

Community Report and DVD

Wallarrah 2 Coal Project is publishing an 80 page document and a DVD about the project to help members of the community understand how the proposed mine will contribute to the Wyong community.

Neither the document, called *Adding Value – Protecting the Valued*, nor the DVD can address all the detail of the Environmental Assessment report but they can provide an overview of the mine proposal that can be followed up via the full EA document for any detail that is required.

Environment and Community Manager, Peter Smith, said that *Adding Value – Protecting the Valued* contained considerable information for readers and it was an accurate overview of the project.

“We have focused this document on the topics that have attracted most community interest during the consultation processes including water related matters, noise and air amenity and subsidence.”

“Both *Adding Value – Protecting the Valued* and the DVD are being distributed to a wide range of community members but if you would like copies please don’t hesitate to contact me,” Peter Smith said.

Project Goes on Exhibition

The NSW Government has placed the Environmental Assessment report (EA) for the Wallarah 2 Coal Project on exhibition and is inviting community comment.

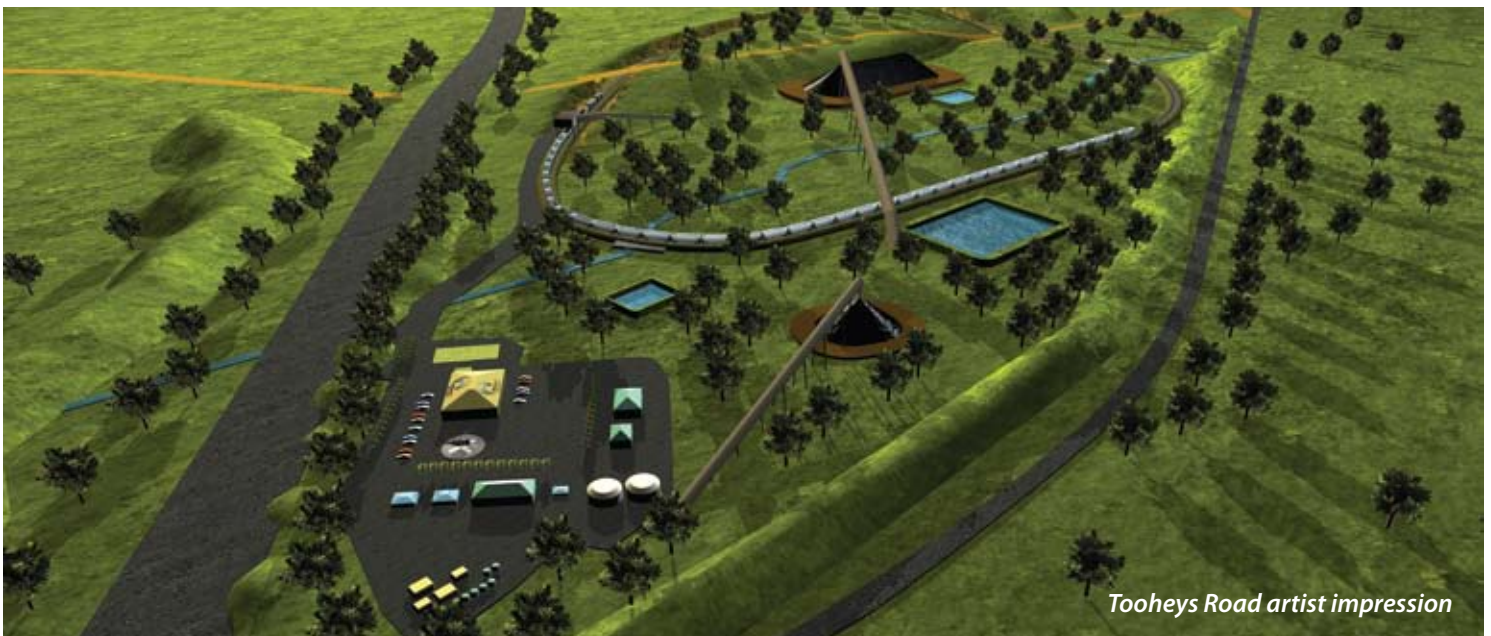
The EA is in four volumes and includes reports from specialists on the diverse range of topics required to be addressed by the Director-General of the Department of Planning.

The EA is the result of more than 13 years of intense research, investigations and studies that have included:

- Subsidence assessment within the proposed mining area;
- Implications for the local water supply scheme;
- Groundwater issues;
- Flooding within the Dooralong and Yarramalong Valleys;
- Social and economic issues;
- Noise impacts;
- Air quality impacts;
- Ecological issues, and;
- Greenhouse issues.

The EA is available on-line at the Department of Planning’s website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au (see under Major Projects Register) and also on the Wallarah 2 Coal website at www.wallarrah.com.au. A hard copy of the EA report can be perused at Wyong Council offices and at the Department of Planning office in Bridge St, Sydney. At both these locations it will be possible to get a copy of the report on CD disk. This allows members of the community access to information that best suits them. Also, the normal 30 day exhibition period for this type of project has been extended to 60 days to ensure all community members and stakeholders have adequate opportunity to review the document and, if desired, make a submission to the Department of Planning.

If you require clarification on any matter within the EA the team at Wallarah 2 Coal Project is more than happy to provide whatever help we are able. Our contact details are on the back page of this newsletter.



Tooheys Road artist impression

Project Details

The owners:

Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture

The project:

An underground coal mine producing about 5 million tonnes a year

Locations:

Extraction area: Wholly within the proclaimed Wyong and Hue Hue Mine Subsidence Districts and deep beneath the Wyong State Forest, Jilliby State Conservation Area and parts of the Dooralong and Yarralong Valleys and Hue Hue areas.

Surface facilities: People access and administration at Buttonderry Coal handling and rail link at Tooheys Road

Timetable:

- If approved construction is expected to begin about 2012
- Mining would begin about 2015
- Total long term mining project is up to 42 years.

Exhibition Details

The Department of Planning has placed the Environmental Assessment report on exhibition from March 31 to June 2, 2010.

It can be viewed at the Department's offices in Bridge Street Sydney, at Wyong Shire Council offices and at the Nature Conservation Council offices in Kent Street Sydney.

The EA is also available from the Tuggerah Offices of Wallarah 2 Coal Project and on line at both www.planning.nsw.gov.au and the Wallarah site www.wallarah.com.au.

CD copies of the EA are also available from the Department and from the Wallarah 2 Coal project team.

Written submissions must reach the Department by June 2, 2010.

In 2009 the NSW Minister for Planning, the Hon Kristina Keneally announced the Department's Environmental Assessment requirements for the project.

The Minister said: "These assessment requirements were written after considering a range of recommendations from the local community, who provided us with feedback earlier this year on the Chikarovski report."

"The inquiry, chaired by former Liberal Opposition Leader Kerry Chikarovski, says mining proposals in the Wyong area can be examined on their merits," Ms Keneally said.

The Minister also said that prior to any determination of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project, the proposal will be put under the microscope by:

- An independent review of the project, including public hearings, conducted by the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC);
- An independent water expert who will review the adequacy of the surface and groundwater data in the sub-catchments affected by the proposal;
- An international peer review of this water review; and
- An extensive community consultation process.

Interested parties have until 2nd June 2010 to provide written comment and submissions on the Environmental Assessment Report.



▲ Location of the W2CP "Tooheys Road" and "Buttonderry Sites":

A Brief Background

Twelve separate exploration programs have been undertaken in the Wyong region since the first drilling was undertaken nearly 130 years ago in 1882.

In 1995 the NSW State Government granted the right to explore the Wyong Coal Development Areas to the Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture.

Drilling by the Joint Venture commenced in June 1996. By its completion in 2002, a total of 352 boreholes had been drilled. Two key coal resource areas were identified. One was the western resource area, a part of which comprises the current proposed extraction area known as the Wallarah 2 Coal Project (W2CP). The second area was the eastern coal reserves beneath Tuggerah Lake. The eastern deposit, although of high quality and potentially viable, requires significantly greater capital investment and is not being considered further at this stage.

The western area resources were assessed for a range of geological, environmental, engineering and economic constraints. A viable project proposal was developed in 2006 and at this time the proposed project was named the W2CP.

Land purchases commenced during the initial drilling and engineering investigations. W2CP owns the land where the majority of its surface facilities and infrastructure will be located. Initially the main coal handling facilities were to be located to the west of the F3 Freeway however, Wyong Shire Council at the time advised that its preference would be for

these facilities to be located on the eastern side of the F3 Freeway in order to facilitate the development of future industrial land. This relocation was considered to also maintain the ecological integrity of the undisturbed lands in the area to the west of the F3 Freeway.

In recognition of the suitability of the Tooheys Road area for industrial use, Wyong Shire Council rezoned a large parcel of land around the Tooheys Road site in 1991 to 4(e) Regional Industrial & Employment Development. This was then followed by the Central Coast Regional Strategy developed by the State government to assist in planning for an anticipated population growth in the region.

Both the Tooheys Road and Buttonderry surface facilities areas are appropriately compatible with the Regional Strategy and the emerging North Wyong Structure Plan. The project has been recognised as an important precursor to further local development in that the project and its accompanying services and infrastructure may attract related essential services to the future employment zone.

Both surface facilities sites are appropriately located outside of the rural valley areas and suitably remote from the main existing and future residential areas.

Importantly, refinements to surface facilities layout and design were made to ensure community concerns about amenity, dust and noise were fully addressed.

Rail Transport and Rail Noise Managed

RailCorp has advised that the existing rail link has sufficient capacity and train paths to transport up to 13 million tonnes per year of coal from mines in the Wyong area. This is about two and a half times the planned production.

The Project has assessed the potential for increased noise impacts along the northern rail line as coal is transported to customers.

Noise modelling has shown that the additional coal trains would not increase the existing LA_{max} levels along the Main Northern Rail Line.

Modelling has shown that the existing LA_{eq,24} hour levels would increase by 1.4dBA. The DECCW LA_{eq} 24 hour 60dBA goal is satisfied at approximately 60 metres from the rail line. The LA_{max} 85 dBA level is predicted to be satisfied at a distance of approximately 100 metres.



▲ Buttonderry Sites artist impression

Identifying What Is Valued

Key requirements of any environmental assessment involve the need to identify and protect many elements including water regimes, local ecology, heritage, community amenity, infrastructure and the built environment.

From the outset of the project, the protection of water regimes has been a focus of high priority and this was emphasised particularly by a drought that developed and impacted significantly on the region.

Jilliby Jilliby Creek and the Wyong River into which it flows are watercourses in the northern section of the Central Coast domestic water supply scheme. Jilliby Jilliby Creek in the Dooralong Valley provides around 11% of the Central Coast water supply (excluding input from the Hunter Water Pipeline which can provide a significant proportion of the water supply in drier times). Protection of these streams has dominated the policy and approach of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project team as it progressed the investigations and studies. This is why no mining will occur beneath the Wyong River and mining beneath Jilliby Jilliby Creek has been designed to safeguard the water supply.

In 2007 the NSW Government established a Strategic Inquiry to consider a number of issues about the potential for further coal mining in the Wyong Shire.

That Inquiry Report released in December 2008 established that there are no significant reasons why coal mining should not be permitted in the Wyong Local Government Area.

The report also said the coal resource in the area is valued at billions of dollars.

The Strategic Inquiry Panel found that mining of this resource is unlikely to compromise in any significant way the

water supply of the Central Coast.

In 2009 the then NSW Minister for Planning, the Hon Kristina Keneally.

Prior to any determination of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project, the proposal will be put under the microscope by:

- An independent review of the project, including public hearings, conducted by the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC);
- An independent water expert who will review the adequacy of the surface and groundwater data in the sub-catchments affected by the proposal;
- An international peer review of this water review; and
- An extensive community consultation process.

Assessment requirements that the Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture was

required to address include:

- Subsidence, with full regard to potential impacts on the surrounding natural and built environment;
- Impact on regional water supplies, surface water, groundwater and flooding;
- Impacts on regional biodiversity;
- Construction and operational noise and vibration;
- Greenhouse gas emissions, including mitigative measures;
- Transport efficiency in relation to the surrounding freight networks
- Impacts on air quality;
- Impacts on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage;
- Visual impacts of surface facilities
- Human health risks with regard to air quality, noise and drinking water quality
- Waste outputs and rehabilitation; and
- Social and economic impacts.



Contact Us

We hope you find the newsletter valuable but as always we welcome your inquiries and comments that you can direct either by:

Telephone: 02 4352 7500
Email: info@wallarah.com.au
Website: www.wallarah.com.au

Interview: Our offices are at 25 Bryant Drive, Tuggerah.
You are welcome to visit but it is advisable to telephone first to ensure the person who can best help is available.