

Personal Submission

WARKWORTH AND MOUNT THORLEY MINES CONTINUATION PROJECT (SSD 6464 and SSD 6465)

4 August, 2014

Tanya Tlaskal

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My name is Tanya Tlaskal and I am a resident of the village of Bulga.

I strongly oppose both the Warkworth (SSD 6464) and Mt Thorley (SSD 6465) Continuation Projects. No matter how Rio Tinto presents the project, it is still exactly the same old extension we have been fighting against for four years.

The NSW Land and Environment Court ruled in April 2013 in favour of Bulga village. Judge Preston found that the information used by Rio Tinto and NSW Planning in support of the project was wrong, and he overturned the approval.

When Rio Tinto and the NSW Government appealed that decision to the NSW Supreme Court (Court of Appeal), they lost. Two superior NSW courts have now ruled that Rio's plan to expand the Warkworth coal mine fails on merit.

We, people of Bugla were ecstatic, we have won, we thought that we can have some peace and to continue with our lives undisturbed. To our utter disbelief Rio Tinto have simply submitted the same mining application again. The old project has been split in two and the project name updated. However, these two projects (SSD 6464 and SSD 6465) are effectively the same project that has been rejected by two NSW courts (MP 09_0202).

That the Planning Department has even accepted Rio Tinto's application is a failure of procedural fairness, and makes a farce of the very process you are now asking us, the public, to participate in. We are being asked to make submissions on a project that has already been through this very same assessment process and failed – only to be resubmitted. We are being asked to submit to a process overseen by a Department that is clearly working closely with the proponent to get the project approved, and which got the decision wrong the first time around. There can be no faith in this process.

We will never stop fighting for our village, because it is a place we love and where we belong.

Our village's David and Goliath battle had become a symbol all over the world. We all know who had won in the end.