining.

In addition to these obvious concerns there are questions that seem to have not been addressed, such as the potential to expand the operation in the future, unsightly and toxic stockpiling and with what will the mine be filled after coal is removed?

The entire project is a recipe for a disastrous outcome for residents of the Southern Highlands. History shows that the moment any outfit says ‘trust us’ is the moment that you can’t. Hume Coal’s pitch to local residents is that they are ‘the solution’ … to what?