

**Bill and Valarie Symington
17 Eucla Road Gwandalan 2259
16th December 2010**

**Director of Strategic Assessments
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001**

Dear Sir,

State Significant Site and Concept Plan Proposal – MP 10 0084 Gwandalan.

I object to this proposal for the following reasons.

Poor urban “planning.”

There appears to be little or no justification for a development of this size and nature in this location.

In fact even using the term “planning” seems to be a misuse as we only have a reactive response from DOP to a request from a third party.

If a planning group, be it Council, State or Federal, sat down to investigate on their own, the best site for a new residential sub division, without bias from private developers, it would never be on Kanagra Drive in Gwandalan.

Using as a benchmark some of the published criteria for making such a decision would immediately remove Gwandalan from the equation.

There is no reliable public transport or hub, there is no opportunities for employment, there is no shortage of currently available vacant land, there is no shortage of houses at reasonable prices, there really is no demand, there is currently an area rezoned for a new residential sub division providing approx. 190 sites, and there is still land available in the last release in Gwandalan of some 5 years ago.

In fact, had it not been for a private coal company looking for a way to make some extra money for their shareholders, I doubt whether this proposal would have ever seen the light of day.

In some circles the project has been promoted as a way to gain some conservation land in offsets. This has been proven in Court to be a “flawed” method of instigating planning and as such should never have been considered.

Staging.

The recently released draft North Wyong Shire Structure Plan, seems to have clearly recognized the flaws with the current proposal and has dedicated new development in Gwandalan and Summerland Point as Long Term.

It even goes so far as to nominate those areas within Wyong Shire which are dedicated Medium and Short term developments, and specifically excludes Gwandalan from these time frames.

The natural areas for development, such as Warnervale, have now or will have in the near future, the “planned” infrastructure and amenities to cope with the planned increases in population in the Short to Medium term.

It naturally follows that the already rezoned Rosecorp project on Precinct 1A should be allowed to proceed well before the C & A is even considered.

The Rosecorp project was initially hamstrung by some of the same flaws, having been recognized in the 90’s as a site for future residential development, and planned to proceed in approx. 2011.

The developer moved to commence the works far too early, (2004) was rejected by Council Planning Staff and eventually by the courts, and now appears to be in a position to submit final plans in the near future, bringing the time frame into the correct perspective.

This is an example of good forward planning, where need and capacity is recognized by planning authorities, appropriate plans are put in place, and a timetable is observed. The same parameters must be observed with the C & A project.

Coal Extraction.

The current method of mining, subsidence, and repair of housing affected has proved to be an unnecessary, unworkable and biased strategy, where homeowners have to go “Cap in Hand” to beg for some justice from a Mines Subsidence Board.

Evidence shows us that after many attempts, most people walk away unsatisfied and dispirited, sell their property for less than it is worth because of the “stigma” attached following subsidence, and lose all faith in the system.

A far better approach would be to make sure that residential developments do not take place over areas where mining is intended, until such times as the mining and extraction of coal has been completed.

An alternative of course, would be the banning of any mining under residential areas, but I fear that the extraction of coal has more power than suitable planning to avoid subsidence.

Environmental.

I am aware that many other objectors will be concentrating on the thoughtless and wanton destruction of 60ha of bushland, but must protest at the almost certain negative result of 632 houses in the area abutting Crangan Bay.

It is bad enough that development continues adding “bad to worse” in many areas but to risk the despoiling of Crangan Bay is almost a criminal negligence.

Conclusion.

Who knows what will be required for population growth in the next 10, 15, 20 years?

Sure, we can make some predictions, we can pinpoint some suitable residential sites, we can even include some concessions from the mining industry and revise these plans as demand eventuates.

This is called Planning!

To go ahead now or at any stage in the short to medium term with this project, is lunacy, and bears little or no resemblance to Planning.!

To go ahead now is just a collapsing of planning processes under the weight of influential and greedy developers!

The Coal and Allied proposal should be rejected in it's present form!

At best, the project should be "shelved" with the direction that the DOP and/or Council will call for a further submission when the situation requires.

Perhaps in 2025!

Yours faithfully

signed

Bill and Valarie Symington