Verbal Presentation to IPC by HUGH R FARRIMOND

July 2021

As a resident of Berrima, I agree with the strong and trenchant reasoning of the Dept of Planning, Industry and Environment (“the Department”) that the Hume Coal and Berrima Rail projects are not in the public interest and thus should not be approved.

Also, as a resident, I wish to reinforce the Preliminary Assessment Report (PAR) of the Department in which is stated “the proposed mine and its impacts are unlikely to be compatible with other land uses in the area”.

In my opinion, a coal mine, just 4km west southwest of Berrima, would transfer this bucolic environment into one associated with heavy industry.

I would also draw the attention of the IPC to the results of public surveys conducted by Battle for Berrima in 2017, published by Perica & Associates in their report to the IPC dated 25 June 2017.

Pages 34 to 35 of that report specify details of those surveys which clearly indicate the Hume Coal projects were not favoured by residents in the Shire. That report also referenced a petition against the project carrying more than 16,000 signatures which was tabled in the NSW Legislative Assembly in August 2016.

I consider that this clearly indicates the project lacks social licence.

In addition, I am very concerned with the potential affects this project will have on groundwater.

May I firstly refer the Commission to clauses 35-43 of the submission to the first IPC hearing from the Wingecarribee Shire Council

Refer: https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/10881

At that reference, the Council clearly expressed that the water resource we currently enjoy will be significantly affected by the proposed mine.

And secondly may I refer the Commission to clauses 67 and 68 of

the Assessment by the Department.

Here it is suggested that where (potentially) a landowner claims a disadvantage in water supply because of mining, the potential legal ramifications could be extensive and involve not only the landowner and Hume Coal but NSW Government.

These threats to the natural underground water system are so significant in my mind that the project should be rejected on these grounds alone.

I strongly recommend the IPC determine that applications SSD 7171 and 7172 be rejected.