

This is a submission to the Hume Coal Project EIS. SSD 7272

I object to this project and recommend that it be rejected.

My objections to this project are manifold and a number of these are outlined below:

WATER

The risk that this project poses for the water supply of Berrima and surroundings is frightening, in fact dire. If this project is approved, clean and adequate water supply to both homes and businesses will be greatly impacted. The perforation of the aquifer will have extreme consequences on supply and it will have a disastrous and irreversible impact on industries such as wineries, orchards and farms in the region. The 91 bores on 71 properties will be greatly affected by the water drawdown. The impact on the bores will remain for between 36 to 65 years AFTER the mining ceases and in fact it is anticipated that some bores will never recover. Hume Coal proposes that the water used to wash the coal and the residual materials will be pumped back underground into the mine voids. This has the potential to impact negatively on the water supply over a great area. As a consequence, this destruction of the aquifer will have a flow on effect on the water supply for Sydney rendering it unreliable and impure.

POLLUTION

The proposed treatment and release into Oldbury Creek of surplus onsite mining water is unacceptable.

Limited mention is made in the EIS of the impact of noise on the township of Berrima. There was a noise reading taken in New Berrima of 75dB, however this was taken close to the Boral Cement works and it does NOT reflect what the potential noise impact will be on the villages of Medway and Berrima.

The potential of pollution by coal dust and diesel emissions is great. These will have a detrimental effect on the air quality for the residents of Berrima, New Berrima, Medway, Bowral, Burradoo and Moss Vale particularly in westerly wind conditions.

A further undesirable impact on the environment was the removal of 64 paddock trees and 17 dead trees which provided habitat for threatened species.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The increase in noise that Hume Coal admits will occur during the construction phase will cause widespread psychological distress and feelings of disempowerment. These negative feelings will result in an increase of anxiety and depression. In turn this could lead to an increase in domestic violence and other adverse effects on the social fabrics of the affected townships.

Potential health impacts not mentioned in the Hume Coal EIS are:

- Potential risk of death and injury to the miners.
- Potential increase in road and rail accidents caused by the increase in traffic and rail movements.
- Potential for irreversible aquifer contamination.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

During the life of the proposed mine, what parameters will dictate the location of ventilation shafts with respect to safe distances from residential communities?

During the life of the proposed mine, can Hume Coal guarantee that coal will NOT be transported by road?

Given the unique geology of Hawkesbury sandstone, how can the operation of the mine proceed safely without impact on land that has not had exploratory bores drilled?

I strongly urge the NSW State Government to reject this project

Dr Gerard Brophy