**Background: Wallarah 2 coal mine project and NSW politics.**

* Wallarah 2 is a proposed 5 million tonnes per annum longwall thermal coal mine in the Dooralong Valley near Wyong. The proponent is South Korean company Kores.
* The proposal has been fought by the Wyong community since it emerged a decade ago, due to the major risks it poses to the Central Coast's drinking water supply.
* The Central Coast Water Corporation, Wyong Council, and several government agencies have expressed opposition or concerns with the proposal.
* In the campaign for the 2011 NSW Election, the mine was a high profile issue on the Central Coast. The Liberal Party ran a strong campaign based on opposition to the project.
* This included local candidates, including Chris Hartcher – later Mineral Resources Minister – joining then-Liberal leader Barry O'Farrell to pose in 'Water Not Coal' campaign shirts, and pledging their 'determination' to stop the mine once in government.
* In a speech in 2009, O'Farrell promised not only to stop the Wallarah 2 mine, but to ban all mining in water catchments in NSW: “no ifs, not buts: a guarantee.”
* Less than a month before the March 2011 election, then-Labor Planning Minister Tony Kelly rejected the original development application for the Wallarah 2 mine[[1]](#footnote-1).
* On October 2011, six months after the Coalition won government, Kores resubmitted the Wallarah 2 development application, with the exact same mining plan that had been rejected earlier[[2]](#footnote-2).
* In the period since the election, the Liberal Party, in particular O'Farrell and Hartcher, have retreated from their promises to stop the Wallarah 2 mine.
* In February 2012, then Premier O'Farrell ‘dropped in’ on a meeting between then-Mineral Resources Minister Hartcher, now-disgraced Liberal Party fundraiser and lobbyist Nick Di Girolamo, and Kores President Kim Shin-Jong[[3]](#footnote-3).
* In March 2012, Kores hired Western Strategic Consulting, Di Girolamo's lobbying firm[[4]](#footnote-4).
* In November and December 2012, then-Minister Hartcher travelled with Di Girolamo to South Korea to meet with the CEO of Kores[[5]](#footnote-5).
* In December 2013, Di Girolamo hosted Hartcher and Kores Director Jung Ki Lee at a dinner at Di Girolamo's home[[6]](#footnote-6).
* In February 2014, Department of Planning released a preliminary recommendation to approve the mine, and it is currently being considered by the NSW Planning and Assessment Commission
* The final determination on the proposed mine will come from the Planning Assessment Commission, by delegated authority from the Planning Minister, currently Pru Goward.
1. <http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/page/development-categories/mining--petroleum---extractive-industries/mining/?action=view_job&job_id=2150> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/page/development-categories/mining--petroleum---extractive-industries/mining/?action=view_job&job_id=4974> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/barry-ofarrell-dropped-in-on-meeting-attended-by-nick-di-girolamo-and-chris-hartcher-20140226-33i5u.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Media statement from Kores, 28th April 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/chris-hartcher-travelled-to-s-korea-with-lobbyist-nick-di-girolamo/story-fn59niix-1226896473811> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/barry-ofarrell-dropped-in-on-meeting-attended-by-nick-di-girolamo-and-chris-hartcher-20140226-33i5u.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)