

22 June 2013
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David Mooney
Project Manager
The Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Re: Submission to Mangoola Coal Modification 6 of Project Approval 06_0014

Dear Mr Mooney,

I wish to make a submission in rejection to the Mangoola Coal Mine Modification on numerous grounds.

These include the alarming proposal to discharge saline water into the Hunter Valley's water ways, in other words the Hunter River. Given the fact that much agriculture relies on this major water way, the effect of increased levels of saline may have a detrimental effect on their business operations.

In a similar fashion we should not forget that a detrimental effect may also impact upon the fauna and flora of the region. Doing so may, thus, breach various pieces of environmental legislation as a consequence of the environmental impact upon these waterways.

Furthermore, under the current approval for this mine, such discharges are not permitted. If such a precedent was set, to reverse this situation, many other mines will likewise demand the right to discharge their waste water, thus drastically increasing the cumulative effort several fold. This would be detrimental, not only to the environment, but also to agriculture which depends upon the Hunter River being free of saline and other pollutants created by mining.

It would also be highly premature to approve this Modification Application in the light that dust studies are still in the process of being conducted, by various agencies, and there is no research to confirm that the high amount of dust created, by the various mining operations, is safe for both workers and local residents alike. To ensure the public safety, in the very least, and to ultimately ensure a safe working environment, it would be prudent to ensure that the current coal mines, let alone extensions of current ones, are not detrimental to the workers and local residents.

To further this concern, only two weeks ago, Professor David Durrheim, from New England Hunter Health, told me that both coal and diesel particles can have adverse health effects. Included in these adverse health effects are illnesses such as asthma leading through to deadly lung cancer. I can readily confirm the latter given my father died of lung cancer caused by dusting on the lungs. I would recommend, therefore, that reports from Professor David Durrheim in particular, and from New England Hunter Health in general, be treated with the utmost of respect.

Finally there are other issues which I will give a passing mention to which also need attention. The impact upon the road structure throughout the entire Hunter Valley, not just in the Denman region, must be understood given the extreme and significant damage being done. Roads are literally disintegrating. Councils are not being compensated for their maintenance requirements, which

means vast sections of roads are dangerous to drive upon. People are being injured and killed, because of this factor, which must be taken into account when approving extensions to mines such as Mangoola.

Another issue to the increased impact of the mining industry on already established industries or the ability to create new ones which are non-coal related. The environmental impact alone on agriculture, such as the vineyards, is a major negative one as is the ability to employ an experienced long term workforce. Even Muswellbrook Shire Council has admitted that it is hard to get staff, especially long term, due to the dominance of the mining industry.

Meanwhile such dominance may even, given the fact that there is now a global coal glut, be counterproductive. As demand for Australian coal has significantly diminished, due to both China and the United States cutting back on coal requirements, and Japan demanding a lower price for Australian coal (a price which the mining companies are not prepared to match), expansion of Mangoola could be a major mistake, not only for the reasons already outlined above, but for the fact that it simply does not have the customers for its increased proposed production.

Consequently the company may well be investing in a white elephant which, if so, could have a huge negative impact upon local employment and the overall economy of region. Given what has been said above, about the global coal market, it would be irresponsible to approve such an expansion for this reason alone during such a time.

Kind Regards,

David Atwell BA. MA. JP.