From: [redacted]
To: pac pac
Subject: Submission re Airly MIne Extension Project
Date: Friday, 18 September 2015 5:00:33 PM

Ms Robyn Kruk AM

Chair Planning and Assessment Commission

GPO Box 3415

Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Kruk

Submission as an objection to Airly Mine Extension Project

As a local, who has lived in the valley for most of her life, I recommend that the PAC refuse consent for the extension of this project.

My reasons are several:

To start with, my primary concern is that the mine extension will affect the quality and flow of water into the Capertee River. Our property is a few metres from the river, and has always depended on the water table connected to the river for our water supply for stock, irrigation and household use. The windmill that pumps from this table has been working continuously since 1932. Already, in drought times, the Capertee river dries up and the associated water table drops to a worryingly low level. We have never lost our water supply entirely. The mine will use vast quantities of water for the proposed washery – what will happen if our water supply dries up? There is no compensation adequate for this scenario.

The IESC paper questions Centennial's research and modelling as regards the possible impacts of the extension project on surface and ground water. some excerpts include: "Surface water hydrology data is lacking from Airly Creek" "Structural features have not been considered in the hydrogeological modeling and ground water impact assessment" "the assessment of impacts to down stream water related assets arising from proposed discharges to Airly Creek has not been justified or supported by data..."

Centennial does not have a good environmental record. There have been three breeches of polluted water overflowing into Airly Creek already. The purity of our water is important to all valley residents, and it is also a catchment area for the Colo – a precious world heritage area.

At the very least I would like to see all of the recommendations of the IESC paper put into place as regards a robust, credible water monitoring system.

My second concern is economics. Airly Mine closed right before xmas in 2012 because it was classed as "unviable". What has changed? In an earlier submission I wrote that, as the [redacted] of the [redacted], initially, I welcomed the Airly Mine project in the 1990's, as I thought it would bring much needed employment for families in our valley. Having observed that no families in our [redacted] gained work from the mines, I am now very cynical about the economic benefit for our valley.

It appears that the jobs that are generated are immediately taken by miners from those mines that have closed down, such as Charbon, and the Lithgow coal fields. I understand and am sympathetic as to why these miners are desperate for Airly to open. They are the friends of my sons and the sons of my friends…. However, mining is only a short term, and very destructive, solution to the problem of unemployment in regional areas. From my observation the mines don't care about the welfare of their workers at all, and have no hesitation about laying them off when it suits.

The Productivity Commission figures show that the mining industry got direct subsidies of $492 million last year (and a tax rate of 14%). Wouldn't it be far more beneficial for our community if the Australian government would use that amount to kick start renewable energy industries and provide employment which has a long term future and addresses issues such as climate change and pollution?

To conclude, I believe our valley has far more economic value as a scenic and relatively pristine potential World Heritage Area that is only three hours drive from Sydney; and it is not worth risking this for the dubious short term benefits of extending Airly Mine.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Alexandra Mateer

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