Roscoe Park,
90 Carters Lane, Sutton Forest NSW 2577
22/6/2017

Submission on Hume Coal's Mining Plan:

We strongly object to Hume Coal's plans to mine under Sutton Forest. Having unfortunately been personally involved with Hume Coal/Posco for the last 5 years, we're pleased that we can put to the government how we feel about the fine-feather mine that is proposed by Hume. The process so far has been an emotional, mental physical and financial train wreck for us.

Two of our sons, their wives and eight grandchildren, are living in the Southern Highlands. They are the very personal reasons for fighting this mine. We think that if we give up on this fight their future quality of life, financial prospects and health would be compromised.

The community reasons for fighting Hume's mine are equally important. We have a raft of objections including water pollution, noise, job losses and the admitted destruction of the aquifer.

In that regard, Hume in their EIS have stated that some 90 odd water bores will be affected or destroyed including ours. These bores service vineyards, olive groves, dairies, horse and cattle breeders and golf courses amongst other things. We're worried that the impacts will be even worse than Hume says and there's no way we can see that Hume can fix the damage or compensate for the water loss. The costs to all of us will be immense.

Just for us, Hume would have to truck in 10,000 litres a day for our cattle herd alone let alone what we need for our gardens and so on. We also have approximately 20 hectares of Highly Endangered Southern Highlands Shale Woodland which would be compromised if the mining happens. A serious water drawdown under these trees would be a disaster.

Wells Creek is on the Western boundary of our property. It is a key feeder stream for the Medway reservoir. Hume is planning to mine right under the creek. This is a disaster waiting to happen.

We haven't enjoyed dealing with Hume people at all and that's putting it mildly. We were involved in an altercation with Hume over the use of our private road (Carters Lane) so they could drill on a neighbour's property. That led to a seven-month blockade and an eventual LEC court case which Hume won on dubious grounds and we couldn't afford to appeal.

We've also been involved in over 5 years of arbitration and court action over access to our land for drilling which they started while the other case was in progress. Hume constantly moved the goalposts from demanding 1 exploration hole on our property to 7 holes and then increased this in the middle of the

arbitration hearing to 22 and then back to 6. Our lawyer told us that to meet the criteria in the REF, Hume were only allowed 4 holes.

Hume have been very persistent and very aggressive. Fortunately, our arbitrator Peter Neil SC was extremely even-handed during the entire period and put the arbitration on hold awaiting the outcome of the s31 court hearing and appeal at our request. Fortunately, we won on the basis of 'Significant Improvements' which Hume never conceded whatever we said or did.

In arbitration, we requested that Hume would tell us who was coming onto our property during any drilling. The formal written response we got to our request said it all. Mr Kim of Hume wrote "Hume objects to providing third party personal information to the landholders. It breaches privacy and Hume has fears that the personal information would be used to harass those people and the families of those coming to work for Hume"! We couldn't believe the insult and effrontery, it's almost libellous. That's typical of this company's approach to the locals who object.

In summary, we've been in court 4 times fighting Hume over land access and drilling. We've spent hundreds of thousands of dollars defending our legal rights, finally winning an appeal in the LEC. After all of that, Hume pulled their s142 notices and said they didn't want to drill on our property anymore but then they won't guarantee it!

We don't know how anyone can trust Hume Coal or Posco to honour any agreement. We had to engage the compliance office in the Department of Resources and Energy to force them to rehabilitate our road (Carters Lane) after they used it for access to the Koltai property next door. It took approximately 15 months and a lot of aggravation for them to admit the damage and lift a finger to fix it even though the Act and the court required them to do it.

We understand that Posco's overseas track record is a shocker and Hume Coal seems to be following the same approach of abuse and destruction here as well. In our opinion, any mining in the district will have a serious impact on what we leave future generations, all for a few pieces of silver for the government.

We will never let Hume Coal onto our property whatever it takes. We've spent millions on our property and won't have it destroyed by a South Korean company who doesn't care about us or our land.

We've attached the Affidavits we submitted in two court hearings relating to Hume's land access demands: the first relates to the Review of Environmental Factors and the second s31 'Significant Improvements'. These contain far more information on our property and the fight against Hume Coal.

Yours Sincerely,

Margaret and Ross Alexander

Attachments