

We are writing to express our concerns about the proposed modifications to Myuna colliery project approval MP 10_0080.

Our main concern is the that with such a large increase to the numbers of trucks using and passing various intersections on the public roads, and without changes to road and intersection design, there will be more accidents, as well as effects on traffic flow.

While the proposal considers the intersections which the trucks would have to navigate, it does so purely with a view to the ability of the trucks to make the turns and whether the roads and intersections need adjustment (e.g. widening) to facilitate this. We disagree with the report conclusions that no such adjustment is required, and will address this below.

The proposal does not properly address the effect on traffic flow on Wangi Road, and the potential impacts associated with the other intersections to Wangi Road such as Summerhill Drive, Donnelly Road and Buttaba Hills Road.

We also note that the traffic counts for these intersections were undertaken on 1 June during the COVID-19 pandemic, when traffic counts will have been lower with more people working from home, or not working.

Wangi Road is zoned 90 kph, with most drivers travelling in excess of this, as the proposal data confirms.

There is no proper merge lane for trucks turning right from Wangi Point Road onto Wangi Road, increasing the likelihood of serious accidents. Both north and southbound lanes on Wangi Road will have to be clear of traffic before trucks can exit Wangi Point Road. As the report notes, traffic on this stretch generally travel at close to 100kph, and without an merge lane, there is a high risk of accidents as cars in either direction brake to avoid a slow-moving, fully-laden truck.

Heavily laden trucks turning right from Wangi Point Road will enter a single traffic lane in a 90kph zone, and almost immediately will be going uphill, thus slowing the northbound traffic. They will stay in the left hand lane coming up the hill towards Donnelly Road when most other vehicles will move into the right-hand overtaking lane.

It will become more difficult and dangerous to make a right-hand turn from both Donnelly Road and Buttaba Hills Road onto Wangi Road. It is already challenging to make a right-hand turn from Summerhill Drive, Donnelly Road and Buttaba Hills Road into Wangi Road, even where there is a merge space in which to stop before joining the northbound traffic, such as there are at the Donnelly Road and Buttaba Road intersections. Additional slow-moving trucks taking Wangi Road northbound every few minutes will make this even more challenging, since while the trucks will be in the left-hand lane, overtaking vehicles will stay in the right-hand lane. The left-hand lane ends just north of these intersections and overtaking vehicles do not generally move back into it after overtaking slower-moving vehicles, so the increased amount of traffic in this right-hand lane means it will become

more difficult and dangerous to make a right-hand turn from both Donnelly Road and Buttaba Hills Road.

When the north-bound left lane ends it is with a give-way, not a zip-merge, and impatient drivers will still attempt to overtake the trucks at this point, potentially causing problems for the trucks, or themselves, as they attempt to squeeze between the truck and the crash barrier.

Southbound trucks turning left into Wangi Point Road will slow the traffic behind them.

Southbound on Wangi Road there are left-hand turn lanes at intersections with Buttaba Hills Road, Donnelly Road and Summerhill Drive so that turning traffic can slow safely before exiting and through-traffic can continue smoothly. There is no left-turning lane on approach to Wangi Point Road. Trucks, especially those carrying coal from CES, will have to slow coming down the long hill south of Donnelly Road, and slow further before they turn left, and as this is a single lane stretch of road, with no left-hand turning lane, vehicles behind them will have to slow down also.

Summerhill Drive will also be indirectly affected. Having been held up behind slow and turning trucks, impatient south-bound through-drivers will then speed up the hill towards the intersection with Summerhill Drive. Turning into and out of Summerhill Drive is already challenging given the speed of southbound traffic and the restricted visibility along the crest and curve of Wangi Road at that point, and I expect that there will be more accidents at this intersection if the proposal succeeds as it stands.

A 7% increase in traffic movements (Appendix A, Para 3.5, p 17) is not negligible. It more than doubles existing heavy vehicle movements. 62,500 additional truck movements will result in:

- increased damage to the road surfaces which will have to be remedied and paid for by Council and State Government;
- increase in the amount of coal dust along the roads (public and private), even with covered loads;
- increased amount and duration of noise that will be generated at Myuna pit by the loading and unloading and the mixing operation;
- increased amount and frequency of noise created by increased truck movements on public roads. While the sound of the occasional hill-climbing truck is noticeable, with trucks moving every 3 minutes on Wangi Road there will be additional truck noise which lasts for a few minutes every few minutes. Here at Puna Road, particularly under some wind and weather conditions, we hear trucks climbing Wangi Road. For residents on Donnelly Road who will be even more affected by this noise, a fully laden truck crawling up the incline from Wangi Point Road to Donnelly Road every 5 to 6 minutes throughout the day will be unacceptable.

We do not support the proposal as it stands. We hope the State Government, Lake Macquarie City Council, Centennial Coal and Origin Energy can find a much more satisfactory solution to the need to mix Myuna coal with that from other sources. Why not a modification to the existing conveyor system, between Myuna colliery and Eraring power station, or construction of a haul road on the old railway corridor from Wangi to Awaba?

The capital costs of either of these may be greater, and should be borne by Centennial coal, but both would keep unacceptably large numbers of coal trucks off local roads on the outskirts of a residential community while still providing employment, locally-sourced coal to Eraring, and investment returns to Centennial. The current proposal shifts the financial, social and environmental costs to the local community, local road users and state government.

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