27th August, 2015

Dear Committee Members Of PAC,

I am writing this letter in support of the Springvale Mine Extension which is due to be heard at the second PAC hearing scheduled for Thursday 3rd September 2015.

As a current Lithgow City Councillor, and a life time resident of Lithgow, I cannot stress enough how vital this project is to our district. Over the years, I have witnessed many industries in our area fall by the wayside, many of which were coal mines. Each time our area experienced these losses, some quite large, the local community picked itself up from the ground, dusted themselves off, and battled on. This is how resilient and tough Lithgow is. We have taken plenty of hits, yet here we still are, a very proud and productive community.

Unfortunately though, I cannot see us being so robust this time if Springvale fails to get the extension approval. Springvale Coal and Mt Piper power station should be classified as the ONE industry. Without Springvale Coal, then it is more than likely that Mt Piper power station will also be wound down. If these two industries were to close, then the impact to this area would be so devastating, one cannot fathom what will eventuate. It's not only the families who are involved in these industries who would suffer, but the flow on would dramatically effect local businesses, schools, TAFE, medical centres just to name a few. Yes, it seems extreme, but they are the facts. More job losses would occur in all of the above, which I feel will create lots of distress to these families, some of which may never fully recover.

I understand that the most compelling argument from those opposing this mine is the water quality being discharged from Springvale Colliery. I am aware that these issues have been, and will continue to be addressed by Centennial in the most professional manner. Centennial has always proven it's committed to the environment, and is constantly communicating with the relevant authorities, including Lithgow Council and the EPA, in keeping its obligation to minimise any effect it's mining has on the environment.

I personally feel that this argument against Springvale does not have much merit. Consistency is what those who oppose this mine are failing to deliver. This is a semi-rural community, so who monitors the poison used for controlling, blackberries, noxious weeds etc? They have always been used without regulation, and would most certainly end up in the Cox's River eventually. Not to mention all of our local roads which have fuel and oil on them washed away whenever the rains come, they too will all end up down the same river. It always has, and it always will. Why then is this any different than the quality coming out of Springvale Colliery? In fact, at least there are regulations stipulated on Centennial's operations before discharging.

Any suggestion that Springvale's discharge will poison Sydney's water supply is in my opinion, utterly ridiculous and pure scaremongering.

I am therefore pleading for common sense when making your final determination on Springvale Colliery, as I fear of the consequences if the decision made by PAC is the wrong one.

Thanking You,
Councillor Frank Inzitari.
Lithgow City Council