

Submission to Springvale Mine Extension Project SSD 5594 Modification 1

"I am a local resident. 20 years ago, before mining arrived I could drive out on Newnes Plateau and all I could see was a magnificent environment of pristine bushland that could be enjoyed for its peaceful beauty. Now there is a proliferation of dry swamps, cliff collapses, cracks in the ground, borehole sites, power lines, ventilation sites, pipelines, more roads, monitoring equipment etc. The list goes on. The degradation should not be allowed to increase even further as is proposed. Government needs to step up once and for all and act responsibly to protect the unique biodiversity on Newnes Plateau, including the Newnes Plateau Swamps which are protected under the Federal EEC Act."

The paragraph above was the introduction to my submission to the PAC for the Springvale Extension Project. Unfortunately economics was deemed more important than protecting the Ecological Endangered Newnes Plateau Shrub Swamps. All scientific advice from prominent experts was ignored during this process. I have seen, as an avid visitor to the swamps over 20 years the undeniable drying and damage caused when mining occurs under or nearby.

I object to this Modification for the following reasons-

Independent Monitoring Panel Report findings

The Independent Monitoring Panel (set up as part of the Extension approval) Report was recently released.

The panel concluded that mining was directly damaging the swamps. Finally, even Centennial has conceded that they have caused irreparable damage to the swamps it has undermined.

And how has this report impacted the next panel LW419? It will go ahead as planned with more monitoring. More monitoring to prove that the swamps are DEAD. The Government should be ashamed of themselves.

In light of the IMP Report, the conclusion in the Executive Summary of the Mod1 report (paragraph below) is just not correct.

"Benefits can be achieved with little to no risk of adverse environmental impact. Based on the predicted environmental effects of the modification elements and the ability to manage these effects to minimise harm to the environment, the Springvale Mine Extension Project as modified will present an overall minimal residual consequence.

In conclusion, the modification is a minor alteration of the approved Springvale Mine Extension Project and can be considered to be substantially the same development. The adverse environmental impacts of the proposed modification elements are predicted not to be significant. Any potential impact can be managed appropriately to minimise harm to the environment. The benefits of the modification can therefore be achieved with little or no risk of adverse impacts on the receiving environment. The modification meets the relevant objects of the EP&A Act and is consistent with the four principles of the ecologically sustainable development."

Waste water pipeline should be completed

The proposed pipeline to pipe the mine water to Mount Piper Power Station should be completed before any mining continues, especially before any increase in production. The Cox's River has suffered enough damage and needs to be cleaned up. This project should be fast tracked.

Stockpiles not safe

After the disaster of the REAIII collapse at Clarence Colliery Centennial cannot be trusted to maintain stockpiles and dumps, let alone allowing them to be larger.

Justifications very weak

The justifications for this Modification do not outweigh the environmental damage that will continue to occur to the Newnes Plateau Shrub Swamps. Denial of this damage continues (see below) in this report even after admission by Centennial to the IMP.

"The accelerated mining schedule resulting from the increased production rate of 5.5 Mtpa will result in earlier cessation of environmental impacts assessed and approved in SSD 5594, and the technical assessments undertaken for this SEE have concluded the environmental impacts from the proposed modification elements are not significant."

The conclusion in this statement is that Centennial denies any damage will occur, and if it does it will cease earlier. My conclusion is that the swamps will be dead quicker under this Mod1 proposal.

In conclusion –

There is no justification to increase the coal production at the Springvale Mine, and in light of the IMP report the Extension Approval should also be revisited. The mine plan should be changed so swamps and waterfalls are protected.

The report is full of inaccuracies and false conclusions and should be rejected.

Why this proposal to dig up the coal quicker and stockpile more? Why would Centennial want to do this? The answer is obvious. They just want to dig it up as quickly as they can just in case someone in Government (State or Federal) has the 'guts' to stop the total destruction of the unique Newnes Plateau Shrub Swamps.

My hope is that someone in Government IS listening NOW. The remaining swamps can be saved. Please SAVE our SWAMPS.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment.