



Hunter Environment Lobby Inc.

PO Box 188
East Maitland NSW 2323
15th December 2016

Planning Dept.

www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au

SSD 5144 MANDALONG SOUTHERN EXTENSION PROJECT Modification 4

Objection to Project

Hunter Environment Lobby Inc. (HEL) is a regional community-based environmental organization that has been active for over 20 years on the issues of environmental degradation, species and habitat loss, and climate change.

HEL has been appointed by the NSW Government over the years to represent regional environmental concerns on diverse committees such as the Hunter River Management Committee, the Hunter and Paterson Rivers Environmental Water Advisory Group (EWAG), and the Upper Hunter Air Quality Management Group.

HEL would like to object to the above extension project on one of the important bases of interference with valuable water resources within the Dora Creek catchment area. This catchment is very valuable to the quality of water resources for Central Coast residents.

The diminution of the value of the Morans Creek and Tobins Creek catchment areas expressed in Appendix 5 of the Water resources Impact Assessment is alarming. The statement that suggests that these catchments or creeks do not have surface flow for the entire year is simplistic.

The very fact that rainfall periods vary greatly and so does creek flow indicates that in some years flows are high and others not. This is the very basic nature of water cycles. The fact that we have Millennial Droughts and floods attest to this.

To pre-empt the notion of undermining these tributaries based on simple equations as expressed in the Assessment could be seen to be dangerous for future water resources.

We feel that your Department may need to have experts revisit the value of these water resources as they impact also on the important Stockton Creek resource which is also a major source for the integrity of the ecology of Dora Creek.

SALT EXTRACTION

The other major concern expressed in the Assessment is the problem of salty brine. The tonnage of salt extracted from groundwater inflows into the mine begins with 1283 tonnes per annum, to almost 3000 tonnes per annum in 2036. These vast amounts of salt extractions transferred to the Borehole Dam and subsequent discharges are not clearly defined.

We find these amounts extreme and would like to see some explanation of this issue? Much more detail is required and greater explanation of the mechanics of controlling and discharge should be clearly shown in the public arena.

It is important for local populations to understand how these large salt depositions are handled over the life of the mine and also the long term impact of saline action upon water resources and fertile land in the vicinity of the catchment areas impacted by this extension. Planning NSW must have Centennial Coal produce clear and defined data for display prior to any approval of this extension being granted.

The value of natural water systems, including tributaries, in NSW is constantly under attack as we have seen many times in Hunter systems. HEL feels that consultants should value these resources more particularly in mine assessments, and it is incumbent upon Planning NSW to take hold of these assessments and to have them critically reviewed by independent hydrologists.

Too many water resources have been either destroyed or been contaminated as a result of bad assessment and planning. In 2017 this needs to be arrested and genuine independent hydrological studies must take precedence over paid consultants' assertions such as highlighted above.

We ask that Planning please review both the water resource issues of this Mandalong Extension Project and also the critical issue of salt extraction, treatment and long time storage.

Both these issues need to be put on exhibition with clearly defined graphs to allow the public the full knowledge for their critical assessment

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Davis', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jan Davis President