

6 October 2017

Carolyn McNally
Secretary
Department of Planning and Environment
carolyn.mcnally@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms McNally,

Re: Maules Creek coal mine Project Application Number: 10_0138 Mod 4

The proponent Whitehaven Coal, is seeking to remove a section from Condition 12a, Schedule 3 from Planning Approval 10_0138 regarding the Maules Creek coal mine. That is the deletion of the wording and requirement to-

“ensure that all equipment and noise control measures deliver sound power levels that are equal to or better than the sound power levels identified in the EA, and correspond to best practice or the application of the best available technology economically achievable;”

I object to the Mod 4 and Whitehaven Coal removing a specific requirement for continuous environmental noise improvement by maintaining or reducing mining equipment sound power.

I remember the first time I stayed at Maules Creek 15 years ago and one of the most defining features was the total silence of an evening. It was a delight to stand outside at night ‘listening’ to the absolute silence. I have been told this background noise level is actually about 17 dB.

Now in the evening I don’t need to leave the house as most evenings in the house I become aware of a constant rumbling like an endless train running along a track, instinctively I wait for it to pass, but it never stops and adding to this is the regular toot of a horn or crash. Some nights are worse than others and sometimes my children will be woken from sleep complaining about the noise that invades their dreams and asking us to stop the crashing. At about 3am you will be woken out of the restive, fitful sleep, because the machines have stopped and for about 30mins you are reminded about how it used to be before Whitehaven’s Maules Creek Coal Mine started.

After enduring night after night of this continuous intrusive noise suddenly it will be quiet for a few nights in a row, and you find out that Global Acoustics are conducting their attended noise monitoring and that the mine have ‘switched off’ the noise. But you know when Global Acoustics have finished because the rumbling and unrelenting noise picks up where it left off, and the new ‘normal’ is restored.

I object to the Mod 4 and recommend the rejection of this application.

Yours Sincerely