

Mrs Wendy Bowman
Ashton Pastoral Co. at
"Rosedale"

31 July 2018

NSW Independent Planning Commission
Via email: ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au

SPEAKING NOTES

Re: Ashton Coal Mine – South East Open Cut MOD 1 (MP 08_0182) – D519/18

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I am very concerned that the Ashton Coal Mine and in particular this proposed modification is creating a situation that is a disaster looming.

There are several reasons why I believe this is the case.

The risk of loss of water resources

Water is the world's most precious commodity, as we are noting each day with this drought.

Glennies Creek is the most important source of water in this mid to lower Hunter region.

The volume of water supplying the Hunter River from Glenbawn Dam is fully allocated by the time the water reaches the Glennies Creek confluence.[†] It is the Glennies Creek Dam (St Clair) which supplies the only water for farmers and towns from Maison Dieu down to the Maitland tidal pools.

If this mine does create a problem, then what do all the farms and the areas like Whittingham, Belford etc. do if the water is contaminated. There is no other water supply they can rely on. The economic and social impact, of the loss of any of the water coming down Glennies Creek is incalculable for our region.

Glennies Creek must be looked after for all those who totally rely on the water.

Coal Mining in the area of Glennies Creek puts at direct risk the water supply from Glennies Creek. We cannot quantify the possible leakage from the mine into the aquifers and the waterway itself, and we cannot be certain about the potential impact of mining on the integrity of the aquifers. For these reasons mining in the environment of such an important waterway is too dangerous and must therefore never be allowed.

We know that previous mining has already destroyed nearly all the aquifers between Muswellbrook and Singleton, so that eventually we will all totally rely on the stored water in the two dams.

Yancoal does not understand the water issues in our area.

Mining alluvial soils

In the past it has been public policy to prevent any mining of alluvial soils which are capable of significant agricultural production. However, that proscription has now been set aside and it is proposed to mine the Glennies Creek soils which are a rich fertile alluvial loam. This area has been used for extremely productive dairy farms for over 70 years. Despite the extensive evidence of the fertility of this area, the mine reports claim that the soil is poor. This is not correct.

Flooding

There is a huge risk arising from mining flood prone areas. With the possibility of leakage of toxic water into the Hunter river water supply during flood events. The proposed mining area has an ironstone ridge to the east. The ironstone attracts storms and during a storm event the water flow is extremely strong. The volume of water floods all the paddocks.

Also, the base of Glennies Creek is lower than the base of the Hunter River therefore, when we have heavy rain in the catchments, that is the Hunter River, Goulburn River, Bowman's and Glennies Creek, the Hunter River flows up stream and meets the creek water – this creates a very fast rise in Glennies Creek which then breaks the banks and covers the flats.

I have photographs.

Dams

The fresh water dam proposed to be built is not allowed under the water rules.

A smaller dam runs the risk of just washing away with the power of the water coming from the large eastern catchment. The contaminated mine water would then flow into the water supply for the lower Hunter.

Building a Wall

Ashton states that they will build a wall to prevent toxic water leakage, and they will build it in sections. ^{PERMEABILITY}

The US company that designed this type of wall (to keep the mine water in and the creek water out), states that this wall must be built in one piece, not sections.

At the end of their description for building, it states that they do not recommend this type of wall for the sort of purpose intended at the Ashton mine.

Yancoal has a poor environmental and safety record

Yancoal has had serious problems in their other mines: the ceiling fall in the Austar mine, a young man on a drilling rig at Ashton now a paraplegic, the breaking of the Tailings Dam at Ulan and a wall collapsed in another mine in the same area.

Yancoal does not need another mine, they own Austar (Cessnock), two at East Maitland, one at Gloucester, Ashton and Ulan and Gulgong area. They also have just purchased C & A from Rio Tinto.

Where is the coal

In the 1980's I was told by a highly regarded mining engineer that the coal seams went west – east, but that they dipped dramatically from Bowman's Creek and reappeared at Rix's Creek. Rix's Creek mine recently purchased the land from our old "Granbalong" boundary to the base of my eastern ridge – it was purchased for "DUMPING" ^{charburden} not mining.

Rio Tinto drilled the Moxey property at Maison Dieu ^{5 km} (next down) and did not find any coal.

They then drilled the land to the east of Moxey's owned by AS Bowman and the Estate of Ian H Bowman – again no coal. What is Ashton after?

My belief is that the eastern ridge was an upsurge millions of years ago, or that the coal seams have gone down so deep that an open cut mine would not be viable.

The mining engineer who set up the Ashton mine for Felix Resources told me just as he was leaving – his exact words to me were, "You've no need to worry, we only found one seam and it goes straight up in the air." (Sounds definitely like an upsurge.)

Camberwell Village

Hunter New England Health stated years ago that no one would be allowed to live in the village if this mine went ahead.

This government has allowed the mining industry to wipe out villages, ^{OUR HISTORY} creating very many angry and unhappy residents – e.g. Ravensworth, Warkworth and now Bulga.

Enough is enough.

Dust pollution

This area of the Hunter Valley has the highest dust pollution, due to the concentration of all the open cut mines plus the two power stations. The population of this whole area is suffering from the effects of this air pollution. It causes respiratory asthma in particular and loss of lung function, especially in young children. The respiratory health of people in the Muswellbrook and Singleton Shires is appalling! Dust is in the atmosphere 24/7 – 24 hours.

Summary

I am extremely concerned about this proposal. I believe the potential impacts in terms of the risk to our water supply, and the quality of that water, and the health risks to the population, are too great.

^{No so-called} Unless stringent controls ^{are} are put in place ^{and} and adhered to by ^{the} this mine, ^{then} then I object to this application.

Mrs Wendy Bowman



09/06/2007



09/06/2007



CAMBERWELL
VILLAGE

NE HWY

ASHTON
OWNED
LAND

my
boundary

↑ my house

GLENVIES CREEK





NEW ENGLAND HWY

ASATON
OWNED
LAND

GLENNIES CRK

ROSEDALE BOUNDARY

I am speaking for
all water users from
Camberwell down
who rely on the H.R.
water

Due to the large quantity
of water used by Bayside
Power Station - the reason
for the building of St. Clair D.

We are farming the
same soils & grow oats
lucerne, feed sorghum etc.
This can only be achieved
with rich soils & water.

The ~~plots~~^{soils} on Astons land
show the result of the pressure
of water flowing down the
eastern ridge - the gullies
that have been eroded
by the force of the water

The western ridge,
between Glenner Creek &
Bosman's Creek was an
up surge - this was
discovered when Augrad
was drilled to put in the
KVA. lines in the
late 1980s.

There is 12 feet of ~~of~~
washed gravel & silt
which is, of course, the
base of a stream

Why a little 7 year mine
what exactly is Hancock
up to?

During this 1 - 100 year
drought, it is the small
irrigation farms that are
able to carry on & provide
food for grow crops to
help others. These
alluvial soils are too
precious for ~~the~~^{our} future

...underground operation in 2002, on the
...community has experienced significant issues associated to
...village, 500meters in exact to the closest neighbours.

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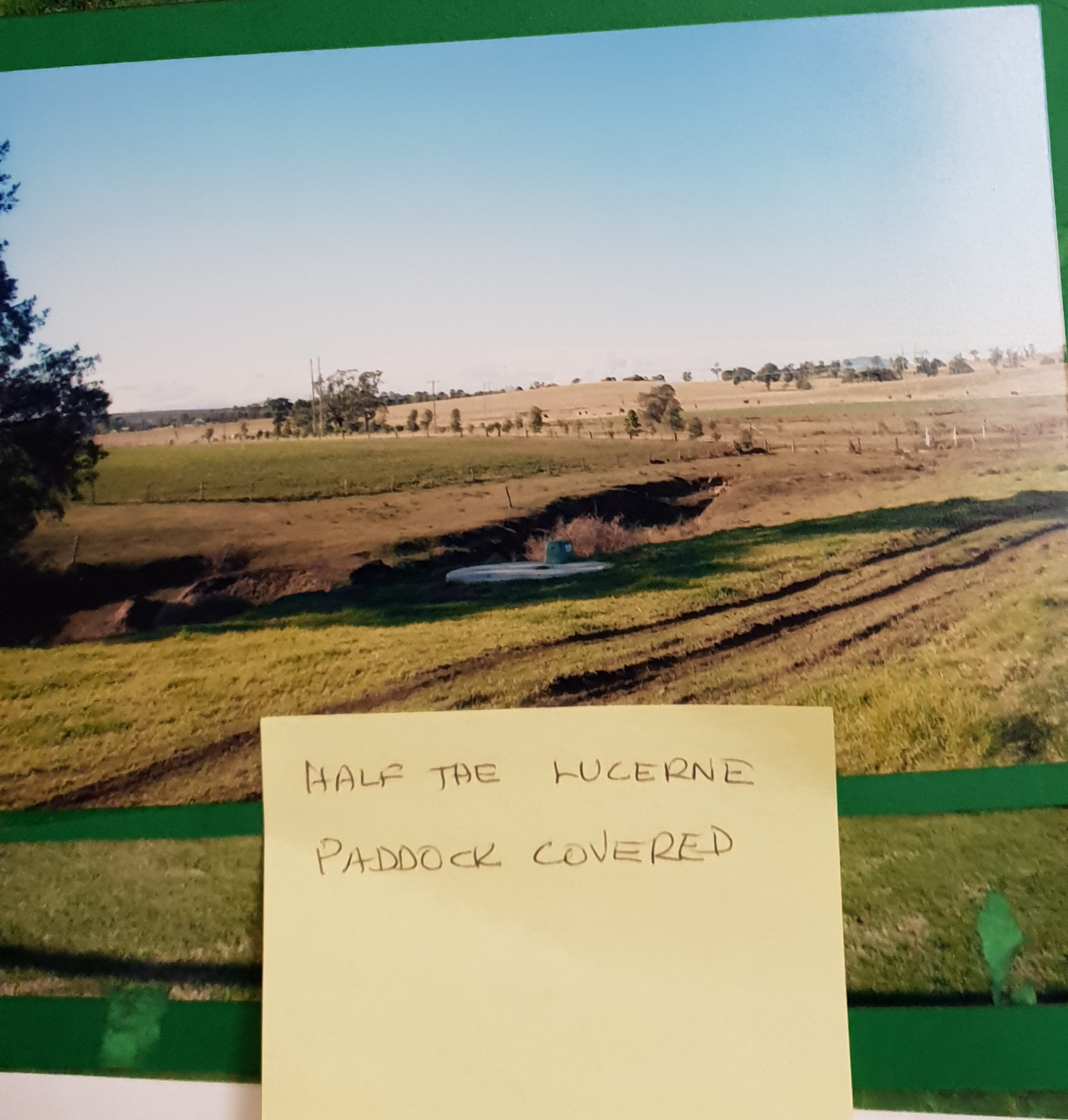
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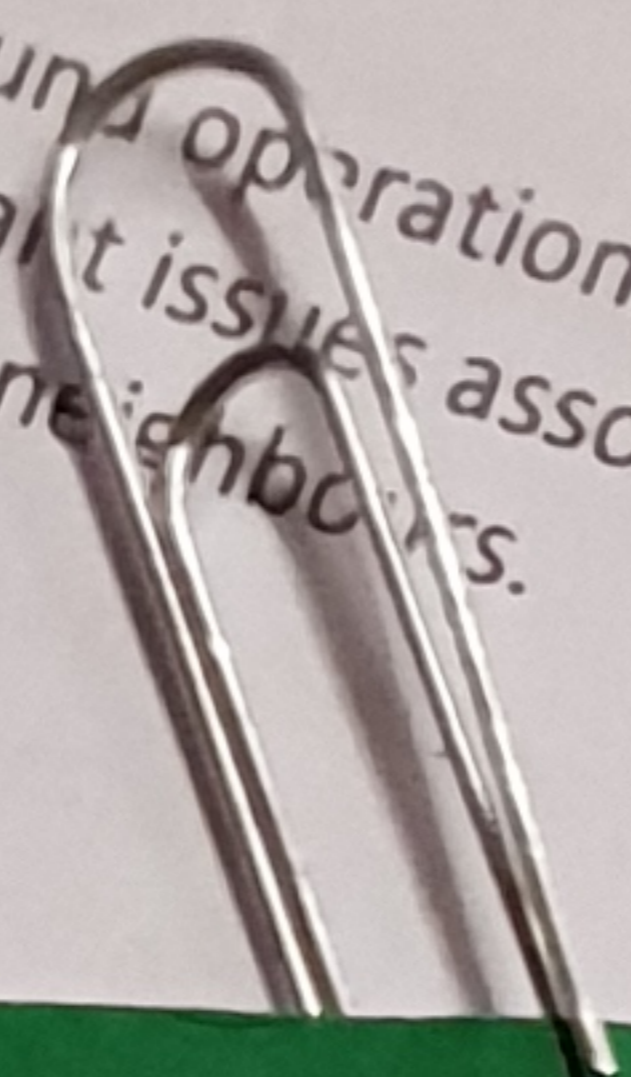
MY GARDEN
FENCE



DURING FLOOD
&
AFTER

/06/20

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