

Submission of Carolyn Crossman

I welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) in relation to the Vickery Extension Project application. I strongly object to this application and it should be rejected on the following grounds:

1. The environmental harm caused by the mines contribution to climate change – including, but not limited to, the fugitive gases, the operation of the mine, the infrastructure to transport the product and the consumption of the product.
2. Water – substantial impact on quality and volume
3. The significant contribution to the destruction of life on this beautiful, fragile planet resulting in an inability for our children and grand-children to enjoy life
4. Detrimental impact to the ability of plants and animals and other critters to flourish on our planet
5. Approval of this project will send a message to other coal miners that approvals are soft and sends the message to Australians and the world that the NSW planning system is not planning for a transition to a low-carbon future.

Climate sensitivity is well understood from many sources, and distinctly from the very high level and consistent reporting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

On the world stage, Australia has agreed to take action to limit increases in global mean temperature to less than 2degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. However, current emission reduction commitments are inconsistent with this target. This is particularly pronounced by (but not limited to) such things as the physical impacts of coral bleaching events, increased number of much hotter days across Australia, increased firestorm season length, increased firestorm activity, extended periods of drought, increased incidents of localised flooding due to heavier precipitation events, extreme temperatures in the Arctic with greater than predicted permafrost melts (increasing methane release), reduction of sea ice in the arctic, accelerated melting of glaciers, and the West and East Antarctic ice shelf reduction.

There is no evidence that if this supply of coal is not available that any potential buyer will just source coal from somewhere else. In fact there is much evidence that many responsible countries are moving away from Coal. For instance, Japan announced (Reuters 2 July 2020) that it is looking to close the majority (100) coal fired power plants in less than a decade. This is a major signal from the worlds third largest economy. There is simply no way to sustainably source or supply fossil fuels. They must be kept in the ground..

In economics we talk about the 'externalities' of an activity as an impact. This is a poorly understood and under researched area of economic measurement. It is generally understood to be a consequence of an industrial or commercial activity which affects other parties without this being reflected in market prices. What we are considering when we talk about 'externalities' is the public return of an activity. It is not measured by 'traditional' Gross Domestic Product monetised measures. This is extraordinarily important because this is the real value that a community, a society, the environment and our children, including future generations must bear.

It is imperative that our decisions, our developments are guided by the principle that we only meet our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

With clear sighted view of impacts on future generations it is evident that the Vickery Extension Project will impact on future generation to meet their needs, thus the Vickery extension project must be rejected.

There is no remedy to mitigate the damage that will be the public return (or 'externality') of this proposal. It is important to note that there is no economic merit assessment (where externalities are considered) that could support this project.

This proposal, if it proceeds, will damage the farmland, the local water resources, the social structure of the community, and all of our childrens future. It is reckless.

Frankly, it is unfathomable that after more than 30 years of knowing the great damage that the climate crisis causes we are still writing to raise awareness and address these old fashioned, out of date proposals.

In a nutshell, I have demonstrated that the Vickery Extension Project (Coal Mine) should be rejected on both economic and climate grounds.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Crossman
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