

Our ref:
Contact: Mr Barry Arthur



9 August 2021

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Dear Commissioners

Re: Hume Coal Project and Berrima Rail Project (SSD7172 & SSD 7171)

Thank you for the opportunity to make comment on the 'additional material' provided by the Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE) on this matter.

Council has adopted a policy of opposition to any new coal mining because of the concerns it has over potential impacts on groundwater, water catchments, agricultural land and tourism. The 'additional material' provided by DPIE has not altered Council's position on the Hume Coal Project which has been outlined in its submissions to the Hume Coal EIS and IPCN Public Hearings.

Council would like to provide further comment on two points contained in the 'additional material'.

On page three of the DPIE letter, reference is made to the railway overbridge being constructed by Council. This project is currently being prepared to a position of being 'shovel ready' for future grant funding opportunities. Council is still resolving complicated issues around land swaps, utility alignments and securing the funding to complete the project. As a result, there is no set completion date for this project.

With respect to point five in the DPIE letter, Council would like to reiterate the related points from its 2017 submission to the EIS:

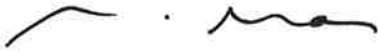
- Tourism is well-established and is one of the key economic drivers for Wingecarribee Shire. Tourism currently provides some 2,500 jobs across the Shire and generates an estimated \$250 million each year, being 10% of the Wingecarribee economy (2017 figures). Along with the natural, rural and heritage appeal of the region, our identity also includes a growing food and wine sector and niche market appeals such as the identity as a wedding destination.

Working with you

- One of the Southern Highlands' key tourist attractions is the historic village of Berrima, recently winning the NSW Top Tourism Town in its category for 2021. There are fears that an impact on the tourism appeal of one of the region's main drawcards could have a flow on impact for the whole area.
- Berrima is located approximately 2km from the Project Area, and the proposed coal mine and associated railway would be visible to Berrima and Southern Highlands' visitors entering and leaving via the Hume Highway. It is foreseeable for the area to become associated with 'the mine' and lose some of its destination appeal.

Once again thank you for allowing Wingecarribee Shire Council to provide comment on the 'additional material'.

Yours sincerely



Viv May
Interim Administrator