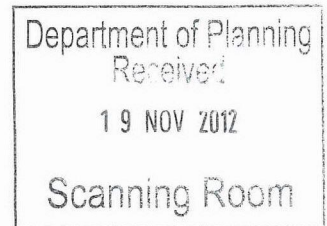


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15th November 2012



To: Major Planning Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001



cc Premier O'Farrell office@premier.nsw.gov.au

Planning Minister Hazzard office@hazzard.minister.gov.au

Tony Burke

I am a former long term resident of NSW and an Agricultural graduate of Sydney University. I thank you for this opportunity of commenting on the Cobbora coal project. I am also a member of several wildlife organisations and support them with donations and actively.

I object to the proposed Cobbera coal mine on a number of counts.

1) Coal fired mines are dinosaur industries.

The Cobbora coal mine, if built, will provide heavily subsidised coal to six large coal fired power stations, locking in decades of carbon pollution, and delaying urgently needed investment in clean, renewable energy. It is an inappropriate investment of \$3.4 billion of NSW taxpayers' money being heavily subsidised. The proposal is to mine 20mtpa (million tonnes per annum) to produce 12mtpa of usable coal – it is extremely poor quality product with high ash content. The project aims to provide cheap domestic coal to power stations in the Upper Hunter and Central Coast. The health impacts of using poor quality coal have not been assessed.

2) Its pollution contravenes your own policies

The additional greenhouse gas emissions conflict with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts.

3) Renewable energy is the future

It would be much wiser to invest in renewable energy programmes. This western area has abundant sunshine and wind and New South Wales should be investing in this. Modular arrays of solar banks heating salt towers for more even distribution of power can be built – putting the profits of the first ones into the construction of further ones. There is no reason why windmills cannot be installed close by so electricity can be carried to cities using the same lines.

4) This coal plant will destroy irreplaceable environmental habitat

The planned project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species. There are endangered and vulnerable plants, including 100% loss of the local population of *Tylophora linearis*, endangered bird species including australasian bittern, malleefowl, regent honeyeater, superb parrot; and vulnerable microbat species - southern long-eared bat, large-eared pied bat.



White Box, Yellow Box, Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland (BGGW)

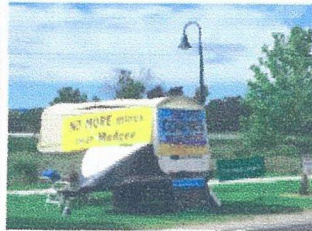
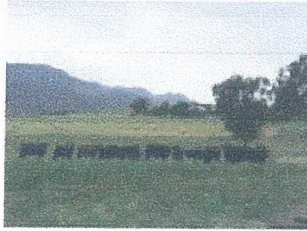
BGGW is characterised by a diverse mix of species, dominated by the White Box, Yellow Box and/or Blakely's Red Gum. Box Gum Grassy Woodlands are listed as an endangered ecological community under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Woodlands are listed as an endangered ecological community under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act.



The replacement of high conservation value habitat especially tree hollows in slow growing woodland species takes centuries. Native grasses & shrubs can never be replicated.

5) Agricultural land will be lost to future generations.

We can ill afford the loss of agricultural land, and the increasing population will need food even more.



6) WATER!! The natural flow of ground water will be destroyed

The mine project would damage to groundwater resources and springs. The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions. Wine and tourism are renewable jobs. The mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long –term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

7) Aboriginal sites will be damaged.

The desecration of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites will result.

Please do not waste taxpayers money on an outdated polluting and finite industry and its associated infrastructure using low value coal – but instead invest in a renewable energy future, conserve land for our farmers and support our wine and tourist industries.

A Sutherland

Anne O'Sullivan