

Hon Dale Last MP  
Minister for Natural Resources and Mines  
By Email: [resources@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:resources@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Cc: Graham Fraine, Director-General, Department of Natural Resources and Mines  
By Email: [dgdirect@resources.qld.gov.au](mailto:dgdirect@resources.qld.gov.au)

30 May 2025

Dear Minister,

**RE: Ensham Coal life of mine extension project – Mining Lease Application 700061**

We write in relation to the Queensland Land Court recommendation following its hearing on an application for a mining lease (**ML**) and objections under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989 (MR Act)* for the Ensham Life of Mine Extension Project<sup>1</sup>.

Environmental Advocacy in Central Queensland (**EnvA**) is a regionally based association concerned about the risks associated with coal mining, coal seam gas and climate change. We made a submission on the proposed thermal coal project<sup>2</sup> and subsequently submitted an objection to the granting of an ML. Due to resource constraints, we were unable to participate as active objectors during the court proceedings and relied solely on our written submission.

Nevertheless, we welcomed the Land Court's independent and thorough assessment, which aligned with our concerns. The Court found that the mine extension would contribute to greenhouse gas (**GHG**) emissions and that the proponents had no meaningful mitigation measures in place. Ultimately, the Court recommended that the mining lease *"not be approved unless and until the applicants show real and significant progress towards mitigating their GHG emissions."*

This case clarified the Land Court's obligation to consider environmental and human rights impacts even in the absence of active objectors, reaffirming its role in safeguarding the public interest and setting evidentiary standards for projects with climate impacts. The decision sends a clear message: coal mining proposals in Queensland must demonstrate tangible and credible action toward emissions reduction to merit approval.

The Ensham coal proposal seeks to extend the life of a thermal coal project that is no longer needed to meet domestic demand. International markets are also shifting rapidly away from thermal coal. Granting this lease would enable further unnecessary emissions, contributing to the intensification of extreme heat events, bushfires, storms, and coral bleaching. If Queensland and Australia are serious about achieving emissions reduction targets and protecting communities and ecosystems, decision-makers must stop approving new or expanded fossil fuel projects.

**In line with the Land Court's recommendation, we urge you to reject the mining lease application for the Ensham Life of Mine Extension Project.**

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<sup>1</sup> [Re Sungela Pty Ltd & Anor \[2025\] QLC 5](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Proposed Coal mining operation – Mining Lease Application Number 700061](#)



We also take this opportunity to express our concern over the Queensland Government's decision to withdraw funding from the Environmental Defenders Office (**EDO**). Organisations like ours which are volunteer-based and resource-constrained depend on the EDO's legal advice and representation to participate meaningfully in planning and legal processes. The withdrawal of public funding from the EDO disproportionately impacts regional communities and undermines fair access to justice in development assessments involving powerful resource companies. Please consider reinstating this funding to provide small groups and landholders access to the resources required to challenge inappropriate developments.

Thank you for considering our views on this matter of public interest. We remain committed to engaging constructively in Queensland's development decisions to help ensure a safe climate and a healthy environment for current and future generations.

Kind regards,



Dr Coral Rowston  
Director  
Environmental Advocacy in Central Queensland Inc.