

## Vickery extension submission

I strongly object to this mine extension. The Boggabri/ Maules Creek region has far more than enough to bear already, with the impacts on their water, living amenity and health.

I have seen the devastating results of mine after mine being approved in the Hunter Valley, with no cumulative impact being considered.

The mine is proposed by Whitehaven Coal, who have shown at Werris Creek and Maules Creek that they do not consider their impact on neighbours and local experience has been that they do not keep promises. Groundwater bores have run completely dry adjoining Whitehaven coal mines and they have refused to accept responsibility.

Whitehaven's existing approval for a mine at the site is threat enough, but this plan to more than double the volume of coal it mines every year, to 10 million tonnes, goes too far. The infrastructure proposed has larger capacity than the proposed mine, backing the fear of local farmers, born from experience, that this mine will end up far bigger.

Floodplains are meant to have unimpeded flows and yet the company proposes a new rail crossing over the Namoi River and floodplain and a new large coal handling facility to process coal from other mines.

This degree of industrialisation will make farming and living in this strategic agricultural area untenable, as already the noise and dust are above what is fair.

While locals' efforts have made Whitehaven move its pits a little further away from the Namoi River, the pits now come close to the edge of the Namoi's alluvial aquifer, the groundwater that underlies and supplies the river. The pits will induce leakage from the alluvial aquifer

and the Namoi River. In a drying climate, as water sources become even more precious, this is unconscionable.

Boggabri feel they will be overwhelmed by a fifth mine near to the town, that the scale is too large for it. As I have seen happen in way too many places, as at Wandoan, Camberwell, Ulan, Wollar, Acland, Bulga, increasingly at Denman, and even Muswellbrook, when the mine buys up the family farms, it wrecks the social and economic fabric of the town that serviced them and the district that sustained the sense of community and identity.

The smaller ones wither and disappear, the larger ones become coal corporate towns, not country towns, and local businesses go backwards, not forwards.

Seventy-six family farms around Boggabri have already been bought by Whitehaven close to Boggabri. This extension proposal will mean more rural properties bought up because of air and noise pollution, irreversibly changing Boggabri – and not for the better.

Dorthea Mackellar would well weep for what has been allowed already in her country, but you have it in your power to call a stop to this destruction of longterm resources and landuses, for short term private profit and greed. Especially for a proven irresponsible and poor neighbour like Whitehaven.

Enough is enough.

Please do not allow this area to be trashed by coal as the Hunter has been. Given global warming, coal is not an industry with a future; farming is.