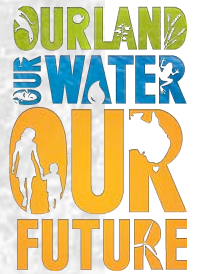


Subject : Worth Saving - Calga, Central Coast

09/09/2015



Dear Lucy

I understand that you are currently making representation in relation to the above.

I would like to humbly remind you that both the State government and Federal government have given undertakings to protect the ground water supplies of our community. The fact that the proposed expansion of the above sand quarry involves the removal of a large section of the ground water aquifer will have very significant impacts for our community. I fail to understand, therefore, how either the State or Federal governments are meeting their commitment to protect our water supplies. As the Central Coast has been on some level of water restrictions for the last decade, there is clearly a fundamental need for both levels of Government on both sides to come good on their commitments.

The above expansion should not be allowed to proceed based on the above fundamental issue of ground water alone. This is not the only major issue affected by this proposal, there are several more:

There is the loss and destruction of significant sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage including the whole topography of the proposed expansion, which has significant spiritual and cultural significance to the indigenous population. Again, both State and Federal governments have made commitments to be more inclusive and take account of the indigenous populations fundamental human rights. Yet again this would seem to be lacking in this proposal with the government prepared to sanction the destruction of significant aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage. I could easily digress here with the appalling treatment of Aboriginal communities in Western Australia and the "recognise" campaign to give First Nation Australians constitutional recognition whilst at the very same time this disgraceful behaviour continues. Keeping things in perspective to the Central Coast Lucy, any forward movement in regard to this issue would be considered very positive by all the community. I would also make mention that in 2009 Australia signed the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Rights but is yet to do one single thing in support of this declaration. It is time the rights of our first nation brothers and sisters be treated with real respect through tangible actions, the eyes of the global community are well and truly upon us all.

As a further digression from the Central Coast issue please be aware that Mr Greg Hunt is currently sitting with a Section 9 & 10 for Lawler's Well in the Leard State Forest. (Whitehaven Coal) This is the last remaining sacred site for the Gomeroi Nation as the other nine documented sites have now been completely destroyed, including burial grounds and other places of sacred significance. I have witnessed this first hand and walked with these people, unfortunately many of our politicians have not. If I continued to mention every desecration of first nation culture and heritage in Australia this letter would become a veritable book of shame.

The Calga mine expansion will also have a significant impact on the native fauna and flora including the spotted Quoll and hanging swamps, as just two examples. I would also mention that many spiritual groups consider protection of the environment paramount, the Uniting Church for example includes the right of civil disobedience in their constitution where issues of social injustice are concerned. Calga is one such issue and it is only a matter of time before these groups converge. I was with the head moderator of the Uniting Church only one week ago and Father Rod in our local Gosford community is also part of our fast growing network of concerned community groups.

The local agricultural land and local agricultural industry, which will be put at risk by falling bore water supply as a result of the destruction of the ground water aquifer at Calga cannot be underestimated. The entire greater Mangrove Mountain District has declared itself gasfield free by an independent participative democratic survey. These people recognise the value of water resources and they too are united with the many other concerned local groups.

The other significant impact would be on the immediate neighbour to the proposed expansion, the Walkabout Wildlife Park and its eco tourism business. This is a major tourism business which employs local people and attracts tens of thousands of visitors to the Central Coast annually. The owners of this business Tassin and Gerard Barnard have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars building this business which, by its very nature, is incompatible with being in close proximity to a sand quarry. These same people have also had their funds decimated fighting a legal battle against the sand quarry, even if they win they lose those funds forever, where is the justice in that? The sand quarry is a literal hole in the ground and is of no benefit whatsoever to the local community. To a large degree these lovely people, have lost their beautiful dreams, hopes and aspirations. We are hoping to help fundraise to return some stability back to this appalling situation.

As our Local Member I would ask you to raise this matter with both your Federal and State colleagues with a view to ensuring this project is not allowed to proceed when taking into account the above significant issues and weighing them against the benefits of which I can see next to none. The arguments for this quarry simply do not stack up and they defy all logic to all demographics. In addition we ask that this land be protected in a similar way to the sensitive area of land in the Cumberland Plains Woodland, which was afforded such protection.

We would welcome your comments on the above and your personal views on the proposed expansion and the risks it poses to our water supply, aboriginal cultural heritage, native fauna and flora, agricultural industries, tourism and the Walkabout Wildlife Park specific.

I hope you are able to use your position to support the wishes of our Central Coast community. People everywhere are waking up Lucy and protection of our water, agricultural land, cultural heritage, the environment and all long term sustainable infrastructure is paramount to our future and our physical and mental well being.

Please understand there is no economy without an environment and any argument to suggest otherwise is fast losing any credibility within significant groups of our community.

Much respect

Paul Robert Burton
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