

Hume Coal Project Hume Coal Project and Berrima Rail Project (SSD 7172 & SSD 7171) - second referral

I am at a loss to understand how Hume Coal (a South Korean project) can have been allowed to proceed to this stage.

I OBJECT TO IT.

The overwhelming argument against this project must be that if allowed to proceed, it will contribute to higher carbon emissions and hence, Australia's cumulative contribution to dangerous global warming.

To have any chance of not exceeding the recommended 1.5 deg warming of this planet, NO NEW COAL EXTRACTION SHOULD START FROM NOW ONWARDS. Two recent decisions support this view:

1. The Federal Court, in its recent Vickery Coal Mine class action decision (Sharma and others) determined,
"the burning of coal from the Vickery expansion "would increase the risk of global average surface temperatures increasing beyond 2°C and the risk of global surface temperatures being propelled into an irreversible 4°C trajectory". (see for example Australian teenagers' climate change class action case opens 'big crack in the wall', expert says - ABC News).
2. And as The International Energy Agency (IEA) recently stated:
"Building on the IEA's unrivalled energy modelling tools and expertise, the Roadmap sets out more than 400 milestones to guide the global journey to net zero by 2050. These include, from today, no investment in new fossil fuel supply projects, and no further final investment decisions for new unabated coal plants. (Media Release: "Pathway to critical and formidable goal of net-zero emissions by 2050 is narrow but brings huge benefits, according to IEA special report", News - IEA).

My objections *specific* to the Hume Coal Project are that:

- The project would cause drawdown in a large number of groundwater bores – as already specified by DPIE's own Director of Resource Assessment;
- The project poses a serious risk to water resources in Sydney's drinking water catchment;
- There are potential severe or catastrophic safety consequences from subsidence which will be caused by the project; and
- There is extensive and long-standing opposition to the project from the local and broader community, and the Wingecarribee Shire Council itself.

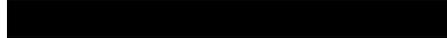
Claims by the CMFEU that the project would result in 400 jobs in the region fly in the face of the known increase in automation of roles in the coal mining industry, and the risk of coal being a "stranded asset" in the near future due to other countries decreasing their use of coal and instead, increasing their uptake of renewable energy sources.

Renewable energy sources must instead be sought in the Southern Highlands and funded as a matter of urgency. Wind and solar farms would provide more reliable and environmentally sustainable employment in the South Highlands. Furthermore, they would not create such harmful effects as coal extraction on the region's existing agricultural landuse – notably wine and beef production.

The time is long overdue for any further risks to be taken with local water supplies (and well beyond) by a coal mining project that would – by its very nature – contribute harmful emissions to an overheating planet. Given the ever-expanding climate crisis, allowing this project to proceed would be unconscionable.

I urge the IPC to reject this project outright for the sake of the wellbeing of the local community, the wider community and indeed, the health of our environment.

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