

SUBMISSION TO INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Sir or Madam,

I wish to object to Hume Coal's application (SSD 7172) to build a new coal mine in the Southern Highlands and its associated Berrima Rail Extension (SSD 7171).

I do not want this mine in Berrima and the Southern Highlands to gain approval. I do not want this mine anywhere near the most abundant aquifer in Australia. I do not want this mine anywhere near the Sydney water catchment area. The risk of surface water pollution as well as the breaching of the aquifer are just too great to chance. The economic benefit is simply not significant enough, as Hume Coal's EIS amply demonstrates.

The proposed coal mine will not only ruin the heritage landscapes around Berrima (Australia's last intact Georgian Village), it presents an untold risk to the environment, water and people's wellbeing and health. The environmental risk is just too great to bear. The proposed project must be stopped right now and the associated exploration license extinguished or bought back, by the NSW Government.

With the Department of Planning having indicated it sees comparatively low economic benefit compared to similar mining operations in the Southern Coalfield across NSW, why would the Government consider placing crucial water reserves at permanent risk of contamination.

Drinking water losses from the Avon and Cordeaux dams are reportedly already in the millions of litres on a daily basis as a result of the Dendrobian Coal Mine. We must therefore permanently halt any further mining in Sydney's catchment and a good place to start would be by not approving Hume Coal's mining application.

HUME'S POSITION ON GROUNDWATER MODELLING HAS NOT CHANGED

The estimated 118 bores adversely affected over life of the mine are sufficient for the refusal of the project.

THE PROPOSED 'MAKE GOOD' ARRANGEMENTS

Hume Coal's 'make good' plan for depleted bores is unacceptable. Hume's plan amounts to the confiscation of landowner water entitlements if 'make good' becomes unworkable.

RISK OF MINE WATER OVERFLOWING INTO SYDNEY'S DRINKING WATER CATCHMENT

The risk that mine water cannot be stored underground in a timely manner, thereby overflowing into Sydney's drinking water catchment, untreated, is unacceptable

PLANS TO AVOID CATASTROPIC DAMAGE TO INFRASTRUCTURE INADEQUATE

The risk of the mine to critical infrastructure - the Hume Motorway, the Sydney Moomba gas pipeline and major communication cables - is unacceptable.

LACK OF SOCIAL LICENSE

The Southern Highlands and broader community are seriously concerned about the potential environmental, economic, agricultural and tourism impacts of The Hume Coal Project. Community opposition to this project will not go away and the community remains very strongly opposed.