

Objection to Glendell Mine Modification 5 – Life Extension DA80/952 - Mod - 5

I am writing to object to the proposed Glendell Mine Modification 5 – Life Extension and request that consent for this project be refused. Ongoing worldwide catastrophic bushfires and floods must be a turning point for Australia and the world. It is time our Governments put the safety of Australia's people and environment ahead of profits for foreign owned mining companies.

Specifically, my reasons for objecting to this proposal are as follows:

- It would seem the Planning Department and hence the Government consider an extra 2 years of coal mining to be a no brainer that doesn't require public meetings or an independent assessment and approval process. Perhaps they should consider the people who still live in Camberwell, 1.1km from the mine. I don't live near this mine, but I do live a similar distance from another mine working on an extension project. I'm sure the people of Camberwell are like me - hanging on for the day the mine closes. They should also consider the people of the Hunter Valley, particularly children, with higher rates of asthma and respiratory complaints. They should consider the people of Lismore, Pakistan and places too numerous to mention which have suffered from catastrophic flooding, and those who have suffered from catastrophic bushfires. We know that burning fossil fuels is the biggest contributor to increasing CO2 levels and this in turn is the biggest contributor to climate change and catastrophic floods and fires. The IPCC has said "Every tonne of CO2 emissions adds to global warming." Extending this mine for a further 2 years is not a trivial matter. It is an opportunity to keep 1.8mt of coal in the ground and prevent 2.7mt of CO2 emissions!
- Consent for the Glendell Life Extension would set a dangerous precedent for an extension to every mine in the Valley that hasn't mined every tonne in its existing consent. We just need our Government to say no to the coal industry and stick with existing consents.
- People in the Hunter have been calling for a "Transition Plan" for years – a plan to move away from coal mining to renewable energy domestically and as export replacement. If this plan was in place, each mine closure would cause barely a ripple to the economy. If Governments were doing their job, they would have renewable energy projects under development and be attracting other employers to the area to absorb Glendell coal workers when the existing consent lapses. Far better to let mines close as their consent lapses than to let the whole industry be decimated at once, at an unknown time in the future, when our customers get their renewable energy act together.

- The constant propping up of the coal industry ties up numerous geologists, engineers, environmental scientists, planners etc. While ever they're working on reports to support the coal industry, they're not working on the far more crucial renewable energy projects. Government needs to get its priorities right if we are to successfully negotiate the leap to renewable energy.
- According to Glencore "The only alternative to the Modification is the 'do nothing' scenario... The potential economic benefits of recovering the remaining coal reserves include royalties to NSW, as well as expenditure and employment within the local area. These economic benefits would not be realised under the 'do nothing' scenario." The consequences of NOT carrying out this development may not be good for Glencore, but may be good for the planet and also good for their customers, who may be forced to swap to cheaper, cleaner renewable power. Glencore clearly has such a high expectation of consent being granted that they haven't seriously assessed the full consequences of not proceeding with the development from anyone else's perspective.
- The Modification Report assesses the project purely from the coal company's point of view. Their assessment of Ecologically Sustainable Development is laughable.
 - On "inter-generational equity—namely, that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment are maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations" we're told "The Modification facilitates recovery of thermal coal which is required to meet the energy needs of the **current generation**. This coal is already approved for extraction and therefore **does not represent any additional greenhouse gas contribution**." As mentioned earlier "Every tonne of CO2 emissions adds to global warming" which is **destroying** "the health, diversity and productivity of the environment" for future generations. Until coal mine assessments start factoring in the impacts of global warming on future generations, mining companies are getting off scot-free for the catastrophes they are causing!
 - On "Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity—namely, that conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration." They tell us "The Modification will not result in any additional vegetation disturbance." It will however, play its own small part in the destruction for the Great Barrier Reef and every other coral reef suffering bleaching due to warmer ocean temperatures, due to climate change due to CO2 emissions due to burning fossil fuels.

- The Modification Report assumes that air quality and noise levels are ok because they meet the required criteria. To the people living nearby, who are sweeping the dust off their outdoor furniture before they can use it and who are turning the television up so they can hear it over the mine noise, existing criteria are not ok.

Glencore's conclusion: "Given that the Modification would have material economic benefits without exacerbating any environmental impacts, the modified development would be in the public interest." At what point is the Government going to acknowledge the environmental impacts of digging and burning coal and decide its not in the public interest?

I urge you to consider my arguments in your assessment of this project. The game has changed – you can't keep automatically consenting to coal projects! We are constantly reminded of this by the ever more frequent floods and fires. It is not acceptable that corporate profits are put before human life, property, wildlife and the environment. I urge you to reject this proposal!

Yours faithfully,

Janet Murray