

Bev Smiles  
3483 Ringwood Rd  
Wollar 2850

Genevieve Lucas  
Contact Planner  
Department of Planning and Environment

Friday 15 December 2023

Dear Genevieve Lucas,

### **Wilpinjong Coal Mine Mod-2 Workers Accommodation Facility**

I am a long-term resident of the Wollar community having moved here in the mid-1970s. I am currently a community representative on the Wilpinjong Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee (CCC). I am also secretary of Wollar Progress Association, the representative body for the community. I object to the proposed modification of the mine approval, except for the application to reduce the current approved mine boundary.

The consultation with the community on this proposal to build temporary workers accommodation on the mine site has been very poor. It is of interest that the Modification Report reveals that consultation with Mid-Western Regional Council on this matter had occurred as early as 6 March 2023. This is the same date as the March CCC meeting yet the matter was not raised with the community. There has been no direct contact with Wollar Progress Association.

The Modification Report includes an attached letter of support from Mid-Western Regional Council dated 19 June 2023. This letter was written only a few weeks after the June CCC meeting. There was still no mention of the proposal at that CCC meeting.

The first time anyone in Wollar was made aware of the proposed modification was at the CCC meeting held on 4 September 2023. There is no evidence that: 'Issues raised and feedback received from the relevant stakeholders has been considered during the preparation of this Modification Report.'<sup>1</sup>

The remaining private landowners in the Wollar district have expressed deep concern about the demolition of houses in the village that had been in good condition when originally acquired. This issue has been discussed at numerous CCC meetings but was not raised as an issue in the Modification Report.

There are mine workers in rental accommodation in Wollar village and on outlying properties with numerous vacant houses being left to fall into disrepair. These should be renovated to safe rental standards and new houses should be built on vacant blocks owned by Peabody Energy to provide additional workers accommodation requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> Wilpinjong Coal Mine, Nov 23. Modification Report p 10

I am concerned that a quick fix, temporary solution to the regional accommodation crisis is proposed when the real solution is an increase in available permanent housing.

Peabody Energy could demonstrate a commitment to the social viability of the Wollar community, into the future, by investing in new houses in Wollar village and in the restoration of existing housing stock that has not yet deteriorated beyond repair. There is no transparency around what houses have been assessed by the contracted real estate agency to decide on rental condition.

Wollar Progress Association had requested a social impact mitigation measure during the development of the Social Impact Management Plan to provide a building maintenance plan. This was not incorporated into the Plan with no explanation provided.

There has been no justification provided for a five year temporary workers accommodation facility at the mine or why it needs to be shifted from the current approved site. This modification is entirely unnecessary, has no merit and is not in the public interest.

I recommend that the proposed reduction of the approved mined boundary be adopted while the proposed new site for a temporary workers accommodation facility be rejected as unnecessary.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Smiles". The letters are cursive and fluid.

Bev Smiles