From: [redacted]
To: pac
Subject: Coalpac/Springvale Submission
Date: Sunday, 17 May 2015 5:36:07 PM

Members of the PAC,

I write this submission in support of the Coalpac/Springvale Extension Project.

Mining has been an integral part of the Lithgow LGA for over a century. It has been, and still is, a critical economic and social component of the Lithgow LGA.

Generations of men, (and more recently women), have relied on employment in the mining industry in order to enable them to support their families. Not only through direct employment, but also, through the flow-on effect of other businesses. It is not only businesses in the Lithgow LGA who will feel the flow-on effects, but also businesses such as engineering establishments in Newcastle, Wollongong and the Western Sydney Region, who contract and supply Springvale, and who will also feel the impact if the extension is not approved. These businesses will be in a situation where they could easily find themselves also having to lay off staff. Other areas that would be affected would be the housing and manufacturing areas. The effect could end up being far more widespread than is realised.

Should this extension not be approved, people and families will find themselves in the situation where they will be forced to leave the town and their homes, to find alternate work. This in turn will have an effect on all other businesses in the area, schools, the local T.A.F.E., creating additional job losses, and also the extended family unit. Parents, aunts and uncles, who rely on their children, nieces, nephews, for “back-up” support, will find themselves relying on charitable organisations for this support, thus placing an extra strain on these organisations.

Following the loss of jobs at the Wallerawang Power Station, defence jobs, through the closure of the Small Arms Factory, and other mines in the area, I, as a small business owner, have noticed a major decline in my business, and having spoken to other small business owners in the area, it is safe to say, I am not alone. Ladies who thought nothing of coming in and spending $500 on lingerie and sleepwear are now spending $100, and this is the same situation with other small business owners in the region. Some of these businesses have also found themselves having to lay off staff due to the downturn. We have also seen some businesses in the town close, and one has to ask if this is the direct result of these job losses. If this is the case, we cannot afford to lose another 300 (plus flow-on affect) jobs in this region. It is not only the loss of these jobs that will affect the region, but also the loss of future apprenticeships.

The annual wage bill for Springvale is in the vicinity of $30 million, and with the multiplier effect, this could blow out to as much as $100 million. Even if only 50-75% of this was spent directly in our area, this equates to a huge loss to our region, if this project is not given the go-ahead, and could not be sustained.

It is not only the wage component that would have a major impact on our economy, but also the donations that are made, both directly by the Coalpac Company, and also indirectly by the employees of Springvale. The company, and the miners, are a major contributor to the economic life of our region. The miners contribute a weekly donation from their wages in Lodge fees, which are distributed to local charities and groups. Without these donations, many community events, and charities, such as the local cancer support group would be struggling to fulfil the important role they play in our community. These donations average $100,000 per year. Coalpac themselves also

support many community and charity groups in the area. They also assist in the ongoing health of our region by supporting sporting events.

During the October 2013 bushfires assistance was provided both financially, and with backup manpower, in feeding and other “behind the scenes” assistance to the firefighters.

The mine supplies coal for both domestic and export markets. Electricity generation relies on coal and Springvale is a major supplier of coal for the Mt Piper Power Station.

Springvale has a good track record of safety and environmental sustainability. They have implemented coal extraction methods to minimise environmental impacts and have complied with all government requirements in the past. They have gained an understanding of mine designing requirements for the sustainability and protection of surface features due to past operations and they are committed to achieving sustainable development. The location of the mine means that it cannot be seen from the main highway, and when the site is reached, the only visible proof of operations are the necessary site buildings associated with the day to day running of the mine.

I find it not only distressing, but also incredible, that people who do not even live in our area, and in some cases, our country can have a major impact on the future economic prosperity of our region. I feel sure, if members of our community objected to a project that was proposed for other areas of Australia, or England, we would be put in our place in no uncertain terms.

I implore you to take into account both the short and long-term social and economic effects of rejecting this project would have on our community, and approve the Springvale Mine extension.

Mrs Glenda Anthes,

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