

Qualifications B. Eng (hons), EIT ~~Alumni~~  
Senior Civil Engineer. Over 10 years, just mining. ①

Hello my name is Karen Barlow, I have been working in the mining industry for over 10 years. I have been involved in not only the design of new mines but also mine expansions. I am currently working in a mining team of around 20 people were and I am the only civil lead responsible for the civil design. I love my job and I love the fact that I work for an international company. I get to work on projects for mines in developing countries and I set guidelines where often there are none.

I am here today to support my family and I am here because I also believe there is a need for balance between mining and the agriculture industry. I am constantly surprised by the lack of curtesy and disrespect given to the smaller of the communities.

When reading the EIS I understood that the noise levels for one of my families properties is "Significant". I believe yesterday we heard enough evidence to suggest from previous experience this modelling is under-exaggerated and without re-hashing the same information as my written submission I am certain that all properties will end up being "Significant". The Namoi river was not modelled and could add anywhere between 0.5 to 2 more decibels and even then true effects may not be captured. Only someone that lives here would understand the river is the serpent that speaks at night as it reflects sound along it's river banks.

I would also like to add that I have concerns when mines promise to keep machinery (especially dozers) to certain gear levels that in practise we know doesn't happen. Dozers operators tend to want to use gears that are efficient, and who would blame them. They are renowned to not follow restrictions, especially at night. I do not know if this mine has restricted gear operations for approvals. I would like this to be looked at. I would like sound to be re-modelling with the river, and machinery operations modelled for efficiency and not what is needed to keep the levels below "significant". I would also like any noisy infrastructure in close proximity to the river to be designed in detail, such as pumps.

Based on the EPA guidelines for "Significant" levels there must be voluntary acquisition or some type of commercial agreement with the owners. This is because when levels are this high the mine can no longer adequately mitigate and those exposed will suffer sleep disturbance. I felt that the mines EIS purposely mislead the government indicating commercial agreement and everyone keeps talking about there is always "acquisition rights". Please stop dropping "voluntary" from the guideline. What rights are people being given if they are being forced out by lack of sleep or dust levels that cause harm? Their rights just got removed. Voluntary just disappeared clearly. The reality is if you squeeze someone hard enough they will sell the foundation beneath their feet. That is their SOLE. The <sup>IPCS</sup> ~~panels~~ purposes is too not approve the mining plan unless conditions are reasonable. If conditions are unreasonable people have forced acquisition and the intent of <sup>the IPCS</sup> protection has failed.

I cannot account for the amount of times there has been banter around a mines table at risk workshop, about complaining farmers, when let's face it there are actually

birds called "Noisy Miners". If there was better boundaries in place we would not have these issues and there would be greater harmony for everyone. On a side note I have submitted designs for infrastructure just 10m off banks of a major tributaries because 40m is a guideline and it was requested. This can happen with the Namoi. The reality of this industry is that we do not account for those around us, and the general attitude is if they don't like it they can move. If this is not true, then can someone tell me why in over 10 years of design have I never been asked to consider my neighbour and I have not known anyway else to have been asked. This is not the country way.

I throw together stockpiles, haul roads, conveyor alignments, rail loops and MIAs and ROM pad (you name it) and when I put together design for approvals its more obvious where the trees are. It was just on Friday that I asked if I could move a million metred cubed stockpile away from a densely forested area that was marked to be protected. The comments were we can put it near the MIA; here next the the village. Strangely through my families recent experience I found myself saying you cannot put a stockpile directly near people. The public wouldn't realise there isn't actually any basic guidelines for allowances or offsets for these kinds of things, mitigation occurs after design and is not built into it. If Boggabri struggles to get dust monitoring its hard to think about some village in third world country? These attitudes have to change. We can do better. We can design better, but it has to come from top down.

The reality is my family is the Australian Satire, called the "Castle" but instead of the Barlow Cooperation being taken to the high Court of Australia, we are the Barlow Cooperation (some people in this district might remember we used to live next to the Carrigions). It's difficult for people to believe that someones "whitehaven" is to live next to a noisy mine. I understand its believed in the mining industry that people just complain because they just want a larger payout, however we just want better boundaries. We don't want a forced land acquisition.

In industry there must be equality between two individuals that seek private gain regardless of size. Mines used to have precedence over industry because the resources was sort for public use. This idea still seems to linger. Even if "voluntary" drops off acquisition, or "public" drops off resources the government (and individual parties) can be called into account. The RULE OF LAW is the LAW that founds our justice system, and ensures the government and other parties obey and don't become a LAW upon themselves. If it's not the feeling of JUST, or cannot be JUSTIFIED, then it will not be of JUSTICE as these three words come from the same origin. The LAW can be understood by the uneducated, the CASTLE wasn't entirely a joke, because you just have to understand a single emotion.

*You cannot justify the right of an individual over the right of others*

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Mining can add considerable wealth to a community but it also goes the other way too. Too much mining can loose a community; especially if it's a mine that is not respectful. I have lived in agricultural towns that are now considered as mining towns. I can tell you that as a designer it was Gunnedahs infrastructure that brought the mines here, along with the existence of coal. It is not the other way around. It's cheaper to use someones infastructure. Agriculture is the backbone of this

community however this can change and I hear enough evidence that this saying this weight will be too great.

Lastly Kurrumbede. Please protect our heritage and the land that goes with it. I ask that the same laws that apply to property be applied to land heritage and that 500 ares be separated with this homestead. A property without land is like a house without windows. My family is 6th generation to this local area, that is over 100 years of our heritage.

Soul

3rd on [redacted] place by water.