

Shenhua Watermark Planning Assessment Commission Hearing

10th December 2014

PAC Chairman and Members

Thank you for allowing me to speak this afternoon.

My name is Prue Green.

By the time this Hearing concludes tomorrow I will have spent 30 hours on mining related activities this week. I am not employed by a mining company; I am not employed by anyone when doing this mining related work. Like many others here today we do it because we know what's right and mining is not the right industry for the Liverpool Plains.

You have already heard and will hear from many more Speakers that support that the Liverpool Plains should be preserved for agriculture forever. No-one can argue that food and water are essential to us all and something we can't live without.

I live 3 kms from the Werris Creek mine and to understand the size of the Werris Creek mine to Shenhua if you look at the two mines on a map the Werris Creek area is a dot. Shenhua is a mega open cut mine and Werris Creek is only a mini open cut mine. Water is constantly being pumped from the mine into either a holding pond or sprayed out onto paddocks.

The Northern Daily Leader reported 4 days ago that "Residents have reported seeing jets of water emanating from the site as workers attempted to disperse the water flooding the pit"

This spraying of water is occurring continuously. When I drive past the mine site I can't believe the absolute waste. This loss of water is impacting the existing water bores. One farmer that I am aware of has had his irrigation bore go dry and another is extremely worried about the drop in water level. I also notice when driving past that the paddocks aren't green even with all this water being sprayed?

The NDL reported that local Farmers have approached Whitehaven seeking to use the water for irrigation purposes. The paper stated "The EPA is considering the proposal and will advise how and if the water can be used without causing environmental impacts,"

That probably explains why the paddocks aren't green where the water is being sprayed?

The unknown impact of the water from the Shenhua mine is of huge concern. The knowledge of the local irrigators and water users must not be ignored. These landholders have been living and working here for decades so they have a better knowledge than anyone of this fabulous and essential resource that is under threat.

Over the past 4 years I have got to know the Breeza community, which includes both the Breeza village residents and local landholders, extremely well.

The uncertainty that they have lived with for the last 6 years is extremely draining and emotionally crippling. Imagine what it is like for the locals to see the km's of trees planted along the Highway in preparation for a mine that is not even approved. Disheartened maybe, angry yes, determined definitely.

When I attend meetings I am constantly amazed at the level of knowledge around the table of the local landholders about the surface water flows, the groundwater, the soils and sustainable agriculture.

I feel these people are being allowed to speak but are not being heard.

Please, please listen and hear what these local residents, current farmers and next generation farmers have got to say as they know better than anyone what the impacts will be to this area, to the catchment and to the agricultural industry.

Thank You.