

OBJECTION TO WARKWORTH MINE EXTENSION

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Rio Tinto's proposal to extend its open cut mining activities towards the village of Bulga. The proposal is characterised by many unsavoury features and should not be approved because

- 1 It is blatantly deceitful in its disregard of an earlier agreement not to mine Saddleback Ridge, so as to minimise the impact on Bulga of the noise, particulate and visual pollution of open cut mining. As it is these impacts are already a significant disturbance:

eg late night noise interrupting sleep

eg dust clouds over the area especially when summer easterly breezes blow

eg large quantities of mud in rainwater tanks

eg the ghastliness of the ever growing mountains of overburden spoiling the scenery
- 2 The Warkworth Sands ecosystem and the Wallaby Scrub Road have unique heritage value that can only be appreciated fully by future generations, as we are able to do with the treasures we enjoy thanks to the endeavours of those who preceded us.
- 3 The original submission for approval has been deemed unacceptable in two judicial judgements. The determination to pursue the development by the proponent, let alone the associated legislative move by the NSW government to limit the criteria in the approval process, is contemptuous and should not be dignified.
- 4 Furthermore the application was proven to have been compiled by unethical consultants, thereby rendering the proponent unethical too.
- 5 Given that Rio Tinto/Coal and Allied have the "rights" to the coal seam to the South of its present operations, **why is it that it will not contemplate underground mining?** It is ironic to say the least that a neighbouring mine, Wambo, has plans to long wall mine coal on the Warkworth side of the Wollombi Brook (aka the Cockfighter). Underground mining would not pose the threats of an extension of open cut mining.
- 6 The most disturbing aspect of the proposal and the approval process to date is the disregard for the **community of Bulga**. The area is more than a mere geographical feature. It has a unique history and is an area where many people have contributed to significant communal wellbeing through social activity and agricultural pursuits that have benefited not only the inhabitants but the broader population of NSW. The benefits are not just material.
It is time that a thriving and enduring cohesive community was given precedence over the rapacious and ephemeral nature of mining.
- 7 As a commercial producer of plant material for the florist industry I am heartily sick of the contamination and consequent reduction in quality of produce by mine dust.

L Fletcher

BULGA