

Objection

1. Mt Owen mine has had significant environmental impact over a 20 year period. The current proposal will disturb an additional 485 ha including 136.3ha of endangered ecological communities (EEC) and habitat for 29 threatened fauna species
2. The nationally endangered Spotted-tailed Quoll and Swift Parrot will be significantly impacted.
3. The proposed biodiversity offset areas are entirely inadequate and will not provide the environmental values lost. There is an 84.6ha deficit for impacted EECs
4. The cumulative impact of Mt Owen Mine since original approval in 1991 and in relation to surrounding mines has not been adequately addressed
5. Air quality will deteriorate further. Current operations exceed the national standards for PM₁₀ emissions, the proposal will increase these exceedances.
6. Over 20 properties will experience higher noise levels
7. Climate change impacts have not been considered in any of the predictions
8. Cumulative impacts on tributaries and groundwater systems associated with Glennies Creek and the Hunter River have not been assessed. Final landform will have 3 voids
9. Estimated to generate 137,653,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent over 15 years of operation
10. The return to the community after external costs are taken into account are negative.

Wholly Adverse Ecological Impact

In 1994 Mt Owen mine was given approval to destroy nearly half of Ravensworth State Forest reducing it from 450 ha to 238ha. This forest was the largest intact vegetation remnant on the floor of the Upper Hunter Valley.

In 2004 approval was given to destroy a further 35ha of the forest and to mine through the biodiversity offset area designed to link the remaining areas of forest.

This latest expansion, while not impacting on the remaining forest area, will continue to remove critical habitat from the floor of the Upper Hunter. This includes Central Hunter Grey Box – Ironbark Woodland EEC (4.4ha – not offset) and Central Hunter Ironbark- Spotted Gum- Grey Box Forest EEC (131.9ha -17% of remaining extent in the valley – a shortfall in offsets of 80.2ha)

The cumulative loss of native vegetation since the commencement of the mine will be 1,838 ha, if this latest expansion is approved. The final protection of the current biodiversity offset areas has not yet been resolved.

The previous approvals have required mine rehabilitation to recreate the forest. After 20 years this objective is nought but a miniscule joke and abject failure.

Legislative Capture and Governance Charade

Mt Owen is a charade of equivalent proportions to the Fraud of the Governance, Planning and Approval process that precedes it in a debauched and captured 'democrati'. A Kafkaesque delusion of a demented psyche, deviant autocracy and criminal debridement.