

# Water worries confirmed

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THE NSW Office of Water has told Ashton Coal its proposed open-cut **mine** south of Camberwell village poses potential risks to **Hunter** River water-use systems and alluvium areas near Glennies Creek.

It has called for the coal company to rethink the **mine's** proposed layout.

But Ashton has dismissed the concerns, and says it has expert advice that the new **mine** would have little effect on water systems.

The Newcastle Herald this week reported concerns from farmers and other water users that the state government might approve open-cut **mines** on alluvial floodplains.

The NSW Farmers' Association wants a freeze on such proposals and longwall mining within 150 metres of a creek.

In documents lodged with the NSW Department of Planning, the state's water office expresses similar concerns in relation to the Ashton project, a new open-cut south of its existing operations.

The water office said it believed the western aspect of the new pit would directly intercept an alluvial groundwater area of Glennies Creek.

There was the "potential risk of significant inflows" from the alluvium into the proposed open-cut and a future backfilled pit, the office said.

The **mine's** layout should be modified to provide greater protection, the submission recommended.

The coal company said in a report that expert investigations it commissioned showed the project would have only minimal effects on Glennies Creek.

The experts had consulted the water office as part of the work, Ashton said.

The company also said it would offset any effects on downstream **Hunter** River users of reduced flows through the use of a water licence.

It would acquire all necessary water allocations and develop a groundwater-management plan.