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## PRESENTATION TO THE IPC FEBRUARY 27TH 2019

Thank you for permitting me to address you regarding this vitally important matter.

My name is Timothy Littlemore. Ten years ago my wife and I bought land in Exeter, built a home and a garden and looked forward to our future here.

The news that a new coal mine might be dug beneath our feet threatened our future and more importantly the future of all those in the Highlands. The threat posed by Posco / Hume Coal has hung over our heads for eight long years. Once we became aware of that threat we joined the throng of locals determined to stop the mine.

So the fight began ..... rallies, speeches, legal advice, scientific expertise and to support all of this ... fundraising. The land holders in and around Sutton Forest were soon joined by others in the Highlands, then by the community in general. The bills increased and so did the contributions. From raffles, garden days, lunches, dinners. an art union and more requests to Highlanders which were always met with open wallets. The farmers, the wine makers, horse lovers, function centres visitors and committed locals .... help came from everyone. While the scientists evaluated the impact of the mine I was part of the fundraising team which involved talking to many Highlanders, almost all of whom wanted to help. To date The Land Owners, the Coal Free Southern Highlands team and its predecessor have raised and spent well over two million dollars. Then a few of years ago when Hume Coal held one of their rare information sessions in village halls they held one in Berrima and the group 'Battle For Berrima' was formed [thanks Hume Coal]. Together we were and are determined to beat off the intruder.

One of the first indications that the Highlands were facing great danger was shown in Hume Coal's cavalier attitude to water, revealed at the public meetings which they held, when they advised us all that they would require so much water for their processes ..... "**that 93 bores would be seriously affected**". However they had a plan. They would **make good** to each farmer by ... **plan A** a giant pipe line bringing the missing water to all 93 bore holders, traversing the Highlands either above or below ground [if the invaded landholders agreed ??] ....

..... then **plan B**, trucking in the water to replace what they had taken, hundreds of huge trucks on our roads each week. .... or **plan C** to come onto 73 properties and deepen the bores so that more water could be removed. But wait .... the water scientists disputed their statistics .... many more trucks or pipes or bores would be required .... where would this end ? .... and from where would the water come ? Hume Coal has **never** answered any of the emerging questions.

Then there is the question of **democracy** ..... Hume stated that the great majority of Highlanders are against the mine .... we certainly know that this is true .... why isn't this enough ? shouldn't a community have the right if they say NO and have their decision honoured .... isn't that what happens in a democracy ? why should the majority opinion not be honoured ?

Water is the most precious element in our lives, risking what we have here in the Highlands is madness. Doing so for someones profit is obscene. If this project is approved, where will it stop ?

**If the Hume Coal project is approved ... "what am I going to tell my grandchildren" every one of us carries the burden of giving them a better life than we had. A cleaner world with less pollution, more positive prospects .... we must aim for utopia not destroy what we have.**

**I ask the Panel to indorse the DOP's recommendation "that the project not be approved"**

Timothy Littlemore 