

“Marlow Downs”

1356 Therribri Rd.

Boggabri NSW 2382.

Attention Stephen O'Donoghue,

I wish to object to the Vickery Extension Project (SSD 7480).

I note that on the date of 12 September 2018, the Managing Director and CEO of Whitehaven Coal - a Mr Paul Flynn, has written to advise that Whitehaven believes the Environmental Impact Statement represents an “accurate statement” of Whitehaven’s development intentions and commitments - in regard to “Environmental Management and Monitoring” for the Vickery Extension Project, to a Mr David Kitto (NSW Department of Planning Environment).

If I may, firstly share, my total dismay and disappointment after reading the Vickery Extension EIS,

1. I strongly believe that the Department of Planning and Environment should rethink in allowing this Vickery EIS to be submitted as an “accurate statement”, further to that, by letting the Vickery EIS being allowed for comments, given the inadequate transparency and the non-definitive detail with in this Vickery EIS is infuriating. Whitehaven once again has demonstrated its total arrogance to this community, as the Vickery EIS is a complete insult to this community in what has been presented.

2. And I hope, that Mr David Kitto be somewhat amused when reading this letter given his experiences in the handling of Whitehaven Maules Creek Coal Mine. To further explain - on the 15 September 2014 at the property “Blue Range” (Murphy family property) standing on top of - what is referred to in previous dialog to the Department of Planning as “Murphy’s Hill”, where the meeting of Whitehaven representatives and Department of Planning a Mr David Kitto explaining there is a 0% chance of a blast affecting your families (Murphy and Leitch families) from the Whitehaven Maules Creek Coal Mine Project. To date our family has experienced over nine blasts drifting onto our properties and homes with one blast on the 6 April 2018 resulting in my parents being taken to Boggabri Hospital with symptoms relating to blast fume gases.

Whitehaven Vickery Extension EIS has referred to a number of local Whitehaven (WHC) coal mines, Rocglen, Tarrawonga, Maules Creek Coal Mine (MCCM) for the use of sound power levels and mine water take etc, to model or demonstrate the Vickery Extension. With this representation of MCCM, I am very concerned - from firsthand knowledge, with our family properties and homes neighboring the MCCM Project. The seriousness with the mine related impacts for neighboring residence of Vickery Coal Mine and also to the very close proximity of the Boggabri Township being with in the path of the predominant wind direction.

References used in the Vickery EIS are on occasions misleading and outdated. This is critical when given the Vickery Project wishes to expand from 4.5million ton coal mine to 10million tons, railway line across a flood plain, 13MtpaROM at the Vickery Project Coal Handling and Preparation Plant,

bore field site of ten bores each pumping groundwater in Zone 4 plus the groundwater inflow into coal pit and the dewatering bores, surface water extraction from the Namoi River, closure to roads etc etc.

For this Vickery Extension EIS to have some credibility, before any further acknowledgment the following should be noted.

1. Independent Impact Study on railway movement in and around Boggabri Township and surrounding privately owned residences in and around the cumulative coal mines is required.
2. Independent Water Panel for all water takes from Vickery Coal mine and cumulative coal mines and flood assessments on mine own land, as well as privately owned land around the Vickery project is required.
3. Independent Property Market Panel for all mined owned cumulative properties and for mine affected privately owned properties compared to non-mine affected properties is required.
4. Whitehaven Vickery Extension Management Plans and Strategy's need to be made available for this community to be able ensure the level of management measures required to mitigate the impacts to Privately Owned Land, Boggabri Township and to the Environment is required.

*Noise Management Plan;

*Air Quality Management Plan;

*Blast Management Plan;

*Water Management Plan;

*Biodiversity Management Plan;

*Traffic Management Plan;

*Environmental Management Strategy;

*Flood Management Plan;

5. Clarification with the existing Vickery 4.5 tons coal mine (SSD 5000) if the approval is granted for SSD 7480 is required.

6. Vickery Coal Mine Extension to include a 15km buffer zone surrounding the Project Boundary and the railway line, by where a negotiated agreement for all privately owned land and residences be in place prior to the Project Approval being granted.

7. WHC commitments made for the Vickery Extension EIS to be held to and enforced in full by Department of Planning and Compliance and Gunnedah Shire Council as well as the Narrabri Shire Council as requirement in the project approval if approved.

By not allowing these seven requirements would be an injustice to this community. Independent findings from 1,2,3 would allow a well-informed Department of Planning and IPC. This is also consistent approach to the Independent Water Panel assigned to the Narrabri Santos Gas Project.

With more and more railway movement and the proposed Vickery railway line and the possibility of a further proposed railway line in the future to possibly link all three coal mines being WHC MCCM, Boggabri Coal Mine and the Vickery Coal mine therefore, introducing a complete rail loop needs to be fully transparent. The Vickery Extension EIS has no modeling or design to illustrate the railway line across the flood plain. The very close proximity to privately owned residences is alarming due to the intrusive noise and coal dust pollution and intrusive maintenance work on railway line and potential train derailments as this Boggabri community has experienced in the past.

Given the proposed water take, one being groundwater take not only from proposed bore field site but also with the groundwater inflow into the pit and dewatering bores. The concerns are with the added pressure on the groundwater to local stock and domestic uses and groundwater entitlement uses in Zone 4 and as well as the downstream communities.

With the WHC MCCM currently pumping Zone 11 groundwater out of the 360 meter coal pit to water roads and wash coal without water meters being documented by NSW State Water is disturbing. Why after the ABC Four Corners program is the Department of Industry's not holding the WHC MCCM groundwater user the same compliance as every other groundwater entitlement holder (irrigation farms), especially when the Water Management Act 2000 is one of the very few where a state significant project does not override this legislation. How can the WHC MCCM and the proposed Vickery Extension, purchase groundwater entitlement being classed as general security water licenses, (under the Water Management Act 2000) and when activated to offset the groundwater flowing into these coal pits, they are actually a high security take of groundwater.

The precedence set in Zone 11 (Maules Creek) when in 2007 just after the implementation of the Water Sharing Plan that was made sustainable after 74% cut in Zone 11 groundwater entitlement a section 323 closely followed by a section 324 under Water Management Act 2000 was implemented by the Minister for the reasoning of critical human need. The Minister was advised by the NSW Office of Water that my pumping of groundwater out of a 6 meter well was depleting the groundwater 15-20km upstream of gradient level 60 to 80 meters above me in height. But when it comes to the WHC MCCM that pumps the same Zone11 groundwater entitlement out of a 360 meter well (coal Pit) with no cease to pump order applied to their approval or water management plans, it just illustrates the "two sets" of rules faced when a state significant project is not subjected an informed and accurate process. This is a further reasoning for an Independent Water Panel that should be assigned immediately to the Vickery Extension Project process.

Independent Property Market Panel is crucial to the understanding of the impacts to local privately owned land surrounding the proposed Vickery Coal Mine Project. For the surrounding privately owned land and residences to subsidize this Vickery Project for its owned financial benefit and not recognizing the effects of these surrounding privately owned properties and residences being

classed as mine affected property. Property market has demonstrated the negative dollar value when properties are classed as mine affected. As a result, this becomes a very heavy financial burden for these people and families.

With the MCCM neighboring our family properties, independent property valuations taken prior to the commencement of the MCCM Project and a number of independent property valuations during the mine life, to date has resulted in a lesser capital gain as a result of our property market regarding our properties as mine affected. This has demonstrated that our properties being classed as mine affected, not only affects our growth to grow our family business, but also showing a lesser capital gain growth compared to properties outside mine affect areas. Basically our family is subsidizing the MCCM Project for WHC own financial gain. The MCCM Approval 10_0138 Schedule 4, condition 8 refers to value landowner's interest using the current market as if the mine wasn't there. This is further reasoning for an Independent Property Market Panel should be assigned to the Vickery Extension Project process.

By not allowing the content of a number of WHC Vickery Extension Management Plans to be made available for public viewing is morally wrong. To enable this process in the "EIS stages" in the initial Vickery Extension Management Plans would clarify an informed submission. In the past the MCCM has released a number of Management Plans and changes to the wording of these Management Plans happens continuously. This has resulted in a number of false and misleading information being presented to the MCCM CCC and to the Department of Planning. For example creeks and streams being listed incorrectly in the WHC MCCM Biodiversity Management Plan etc.

To not allow public viewing of Management Plans in the EIS stage run the risk of the Department of Planning signing off on a Management Plan that pollutes the perpetuity of their Project Approval conditions. For example, WHC MCCM Project Approval is required to measure mine noise by an independent acoustics person that measures mine noise one hour a month (half an hour in the evening and then half an hour at night) at certain locations around the MCCM Project, one being NM6 located at our front gate way. This has resulted in our family experiencing MCCM noise being very quiet at the time of arrival of the noise acoustic monitoring, as a result of the WHC MCCM Noise Management Plan that requires informing the mine manager of his arrival in the area. But also if the noise that is measured in the first 15min period of noise monitoring is exceeding the noise criteria set out for privately owned residences, under the MCCM Noise Management Plan the acoustic employee is required to make contact with the MCCM operator for the reasoning of mine noise exceedances. With the Department of Planning signing off on this Noise Management Plan they are condoning the MCCM noise exceedances experienced by family on an all too regular occurrence and makes a complete mockery of the noise criteria set out in the Project Approval for privately owned residences.

In having a 15km buffer zone surrounding the Vickery Coal Mine Extension and railway line will alleviate the inaccurate noise and dust modeling that is currently used in this EIS. The noise modeling is suggesting, noise received at the surrounding privately owned residences is less than the 4.5 million ton Vickery Coal Mine compared to this 10 million ton coal mine. EIS "other management

measures”, “in addition of general noise management measures” is laughable. Suggesting that all travel movement for bulldozers to travel in 1st gear, - training of relevant personal would undergo environmental training on noise control and contractors or sub-contractors whose likely to create intrusive noise will protect the very close proximity of privately owned residences or dwelling entitlements is not practical or achievable as demonstrated by the MCCM Project to date.

Dust modeling stated in this EIS does not reflect the precedence set in the MCCM Project Approval. The property noted in the Project Approval 10_0138 Schedule 3, McGregors property (279-280) “Callander” being subjected to air quality above the criteria is over 12 km South-East from the MCCM project in the opposite prevailing wind direction according to MCCM EA. To date our property “Marlow Downs” and homes are constantly being covered by dust coming from MCCM. For the Vickery Extension EIS to model dust as shown, is terribly misleading as the daily experience our family endures by neighboring the MCCM would demonstrate Vickery EIS dust modeling is false and misleading.

Vickery Extension EIS has failed to describe site operations for blasting, as a result a NO BLASTING when the wind is in the direction of privately owned land surrounding the project unless there is a written agreement with he or she allows the potential risk of the intrusive blast dust, blast gasses and blast vibrations.

Department Of Planning allowing these state significant projects to make commitments to gain an approval to mine coal outside the recommendations made by Response Subsidiary To Submissions, has resulted in WHC having no Social License in this community. By not enforcing the commitments made by this proponent Whitehaven Coal in gaining an approval, has led to this community saying very loudly NOT AGAIN. We won’t be treated like this anymore and for WHC to call this Vickery mine separate identity to Whitehaven Coal, just further demonstrates the arrogance shown by WHC towards this community, as this attempt would enable the very poor environmental track record not to be associated with the Vickery Mine Extension. This is desperation at the very highest level by WHC.

I firmly and very strongly object to this Vickery Extension Project.

Regards Lochie Leitch.

25th October 2018

