

I would like to make some urgent comments on this proposal by Centennial Coal. I am very concerned about the environmental consequences for our water and for the wetlands and I am sure that this project needs greater scrutiny and longer opportunity for community responses.

I live in Sydney - but the Blue Mountains, and in particular the Garden of Stones Area and the Wolgan Valley have always been my happy places and the places my friends and I go to for rest and recovery. Only two weeks ago I was staying in the Wolgan Valley and walking up and down and around in the Newnes area. It is a challenge to visit now because the road into the valley is closed because of landslips and it is still not clear how to build a road into this most beautiful valley. I think this issue with the road reminds us how fragile this environment is. We need rigorous scrutiny of all proposals for projects in our Blue Mountains. I am very concerned about any proposals for mining under the Gardens of Stone. I am particularly worried about the possible implications for the drinking water in Sydney.

There are obvious concerns about the timing of this application. Having the two-week window for public comment start on a long weekend effectively shortened the available time for comment. This does not seem fair or reasonable and also suggests the application itself is hiding something. Also, I understand that Centennial is planning to expand mining under Angus Place West, and this application looks to be connected to that application. The mining application has to undergo more significant scrutiny. I most strongly think that these modification proposals by Centennial need to be subject to the same scrutiny, and need to be included in the mining application so that the project and its environmental implications can be viewed as a cohesive whole.

This project, if carried out, looks to have significant on water - on our Sydney drinking water and on surrounding unique wetlands. Such a project clearly has "significant impact on a water resource", and as such is required to be referred for Commonwealth assessment under the EPBC Act.

Everyone knows that Centennial has a very poor record for responsible care of the environment. An audit of Centennial's mining licences for the last five years found 134 licence non-compliances across its sites in the Garden of Stones. (Including - mining outside approved area; toxic sludge discharged into wetlands; the permanent loss of significant Temperate Highland Peat Swamps...) It is just unbelievable that proposals from Centennial could be considered without the utmost scrutiny.

If the capacity of the Springvale Water Treatment Plant has been exceeded then something else needs to be proposed to address the issue. Centennial Coal needs to withdraw the proposed modification 8 Angus Place and modification 5 Western Coal Services and install a reverse osmosis treatment plant. Such a proposal needs to be included in the general mining proposal.

Thank you for considering my comments.