I support the Russell Vale underground expansion for many mixed reasons, some of which I have listed below:

- The proposal is to mine by the method of bord-and-pillar, first workings only, which over many years has been a proven extraction system which has negligible if any impacts to surface structures, man-made or natural.

- The extraction plan of coal for this proposal is around 20% (1/5) of the coal reserves in the Wongawilli seam, which is much less than other methods of mining.

- The coal to be mined is to be used for steal making, a final product used in most industries and day to day life with essential by products.

- I have also read the reports and viewed the mining plans in detail and believe the environmental aspects of this proposal have been addressed regarding the security of the inland water storage and swamps.

- I have been fortunate enough in my 40 years of mining, to have entered old areas which have been mined 80+ years ago through the bord-and-pillar system and have observed no displacement, minimal cracking, no caving of the roof, no bulging or displacement of the coal pillars. These old areas, when mined had minimal if any roof or rib supports. These areas looked as though they had been mined only recently.

- Employment: Yes, employment will be create, not only at the colliery but also to businesses at a local level and in the broader Illawarra.

- Economy: The flow on financial effects to local businesses, local communities and community groups will be invaluable, not to mention the financial benefits to the local and state governments.

When this method of bord-and-pillar extraction is done methodically with modern day roof and rib supports I believe there will be zero impacts to the surface and its environment.

Farming and mining we can’t do without, but it must be done sensibly, sustainably and safely. I believe this proposal ticks all the boxes and should be given to approval to go ahead.