

NSW Government Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Director Mining and Industry Projects
Re: Watermark Coal Mine
App No.: SSD – 4975, Watermark Coal Project

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Disclose reportable donations: I have **not** made a reportable political donation.

Privacy Statement: I have read the Department's Privacy Statement and agree to the Department using my submission in the ways it describes. I understand this includes full publication on the Department's website of my submission, any attachments, and any of my personal information in those documents, and possible supply to third parties such as state agencies, local government and the proponent. I agree to the above statement? **Yes.**

Submission

I am a farmer on the Liverpool Plains of NSW, and a member of the Caroon Coal Action Group and SOS Liverpool Plains. Together with my family we have a history of farming on the Liverpool Plains for over 100 years & plan to continue for many more years to come. We have been very successful in our farming enterprise, producing high quality & yielding crops in an environmentally sustainable manner. We can continue to do this for many, many years to come, producing the food that is required for our nation and indeed the wider world.

Our world population is growing at an alarming rate, it is an often quoted statistic that by 2050 the world population will be 9 billion. Our capacity to feed that population is being diminished as global warming increasingly produces catastrophic weather events that have directly affected food production for the world population. Urban growth and industrialisation have reduced the amount of land available for food production. Our future challenge as a world population is to be able to feed ourselves. Food security for our nation and the world is critically important.

The Liverpool Plains of NSW is vital in providing food security.

It is for this reason that I object to the proposed Shenhua Watermark Coal Mine at Breeza NSW.

Not only will this project endanger world food security, the Shenhua Watermark Coal Mine at Breeza will have a significant impact on our community and region. These impacts include:

1. Water – the EIS in the Surface Water Assessment S Executive Summary discusses
“The potential impacts of the project on surface water” including
 - “Impacts on regional water availability...”

- “Adverse impacts on downstream water quality in Watermark Gully associated with possible overflows from the Mine Water Management System”
- “Adverse impacts on the quality of surface water runoff...”

In particular there is a risk of contaminated water being released from the sediment dam during rainfall events where it exceeds the capacity. With increased unpredictable rainfall events this situation is considered most probable and the releasing of contaminated water across the black soil plains and into our ground water systems is unacceptable.

It is stated in the proposal that:

- there is a potential for the reduction of catchment flows to surrounding waterways including the Mooki River, Watermark Gully, Native Dog Gully and Lake Goran with 25% loss at Watermark
- a reduced rate of upward flow from the Permian to the alluvium is predicted

These predictions and forecasts by Shenhua Watermark Coal are of great concern and pose a very real risk to the local surface water systems and ultimately the Murray Darling Basin System.

2. Agriculture – the EIS in the Agriculture Impact Statement Z Executive Summary states that 5,630ha of land will be lost to agricultural production with a gross value of \$2.7M. Shenhua Watermark Coal plan to offset these “ecological impacts” with the projects Biodiversity Offset Package. As stated earlier, food security for our growing population is a major concern. It is highly unlikely that a Biodiversity Offset Package will provide food and thus address these concerns.

3. Future Expansion – It is stated in the EIS that a final void will remain in the Western Mining Area that will cover an area of approx. 100 hectares. It will have a maximum depth of 80 metres below the natural ground surface. This outcome is recommended by the mining company as it is the most cost effective method and allows for the opportunity to access coal resources in the future. This raises concerns for future expansion of the project with further risk to water resources and agricultural land.

4. Increased Train Movement – the EIS states that there could be up to eight train movements generated each haul day by the Project.

This increased level of train movements will greatly increase the level of noise and dust experienced by towns and properties along the rail line, adding to the health risk associated with coal dust from the trains in these communities.

The increase in train movements will have a significant impact on the availability of the rail line to carry passenger and freight trains. In regional NSW these services are of vital importance to our continued economic survival and must not be compromised.

Increased train movements indicate four Level crossings being identified in the EIS as having potentially significant risks with regard to short stacking and queuing related risks due to cumulative rail movement. The very real possibility exists that a number of towns will be “cut in half” for a significant length of time hindering the access and movement of emergency services, thus posing significant risks in these communities.

Finally the EIS states that “Socio-economic benefits of the Project will far outweigh its social and environmental costs. Therefore it can be considered that the Project is in the public interest”

I strongly disagree with this statement, not only for the reasons listed above, but also due to the adverse Ecological, Noise, Koala population and Heritage impacts of the Project.

If the Government approves this Project, they are knowingly approving the detrimental impacts of this mine at the cost of the landholders and the community. Once the mine starts, you cannot stop or mitigate these impacts.