

Thankyou for this opportunity to speak. I commend all those today who choose to speak their mind.

My name is Peter Wills, I am a Quirindi local - born, bred and educated. I have lived in Melbourne for 8 years and more recently London for 5 years, and today I am a Breeza resident and home owner, having bought and renovated the historic 122 year old Catholic Church St Marys in the heart of Breeza village.

One of my biggest personal concerns - that would affect me, and my neighbours greatly - is pollution to our rain water – as I and many Breeza residents predominantly survive off rain water we collect from our roofs, and store in our tanks.

**I have no doubt** – that westerly winds flowing from the Watermark mining site would **have** to leave dust and particles on our roofs, and would sit there waiting to potentially foul our main source of household and drinking water. **There is no doubt in my mind that it would occur.**

I recently returned home last month from work, to find dust and leaf matter had managed to get thru gaps surrounding my garage doors, and then - under the door from my garage into my hallway. It must have been a intensely strong southerly wind to have done that.

And the double brick front of my Church is reinforced with steel, as about 1 year ago when renovating a strong northerly gust of wind shook the whole northern wall of the house – The plain can experience extremes in weather and wind activity.

And today we fight one mine to the west of Breeza, I fear the same dust versus rain/roof water arguments if we have to fight another mine to the south of Breeza. And then I fear the worst - who would own the responsibility/pollution if there are 2 mines in the area.

At the moment I live happily in my home with windows open and co-exist with the current train and road traffic levels, I even sleep with the windows open thru the night with out a care. But I am gravely concerned about what both rail and road traffic might significantly increase too.

And I fear for those who live closer to the rail line than I, not only in Breeza, but all the way to the port of Newcastle. A somewhat silent group of people, many out of this district, who might not actually know how their lives will change in the next 5 years – when these mining scenarios possibly come on-stream. I hope and will fight - like Newcastle residents are at present - that coal carriages should be covered to protect those near train lines from coal dust.

I read with some interest – Recommendations 9, 10 & 11 – about the options available to residents ‘predicted to be impacted’ by dust, air quality and noise levels. I certainly didn’t buy and renovate my home – my ideal home – ‘to sell to the mine and move elsewhere’ – if I were ever to fit officially into this criteria. And I doubt that noise exceedance’s from one of their many negative outputs – the increase of coal train activity – is within their remit of interest or concern. Its a by-product they are not responsible for. And I feel that their point 3 in recommendation 9, should extend to recommendation 11 – however they would have to action this for everyone near a train line from Breeza to Kooragang.

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And sadly I feel there is a significant number of people who would be here to speak up today, but have received - what I personally call ‘Hush Money’ for their charity or organisation that they volunteer, strive and work extremely hard for. Country politeness kicks in for a lot of people, but they are out there in droves.

Personally I have little confidence in politics - like the recent Bays Precinct in Sydney’s inner west – where there seemed to be a government opinion that a decision had already been made, before consultation had begun. If mining is established within the plain, nowhere is sacred and a dangerous precedent will be set.

I feel for those neighbours to this mine, who won’t be bought out within acquisition areas – who property’s – homes and livelihoods – will no doubt, be financially devalued and on paper worse off, and will suffer long term- as it will be all the more difficult to sell their property, should they ever wish to. And If more mines are developed in the area, the whole plain, farms and livelihoods will be all the less financially valuable to these hardworking long term Australian Tax paying - generation after generation after generation – farmers and residents.

Like criminal law requires a crime to be proved "beyond a reasonable doubt" – this coal mine must be classed in the same way. It would be criminal if anything were to go wrong caused by the mine to the plain and underground water.

I fear the people who ultimately make a yes decision will be long moved on and untouchable when things do go bad.

I commend and support the opponent groups here today, of today’s mine in question – Shenhua Watermark.

Mining on the Liverpool Plains is not inevitable.