

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Sunday 15 December 2013**

### **Moolarben Coal silent on expansion plans around The Drip**

Mudgee District Environment Group (MDEG) calls on Moolarben Coal to explain future expansion plans to the community instead of running an expensive advertising campaign that claims to protect The Drip.

'While MDEG is concerned about the impacts of the underground mine to the south of The Drip, approved in 2007, greater problems will occur if the mine expands to the north,' said Bev Smiles, chairperson of MDEG.

'Moolarben has already conducted exploration drilling to the north of The Drip where sensitive groundwater systems occur that support this water dependent feature.'

'Further drilling is proposed within 330 metres of The Drip plus an additional 16 exploration holes on 'Gleniston'. This property is on the Goulburn River to the east and north of The Drip where Colin and Julia Imrie run an ecotourism business. Moolarben Coal has served notice on Colin and Julia to gain compulsory access to explore for coal on their land above The Drip.'

Members of MDEG met with the Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Planning, Craig Baumann, in May 2012. He informed the group that Moolarben Coal has plans to build a tunnel under the river.

'MDEG does not support any further mining impacts in the area. The inclusion of all the land surrounding The Drip into the Goulburn River National Park is the only way to avoid future irreversible impacts,' said Ms Smiles.

'If Moolarben Coal genuinely wishes to protect The Drip they would not be proposing an unconnected 0.75 hectare strip of National Park; a State Conservation Area where mining can continue whilst retaining 17 hectares of The Drip land for Moolarben Coal operations.'

MDEG maintains that the community deserves to be informed about the future plans of Moolarben Coal so that the current proposal can be fully understood.

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