



Attn: Executive Director, Resource Assessments Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

27 JUN 2017
Scanning Room

This is a sub mission to the Hume Rail Project EIS SSD7171

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

I am a resident/owner of a house in Berrima township, inside the designated historic area. If this project goes ahead, the social and economic impact on this area will be out of all proportion to any imagined gains to NSW, despite any assurances to the contrary by smooth talking company representatives.

My major concerns with the rail aspects of this project are:

Pollution

Visual Pollution. The proposed coal stockpile, loader and associated large rail loading loop and line to the east are hard to visualise for most people and they don't worry about it until it's too late. The fact is it will be very ugly and very visible to anyone passing on the Hume Highway as it's right next to the highway and the rail is proposed to run under it. It will be a very large eyesore sitting in what is now farming grazing land like the rest of the surrounding area, further degrading public perception of the Highlands area.

Aural. Coal loaders and trains are not quiet, despite Hume smooth assurances. The proposed measures cited by Posco/Hume that they say will make them quiet are risible. A 2km conveyor belt that you won't hear? A bucket loader that makes no noise? The worlds quietest rolling stock? Don't make me laugh. The proposed mining volume will require 8 long trains or so per day, which in turn will require significant night operations with the loading and trains running all hours near the Southern Highlands towns. This operation necessarily will be skewed to night time due to the difficulties threading east-west trains across the overworked north-south coastal rail lines.

The noise impact will be significant, shattering the peace the area is known for. [Did I mention the tourists staying away, the economy tanking and the property values falling?] In Berrima, we can on occasion, hear the few trains that operate to the New Berrima Boral plant but their frequency is tolerable and they are not a large operation. The proposed rail operation will introduce rail noise to areas that currently have nil, for instance the eastern Southern Highlands area.

Light. As noted above, rail operations necessarily will be skewed to night operations due to the difficulties of scheduling trains across the norther-south coastal rail lines. This will require significant floodlighting of the stockpile and loading area, with a likely constant, industrial 'halo' across the loading area, visible for many km.

Dust. As well as the obvious pollution posed to the local area by dust being blown from the stockpiles by the high winds regularly experienced in this area (look at the trees sloping uphill outside my place), such dust will be increased significantly in times of rail loader operation.

Warren Buffet did a study of losses in train transit of coal in operations in which he has an interest. The figure was 6%. 6% of the proposed tonnages is a lot of coal dust across the highlands. Even if the journey is not as long as Warren's, the effect is the same: his wagons were covered n the same way Posco/Hume proposed or theirs.

Coal dust will be spread from the mine to the sea, with attendant likely increases in medical issues from the dust an diesel fumes. This proposal goes against all the 'clean and green' initiatives and focus of the local and state governments.

...lines and vehicles don't mix, hence the need for level crossings or bridges over the rail. Bridges obviously will be cost-prohibitive. The EIS itself identifies this rail project would introduce significant delays to local traffic at 17 (trust me only 17) level crossings, including across major roads across the region. Such delays do not exist now (noting that a bridge is to be built on the Moss Vale-Berrima road over the one crossing on the Boral line). The introduction of such delays into the area, with consequent significant impact on commerce and the emergency services, is not acceptable. Emergency response times in the area are bad enough without building in further delay.

Everything that threatens Berrima comes for the southwest: usually severe storms, winds and bushfires. I do not wish to add coal dust, train noise and light pollution.

I ask the Government to reject this project

