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SUBMISSION IN OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED T4 PROJECT - PREFERRED PROJECT REPORT

I am a lifelong Newcastle resident who is actively involved in local environment groups (such as Hunter Community Environment Centre, Climate Action Newcastle and the Wilderness Society Newcastle); and I am the Environmental Representative on the recently established Newcastle Consultative Committee for the Environment (NCCCE). I, like thousands of Newcastle and Hunter residents, am strongly opposed to a fourth coal loader being built in Newcastle. There are many very good reasons why T4 should not be built, even as per the revised scope in the Preferred Project Report. Some of these reasons are summarised under the following subheadings.

Climate Change

T4 will have a peak capacity of 70 megatonnes per year; at full capacity this will represent close to a doubling of the current peak export capacity in the port of Newcastle. When the coal is burnt overseas, more than 174 million tonnes of carbon dioxide will be emitted, which is more than NSW's annual emissions and approximately 30% of Australia's emissions. These Scope 3 emissions represent more than 17% of the 1000 MT global carbon budget that PWCS itself acknowledges that must be kept if the world has a hope of limiting warming to less than 2°C. 17% of global emissions from just one development is a colossal contribution, not acknowledged by PWCS in the PPR. While Scope 3 emissions are not specifically the responsibility of the source country, government and business should be taking them much more seriously. There will come a time in the near future when making money will have to take a back seat to saving the climate.

This year, several major reports about climate change were released, including but not limited to:

The World Bank: *Turn down the heat: climate extremes, regional impacts, and the case for resilience*

CSIRO *State of the Climate 2012*

The Climate Commission: *The Critical Decade*

The Climate Commission: *The Angry Summer*

I presume that senior staff at the NSW Department of Planning have read at least the summaries of these reports, and have grasped the fact that climate change is not a fringe green issue.

The severity and consequences of accelerating climate change is very well documented by the CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology, the International Panel for Climate Change and countless science academies and centres of learning worldwide. Many of these organisations are in concurrence that it is happening faster than previously predicted and the impacts will be far more serious than most

people realise - potentially threatening the capacity of the planet to sustain human civilisation in its current form. To further contribute to climate change by approving - nay, actively encouraging - a development such as T4 - is grossly irresponsible act of governance and will be met with censure and dismay by everyone who thinks about the sustainability and future of our society.

Health Impacts of the Coal Loader, Stockpiles and Trains

Dust emissions from coal trains, coal stockpiles and coal loading operations have serious health impacts, particularly the fine particles (PM2.5 and finer). I have many friends who live in Tighes Hill, Maryville, Carrington and Mayfield East and they almost constantly have fine coal dust on their houses, in their backyards and by inference in their children's lungs. The amount of dust generated by the existing three coal loaders is already too much; and there are already far too many coal trains travelling through port-side suburbs. To dramatically increase coal train movements, and the subsequent amount of dust and diesel emissions that would occur at peak T4 capacity is totally unthinkable and the proposal should be rejected on these grounds alone, let alone all the other key reasons briefly outlined in this submission.

Environmental Health Impacts of the Development

The dredging and dumping of contaminant-laden sediment from the sites of the two swing basins is potentially an environmental disaster and will certainly have negative impacts on the endangered fauna species that are found on the development site and in the Ramsar listed wetlands adjacent to it. The fauna impact assessment in the EA has no grounds to dismiss the likely impacts as being 'not significant' - it is obvious that the report's authors have come to such a conclusion because, as consultants to PWCS, they do not wish to bite the hand that feeds them. Biodiversity offsetting is inappropriate for this site because it is habitat for migratory birds that land there year after year - they can't be told to go elsewhere for their foraging, roosting and nesting habitats.

The site has been a dumping ground for a cocktail of highly toxic contaminants for many decades. These contaminants are in the soil and groundwater and will almost certainly be release during dredging, earthworks and construction; and furthermore the colossal weight of the infrastructure will effectively 'squeeze' the soil and sediments beneath it, exacerbating the leaching of contaminants into the groundwater and subsequently into the Hunter River estuary. This is a ludicrously risky thing to do and port-side communities will not stand for it. It is now the 21st century, and citizens of a wealthy, first-world country such as ours demand first class environmental management which does not include contamination of groundwater or off-shore dumping of contaminated dredge spoil. I will continue to raise this issue in my role on the NCCCE.

Expansion of Mining in NSW

70 million tonnes of coal is the equivalent of 6 or more new mega pit coal mines in NSW, the majority or all of which will be located in the Hunter Valley and the Liverpool Plains. These communities are already feeling the negative health and environmental impacts of excess levels of open-cut coal mining. The extent of irreparable destruction wrought by open-cut coal mining is already becoming too much for human and ecological communities in the Upper Hunter; another 70million tonnes worth of new mining activity is almost inconceivable and any government that

could countenance this is grossly irresponsible and thinking only of very short-term and short-lived economic gains at the expense of future generations and other species.

The devastating environmental impacts of open-cut mining has been well documented in recent years; and despite the mining industries' claims of 'best practice' remediation and rehabilitation of mine sites, the depth of extraction, total removal of living flora and fauna years of stockpiling soils means that no site can ever be the same again. Coal mining uses vast quantities of water for coal processing, dust suppression and equipment wash-down, sourced from local river systems such as the Hunter River in the Hunter Valley. Furthermore, open-cut mining substantially disrupts and contaminates regional groundwater systems, which are relied upon for ecosystem health as well as indirect and direct agricultural supply.

The world's largest coal port is large enough - we don't want or need a fourth coal terminal, of whatever size.

Yours sincerely,

Zoe Rogers