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How to make a submission

Thank you for taking the time to share your views with the Independent Planning Commission. The role of the Commission is to make planning decisions on state significant development applications. The Commission's decision follows a whole-of-government assessment that is undertaken by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), and also included public consultation.

We would like you to submit your views in a way that helps you and helps us. You can do this by providing relevant and specific information in your submission. To learn more about the relevant planning issues that the Commission can consider in its decisions please review the public submission guidelines.

Your submission

Which proposed development do you wish to provide a submission on?

McPhillamys Gold Project



2. Does one of the following apply to you? *

I am someone whose legal consent is required for the application to proceed under NSW planning laws

I am the owner or a tenant of a neighbouring property to the proposed development

- I am a member of the local community who would be particularly and directly affected by the proposed development
- I am a member of the community with a view about the proposed development
- None of the above

3. Please indicate which of the following best describes you: *

- an individual making a submission on my own behalf
- a traditional custodian
- a subject matter expert or academic
- a representative of a business or industry group
- a representative of a community group
- a representative of an interest group or non-government organisation
- a representative of an Aboriginal land council
- a local councillor or representative of a local council
- a state MP (i.e. a Member of the NSW Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council) or a federal MP (i.e. a Member of the House of Representatives or Senate)
- a representative of a NSW government department or agency
- a representative of a Commonwealth government department or agency
- Other

4. If you are making a submission on behalf of an organisation or group, please name the organisation or group:

5. Please select the reason for your submission: *

- Support (I am making a submission that supports the conditional approval of this proposed development)
- Neutral (I am neutral about this proposed development and am providing comments for consideration)
- Objection (I am making a submission that objects to this proposed development going ahead)

In your submission, we encourage you to consider the **Assessment Report** prepared by DPE along with any recommended conditions of consent. When a proposed development is provided to the Commission for determination, the Assessment Report will contain the most up-to-date information about the proposed development. Any further information after that date will be published on the Commission's website.

6. Please let us know what key issues are of most importance to you in regards to the DPE Assessment Report for this project.

Please select those issues that concern you the most and place them in order of importance.

Select an item from the List of Key Issues box (by double-clicking or using the 'Add Selected' button) to move it to the Selected Key Issues box. Then, sort your Selected Key Issues in order of importance by using the Up/Down buttons. If you are using a keyboard, you can select an item from the List of Key Issues using the Tab and Enter keys.

| List of Key Issues | Selected Key Issues |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Water Resources Agricultural Economics Amenity (visual, air quality, noise, vibration, odour, overshadowing, privacy) Social Costs and Benefits Biodiversity Aboriginal Cultural Heritage |

Add selected

Remove selected

Up

Down

My issue is not listed

7. Please enter your submission here: *

See attached

9988 remaining characters

Some of the issues you may want to address in your submission could include:

- the reasons you support or object to the proposed development
- your consideration of the issues addressed in the DPE Assessment Report
- any impacts on you personally
- anything you would like to change about the proposed development to improve it or to reduce its impact on you (e.g. its hours of operations, its design, size)
- in your opinion, do the recommended conditions of consent adequately prevent, mitigate or offset any adverse impacts from the proposed development.

8. You may upload up to three supporting files - including documents and images.

Choose your files for upload 

Please note the files must be in either PDF, DOCX, JPG or XLS format, with a maximum size of 20 MB per file.

When uploading PDF documents, please ensure the document security settings enable copying of text, images and other contents. This will assist the Commission in storing and analysing the contents of your submission.

Please note the Commission will NOT redact any personal information or other confidential information included in attachments before publication – including any personal information in the text of the document, the file name or the document properties – in line with our Privacy Statement.

Description of file/s

About You

To lodge your submission, please provide your details below. The Commission's Privacy Statement outlines how your personal information will be protected and managed.

Your information and privacy: When you make a submission, we will publish:

- The content of your submission provided in the open-ended text box above and any attachments. As a reminder, the Commission will NOT redact personal information provided in submissions or attachments before publication.
- Whether your submission is made in support, objection to, or as a neutral comment on the proposed development.
- Your full name and state/territory as provided below, unless you elect that these be redacted.

If you would prefer your submission to be published anonymously, you can specify below:

Do not publish my full name

Do not publish my state/territory

First name *

Karen

Last name *

Ward

Street address ***Suburb *****Post code *****State *****Email address ***

Thank you for your submission - please click 'Submit' below to complete.

Declaration

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- You have read and understood the Commission's Privacy Statement and Public Submissions Guidelines.
- The content of your submission is factually correct, does not contain offensive, threatening, defamatory, or inappropriate content, and otherwise contains expressions of opinion that you honestly hold. You have not provided any false or misleading information in your submission or omitted any information from your submission which would make it false or misleading.
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- You understand that the Commission will publish submissions within seven days of receipt, however in circumstances where significant numbers of submissions are received, this may take longer.
- You accept responsibility for any and all content provided in your submission.



I have read and agree to the Commission's terms and conditions above. *

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My husband is the fifth generation of a continuous farming family which took up an original grant in Cootamundra, following on to Purlewaugh, then he and I at Cundumbul area out of Molong/Wellington. We sold our the latter for our current property at Guyong, which, given our ages, supports us in part retirement. We purchased here some years ago in to what we perceived to be a pristine, quality agricultural area, close to a small friendly village.

We are aghast at the efforts, in the face of clear opposition, to inflict an open cut mine on the populace which will clearly devastate the village atmosphere with severe impacts on health viz dust (including silica and asbestos) pollutants and vastly increased traffic noise and 24 hour light pollution. In respect of dust pollutants it is appropriate to note that our Guyong home of just 18 years is the dustiest and grittiest property that we have owned, (over a lifetime), obviously reflecting the proximity of the Cadia mine and the number of gravel pits in the surrounding district. We do not need any more dust and while we are just a few kms from the mine, our heart goes out to those directly adjacent to the mine, particularly those in the historical village of Kings Plains who, are it seems, expected to simply accept this enormous imposition on their quality of life.

My husband is an asthmatic with heart issues and I am immuno compromised with rheumatoid arthritis, both under Sydney specialists. The stress associated with the prospect of having our water, health, property value and lifestyle compromised by what is in reality, bullying tactics, lies and smart marketing, has resulted in my husband's heart going out of rythm into AF, requiring medical intervention on two

occasions recently. There are others like us with medical issues, including a number in Kings Plains who desire a quiet semi retirement in their chosen village locality, close to medical facilities.

Despite comments to the affect that there are few indigenous artefacts on the site, from discussions with the local traditional owners it is clear that the whole indigenous issue has been somewhat downplayed. The mining area is sacred and of immense significance to that community given that it was a meeting place for young men being inducted into manhood. Kings Plains also featured in the 'Bathurst Wars' of 1824, well documented in Gapps' 'Gudyarra', Hughes' 'The Fatal Shore' and others since the early days of colonisation. The Community has many song lines relative to the area however they have had little access to the site and consider that the archaeology used by Regis was totally inappropriate. There was a lack of consultation from the Local Aboriginal Land Council to other Aboriginal groups including the Traditional Owners who require the archaeology to be redone with Aboriginal input. The Community also consider that the proposal lacks empathy and consideration for the land and challenge the methods used to ascertain the cultural impact. They cannot comprehend how, for a small quantity of gold, the country can be destroyed and the people poisoned by asbestos and other pollutants.

After perusing the various reports viz the DPE report and the SIA expert review, common sense dictates that given the shortcomings presented in the proposal, this project should not go ahead. How it got as far as it has and that the Government can recommend the project is just mind boggling, to my mind reflecting more something out of a

Middle East autocratic state than that from a free speaking democratic country. From the approach that the EPA has taken it would appear that there has been a strong, behind the scenes Government push to approve the project, their interest lying in \$ revenue to the detriment of their constituents. I have a similar view in respect of Council' responses.

Accordingly I do not support the mine and further highlight the above issues as follows....

Water

There is a reference that a drawdown of bores in the district to 2 m would have a negligible affect on landowners which I would dispute in a dry time when the bore levels drop.

Studies have confirmed that water availability is 35% down on 1990 levels with projections ahead suggesting a further 30% reduction in the years ahead, in line with global warming. Regis has indicated compensation would be available but how would this work in a crisis situation when one's cattle have no water?

A Cadia engineer a couple of years ago informally advised us that groundwater and therefore our bore, would be affected for up to 10 kms from the site.

In extremely dry times, given that the pit depth is lower than that of the groundwater, bore water will be further depleted as the water will be retained in the pit together with local runoff. Additionally the numerous springs under the tailings dam will be cemented shut, reducing flows to the Belubula river.

Surface water, springs and groundwater provide residential and stock water for most local residents who are not on town water. Dust and contaminants in tank water supplies are a major concern for health viz cancers and other nasties, already reportedly higher in the region than average. Should there be a mine 'spill' via the tailings wall, then the water supply and river is contaminated...with cyanide/arsenic. Despite the best technology, issues occur viz the Cadia experience...and others offshore, well documented facts.

I am aware that Regis were devoid of acquiring sufficient water licences and was appalled to hear that the Minister had sold them an environmental licence permitting water transfer upstream.

My husband, as the then Chairman of Cundumbul Landcare, was involved around the year 2000 in the Bell River Catchment project which arose as much as anything else from community angst. This followed the purchase and transfer of irrigation licences in the lower Bell river upstream to a commercial vineyard, outside the valley in Boomey. This action resulted in legislation preventing the transfer of licences outside the particular valley!

There is an indefinite waffle around compensation if local bores deplete however this needs to be a made a watertight condition with Regis paying local landholder costs to measure current bore levels (now) and then a defined compensation \$ to cover financial loss as the bores fall a metre (or more) following the inevitable drawdown in the forthcoming drought.

Water is critical to life...gold is not!

Traffic

There is an acknowledgement that there will be increased traffic on local roads during the construction period. ..specifically Guyong and Vittoria roads..which are of concern to my husband and I.

Vittoria Rd is of a very poor standard between Guyong Rd and Millthorpe (8/9kms) being narrow with close hedgerows (very much a part of the Millthorpe attraction), poor visibility and there are 29 close to the road home entrances, 30 truck entrances and 7 local roads entering this road. Large School buses and one commercial bus use the road of which the Cabonne council section (50% of the road) has a 10 tonne load limit.

There has been ' Reduce Speed 'and 'Rough Surface' signs adjacent to our property for years (not just in the current wet), one death, a rollover at our front gate, and my husband towed a vehicle out of the adjacent gulley with the tractor a year or so ago. Neighbours opposite have had numerous near misses as they try to exit their property, similarly us and recently we were nearly wiped out by an overtaking hottie who was out wide passing 3 cars while we had our indicator on to make the right hand turn into our driveway. It is a miracle that we are not a statistic...I just caught sight of the vehicle behind with seconds to spare, on a portion of road with limited visibility.

The road surface is poor, many driveway entrances are blind and our neighbours and us propose to have the speed limit reduced from the ridiculous 100kms to 80kms.

The road is used by Cadia / tradies and at shift changes is a speedway with speeds to 120kms+. These workers increasingly drive more powerful utilities, pass on double

lines even in darkness and fog, tailgate incessantly and generally ignore road rules. They do not drive to the conditions, particularly evidenced when the roads were recently torn up with the weather. Noise levels have increased commensurate with the larger and more powerful vehicles, many of which run oversized tyres. They also litter, viz McDonalds/KFC refuse.

Departmental recommendations suggest Regis implement an internal plan...a Traffic Management Plan including a Code of Conduct which will provide for limitations to traffic on Vittoria and Guyong roads as well as changes to site access via Dungeon Rd during the construction phase. This proposal suggests that construction workers would travel via car pooling and shuttle buses, with heavy vehicles primarily used for the delivery of materials, plant and mining fleet. Operational traffic would comprise of private vehicles and minibuses with heavy vehicles limited to deliveries. This would be catastrophic for road and safety on Vittoria and Guyong Roads.

The concept of a voluntary Plan and Code of Conduct is totally refuted on the basis of past experience...as highlighted earlier. Driver and road behaviour issues have been raised with Cadia over many years without any improvements. Additionally the practicalities re timing for shift workers result in them usually driving in private vehicles to their workplace, often as the sole occupant. We never see minibuses ...

Vittoria Rd, between Guyong Rd and Millthorpe, in the opinion of residents, is considered unsafe for heavy vehicles and increased mine traffic. Guyong Rd, while a wider road, has

had its share of past tragedy also and there was a near miss recently with a comment expressed by a local resident re the mine shift workers.

The Department's recommendation is to utilise Dungeon Rd for access to the mine site during the construction period. The writings suggest that vehicles would access this via Vittoria Rd and Guyong Rd and there is no mention at all of access via the Mitchell Highway, a road in top condition with a safe 100km speed limit, just 500 metres along Vittoria Rd with a good surface to Dungeon Rd and with good turning access.

The logical answer is to regulate through a condition that access from Orange etc to Dungeon Rd to the mine site should not only be during construction but also remain for the life of the mine with minimal access permitted via Vittoria Rd between Guyong Rd and Millthorpe.

Health

The Departmental report states that they are satisfied that risks to human health and other aspects have been minimised, in complete contrast to the SIA expert review which rates;

—resident health and wellbeing affected by the stress and anxiety associated with the project's uncertainty as high!

—resident health and wellbeing affected by sleep disturbance resulting from noise and vibration levels impacts as low!

My husband and I have had personal experience with mine operations on our previous property and on one occasion we were subject to exploratory 24 hour drilling over 3 weeks on a site 1 km from our home. We had a large award winning

garden, established from 1880, which provided good screening and the Co surrounded the operation with hay bales but we could clearly hear the drill and I recall a thumping, perhaps vibration. There was additional noise from vehicles and of course there were the light and dust issues.

My husband and I would not wish to be in the situation of the Kings Plains residents given their close, untenable proximity to the site, let alone the affect of the blasting on their animals, particularly horses which do not have the ability to reason and simply panic.

There will be also be, given the workforce numbers, a need for increased health and emergency services. Glossed over in the Departmental report, it is recognised in the SIA expert review that there will be an affect on services for local residents culminating in a rating of high. Medical services in Orange and local towns are already stretched as are State resources and these facts are well documented.

Similarly assessed as being manageable is the issue of dust emissions relative to health concerns. SIA review highlights concerns as to the air quality viz dust, naturally occurring asbestos, metals and metallics, nitrogen dioxide and hydrogen cyanide but accepts that, subject to monitoring when operations commence, there should not be a health risk from dust emissions. While they will be monitored, the Cadia experience does not provide comfort as they appear to be frequently, if not constantly in excess of dust regulations with resultant fines. Any imposed condition should be well over that stipulated with Cadia, ie the dust limit should be

significantly lower and the fines much higher due to the close proximity of residents.

For all these issues viz dust, noise, vibration, together with those later discussed, ie health and the negative affect (reduction) in the area's property prices, there needs to be, by conditions in any approval, a stipulation requiring compensation to affected parties. This is in line with conditions imposed by the DPE in other mining projects (including Cadia) as well as the agreements Regis have offered to some Walkom Rd residents.

These provide that in the situation that noise limits exceed table 1 limits and the landholder issues a written request to the Co, the Co must implement procedures, at their cost, to immediately reduce the impact of noise, vibrations and dust. Compensation for any costs incurred by the landholder in the interim must be met by the Co.

Should the noise impact exceed the limits of table 2 (5db), exceed table 3 for blasting or the limits set for air quality, the affected landholder should be able to request the Co. to acquire their property at a price applicable before the mine was approved. In case of dispute an independent valuer appointed by the NSW division of the Australian Property Institute will be appointed and this procedure, rather than spell it all out here, is available in previous EDO/Regis documentation.

Comment has been expressed that homes could be airconditioned and double glazing of windows provided but this ignores the reality that Kings Plains enjoys a Tablelands climate and currently, opening the windows provides

abundant fresh air. This aspect, together with the loss of enjoyment of rural vistas, outdoor spaces, natural sounds viz bird life etc, intrusive lighting and the impact on dark skies, all have a psychological impact on the residents.

The Departments response to fears surrounding the bee/honey

industry is disappointing given that any losses in that industry is a potential threat to National food security. Much of the comment relates to habitat loss, to be negated by tree planting which will be of no use to bees for a minimum 15 years as it is the mature trees that provide the required flowers.

There is no recognition re dust issues and heavy metal contamination (viz arsenic/cyanide) threat to the bees viz the tailings dam. Bees seek water...and they are critical to the farm sector for pollenisation. There certainly should be ongoing monitoring with stipulated conditions providing compensation to the local bee industry (businesses) as and if necessary.

This raises another concern...that of the impact on human health in the situation of a tailings dam failure be it wall failure or leakage. The dam is sited directly over the Belubula river, over springs and usual waterway tracks . It is generally accepted that it is impossible to stop all leakage and as it is highly likely that the operation will continue indefinitely and therefore the dam likewise, what is going to be the affect long term on the Belubula system downstream? Should a wall collapse (as per Cadia and others offshore) the result would be catastrophic. While the damage would have been done and the environment devastated, there should be a condition to ensure compensation to those landholders and businesses

affected is paid, even if Regis move on or the owners at the time are liquidated in the future.

The proposed pipeline is also of concern in that it pipes contaminated water from Lithgow to the site, water high in salinity, nickel and zinc. It has been suggested that the water would be an asset to the area by 'drought proofing' the region for farmers, a ridiculous statement given that cattle (and insects) require pristine water to develop and gain weight.

Related to health and wellbeing is that of the visual aspect, which not only affects the Kings Plains community but also those properties along Guyong Rd, many of which look directly into the tailings dam and mining operations with resultant dust and light issues. There may be also some visual issues with neighbours to Regis purchased country along NE Vittoria Rd but clearly those along Guyong Rd (some being direct neighbours to the mine site) are severely impacted for many kilometres...up to possibly 9kms. It is a 24 hour operation and it is acknowledged that there will be light pollution and a glow all night, possibly more so in our tablelands climate with frequent overcast skies.

Another aspect also leading to depression via anxiety and stress is the affect on property prices, principally in the Kings Plains area but also extending further outwards into the district. Small rural lifestyle properties which have income earning potential, be it farming or hospitality, are in demand, selling to around \$20,000 an acre (eg our adjoining neighbour), particularly towards Millthorpe and Orange.

The affect on property prices is recognised by Regis who

have purchased some Kings Plains area properties and signed some agreements to purchase others at market value should the owners later decide to sell. These agreements prevent one objecting to the mine.

They encompass only a small content of the current owners in Kings Plains (18 of 85 within 2 kms) the majority remaining opposed to the development. The affect on that community, so directly impacted on so many fronts, is recognised by the Department but accepted on the basis of the greater good/ benefits to Blayney and the area. The latter is strongly refuted and the local residents perceive that they unfairly bear the direct cost of the proposed mine.

One's home purchase is generally accepted as the largest procurement one makes in a lifetime and it is depressing and soul destroying to see one's home asset and lifestyle decline.

No one wishes to live near a mine and the SIA report rates the social impact on Kings Plains residents as extreme.

Recently a bank providing accommodation to a near neighbour, (not in Kings Plains), allegedly has reviewed the valuation of their property...down 30% due the 'mine effect'. Compensation, in line with that highlighted above, including a multiplier effect of 3X their value should be available, as a condition, to those landholders close to the mine (say to 4/5 kms) should they deem it unfit to reside in their current abode.

It is appropriate to highlight a few other misconceptions relating to community benefits....

Regis talks of job opportunities for locals...where are the staff to come from? Cadia has currently in excess of 90 vacancies and unemployment in Blayney and the Orange/ Bathurst area

is low, with businesses everywhere seeking staff. The most likely scenario is that the mine will further decimate local entities as their staff depart for the high mining wages, evidenced in so many mining communities elsewhere.

Regis will require accommodation...where is it available currently? Cadia is seeking accommodation and for large parts of the year there is virtually none available in Orange and surrounding towns. Mining pressure will lead to a distorted rental market with high rentals, disadvantaging the less wealthy and reducing opportunities for younger citizens to purchase cost efficient housing.

These issues have not been addressed appropriately by either Regis or the Department.

Contrary to what many citizens of Blayney believe, the ore pit is not to be filled in on completion of the project and the tailings dam remains throughout the operation which could and is likely to be ongoing, viz Cadia. The tailings dam remains for eternity however in respect of the pit, if the mine is to proceed then it should be conditional on the void being filled in, as occurred in the 'Friskies' case with the landscape restored....in line with community expectations.

Regis has supposedly had much community consultation but I wish to record that they have not approached my husband and I, nor adjacent landholders. They have however been very active in marketing the mine around town, handing out forms for signature on the basis that they (Regis) will forward them to the IPCC in support of their project. This is clearly evident in the 300 plus favourable responses to the IPCC, most reiterating motherhood statements re benefits to the

community/ job prospects etc.,based on flawed, unsubstantiated and misleading information.

As to Regis' credibility I would not take much comfort from any assurances, given that much earlier at a public meeting, when asked whether they intended to develop the Discovery Ridge facility and process it at Kings Plains, they stated that there were no plans to develop Discovery Ridge and that Kings Plains stood on its own. Regis has now amended this confirming that ore from Discovery Ridge may now be processed at the Kings Plains facility, being trucked from Discovery Ridge, (near Mandurama).

Additionally they stated that the project was only for 10/11 years but this has been also amended to 15 years. With other ore bodies at Bald Hill and explorations to the other side of Molong could one in reality accept that statement....most likely Kings Plains would become the processing plant for further developments and would thus be ongoing. The inclusion of other sites does not require Govt approval, only the local Councils.

In my view the economic and true social cost to the community for this venture is considered extreme and as the project stands it SHOULD NOT be approved.

Karen L Ward