

Personal Submission regarding the Vickery coal mine extension at Boggabri.

Application No. SSD 7480

I'm Jim Morris at Hurlstone Park in Sydney and I object to the proposal for the following reasons:

I live in Sydney which is a heck of a lot closer to Boggabri than the domiciles of the majority of shareholders of the Whitehaven mine. I'm more likely to one day visit the Boggabri area or to live there than the shareholders. There are arguments put for employment opportunities for people whose interests in the area will last for as long as they can work there. There are much better arguments against the new mine put by local residents whose lives are bound up in lifestyles incompatible with the proposed mine.

People in the Boggabri area are occupied with drought and earning their livelihoods. The last thing they need is to be burdened with fighting for viability from a coal mining company and even for their own continued presence due their properties being mined. Open cut coal mines leave monstrous voids that filling them would make the mines unfinancial. But these are permanent legacies for the region to deal with. Surface and ground waters within them are polluted and leave remaining farms short of their bore and river water. They force the people to detour round them. More worrying than that is the proximity of pits to the Namoi's alluvial aquifer. As if water availability isn't going to be much much more important in the long term. The foolhardiness in the way we assume water quality and availability will continue into the future is madness.

Bad health outcomes Every hour an Australian dies of lung cancer, and smoking can't cop all the blame. Coal dust, blast dust and gas, and other air pollutants associated with coal mining share some responsibility. The IPCC v's denialists debate is over. The IPCC has maintained the same position and the denialists are exhausted from dancing round the facts, these days focusing on side issues as electricity prices, as if that is the only issue that matters, and as if their remedies are realistic!.

Another major problem in our society, and particularly in rural communities, is suicide. Of course each local suicide cannot be proven beyond all doubt to be caused by the stresses associated with disruptions to individuals' lives and community life from mining companies. Mining companies and their well paid employees and contractors have the resources to fight on, again and again, not accepting no for an answer.

One-sided contest Local people hardly have secrets whereas mining companies plead commercial-in-confidence rights to secrecy. It really is a one-sided contest. Residents aren't experts in these matters but they're fighting people in private industry and in government whose livelihoods are specialising in these matters.

No Redress If the mine were to go ahead contraventions like overuse of water resources, illegal blast noise and dust won't be policed. Any undertakings to not exceed allowable limits would prove hollow. There'd be no scope for redress, anymore than holding back water from a burst dam. Same story as Maules Creek.

Losers and winners So this fifth mine for the district would continue for a period, likely to close sooner than planned if the coal deposit becomes a stranded asset. Whitehaven will pack up and leave the disgusting voids; 'remediated' land will be the poorer; the community will be depleted of dozens of farming families and town families forced out by mining; poor health outcomes of the mines for residents remaining; wildlife and native plants lost; worse global warming outcomes (the current IPCC makes this undeniable); taxpayers left with all future costs incurred in getting some normality back into the area; and those who've made their fortunes from the mines, nowhere in sight of Boggabri.

Please reject the Vickery coal mine extension at Boggabri.

Regards

Jim Morris

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