

Submission of Objection: Wilpinjung Mod 3 Pit 8 Extension (SSD-6764-Mod-3)

I write to object to this project. There is much that is unsatisfactory and inappropriate about the matter. The following points present only a summary of the most significant issues. I urge the Department to critically review the Modification Report in light of these considerations and reject the Mod 3 proposal.

1. Wilpinjung Mod 3 Pit 8 extension (Mod 3), should not be assessed as a Modification. The proposal would move mining into a new area, covered by an Exploration Licence, not a Mining Lease. It is clearly not substantially the same as the current approved project.
2. The Mod 3 proposal would bring open cut mining to the boundary of Wollar. This is unacceptable and inappropriate for the residents and community of this village and its locality. The closer proximity of the mine would bring an immediate increase in the physical impacts of noise, dust, vibration, night sky-glow and increased traffic. I object to this impost.
3. The proponent identifies that this expansion is the likely precursor to a much greater expansion – Pit 9 and Pit 10. Such an expansion would as good as surround Wollar, making life impossible for residents, and detracting from the amenity of the area. This impact is unwarranted.
4. The Mod 3 proposal would impact surface water and groundwater flows. There is a lack of available data and consequent analysis. The new impact on the catchment of Wollar Creek has not been assessed appropriately. The change in flow regimes, pollutants and sedimentation has not been adequately assessed as there is no baseline data.
5. The biodiversity impacts of Mod 3 are staggering. Threatened species will have habitat and forage areas destroyed. Breeding colonies will be displaced. Landscape connectivity will be broken. A number of the listed species are at risk of Severe And Irreversible Impacts (SAII). There is no mitigation strategy that can reduce such impacts.
6. Ecosystems by definition provide habitat for many species that are inter-dependent. Threatened ecosystems, and in particular groundwater dependant ecosystems that would be impacted by Mod 3, have not been assessed sufficiently.
7. Greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants are not assessed sufficiently. The impact on residents is underestimated, as climate change impacts are increasing globally, nationally, regionally and locally. Local air quality impacts lead to poorer health outcomes.
8. The Mod 3 site, (and in fact all of the Wilpinjung mine area, and the neighbouring mines of Moolarben and Ulan) is significant to the Wiradjuri nation. The destruction of 15 sites in this current proposal continues the ‘death by a thousand cuts’ of the Aboriginal heritage of this songline along the upper Goulburn River valley.
9. There is no justification for the project – economically, or otherwise. There is a marked labour shortage in the region to answer the many employment opportunities associated with the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone. The legislated energy transition cannot occur while increased coal mining ties up the needed resources, labour and housing.
10. Cumulative impacts have been given scant attention in the Modification Report and supporting documents. There is insufficient recognition, measurement and understanding of the local, regional, nation and global impacts of additional coal mining.

Sincerely

Rosemary Hadaway