

NSW Government Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Attention: Director of Mining and Planning
Re: Watermark Coal Mine
App No: SSD-4975 Watermark Coal Project

Disclose reportable donations: I have not made any reportable donations.

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 the possible supply to third parties such as state agencies, local government and the proponent. I agree to the above statement.

I object to the proposed Shenhua Watermark Coal Mine at Breeza NSW.

My objections are:

Air Quality

With two young children how are we to know if we are exposing them to toxic fine dust from the mine site, which has been proven to cause numerous health issues in the Hunter Region.

Water Quality

With the fall in air quality also comes the fall in water quality. All of our water relies on runoff or rainfall, with low air quality also comes the destruction of our high quality water supply. It would therefore be irresponsible for us to live in close proximity to this mine. The question I ask 'who has right to take away our air and water quality and therefore diminish our health and wellbeing'? 'Who absorbs the burden of relocation'?

With the original exploration licence being issued by the former and now disgraced Minister, Ian MacDonald, I find it hard not to be sceptical of how this licence was purchased for an amount well above Expression of Interest requirement. Were guarantees given? Why then did Shenhua Watermark, a

Chinese owned company, go about buying so much land when they only had a licence to explore?

The money that has been spent by Shenhua Watermark for both the exploration licence and the purchasing of the land and the royalties the State Government may acquire should not be taken into consideration when determining the feasibility of this mine, nor should the fear of upsetting the applicant be considered.

Land Productivity

The EIS states that the productivity of the land surrounding the proposed mine site will not be effected. This shows a complete lack of knowledge of how a plant functions. Plants need water to grow. Quote 'the project will impact Watermark Gully through a reduction in the contributing area by approximately 25%.' This will therefore stop smaller flows reducing the frequency of flows and changing the balance of the floodplain which has been created over thousands of years of sedimentary flows. High flows will be discharged as the mine will be unable to store all the water during larger rain events and as a result toxic overburden sediment will be deposited over the floodplain and further upstream into the Namoi Catchment.

Who will be responsible for this land and water becoming contaminated and therefore compensation for the destruction of an infinite resource?

The EIS also states 'the salt load of Watermark Gully increases by 4% and 30% years 25 and 30. This represents a likely upper limit of salt load impact.'

As the world's farming areas are being diminished due to salt levels it is a complete disgrace that our government even contemplates the allowance of a foreign owned company to deposit salt on our and the world's most fertile land and into its river systems.

Offsets

How can the purchasing of pre-existing forest and then the decimation of another equal 'zero'.

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 the impacts to the water resources, the system enters a new state and is changed.

Tim Lyle

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