

Five Bays Sustainable Neighbourhood Group

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Submission to the Newstan Mine Extension Project Proposal

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To Whom It May Concern,

Five Bays Sustainable Neighbourhood Group (SNG) objects to the Centennial Coal Newstan Mine Extension Project application in its current form. Whilst there are many issues of concern, we will focus on those outlined below.

Eraring Ash Dam (the Dam)

Historically, the Dam has caused great concern and angst within the community. The Dam itself is large (occupying an area of approximately 150ha¹), unlined² and estimated to contain **40 million tonnes** of ash waste³. This ash waste contains heavy metals including selenium, lead and arsenic⁴.

Groundwater and surface water monitoring indicates that waste from the Dam is seeping into Lake Macquarie via the sub-catchments of Muddy Lake, Myuna Bay and Whiteheads Lagoon⁵.

In 2019 the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre was closed because of the risk posed to people and infrastructure if the Dam wall were to collapse due an earthquake.

The MSEC report (Appendix H), states that the coal seams are "characterised by complex patterns of splitting"⁶ and that dykes, faults and folds dominate⁷ the area.

Currently there are no first workings under the Dam and it states that the existing workings in the Great Northern Seam will be reactivated in order to source the coal from under the Dam.

¹ HCEC 2020 Out of the Ashes II, pg 56

² GHD 2020 Report for Centennial Newstan Pty Ltd - Newstan Mine Extension Project pg. 126

³ HCEC 2020 Out of the Ashes II : Summary of Key Findings pg 3

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ MSEC 2020 SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR NEWSTAN COLLIERY 201 TO 218 PANELS pg 7

⁷ ibid

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⁸ Figure .1.5⁹ indicates that the Great Northern Seam is less than 50 metres under the floor of the Dam.

Awaba Conservation Area

Most of the area for this mine extension project is within the confines of the proposed Awaba Conservation Area (ACA). The ACA, which is mainly on Crown Land, is a vital wildlife corridor between the Watagans and Lake Macquarie. The importance of this area has been acknowledged since 1972 by the National Trust of Australia and subsequently by Lake Macquarie City Council (LMCC) in 1995 and the then NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water in 2009.¹⁰

We acknowledge LMCC's Awaba Biodiversity Conservation Area is not only part of Council's offset obligations but it is a part of the proposed ACA. While consultants have acknowledged the Awaba Biodiversity Conservation Area and other existing biodiversity conservation areas.¹¹ However, we have concerns around the area's that are designated for full extraction within the Biodiversity Conservation Area, other existing biodiversity conservation areas (i.e. the proposed ACA), Kilaben Creek¹² catchment and the integrity of the Teralba Conglomerate Formation. If the Teralba Conglomerate Formation is compromised, how will this effect ground and surface water and thus the integrity of all biodiversity conservation areas in the projects boundaries?

Additional concerns

We request Centennial not to clear native vegetation at the Awaba Colliery. Part the land to be cleared is 0.15 ha of PCT 1718 (Swamp Mahogany – Flax-leaved Paperbark swamp forest on coastal lowlands of the Central Coast)¹³ which is an Endangered Ecological Community. Five Bays SNG requests that Centennial leave this EEC as is and work around it.

In addition we would like all efforts to be made to leave hollow bearing trees intact and/or a major nesting box program be implemented for the area.

References

Charlton R: 2015 *Awaba Conservation Area*

<https://conservewestlakes.wordpress.com/awaba-conservation-area> Cited 10 October 2021

GHD: 2020 Report for Centennial Newstan Pty Ltd - Newstan Mine Extension Project, 2220261

⁸ MSEC 2020 SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR NEWSTAN COLLIERY 201 TO 218 PANELS pg. 10

⁹ ibid pg 7

¹⁰ Charlton R 2015 Awaba Conservation Area

¹¹ GHD 2020 pg.310

¹² Ibid Fig6.1 pg.99

¹³ Ibid pg. 185

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HCEC: 2020 *Out of the Ashes II*

MSEC: 2020 Report: SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR
NEWSTAN COLLIERY 201 TO 218 PANELS