

Objection: Mt Pleasant Modification 3

This project was originally assessed and approved in 1999 before the dramatic escalation of open-cut mining that has occurred from 2008 onwards. In 1999 the frightening destruction of The Hunter could not have been envisaged. If this mine proceeds, as well as the expansion of Bengalla and the Dartbrook open cut, the area immediately to the North of Muswellbrook is going to be an almost 20km string of open cut pits from Mount Arthur to Dartbrook, broken only by the poor Hunter River.

With the EPA acknowledging the severe particle pollution in The Hunter and suggesting it be cut by 50% it is time to stop the expansion of **all** open-cut mining and to attempt to curtail those already with consent. This particular mine requests an extension in an area where the surrounding area has changed substantially with the opening of the Mangoola mine and the construction and expansion of Bengalla mine and several expansions of Mount Arthur mine.

The impacts of dust and noise in the Muswellbrook area have increased dramatically. There is a real need for a totally new EIS process which addresses the cumulative impacts being forced upon citizens who gain no benefit from these projects but are condemned by NSW Planning to suffer the detrimental effects on their lifestyle, value and amenity of their homes and their health.

The maximum 24-hour average PM₁₀ concentration recorded at Muswellbrook North West, Muswellbrook and Wybong breached the 50µg/m³ criteria every year from 2012-2015. Annual average PM_{2.5} concentrations in Muswellbrook are already well over the 8µg/m³ criterion and 24-hour average concentrations of PM_{2.5} are also in breach of the 25µg/m³ goal. By extending mining at Mount Pleasant beyond 2020, this modification will unacceptably add to that health burden and should be refused on that basis alone.

The Department of Planning's Voluntary Land Acquisition and Mitigation Policy must be updated to reflect the current particulate pollution limits in the EPA's Approved Methods for air quality assessment in order that. Landholders affected by the impacts this project are not disadvantaged.

The **Indonesian** proponent is seeking this Modification whilst still in dispute with the adjacent Bengalla mine. No application can be considered while this situation continues

MOST CRITICALLY

Global Climate Change is accelerating dramatically more than 97% of **suitably qualified scientists** agree the change is anthropogenic with GHG emissions the major culprit. The World is turning away where possible, from the use of coal for energy generation.

Australia is a signatory to the Paris Agreement; our emissions are already increasing not decreasing. Mining coal can only exacerbate that.

There is no such thing as "clean coal" only slightly cleaner coal. The cost of renewable energy is decreasing rapidly and battery storage is improving daily. Renewable energy is clean. Ordinary householders are increasingly abandoning expensive electricity from coal and CSG for the concept of renewable sources backed by storage, with the ultimate intent to leave the conventional grid behind.

If Australia continues to approve more coal-mining we are likely to see the ultimate abandonment of unrehabilitated mines as multinationals walk away from the “burst bubble” The subsequent detrimental effects on our land our water and our health will be **our** reward!

We should not allow the substantial donations and misrepresentations of Coal Companies and the NSW Minerals Council to influence policies that are destroying our country.

We should also remember that only approx. 1.5% of NSW State Revenue is derived from royalties. This tiny part does **not** “pay for our hospitals schools etc” as is proselytised by The Minerals Council. Coal Companies are multinational with complex tax-shifting of profits meaning they pay little or no tax on profits made in Australia.

Coal-mining has significant effects on the health and well-being of citizens unlucky enough to be near to the mines. For example; The Singleton LGA is home to four times the rate of childhood asthma of that Australia-wide. Healthcare costs for this and other effects of coal-mining come from the same budget that receives the royalties. Thus far from “paying for our hospitals” mining increases the cost-burden on healthcare.

Infrastructure to facilitate mining such as roads and rail is often heavily subsidised or paid totally from the same revenue.

All this for a few jobs?

Despite the much-vaunted job increases promised in various EIS for mine expansions in recent years, the most concentrated area of mining in The Hunter (Singleton Muswellbrook) has increasing unemployment (around 7% in 2015)

Thus, for reasons of health, welfare and even economic benefit, mining has not been the backbone of The Hunter as promised.

Tourism, hospitality, horse-breeding and health and welfare services contribute more and most importantly are sustainable.

For all of the above it is time to stop the increase in coal-mining for the sake of land, water and intergenerational equity both in Australia and the rest of the world.

It is time to say “no”. Enough is enough”

This Application should not be approved.

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