

Rebecca Newman - Objection to Proposed Fourth Coal Export Terminal in Newcastle

From: Rebecca Newman
To: plan_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au
Date: 11/05/2012 9:22 AM
Subject: Objection to Proposed Fourth Coal Export Terminal in Newcastle

Director
 Department of Planning and Infrastructure
 GPO Box 39
 SYDNEY NSW 2001

7 May 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

Objection to Proposed Fourth Coal Export Terminal in Newcastle

Project Title: Port Waratah Coal Services Terminal 4

Application No: 10_0215

In reference to the above project, I have many grounds on which I wish to lodge my objection.

Firstly, part of the area for the terminal includes gazetted National Park which should never be open for development. They have been so designated because of their uniqueness, their critical habitats for species and endangered ecological communities. Other parts of the terminal site are critical for migratory shore birds, or they are endangered saltmarshes, mangroves, or freshwater wetlands. The loss of habitat brought by destruction on the T4 site will endanger many species of birds and frogs, which are covered by international conventions, and/or federal /state legislation.

The one and only freshwater refuge in the Lower Hunter Estuary system in times of drought is Deep Pond. This refuge is near to RAMSAR listed wetlands so it is an integral part of that estuarine environment providing essential habitat for migratory birds and endangered ecological communities. Having any part of Deep Pond developed as a coal terminal is not on.

Offsets can never ever compensate for the loss of high value habitat. Off-set proposals are often highly valued in themselves. So it is with Ellalong which has been identified as critically endangered in its own right. Also this is nowhere near the proposed new coal terminal, so it cannot compensate in any way for the loss of important foraging and roosting sites that are present in Deep Pond and the RAMSAR listed wetlands of the Hunter Estuary.

I would now like to touch on the subject of dredging and water pollution.

- As there are no plans to clean up the heavily contaminated T4 site, existing toxic material will leach into and pollute the Hunter River, and the neighbouring National Park and RAMSAR listed wetlands.
- More shipping will result in more sediment disturbance in Newcastle Harbour, some of this being contaminated. Other pollution will also follow, such as bilge water, increased chemicals, oil spills, dumped debris etc.
- There is an increased risk of introduced species from shipping.
- The construction of T4 itself involves massive realignment and dredging of the Hunter River which will result in huge losses of aquatic habitats. These major changes will radically change Newcastle Harbour itself which will affect the entire city, let alone the natural environment. This has not been dealt with adequately in the Environmental Assessment.

In regard to the social impacts of the new T4 development, there would be a loss of present economic benefits from the harbour, such as tourism, fishing, and other shipping such as yachts and

pleasure craft. Commercial and recreational fishing would decrease because of extra pollution, loss of habitat and extra shipping movements.

An additional 41 coal trains per day through Maitland and Newcastle would have a significant impact on people's lives, with major issues of noise, dust and railway congestion. Noise and vibration from site operations would be unbearable, as these will be non-stop, 24 hours a day, every day.

It should be mandatory for all coal stockpiles to be covered, as well as all coal trains. This has been brushed aside in the environmental assessment and is totally unacceptable.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely

Ms Diane O'Mara
2 Little Belmore St
Gulgong NSW2852