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Subject: Submission on additional material: Glendell Continued Operations!
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To: Independent Planning Commission Members

Dear Commissioners,

My thanks for allowing concerned members of the public to make submissions on the issue of relocating the Ravensworth Homestead to allow for an expansion on this estate of coal mining by Glencore.

When ‘heritage’ is considered, I believe that physical objects must be understood within their context. Picking up an object, even one as large as a colonial building, and moving it to another place, alienates it from its embeddedness within the socio-cultural dynamics which define and enrich space as place. It also continues our long, shameful history of denying how non-indigenous actors have tried to obliterate the presence and vital importance of Indigenous peoples across this country.

A history of disbelieving or ignoring Indigenous histories, especially those related to massacres enacted by ‘white settlers’, adds to the oppressions perpetrated in Australia. When Heritage experts and professionals urge government agencies like the IPC to protect places like Ravensworth, based on irrefutable evidence, for the benefit of us all, we are called to listen and act.

Three important issues have been raised. Ravensworth homestead and surroundings areas: have the strongest documentary evidence of any conflict site across the Hunter Valley, including the event known as the Ravensworth massacre; tells the story of shared Aboriginal and European heritage; and is rare and exceptionally intact.

On balance, why would we allow, in the words of Heritage NSW, diminishing an “*opportunity for truth-telling*” and “*for us to come together as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people that live in this country*”, for the sake of a company to profit from an old, dirty technology like coal, when we know it is imperative for all of us to do what we can to avoid climate catastrophe by moving to ‘cleaner’ energy sources.

Unfortunately, sad as it is, Australian Governments and their commissioned actors, have so often enabled destruction of our country and of our shared cultural and social heritages, for their own short term political benefits.

Please listen to our Heritage experts and to The Wonnarua Plains Clan and act to protect Ravensworth Homestead and estate, from this proposal from Glencore.

Regards,

Dr Maree H Bracker