

Independent Planning Commission
Suite 15.02
135 King Street
Sydney
NSW
2000

11/02/2023

Proposed Development – Bowden’s Silver: Exploration License 5920.

I, Bill Kempton, am writing in objection to the proposed Bowden’s Silver mine to be located at Lue, near Mudgee, NSW. I am a resident living alongside Lawsons Creek and have been so for the past 34 years. My wife and I operate a small beef cattle enterprise on land adjacent to the creek.

My objection to the Bowden’s project is for the following reasons:

- Bowden’s intends to utilize approximately 2000 megalitres of ground and surface water/year for the operation of the mine. The Lawsons Creek Valley will not sustain this reduction in available water, particularly during times of low rainfall and drought. The recent 2018/19 drought was one of the worst on record. This will cause significant limitations to agricultural, horticultural and recreational pursuits in the Valley if the ‘lion’s share’ of the water is directed to the mine.
- The potential for heavy metal contamination of the Lawson’s Creek Valley from possible leakage of the proposed 117 hectare ‘tailings’ dam, is significant. Sealing the base of this dam with a ‘geofabric liner’ is the proposed solution to this challenge. There must be a probability that sharp rock debris will puncture this liner. What will then prevent the leakage of contaminants into the surrounding groundwater? How will this eventuality be prevented, corrected and subsequently monitored?
- Heavy metal toxicity in Lawson’s creek could render the water unfit for stock consumption, domestic and irrigation purposes. The welfare of wildlife e.g. platypus, water rats and native fish, which inhabit the creek, would also be at risk.
- Flooding or overtopping of the ‘tailings dam’ as a result of a major rain event (as occurred in October 2022), is likely to cause overtopping of the dam and subsequent entry into Lawson’s Creek, with resultant contamination. What strategies are to be implemented to prevent this outcome? Has a second tailings dam been considered by the mine’s engineers to capture this possible additional flow of contaminated water?

- Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) is also a potential threat to the Lawson's Creek Valley, Cudgegong River and Burrendong Dam. AMD could potentially impact all forms of water usage in these areas over many years.
How is AMD to be addressed in relation to containment which will provide an assurance that AMD will not pollute downstream water and soils in the medium to long term?
- Additional aspects of the Bowden's Silver mine proposal which have prompted my objection include:

Site suitability – the mine is to be located within 2 kms of Lue Public School. The lead particles contained in resultant dust from mine activity may cause deleterious health outcomes for the children of that school.

Socioeconomic – the livelihoods of families could be placed at risk.

Amenity – e.g. air quality (lead dust), vibration, noise etc.

Traffic and transport – it is estimated approximately 15 – 20 B Double trucks/week will utilize Lue Road to transport 'slurry' from the mine site.

What arrangements are proposed if an accident was to occur with subsequent spillage of contaminants? Lue Road is a narrow, dangerous road so this is of concern.

Is a major upgrade of Lue Road proposed to cater for this increased usage by heavy haulage vehicles? Is Bowden's prepared to fund this upgrade?

Impact on Native Fauna – koala bears have been sighted on and near the proposed mine site and will be severely impacted by mining operations. The proposal that 'koala credits' be implemented to remedy this issue will not effectively address an already declining population of koalas in this area, and NSW in general.

Thank you for considering the points raised in my submission regarding this proposed development.

Yours Sincerely,



B. Kempton

