

NSW Department of Planning

28<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to object to the proposed **Bylong Coal Project**  
**Application Number: SSD 14\_6367** that is currently on exhibition as we have a number of concerns about the impacts of the project.

Although we are not immediate neighbours, the proximity of our property is relatively close and we believe there will possibly be some impacts from the proposed Project.

#### Water Management

Whilst extensive monitoring has been done in the Bylong area we are concerned about the greater impacts on the water sources located further east of the Project. We are landholders in a small valley approximately 13kms ("as the crow flies") from the Project boundary and have a historically very reliable permanent water source that underpins our entire agricultural operation.

We are concerned that the size of the proposed Project will potentially impact our water in the future. We would like monitoring done so that in the event the proposed Project is given approval we can ensure the correct procedures have taken place to avoid any possible complications.

In addition to our personal concerns, we are also very worried about the impacts of mining in such a significant agricultural area that relies on substantial groundwater for rural operations.

#### Loss of Agricultural Land / Social Impact

The Bylong Valley is a unique area steeped in agricultural history. In the Social Impact Management summary sheet Kepco states "Due to the effects of rural decline, the population of the Bylong Valley has been decreasing ....." Perhaps part of the population decrease has been due to the threat of mining for quite some time in the area and the acquisition of a number of properties by foreign owned and/or corporate entities who are not concerned about the impact of the social fabric of the small community that has been decimated.

It visually appears that the current farm management is very minimal and the prime agricultural land available is not being utilised to its maximum potential. Bylong Station has been a very viable enterprise in the past and it is disappointing to see it become less productive recently.

#### Workforce Accommodation

We are concerned about the impact of the workforce accommodation facility on the local community, including possible rental opportunities in the surrounding areas. There also appears to be many vacant houses in the area, it is not clear if the company is going to attempt to restore them for accommodation purposes.

The Muswellbrook/Denman area we don't believe is mentioned in the EIS. With the

area being a similar distance from Bylong as the Mudgee region we believe there is scope for workers to be sourced from that area also, especially in respect of the current downturn and job losses in the area.

#### Traffic Management

The EIS focuses entirely on traffic from Mudgee, nothing at all from the eastern region, which we feel may be not represented accurately. Bylong Valley Way, starting from the intersection at the Golden Highway at Sandy Hollow is a sealed road to Bylong, but relatively narrow and winding in parts. It is entirely feasible that traffic will increase if the proposed project is approved.

The project is reliant on the upgrade of the Wollar Road by Mid Western Regional Council. As the Bylong Project is the principal beneficiary of this upgrade for their project, shouldn't they be liable for some of the funding? The project would be under severe restrictions if the upgrade does not occur in the timeframe before construction commences.

In summary, although we can see some benefits to the region if the Bylong Project is approved we feel that the negative impacts far outweigh the positive.

We are very concerned about our permanent water supply, and would strongly object to mining commencing without prior monitoring.

The Bylong Valley is a prime agricultural area with no other mines in the immediate vicinity. Expansion of current mines in less arable areas would be preferable to a new project commencing in an irreplaceable agricultural region.

We hope that the Department of Planning will review our submission carefully and take our concerns into consideration when determining the outcome of the Project.

Yours sincerely,

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