

31st May 2017

Dear Department of Planning & Environment,

I write to you to express my objection to the Hume Coal Project, and the recently published Environmental Impact Statement (SSD 15_7172).

This project will have significant negative effects on Sutton Forrest and the wider Wingecarribee Shire area. Despite arguments of increased jobs and revenue from royalties and taxes, I believe these will be far outweighed by the adverse impacts of this development. Please see my key concerns outlined below.

Environmental: The Hume Coal Project poses severe risks to the health of the local ecosystems. The reinjection of mine waste may pollute groundwater and the pumping of mine water into Oldbury Creek could potentially impact the water quality of the Wingecarribee River and consequently the Sydney Water Catchment. Furthermore, the downstream burning of coal is responsible for one-third of the world's CO2 pollution. Coal burning accounts for >70% of the CO2 emissions from the power sector, with CO2 being the most prominent greenhouse gas. As such, this project will have far-reaching implications for global warming at a time when Australia should be transitioning to a greener future.

Health: Coal dust from any source, be it the mine, freight trains or at the port, poses serious health risks. The World Health Organisation has noted that there is no safe threshold for fine particulate coal dust, which has been associated with increased rates of respiratory and cardiovascular disease. This is of particular concern for the young and elderly, which are two prominent sub-populations in the Wingecarribee Shire. Furthermore, emissions and toxins from the exhaust of transport methods used to move the coal will exacerbate these health risks.

Financial: Over 90 bores will be affected, with some bores being drawn down by up to 80 meters. This, coupled with the potential for polluted aquifers, will compromise the utility and feasibility of current and future water bores. This will have longstanding effects on many landowners who rely on these bores for agriculture and personal water provisions. The establishment of a coal mine will arguably impact the value of properties and land in the area, especially those with compromised water bores. Approval of the Hume Coal Project and the establishment of a coal mine will also have deleterious effects on the tourism sector. The Wingecarribee Shire enjoys a strong, and growing, tourism sector. This could foreseeably reduce this growth, impeding a future sustainable form of income for the local community which celebrates the beauty and heritage of the region without undermining its wellbeing. This will be felt most prominently in historic Berrima.

As such, this initiative will have demonstrable environmental, health and financial risks which are not balanced by the advantages of this project. Coal mining is unsustainable and the Wingecarribee Shire should be focusing our efforts on more sustainable ventures. I implore you to listen to the community, and consider the irrevocable damage approving this project may precipitate in the Wingecarribee Shire.

Thank you for your time.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Digby Allen', with a stylized, cursive script.

Digby Allen