

WOLLAR PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

C/O- POST OFFICE

WOLLAR NSW 2850

Paul Freeman
Project Manager
PO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Tuesday 28 July 2015

Dear Sir,

Submission of Objection
Moolarben Coal Complex - UG1 Optimisation Modification
Stage 1 (05_0117 MOD 12) & Stage 2 (08_0135 MOD 2)

Wollar Progress Association (the Association) objects to the proposal to increase extraction of coal from Underground Pit 1 (UG1) at the Moolarben Coal Complex. Yancoal, the operators of the mine, has demonstrated an inability to safely manage the mine and to adequately consult with the community.

The Association considers that the cumulative impacts of the mining operations at Moolarben, particularly the proposed increased number of trains, have not been adequately identified or assessed.

1. Highwall collapse at Moolarben Opencut 1

The Association has major concerns about the ability of Yancoal to manage the Moolarben Coal Complex safely and in compliance with approval conditions. A highwall collapse at Opencut 1 occurred on Saturday 6 June 2015. This has threatened the stability of the Wollar-Ulan road. Mid-Western Regional Council closed the road for public safety reasons. It has now been closed for over 7 weeks.

The Wollar community has experienced major threats to health and safety since that time with all mine related traffic to the Wilpinjong Mine travelling through the Wollar Village and across the Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve on Main Rd 208 (MR 208) between Wollar and Mudgee.

This includes all shift change traffic, Bdouble fuel tankers on a daily basis, large cranes and other heavy vehicle movements.

This road was not the approved travel route for Wilpinjong Mine road traffic. The Association understands that there has been some waiver of the approval conditions for the current arrangement, though there has been no direct communication with the affected community.

The safety of the travelling public and particularly regular users from the local area has been constantly threatened by the increased mine traffic movements and wide loads between Wollar and the Budgee Budgee turn off on MR 208.

The road surface is now breaking up because of the increased daily heavy traffic. Large pot holes and rough surfaces are increasing the danger for public road users. This has been the only available route west from Wollar.

The Association understands that Mid-Western Regional Council has attempted to build a detour around the affected area of road with the cost covered by Yancoal. However, wet weather has made this impassable. Apparently the detour cannot be sealed because these type of operations do not occur during winter months. While the detour can be used during periods of good weather, there is no certainty for the local community that the road will be passable.

The quickest way for the problem to be solved is for Yancoal to fix the subsidence causing the safety threat to the public road.

There has been no information provided to the Wollar community by any level of Government or by Yancoal about the extent of the problem, the timeframe for fixing it or when permanent access through the Wollar-Ulan Road will be available.

The Association considers that Yancoal should be given no further approval to expand the Moolarben Coal Complex until such time as the company can demonstrate safe and compliant operation of existing approvals.

2. Cumulative impact of increased train movements

The Association notes that Appendix C Noise Assessment by SLR considers the cumulative impact of noise from a peak of 9 additional trains per day on the Sandy Hollow Railway Line.

The assessment does not appear to assess the impact of train noise during temperature inversions. The assessment also does not identify any receivers to the east of Wollar. There are residences at Wollara, O'Briens Crossing, through the Bylong Valley and east to Sandy Hollow that have not been assessed for increased noise impacts.

The Association considers that an increase in 0.5 dBA noise from trains in Wollar Village is significant when considered with current noise emissions from Wilpinjong Mine.

There is no assessment of Low Frequency Noise from trains, particularly in relation to increased use of the passing loop at Wollar. There has been no assessment of increased use of passing loops along the entire length of the Sandy Hollow Railway Line.

The Association considers that the noise assessment for an additional peak 9 trains, generated by the proposed expansion of Moolarben Coal Complex, is entirely inadequate.

3. Managing dust from passing coal trains

The Association recommends that the NSW Government adopt a policy for all coal wagons to be covered and washed to prevent coal dust pollution through the length of the Hunter coal chain. The increased number of daily train movements to a peak of 74 over a 24 hour period

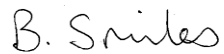
past Wollar is a significant number of trains causing a cumulative impact along the entire length of the Hunter coal chain. This has not been adequately assessed.

4. Cumulative Impact Assessment

The Association considers that the cumulative social and environmental impact of the proposed modification has not been adequately assessed. The cumulative impact of existing operations at Moolarben Coal Complex has been substantial with no consideration for local inhabitants of the region.

The Association considers that the current level of coal extraction from the Ulan-Wollar area is substantial and should not be increased.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Smiles".

Bev Smiles
Secretary