

Dear Madam/Sir,

I object to the Angus Place Coal Mine Extension, and request that the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) recommend refusal of consent. There are multiple reasons for consent to be refused, including the contribution this proposed extension would make to exacerbating the current climate emergency, and the degradation of precious swampland, as well as loss of endangered species.

The specific objections raised below also need strong consideration.

There are many nationally important endangered swamps that will be fractured and drained by the mine extension. This fracturing has also happened in the Woronora Dam catchment area, and is expected to worsen with longwall mining extensions there. Centennial Coal admits that subsidence-related impacts are expected at Tri-Star Swamp, Twin Gully Swamp, Trail Six Swamp, Birds Rock Swamp, Crocodile Swamp and hanging swamps in their catchments which are home to vulnerable and endangered species such as the Blue Mountains Water Skink, Giant Burrowing Frog and the Giant Dragonfly. Wildlife species and bushland have very recently been devastated by bushfires, having been dried out by an extended drought and then scorched in extreme heat in the type of weather event which will only become more frequent with increasing, instead of reducing, carbon emissions. These swamps are critical refuges for these endangered species, and are valuable natural firebreaks. Centennial Coal has already destroyed swamps on the Newnes Plateau, and should be prevented from destroying more. In the Amendment Report (p. iii), Centennial Coal states: "Subsidence-related impacts are expected at Tri-Star Swamp, Twin Gully Swamp, Trail Six Swamp and the hanging swamps within their catchments. Impacts to THPSS-associated threatened species are also likely in these locations." They only propose an offset, instead of limiting their operations appropriately.

The proposed mine extension will worsen the climate emergency. Global heating is having devastating impacts on people and nature in NSW and around the world, and is worsening the health of people (contributing to increased respiratory distress) and the planet. The increased emissions from the proposed mine extension will contribute markedly to this.

Centennial Coal's mine extension project would be responsible for 11 million tonnes of CO₂ each year, or 8.5% of NSW's CO₂ emissions, while Centennial claim the number is only 0.368% of NSW's emissions. Centennial fail to account for the impacts of these emissions. The climate impacts such as sea-level rise and associated flooding, longer and more extreme fire seasons, heatwaves, coral bleaching, ocean acidification and increased disease spread must be properly estimated and quantified.

Future NSW Governments should not have their hands tied by the approval of this proposal, and should be able to end coal-fired electric power as soon as possible and so help stop the growing climate catastrophe. If consent is issued, it should be reviewed every 5 years with a possibility of cancellation from 2025.

Approval to 2053 is certainly in breach of the NSW government's net zero emissions by 2050 target. Approval beyond 2030 is in breach of Australia's commitment to the Paris agreement goals of making efforts to limit global heating to 1.5 degrees.

The Gardens of Stone should be a State Conservation Area, not subject to the damage that the Centennial Coal project would cause to spectacular Birds Rock, pagodas, cliffs and the nationally endangered swamps in the 2,000-hectare proposed mining area.

The Wolgan Falls must not run dry and so the proposed longwall mining panels along the Wolgan River side of the proposed mining area must be shortened by hundreds of metres to prevent river water losses due to far field impacts associated with the extensive Wolgan Lineament Field.

At a time when most of NSW is still in drought, Centennial Coal should not be allowed to degrade a pristine water source. DPIE must require that pristine Carne Creek, and its waters that flow through the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and past the Wolgan Valley resort not be contaminated with iron and manganese or suffer reduced flows due to fracturing of surface rocks.

In the seven years since Centennial's consultants identified the need for targeted surveys of four nationally endangered plants, the company failed to undertake these searches. Lithgow Environment Group has in that time identified many sites where these Federally listed plants occur within the proposal, highlighting the weakness of the company's environmental assessment.

This amended mine extension proposal must be subject to Independent Planning Commission review processes, and to do otherwise would be to fail the people of Lithgow, Bathurst, the Blue Mountains, and NSW.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Sewell

Source:

<https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=SSD-5602%2120200301T052004.193%20GMT>