**VICARY COAL MINE OBJECTION | JULY 2020**

This is a new mine not an extension, so it is a deceptive proposal from the start. Its location in the productive farming district of Boggabri, with a new rail connection that will cross the Namoi River and its floodplain is unacceptable. Farming & food production should never be sacrificed for mining. Agriculture’s contribution to our economy should be recognised especially given our clean green credentials and Australian food security. The Covid19 pandemic has brought to the fore the imperative of being self-reliant in food production & processing.

Narrabri Council has formally objected to the project, due to its social impacts on the Boggabri district, already reeling from the depopulation of farms by Whitehaven’s nearby Maules Creek coal mine. If local council has rejected the project, there should be no further action to push a mine on our rural communities already negatively impacted by mining.

This mine would mine 168 million tonnes of coal, at a rate of up to 10 million tonnes per year. One third of it will be thermal coal and will be burned for electricity overseas. Altogether, if it goes ahead, this mine will add 370 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere.

Water is a most precious commodity in Australia. The Department of Planning admits it might run out of water in dry times. To feed its thirst for water, Whitehaven’s nearby Maules Creek coal mine has already taken water illegally, outbid local farmers for water at auction and built pipelines from nearby farms to divert farming water for mining. This is unacceptable. Building another water hungry coal mine in the parched Namoi should not even be considered especially when history shows us that mining is given preference over the needs of farming & farmers & in some cases their water usage has been illegal.

Why would planning approval be given to Whitehaven proposal to pile mine spoil on top of 202 ha of the Namoi alluvial aquifer when the Department of Planning Industry & Environment’s own Water Division has stated it does not support because the presence of acid forming materials in the spoil will mean heavy metals could leach into the aquifer below?