

Tahmoor South Coal Project SSD8445

As presented to IPC hearing @ 2pm 16/2/21 - requested by IPC panel.

Please note: additional information has been added.

Firstly, as an individual who has lived in the Wollondilly shire for over 40 years, as a parent who has chosen to raise 3 kids in the Wollondilly shire and as a home owner who will be directly affected by the Tahmoor South Coal expansion, I thank you for the opportunity to speak at this hearing.

As a homeowner, I am strongly opposed to the Tahmoor South Coal expansion, I am opposed to the physical impacts to homes and I am opposed to the affects that it will cause on the mental wellbeing of home owners and their families.

I found out about this expansion proposal from my local MP Nathaniel Smith about 4 weeks ago, and since that time it has absorbed my mind day and night. The impact to me personally has been overwhelming with my emotions ranging from anger to sadness to disbelief that this proposal has been submitted. I am not looking forward to a potential 10 year plus emotional rollercoaster.

If nothing else, as a homeowner who will be affected by this proposal, I would have expected the responsible duty and common curtesy from the mine to be contacted and informed of their intensions, considering the direct impact they intend to have on my home, my life, and the lives of my family members for many years to come.

Keeping YOUR OWN HOME in mind... this is what I can expect to happen to MY home according to the SIMEC proposal if this is to go ahead:

During LW2A activities scheduled to start in April, 2023, my home and my property, will enter into the 'draw zone' and I have been told from a mine employee that I will experience damage from this point onward.

As the longwalls pass directly underneath my home, I can expect (according to the Subsidence Predictions & Impact Assessment) to see a **subsidence drop of 1.35m and a tilt of 7.5mm per metre**. As recently as October 2020, I submitted plans for an extension which were approved by [Subsidence Advisory NSW](#). The engineering approved on these plans states that my foundations can withstand a maximum tilt of up to 7mm per metre... **YET according to Tahmoor Mines own predictions**, I can expect a tilt OVER this, at 7.5mm. It seems that my approval has been under engineered. Which makes me question... How many other homes have had engineering approved with inadequate foundations?

According to this proposal MY home is amongst the **highest predicted probability of an R5 impact** – I can't help but wonder if my home is one of the 22 homes predicted to be damaged beyond repair requiring a re-build or acquisition.

With mining activities scheduled to end in April 2032, I will be affected by active mining for a period of 10 years. Over that 10 year period, to the best of my understanding, as long as my front door opens, the toilet flushes and I can have a shower MY home is deemed to be a serviceable dwelling.

I am expected to live with all the physical damages to my home and to my property... including cracks in walls (thankfully in my case, non asbestos walls), cracks in brickwork, 170mm height variation from one end of my home to the other, distortion of retaining walls, subsidence of driveways, just to mention a few. THEN I am expected to wait up to 5 years ground settlement period before any repair work is carried out, assuming my claim is accepted in the first place.

The expectation that anyone may have that this will have no affect on my mental health is unreasonable and unrealistic.

I am also expected, for this 10 year period, to accept that the life choices that I currently have the freedom to make, will be taken away from me and my family to a very large degree. If opportunities arise for career advancements involving me to move, or responsibilities to care for family members requiring me to move... at the moment this is an uncompromised choice... but if I am within this 10 year active mining period, the choice to sell and move becomes compromised.

An active mine beneath you is NOT a desirable selling point. I doubt that anyone can argue that a home with damages holds the same value as a home without damages. I would expect a substantial devaluation of my MAJOR ASSET if placed on the market during active subsidence. Which therefore, in my case, takes away my choice to move. It seems that my freedom in this regard will be governed by the mine until 2032.

Other concerns which have come to my attention during researching this proposal include:

Firstly - The \$13.8M compensation fund nominated for ALL repairs AND up to 22 potential property acquisitions.

I recently had my property valued by an accredited valuer, to be \$1.15M. The 30 odd properties surrounding me hold a similar value, if not more. Considering acquisitions ONLY... Should my property be acquired by the mine along with 21 surrounding properties with a similar value, this \$13.8M fund only accommodates for an average of \$630,000 each... **approximately half their market worth.** \$13.8M is grossly inadequate.

Secondly, I would like to raise this as a major concern, the consequences of Tahmoor Mines ever going into administration, and question whether that fund will even still be available for repairs.

Thirdly, The noise levels from the increase in traffic directly passing my property of 190 vehicles per week day AND from the proposed ventilation shafts put MY home in the nominated noise catchment zone outlined on page 102 of the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Report. NOT the peaceful rural atmosphere I currently enjoy.

Lastly - I would like to raise my concern with the term – Rebuttable Presumption: Current legislation, to my understanding, is that if my home has shown no physical damage for its 20 plus year life span... THEN it is directly exposed to mining activity, and my home shows physical damage as such... at the moment the rebuttable presumption is that the damages are NOT due to the mining activities.

So then me as the homeowner may be put into a position of having to prove that mining WAS IN FACT the cause. To me, I feel that this existing legislation takes away a great deal of protection from the home owner, and needs to be properly addressed.

To finish off, I would like to make comment to the employees of Tahmoor Coal Mine. Even though we have opposing opinions, we are all in a similar position... defending what is important to each of us. I appreciate that you are defending your jobs as I hope you can appreciate that we are defending OUR homes, OUR families, OUR peace of mind.

I am not against the mining industry, but at the present time, with the level of concerns I have, I need to oppose this extension proposal in it's current format.

PLEASE NOTE: Further information has come to hand after speaking at the IPC hearing:

1. The NSW ePlanning website tells me my foundations should be built to Australian Standards AS2870 class H2 Guideline 5. This standard states my foundation can withstand ground movement UP TO 75mm. My home prediction is WELL OVER this at **1350mm**. There are 280 homes on the proposal that are predicted to be over 75mm subsidence.
2. If this extension plan is approved, SANSW is apparently going to change the building guidelines from Guideline 5 to 4 for the whole local area. This means homes built after this will have stricter codes and building restrictions. If this is the case, I will NOT be able to rebuild my current home (should I need to) as my current home is a custom build, double storey with a larger footprint than guideline 4 states. Again more democratic freedoms taken away through no fault or choice of my own. A smaller home would devalue my property (my asset) considerably.
3. I raise the concern that Wollondilly Council is in support of this expansion, yet has been approving homes built using the H2 Guideline 5 standards which are consequently grossly inadequate to withstand the subsidence and tilt estimations in this proposal.
4. I raise as a question if Wollondilly Council has changed their DA guidelines when Tahmoor mine changed from the old bord & pillar method to the longwall mining method?

Brian Mathiasch



