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Submission by Kelia Keogh

for the Wallarah 2

Planning & Assessment Commission Hearing

3rd November 2017

When the white people's ancestors came to this land that we are standing on, they violently stole this land from the Indigenous peoples that lived and farmed here for thousands of years. When they did that, they didn't just steal a commodity that is quickly replaceable, they stole the birthrights of all those who came after that - a birthright to belong to the land, to be in deep connection to Mother Earth, to the lifetime 'sense of place & home' that comes with knowing deep in your blood and bones, that you are a custodian and trustee of inter-connected eco-systems, that don't just exist all around you, but flow through the centre of your being.

Connectedness.

Belonging.

Heart & Soul.

HOME.

This is what our ancestors violently stole.

And this could have been forgivable , if as a race, we stopped doing this, and made amends.

I have worked hard for the last 35yrs to act differently than my ancestors, and to make amends through my actions. Ive worked hard to learn how to be a worthy Custodian and Steward of Mother earth. And I work hard everyday to provide an environment around my children that allows them to stay connected firmly to their innate sense to look after the land, the wildlife, the water, the trees. All of our our ancestors belonged to to the land at some point in history. Mine and my childrens birthright has been taken as well. It is a fundamental human birthright of all the people in this community, to say that WE DO NOT CONSENT TO THIS WALLARAH 2 MINE GOING AHEAD, in any way, shape or form. And for you as representatives to the community, to listen to us and act in accordance.

I want you to look my daughter in the eye, and tell her.....when this madness is going to stop? I implore you, please think of the inhabitants of the future, and do not let this mine proceed. Protect Our Land, Our Water, and Our Future.

In closing, in the words of Jarmbe Githabul....

"Before colonisation, this land ran on wisdom. It ran on what people actually need to survive. It ran on the understanding that we can't live without the Earth. Not an Earth that's been mucked up like this (by mining), an Earth that's natural and healthy. tell me, if you could ever picture walking out there (through land that has been mined), on that same patch of land, and ever being able to find food again? Could anyone ever expect that? Coal is a natural fertiliser for the above ground plants. You take that out, and the above ground plants will not grow again. Ever. This

place is going to be worse than the desert. At least in the desert, there's food around. All those blokes down there that work for the mining company, think they're doing this work to feed their families. They're stealing from them."

Please say no to this mine.

Thankyou, Kelia xxx