



30 October 2025
Department of Planning,
Housing and Infrastructure Locked Bag 5022,
Parramatta NSW 2124.

Submission Objecting Wilpinjong Coal Mine Extension

Sydney Community Forum (SCF) and the Voices for Power leaders appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal to extend Wilpinjong Coal Mine

Sydney Community Forum is a regional community development organisation that has worked towards social justice, inclusion, and sustainability outcomes for disadvantaged and marginalised communities in Sydney since 1974. Through the Voices for Power project over the past seven years, in collaboration with Sydney Alliance and its partner organisations, we have worked closely with migrant community members, privileging their voices in climate action.

In May 2025, Voices for Power leaders travelled to the Mid-Western region and had the privilege of witnessing the biodiversity, Aboriginal heritage and the thriving tourism industry of the beautiful wine country. We also thoroughly encouraged by the growing solar farms in the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone, and its potential to be the centre of Australia's renewable energy future, and create thousands of jobs. We also visited the Goulburn River State Conservation Area, which includes several significant sites important to the Wiradjuri people. We understand that the area is home to critically endangered microbats, the Regent Honeyeater, and several other endangered fauna.

We were shocked by the massive destruction that the Peabody Energy Wilpinjong Coal Mine is already causing to the region. We listened to tens of local residents who are in fear of losing their homes. The village of Wollar has already lost several public amenities, including the school and general store. We listened to the stories of children falling sick, waking up in the night vomiting, the increasing noise and water contamination. We are sure the Department of Planning officials and decision-makers can imagine what it means when such massive destruction and loss of community and habitat occur in one's neighbourhood, and when basic comforts of life are denied.

The 115 ha expansion of Wilpinjong Coal Mine will exacerbate these damages. The justification cited in modification 3 that the pit extension will extend the life of mining by only 6 months does not undo the damage to the loss of endangered habitat, permanent degradation of alluvial groundwater sources, and surface flows in the Wollar Creek catchment. Given the impact of mining extending to the physical and social boundaries of Wollar village, these damages cannot be compensated by the 21 million net social benefit claimed in the proposal.

NSW Government has set an ambitious target of achieving net zero by 2050. The Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 was legislated by the NSW Parliament with multi-party support on 30 November 2023¹. The proposed mine extension will result in over 25 MT of additional Greenhouse Gas emissions, jeopardising the NSW Government's policy direction and climate adaptation strategy. We ask that the Department of Planning refer to the Australian Climate Service's National Climate Risk Assessment, which highlights the disproportionate effect of climate change on already

¹ NSW Climate and Energy Action, <https://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/nsw-plans-and-progress/government-strategies-and-frameworks/climate-change-net-zero-future-act-2023>

disadvantaged people, as in the case of the residents of Wollar. The report also highlights the risk to the health of Aboriginal Country².

Based on the above grounds, the undersigned Voices for Power leaders, objectd Wilpinjong Coal Pvt Ltd's application to continue the open cut mining, including modification 3, and ask that proposed mine expansion should not be assessed as a modification, and recommend that it must be treated as a new project and an exhaustive social and environmental impact assessment and community engagement be undertaken:

List of signatories

1. Sheikh Adid Alrubai, Chairman, Muhajirin Association; VfP founding Iraqi Muslim leader
2. Asha Ramzan, Executive Officer, Sydney Community Forum; VfP founding leader.
3. Melville Fernandez, Voices for Power Leader, International Climate Aid Professional
4. Domingas Soares Gama, VfP Pacific leader.
5. Truc Nguyen, VfP Vietnamese leader.
6. Ibtisam Hammoud, VfP Lebanese leader.
7. Nirmal Joy, Co-Executive Officer, Sydney Community Forum
8. Jijo George, VfP Indian leader.
9. Dr Kim Loo, Chair of Doctors for the Environment Australia (NSW), VfP leader.
10. Gabriela Weiss, VfP Brazilian leader.
11. Kavitha K G, VfP Indian leader.

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this consultation process. If you have any questions about our comments in this submission or want to discuss this further, please contact Nirmal Joy at projectofficer@scfonline.org.au.

² Australian Climate Service, <https://www.acs.gov.au/pages/ncra-climate-risks>