

INTRODUCTION:

How much does the Central Coast need to endure when it comes to being used and abused environmentally and then having to live with the impacts for decades, if not generations later?

We the residents of the region cannot accept antiquated planning processes that approve State Significant Developments on their own merit, yet fails to consider the externalities and future proposed developments for the region.

Firstly, as a housing hot spot due to our proximity to Australia's largest city and having very little adequate infrastructure or transport both under the North Wyong Structure Plan, the Central Coast Regional Action Plan NSW 2021 and other strategic policies & strategies, that change like the wind or to whatever political party is in place at the time.

Decades of exploitation with the sandmining of our beaches, along with gold, sandstone, clay, gravel and of course, coal removal in our hinterlands and beneath our lakes & homes, has created biodiversity changes that have introduced noxious weeds, destroyed habitats and changed the biodiversity of the entire coast .

Mine subsidence's have continually threatened our properties, changed our lakes and destroyed our roads, with the necessity to have the Mine Subsidence Board's approval to purchase our homes.

The long term environmental degradation due to essential power station electricity production for the entire state of N.S.W., has produced toxic waste from burning coal. Structures known as tailing dams full of toxic bi-products, have been effectively swept under the carpet for decades by authorities. Out of sight and out of mind as in the Doyalson area alone, there is the equivalent of 466 Olympic size swimming pools full of fly ash and other toxic materials waiting for another environmental disaster to occur, just down the road from this proposed coal mine.

Not only is the area riddled with a honeycomb of old mining shafts that are systematically collapsing and creating sink holes in residential areas. We have the ongoing threat of earthquakes that fortunately have not yet created a major problem since the Newcastle earthquake in 1989, which reached a

2.

magnitude scale of 5.6. Any further quakes of this or greater magnitude will certainly spell disaster to the entire region.

The economic recourse downturn has destroyed Australia's economy along with many townships in Western Australia and now we have proposals of further coal mining coming back to haunt the Central Coast.

The Wallarah 2 proposed coal mine near the M1 Freeway, north west of the township of Blue Haven, is nothing more than a disaster waiting to happen. Not only will it bring health issues to a region currently scattered with over 50's housing estates, disability respite establishments and school precincts. The local region is also earmarked by government departments for at least a further 20,000 residential developments and 50,000 new residents.

Known as the gateway to the scenic coast, the gateway will now have if approved by the Baird Government, a welcoming gate that will impact on the region for the next 28 years.

Coal dust, noise, traffic issues and the real threat of mine subsidence, are some of the impacts if approved. The same N.S.W. Government is currently focusing on an adaptive & sustainable economy, offering excellent local educational opportunities by promoting the Central Coast as a key Tourism and event destination.

Our way of life, standard of living, health and security is totally threatened by this out of touch, antiquated and possibly uneconomic proposal. Cumulative impacts from what we already endure, mostly hidden below the ground and raising its ugly head from time to time are only going to be exacerbated.

The public need to be aware of the ongoing cumulative threats. We demand that the Central Coast Council & Planning N.S.W. instigate public meetings for this amended development application, so that all residents are on the same page and understand the real threats to their families.

That Central Coast Council also calls for a **Commission of Enquiry** that not only looks at individual mining proposals and ongoing amendments to development applications. A commission which also takes into account of what damage

3.

already exists today and **audits the entire region** for the welfare of future generations.

HISTORY:

It has been well documented that this proposal has been on and off of the drawing board for several years. That alone indicates the enormity of the development and the significant impacts which will be generated and how the proponents intend to deal with these issues.

Both the previous Wyong Council and Gosford Council have opposed this development application on the grounds of Water supply and impacts.

The tweaking or changes to the development application is not because the developers have found ways to improve operations, it is purely that their original proposal did not suit neighbouring land owners.

The proponents have then attempted to divide and conquer the community by holding individual consultation meetings to convince concerned residents that their changes are for the betterment of the region. Not willing to hold Public meetings, this is nothing more than allowing the ticking off of their legal responsibility under the N.S.W.'s legislations and convincing the government that they intend to be good neighbours.

SUBMISSION:

I **[REDACTED]**, a resident and active community member of the Central Coast, not only totally object to the proposed amendments to development application XXXXXXXX, I object to the development of the lands identified for such a State Significant Development due to the following reasons ...

OVER DEVELOPMENT, UNSUITABILITY & EXPLOITATION OF THE REGION:

As previously stated the region has been exploited by extraction industries and their processes for decades with the consequences only beginning to be understood or seen. Subsequent Governments have been well aware of

4.

unsustainable extraction processes and have turned a blind eye to the outcomes of such practices and have introduced bandaied solutions. Yet they still insist on exploiting the most out of the region, both above and below ground, to the detriment of the residents and land owners. All government levels swing in the developer's direction, as they too will benefit financially from the approval and not have to live with the consequences.

As a local land owner and resident, I am not convinced that the findings of this and or previous Environmental Impact Statements are credible or accurate. The N.S.W. Government has a history of accepting E.I.S.'s that ultimately are found flawed with the consequences dramatically impacting on either the natural environment or the health of residents.

Port Kembla's Copper Smelter which ultimately caused clusters of Leukaemia with devastating consequences, yet having an approved the E.I.S. The Port Botany Expansion with a \$10 Million E.I.S. that was found wanting by three commissioners, with their findings being totally overridden by the state government.

The former I.C.I. site at Botany now Orica, with the E.P.A. monitoring the second largest toxic groundwater plume of Ethylene Dichloride for fourteen years, knowing the size and its direction, yet doing very little until the community forced their hand. The cost of remediation is not only causing Orica financial hardship, the lack of investigation of the previous owners environmental integrity is only just being found to be a compounding factor.

Major Mercury pollution contamination flowing down two local creeks into Botany Bay and bioaccumulating into the ecosystem. There are now warning signs installed not to eat the fish caught in the region.

These issues are mirrored around N.S.W. like Rhodes in Sydney and the Homebush Olympic precinct, where remediation is at best burying the evidence.

It is commonly found that Environmental Impact Statements inevitably slant favourably towards the organisation paying for the report. Therefore it is my

5.

opinion that all E.I.S.'s for this proposal have an element of fact, **yet fail to find or consider the externalities and impacts of the proposed development.**

AMENDMENTS TO THE PROPOSAL:

After meeting with Peter Smith Environment and Community Manager at a non public forum at Doyalson RSL Club on Monday 1st. August, I am further convinced that the Wallarah 2 Coal Project is **not suitable for this region.**

Table 1 (2) The development description states **to provide a clear and concise summary of the proposal that describes the type of activities that will be undertaken during each stage of the development.**

Is this nothing more than an oxymoron? We cannot have a "clear and concise description" which is nothing more than just a summary.

The Collins English dictionary describes a "**Summary**" as a **brief account or done quickly without formalities.**

Existing or current Environmental Impact Statements are null and void if Table 1 (4) states that we have a **preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment.**

The Collins English Dictionary describes "**Preliminary**" as "**Happening before and in preparation**".

How can we identify and prioritise the expected environmental impacts (positive and negative) based on a **preliminary risk assessment** that briefly outlines any strategies to address the impacts identified?

Briefly exposing some of the impacts that I see possible are...

- Coal Stockpiles (Air and Visual pollution)
- Handling Facilities (noise, back -up systems and breakdowns)
- Open yard storage (Air and Visual pollution)
- Reverse Osmosis Plant (Visual, noise and proposed removal off site and disposal of Brine)
- Cut and fill requirements subject to detailed design (not available).

6.

Just to name a few of my summarised or preliminary impacts found with this amended development application.

There is a major list of **S.E.P.'s, L.E.P.'s, Acts and Policies** that have to be satisfied before any such approval could be considered. It is up to the proponent to identify the key threatening processes and suitability of any State Significant Development under each of the following controls...

- Coastal Protection Act.
- **Hazardous & Offensive Development**
- Koala Habitat Protection
- Contaminated Land Management
- Crown Lands Act
- Dangerous Goods Act.
- Roads Act.
- Water Act.
- P.O.E.O. Act. (Federal)
- Biological Diversity Strategy
- Species Impact Statements
- Permit to clear Native Vegetation
- Bushfire Safety Authority approval
- Water Management Work Approval

Again just to name a few of which I have not been able to obtain or find approval from the relative authorities.

The Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements are concise and unless every item identified can be ticked from the list, I believe this development should not be granted approval.

The proposed amendments or in fact the Development Application (D.A.) does not consider all of the **externalities of the proposal** such as...

- The existing open water storage facilities known as **Tailing Dams** in close proximity which are also bi-products of other processes generated by the mining of coal.

8.

- Equivalent to 455 Olympic size swimming pools of toxic materials in close proximity to this proposal.
- These are equivalent in size to Sydney's Centennial Park or 2/3 of the entire Olympic site at Homebush.
- Impacts on the many over 50's retirement villages, school precincts, or housing estates both existing and proposed, more than what looks to be outside one kilometre from the site, yet well within any impact zone.

This does not include mine operations, waste water or dam & surface settling ponds to add to the region's ongoing dilemmas.

The amendment to the D.A., briefly mentions the Strategic Planning Documents...

- **Central Coast Regional Strategy**
- **North Wyong Structure Plan**

Both strategies indicating some 50,000 extra residents and 20,000 extra residential homes to be built in close proximity with the next decade.

The amendment fails to indicate how the mine proposal will not impact on local townships and proposed housing estates.

This amended proposal expects the regional residents to accept what is a very inadequate summary...

- There is no current environmental impact statement for the amendment.
- The impacts will be **24/7 for 28 years.**
- It does not consider the **cumulative impacts or externalities** of the entire proposal, let alone the amendment.

In fact, I don't know how this development proposal has gotten this far without all the relevant approved documentation?

9.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION TO THE REGION:

Non existent and the general community are not fully aware of this proposal.

The consultation process was not proper community consultation with the truth and nothing but the truth. I put to Central Coast Council and NSW Planning that the Wallarah 2 Project is subject to the formation of a **Community Liaison Committee**. That it holds regular monthly meetings before approval, during approval (if so) and during operations (if approved).

That the Newly formed **CLC** be donated **\$100,000** as a top up annual grant so that the CLC can **employ independent scientific experts** as per the precedent set by **Orica in Botany**.

CONCLUSION:

I call on both the Federal and N.S.W. State Government (Director General) to place a **STOP WORK ORDER** on all processes and assessments for approval of **Walarah 2 Coal Mine**, until the new and up to date .environmental impact statement has been tabled and the Community with their chosen experts, have had time to comprehend and or oppose this development.

I call on the N.S.W. State Government to execute a **Commission of Inquiry**, as this proposal has too many hidden impacts and is a state Significant Development. There is a great need to execute **arbitration** as the general community have not been given the opportunity to understand the impacts of such a development will have on their lives.

If approved, this mine will become a festering sore on the Central Coast for a minimum of the next three decades. The proposal is not out in the middle of the bush, away from people trying to raise their families.

It sits beside the M1 Freeway, the gateway to Sydney from Northern N.S.W. and Queensland. It is one hour drive to Sydney and will dramatically impact on Tourism in the region.

10.

As [REDACTED] of the Northern Lakes Disability Tourism Precinct Committee Inc., we have been working with RMS, Dept. of Primary Industries, National Parks and the National Parks Association N.S.W., Destination NSW and many local businesses to establish a Disability Tourism Destination, here at Budgewoi and San Remo.

We have constructed an Accessible Beach ramp at Lakes Beach, built entirely by the community, at no cost to the N.S.W. Government.

Wearing one of my other hats is as the [REDACTED] of Camp Breakaway Inc. A disability respite accommodation facility, which was established some thirty three years ago and is found only a few kilometres from the proposed mine site.

This establishment is the only organisation in the world to cater for Smiths Magenis Syndrome children and their families for total respite. Every second year Professor Ann Smith from the U.S.A. conducts research clinics at Camp Breakaway to try and find the common reasons for such a debilitating disease for 1 out of 25,000 children each year.

My third hat is the [REDACTED] of the Disabled Surfers Association of Australia Inc. The world's only registered Surfing Public Benevolent Institution and Charity that runs special surfing events around Australia and New Zealand and runs out of several Central Coast Beaches, within a few kilometres of the proposed coal mine.

- Is this coal mine suitable for the region? **NO**
- Will it impact on the social value of the local region? **YES**
- Could it cause greater health issues for the region? **POTENTIALLY YES**
- Will it destroy Australia's only Disability Holiday destination? **YES**
- Could it destroy the Central Coast's water supply? **POTENTIALLY YES**
- Are there enough issues to place a **Stop Work Order** on the proposal?
YES

I have taken the time to meet with Wallarah 2 Coal Mine representatives. I have taken further time to write my objection and summarise the issues that

11.

are dear to me.

I expect the respect from each of the authorities involved in the process. I am willing to have arbitration, yet I am not willing to accept that this proposal is beneficial to this region.

Community Advocate

NB: Please refrain from publically publishing my personal details