

30 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 the joint owner, together with my sister Samantha Bailey, of a residence in Sutton Forest located within the lease area for the Hume Coal Project. I am strongly and unequivocally opposed to the proposed mine.

There are a number of reasons why I do not believe approval should be given to Hume Coal's (HC) proposed mine which include but are not limited to:

***Community Engagement & Social Engagement***

- HC have made a cursory attempt at community engagement. They have done merely what they are required to do under the most minimal possible interpretation of the term.
- When they have held information briefings they have consistently shut down the question and answer part as soon as questions are raised that they clearly do not wish to answer.
- They have labelled open days erroneously as 'information sessions' – setting up what amounts to stands with information available is not the same as imparting information that the community needs to know, or should be made aware of.
- HC are consistently denigrating in their attitude towards anyone who opposes the mine. They label anyone who is not supportive of the mine as 'activists' – continuously – on their Facebook page. This is in marked contrast to other groups which oppose the mine who strive to keep activity on their pages respectful of all at all times.
- HC appear to have a very low opinion as to the collective intelligence of the community – regularly posting inane comments on their Facebook page which imply that anyone opposing mines shouldn't be availing themselves of the luxuries of life such as motor vehicles, toasters, BBQ's, yachts, and of course, light & power.
- HC appear to have no understanding of the serious consequences of climate change, and the contribution that the continual use of fossil fuels makes to this globally – an issue that should be of great concern to us all.
- HC have twice posted to their page a photograph of my sister's vehicle, displaying a 'Coal Free Southern Highlands' bumper sticker, without her knowledge or permission, something I have pointed out to them on their Facebook page to which they have not deigned to respond.
- My sister has been working with Coal Free Southern Highlands (CFSH) in a voluntary, unpaid, capacity for a number of years. She and others have put in a significant effort into the long ongoing campaign against this mine – something which has taken a great personal toll as she is also holding down an incredibly demanding full time job.

- Even when acting as my carer during my cancer treatment, and when undergoing her own cancer treatment the following year, this campaign remained a priority for her – under very difficult personal circumstances.

### **Groundwater**

- HC have advised us that the bore on our 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 our 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 our property.
- We have no confidence whatsoever in the figures provided by HC in respect of the impact to our 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).
- My sister has attempted to engage with HC to obtain specifics of their groundwater model – something they have consistently refused to provide to anyone in the community, as recently as today (please refer to the email attached in which they deny our latest request).
- My sister and I also own 2 horses currently agisted within the area that will be affected by the proposed mine, their water is provided by way of a groundwater fed dam, and we have major concerns about the potential impact that contaminated groundwater could have on them, let alone what may happen to water which forms part of the Sydney water catchment area for human consumption.

### **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.
- 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.
- I am personally aware of many whose businesses are highly dependent on the wedding industry – hairdressers, florists, caterers, hospitality wait staff, venue owners and operators to name a few – their businesses are in jeopardy should this industry be decimated as a result of the proposed mine.

### **Summary**

As a professional working in the medical area I have deep and serious concerns with regard to what will happen in the Southern Highlands should this mine be given approval. On these grounds alone, this mine should never be approved.

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. I have witnessed the toll this has taken on those who have continued to campaign against this mine – including depression, increased alcohol dependence, stress, anxiety – this is not something that should be underestimated when reviewing the proposal.

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,

Peta Bailey  
PO Box 3410  
Exeter NSW 2579

### **Attachments:**

- Letter in response to Hume Coal re Bore Impact; and
- Subsequent response from Hume Coal