

On line information is not easy to understand. "locate project on map" yields very little enlightenment. Why?

After some effort, the location of the Maxwell project is somewhat visible but as a vague patch in a bland, abstract ground.

With the full data from past Department of Lands topographical maps, an informative accurate location could be provided.

"Consultation" which is based on such slight information might be discarded as ill-informed?

The mine appears to be within a huge field of coal projects. Maybe it is thought by proponents that this cosy situation renders its added impact relatively minor. Not so. There is no validity in smashing the entire valley when some of it is already broken.

The minefield in totality is already creating unacceptable impacts on air quality and water supply. Cumulative impacts are not studied or shown because they are so damning. Adding more to the cumulation to date, without assessing the effects of doing so, is unscientific, unethical and irresponsible.

The minefield at large is found to be dividing the weather already with its huge voids. This creates rain shadow in the most needy agricultural areas. No more coal mining should take place in this vicinity, whether open or underground.

In underground mining, emissions are no less because it all happens unseen from the surface.

Fugitive gas emissions from underground mining already pollute the air of the entire upper Hunter. The airshed is continuous from the sea to the top ranges, going by the sea salt in the monitoring stations around Muswellbrook. The pretence of separated airsheds is easily seen through. It is proven false by a glance at the accurate contour mapping. That ruse fails. Not on.

Underground mining is notoriously hard to control regarding water impact. Underground water was the death of the Dartbrook mine several times; men worked up to thighs in water, and were told to tell nobody about this. Yet lies have been told, and have convinced Planning to give more time to this dangerous, soggy pit. How are we to have confidence in Planning's understanding of the water situation at Maxwell?

The pressure from lobbyists, the supposed promise of revenues and jobs; it will soon count for nothing in the overwhelming threat from climate change caused by the coal mining already under way here. Extending and intensifying it is wrong, and a risk in many ways.

Respect for the remaining landscape, and its historic cultural connections, should be paramount, given the guilt attaching to the destruction all around the subject land. Destroying the intactness of this land also, is like killing the witnesses to murder.

I request that for the sake of the intactness of what is left of the land, and the integrity of government for the good of all, this Maxwell underground mine proposal should be refused.

Thankyou,

Bev Atkinson.