

Submission on :

Hume Coals EIS – Berrima Rail Project 7171 and Hume Coal Project 7171

Personal Private Submission by:

Holly Campbell of Mittagong

(former Wingecarribee Shire Councillor 2012-2016 and current Vice Chair Southern Highlands Chamber of Commerce & Industry) 30th June 2017

Summary of Submission:

I am entirely opposed to both the Berrima Rail Project (7171) and the Hume Coal Project (7172) as per the following submission.

I, Holly Campbell of Mittagong NSW, strongly oppose POSCO's EIS made by their wholly owned subsidiary Hume Coal on the following grounds.

I was elected to Wingecarribee Shire Council in 2012 and have seen consistently, since election, the community's overwhelming concern at this proposed mine. As a councillor I engaged with a broad range of people from farmers to the management of manufacturing and mining associated industries such as Joy Global, to retailers and viticulturists, to those engaged in various equine pursuits from breeding to sporting activities, to mothers raising young families and pensioners who have either lived here all their lives – some with generational lineage – to those who moved here in recent times. I met with people who are wealthy to those who are on the very fringes of our community, to Indigenous leaders and historians, retailers and recreationists, to those who've discovered our koala populations and those raise alpaca. I've met with professionals to school children, to community volunteers to real estate agents, to environmentalists and those who are on the other side of all environmental debates. I have a wide experience of who lives here and why. During my time on council I was Chair of Economic Development and Tourism, Deputy Chair of Arts & Culture, Chair of Council Facilities and of course sat on required committees of council such as Finance. I was responsible for bringing to council's attention the need for a full time Economic Development Manager and drove through council approval to have the role filled because I recognised in very short time the enormous potential of our shire and where our future - as a shire - lay.

It was not in mining coal.

It is still not in mining coal.

It will never be in mining coal.

It is where our strengths lie.

And our strengths are many and quite simply outstanding, undeniable and must be taken into account by the NSW Government's various departments, Ministers, Cabinet and Premier when considering Hume Coal's two projects. Our strengths include:

- Delivering one of the most scenically beautiful rural destinations – to live in, to visit - in NSW
- Retaining considerable rural acreage right on Sydney's doorstep which has enormous potential to become Sydney's 'Food Bowl' utilizing advances in agriculture, servicing the demand for fresh produce, organic produce, sustainably grown produce
- Delivering to NSW Govt a strong tourism economy showcased within a rural setting with increasing scope to improve that economy and deliver even more especially now that:
 - Motorways connecting and exiting Sydney make travel to the Highlands easy – it's an easier drive for many than getting to Bondi or Palm Beach or the Blue Mountains

- International flights are landing at Canberra, just an easy 2hr drive away and
- Cruise ships are docking at Port Kembla, just a 45 minute drive away
- Council's tourism department has in the last 4-6 years put in an enormous effort – in line with NSW Gov directives – grown our local tourism industry, won numerous awards and is recognized by Destination NSW as a tourism leader delivering destination economy growth
- Agri-tourism has become a trend that shows no sign of slowing and this shire, with its farms, scenic beauty and 1.5hr easy proximity to Sydney metro, is more able - perhaps than any other shire in the state - to deliver an exceptional array of 'destination events, venues, experiences' of high calibre appealing to every demographic – because we are rural, clean, scenically pristine, safe, quaint, affordable, and seen by many as a mix between quintessential 'English countryside mixed with Authentic Australian Bush' – a rare combination due to our climate
- Delivering a 'lifestyle choice' of exceptional quality which includes:
 - Exceptional schools
 - Excellent health and medical services
 - Strong communities
 - Lower housing prices (compared to Sydney)
 - Clean and healthy environment (air, water, noise)
- Situated at the heart of the 'Golden Triangle' the Southern Highlands is geographically centered between Sydney, the Illawarra and Canberra
- Developing 'wedding industry' which has grown to \$33million p/a as of 2015 in just a few years and has potential to grow much further in our pristine, picturesque rural environment
- Developing wine and boutique brewing industry (unlike the Hunter Valley, our wine industry is relatively young and needs fostering and encouragement to continue it's growth trend and deliver fine produce for national and international consumption/export)
- Potential for clean industry and R&D as we are close to Sydney/Canberra/Illawarra from a travel perspective and have the space – including the Moss Vale Enterprise Zone – to accommodate IT, bio-tech, healthcare, clean energy (eg solar farms) research and delivery
- Delivering a desirable location for retirees which frees up housing in Sydney as they vacate to live in the Southern Highlands. Our aging population is only going to increase in the next 50 years. The Southern Highlands is much closer and more accessible to Sydney than other 'non metro' choices and our infrastructure serves retirees well. It could always be better but it is good now. For families and friends wanting to visit retirees living here, it's a short journey. For retirees travelling to Sydney for health or recreational purposes, it's a short and relatively easy journey.
- It is regarded as a 'safe' place to live, regarded as an ideal place to raise families.
- Delivers water to Sydney's Water Catchment and therefore, supplies Sydney with clean, quality water.

1. Mining history of Shire is NO validation for new coal mine at Berrima/Sutton Forest in 21st Century :

While it may be historical fact that coal deposits in the Southern Highland have been reported to government since 1853, it is also well documented that most closed before WWII and of those few that lingered on, none remain today.

The following is extracted from a letter sent to the Southern Highland News by Graham Pryor, Secretary Mineral Heritage Subcommittee of the Illawarra Branch of the AusIMM which outlines the brief and very limited mining carried out in the Southern Highlands since 1867:

Medway

- The first colliery in the Southern Highlands was the Cataract Mine which opened in 1867 It closed in the early 1870's, re-opened in 1874 and closed again in the late 1870's.
- Great Southern Colliery opened in 1881 and closed in 1896.
- Loch Catherine Colliery opened in 1923 and produced until 1929. The colliery reopened in 1964 and amalgamated with Berrima Colliery in 1990.
- Medway Colliery opened in 1924. It was purchased by Southern Portland Cement Ltd in 1926 and renamed Berrima Colliery. It served the Berrima Cement Works until the colliery closed in 2013.

Bundanoon

- Rock Roof Colliery opened in 1869 and was renamed Erith Colliery in 1871. It closed in 1896.
- Ringwood Colliery opened in 1884 and closed in 1885. After lying idle for a decade the colliery reopened in 1896 and was renamed Collins Colliery. The colliery ceased production in 1912. It reopened in 1923 as the Federal Colliery and closed again in 1924.

Mittagong

- Black Bob's Colliery was an early source of coal for the Fitzroy Iron Works in the 1870s. It closed in 1889 then reopened in 1947 as Southern Colliery which operated successfully until it closed in 1968.
- Mittagong Colliery opened in 1883. It was renamed Box Vale Colliery in 1890 and closed in 1896. South Main Colliery at Mittagong opened in 1951 and closed in 1955.
- Two mines near Mittagong mined the only known deposit of anthracitic coal in Australia. Mount Waratah Colliery opened in 1957 and closed in 1971 and Mount Alexander Colliery opened in 1956 and closed in 1972.

Joadja Creek

- The vast majority of the collieries in the Southern Highlands mined the Wongawilli Seam.
- An exception was the Joadja Creek oil shale mine which mined the American Creek Seam because of the presence of torbanite. Mining commenced in 1873 and ceased in 1903.

Looking at this historical evidence of mining in the shire, one must take into account the times these mines operated in:

- They were largely pioneering days when populations in the shire were sparse
- TOURISM and/or AGRI-TOURISM and the WEDDING INDUSTRY were unheard of as 'industries' or 'economies' in the shire to be fostered, protected and developed.

Prior to approximately the 1980's the Southern Highlands was regarded and recognised as a rural part of NSW, a pleasant place to farm, live, or to retire to – never has it been regarded as a centre of mining.

The Southern Highlands has never been regarded by governments past or current a 'mining community' and no town or village in the Southern Highlands has ever been referred to as a 'mining town/village' or had its sole income derived from mining. Particularly not historic Berrima or Sutton Forest.

Berrima, the village which will suffer the most from the mine's proximity is today, in the 21st Century, recognised as the most intact Georgian village on the Australian mainland. It is regarded as the Southern Highlands 'jewel in the tourist crown' with many historic buildings while the village as a whole is listed on the Register of the National Estate.

In June 2016, Wingecarribee Shire Council accepted a recommendation to nominate Berrima for the State Heritage Register which would further boost its reputation as a visitor economy drawcard, in line with NSW State Government's push for regional New South Wales to increase employment opportunities, facilitate new business and grow regional visitor economies.

This is a mine owned by and producing for a foreign company that will disrupt one of the most magical villages in Australia - a village 100% reliant on tourism, that people flock to because it's pristine, quiet, a step back in time, largely unspoiled. This is a mine that will, no matter what you argue, send greasy black coal dust particles across not just Berrima township, but to farms, towns and villages beyond and around with alpaca and cattle, viticulture, bloodstock, agricultural produce, pet kennels, home-stays, paddock-to-plate fare and wedding venues (pity the bride on a windy day!)... and beyond. Our burgeoning wedding industry brought \$33M to our economy in 2015. How far does a dust particle travel? For me this is not about being anti-mining, this is about being responsible to the shire as a whole, its existing businesses and industries, its growing businesses and industries, its future and potential businesses and industries, to its communities and their health and wellbeing.

How can the NSW Government consider putting at risk so many for the interest of so few? Putting aside the interests and futures of Australian local businesses – farmers, tourism operators, sole traders – for the sake of a single foreign steel giant?

Berrima Village today relies on tourism and recreational businesses. Its retail is tourism oriented. Its food / beverage / hospitality industry is tourism oriented. One business, Berrima Diesel which has allegedly won a contract with Hume Coal to service their diesel vehicles, could be considered the only real non-tourism business in Berrima and it is not in the village centre but across the bridge on the outskirts of the township. This particular business does not need Hume Coal to survive or thrive. It was well proven during my time on council in the 2012-2016 term that Berrima Diesel is a highly successful business with a national and even international clientele. A visit to Berrima Diesel's websites (<https://www.berrimadiesel.com/> and <http://www.diesel.asia/>) will undoubtedly confirm to the Planning Department's that this business is a stand-alone business,

reliant on IP and the manufacture and installation of a chip. stark contrast, all other businesses in Berrima rely almost entirely on tourism to survive.

To look back at the list of mines that have opened and closed in the shire demonstrates one thing over all else: mining has never been particularly widely or successfully practised in this shire. The lease/s that POSCO bought from Anglo American I understand to have existed since the late 1950's. Anglo-American recognised the hydro-geological impediments to making this mine a commercially viable enterprise and so when the opportunity came along to 'flick' a poor investment, they 'bundled' what is known as the Hume Coal project into a bunch of mines they owned in Queensland and told POSCO that in effect, the deal was the whole bundle or nothing. So Korea's largest and the world's fourth largest steel manufacturer were in effect forced to pick up a very ordinary mining opportunity that historic owners had never bothered with because, in mining industry terms, it was neither profitable nor easy. In fact the majority of mines in this shire opened and closed quickly with short life spans.

Interestingly our largest industry sector is manufacturing and with technology advances, our shire is ideally placed to attract 'clean manufacturing industries'. Our other big industries are health care, tourism and agriculture, the latter enduring from the start of this shire to the present day. What has grown steadily in this shire and shows even greater promise in the 21st century as 'lifestyle choices and trends' and technology drive demographic changes, are:

- agri-tourism
- agri-viti-horticulture and new solutions to 'food bowl' sourcing
- destination and 'experiential' tourism
- weddings
- residential living for young families as well as retirees escaping Sydney housing prices and/or seeking a better 'environment' to raise families or to live in as one ages and health concerns become significant
- health related industries
- education/training/R&D
- equine industries

2. Once a Poor, Commercially Unviable Mine, Always a Poor, Commercially Unviable Mine

My understanding is that Hume Coal have not fully complied with the Government's requirements in that they have failed to put forward full information relating to the commercial viability of this mining project. Why? Because, quite simply this mine has always been a poor, unviable mine and will always be so. In terms of mines and mine profitability and State Significance, this mine does not stack up. This is a small mine, relying on an unproven method of extraction, yielding an average-grade mix of thermal and metallurgical coal and fairly insignificant revenue to the State and that will, by Hume's own admission threaten water security across many properties rendering them no longer able to sustain themselves for decades as they have to date This is a mine that Anglo-American very cleverly bundled like a bad CDO into their sale of better projects in Queensland – they were happy to be rid of it, knowing it to be a poor investment. This is a mine who's EIS fails to include essential financial data claiming commercial in confidence for the simple reason they know this mine is in mining terms, not worth the effort or the cost. This mine, given the extraction method, will yield only about 33% of it's resource of which the split between metallurgical and thermal coal is around 55-45%, so all round this is fairly pitiful. The yield to NSW Government in revenue is not even significant.

3. Potential Threat of Loss of 93 Water Bores on Farms in the Area Affected by Hume Coal's operations – 'City versus Farmer Thinking, Or Not Thinking Outside One's Own Box'

Without water, all life dies. It's pretty simple. Any farmer will tell you that. Farmers the world over do it tough and Australian farmers do it tougher than most in a country where extremes reach absurd levels. Drought, fire, flood – we see them all across Australia and yes, in this shire.

However those who live in 'cities' have no concept of what the life of a farmer entails and just how critical water – clean, available, reliable, consistent water – actually is to the existence and viability of the farm. And what, if that farm fails, it means to the food on their plate or fabric on their back. When farmer's cry out about potential threats to their bores, how critical their water supply is, the 'city' just does not get it.

Curiously the dwellers in Bowral, Moss Vale and Mittagong are almost 'city' in their thinking. Recently the Southern Highlands Business Chamber (SHCCI) had a members social evening and they were asked by a member of the board – randomly and unofficially – what 'impact' the mine would have on their business. There were about 25 members present and those present were in retail, hospitality, property development, creative and IT industries and general services. None of them were farmers with functioning bores in the areas covered by Hume Coal's leases. None. So when they answered that the

mine probably would not affect their business directly they were right. But in true 'city thinking' they thought only of themselves and not the bigger picture. They were not asked to think about the food on their plate, the milk on their cereal or the wool in their pullover.

And this is where the conversation often fails because there are more votes in 'the city' than will ever be 'from the farm'. The NSW Government and its relevant departments, when viewing the EIS of Hume Coal, will see that a staggering 93 bores could be lost due to the impact of Hume Coal's operations. Those bores represent water - water to stock, water to crop, water to farmers families. No we are not talking 'town water' which Hume Coal has cleverly plastered on their website because as everyone knows our 'town water' in the shire comes from council's reservoirs, not farmers bores. Hume Coal has said it will 'make good' but if a bore dries up in the middle of summer, let's even say a drought, how fast will trucked water get there to save the stock. And will it come in every day. And how much will the water cost Hume Coal, which only adds to the deficit side of the 'mines commercial viability' story, surely.

No farmer can afford to lose his bore. Not one bore. If he does, he cannot drill another because the legislation will prevent it because there will be a coal mine underneath him/his farm and so prevent him – legally prevent him – from drilling a bore on his property to replace his lost bore.

Is that right?

Is that fair?

Is that endangering the farmer's right to his business?

Could that be termed restrictive trade practice?

Can the farmer sue?

He could but really we all know he hasn't got the financial resources of a government or the fourth largest steel producer in the world.

Instead this farmer will lose his right to farm his own farm; will potentially lose his livelihood; will potentially lose his farm; will potentially suffer mental stress which can extend to physical and emotional harm. How many farmers have committed suicide in Australia because the stress – financial, marital, physical, mental – has become too much?

Is the NSW Government prepared to face the farmers of the Southern Highlands who lose their bores and say a Korean steel producer's mine has more rights than they, the Australian citizens who own and work their Australian farms?

4. Sydney Water Supply Threatened

Sydney has almost run out of water in my lifetime. When I lived in Sydney water restrictions during summer were common – no watering of gardens or washing of cars etc.

Sydney's population is growing, ergo it's water consumption is growing and will only continue to increase.

If Sydney Water is to be safeguarded then surely the sources of its water must be safeguarded. Hume Coal's areas of operation do indeed fall within the area marked as 'catchment area' for Sydney Water.

5. Tourism - What We Have Built Up, What We Could Develop Further... a Strong, Viable Visitor Economy

The shire's greater history is based in agriculture, historically dairy, beef and sheep. Farms that dotted the shire were much bigger than they are today. Tax changes, milk deregulation, technology, baby boomer's health and lifestyle trends, property prices and more have played their part in shaping this shire and the environs of Sutton Forest and Berrima in particular – not mining. In the 1990's in particular with tax changes came the breakup of larger properties into 100acre lots and these were bought up largely by those looking to escape Sydney on weekends.

Berrima is a tourism destination. Undeniably. Yet at its back door it is threatened by underground blasting and a massive stockpile almost a kilometre long and many stories high close to Berrima Village. South of Berrima in fact. And the prevailing

winds in the Southern Highlands are southerlies so Berrima will be continually coated in fine black greasy dust particles. This, across a village that contains a large amount of historic sandstone buildings.

Hume Coal argues that the land where they will be operational is not good farming land and has little tourism associated with it. They clearly can't count the number of B&B's, Farm and Home Stays, Paddock to Plate and Cellar Door businesses that are in the area. But more significantly, the land covered by Hume Coal's leases could in fact be further developed to increase agriculture, horticulture, viticulture and tourism related enterprises if the zoning permitted it. Wingecarribee Shire Council is partially at fault for not allowing a more innovative LEP to exist and so encourage businesses that have a basis in rural enterprises. So should the NSW Government see the value in preserving this land from mining, then it should also encourage the local council to allow the farms to run agri-tourism enterprises and rework the WLEP to facilitate tourism related businesses.

The Southern Highlands potential for tourism is enormous. Revenue locally and for the government from tourism is a far cleaner, far more attractive industry well suited to the landscape and environment of the Southern Highlands than mining. Enormous efforts have been made by individuals in the area to build businesses catering to tourism and the visitor economy. To have a shire so close to Sydney that offers such diversity of attractions is a potential money maker for any government.

Hume Coal says that mining and tourism can co-exist citing the Hunter Valley. When one looks at the locations of the majority of coal mining versus the majority of tourism in the Hunter Valley, they are in different areas. Interestingly the Hunter Valley Wine Country Destination Management Plan – Part 2 Strategic Actions on Page 10 says:

“However, another challenge for the destination is protecting the key asset that drives visitation to the region – the vineyards and the rural nature of the destination.... Any future land uses must not cause any land use conflicts with an existing vineyard or tourist activity”

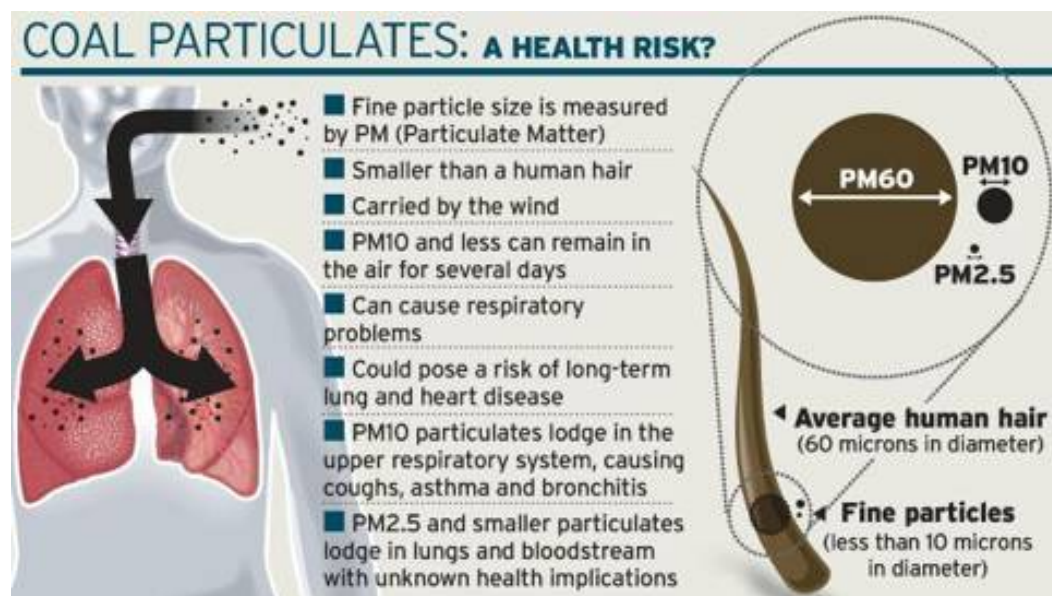
Berrima has no chemist, no newsagent, no grocer or butcher, no dry-cleaner or bank, no shopping mall or big brands. It has tourist accommodation, retail that is entirely 'boutique' aimed at tourist markets, cafes and restaurants, galleries and Australia's oldest continually licensed pub.

6. Health

Wherever coal is being extracted from the earth, there is a population with increased health problems caused by circulating coal dust, diesel emissions and water pollution.

In coal mining communities in Australia laundry can be blackened with coal dust and children get more allergies and asthma. Photo: File

Underground mining, as is proposed in the Southern Highlands, would result in up to 400,000 tonne stockpiles of coal above ground, and transported to a rail line along Medway Road, via Berrima, then Moss Vale and Robertson.



Massive amounts of coal dust are released in the loading and transportation process. In a strong wind, nothing stops coal dust spreading through the air kilometres away and remaining in the air for days. The World Health Organisation says: "There is no such thing as a safe threshold for coal dust".

When fine particles of coal dust that are 10 times smaller than pollens are breathed in, people get more asthma, allergies and respiratory disease. In the tiny particles of coal dust are heavy metals at low concentrations, which can cause neurological problems.

Increased diesel emissions from mining equipment cause irritation to the nose, throat, lungs, causing acute allergies, coughs, colds and headaches. Both coal dust and diesel fumes cause lung cancer.

Health effects of water pollution are more difficult to measure. Around 100 bores in the Southern Highlands would be affected if the chemical containing slurry waste from washing the coal was pumped below ground into pristine aquifers, which are the water supply for many food producers in the area.

The water is used on crops and for livestock to drink, increasing the long term chemical and heavy metal content of produce. Coal workers are monitored for, but do not escape chronic heart and lung disease. The community is not monitored, nor protected from coal dust, diesel emissions or water pollution.

In coal mining communities in Australia and around the world, here's what it looks like:

- Laundry is blackened with coal dust
- Children get more allergies and asthma
- Respiratory illness increases throughout the community
- More children develop learning difficulties and autism from the increased heavy metal load
- Coal dust leaches galvanised roofs and contaminates water tanks

Farming families start reporting strange symptoms and illnesses in themselves and their animals, caused by water contamination. There is no nice picture, nor healthy ending for coal mining communities. The internet is awash with David and Goliath stories of communities fighting for compensation for the health damage done by coal.

In Summary:

I'd like Premier Berejiklian, our local MPs, Ministers Roberts, Barilaro, Blair, Harwin, Upton and Marshall, Greig Duncan and those who are considering or favour Hume Coal to pause and consider the following.

Reports about the effects on communities in Australia when 'mining moves in' include some fairly sobering issues : the incursion of bike gangs who peddle illegal drugs (documented in the London Times about Australian bike gangs and Australian mining towns); rises in prostitution; rises in underage sex; rises in pregnancies and STD's among young girls. These things may sound alarmist but they are threats to our community along with:

1. **damage to local infrastructure via increased high and heavy traffic which council cannot afford to repair/maintain**
2. **interrupted rail services and/or increased rail usage resulting in transport impact, air and noise pollution**
3. **soaring property and rental prices;**
4. **negative impacts on health and existing livelihoods;**
5. **community divisions and changing social dynamics;**
6. **two-speed economy = sudden unemployment and local business struggling to recalibrate post mining.**

Hume Coal never quite pins down how many jobs will be filled by local residents – those who have established residency that is provable. 300 full-time mine jobs does not mean the same as 300 locals employed full time on the mine because the truth is, not all jobs will be filled by locals. Also, as I am well acquainted with mining companies and their 'pr spin', not all jobs will necessarily be here anyhow as mining often gives employment figures that include offices and head offices located elsewhere. It's an open secret that the 'employing locals within a 45min drive' requirement is no assurance as in Tahmoor where many workers live outside the 45min catchment (eg the Illawarra) but use a mate's address that falls within the catchment area to get around the red tape.

Lastly, the 75 points in WSC's submission are all strong points, all of which I wholeheartedly, as a resident of this shire, support.

I urge the NSW Government to reject this poor project and instead support the people of this shire by supporting the industries and communities that already exist and the strong future that this shire can build for itself and for NSW economy if the Hume Coal Project and the Berrima Rail Project are refused.

Yours sincerely

Holly Campbell, Mittagong, NSW.