

**From:** Sharyn Munro [REDACTED] **Behalf Of** Sharyn Munro

**Sent:** Monday, 20 February 2023 10:07 AM

**To:** IPCN Enquiries Mailbox <ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au>

**Subject:** Bowdens Lead/Silver mine

Dear Commissioners,

I would like to submit my objections to the Lead/Silver Mine proposed by Bowdens at Lue, hoping to be included in your considerations for your recommendation. I know you have listened to many such at the public hearings.

I have been hearing many ongoing and passionate concerns voiced about this mine ever since 2012 when I spoke in Mudgee at the launch of my book, 'Rich Land, Wasteland', on the impacts of runaway coal and gas extraction. People were stressed and worried then, as the Lue mine seemed like a very bad idea then ... and it still does. Those folk have not been reassured in the meantime, and ten years of such a threat looming over people and communities takes a

severe toll on mental and thus physical health, as any plans for the future remain uncertain. Sadly, I have seen this many times.

A decade later, the area has become more popular with tourists and much is made of these historic villages like Lue and Rylstone. More eating, accommodation, agri-tourism and eco-tourism ventures have sprung up, and property values have risen.

I can tell you, from experiences in coal areas, a mine and its impacts, its traffic, its noise and its pollution, both real and perceived, is not what tourists expect when they visit a rural area.

I have seen villages decimated by too-close mining, and existing businesses or landuse close because of this: Camberwell, Warkworth, Bulga, Craven, Wybong, Ulan, Wollar... to name a few in NSW. Lue is only 2-3 kms away from this mine site. Even the prospect/threat can cause great damage, as at Bylong.

These are obvious social and economic impacts on community, totally avoidable if this mine is rejected. The region could proceed on its upwards path, welcoming newcomers and new enterprises as people seek lives and livelihoods away from cities.

But they will not come to an area with health risks to themselves, and especially not to their children.

There is NO safe limit of exposure to lead for children. For anyone, any exposure is not only dangerous but cumulative; lead cannot be excreted. Why would people risk decreased I.Q. and learning ability in growing brains, blood cell and kidney development for children, high blood pressure and liver, kidney and brain problems in adults?

Why would the locals want any of this, or see the risk as far outweighing the 'benefits' to anyone but Bowdens?

The concept of public benefit, aka jobs, has to be realistically balanced against risks to health.

People should not be treated as mere collateral damage from mining, with health concerns dismissed by 'assurances' from the proponent.

Bowdens' mine is expected to produce 50 times more lead than silver over its life, but being designated a silver mine sounds less obnoxious than a lead mine. Bowdens ignore many of the likely sources of lead particles, and thus underestimate the level of community exposure, especially in peak wind conditions. Most rural residences rely on tank water; will that have to be constantly tested for lead levels as the particles are washed into the tanks? Will bottled water have to be supplied when levels are too high... as at Wollar and Mt Pleasant Schools, by the Dept.of Education? But for homes, and pre-school age children, by whom and for how long?

As at Bylong, the water impacts in this relatively dry area have not been adequately researched or explained. There would seem to be insufficient water for this project for the processing involved, especially in dry years, in this increasingly unpredictable climate. And how then would the mine proceed, those jobs to be maintained?

We now live in a world of extreme weather. In high rainfall events, as seen in 2022 in the region, how will the existing groundwater survive the likely impacts of acid mine leaching as the 117ha. tailing dam overflows and seepage collection ponds are insufficient? How would any contamination of Lawson's Creek be fixed?!

Bowdens anticipate a leakage rate of 1.6 megalitres per day after mining has finished. A legacy for our children, along with climate change?

In the lower Hunter, old underground mines continue to leach sulphuric acid and other toxic chemicals decades and decades after closure. It can go on for hundreds of years.

For how long after closure would Bowdens manage this dam? How much Potential Acid Forming Rock is involved and why do Earth Systems consider Bowdens' containment measures unsuitable?

It is no surprise that Bowdens' claims are not believed, after so many examples of glib assurances by mining companies that risks to the environment will be monitored, managed and mitigated, so any risks are deemed unlikely to be significant, Sadly these assurances are proved hollow only after the damage is done, often irreversibly. Here the AMD damage is not only during the project but may as well be forever...

And of course it is not only humans who will suffer from this project. At a time when we have been made well aware of the risk of extinction for many of our native creatures, including koalas, it is unconscionable to allow the clearing of this

native vegetation. Current ground-truthing of data on koala populations and activity in the area must be done BEFORE any possible approval can be considered. The predicted area to be destroyed does not consider the need for wildlife corridors for such as koalas; fragmentation of habitat is at odds with the NSW Koala Recovery plan.

We know that 95% of the Grassy White Box woodland community has already been destroyed, yet here another 180ha of this rare community is slated to be cleared. It is not only our native animals threatened with extinction from our 'development': it is native vegetation as well... and thus habitat for those creatures. Little by little... we must say STOP before it is all gone.

I hope you see fit to say that now.

As a frequent visitor to the area, with friends at Rylstone, Ulan and Wollar, and relatives in Mudgee, I fear greatly for the future of this lovely area if Bowdens mine goes ahead. For so many reasons I ask you to recommend rejection of this project.

Your sincerely,

Sharyn Munro

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

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