

Formal Letter Expressing Concerns about Wilpinjong Coal Mine Expansion

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to formally express my deep concerns regarding the proposed expansion of the Wilpinjong coal mine. I spend a significant part of my time at Kains Flat and have developed a profound appreciation for the unique biodiversity of the region.

We have spent countless hours exploring natural treasures such as the Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve, the Goulburn River National Park, Drip Gorge, Ferntree Gully, and Ganguddy (Dunns Swamp). As a passionate birdwatcher, I have found immense joy in observing the remarkable variety of birdlife these areas support. Both the Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve and the Goulburn River National Park are especially significant to my family and friends, offering habitats to a broad spectrum of wildlife. Notably, the Munghorn Reserve is home to more than 150 different species of birds.

Of late, there have been a number of koala's spotted around the Kains Flat, Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve, Mudgee and Lue vicinity. I am concerned that, like the birds, an extension will have further impact on the habitat of our wildlife.

I am strongly opposed to the proposed mine expansion and wish to outline several key concerns regarding it:

- **Impact on Biodiversity:** The expansion will not only affect the mine site, but also nearby reserves such as Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve, Goulburn River National Park, as well as surrounding bushland and farmland. The associated disturbances—including dust, noise, lighting, de-watering, and disruption of groundwater—are not isolated incidents, but will persist for the lifetime of the mine, potentially causing lasting harm to the environment.
- **Project Assessment Process:** I believe this modification should be treated as a “new project,” necessitating a thorough Environmental Impact Statement and independent oversight. This is especially important given that Peabody’s exploration licence encompasses both this expansion and a much larger area that extends through the Wollar Valley to the township of Wollar.
- **Cumulative Effects:** The broader cumulative impact of extensive mining activity in the region must be considered. Adjacent operations such as the Moorlaben and Ulan mines are both seeking significant expansions (Moorlaben with Open

Cut 3 and Underground 4, and Ulan with Modification 8). In addition, approval has recently been granted for Bowden's lead, zinc, and silver mine in nearby Lue. This pattern is rapidly transforming the Mudgee area into a hub of mining activity.

- **Tourism and Livability:** The expansion threatens to undermine the Mudgee region's appeal as an inland tourism destination and diminish the overall quality of life in the area. Its reputation risks being overshadowed by the growing presence of mining activities.
- **Conflict with Renewable Energy Initiatives:** This coal expansion appears inconsistent with the NSW Government's commitment to renewable energy in the region, particularly given the objectives of the Orana Central West Renewable Energy Zone.
- **Competition for Skilled Workers:** There is an existing shortage of skilled workers across the region. The mine's expansion will place it in direct competition with renewable energy projects for the limited workforce available.
- **Increased Emissions and Climate Impact:** The projected additional emissions of 25 million tonnes will further exacerbate the ongoing climate emergency. Economically, any royalties from this expansion would likely be offset by the costs of remediating the broader community impacts of climate change in the future.

In summary, I urge you to carefully consider the long-term environmental, social, and economic consequences of the proposed expansion. Safeguarding our region's natural heritage and supporting a sustainable future must take precedence over short-term gains.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Yours sincerely,

Maggie Pressnell