From: <pac@pac.nsw.gov.au>
To: <pac@pac.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 13/03/2014 8:32 pm
Subject: Submission to object to the Wallarah 2 coal project (SSD 4974)

I would like to make a submission to object to the Wallarah 2 coal project (SSD 4974). I declare that I have not made any political donations in the past 2 years.

This mine has been rejected previously on the grounds that it will destroy the water supply for the Central Coast region. The current government while in opposition agreed with this decision and Premier Barry O’Farrell and the coalition candidates for Central Coast seats promised, and in fact guaranteed, that the mine would not proceed because of its destructive impacts. The previous EIS proved that the aquifers and streams that supply the water for hundreds of thousands of people would be destroyed.

Those facts have not changed. All that has changed is that the candidates have allegedly received illegal secret donations on behalf of the mine developers. This matter is currently before ICAC. If the finding is that these donations were corrupt then the whole current process is corrupt and should be thrown out. Advice that there are no environmental impediments to approving the mine are so clearly untrue that ICAC should also be looking at why such misleading advice should be given. The PAC should also consider why this is the case and include a consideration of this in their findings. Independent experts conclude that the mine will be a major environmental and economic disaster.

There are good environmental and economic reasons to reject the mine but if the PAC is tempted to approve it then there must be a condition that the process is not found to be corrupt otherwise the PAC itself will be tainted and could be subject to investigation by ICAC.

The original EIS and the current EIS are overly optimistic about the potential negative impacts. But even so, the figures in the current EIS prove that in dry times the loss of water into the mine will exceed the flows in the streams. The impact of this is that there will be no water flowing into the dams so the hundreds of thousands of residents of the Central Coast area will be left without water. The government of the time will have to find billions of dollars to find other ways to provide water such as a desalination plant. So the miners will pocket billions and the people of NSW will then be hit to undo the damage. The EIS says that the land under the creek beds will drop by at least 1.8 metres. This will mean consequent cracking of the creek beds because of uneven dropping. This in turn means that the water in the creeks will disappear into the ground never to be seen again. More than 30 streams and rivers in NSW have now stopped flowing as a direct result of coal mining. Please don’t add another one to the list.

The EIS cites other longwall mines south of Newcastle as examples of what will happen with the Wallarah 2 mine. Revelations of environmental disasters as a result of such mining were revealed by the Newcastle Herald last year after the EIS had been submitted. This invalidates the main assumption of why the mine will be safe and is a sufficient reason to reject the mine. See http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/mine-subsidence-devastates-sugarloaf-conservation-area-20130828-2spuc.html and http://www.theherald.com.au/story/2103695/miner-scales-back-after-grout-mishap/

On economic grounds, the assumptions of revenues to the government are overly optimistic. When the environmental damage is factored in then the people of NSW are in fact paying out more than the government will gain in revenues.

It was also revealed last year that catastrophic climate change can only be avoided if 80% of all the world’s coal, oil and gas reserves are left in the ground. To approve any further coal mines is morally reprehensible and is sentencing our children and grandchildren to at best an uncertain future.

Please reject this mine.

Yours faithfully,
Brian Davies