

[REDACTED]

10th September 2015

PAC

Denman

Objection to Drayton South Coal Project

Thank you for hearing me speak on behalf of the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. We are here to object again to the application by Anglo American for the Drayton South open coal mine project.

Withdrawing Clause 12AA and restoring some semblance of sensible process was very urgent and is very welcome. The corruption underlying this clause has been exposed and in part remedied by its removal. But this is still our last legal opportunity to remind the PAC of the devastating social and environmental impacts of this mine and call for the coal to be left in the ground.

We are concerned about the continued cumulative impacts of this proposal on our health and our environment.

Our specific local environmental concern relates to the critically endangered ecological community - Central Hunter Valley Eucalypt Forest and Woodland Complex. Nowhere in the Valley has such land been successfully restored to its previous condition following mining. "Off-set" theory is problematic and the "like for like" condition is not being met. Globally, the taste the world is getting of the effects of climate change is being accepted as a signal to quit fossil fuels as quickly as possible.

Clearly the mine will negatively impact water courses and water quality, add to air pollution including dust and PMs 2.5 and PM 10 from diesel combustion and add to the visual degradation of our local environment.

We love where we live, have experienced enough destruction in the Upper Hunter and ask that the environment we have left, especially the endangered ecological communities remain intact.

With respect to health,

I have been at Mbk Hospital in the emergency ward with my students and been told of the previous days cardio-pulmonary helicopter emergencies. The air quality that day was regarded as fair, good enough for most of us but, it seems likely a problem for the more vulnerable.

In the study *Investigating the Health Impacts of Particulates associated with coal mining* 2014 Dalton et al uses dose rates to provide understanding of the health impacts of dust, rather than incidence of particular diseases. For every 10µg/m³ increase in PM₁₀ we can expect an increase of .6% deaths from any cause. In Muswellbrook postcode there was 29,000,000 kg of PM₁₀ from coal mining and 1,300,000kg from electricity generation 2013/2014. The mortality from lung cancer increases 8% for every 10 µg/m³ PM_{2.5} increase. The National Pollutant Inventory using industry estimates reveals coal mining produces 700,000kg PM_{2.5} and power stations release 280,000kg.

The not for profit health professionals organization, Climate and Health Alliance in their study published this year, *Coal and Health in the Hunter, Lessons from one valley for the world*, summarise that "the impacts (of the rapid expansion of coal) on local communities in the Hunter Valley include exposure to harmful air, noise and water pollution, stress associated with social disruption, and a sense of abandonment as government's prioritise the interests of the coal industry above that of the community."

As for social license,

I would also like to comment on the saturation promotion of this application in my community. I know the PAC has received written submissions on this. I think it is fair to suggest that businesses approached to support the Drayton South proposal would see it in their best interests to comply and display the sign rather than say NO. I certainly found it odd to have men come into the op shop in orange high vis shirts, getting the petition signed. It felt intimidating.

We saw what happened to the Australian Prime Minister when the Mineral Council waged a \$15.78 million advertising campaign against the Minerals Resource Rent Tax in 2010. Our government was destabilized by multinational business interests. Muswellbrook and Singleton have hosted Anglo promotion offices for months. The bid to achieve social license has been relentless.

I am no economist or mining strategist but it seems sad employees are being given the impression their well paid jobs are safe, if only for this approval, while ignoring the impact of the global downturn in coal prices, the frequency of extreme weather events and the casualization and robotisation of the industry.

Finally, in 1987 the UN Brudtland Report identified environment and society as needing to be part of a triple bottom line for sustainable development. That report was written, I repeat, in 1987 as a global response to climate change.

The world bank has warned that 'we are on track for a 4°C warmer world (by the end of the century). This means "extreme heat waves, declining global food stocks, loss of ecosystems and biodiversity and life-threatening sea level rise", "There is no certainty that adaptation to a 4°C warmer world is possible. " Kevin Anderson of the

Tyndale Centre for Climate Change Research says that 4°C warming is “incompatible with any reasonable characterization of an organized, equitable and civilized global community.”

We have wasted the time to easily and methodically move away from fossil fuels, climate change is now being felt. We need to stop pretending it isn't happening and wake up to its mercilessness. We need to work together, retrain if necessary, reorganize and re-educate so that our lives will be enjoyable and meaningful and wonderful into the future, rather than desperate and impoverished.

I have been impressed at the various PACS at the civility and respect shown by everyone assembled. Imagine if we were putting this effort in to work together for our children and the planet. It is so much easier not to wreck the Earth than it is to fix it.

We request the PAC reject the Drayton South Coal Project Application Number SSD 6875.

Wendy Wales

