

## **MANGOOLA COAL CONTINUED OPERATIONS PROJECT.**

### **IPC PRESENTATION.**

**Application No: SSD 8642**

#### **IN THE BEGINNING:**

Our property is located at 590 Yarraman Rd., Wybong (Property ID 148). Mangoola Coal buffer land is a direct neighbour. We have mitigation rights, but not acquisition rights with the Mangoola mine, which has been operating for 10 years. We bought our bare property 45 years ago and we built the house ourselves on a ridgeline, which is now in direct line of sight of the Pit.

We were told many years ago, by previous mine management, that we are 200 metres too far away to be eligible for Acquisition rights

#### **MANGOOLA EXTENSION PROJECT SUBMISSIONS:**

I recalled the old adage, "You can please some of the people some of the time, but not all the people all of the time," as I reviewed the submissions received. I perceived them as 3 separate groups.

1. The Altruistic group are Respondents who are living faraway, some as far as Western Australia. They took the moral high-ground and opposed on the basis of greenhouse gas pollution.
2. The Pragmatic group are Respondents living nearer to the mine but NOT close and supported Glencore, mainly for creating jobs and financing sporting groups.

3. The Personally Impacted group are the very small group living within 5 kms of the Mangoola mine and are expected to tolerate their new life for the sake of the greater good. I believe that probably everybody living close to the mine made a submission and all were strongly emotive opposing the extension. If submissions are to be considered to have any relevance on the outcome of the determination, then these collateral damaged souls, through no fault of their own, will have to live their lives close to an operating open cut mine and are the group most personally affected and should be given the most compassionate credence.

Our house is on the rim of a ridgeline which is part of the natural amphitheatre within which the mine is centred. The computer modelling used by the Consultants for the original EIS before mining commenced and which must still apply for the now current mining operations, calculated the dust and noise generated for every season for every year of the predicted mining operations. The computer huffed and puffed at immense expense and finally determined where the dust and noise would stop. It created an "imaginary line" across the flat valley floor below us. Obviously, it is not possible to see this line, but look up and observe the Mine workings beyond it. The Computer says, that dust and noise will suddenly get very weak and be NOT able to crossover this line. Many years ago, we were told by the Mine that we were 200 metres too far away from this "Line" to be affected enough for us to be considered for voluntary acquisition. All throughout the EIS are many references about the use of natural ridges or bund walls to ameliorate noise. What if you are living on a ridge which is enclosing the amphitheatre? With the progression of the Mine, we feel that we are significantly affected and time has revealed that this fortress imaginary line can be easily and often breached. There is no credence given to common sense and the senses.

At night-time, prior to the mine, on those special, magical nights, there was simply NO noise.

The “sound experts” say however, there is always noise and legislation has actually been enacted to legally permit making a noise in addition and above a set baseline noise level. This baseline level is derived from the sounds of frogs, crickets, birds, barking, mooing and occasional vehicle. To my ears these are “natural” sounds you expect to hear and are not only normal to hear, but also necessary to hear when you live in a farming area. It is only one’s perception that differentiates between sound and noise. Something a decibel meter cannot compute. We like to sleep with the windows open for the fresh country air and also to be attuned to any untoward and potentially dubious nocturnal occurrences. Rather than being insulated inside with the stuffy air conditioning running to mask outside noises.

We have the lawful right to complain to the mine about intrusive noise. I have registered noise complaints on occasions when it becomes too upsetting in the quiet of the night. However, I can’t answer how many decibels it is, or just exactly what is making the noise. How can you identify individual noise sources when it seems to me to be the sound of an invading army? I am basically registering a complaint, so that they realise there exists some nearby privately owned residences who are having trouble sleeping. You cannot ring every time the noises upset you and I do not expect the mine to change their operations just because they are upsetting us. They are legally permitted to make noise. I tell them, “it is not necessary to change your operations just because I can hear you.” It is difficult to mine quietly.

As the slowly approaching army advances and the battle sounds intensified, we finally asked for noise mitigation for our house. They installed air conditioning and insulating bats in the ceiling. However, it was too difficult to double glaze the noisy side facing master bedroom windows and therefore the noise is still intrusive.

The noise is not of great concern during the day, it’s just when you are trying to get peaceful, restful sleep at night. How can you set a decibel limit on that? Nobody compiling the EIS nor mine management has been to our home to feel firsthand, the impacts on us. They have always been welcome.

#### LIFESTYLE AMENITY AND PROPERTY VALUE:

We are 3 generations living here and the Mine has been operating for many years. Compared to our pre-mine life at our property, we consider that we are now severely impacted visually, by dust, by noise, by loss of community and property values. When I first built here, it was an area designated on Council LEP as “Scenic Rural Beauty”. They had to change the LEP to allow the mine. There was NO night time intrusive noise. We had a vibrant social community centred on the local hall. (OK, some nights there was music and laughter coming from the hall.) To their credit, Glencore have contributed funds to the upkeep and improvements to the Wybong Hall and cemetery. However, they are required by legislation to give back to the local community. Unfortunately, much less now happens at the Hall and you have to die to use the cemetery.

Who would want to buy a bush property without even a garbage service and so far away from town, just to be living next to an Industrial Zone?

The Mine is the only prospective customer, if, you have “Acquisition Rights”, and, you wish to sell.

#### CONCLUSION:

I am ambivalent to the proposed new extension. Our Son has a good job at Mangoola Mine, which he enjoys and appreciates. I would be a hypocrite to oppose mining on greenhouse gas emissions.

I am venting my feelings as this EIS process is our only platform to express how we feel we are being affected.

The new computer noise modelling for the Extension Project, has determined that the night time noise will increase for us. That will result in our property being legislatively available for Voluntary Acquisition. What's a few more decibels when we have already been living for 10 years with what the poor new group are going to have to now endure? My life has been my family whilst building and improving our property. My late father lived here while he helped me build our home. We are still 3 generations living here. The Grand children know nowhere else but we do worry over their health implications.

The family cannot stand to envisage all we have worked for here to be rented, then become unloved, unkempt and unappreciated. We have spent too many hours trying to keep our property weed free. It hurts to now see the deterioration in the homes and paddocks around Wybong, once proudly owner occupied and now mine owned.

If the Extension project is approved, I especially have sympathy for the property owners who will find themselves in the same position we have been subjected to since mining began. Even though the "Computer says", you will be OK, be prepared for an uninvited lifestyle change and a stressful, uncertain and disrupted future.

Kerry McIntosh

590 Yarraman Road, Wybong.