

Karen Nagle
Homebush Park
40 Smiths Road
JILLIBY 2259

9th September, 2016

Dear Sir,

Development Application SSD 4974
Wallarrah No. 2, Coal Mine

I am an owner of 40 Smiths Road, Jilliby, and it has recently come to my attention that my property falls within the area of the subject Development Application and that it will be adversely affected over several decades if consent is granted to Wyong Coal's longwall mining proposal Wallarrah No. 2.

The PAC was disappointed, even critical, of the Company's deficient material in support of its application but surprisingly went on to accept its projections and assertions with regard to the mine's impact on land subsidence, the region's waterways, drinking water supply, etc. I find the PAC's blind faith in the company's inadequately supported proposals and remedy propositions with regard to the mine's impact on residents' properties and livelihoods, the environment, the locality and existing infrastructure to be incongruent with best practice. Thankfully, many of the deficits in the Application are highlighted in submissions from other public bodies. I submit that despite giving the appearance of producing a thorough and complete environmental impact statement, there appears to be significant gaps and on closer examination many of the conclusions are little more than educated guesses by Wyong Coal.

Although Wyong Coal submits in its Application that it has consulted with all relevant stakeholders, as a person who purchased a property in the Dooralong Valley in 2013, I had never been contacted let alone "consulted" by the company. Perhaps the company's assertion in its Application that it has consulted all stakeholders was true when it initially made the Application, but it is probably no longer an up to date claim. Jilliby has a buoyant property market and I wonder how many other residents are similarly in the dark as to how their property is impacted by the mine proposal as we were until recently.

It was only when the Coal Alliance advertised a public meeting in mid-August this year that my husband and I became aware that our property was affected by the proposed coal mine. Although the deadline for submissions was fast approaching, we felt we could not write an informed submission unless we had more detailed information about the operation of the mine in general and as it affects our property in particular than what was available in the amended document on exhibition. My partner contacted the DPE's Ms Jessie Evans who arranged for the company's representative, Mr Peter Smith, to ring us and subsequently he

provided in person a much more comprehensive explanation of the proposal. Given the looming deadline of the public exhibition we were advised by Ms Evans that our objections would be accepted for consideration even if they were submitted late. In terms of the public exhibition process I note that as a lay member of the public I took it on face value that the document put on exhibition was all I needed to read but have since realised that the whole of the Application plus the amendment should have been available for perusal during the exhibition period. But it was not and I wonder how many people affected by the proposal missed out on crucial information because they did not see the Application in its entirety. People viewing the amendment may have easily formed the limiting view that they could comment only on the amended proposal for the system of removal of extracted coal from the site (ie: the coal loader and associated conveyers), rather than the entire Application.

There appears to be a complete lack of consideration for the impact on landowners who use their land to graze stock or run other agricultural activities or businesses in the valley. This lack of deference for the lifestyles and livelihoods of the valley's residents is best highlighted in the case of my next-door neighbour who operates a thriving turf farm called Austurf at 6 Smiths Rd, Jiliby. Wyong Coal admits that impacts from subsidence may result in loss of turf production for three years but apparently regards this as an acceptable consequence of its mining operation and shows no regard for the economic loss experienced by the family and the staff it employs. It also provides no expert or empirical evidence to support its contention that the turf farm could return to productivity in three years, an omission highlighted by the Department of Primary Industry in its submission.

Wyong Coal admits there will be a change to the ground levels and contours at the surface as a direct result of their underground mine. The impact on my property is stated to be subsidence in the range of 1300mm, with tilt of 2mm/1000m. The company can give no guarantee whether the subsidence will be uniform or undulating although it hopes the whole of the land will subside in a level fashion. My concern is that the potential changes in topography are extremely uncertain and there is no reassurance that the suitability of my land for raising cattle and other grazing activities will not be adversely effected. Of course, my small cattle grazing activities didn't even warrant consideration in the EIS even in the superficial and off-hand manner applied to my neighbour's turf farm.

Wyong Coal admits that at least 245 dwellings will experience some impact due to subsidence. Apart from major structural damage, common damage from subsidence includes hairline cracks to walls and cornices, and fine cracks to brickwork and impeded operation of doors and windows caused by tilt. According to the Application I am expected to be reassured by the fact that if my property is damaged, I can seek compensation from the Mines Subsidence Board. Of course I first have to engage in the combative process of proving that my house was damaged by subsidence and not by the failure of footings, unusual loadings, inadequate structural design, changes in drainage patterns, ground movement due to reactive soil, settlement and shrinkage or simply the ravages of time. It was cold comfort to learn that the Board approves only a small percentage of the total claims made for compensation. I have significant out buildings on my property and although these structures may be subjected to

damage from subsidence, they are not covered by the Mine Subsidence Compensation Act. If the company's predictions of the impacts of subsidence are so reliable then why is longwall mining not being permitted under Wyong River, the M1 Freeway and other similar sensitive areas?

Foreign investment in our prime agricultural land and natural resources has struck a raw nerve in Australia recently, partially fuelled by many Australians like myself who feel their lifestyle and hard-earned assets are being sacrificed so a foreign country can become wealthy exploiting our natural resources. This inequity seems all the more pointless as the world gradually reduces dependence on coal-fired power stations for electricity generation, including South Korea, home of Wyong Coal's parent company, which has announced the closure of at least ten coal fired power plants by 2025. Therefore I question the need to approve another coal mine, especially one that has attracted so much opposition from the people most affected by it, the close-knit rural communities living in the Dooralong and Yarramalong valleys. I understand that anyone living on the Central Coast and indeed in NSW can make a submission in support of the mine but I believe the objections of residents living in the area directly affected by the mine should carry far more weight than those of people who are supportive of the mine but whose property is not affected. The Coal Alliance has calculated that the effective amount of royalties the State Government will receive is about \$7million per annum over the life of the mine. If these figures are correct, it seems it is hardly sufficient to justify the harm caused to the community and environment and the economic loss to landowners.

Wyong Coal admits that in a survey in 2006, 86% of people believed land and property values would be adversely impacted by the mine proposal. This was later revised to a more "acceptable" 24 percent in a second survey in 2012 but the methodology and different questions posed to respondents were not disclosed in the Application. This omission calls into question the results of the later survey and the company's claims that house values will not be impacted. I have spoken to neighbours and friends and without exception they have all expressed the belief that our property values and saleability will be significantly reduced if the mine goes ahead. As my land will not be mined under for at least 20 years I am in the position of bearing the uncertainty of not knowing exactly how my property will be effected and therefore so would any potential buyers. I would not have purchased my property had I been aware of the mine proposal and I believe this is a view shared by most Australians who are distrustful of mining companies and suspicious of their promises. Astute buyers could also use the mine to drive prices down in an effort to secure a bargain.

I have a major electrical transmission line running down the boundary I share with my neighbour's who operate Austurf and there is another transmission line close by on another property, both of which are located within the area of the proposal and will be impacted by subsidence. Destabilisation of these high voltage transmission lines could lead to their failure which would disrupt the national electricity grid and pose a fire risk should they be toppled by ground movement. Wyong Coal argues that any impacts can be mitigated by various means involving alteration and/or relocation of the towers. However, Transgrid, the owners of the

lines have stated that the company's proposed mitigations are impractical and hugely expensive. Transgrid have stated they prefer that there be no mining at all under certain parts of their easements and I support Transgrid's submission.

Wyang Coal proposes to rely on trains to transport the coal to Newcastle. However, Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) has advised that there are no available paths for the trains and Transport for NSW (TNSW) has indicated there are significant issues concerning rail access and capacity. These concerns call into question the viability of the company's infrastructure plans and costings at a time when one would expect a thorough and complete assessment of this aspect of their proposal. I question how the Consenting Authority could grant the Application with such a gaping hole in an integral part of the proposal.

It appears Wyong Coal has not performed detailed analysis and assessments of the principle water courses of Little Jilliby Creek and Jilliby Creek let alone all the seasonal waterways and drainage channels. I submit that land subsidence and land tilt could lead to soil erosion or changes in the course of the streams and losses of billabongs, drainage channels and other water courses. Additionally, if the mining causes significant fractures or fissures, the water could be lost altogether and the Central Coast's supply of drinking water could be seriously compromised.

I understand as part of the mining process Wyong Coal will create huge stockpiles of salt which they initially intend to store in the underground workings. If there is fracturing of the strata, then the water could be contaminated by the salt and then leach to the surface. The salt could contaminate the fresh water and the land could be rendered unusable in the same way as areas affected by dry land salinity. Even more dangerous is the plan to pump it out to sea once it can no longer stockpile the salt underground. Any damage by salt leaching, may very well be detected too late to rectify.

For all of the above reasons I object to the Application.

Yours faithfully,

Karen Nagle