

Professor Rob Herbert & Professor Lisa Harvey
211 Annandale St
Annandale NSW 2038

26 April 2020

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

To whom it may concern,

We are writing to express our strenuous objection to the Angus Place mine extension project (SSD 12_5602).

We understand that the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment must make a decision that weighs the short-term economic benefit to local communities - particularly Lithgow and Wallerawang - against the long-term environmental impacts of the proposed development.

We do not doubt that the mine extension will bring jobs to the region, but those jobs will be insecure. It is hard to imagine that coal will be a viable industry and will provide a significant source of either energy or employment in 2053. The industry is barely viable now. That is apparent from the myriad of mine closures North of Lithgow, all of which have left a legacy of economic decline and environmental devastation.

Moreover, we believe the long-term environmental consequences of the mine extension are too great to justify transient economic benefits. In particular we note that the mine will generate half a million tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year for the life of the project or 15.7m tonnes of CO₂ over the life of the project.¹ In addition, surface cracking caused by subsidence will result in altered drainage flows, damaging the extraordinary environment to the North and South of Sunnyside Ridge.

We are frequent visitors to the Newnes State Forest and we know, better than most, of the extraordinary pagodas, hanging swamps and canyons that lie immediately above the proposed mine extension. These include the beautiful Wolgan Loops and Wolgan Falls, the labyrinthine headwaters of Carne Creek and the stunning pagoda country near the Wolgan Pinnacle, to name just a few. These places should be part of a shared national heritage, and would certainly have been incorporated in the Gardens of Stone National Park if the boundaries were based on environmental significance rather than economic interests.

It does not take much of an understanding of history to see what will happen if the mine extension is approved. The mine extension will proceed for a few years until coal can no longer compete with cleaner sources of energy without unacceptable government subsidy. The mine will then close, putting many people out of work. But the environmental damage will have been done.

We ask the Department to act in the long-term interests of the people of NSW, rather than in the short-term interests of the mine owners and local community, by preventing the Angus Place mine extension. The NSW government should incorporate the entire catchment of Carne Creek to preserve its extraordinary values for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob & Lisa Harvey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Rob Herbert
Professor Lisa Harvey

¹ We note that this key statistic summarising CO₂ emissions from the proposed project is given in Table 8-22 and page 102 of Centennial Coal's amendment report and is not given a single mention in the text. Is this demonstrative of a balanced environmental assessment?