

Anna and Richard Turner
'Dochairn'
[REDACTED]
Sutton Forest, NSW 2577

17 July 2021

Office of the Independent Planning Commission NSW
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street Sydney NSW 2000
BY EMAIL TO : [REDACTED]

Attention Ms Nina Harrison

Dear Madam,

**Re: Hume Coal Project (SSD 7172) and Berrima Rail Project (SSD 7171)
OBJECTION**

This letter is further to our previous letters of objection to both the mine and rail projects dated 28.06.17 and 30.01.19.

We own the property 'Dochairn' which is 140 acres - Lot 2 of DP 1213201 and have been coming to the area for 40 years. I also write on behalf of my parents-in-law Dr Colin and Mary Rose McDonald who have owned 60 acres adjacent to us since the 1960s. Both properties are within the Hume Coal lease area but not directly within the area proposed for mining. We are approximately 5 km to the south east of the mine site and commencement point of the rail line.

We listened to the 2 days of the hearing last week and feel that the objections to the mine were expressed comprehensibly by many objectors, both experts and members of the public. We cannot see how it would be possible for the Panel to approve this project on the basis of the following:

- Detrimental impact on ground water
- Effect on the scenic quality of the Southern Highlands
- Generation of coal dust
- Detrimental impact on tourism and related employment
- No new coal mines are needed in Australia and should not be approved

As these points were covered at the Hearing this letter concentrates on the railway line which seems to have had much less focus than the mine

This seems to assume that whether the mine obtains approval or not will determine the fate of the railway project. We object to this assumption and contend that the railway project is a very poor proposal and should be refused in its own right.

We submit the following objections:

An eyesore!

This is an extremely major project which will have significant visual impact to a scenically beautiful area, in particular the route from the mine site to Moss Vale. The impacts also extend to the wider area of Moss Vale, Robertson and the Illawarra region.

Traffic disruption

The proposal will have significant impact on the 17 affected level crossings which we understand will add 24 minutes of closures per day. The applicant's report simply states that these impacts can be managed but we believe this is simplistic and ignores the extensive effect on traffic that will only increase as future development occurs in the area. How will roads cope in say 10 years with the increased traffic? What is the impact on emergency vehicles? This has not been assessed at all.

This was highlighted by the confusion in questions after the public hearing from the commissioners to the DOP experts. An objector had stated that there will be 40 trips (20 each way) per day but the Chair told her that it was only 14. However after discussion, it was stated that the number will be 34, but there seemed to be a lack of certainty even about this figure.

But assuming it is 34, this would be an extraordinary increase in traffic particularly through the scenic town of Robertson

Air Pollution

Coal dust and diesel engine emissions can carry a long way in windy conditions and dust from both the mining operations and trains could be a threat to health.

Noise Pollution

The extra 34 daily trains between the mine site and Port Kembla will be long trains with many carriages and be extremely heavy necessitating hard working and noisy diesel engines. This noise pollution will be most undesirable and affect many residents in the vicinity of the train line.

Conclusion

Our concerns relating to the Rail Project are for the whole area which is inherently beautiful due to a balanced combination of environmental and scenic amenity. The train line would have significant detrimental impacts on a very extensive area from Berrima to the coast which we contend are not acceptable.

The State Government has a responsibility to protect this area and the rail project being as flawed as the mine should be refused, even if extremely regrettably the mine was to be approved

As mentioned by many objectors last week, it is well past time to put a complete and absolute end to this ill conceived project so that, after 10 long years of uncertainty and anxiety, we will finally have some closure.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Anna and Richard Turner.

Anna and Richard Turner,
cc. Mrs Mary Rose McDonald