



Lithgow Environment Group Inc.

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Preserving the Balance of Nature

Mr Carl Dumbleton
NSW Planning Assessment Commission
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5 February 2013

Dear Mr Dumbleton

RE: LEG RESPONSE TO THE PLANNING ASSESSMENT COMMISSION REVIEW (PAC1) OF THE COALPAC CONSOLIDATION PROJECT (10_0178) MAIN REPORT OF 14 DECEMBER 2012

The membership of LEG wishes to congratulate the PAC on its comprehensive assessment of the vast amount of material presented to it, including the information presented at the public hearings. We fully endorse the principal finding that (p157):

"... when the merits of the project are considered as a whole, the benefits of the project are substantially outweighed by the breadth and potential magnitude of the impacts. The Commission therefore recommends that the project should not be approved."

Whilst we may be an environment group, our members also live in the local area and many have experienced the negative dust, noise, blasting, and coal transport impacts associated with open-cut mining on their homes, health, amenity and property values. We are acutely aware that mining on this scale has never been attempted in the Lithgow area before, and that current legislation in NSW is unlikely to protect residents or the environment.

We don't wish to add to the information overload for the PAC, and whilst there are many new and additional factors that have come to light since the PAC hearings in September 2012 in our area of expertise – biodiversity and water quality - we believe that the PAC has comprehensively considered these issues in reaching the conclusion that the Coalpac Consolidation Project be rejected.

LEG must express the frustration of our members and Cullen Bullen resident's at the belated entry into this debate by 2GB's Ray Hadley and a petition purportedly being organised by the CFMEU with the usual catch-cry of jobs-jobs-jobs. Our members and the residents of Cullen Bullen have tirelessly on this proposal in our spare time over several years, we have followed all proper processes and procedures, we have attended all public meetings and hearings, and we have ploughed through copious volumes of information to reach a decision. Yet 2GB and the CFMEU can enter this debate at the 11th hour without knowing the facts and perhaps have undue influence on the PAC 2.

We believe that 2GB and the CFMEU have had every opportunity to participate in this debate and familiarise themselves with the local people and local issues. They did not do so until now. We hope that PAC2 will carefully weigh the merit of this belated attempt to sway due process.

We remind the PAC that Springvale and Angus Place Collieries were designed to supply both Wallerawang and Mt Piper Power Stations for the projected operating life, and are still capable of doing so. Purpose built coal conveyors and Coal Haul Roads from these mines to Wallerawang and Mt Piper Power Stations are in place. In addition Clarence Colliery has a rail coal loader and can supply both Wallerawang and Mt Piper. The recently closed Airly Mine is along the recently upgraded Wallerawang to Capertee railway line. Energy Australia should be encouraged to purchase Airly Mine rather than the environmentally destructive Coalpac project.

We also urge the PAC to consider that NSW currently has 3250 MW oversupply of generating capacity, reportedly due to the closure of the Norsk Hydro Aluminium Smelter in Kurri Kurri. As a consequence Delta Electricity announced in the Lithgow Mercury recently that one unit at Wallerawang power station was to be mothballed for 12 months from January 2013. The energy supply and coal supply situation is therefore nowhere near as critical as has been made out by Energy Australia.

The membership of LEG urges the Commission to reject this project in its entirety.

We thank you for allowing our group this opportunity to respond.

Yours faithfully

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