

25 June 2020

To the Independent Planning Commission (IPC)

OBJECTION TO VICKERY EXTENSION PROJECT

I object to an extension of and/or a new mine at Boggabri.

Boggabri has already felt the damage of coal mining, with three large open cut mines nearby taking water from their precious waterways and driving local farming families away.

Now Whitehaven coal wants to dig another big coal mine called Vickery. Building another water hungry coal mine in the parched Namoi is a terrible idea. If this goes ahead the Boggabri community will be dehydrated and pushed out.

The proposed Vickery mine is being called an "extension" but is a misnomer and is in fact a new mine in the productive farming district of Boggabri, with a new rail connection that will cross the Namoi River and its floodplain.

It would mine 168 million tonnes of coal, at a rate of up to 10 million tonnes per year. One third of it will be thermal coal and will be burned for electricity overseas. Altogether, if it goes ahead, this mine will add 370 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere.

The most troubling aspect of the mine is its lack of water. Even the Department of Planning admits it might run out of water in dry times. To feed its thirst for water, Whitehaven's nearby Maules Creek coal mine has already taken water illegally, outbid local farmers for water at auction and built pipelines from nearby farms to divert farming water for mining.

Furthermore, Whitehaven proposes to pile mine spoil on top of 202 hectares of the Namoi alluvial aquifer, a plan the Department of Planning Industry and Environment's own Water Division has stated it does not support because the presence of acid forming materials in the spoil will mean heavy metals could leach into the aquifer below.

In addition, the mine site includes the historic 'Kurrumbede' property, said to be the inspiration to Dorothea MacKeller's poem "My Country". Vibration from mine blasting will harm the homestead.

While we're talking about historical aspects, let's not even get into how this mine is named for Ebenezer Vickery a mining magnate who cheated, mistreated and essentially murdered his own workers to prop up his vast fortune. Vickery was responsible for the greatest industrial disaster in Australian history which took nearly 100 lives. Celebrating this persona in any way is foul and disgusting.

The Boggabri community is already reeling from the depopulation of farms by Whitehaven's nearby Maules Creek coal mine. Narrabri Council has formally objected to the project, due to its social impacts

on the Boggabri district, already reeling from the depopulation of farms by Whitehaven's nearby Maules Creek coal mine.

DO NOT GIVE PERMISSION FOR A COMPLETELY ILL-ADVISED NEW MINE FOR BOGGABRI.

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