

Objection to Ulan Coal Mine Mod 8 – Ulan West Continued Operations

I am writing to object to Ulan Coal Mine Mod 8 – Ulan West Continued Operations.

I object for the following reasons:

Mod 8 makes no sense without Mod 6

- Mod 6 has been overturned in the Court – Mod 6 covered operations from 2033 to 2035, while Mod 8 covers operations from 2035 to 2041. Without Mod 6 being approved, it is impossible to proceed with Mod 8. The Department should stop wasting our time and take Mod 8 off exhibition.

Not substantially the same development

- This proposal falls outside the existing mining lease, therefore its impacts have not been fully assessed and it can't be classed as "substantially the same development". The "modification" needs to be assessed as a new project, with all impacts assessed.

Biodiversity Impacts

- This proposal would disturb an additional 1743 ha with sandstone escarpment, caves and overhangs, thereby destroying additional important habitat for the nationally threatened Large-eared Pied Bat, Eastern Cave Bat, Regent Honeyeater and Koala and critically endangered Box Gum Woodland. These impacts are common across several current mine extensions and the cumulative impact has not been assessed. The potential impact on these threatened species is unacceptable.

Impact of emissions on local environment not assessed

- The Court of Appeal ruled that MACH Energy had to take into account the climate impact of the coal burnt from the Mt Pleasant mine on the local area. This hasn't been done for this "modification". This project will release over 105 MT of additional Greenhouse Gas emissions. This will only increase extreme heat days, increase ferocity of bushfires, increase the frequency and destructiveness of flooding and increase loss of life from these extreme weather events. These impacts on the local community and environment do not appear to have been assessed.
- We all know that it doesn't matter where coal is burnt, it affects the global atmosphere and temperature increases affect everyone, everywhere, including right here in the Mudgee district. Again, the Department should stop wasting our time and take this proposal off exhibition until the climate impacts have been properly assessed.

Mining reducing labour availability for renewable energy

- Mining is competing for skilled labour urgently required in the construction, housing and renewable energy industries. There is a major labour shortage in the Central West with local workers needed for the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone construction. Mining is slowing the advance of renewable energy by tying up labour.

More coal mining is insane in a climate crisis

- The year 2024 was the world's warmest on record globally, and the first calendar year in which global temperatures exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. This must be a turning point for Australia and the world. The Paris Agreement looks at temperatures over decades, not a single year, but 2024 temperatures tell us the goal to limit global warming to an increase of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels is in serious trouble. This record-breaking global heat is primarily driven by our ongoing greenhouse gas emissions, caused largely by the burning of fossil fuels, such as thermal coal from Ulan.
- Clearly, the need to rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions is now more urgent than ever – the line must be drawn for no new mines and no extensions to existing mines. Every approval builds the precedent for more approvals. It is time our Government put the safety of Australia's people and environment ahead of profits for mining companies.

I urge you to consider my arguments in your assessment and stop the clock on this “modification”. It is not “substantially the same development” and at least two Court rulings haven't been taken into account.

The game has changed – you can't keep automatically consenting to new and extended coal projects! We have seen where that leads and it is not acceptable that corporate profits are put before human life, property, wildlife and the environment. I urge you to reject this “modification”!

