



Tuesday 31 January 2012

Letter to the Editor of the Newcastle Herald

Your editorial and accompanying cartoon regarding approval for the expansion of Centennial Coal's Myuna Colliery (*Newcastle Herald*, Opinion & Analysis 25/1/12) are incorrect and misleading.

The project was approved by the independent Planning Assessment Commission – not the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, as your editorial states.

You highlight potential impacts on the lake bed ecology and concerns raised by the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority. It is common for public agencies to specify areas for attention (nine of the 15 submissions received were from public bodies). This does not automatically disqualify a project; it simply means these issues need to be thoroughly addressed.

In its assessment of the application, the department gave considerable attention to these concerns. In fact, the CMA varied its position after changes to Myuna's proposed mine plan and subsidence management (set out in Centennial's response to submissions). The CMA did not continue its objection.

The cartoon was also misleading in suggesting that houses are in danger of being inundated by subsiding lake shores.

The mine proposal involves no subsidence of residential land, the lake foreshore zone, or the seagrass beds fringing Lake Macquarie. All of these areas have been protected under the mine plan and the Commission's approval.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Pearson
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