

Please consider this objection to the Dendrobium Mine Extension Project: SSD-8194.

It is unacceptable that this project proposes to undermine Special Areas which are the wet coastal catchments for the Cordeaux, Nepean and Avon Dams which provide drinking water for Wollongong, Macarthur and parts of greater Sydney.

Locked in mining approvals for 30 years are unacceptable, because recent experience has shown there is no adherence to this principle, as a locked in Mater Plan approval trumps any prospect for major revisions should negative environmental impacts either exceed predictions or become socio-politically unacceptable due to changing circumstances. It is likely that the case against longwall mining will strengthen in times of future drought and facing both the prospect of worsening droughts coupled with increasing urban populations of both Sydney and Wollongong and known water loss from surface catchment tributaries but of unknown long term cumulative consequences.

A non approval of this extension project will not, as South 32 predicts, jeopardise the Port Kembla Steelworks and the Port Kembla Coal Terminal, as there are alternative sources of coal of various qualities to provide the right blends for domestic steel making and export . Those sources are: 11 years of mining at Dendrobium under current approvals (for area 3A and 3B) and approximately 22 years of further operation at the Appin_Douglas Park based Bulli Seam Operations. Furthermore South 32 have major leaseholds to the west of its current BSO Operations, that are outside drinking water catchments, that present a feasible alternative to the Dendrobium proposal.

Water loss from the catchment due to Dendrobium's mining will increase over the coming years, with surface water loss expected to peak at 27.6 ML per day in the year 2035. This is totally unacceptable, there needs to be a benchmark standard set within drinking water catchments of no net loss of water nor any change in water quality, as a result of any human activity. This cannot be achieved for longwall mining and thus it should be prohibited in drinking water catchments. Consultants estimate that up to 9,500 Megalitres (ML – million litres) of surface and ground water will flow

into the mines each year, which is the equivalent to the annual water usage of 123,940 residents of Greater Sydney

South 32's proposal to offset catchment land and ecological communities that have been irreparably damaged by mining is not in the public interest; truly like-for-like offsets are rare. Furthermore, there is no "equivalent" land that could compensate for damaged and compromised water catchment.

The loss of surface moisture, pristine swamps and streams is unacceptable as a result of biodiversity loss, but also because loss of functionality could trigger a collapse in the water delivery system of the affected dams. South 32 predicts that its 305 metre wide long wall panels may result in subsidence of 2m to 2.45m. Previous mines of similar width have caused 2.5m to 3 m of subsidence, so South 32's prediction may be conservative, and thus damage may be greater.

The proposed set-backs will not protect water resources, The proposed mining is just 300m from Avon Reservoir and 630m from Cordeaux Reservoir. Recent evidence from the approved Bull Seam Operations by South 32 at Douglas Park, has revealed damage to the bed of the Nepean River at Douglas Park has occurred when longwalls are approximately 900metres away from the river.

The plan to continue to transport & emplace coal wash (waste) at Westcliff Emplacement at Appin, is totally unacceptable. The hypothetical commitment for beneficial re-use in unspecified markets in Wollonong is a dream not a firm commitment. Coal emplacement at Appin is a huge threat to ecological integrity in an area which is increasingly recognised as having potential significance for wildlife corridor movement, especially for koalas. At the very least there should be no expansion of the dump footprint into the pristine areas of Stages 3&4, and a recognition that Westcliff emplacement needs to support the dumping obligations of the BSO project and thus there is no 'room' for Dendrobium waste.

We ask that you reject this application from Illawarra Coal and commence a process to close the mine at Dendrobium permanently.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Sharyn Cullis, Georges River Environmental Alliance, Oatley NSW
14 Marine Dve Oatley 2223.