

Philippa Vale

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 24 March 2017 2:25 PM
To: PAC Enquiries Mailbox
Subject: Letter of Support - Wallarah 2 Coal Project

NSW Planning Assessment Commission
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street Sydney NSW 2000
Email: pac@pac.nsw.gov.au

RE: Wallarah 2 Coal Project

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Wallarah 2 Coal Project.

With the reduced investment in the mining sector over the past few years, I am part of a growing number of professionals / business owners traveling the M1 Motorway to Sydney for work. At the present time, those of us working on this basis regularly bypass the Central Coast, with our associated business and personal economic activity also bypassing the central coast region. In contrast, the Wallarah 2 Coal Project is ideally positioned to attract professionals to live and work within the Central Coast community.

I note the proposed underground longwall mine would extract up to 5 million tonnes of export quality thermal coal per annum over a 28-year period, with the coal to then be transported by rail to the Port of Newcastle for export. I note further that as per the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's "Walarah 2 Coal Project (SSD 4974) - Addendum Assessment Report", the *"Department remains satisfied that the project as amended would provide major economic and social benefits for the Central Coast region and for NSW as a whole. These benefits include the:*

- *direct employment of 300 full time equivalent staff during operations (targeting 70% local employees and 10% Indigenous employees) and around 450 contractors during construction;*
- *estimated indirect employment of around 879 people across NSW during operations;*
- *estimated annual direct and indirect household incomes across NSW of \$104 M during operations"*

I have also seen evidence of the Project's commitment to the local community, demonstrated through:

- the Wallarah 2 "Community Foundation" program whereby funding continues to be provided for local projects that assist or benefit the environment, community wellbeing or educational outcomes within the Wyong area. This program has provided ongoing benefits to the local community since 2013.
- the Wyong Coal agreement with the Guringai Tribal Link Aboriginal Corporation that will fund apprenticeships, business start-up schemes, a mentor scheme, a Green Team scheme and tertiary scholarships. It is a credit to both organisations to be able to work together to deliver increased education and training opportunities for the indigenous community of the Central Coast.

While I respect the concerns of those opposed to the project for environmental reasons, I also acknowledge the significant body of work undertaken by the project to demonstrate how it will avoid, mitigate or manage the predicted impacts of the project. I note that this is underpinned by the Department of Planning and Environment's revised (and strengthened) draft consent conditions which are both comprehensive and enforceable.

In closing, I note that the Department of Employment's Labour Market Information Portal currently lists the Central Coast Youth Unemployment Rate (15-24) as 14.9%. Further I note that that the unemployment rate in Wyong Shire is around 8.5% (June 2016 quarter). Should the Project be approved, the economic benefits, the creation of new jobs, the ongoing skills development and the investment in the Central Coast region flowing from a project of this nature will be a game-changer for economic development within the region.

Please accept this as my letter of support for the proposed Wallarah 2 Coal Project.

Regards,

Ashley Griffiths