

29/5/14

NSW Planning Assessment Commission

Attn: Ms Megan Webb

NSW Planning Assessment Commission

GPO Box 3415 Sydney NSW 2001

RE: Public hearing of Watermarks open cut coalmine, 26/6/2014 Gunnedah.

My name is Patrick O'Halloran Solicitor from R.J.O'Halloran & Co and I represent the interests of Mr and Mrs Hollohan. **I wish to speak at the public hearing.**

In my respectful submission I oppose the approval of Shenhua's proposal for a 30 year open cut Watermark coalmine for the following reasons:

1. Two Independent expert panels; the Independent Expert scientific committee (IESC) and the Mining and Petroleum Gateway Panel, raise serious concerns in relation to the state government's approval of the watermark coalmine.
2. The concerns should be adequately addressed. The concerns are being overlooked. The concerns are raised by experts. These experts have extensive experience in the field.
3. The concerns by the IESC panel relate to the impact on productive farmland and have found Shenhua has "applied incorrect methodology" in calculating the mine's effects on productive farmland.

4. The concerns are extremely serious to the regions agricultural farmland and provide for irreversible consequences in relation to the effect on water quality and surface and groundwater flow in the context of other mines in the area.
5. The IESC committee concluded that Shenhua was unable to guarantee water downstream. It held the “potential for contamination from mobilisation of accumulated seepage, emergency release from mine water storages and overflow of sediment dams.”
6. The Mining and Petroleum Gateway Panel purports that “the project shouldn’t proceed until the company correctly identifies the amount of strategic agricultural land that’ll be affected and the long-term risks to water quality in nearby creeks and aquifers.
7. The mine being 24 hour open cut poses significant concerns to locals in the form of noise, sleep disruption and harmful dust from digging and drilling which will impact on neighbouring farmland.
8. Shenhua’s evaluation is based on assumption. A mine of this magnitude has never been developed. The project is Greenfield. It is new and not built on any existing operations.
9. The NSW department of planning has approved the mine on strict conditions. The conditions do not address the substantive underlying effect of the Independent reports on the biodiversity and aquifer

Patrick O’Halloran

R.J.O’Halloran & Co

Solicitors & Attorneys EST 1903

Tamworth

