

Mr Brendan Liew
Major Project Assessment
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

2 September 2013

Dear Sir,

Modification to the Wilpinjong Coal Mine Project
(05_0021 MOD 5)
Submission of objection

I am basing my objection to the modifications for the above mine on environmental grounds.

First and foremost I am calling for all coal trains to be covered. Coal dust has been identified as a major health hazard, and to have uncovered wagons spewing this along rail corridors is not negotiable. Air quality needs to be monitored in a serious way.

As all previous predictions of environmental impacts have been proven wrong, I have no confidence that the current modeling for Wilpinjong will be any different.

An additional 52 ha of woodland and grassland will be destroyed in this modification. This includes 10.6 ha of federally listed critically endangered ecological community. This is appalling. Critically endangered means exactly that.

The proposed biodiversity offset for this classification is only 4:1 which is insufficient. 116 native fauna species were recorded in the impact area, and this includes 5 threatened species of birds and 4 threatened species of bats. A diverse natural environment is crucial to humanity's wellbeing on this planet, but apparently is not deemed important when it comes to mine approvals.

This application will destroy 20 ha of an area previously set aside for regeneration in the original Wilpinjong Mine approval conditions. Mine rehabilitation has a history of poor practice, as invasive species such as Rhodes Grass are introduced. This is most unsatisfactory.

I am also disturbed at the loss of indigenous culture that will occur in this expansion. There are very few scar trees remaining, so these should be preserved rather than be destroyed by mining. Overall, there are 17 sites, one scar tree, and an area of cultural significance that will be affected by this mining proposal. Many other sites identified in previous approvals have already been destroyed or impacted. We would be very angry if people destroyed our Christian cathedrals, but we do not care about our shared cultural heritage with our indigenous fellow Australians.

As a grandmother, I am dismayed at the complete lack of regard for the problem of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions from coalmining. I want a future for my grandchildren, which I see disappearing by the day, as the Arctic icecap melts, and the permafrost thaws across Siberia and Northern America. It is completely wrong under these circumstances to approve an increase in the extraction of run-of-mine coal by 3 million tonnes over the life of the Wilpinjong project. Greenhouse gas emissions must be considered in the approval process.

Given all these factors that I have outlined above, I do not consider that approval of this modification should proceed.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Hails
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Mudgee NSW 2850

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