

To: Commissioners, O'Conner and Hann.

Dear Sirs, regarding: Dendrobium Extension Project (SSD 8194)

I am not alone afraid that Bureaucracy will triumph in it's misguided bid for this untenable search for what pittance of fossil carbonaceous remains.

If water catchment issues had not prevented further incursion into delicate environment, I fear the sacred nature thereof would have had no consideration.

I have included an article from the Illawarra Mercury by the erudite Ben Langford on this very matter. Considering the Steel Industry here can be guaranteed, perhaps there is an 'excuse' for extraction of the 'underground' however it's future be sensibly limited.

Still, environmental, Natural Physical, Animate and Substantive considerations must remain paramount. There is no Planet B, C, or other. Our only Heritage past, present and future depends thereon.

Please, don't allow Corporate (Local or Foreign) shortsightedness and greed run roughshod over our security in water, verdure and culture.

"Be careful when you walk through this land..." - Archie Roach.

In good faith and hope,

John Bush.

# Protecting Aboriginal sites 'not justified'

## MINING

THE recommendation to approve the Dendrobium mine expansion has angered people concerned about its impact on scores of Aboriginal heritage sites, many set to be directly undermined.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) found there

would only be "limited" damage to cultural sites, which included "23 axe grinding groove sites, 34 sandstone shelters with art and/or archaeological deposits and one artefact".

But it said nine of the 10 rock shelters which were at risk of more than 100mm of subsidence had "low scien-

tific significance".

The Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council's submission, objecting to the project, said this "scientific" assessment was "offensive".

"As an Aboriginal community we find that the process of assessment of our sites and their value being reflected in relation to their scien-

tific classification as being completely inappropriate and offensive," it said.

"This position falls the human test. Aboriginal people are not scientific experiments. Our heritage belongs to us."

DPIE said it had recommended changes to the project to protect Aboriginal

sites. One of these sites had been "substantially protected" by the miner's revision of its project to reduce the spread of one longwall panel.

"The five remaining sites are all located centrally above longwall panels," DPIE's assessment report said.

"Given the limited risks of impacts, the department

does not consider that the scientific or cultural benefit of avoiding the risk of impacts is warranted."

Dr Rada Germonos of Protect Our Water Alliance said six of the "invaluable" sites were sandstone shelters with rock art, likely thousands of years old.

- BEN LANGFORD