

Executive Director,

Resource Assessments,

Department of Planning and Environment

Box 39 GPO

Sydney 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Posco/ Hume Coal EIS No. SSD 7171 and 7172

I would like to raise a number of concerns I have in regard to the proposed coal mine as put forward by Posco/ Hume Coal EIS documentation.

Water –

The potential for 93 Bores to be effected by water drawdown, with this impact having the potential to continue for decades is completely unacceptable. On our property we are reliant on bore water to water our own stock, with our bore extending down 90m. While we are not within the designated area of the mine what assurance can the Company and the Government give that our water supply will not be affected and if it was affected what do Posco/ Hume Coal propose to fix the problem.

The Posco/Hume Coal EIS refers to treatment and release of surplus mining water into Oldbury Creek, during times of above average rainfall. On our property we keep rainfall records, the rainfall average for our property is 100mm a month . Feb 2017 was 115mm, March 365mm for the month, 2016, 3 months were over 100mm in a month. Do Posco/Hume Coal and the State Government really think this is an acceptable level of risk given the varying pattern of rainfall?

I hope Sydney Water has a plan for possible contamination.

I am not aware of any discussion or mention in the EIS documentation of the impact on surface water in the area of the mine. Water in the top half metre of soil is integral to tree and pasture survival and growth, if, as a consequence of mining activity the aquifer is drained, of even some of its water, this will result in a change in the water table. From my own experience of running a farming enterprise in Central Western NSW for many years through some very tough droughts, I can say once that surface moisture is lost ground covering grasses and plants die very quickly, with nothing to hold the topsoil you can do little but watch your topsoil get blown out to sea. What is the justification for placing existing agri businesses at risk of lost of livelihood for the benefit of Posco/Hume Coal.

## Pollution –

I am struggling to see how the population of the Southern Highlands will not be effected by air pollution when the prevailing winds come from a south westerly direction. Which means that not only Berrima and New Berrima villages would be covered in coal dust and dirt and diesel emissions but Bowral and Moss Vale are likely to be impacted on by this pollution as well? The World Health Organisation says: “There is no such thing as a safe threshold for coal dust” With proposed conveyers systems, as used in the Hunter region used to transport the coal from the mine to the processing area, within 1350m of Berrima and New Berrima and an overhead rail bridge for coal trains over the Old Hume Highway. How can the Company provide assurances that there will be “minimal coal dust, dust or diesel emissions” polluting the population of these villages.

Coal mining is inherently a heavy industry with a large amount of buildings of various heights, dusty dirt roads, and coal conveyer systems running back and forth across the landscape, the night sky light up as the operation will run 24 hours a day, noise pollution will be at a high level with the amount of heavy machinery operating continually. This type of industrial landscape does not fit with the existing rural landscape. This is a colonial heritage landscape how can we allow a foreign company to destroy it.

Posco/ Hume Coal have planted 5 rows of trees and shrubs along the boundary of the mine infrastructure site these trees and shrubs one presumes are going to shield this heavy industry site. As a qualified Horticulturist I can tell you five rows of native plants in a stripe of 20m is NOT going to screen anything, it is a complete waste of time and shows a lack of knowledge of the requirements by Posco/Hume Coal or a disregard for the local community. The noise pollution, visual effect on anyone arriving in the Southern Highlands from the Berrima freeway off ramp the detrimental effect of this one operation on so many existing businesses in, food, retail, accommodation and functions in the Southern Highlands cannot be underestimated.

For Hume Coal to suggest in their EIS that because Boral cement works operate in the area then it is acceptable for Hume Coal to also operate is a completely erroneous assumption on their part. Work commenced on the Cement Works in 1927 and first operations started in May 1929 the population of Sydney were 1.1 million while the Southern Highlands had less than 5,000 people. There is a huge difference from 1929 to 2017 with the population of Sydney now 5.07million, on the doorstep of the Southern Highlands. Would the Boral Cement works pass 2017 legislation, I would hope not and neither should Hume Coals mining operation.

Some of the figures quoted by Hume Coal in their EIS are misleading.

# the distance quoted from the mine site to Berrima is quoted as 3km. This could only be if they measured from the mine head to the centre of Berrima, completely ignoring the huge amount of mine related infrastructure located right up to the round- about as you come off the freeway. A quick check on Google maps shows the correct distance is 1350m from the start of their operations to the Council maps defined boundary of Berrima village. The same applies for New Berrima they have over stated the distance.

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# Hume Coal's EIS suggests that there is little tourism in the area, this is also completely incorrect. They quote accommodation as 4 motels, failing to mention the 398 accommodation properties listed on Stayz.com.au and 50 odd in the Berrima area itself.

Living in this region I can tell you, going out on the weekend is very busy, tourists are everywhere , how often I see people pulled over at the side of the road taking "selfies" of themselves with autumn leaves or the other day taking photo's with dairy cows in the back ground.

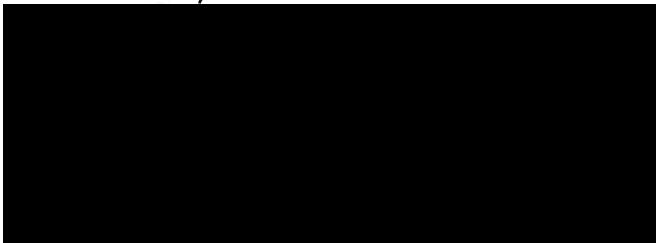
Why are they attracted to this region, by our clean, green reputation and the fast expanding food sector? Retail, accommodation, food and wine these are the big employment sectors of the future, not an environmentally damaging "dinosaur" industry like coal mining.

Over the 7 years Hume Coal have been in the district they have divided the community, many examples of this are in the Wingecarribee Council submission. Throughout this time the company has always referred to their "modelling" as if it was a fact. How they manage the water. How they will deal with the pollution. All will have minimal impact because their modelling shows it to be so. This, quite frankly is rubbish. The Posco/Hume EIS is so light on fact that it could be deemed a marketing document not a technical environmental document.

To speak with such conviction on something that has not been tried and tested in the conditions of the Southern Highlands is wrong. For any statutory authority to accept their "modelling" is equally wrong.

The Hume Coal proposal should be rejected completely and the mining licence bought back by the State Government to protect this unique region.

Yours sincerely



PS: I have made no political donations and I am happy for my name to be published.