

Aaron Brown

From: IPCN Enquiries Mailbox
Sent: Monday, 7 January 2019 12:39 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Hume Coal Project Public Hearing

From: Alan Lindsay [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 January 2019 10:03 AM
To: IPCN Enquiries Mailbox <ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Clay Preshaw [REDACTED]; Peter Martin [REDACTED]; Tim Littlemore [REDACTED]; Tim Frost [REDACTED]
Subject: Hume Coal Project Public Hearing

Attention: Mr. Robert Bisley – Planning Officer

I am writing as the Vice President of Coal Free Southern Highlands Inc. (CFSH), a community group that is opposing the proposal by Hume Coal, for an underground coal mine in the Sutton Forest area of the Southern Highlands. This project has been on foot since late 2010, and the cost to the community of the opposition to this mine has been significant, in both financial and emotional terms. We are grateful that the NSW Department of Planning has recognised our concerns in their recommendation to the IPC that approval should be refused as the project is contrary to the public interest.

Plans for our participation at the Public Hearing scheduled by the IPC for March 26 (and possibly March 27th) are now underway. You may be aware that CFSH commissioned a number of expert reports to support its opposition to this proposal and it would be our intention to ensure that the IPC panel has the opportunity to directly hear the strength of their arguments. However, while the location of the hearing in Moss Vale is most suitable for the vast majority of local residents who will be participating, the venue poses some difficulties for our Sydney based experts, both in terms of their time and the resultant cost to our organisation.

If past practice is any guide, we assume that the IPC panel will meet separately, in private but documented sessions, with the DPE and the proponent of the project. In the meeting with the proponent it would be expected that their expert advisors would be present, as was certainly the case with the Bylong Project. We also note that in the Bylong case, the Bylong Valley Protection Alliance was given the opportunity for a separate meeting with the panel to allow their experts to be heard in more depth than would have been possible at the Public Meeting held by the IPC.

We request that the IPC adopt a similar approach in the case of the Hume Project. As the DPE noted in their assessment, the technical aspects of a number of key issues involved in this proposal, particularly concerning groundwater, are in dispute, and we believe that fairness and thoroughness demands that the CFSH experts be given the same opportunity as those arguing for the proponent. If such a meeting was held in Sydney, the CFSH experts would be more readily available and any costs associated with their participation would be minimised. We estimate that a maximum of 3 hours would be required.

To facilitate our planning, please advise your response to this request as soon as possible. I will happily provide any clarification that may be required, and my contacts are shown below.

Alan Lindsay
Vice President – Coal Free Southern Highlands Inc.

Alan Lindsay
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