Springvale Mine PAC Submission

Dear PAC Members,

I would like to provide you with a submission for the second review of the Springvale Mine Extension Project. My name is Sarah Pender and my husband Craig and I own two local businesses in Lithgow. I operate [redacted] and Craig operates [redacted]. [redacted] employs 2 staff members and [redacted] employs 4 staff members.

We have three children, Ebony 9, Jorja 7 and Hunter 5, we live at [redacted] but our children attend school in Lithgow and our businesses are located in Lithgow. Our children play netball, soccer and participate in the gymnastics in Lithgow. I also volunteer at the Lithgow PCYC.

Both Craig and I grew up in [redacted], moved to Sydney for work early in our lives but returned to the area as we felt it was a more suitable place to raise a family.

We have just recently, literally a month ago, purchased a building in Lithgow to move my accounting practice to. With this purchase and the purchase of the [redacted] business we have invested [redacted] in Lithgow. We have a mortgage with the bank for [redacted] of this investment, and if we fail we will lose our house, pretty much everything.

Our sports store relies on the disposable income of people in Lithgow, the income left after paying their mortgages, car loans and other mandatory payments they may have. If the Springvale extension does not go ahead, then 300 families will lose an average income of [redacted] p.a., that is [redacted] in income lost from this community, this will adversely affect our business in ways that leave me awake at night. Since the stand down of the mine, our turnover has already dropped by [redacted] a week, that's [redacted] in the last month. This money is used to pay our loan to the bank, GST to the government, wages to our staff and purchases we ordered 12 months ago (we have to place our orders 12 months in advance and we are unable to cancel them).

When things get tight it will be us personally who lose out, we will stop taking a wage from the business we will always pay out staff, without our wage we will be unable to pay our mortgage on our home. If it gets too bad we will have to put 2 of our staff members off, and then we will work 7 days a week with no breaks to make ends meet. All because of one business in town being closed, Springvale mine.

If this affects us in this way what about the 30 other small businesses in Lithgow, this would be devastating for our town, and it may become a ghost town.

The first PAC review approved the mine subject to the stringent environmental conditions, we are avid bushwalkers and love our local environment, and want our grandchildren & their grandchildren

to enjoy this part of the world, so we understand that the mine must adhere to strict environmental guidelines.

The problem is that the environmentalist that have pressured the state government for this second PAC hearing are creating fear from the Clarence colliery incident. My brother works at Clarence, I know the environmental people at Clarence personally, I worked at Clarence before I was made redundant in 2012. I can say with all honestly that this incident was a freak accident, and that the people there would do anything to fix, and they are doing it. The negative reports are seen on the news as they are more sensational then the reports of Centennial fixing the problem. Bad news sells more than good news.

Lithgow Environment Group (LEG) posted pictures on their facebook page two pictures of the Wolgan swamps and the damage done to them:

And then they took this bottom picture down, but as most people are aware once something is on the internet its there forever. I posted a comment on their facebook page calling them out on photo shopping the original picture in May 2010 to make the May 2014 picture, as did many others.
This was the reply from the group on their facebook page:
"Lithgow Environment Group Inc. Fortunately it doesn't matter whether we convince you or anyone else Deborah McGrath, We needed to convince the Feds, and did just that, Hence Centennial's $1.45m Enforceable Undertaking. For the first time ever a Deputy Director General visited Newnes Plateau, saw this site, and we are sure took back some vivid memories. These swamps or of National Significance, which trumps a State Significant coal project. If Centennial were environmentally responsible corporate citizen they'd do the right thing and avoid just 2% of Newnes Plateau to give these swamps a chance. But no, arrogance and greed rules, and they are going after the lot. Which means we and many other people will continue to fight for that 2%, which if achieved won't affect the economic viability of Springvale or Mt Piper and won't turn Lithgow into a ghost town, 2% 2% 2%, 2%....."

If Centennial or any of its consultants did this, they would be sued and effectively shut down, but an incorporated association which does not have an ABN, and thus can avoid any legal action can do

this. How can you take any information from this organisation as being truthful, if they Photoshop this what else do they falsify to achieve their desired outcomes???

If you decide that what they say is true and this results in the loss of 300 jobs, $27million dollars into our economy how will you sleep at night, I guess probably pretty well as you won't have the worry of how are we going to cope, how do we pay our bills, how do we give our kids birthday and Christmas presents, the list goes on. I know I did this every night for 4 months after I was made redundant from Centennial, and I am lucky I have an accounting degree that enabled me to buy my own business what will the other people do who have no skills to utilise. The feeling of not being able to support your family is very demoralising, I even contemplated suicide, as I knew my life insurance would set my family up for the rest of their lives, but I couldn't do that and miss out on so much and give them the heart ache, I was strong. Will others be as strong, will you give their families any thought after this is done.

The PAC originally deemed this project good enough to proceed, the fact that we are having this second PAC review because of the protest of environmental terrorists who have fabricated evidence to suit their cause make a mockery of the system and implies that **you PAC members are not independent experts who can make a decision based on facts and evidence** from Centennial and their licensed consultants who do this work every day.

Are you able to do this, can you see past the professional protestors and lobby groups to make a decision on this mine based on the facts, you have done it once can you stand up to the political pressure and do it again?

This extension would mean that 58.5 million tonnes of coal would be extracted over 13 years, at a sale price of $50 per tonne, less the deductions available under the NSW royalty rules this would mean that NSW would receive $130,572,000 in royalty income over 13 years. This money funds our roads, our hospitals, our schools. Where will this money come from, how will NSW government replace this lost revenue. Factor in lost payroll tax of approximately $1.4 million a year or $18.2 million over 13 years, and then the income tax from the employees approximately $12 million a year or $156 million over 13 years, how will this lost government revenue be replaced?

These amounts are extremely significant, and would have a profound effect on the entire state and countries revenue sources, and we haven't even gone into the income tax from Centennial itself.

Majority of the protestors say that we should move away from fossil fuel to a more sustainable future, how can this happen immediately? It can't, the Uterne solar fame in Alice Springs, went from a 1 megawatt facility to 4.1 megawatts over a 4 year period at a cost of $13 million dollars. This facility provides enough power for 1,100 homes, to replace the output from Mt Piper Power Station another 342 of these facilities would need to be built, at a rate of one per 4 years that is 1,368 years and $444.6 million dollars. It is not feasible for this to happen immediately, but we should start to move to renewable sources **BUT THAT IS NOT THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAC REVIEW**.

This PAC review must make a decision on the Springvale mine extension based on facts that can be verified from sources that licensed and authorised to work in their specific areas, not from fabricated lies of environmental terrorist, who claim to want to work with mining companies to improve their practices for the environment. In the 4 years I worked at the Airly mine and Clarence colliery not once did any environmental group come up to work with us, they all put their hands out for donations but do nothing but create fear. You cannot use the incident from Clarence as a reason too, this was a separate site and a one off event, which the company is working with the EPA to fix.

If the EPA needs more power or resources to better monitor mining company this needs to be rectified outside this review, and these issues should not cloud the decision making purpose.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission, my intention was for it not to be this long but I have a lot at stake if this town loses its main employer of 300 workers, my husband and I took a risk in purchasing our businesses as we support this town and hope that you make your decision based on facts relevant to the Springvale extension only and not the additional propaganda that is being pushed into the media.

Yours sincerely,

Craig & Sarah Pender
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