

My name is Karen Cairnduff.

My husband and I built our home in Hawthorne Road Bargo in 1986 – well before longwall mining was proposed for this area.

I am almost 60 and looking to retire.

Our forever home is in danger. Danger of being damaged, or worse, but not by natural elements, such as fire or flood. By a private multi-national company, intent on earning profits at the expense of hardworking, honest homeowners.

Our forever home was paid for by many, many years of our family's hard work, blood, sweat and tears, but could very well become unlivable and untenable, literally on shaky ground, all because of the voracity of a multi-national company, more worried about stakeholders and profit. They do not care about lives and dreams of those who live above their "long walls", as they excavate the earth which should be supporting and sustaining our home and our community.

Our children were born and raised in this home.

We hope to surround ourselves with grandchildren in this home.

We intend to retire and live out our days in this home. Our piece of paradise.... Our Castle.

While mining is undoubtedly the backbone of Australian industry, and is providing many jobs and supporting many businesses, directly and indirectly, it does not entitle a mining company to possibly decimate an entire town. It is not worth it, not even if "it might happen."

I have watched my friends live through this. Front door permanently closed – does not open. Windows permanently closed, tiles falling off walls, concrete pool draining, 12 years fighting for compensation until their house was rebuilt. I watched them age, the toll it took on their health.... It destroyed them.

Some people have told me not to bother...

It is a mining company Karen.

Your house might not be damaged Karen.

You will receive compensation Karen.

But do I?

Will I?

What compensation do I get for the stress and the worry of living with this even if there is no damage to my property directly?

What compensation do I get for the loss of property value or not being ever able to sell my house when required?

Who will really compensate us? Who will be there to help us?

Karen Cairnduff

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