

I wish to lodge a submission of objection to the Department of Planning & Environment to the Peabody Energy Wilpinjong mine extension project SSD 6764.

My family home is the old police station residence built in 1930 in the village of Wollar.

Current approved operations in Pit 3 have seen noise, dust and blasting affect my property. The EPA took samples of dust inside and outside my house and water samples from my kitchen drinking water. The samples from inside and outside my house showed coal dust and samples from my drinking water contained coal dust, sulphur and other pollutants (NSW Government Office of Environment & Heritage. Report of Analysis. Report 201400361).

During blasting my house shakes and windows rattle. I have kept a diary of complaints of noise, dust and noxious fumes from burning coal stockpiles.

The Peabody Energy extension SSD 6764 will be within 1.5km of the village of Wollar. We already experience difficulty sleeping due to mine noise and train movements at night.

As per the Peabody Energy Wilpinjong Extension Project Environmental Impact Statement Appendix A Noise and Blasting Assessment during the period July 2014 to May 2015 a total of 454 shutdown hours (including 73 hours associated with the use of excavators) and this has occurred under the current approval. Peabody Energy have advised that the proposed extension will lead to noise levels up to 37 decibels, the current limit is 35 decibels, which is already being exceeded by the current mine operations leading to Peabody Energy acknowledging they have to shut down equipment due to non-compliance.

Another adverse impact has been the offensive odour omissions from spontaneous combustion in the stockpile. At the February 2016 CCC meeting Peabody Energy advised that during April, May and June 2016 they will recommence moving the stockpile, in light of recent reports of adverse health issues from the Hazelwood Coal Mine fire at Morwell we are very concerned.

There has been very limited consultation regarding this extension, I have gained information by attending the CCC meetings as a visitor every 3 months. We have requested public meetings but Peabody Energy has declined.

The social impact on the village of the existing operations has been enormous. We have lost over 90 families including our local mechanic, the Wollar volunteer Fire Brigade, closure of both churches, the current lessee of the shop is expected to leave at the end of this year leading to its possible closure. My neighbours are drive-in drive out shift workers or houses are falling down and overgrown with neglect. No Peabody Energy employees children attend the Wollar school and with the mine operations approaching the village, will Peabody Energy require the school to close?

We already experience increased heavy vehicle traffic through the village of Wollar and we are concerned this will increase during the initial construction phase and also during the mine production phase.

We are also concerned about the loss of a further 800 hectares of bush land habitat.

In public meetings before mine operation commenced, we were assured the village would not be affected, scientific modelling showed the village would not have any issues with noise, dust or blast damage to properties. Our village would grow with mine families living in the village! How wrong they were.