

27 June 2017

Executive Director Resource Assessments & Business Systems
Planning Services
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Hume Coal Project Environmental Impact Statement

I am a resident in Sutton Forest and my property is located within the lease area for the Hume Coal Project. I am strongly and unequivocally opposed to the proposed mine.

In the interests of full disclosure, it should be noted that I have been volunteering with the community group Coal Free Southern Highlands (CFSH), and prior to that, the Southern Highlands Coal Action Group (SHCAG). I would like to make it clear however that the views and opinions expressed in this submission are my personal views and opinions.

There are a number of issues that are concerning in Hume Coal's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) including but not limited to:

Social License & Community Engagement

- Hume Coal (HC) has consistently displayed what can only be described as an arrogant attitude to the community. I have obviously taken a keen interest in their social media – primarily their Facebook page which I have been following for some considerable time.
- HC have made multiple and repeated references to those such as myself, who are opposed to their proposed mine, as “activists”, “anti-job activists”, and portrayed as wanting to destroy the economy of the Southern Highlands etc.
- HC take any opportunity to mock members of the community and display blatant disregard for the views of anyone who opposes them.
- HC's Facebook page is peppered with posts inferring that coal is required to enable consumers to have items such as toasters, BBQ's (posted on Australia Day), yachts (posted on Boxing Day), light and power – these posts are ridiculous in the extreme, and at any stretch of the imagination amount to scare mongering.
- HC's Facebook page includes posts of advertising taken out by HC but slanted as though they are editorial pieces which I consider to be misleading and deceptive conduct.
- HC in my personal experience are given to intimidating tactics, including taking photographs of me and my vehicle when I stopped to look at a site where they were test drilling. I and my vehicle were on a public road at the time and a number of HC employees lined up in a manner that was obviously intended to be intimidating.
- HC have taken photographs of my vehicle (displaying a CFSH bumper sticker) and twice posted it on their Facebook page without first obtaining my permission – nor the consent of the private property owners on whose premises the photograph was taken.
- As a community volunteer I have come to know many of the affected landowners very well. The treatment that has been dished out has been nothing short of appalling. Landowners

are subjected to repeated harassment – and a number have been the subject of legal action taken by HC.

- HC have refused to acknowledge the nominated representative of one landowner and I, and many others, were witness to the HC representative being informed of this not only by the nominated representative but also the landowner himself. HC had also been previously notified in writing. It should also be noted that the wife of this landowner was undergoing chemotherapy treatment for cancer at the time which HC were well aware of, but they continued to harass them for some considerable time.
- One landowning couple in particular have been subjected to protracted and ongoing so called access arrangements. Their legal bills have tallied up to a truly phenomenal amount. The legal bills, coupled with what can only be described as bullying tactics by HC have had a seriously detrimental effect on their mental wellbeing.
- There are several instances where landowners have elected not to proceed with property improvements, investment in infrastructure etc. Further to this some landowners have been denied funding to invest in their businesses due to the uncertainty created by the proposed mine.
- HC have made several 'grants' to sporting and community groups – a tactic that is viewed by many in the community as 'buying the community off'. Notably, one of the village junior soccer teams originally accepted sponsorship from HC only to hand it back shortly thereafter once the local community had expressed its collective views on the matter. A crowdfunding campaign was then launched – clearly explaining that they were raising funds in lieu of accepting funding from HC – which in an extraordinarily short period of time raised funds well in excess of that offered by HC.
- Anyone in the community who is opposed to the mine are labelled by HC as tree hugging, job hating, environmental idiots and activists who do not know the facts.
- There are numerous posts on their Facebook page where members of the public have been denigrated, insulted or it has been specifically commented that others (opposed to the mine) are idiots, have no idea what they are talking about, rely on 'made-up' facts etc. Even when these conversation threads descend into name calling and quite frankly offensive comments, HC make little or no effort to moderate these threads. In contrast, other community groups such as CFSH and Battle for Berrima provide warnings when thread commentaries are getting out of hand and if warnings are ignored, delete threads where potentially litigious comments are made. I have personally spoken to HC representatives on at least 2 occasions in this regard to no avail.
- HC are very quick to ban people from making comments on their Facebook page and/or deleting comments which they clearly do not agree with, and in at least one instance, denied doing so even though screen shots were provided as evidence.
- HC have been known to make illegal recordings of conversations with at least one landowner who at the time was involved in access proceedings.
- Where landowners have been involved in access proceedings HC have continually denied landowners the right to legal representation in those proceedings, and denied participants the right to record the proceedings – something that should be a basic legal right and within the bounds of reason.
- It is obvious to many in the community that HC is merely 'ticking the boxes' with regard to community engagement. A case in point is the recent so called community information sessions held at Mereworth, a property that HC purchased and which will be the site of much of the proposed above ground workings. This was in fact an open day at the Mereworth site which I attended. On arrival at the main gates I was confronted by hired

security guards at the main gates, and again by a second set of security guards at the parking area. On entrance to the premises HC were requesting personal details be entered into an attendance register, including telephone and email contact details. Once I entered the premises a representative from HC insisted on accompanying me in person as I traversed what amounted to information stands. I found this to be intimidating and despite my requests to leave me to navigate the various information stands on my own, the HC representative insisted on accompanying me throughout.

- At public forums hosted by HC it has been common practice to shut the forums down once Q&A starts, the minute a member of the community asks a question that HC does not want to, or cannot, answer the forum is shut down. I have personally witnessed this on at least two occasions.
- On at least one occasion HC had a number of what were presumed to be miners, decked out in hi-vis clothing, lined up at the rear of the room – quite confronting and perceived to be intimidating by many who attended.
- HC 'tick the box' when sending correspondence to affected landowners – I, along with many others, received a letter from HC advising that someone from HC would be contacting me to discuss potential groundwater impacts. On receipt of this letter I visited HC's offices in person and spoke directly with Mr Greig Duncan (Project Director). In that conversation I requested that further information be provided to me - to which Mr Duncan responded that I would "just have to wait until the EIS was released". I also had authorisation from two of my neighbours to liaise with HC in regard to this letter, to which Mr Duncan advised that he "wasn't prepared to meet with any committees and I will only talk to individual landowners". I left my business card with full contact details, and advised Mr Duncan that I was at the time occupying an office next door to their premises, and would make myself available at short notice to discuss, I am still waiting some months later for anyone from HC to call me to arrange a mutually convenient time. I literally could not have made it any easier for them.
- I acknowledge that HC set up a website – yoursayhumecoal.com.au – which included tabs on the topics of 'Project Overview', 'Visual', 'Air Quality', 'Water', 'Economy and Employment', 'Noise', 'Ground Stability', 'Consultation Commitment'. It should be noted that HC allowed comment on each of the topics listed within an extremely short period of time, and only one subject at a time. This completely negated the ability of anyone in the community to engage with HC at a mutually convenient time on any topic that may have been of particular interest or concern to them. Further to this, there is anecdotal evidence that individual comments have been deleted from this forum as not being 'on topic' in HC's opinion. I certainly saw one post on this so called engagement forum that was not to HC's liking which was subsequently deleted by HC. This is far from a transparent and open community engagement. Once again, evidence of HC 'ticking the box' in terms of community engagement.

Groundwater

- HC have advised me that the bore on my property will be drawn-down as a result of the mine activity in excess of 5 metres – a greater than minimal impact as defined under the NSW Government's Aquifer Interference Policy (AIP) 2012.
- According to HC's data my bore will take over 45 years to recover.
- Living in a regional/rural area a bore is acknowledged as a significant contribution to the value of my property.

- I have no confidence whatsoever in the figures provided by HC in respect of the impact to my bore. HC have consistently refused to provide the details of the data and assumptions contained within their groundwater model (while at the same time ridiculing the groundwater model funded by one of the community groups and peer reviewed by eminent and acknowledged experts in the field).
- It is not inconceivable that, should the HC groundwater model be fundamentally flawed or based on incomplete or erroneous data, there will be catastrophic and permanent damage to the aquifer.
- I do not believe that HC have sufficient provisions in place to prevent run-off of toxic and potentially contaminating elements being released into the local environment – which forms part of the greater Sydney water catchment area.
- When questioning the run-off aspect at the Mereworth open day I was informed by one of HC's mining engineers that there was no need to worry as any run-off would be contained on land owned by HC – clearly they have no grasp of just how far contaminants can go once they are in the water table.
- As an owner of 2 horses currently agisted within the area that will be affected by the proposed mine, whose water is provided by way of a groundwater fed dam, I have major concerns about the potential impact that contaminated groundwater could have on them.

Tourism

- In Appendix R of the HC EIS it is stated that there are a total of 20 Tourism establishments in the Total Wingecarribee area.
- A simple search on Stayz.com.au shows 58 properties in Berrima, 19 properties in Sutton Forest, 18 properties in Exeter, 17 properties in Moss Vale, 23 in Robertson, 34 in Bundanoon, 235 in Bowral, and 40 in Mittagong – a total of 444 properties. Only 424 more than stated in HC's EIS!
- A search on Trip Advisor comes up with 1,158 establishments within the NSW Southern Highlands – accommodation, restaurants, cafes, pubs, and things to do while visiting the area.
- Eco and Agri tourism within the Southern Highlands is a growing industry and significant investment has been made not only by businesses, but also the local Council in promoting the NSW Southern Highlands as a premium tourism destination.
- Given recent experience in the NSW Hunter Valley there is no doubt that the establishment of a coal mine, and it's above ground workings, will have a significant and detrimental effect on the tourism industry within this area.
- The NSW Southern Highlands is a well-known and extremely popular wedding destination – there are a number of businesses that rely on the income from this industry. This also includes the suppliers to those businesses, caterers, florists, food & beverage suppliers, photographers, wedding celebrants, accommodation providers et al.
- The local hoteliers are also heavily reliant on the incoming visitors and tourists, as are the innumerable coffee shops, local produce suppliers and the like.

Visual Amenity

- HC have been extraordinarily vocal with regard to visual amenity – of note is their proud claim that they have done extensive planting to provide visual screening to hide the above ground workings.
- The areas where they have done plantings are very familiar to me as they are roads that I travel many times a week – while I acknowledge that they have done quite significant

planting it is doubtful that these will grow to any effective extent within the lifetime of the mine.

- As no doubt many have noted the above ground workings are also in extremely close proximity to the village of Berrima – a notable tourist destination within the Southern Highlands. Berrima is the only intact Georgian village left in existence, and there are a number of heritage properties not only within Berrima but also in the surrounding villages. Given the known experience of areas like the Hunter Valley it is not only probable, but almost certainly definite that the visual amenity of these areas will be detrimentally affected by the proposed mine.
- HC have gone to a significant effort to purchase a number of properties in the area (some \$40 million worth it is estimated) – lovely that they will be housing the above ground workings of the mine on their own property – it's just a pity that quite a number of the properties were sold by the vendors under the false assumption that they were selling to agricultural or pastoral enterprises. All of which were subsequently discovered to be fronts for HC.

Fit & Proper

- HC is a fully owned subsidiary of Posco Daewoo (PD).
- PD has a truly appalling track record in terms of its reputation as a good corporate citizen.
- The CEO of PD has recently been linked to corruption in Korea.
- PD and/or its subsidiaries:
 - o has been cited by the United Nations for their treatment of landowners in Odisha, India – serious human rights abuse including the attempted forced eviction of **22,000** itinerant betel leaf farmers;
 - o has been linked to the use of forced and child labour in Uzbekistan;
 - o is responsible for the illegal destruction of pristine rainforest in West Papua for palm oil plantations by PT. Bio Inti Agrindo (a Posco subsidiary);
 - o has been involved in a number of cases of bid rigging in South Korea (their construction arm Posco E&C) with some resulting in convictions and fines; and
 - o has been cited as being involved in bribery resulting in the award of construction contracts in Vietnam.

Posco Daewoo, and any company even remotely associated with them, are not fit & proper persons and as such should never be granted a licence to operate their proposed mine.

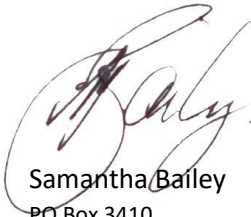
Summary

In summary, I would like to reiterate that I am completely opposed to approval for HC's proposed mine being given. I have given up a significant amount of my personal time to fighting this proposed mine. This has taken a considerable personal toll on me, having also undergone chemotherapy and multiple major surgeries for breast cancer during this time, and also acting as the primary carer for a sibling also undergoing cancer treatment prior to my own diagnosis. This is testament to my strong belief that the approval of this mine would have irrevocable and catastrophic consequences for the entire NSW Southern Highlands, and the Sydney water catchment area.

There are a large number of people who have been opposing this mine for a seriously long time – it has been dragging on for over 6 years. For a select few, this has turned into more than a full time job – people have literally put their lives and their businesses on hold to fight this. The personal toll has been enormous, and the financial toll crippling for some.

The government needs to do the right thing and not only oppose this proposed mine but cancel any and all licences, exploration or otherwise, and let this community get on with their lives without this, or any future mine, hanging over their heads.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S. Bailey', is written over a circular stamp or seal that is partially visible and mostly obscured by the signature.

Samantha Bailey
PO Box 3410
Exeter NSW 2579

Attachments: Letter in response to Hume Coal re Bore Impact