

**OBJECTION TO  
HUME COAL PROJECT EIS SSD 15\_7172**

We strongly object to the underground coal mine proposed by Hume Coal in the Southern Highlands of NSW and ask the NSW government to reject this proposal unreservedly.

Our greatest concerns are:

- If the mine proceeds, the main aquifer for the Southern Highlands will be severely interfered with and approximately one hundred water bores, primarily used for agriculture, will be left totally or partially dry, probably for decades. Even the mining company in its EIS acknowledges this will happen. The government should not allow groundwater reserves and agricultural livelihoods of this area to be so adversely impacted.
- There is a high risk that many of the beautiful old trees that the Highlands are famous for will deteriorate or die. When the water is drained from the aquifer the general water table in the area will be lowered, especially in the Berrima and Sutton Forest areas. During our hot, dry summers the trees rely on the groundwater reserves to survive, and if these are depleted or non-existent many old trees will be severely stressed or die. We should not risk this happening.
- The economy of the Southern Highlands is very much dependent on tourism. People visit because they love the clean air, peace and quiet, quaint and historic villages and the beautiful trees and gardens. When these attributes are adversely affected by this mine, through the dust, the extra trains and the ugly mine infrastructure, visitors will be alienated. Thousands of people are employed by businesses which directly and indirectly service the people who come to visit the Highlands. If visitors stop coming, these businesses will suffer. The number of local jobs that are likely to be lost in the tourism and agricultural sectors might far exceed any local jobs that the mine might create in the short term.
- The mine plans to release waste water directly into the local creeks, which eventually flow into Warragamba Dam. There is a risk that toxic mine waste due to an accident or error could contaminate Sydney's main water supply.
- Coal dust from the stockpiles and trains will be blanketed over large areas of the Highlands by the wind. The Highlands is subject to strong winds from the west and south west in winter and northwest in summer. The beauty of villages and towns such as Berrima, Bowral, Moss Vale and Bundanoon will likely be seriously diminished by excessive, ugly, black, coal dust.
- Coal dust carried by the winds will be everywhere in the air for all to inhale, possibly causing respiratory problems, especially in children and elderly people and people with asthma. The Highlands has attracted large numbers of retirees who really enjoy living here, so a significant proportion of the local population will be at risk.
- The proposed mine is relatively small, but will be extremely costly due to:
  - groundwater issues
  - the limited amount of coal that will be extracted and
  - the fact that a lot of the coal will be cheap, thermal grade coal.

Royalties that the state might receive should be minimal compared with the state's probable expenditure. Subjecting the Southern Highlands to all the adverse environmental and economic risks for an uneconomic return should not be contemplated.

We totally object to this proposed mine and request the government to reject this proposal outright.

We have not made a reportable political donation in the last 2 years.

Sincerely,

  3 June 2017  
Michael and Patricia Day 12 Victor Cres MOSS VALE NSW 2577.