Hi

I object to the Russell Vale revised Underground expansion Project for many reasons most importantly because it will negatively impact the quality of life in our region.

This project will bring with it traffic hazards, pollution risks and permanent damage to our water catchment.

I’ve also been informed that there is new information to suggest that the potential of subsidence ( triple seam mining issues along with historic problems with seam mining on this site) is potentially far greater than originally thought . This alone raises doubts as to the efficacy of this project.

Specifically I take issue on the following points:

ETERNAL COST OF COAL MINING ON COMMUNITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

* Ongoing water treatment requirements will cost future generations
The project will further the loss of ground and surface water from Cataract Reservoir and its catchment, adding 131 ML/year of ground water and 10 ML/year of surface water to losses from previous mining damage. This is estimated to bring the total ground and surface water loss from the project to 298 ML/year. This is the equivalent annual water usage of over 4,000 people.
* Unending mine water discharge at the Illawarra Escarpment
After the project is finished the mining void will fill up with water. The water will keep rising until it reaches the adit (mine portal) in the Illawarra Escarpment in about 2057. The water will overflow through the adit and the outflow will slowly increase, reaching 0.3ML (300,000 litres) per day in 2179. WCL’s modelling shows that the volume of water outflow at the adit above Russell Vale will continue to flow, even beyond 2179. In other words, there will be escalating water discharge from the adit for at least 160 years… perhaps, in perpetuity.
* The Planning Department’s failure to protect our water
The outflow will need to be managed and treated and Wollongong Coal is proposing a commitment to do this for 10 years. The company, as the current mining lease holder, not generations of NSW taxpayers should be responsible for all future discharge. The Planning Department’s recommendation that Wollongong Coal be required to merely “make a plan” for outflow management is ludicrous; it is indicative of the Department’s failure to protect our water through decades of mining the Greater Sydney Water Catchment.

The proposed Russell Vale UEP is not in the public interest. We ask that you reject this application from Wollongong coal and recommend a process to close the mine at Russell Vale permanently

Regards

Helen Tasses