

Thank you for the opportunity to express my objection to the Wilpinjong Extension Project D458-17.

My concerns are as follows:

1. My friends who live in and around the village of Wollar have already experienced considerable distress due to the social, economic and health impacts from the existing mine. Any extension would add to this. To my distress I have witnessed this once strong and vibrant rural community brought to its knees. However, I believe they have the capacity to rebuild. Give my friends a chance to assist their community to recover. Small villages and rural communities play an important part in the fabric of Rural Australia. Please do not approve this destructive project.
2. It's important to acknowledge that the distress and the losses both socially and economically to the residents of this community are clearly unjust. Most residents of Mudgee town reap the benefits while my friends in the Wollar community suffer daily from the dust, noise, withdrawal of services and the destruction of their natural environment. It is only fair that the residents should be given "Acquisition Rights".
3. I stand with the local Aboriginal community in pleading that the significant ochre quarry and art site of the Rocky Hill Complex be protected. Aboriginal people are increasingly standing strong and contributing in many significant ways to the health of Australian society. Too much destruction has happened in the past to their way of life and traditions. They need to know that these important sites are kept alive for future generations. Everyone can benefit from learning the values and teachings of Australia's first people. Their voices must be heard. Significant sites must be maintained. I support their request that improved consultative processes be established in line with the recommendations by the PAC review and more consultation happens before a decision is made.
4. The social and environmental impacts of Mudgee's three large mines combine to create grave concerns for all Mudgee Shire residents. I strongly agree with the PAC Review that there is a need to develop a "Strategic Vision Plan" for mining activities in our area. This process needs to involve all community stakeholders, be transparent and timely for it to be effective. This plan needs to be completed before the Wilpinjong extension final decision is made.
5. The Wollar-Ulan area has provided feeding and breeding grounds for the Regent Honeyeater. This area has been identified as an Important Bird Area. We are losing more and more of these significant habitats. Mine rehabilitation cannot solve the problem. Our native flora and fauna is fast being destroyed at a national level. Respect for the value of biodiversity needs to be upheld by decision makers. I ask that this panel demonstrate their respect for this classification and not approve the extension.
6. An independent review of the environmental impacts on the Goulburn River is critical in order for a fully informed decision to be made regarding this project.
7. As a long term resident of the Mudgee area I ask that you consider all these recommendations and concerns and refrain from granting approval for this project.

Yours Truly  
Phyllis Setchell

