



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

ABN 38 686 119 087

PO Box 29 Wentworth Falls, NSW, 2782

Phone: (02) 4757 1872

E-Mail: bmcs@bluemountains.org.au Web Site: www.bluemountains.org.au

Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

9 April 2018

Mining and Industry Projects
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Wallerawang Ash Repository MOD 1 [07_0005]

Dear sir or madam,

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society is a community organisation working to achieve the preservation and regeneration of the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains area. The Society has a membership of over 800 people.

The society opposes this proposal because it is sourcing waste material for the capping from Sydney rather than closer to the repository or from the central west region and because it proposes to convey the capping material by truck through the Blue Mountains along Great Western Highway (GWH). The proposal indicates there will be 150 additional truck movements a day for an undefined period of years.

The society understand that the fill material will be used to complete the capping and rehabilitation of the Wallerawang Ash Repository. This is necessary now that Wallerawang Power station is closed and it will relieve local residents who experience ash blowing from the repository.

However, our concern is the traffic impacts on the GWH and the lack of any plan to reduce or prevent this. The GWH is not just a major highway as it also serves as a local and district road and, in places, is the only road connecting towns along the highway. A large number of heavy trucks including large double quarry trucks are already using the highway and this is estimated to keep increasing annually. As well, the upper Blue Mountains is experiencing significant annual growth in tourism visitation from Sydney, much of it by bus travelling on GWH.

The Environmental Assessment states that the proposal's 150 daily truck movements will increase heavy truck traffic by 9% around Hartley, which is a significant increase. The GWH through the Blue Mountains is more heavily used between Glenbrook and Katoomba so, in that part of GWH, there is more opportunity for accidents involving cars

and smaller vehicles making up the tourist and local traffic. Whoever is at fault, heavy vehicles tend to survive crashes better than smaller vehicles. The highway cannot be continually overloaded with more heavy vehicle traffic.

If approved, the Society believes that the consent should be conditioned to require Energy Australia to transport the capping material by rail. Centennial Coal's Springvale Colliery, which is located nearby to the repository, has rail loading facilities. The material for the Repository could be offloaded from rail there and then trucked locally. Coming to a commercial arrangement for rail transport is possible as Energy Australia (EA) already has commercial arrangements with Centennial Coal. For instance, there already is a joint venture between Springvale mine and EA to build the water treatment plant to take Springvale's mine water [SSD 16_7592]. This came about through the approval processes for Springvale Mine extension. The department should require EA to investigate rail transport.

As well, a further increase of heavy truck movements on the GWH is possible very soon. The department will be aware that a proposal to increase truck movements from Austen Quarry is also currently being assessed [Austen Quarry Extension [SSD 6084] - Mod 1]. Austen Quarry is seeking approval for a 50% increase in product extracted which will generate up to 50 more truck movements a day from the quarry on Jenolan Caves Road to various Sydney locations travelling through the Blue Mountains along the GWH. Austen Quarry's extension was only approved three years ago and yet it is already seeking this increase. This combined increase of 200 truck movements a day needs to be taken into account in approving both of these projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Madi Maclean", followed by a period.

Madi Maclean
President