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To: pcn@ozdoors.com.au
Subject: Russel Vale Extension
Date: Monday, 2 November 2020 3:28:42 PM

Dear Commissioners, I cannot get through via the website as I keep getting told there are some technical difficulties. I hope my email gets through as it is only one and half hours before submissions close.

Russel Vale Coal Extension 



Tas & Lib Taylor-Boyd <ozdoors@gmail.com>

15:11 (14 minutes ago) 

to pcn 

Dear Commissioners,

I strongly object to this coal seam extension by Wollongong Coal at Russel Vale.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report 2019, 3056 people on average in Australia die of air pollution-related diseases per annum. This does not include the extra 420 plus who died during the air pollution from 2019-2020 bushfires. The average cost is \$24.3M. I do not know know the cost figures for those maimed and chronically ill nor the cost of the loss of their contributions to society at large.

Those worst affected by air pollution are a) city-dwellers b) people who live near motorways c) those who live near coal-fired power stations d) those who live near coal transport corridors e) those who live in coal mining regions. We do not want to condemn the people of Russel Vale and surrounds to be the canaries in the coal mine to tell us what we already know. They meet 4 out of the 5 categories. There are no safe levels of particulates in the atmosphere: particulates cause and exacerbate respiratory diseases in adults and in children and the tinier they are the deeper they are absorbed into the lungs wherefrom it is easy to enter the bloodstream and cause a wider spectrum of disease, including cardio-thoracic and cancers. The area that will be affected has a young population and many schools. It is unthinkable that their health should be treated in such a cavalier way if this mine is approved.

This shocking sacrifice of the local population over an entire lifetime would be in exchange for an estimated 205 direct jobs and some 800 indirect employment places in the short term, perhaps a couple of decades. Nor does it take into account the potential that other industries, particularly local tourism, are short-circuited by such a development.

We see ourselves as a civilised and fair society but this is looking to be increasingly fateful in face of many of the planning decisions that favour fossil fuel industries and big money. Our care for our own is waning as we are increasingly stereotyped as "the Quarry" by nations that import our minerals. After the IPC decision in the case of the Santos project in the Pilliga, our faith in having our voices heard has been fundamentally shaken, even with the 134 provisions attached. There were 23,400 objections and 300 supports. We all know what happens once the spotlight is turned off these projects. Where there is no light, corruption germinates (Richard Ackland).

I heard the market substitution argument plausibly put forth during the submissions on Russel Vale: if we refuse this coal project, which is alleged to be world's best practice in the industry at large, it will simply be sourced from elsewhere which will be more polluting.

In answer to this, it does nothing for the lives and amenity of the people of Russel Vale and surrounds - air pollution and dust on everything, rattling offensively noisy trucks, road safety compromises, damage to road infrastructure, vehicular pollution, loss of bushland and running and recreational space, loss of real-estate value, subsidence potential, and high risk of water pollution by a company whose track record and solvency is not impressive.

But on a global level it is even worse. To say this coal extension will not cause harm in itself because it will just be dug up elsewhere is a willful misrepresentation. More cheap coal on the market will stimulate demand and help to delay the transition to renewables. I conclude with the words of Justice Brian Preston in rejecting the Rocky Hill coalmine: "...the environmental impact does not become acceptable because a hypothetical and uncertain alternative development might also cause the same unacceptable environmental impact".

Thank you for your efforts to find a way forward for all of us.

Yours faithfully,
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