

From: [Martine Holberton](#)
To: [IPCN Enquiries Mailbox](#)
Subject: Submission against the Narrabri Underground Mine Stage 3 Extension Project
Date: Monday, 28 February 2022 10:15:37 PM

To the Independent Planning Commission,

I STRONGLY object to the extension of the Narrabri Underground Mine extension project. WHY? As we continue to be informed with scientific, peer reviewed evidence, we CANNOT and MUST NOT continue to burn fossil fuels. We have a development pipeline of renewables and back up storage in this country that will power us on 100% renewables by 2040. We CAN do it and the private sector is committed to making this happen. We know we need transmission infrastructure to catch up, however there is state government impetus to make this happen to align with projects readying to connect to the grid.

We don't need the Santos Narrabri gas project either. It is a crime on the children of this country and their future, that it has been approved.

A few other key concerns I have:

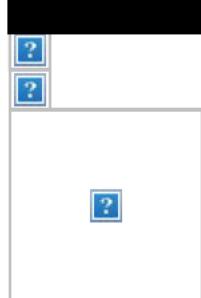
- At least nine bores which are crucial for watering stock will be affected by groundwater drawdown that is worse than the impact criteria of NSW's Aquifer Interference Policy.
- This number could be far higher, particularly since the project is directly next door to Santos' proposed CSG, which is also going to remove and disrupt groundwater.
- These impacts will continue for at least a century, peaking well after the mine has closed.
- The drawdown will affect the contribution of groundwater 'baseflow' into the Namoi River itself, a crucial source of water in times of low rainfall.
- The eastern Pilliga forest is a unique and irreplaceable biodiversity refuge. The Stage 3 project will clear 440 hectares of woodland and fragment a much larger area.
- The area is home to many threatened species including the Glossy Black Cockatoo, Eastern pygmy possum, Squirrel glider, Black-striped wallaby and Pilliga Mouse.
- The survival of many of these species requires large mature trees where hollows have formed and these will be lost to clearing.
- Narrabri is a longwall mine, and the proposed new longwalls are some of the longest and widest in Australia. This means intense surface subsidence after the longwall panel collapse post-mining, disrupting creek flow, withdrawing water from mature trees in Pilliga East forest and creating cracks up to 78cm wide and 2.5m deep.
- In addition to the clearing, there are 160 hectares high priority groundwater dependent ecosystems that will experience groundwater drawdown. Whitehaven admitted in its response to submissions that "At some groundwater dependent vegetation, predicted drawdown exceeds 10m which is expected to result in larger trees potentially not being able to access groundwater in drought conditions."
- The importance of the Pilliga and its creeks for Gomeroi people is reflected in the large number of artefacts found, many of which are clustered along Kurrajong Creek.
- Among the 60 sites recorded are two grinding grooves sites and one of these grinding groove sites has several dozen grooves and is well-preserved. Whitehaven's assessment considered it likely this site would be affected by subsidence.
- These cultural heritage sites will be affected by cracking and subsidence caused by movement, water extraction and coal extraction from below them.
- Whitehaven and the Department gave minimal consideration to the potential damage

to grinding grooves and the protection of Gomeroi cultural heritage.

This extension is not needed and is a threat to our future. Do the right thing and DO NOT approve it.

--
Martine Holberton
(she/her)

Sustainability Communications Consultant - Melbourne & Sydney



Please consider your environmental responsibility before printing this email.