



Caroona Coal Action Group Inc.

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CCAG NEWSLETTER NEWSFLASH!!!!

- At last! Is the tide beginning to turn???!!!! A leaked report by the State Government Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) received by the CCAG on Friday afternoon, vindicates all CCAG's worst fears and concerns regarding the adequacy of the State Government Planning Process in relation to coal mines.
- The report cites many instances of environmental degradation and destruction at the hands of both open-cut and underground coal mines currently in Australia.
- The report slams the inadequacies of the current State Government planning process, and reiterates the need for "strategic planning and inter-agency dialogue to ensure a whole of government approach and strategic assessment of current and potential mining areas".
- The report cites subsidence damage caused by BHP Billiton in its underground mining in the Southern Coalfields as "devastating", and goes so far as to state that "impacts related to subsidence are very difficult to rehabilitate. "Rehabilitation is not suitable to address many impacts from underground mining".
- The report discusses damage caused by underground subsidence mining in detail, and states "currently there is no balance between how coal is extracted and actively avoiding or minimizing impacts".
- The report re-iterates CCAG's position on off-site impacts, stating "there is a need to consider the cumulative effects of ... mining operations".
- With the purchase of a local property now confirmed, BHP Billiton and Minister Macdonald can no longer hide behind the premise that this is "just exploration". A **huge** coal mine development is being planned here near Caroona, and this report from one of their own Government agencies confirms that the State Government Planning Process is totally flawed and inadequate to protect this area and its rich environmental assets from serious and debilitating damage.
- The report acknowledges "**Coal mining is a temporary land use. As a result, areas impacted by mining must be appropriately managed to make them safe and suitable for other future land uses.**"
- Landholders remain ready to negotiate access based on the CCAG Access Agreement which holds BHP Billiton to its own published standard of "zero harm", and will not be bullied into accepting anything less.
- The situation is now urgent, and CCAG has again written to Ministers Peter Draper, George Souris and Tony Windsor to gain their public support for a fully independent, catchment wide study of the groundwater and surface water flows of this region **prior** to any further mining exploration or development taking place.
- The CCAG Committee is meeting on Wednesday for a Strategic Planning Day. It is hoped to have a community meeting shortly after to update the community on the next crucial steps.
- In the meantime, letters and support for an independent study to our local members would be most welcome.
- Visit our updated website regularly to get the latest news and links. www.ccag.org.au
- The CCAG committee appreciates your support. Stay tuned!!

"We must ensure mining does not destroy our environment, agricultural production, people's livelihoods, health and attachment to the land"