

To Executive Director, Resources Assessment
Department of Planning and Environment. NSW

EIS response to DA SSD 7172 Hume Coal mine.

I am concerned about plans proposed to approve the Hume Coal underground coal mine.

I believe that there is a worldwide move away from coal, and that it is time to stop approving new mines, likely to be uneconomic, but likely to adversely affect the environment, health and wellbeing of Southern Highland residents.

I have lived in the area for 31 years. I have worked in the local area, in early childhood teaching, in disability work, at Moss Vale TAFE, and in a welfare field over the last 30 years. I have also worked part-week in Redfern Sydney for 10 years during the last 13 years. I volunteer in several local community organisations.

I am concerned that the proposed underground mine will permanently affect the aquifer which belongs to our descendants here in the Highlands, and which filters water for Sydney. Hume Coal admit that the mine will mean that landowners and businesses already drawing from the aquifer will have to relocate, or place pumps deeper because the aquifer will lower the groundwater levels.

Bruce Robertson, a former geologist who lives locally who has nearly 40 years' experience in the mining industry said that the proposed mine, if allowed to go ahead, would destroy a "world-class" aquifer that sits in Hawkesbury sandstone above the coal seam. "If they mine underneath it, it will be destroyed, there's no question about that," he said.

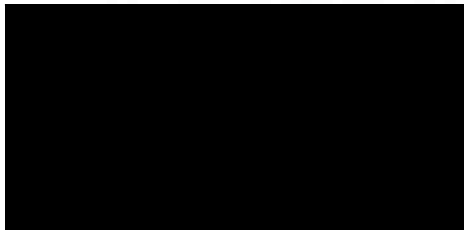
The EIS has confirmed the mine will lower the groundwater level in 93 bores owned by landholders, known as a "drawdown", for between 36 and 65 years after mining ceases. We do not know how climate changes might affect this area in 30 to 80 years, so we should not allow industries here which risk our future access to reliable good water, for short term gain for an overseas company, with little benefit to NSW.

It is possible some bores will never recover, and it is possible that surplus on-site mining water and residual spoilt water, after floods may damage Oldbury Creek, and, more worrying, affect the safety of Sydney's drinking water. We must not take that risk.

I am also concerned about the stockpiles of coking coal and thermal coal being stored above ground, with the possibility of small particles being blown over residents, waterways and stock pasture. A Sydney Morning Herald article on 23.2.15 estimates the annual coal health toll in the Hunter region which has numerous coal mines could be as high as \$600m, due to air pollution from tiny particle

matter, measured in 2.5 to 10 millionth of a metre in diameter. ..."these particles lodge in the blood vessels and cause inflammation and irritation, and leads to long term cardio-vascular and lung disorders" said Liz Hanna, a research fellow in epidemiology at the Australian National University. She said, "It's not just people falling ill today, but also the negative impacts coal is going to have on their systems so that they end up with cancers in years to come". This would mean that long after Hume Coal have departed with their profits (if any), the Australian health system would be carrying the cost of health issues. As well, Hume Coal says its coal mining rejects, with possible toxic material will also need to be stored above ground for the first few years, with higher risk to health, if dust particles blow from the site. What risk for workers on site, and for Southern Highland residents?

I ask that you refuse this DA and reject the Hume Coal project.



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I Have not made a reportable political donation.