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Major Planning Assessments

Department Planning and Infrastructure

GPO Box 39 SYDNEY 2001

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RE: Coborra Coal Project Application No 10_0001

Dear Sir

I wish to strongly object to this coal project for the following reasons:

- The proposal is a waste of taxpayers money. It will lock in subsidised coal fired power generation for the next 20-30 years (life of coal mine). The Coalition government is on record prior to the last election noting that "significant risks and costs" the project imposed on NSW (Hon Mike Baird) The main reason to establish the Coborra mine was to secure long term fuel supplies for state owned power generation. Now that power generation is in the hands of private ownership, why would the government consider and pay for the development of the mine?
- The figures presented for electricity demand and coal price projections are outdated.
- The project is a greenhouse gas intensive, outmoded system for the production of electricity; "Coal is a sunset industry. Last year global investment in renewable energy was greater than investment in all fossil fuels (Australian Conservation Foundation, Tony Mohr, Sydney Morning Herald Oct 27 Climate Change secondary to energy poverty)" Further in the same article it is stated "major coal producer, BHP Billiton, (which) on Thursday reiterated that it accepts mainstream scientific opinion that carbon emissions are unnaturally altering the Earth's climate".
- The existing and potential health impacts of coal mining of the coal mining industry both at the site and along the coal chain have been well documented both in the media and through various scientific reports to the government – for the government to support the unnecessary establishment of another black coal mining project is irresponsible. The community is demanding that the health effects and social harms of highly polluting, coal fired power stations require review (Newcastle Herald, October 30 – Health and Social Harms of Coalmining in local Communities, University of Sydney Health and Sustainability unit)
- Inadequate transport infrastructure will put further strain on community resources, increasing train movements along Hunter Valley rail corridors will adversely affect

communities not only through increase in noise and dust levels but by tying up domestic road and rail amenity.

- There is no clear definition of domestic and export capacity of the project. At any rate, who would buy this coal when it is cheaper and more accessible from China and Indonesia?
- Development of the project is at the expense of environmental and agricultural concerns resulting in long term social impacts including the habitat of 39 threatened species
- Unfair competition in terms of demands for water to the region's (specifically Mudgee) established tourism and agricultural industries which are presently productive and sustainably sound.
- Unacceptable loss of significant Aboriginal cultural sites.

If the government is to work in the public interest it will reject planning for the Coborra coal project as an uneconomic, socially and environmentally unacceptable development proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Megan Benson.