

Director - Resource and Energy Assessments  
Department of Planning and Environment  
G P O BOX 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please find a copy of our Submission about Whitehaven Coal Mines proposal for extensions to Vickery mine and a new rail line which will pass close to our home and property.

This rail line will have to be 6 metres plus to go over the Kamilaroi Highway and across the flood plain and river will have to be above the flood levels and this will cause a lot of damage to both the river and flood plain especially to the fish population, koalas and bird life that exist on the river at the moment.

Thank you for taking the time to read our submission and consider our position about the influence this mine and rail line would have on our life and all our neighbor's life's as well.

Regards Carol and Eric Hannan

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Carol', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Eric Hannan', written in a cursive style.

## **Mining Impact on Carol and Eric Hannan's Horse Agistment**

### **Retirement Plans**

We object to the Vickery Extension Project as it will adversely affect our business, lifestyle and local community.

### **Background**

#### **Kurrumbede**

Beef cattle property, now part of the Whitehaven Vickery Mine Extension Project

#### **Lanreef**

Property adjoining Kurrumbede owned by Carol and Eric Hannan

We have worked and lived on Kurrumbede on the banks of the Namoi River since August 1973.

In 1995 we purchased Lanreef which adjoins Kurrumbede and put in place our retirement and lifestyle plan which was to agist horses to supplement our pension and enjoy our retirement in the peaceful surrounds of the Namoi River, we are ordinary people who have worked hard all our lives dreaming of a quiet retirement on the land doing something we love.

### **Vickery Extension Project**

After 21 years of hard work and capital invested in Lanreef, our client base has raised concerns that the mine development will adversely impact on the welfare of their horses. Failure to provide our clients horses with clean air, water and pasture will result in loss of clients and income.

The mine will affect our business through:

- 1) Mine dust and fumes, will cause breathing weaknesses within ourselves and our horses.
- 2) Reduced water, air and pasture quality which will adversely affect the growth and health of the horses we agist
- 3) Noise from empty coal wagons bunching up, lights and vibration from the rail loop, will cause stress and fear to the horses resulting in catastrophic injuries and disease.



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Retirement Plans**

For our retirement plan to succeed we need to provide our clients horses with a clean environment. New horses will be frightened by the noise and lights and more likely to run into fences and catastrophically injure themselves. If a horse is rendered unsound or put down because of a catastrophic accident, this will adversely affect our business reputational and result in considerable veterinary and liability expenses. The ongoing light and noise make horses more prone to stress diseases such as colic, which is life threatening and costs thousands to treat. A high incident rate of colic in horses would discourage people from a gisting with us and could potentially destroy our business.

On major dams and rivers noise echo's and travels further, the noise from people working at the mine site will travel and echo along the Namoi River, resulting in a greater adverse impact on our living conditions. There will be no ability to enjoy the peace and quiet we have worked so hard to achieve.

The reduction in the quality of our environment will not only negatively impact on our business, but it will also cause us considerable stress and detriment. We've enjoyed the pristine landscape for over 40 years and the Vickery Extension Project will destroy this natural heritage and change them for the worse.

We would not have purchased Lanreef in 1995 had we known about the mine development.

The reduction in air quality and mine noise will have a significant impact on our health causing series problems.


At our age and existing physical health issues it will make it difficult to start another retirement plan. This situation would leave us with no alternative other than Whitehaven relocate us to a property comparable to Lanreef, away from the impact of mining operations

Carol Hannan



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Eric Hannan



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**Mining Impact on Carol and Eric Hannan's Horse Agistment  
Retirement Plans**

**Summary**

**Under OH&S Whitehaven Management have a duty of care to provide their employees a safe working environment, with controls in place that allows employees to return home to their families at the end of shift in the same condition they started their shift.**

**Whitehaven's duty of care must also extend to those in the local community impacted by their mining operations,**

**Where Whitehaven is unable to put in place effective controls under EPA guidelines for noise, mine dust and water quality, then relocation or compensation must be a voluntary option**

**Local communities should not be put in a position of conflict with mining company's where mine operations impact on their business and health when exposed to the negative effect of mining operations**



ENVIRONMENT

# Mine blast gone wrong spews toxic cloud

By Joanne McCarthy

21 February 2014 — 11:05am

A toxic fume from a blast at the Mount Arthur mine in the Upper Hunter turned the sky bright orange and prompted demands for a much stronger response from environmental regulators.

Ammonium nitrate and fuel oil were detonated at the mine near Muswellbrook on Wednesday afternoon, causing poisonous fumes containing nitrogen dioxide to spread several kilometres from the site.



The sky above Mount Arthur mine in Muswellbrook glows orange after a blast that went wrong.

Workers in the Muswellbrook industrial area said there were no warnings about the toxic cloud, which left people with sore throats.



The blast led to an apology from BHP Billiton.

Mine workers were told yesterday that the ammonium nitrate and fuel oil were in the ground for 21 days, seven days longer than the recommended time in which blast material should be detonated.

The Environment Protection Authority is investigating the blast, including the length of time the materials were left in the ground.

Mine workers told the *Newcastle Herald* that blast material, boosters and detonators are left to "sleep" in the ground for longer than the recommended 14 days because of weather conditions.

Blasts can also be delayed for production reasons.

A blast technician from another mine told the *Herald* that ammonium nitrate and fuel oil, the most commonly used blast materials in the Hunter, were highly susceptible to water contamination.

The dark orange colour of the fume meant the whole "shot" was likely to have been contaminated, he said.

Muswellbrook mayor Martin Rush said the community would find the incident disturbing.

Cr Rush and NSW Nature Conservation Council chief executive Pepe Clarke said the botched blast, less than three months after Mount Arthur was fined for blasting incidents in October last year, showed the company had a "serious culture problem" and was "cutting corners" and risking people's health.

"Given a risk assessment requires a consideration of both likelihood and consequence, and given the probability of a wind change and the heavy consequences arising from a population exposed to fumes, the risk must have been considered to be high," Cr Rush said.

"The fact that the blast proceeded will leave people with the impression the company put profit before people.

"The community will also find it disturbing that the company has offered up excuses in circumstances where zero tolerance conditions were operating, supposedly to ensure health and safety."

Muswellbrook Council could seek independent monitoring of each blast at the mine site.

"It may be necessary for council to ask the Planning Assessment Commission to consider imposing conditions requiring an independent assessment of each blast if BHP can't ensure the community's safety," he said.

## Previous blast plume incidents

- A number of workers at Mt Thorley were hospitalised when a blast plume travelled 3 kilometers from Warkworth mine
- A similar blast plume in QLD asphyxiated workers 6 kilometers away