

## Aaron Brown

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**From:** Shirley Urquhart [REDACTED]  
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**Categories:** Aaron

“Of droughts and flooding rains “, Dorothea’s words ring true and are very significant to this proposal- a proposal threatening to risk the very property , Kurrumbede, , where Dorothea found inspiration to pen her iconic poem , “ My Country”.

At the recent meeting held at Boggabri it was stated that no good environmental outcome can come from this proposal . We endorse this statement re the new Vickery mine, rail spur , coalloader and bore field made by parent company Whitehaven.

It was heartening to hear Brian Preston , refuse approval for a new mine , Rocky Hill at Gloucester using the further emission of greenhouse gases and the affect this would have have on the global warming process , to justify his decision .

The Nandewar ranges, now are shrouded permanently in a dusty haze ???with constant blasting and emissions. We were also very interested to hear of the grounds the NSW Planning Dept refused the Hume Coal mine , an unsustainable development where there were concerns for the ability to mitigate the harm of contamination to surface and groundwater.

These are very real concerns to landowners fighting this new mine, rail spur , coal loader , 10 bore field , virtually on the banks of the Namoi River - a real threat to water security of this entire valley. This river , along with Lake Keepit is almost dry . The mine assured us it doesn’t use as much water as cotton growers . We are not irrigators and question this - a mine that pumps precious water 24 hours a day , 7 days a week to wash coal to send to Asia , wet roads for heavy vehicle movement??

Last week a train was derailed in floodwaters in Queensland with no way to determine contamination to local waters.

This scenario could easily occur if this projected rail spur , with no details of construction in the very transparent EIS , is allowed to be constructed across a floodplain and over the Namoi River.

Paul Flynn, CEO of Whitehaven, in his opening address to the IPC stated that this proposal had a “small footprint “- a proposal that intends to extract a further 10 million tonnes of coal a year ?

- stretches its tentacles from Maules Creek to Emerald Hill ?

- Leaves a huge toxic void ?

- threatens contamination and the future health of the Namoi River .?

We question his choice of words.

We have been assured there would be no impacts on private bores. Neighbours to Maules Creek mine and Werris Creek mine , run by Whitehaven , have had their bores run dry , bores that have never run dry previously and survived many droughts . These landowners have NO water for stock.

Tim Muldoon, speaking on behalf of Whitehaven said that the Coal Industry is a heavily regulated industry.

We are not assured that this is the case and have no confidence as Whitehaven have a history of noncompliance and Maules creek is on Level 3 - the highest risk category - and has the dubious honour of sharing this category with only 2 other mines out of 49.

We hear of jobs this mine will bring to the area .Why then, does Whitehaven have such a high percentage of staff turnaround ? Aren’t they investigating driverless trucks for their mines ?

We found that all those who spoke in favour of the proposal , either Whitehaven employees, businesses that had been approached by Whitehaven to speak on their behalf , land owners bought out by Whitehaven and dangled a carrot of leasing further property , spoke only in terms of monetary gain .

Will the young, educated professional employees of Whitehaven be prepared to compromise their health , be happy to live in Gunnedah when air quality is severely polluted if this proposal is allowed to proceed?

Coffee shops in the Main Street . We heard of these benefits in several speeches on Wednesday . No water, no coffee!!!, Gunnedah is a town that relies on bore water??

Whitehavens commitment to preserve Kurrumbede is a hollow promise. As a member of the Dorothea Mackellar Society , who has heard other promises and commitments made by Whitehaven , I am not convinced this will happen . We have no t rust in this company At Wednesday's meeting I was shocked to hear one speaker say that agriculture had no future in this valley . We, the farmers of the area. , has not twisted the arms of businesses in our area , offered bribes , written speeches for businesses reliant on agriculture .

All the speakers against this proposal have no conflict of interest , were not cajoled into speaking , did not have speeches prepared for them!!!

I feel confident all the "new" businesses to town , in their expensive shiny new premises, will be able to work profitably if the original proposal , the 4 million tonne proposal , that has already been passed , goes ahead without this new proposal.

I urge the IPC to look at the future sustainability of our valley not at the " short term gain for long term pain "that this new mine and infa structure associated with it will bring to Gunnedah.

I have not mentioned the obvious dust, noise, air , light pollution that goes with this proposal . Looking at the environmental impacts that Whitehaven coal has had at Maules Creek is terrifying .

This is not about revenue for the state government but should take into consideration the total environmental degradation of our landscape ,as we know it .

Ross and Shirley Urquhart

Sent from my iPhone