

Commissioners, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Andrew Griffiths, I am a local Mechanic with a business at Lidsdale which employs 5 people.

I wish to speak in support of this project.

Our local area has, in recent times been severely affected by the down turn in the mining industry and the uncertainty caused to the mining industry by some groups who would have representation here today.

This operation, if approved, will have large benefits for the community as a whole, it will benefit local jobs and the overall local economy.

I currently employ an apprentice which used to be commonplace in this community, however with the current down turn in the mining industry and the flow on effect of this, less and less apprenticeships are on offer for the youth of our community.

It will create employment opportunities desperately needed in the area both inside and outside of the Mine. Manildra Group have made it clear they will make roles available for both experienced and inexperienced people who are willing to train on the job and they are also stating they will investigate apprenticeship opportunities which benefits the whole country.

This project will create more opportunities within the local business community as the Manildra group has stated they will be looking to locals first for local suppliers and service providers.

I would also like to point out that our local community is not the only small community to benefit from this project. The areas of the Bomaderry, Nowra, Manildra, Narranedra and Gunnedah will also greatly benefit from this project to ensure the continual operation of their plants and mills which employ large numbers in these regions.

These regions, like us, rely heavily on a mining and agricultural industries and without the Manildra Group would suffer their own local down turn in economy as we have recently.

This project will also benefit the local electricity generation which is without doubt a most important link in reliable power supply for the entire eastern side of Australia.

Some opponents of the mining industry still think that alternate energy will work out today. While it is necessary to plan ahead for years to come, there is not sufficient or efficient infrastructure in place for the present.

To my knowledge the entire business community and the majority of the local people want and need this project to go ahead, so I whole-heartedly support it.

Thank you for your consideration.