

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

The Mandatory Noise audited noted that our family are impacted by noise. Due to directly line of sight to the mine and the regional topography.

Accumulated tiredness and a poor night sleep are not good for human health. My children hate the sleep disturbance and at times are jumping on me in the night saying “Mum, make it stop.” If it wasn’t sleep time- you may think yes there is background noise but it is combined with the low frequency noise that really disturbs sleep. It is invasive and gets in your head and body. I find it very draining. Waking up from a half sleep when the noise stops is harsh.

I believe the action of making this legally binding Approval Condition a written objective in the Noise Management Plan – and thus a focus for the noise management systems and strategies is missing.

Amending this NMP to include this, should be the first step the Department takes in response to this plea for assistance from the proponent.

Because, it is clear in their gruff way that MCCM are asking for help. Expecting the community to shoulder their noise is an absurd ask.

The Mod 4 document is only a self-assessment of the situation.

Rewriting and focusing on the objectives of the NMP will be a way of MCCM beginning to take control of the sound power problem and demonstrate a renewed effort in professionalism and as the condition states "a commitment to continuous environmental noise improvement by maintaining or reducing mining equipment sound power."

Residents of Maules Creek cannot be under surveillance for the next 30 years. The presence of security guards posted at peoples front gates, outside the Community hall and Fairfax Public School precinct and elsewhere is a catastrophe for the Maules Creek community.

During a peak period of community noise monitoring last year, the Security guards drove past our Country Women's Association meeting three times- in a two-hour period between 1-3pm. This behaviour must stop.

It is unseemly and inappropriate to have uniformed mine security hanging around the public school. Furthermore, guests at the community hall have been alarmed and shaken when they ventured out on the road for a walk and discovered security seated in the dark in their car surveilling the area.

The Department must consider the social impacts of acquiescing to Whitehaven's schemes of the future.

In closing, I have found that WHC claiming they are compliant, and the EPA citing they are "generally compliant" even though over 100 exceedances were recorded by the EPA at "Ellerslie" does not mean a good night's sleep and it does not reduce the dust from the noise barrier/embankment that blow across the valley.

With the mine coming closer, I believe that we need more protection, not less and that this will be bad for my family and our community and I strongly support the rejection of this Modification 4.

Yours