

HUME COAL PROJECT-MINE & ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE - SSD 7172

WE ARE RESIDENTS OF BERRIMA IN THE NEW SOUTH WALES SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS AND OUR PROPERTY IS WITHIN 1KM OF THE PROPOSED HUME COAL MINE SITE.

WE WISH TO OBJECT TO THE HUME COAL PROPOSAL FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

WATER

MOST IMPORTANTLY THE HUME COAL MINING PROPOSAL FALLS WITHIN THE WATER CATCHMENT FOR THE SYDNEY AREA AND SHOULD BE CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZED AS IT WOULD POTENTIALLY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON SYDNEYS WATER SUPPLY.

SECONDLY WE AS FARMERS IN THE AREA HAVE A BORE ON OUR PROPERTY SO WE WILL CERTAINLY BE AFFECTED BY WATER DRAWDOWN. THROUGH DRY SEASONS THE BORE IS USED TO FILL DAMS FOR OUR ANIMALS CONSUMPTION AS WELL AS TO HAVE A CONSTANT SUPPLY OF ACCESSIBLE WATER TO FIGHT BUSHFIRES.

THIRDLY THE PROPOSAL TO WASH COAL AND PUMP BACK THE SPOIL UNDERGROUND MUST HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE GROUND WATER SYSTEMS.

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS ECONOMY DEPENDS ON GROUND WATER RESERVES WHICH COULD BE DIMINISHED AND CONTAMINATED IF THIS PROPOSAL WAS TO GO AHEAD.

IMPACT ON NATIVE ANIMALS AND THEIR HABITAT

IF THE MINE GOES AHEAD THE AREA WILL SUFFER TREMENDOUSLY FROM SAFE HAVEN TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF BIRDS, KANGAROOS AND WOMBATS THAT FREQUENT THE AREA.

DUST

THIS IS OF MAJOR CONCERN.

THE PROPOSAL INDICATES THAT THERE WOULD BE TWO STOCKPILES OF UNCOVERED COAL 800 METRES IN LENGTH.

EVEN THOUGH THERE IS A WATERING DOWN SYSTEM PLANNED IT WOULD STILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTAIN THE DUST AND THUS WOULD POSE A SERIOUS HEALTH HAZARD AS WINDS IN THE AREA CAN BE VERY STRONG AT CERTAIN TIMES OF THE YEAR.

COULD THE WATERING SYSTEM KEEP THE COAL MOIST ON 40 DEGREE DAYS IN THE HEAT OF A SUMMERS DAY WITH STRONG WESTERLY WINDS BEHIND IT?

A THIRD STOCKPILE OF TOXIC MINE REJECTS WILL ALSO BE STORED ABOVE GROUND FOR THE FIRST 2 YEARS OF THE MINES OPERATION . THIS WASTE WOULD ALSO BE EXPOSED TO PREVAILING WINDS.

DIESEL EMISSIONS WOULD ALSO BE OF CONCERN AS A HEALTH HAZARD TO LOCAL RESIDENTS .

HUME COAL ADMITS THAT THE LOCAL RESIDENTS WILL BE EXPOSED TO NOISE AND AIR POLLUTION DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE.

NOISE

NOISE WILL BE A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS ESPECIALLY IN BERRIMA, NEW BERRIMA AND MEDWAY VILLAGE. LIMITED MENTION OF NOISE HAS BEEN MADE BY HUME COAL IN THE E.I.S.

THERE IS NO MENTION OF THE NOISE THAT WILL BE GENERATED BY THE RAIL LINE NOR THE ABOVE GROUND UNCOVERED CONVEYOR BELT.

IMPACT ON LOCAL INDUSTRY AND TOURISM

MANY AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS ARE DEPENDANT ON THE TOURISM INDUSTRY FOR A SUBSTANTIAL PROPORTION OF THEIR SALES- VINEYARDS, BERRY FARMS, OLIVE GROVES, CHEESE PRODUCTION, EQUINE ACTIVITIES AND MANY OTHER SMALL ENTERPRISES.

OVER 100 BUSINESSES HAVE FORMED THE “SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS FOOD AND WINE CLUSTERS”

THESE AREAS ARE ON THE TOURIST TRAIL AND HAVE PROVED VERY POPULAR.

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS IS AN ATTRACTIVE TOURIST DESTINATION AND BOASTS NATIVE FORESTS, HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND INDIGENOUS HERITAGE.

IF THE MINE WERE TO GO AHEAD THE REGIONS HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT WOULD SUFFER TREMENDOUSLY. THE PROPOSED MINE SITE IS LOCATED ON A PROPERTY WHICH WAS ONE OF THE EARLIEST GRANTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES. THERE IS SO MUCH HISTORY ASSOCIATED WITH THE AREA. THE TOWNSHIP OF BERRIMA IS FULL OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND THE TOWNSHIP WILL SUFFER GREATLY FROM THE IMPACTS OF THIS PROPOSED MINE.

HEALTH ISSUES

APART FROM THE AFOREMENTIONED CONCERNS OF NOISE AND DUST ON THE HEALTH OF THE LOCALS THE DISTRESS AND ASSOCIATED LOSS OF LIFESTYLE AND IN SOME CASES INCOME WILL NO DOUBT BE A HUGE ISSUE FOR THE WELL BEING OF MANY INDIVIDUALS.

MINING BOTH COKING AND THERMAL COAL

HUME COAL SAID FOR YEARS THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE MINE WAS TO OBTAIN HIGH QUALITY COKING COAL FOR OVERSEAS EXPORT AND OFFSHORE STEEL PRODUCTION. THE E.I.S. STATES HUME COAL IS NOW WANTING TO MINE THERMAL COAL FOR SALE.

MINING OPERATIONS

QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ANSWERED

- 1. REGARDING THE LOCATION OF VENTILATION SHAFTS WITH REGARD TO SAFE DISTANCES FROM COMMUNITIES.**
- 2. CAN THEY GUARANTEE THAT ROAD TRANSPORT WILL NOT BE USED CREATING MORE NOISE ISSUES?**

THE E.I.S. DOES NOT GIVE ANY GUARANTEE THAT THE MINE WILL NOT BE EXPANDED IN THE YEARS TO COME

SUBSIDENCE

THERE APPEARS TO BE NO GUARANTEES BY THE COMPANY IN RESPECT OF ANY DAMAGE THAT MAY OCCUR AS A RESULT OF SUBSIDENCE CAUSED BY THE MINE. GIVEN THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER AREAS SLIGHTLY FURTHER NORTH WHICH HAVE BEEN MINED AND SUBSIDENCE HAS OCCURRED THERE COULD BE ANY NUMBER OF PROBLEMS ARISE IF THAT HAPPENS HERE.

PRECEDENTS

IF THIS MINE GOES AHEAD THEN A PRECEDENT WILL HAVE BEEN SET FOR THE OPENING UP OF MINES THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS.

THIS COULD RESULT IN FURTHER SUBSTANTIAL LOSS OF HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND.

CONSEQUENTIAL EFFECTS

IF THE MINE WAS TO GO AHEAD, ONE OF THE MAJOR CONSEQUENTIAL EFFECTS WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT EXPANSION OF THE RAIL TRAFFIC IN THE AREA AND ALTHOUGH WE HAVE LODGED A SEPARATE OBJECTION TO THE APPLICATION WHICH WOULD ALLOW THE INCREASE IN RAIL TRAFFIC IT MUST BE NOTED THAT THE RAIL DEVELOPMENT AND ALL ITS DELETERIOUS CONSEQUENCES WILL ONLY OCCUR IF THE MINE DEVELOPMENT TAKES PLACE.

CONCLUSION

THE E.I.S. APPEARS TO HAVE IGNORED MANY OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS PARTICULARLY AS IT INFERS THAT TOURISM IS ONLY RELATED TO ACCOMMODATION, RETAIL AND TRANSPORT. AS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF THIS FALLACY ONE COULD POINT TO THE PROPERTY "ZEN OASIS" WHICH IS LOCATED DIRECTLY OPPOSITE THE PROPOSED STOCKPILE ON THE NORTHERN SIDE OF MEDWAY ROAD. THIS PROPERTY HAS RECENTLY BEEN GRANTED SPECIAL TOURIST ZONING BY THE LOCAL COUNCIL AND IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE WHOLE OF ITS BUSINESS WOULD BE WIPED OUT IF THIS PROPOSAL IS ALLOWED.

THE E.I.S. SHOWS A MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE ECONOMY, THE HISTORIC VALUE OF THE AREA AND THE IMPACT OF THIS PROJECT ON THE VERY IMPORTANT ISSUES OF NOISE, AIR POLLUTION AND MOST ESPECIALLY WATER.

AT A TIME WHEN THE POLITICAL LEADER OF THE STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES HAS RECENTLY AND VERY PUBLICLY STATED THAT COAL FIRED POWER STATIONS AND COAL MINES SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED IN AREAS OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND THEN IT SEEMS HIGHLY INCONGRUOUS THAT THE DEVELOPMENT IS EVEN BEING CONSIDERED.

**IN CONCLUSION WE ASK THAT THIS PROPOSAL NOT BE
ALLOWED TO GO AHEAD FOR THE MANY REASONS STATED
ABOVE.**

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