

The Independent Planning Commission of
New South Wales.
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000.
13 June 2018.

By email: pac@pac.nsw.gov.au

**Rix's Creek Mine Extension Project
Letter of Support
Submitted by Brett Lewis**

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the Rix's Creek Mine Extension. I have been an employee of The Bloomfield Group for more than a decade. I have held a number of management positions and am currently the CEO. I believe this experience puts me in an excellent position to make a submission.

For almost 30 years, The Bloomfield Group's Rix's Creek mine has –

- consistently produced coal for the export market
- paid a steady stream of royalties to the NSW government
- provided stable employment, with most residing locally or in the neighbouring regions
- as part of the broader Bloomfield Group, invested in the community's future by providing training opportunities for apprentices, university graduates and recently trainee operators
- successfully built relationships and proactively worked with immediate neighbours and the broader Singleton community
- supported the communities in which it operates through consistent, generous and well planned contributions in cash and in kind, and
- operated at the forefront of environmental performance and innovation.

I believe that the points set out above would be seconded by anyone who is familiar with The Bloomfield Group.

The performance and behaviours listed above are entirely consistent with how The Bloomfield Group has, for more than 80 years, conducted itself at its original mining operation at the Bloomfield Mine near Maitland....and underpin why and how the Bloomfield Mine remains operating today.

The grant of the new consent, as recently recommended by the Department of Planning and Environment, will enable the operation to respond and survive in an increasingly competitive market while at the same time maintaining leading environmental and community performance.

In the future, as the mine progresses, the operations will move further away from the outskirts of Singleton so the potential for impacts on this community will naturally diminish. However by continuously reviewing its noise and dust mitigation strategies, made possible by the early

adoption of emerging technologies, the Mine is committed to even further reduce the potential for impacts on all of its neighbours.

The majority of the site yet to be mined was cleared of its native vegetation more than a century ago by graziers and is currently used for low stock level beef cattle production. Rehabilitation currently completed on the site has again returned the land to a standard that supports grazing as well as providing nature corridors with demonstrated success in supporting native species. The proposed rehabilitation builds on the success of this rehabilitation format.

Last week, together with a number of other representatives of Rix's Creek Mine and The Bloomfield Group, I attended the public hearing conducted by the Independent Planning Commission in Singleton so that we might observe and understand the process. It seemed that, leaving aside the representatives of special interest groups who were invited by the Commission to speak, there was no-one in attendance at that hearing who opposed the project.

By the time the available resource in the Rix's Creek Mine is fully extracted and rehabilitation completed, The Bloomfield Group will have been successfully mining for more than 100 years. The Bloomfield Group has had a long and impressive record of leading performance in mining as well as in environmental and community matters.

Rix's Creek Mine is, unlike many other mines in the Hunter Valley, not located proximate to any of viticulture, horse studs or prime agricultural land.

There is no apparent alternate activity or land use other than mining that could be undertaken on this site that could bring better outcomes to the immediate community as well as the State.

The Continuation application seeks to enable the Company to continue its demonstrated and effective stewardship of the site until at least the completion of the open cut resource. The continuation of the mine will maintain the tangible and significant benefits to the employees, company, local community and NSW Government. The submission to the Department of Planning is comprehensive, supported and addresses potential issues through carefully considered mitigations or controls.

Given all of the points set out above, I unreservedly support the Rix's Creek Mine Extension application.