



New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

RE: McPHILLAMYS GOLD PROJECT (SSD-9505)

PUBLIC HEARING DAY 2

COMMISSION PANEL: DR PETER WILLIAMS (PANEL CHAIR)
MS CLARE SYKES
PROFESSOR NEAL MENZIES

COUNSEL ASSISTING: MR JAMES EMMETT SC

LOCATION: BLAYNEY SHIRE COMMUNITY CENTRE

DATE: 10.00AM, TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2023

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Commissioner Williams:

Good morning. And welcome to Day Two of the Independent Planning Commission's public hearing into the State Significant Development Application for the McPhillamy's Gold Project, SSD9505.

I'm Peter Williams and I'm the Chair of this Independent Planning Commission Panel. Joining me are my fellow Commissioners, Claire Sykes and Professor Neil Menzies. We also have Mr. James Emmett, Senior Council assisting the Commission at this public hearing.

Before we begin, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, Wiradjuri People. I would also like to pay my respects to their elders, past and present and to the elders from other communities who may be participating today.

The applicant, LFB Resources NL, a wholly owned subsidiary of Regis Resources Limited, proposes to develop the McPhillamy's Gold Project, an open cut gold mine, to extract up to 60.8 million tons of ore and produce up to two million ounces of gold over 11 years. And build an associated underground water supply pipeline in Central West New South Wales. I note the Department of Planning and Environment in its assessment report has concluded that the application is approvable, subject to conditions.

The Commission is the consent authority for this State significant development application because more than 50 unique public objections were received. The Minister for Planning has directed the Commission to hold a public hearing into the application. The Minister has asked the Commission to determine the application within 12 weeks of receiving the whole of governed assessment report from the Department.

In the interest of openness and transparency, we are live-streaming proceedings on the Commission's website. A full transcript of the three-day public hearing will also be published on the Commission's website in the next few days.

Following the public hearing, we will endeavor to determine the application as soon as possible, noting that there may be a delay if we, we find that, uh, additional information is needed. Written submissions on this matter will be accepted by the Commission up to 5:00 PM Australian Easter Daylight Time on Wednesday, 15th of February 2023. You can make a submission using the submissions' portal on our website. Um, we have many speakers on today's schedule. Um, as such, I would ask everyone presenting today to please try and, and keep to their allocated speaking time.

Uh, as Chair, I will enforce time-capping rules, to ensure everyone receives their fair share of time. However, I do reserve the right to allow extra time for the panel and council assisting to ask questions or to hear new information. Uh, thank you. Uh, it's now time to call our speaker. Uh, so, Mr. Emmett, could you please call the first speaker, uh, this morning.

James Emmett SC:

Thank you. And just to confirm, in relation to time management. Speakers will hear a bell when they have one minute left of their allotted time. And then they will hear a double bell when their

time is up. At that point, I will need to interrupt you and it will be a matter for the Chair whether to allow more time to complete the submission or a shorter version of the submission.

And just to remind everyone, if there's something you didn't get around to saying in your allotted time, um, written submissions can be sent in up to 5:00 PM, as the Chair said, on Wednesday the 15th of February 2023. So there's an opportunity to put in writing anything that you're not able to say or don't have time to say during the allotted time.

The first person to address the Commission this morning will be Michael Yelf. And can I invite you to address the Commission?

Michael Yelf:

Thank you very much. Uh, good morning. My name is Michael and today I'd like you ... Uh, thank you very much for the opportunity to talk to you this morning about the McPhillamys Project. Through sharing my story, I might talk and show the importance of McPhillamys Project for providing opportunities for inspiring and developing tomorrow's leaders in the Central West and Australia's mining industry. So my story. I grew up in country, New South Wales. And during high school, I attended a mineral summer camp at UNSW. And due to the close proximity of mines in the Central West, we were able to visit mines in the area, such as Cadia, at the time. As a student, I was really impressed, um, with the people I met and the impressive equipment and the technology that I saw. I saw through the leadership of the people that were, um, at those mines, how they were an essential part of the fabric and vibrancy of community. Uh, I also saw how caring for the environment was taken seriously and part of each decision made. So through these visits, I was inspired to follow a career in the mining industry. And so I just started a degree at UNSW, working at Cadia during the summer break, and starting my first job in the local area.

I also saw other young professionals who were attracted to the area, uh, and becoming part of the community, adding to the vibrancy of the community. I saw how children of, uh, local people that lived in the area, local farmers, um, could become, um, and do apprenticeships in things such as engineering, diesel mechanics or electricians, et cetera, um, which then in turn was able to also benefit the local community in the long term. And so, uh, working in these mines in, in local area in the Central West, the, uh ... uh, I was then exposed to technology, things like big trucks, innovation and new technology development, uh, which without the mines locally, um, none of that would be in this area.

And so I believe that it's also vitally important that we give our future leaders the same opportunities that I've had to de- ... learn and develop, in, um, giving them experiences, in ... by allowing this mine to proceed. Today, what I do in my job is to design mines to be efficient, uh, so that we can provide the critical minerals that we need for our society today and also in the future, and by allowing companies to do that in a responsible way. And we all know that minerals are critical for our life today, and becoming more and more critical in the future, um, with the development of new technologies. There are also, um, over the time that I've been here, and in the past, there are other people that I've mentored and grown, and seen them become part of the mining industry and then go on to, um, leadership positions within the mining industry, that they otherwise also would not have had the ... that ability to do. Part of what I do and

something that I'm really passionate about is mining education and mentoring. Uh, I'm involved in mentoring students at UNSW and to help our future leaders find careers that are valuable and fulfilling. And the McPhillamys Project is close enough to Sydney to allow students in these industries to come and visit in the future and be inspired by the project.

And I really look forward in the future to bring the students to this project, to show them the career opportunities available and all the amounts of high technology and larger picking and availability, um, of career development. Also, and I'm sure other people have spoken about it, there are also greater benefits to McPhillamys. There will be lots of local jobs that are generated, millions of dollars in wages, which will go into the community. Also, it will generate millions of dollars in royalties and taxes, which then can be used for supporting people that are less fortunate than ourselves.

Also, there are great benefits to Australia. Mining's the single-highest export earner in Australia. It supports our high standard of living and it's a high-tech industry and very progressive. So I think we need to support projects that provide benefits now, but also provide benefits to our society in the future and to the next generation. It's also ... And this is also more the case, as we have a skill shortage in the mining industry at the moment. So we need to proactively support projects that allow our young people, uh, to become part of vibrant communities, to learn and to grow. To give them the best opportunities for the future.

We need to ensure that mining ... our best and brightest students do ... are a part of the mining industry and so they can develop careers, which then can sew into and grow communities in the future, and also Australia's society in the future as well. So in summary, I hope that through my story I've shown an example of how mining projects in the Central West similar to McPhillamys have really benefited, um, the, uh, the area, um, and through me ... through my, um, opportunities I've had, that I'm able to then sew back in and benefit the local area as well. Um, and so I hope that through McPhillamys in the future, we can inspire and develop tomorrow's leaders. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you very much, Mr. Yelf. Uh, just see if there's any questions before you go. Thank you. Questions?

Commissioner Sykes:

No.

Commissioner Williams:

No. Um, thanks, Mr. Yelf. Uh, sorry, I presume, just hearing you now, you live in the locality or region?

Michael Yelf:

Yeah. So I used to live ... I used to live in the local region. I'm sort of here fairly regularly with, with mining projects, but, yeah, I, I live, um, about two or three hours away.

Commissioner Williams:

That's fine. It involves in the ... Yeah, thank you. Um, have you made a written submission or will you submitting these?

Michael Yelf:

Um, yeah. I haven't as of yet, but I, I will be making a written submission after - - -

Commissioner Williams:

Right. Good.

Michael Yelf:

- - - I see what's spoken about.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you very much. Thanks, Mr. Yelf.

Michael Yelf:

Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

Next to address the Commission, can I invite Roger Hamer?

Roger Hamer:

Good morning, Commissioners. Firstly, I'd like to express my, uh, condolences for the, uh, unfortunate loss of the previous Commissioner.

My name is Roger Hamer and I'd like to add my support for the McPhillamys project. I am a resident of Blayney and I own and operate a farm about four and a half kilometers due south of the proposed mine site. I have recently retired from a successful business that operated in town for over 20 years, which consists of sales and service of outdoor power equipment. During recent years, Regis Resources had an account with us and we sold 'em some product and carried out repairs on some of their equipment.

Now, whilst the, uh, proposed development hadn't commenced, we still gained an economic benefit that would certainly have grown if approval was granted. I believe that if the town doesn't grow, it tends to stagnate. And with a projected estimate over 250 permanent jobs with the mine site, it will provide a huge boost to the local economy. But it's not only the direct jobs that eventuate, it is the certain bonus of other industries and businesses that are associated with the service industries that a mine site requires. One only has to look at the plethora of industries and businesses that the industrial regions of Orange and along the northern distributor and adjacent areas, to witness that many of those owe their existence and prosperity to cater the above operations and mining in general.

These, and similar industries, provide an enormous array of specialized skills to adequately service the mining industry and create massive opportunities for our youth, to gain apprenticeships and trade-based skills. Personally, I have a grandson who is going to dual trade, fitter machinist and boilermaker and is currently employed by an Orange-based engineering firm

that specializes in manufacturing, fabrication and providing on-site maintenance services to the mining industries. Without mining, that opportunity may not have existed, but he's now set for life and I believe that that opportunity exists for the youth of our region, the opportunities that mining creates.

I also believe that Regis Resou- Resources will offer part-time job-sharing opportunities and will proba- ... that will probably be a benefit to many local households. Now, while I can see merit in some of the objections put forward, especially by those in the immediate, immediate vicinity of the proposed site, it is my firm belief that given the vast amount of hoops to climb through, hurdles to jump over, impact statements and various studies, red and green tape that development applications have to go through during the planning process, that I and the community can be satisfied that if approval is granted, there will be more than enough safeguards and conditions put in place to satisfying any doubts that I ha- ... may have.

Finally, I would like to commend the, the project for your approval and I thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Commissioner Sykes:
Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you very much, Mr. Hamer. Thanks very much. Uh, any - - -

Commissioner Sykes:
No, I think - - -

Commissioner Williams:
- - - questions?

Commissioner Sykes:

No.

Commissioner Williams:
Yeah. Uh, if you haven't already, uh, we invite you also to submit written, uh, submissions as well if you like, uh, of your presentation today.

Roger Hamer:
I haven't, but I can.

Commissioner Williams:
Yes. I- if you'd like to, that would be fine too. Thanks so much for your time, Mr. Hamer.

Roger Hamer:
Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

Next, I invite Tim Packham to address the Commission.

Tim Packham:

Good morning, everyone, I'm Tim Packham. I live on the northern end of Guyong Road.

We're approximately three kilometers from the western side of the mining lease area. I run and own a welding business. It's run on the family property and lease property. My great, great, great-grandfather came to the area in the ... uh, from England in the 1860s. The family property, Stonehaven, was purchased in 1903 and we've been there ever since. I've lived on the family property for 15 years. I'm the fifth generation to farm this land. We've got two boys, aged one, two and a half, and they already love everything, farming, tractors, trucks, dogs, horses and cattle. One of the old family par- ... properties, The Dungeon, currently known as Koomoorang, was owned by the family from the 1900s to the early 1950s. The Dungeon is 1,500 acres and covers about half the proposed mine site on the western side. The old house on The Dungeon was built in 1879. It's one of the oldest houses in the area. This house has an underground cell, which most likely kept slaves when the house was built. The Dungeon ... The property is now owned by Regis and it doesn't come up on any of the local historical records.

We have a variable climate around Blayney, uh, temperatures range for -10 to 40 degrees. We've already had two frosts already this ... early this year. We also get heavy fogs, blizzards and snow a few times a year. Our rainfall is also quite variable. We may not get rain for three months. We might get 150 ml rain in one day. Our beef cattle farming property is run very naturally. We've managed to get through the drought with ... by scaling back to 50% of normal op- ... normal operation, but just buying two truckloads of hay. The land around us is extremely productive and can carry d- ... 17 DSE per hectare very comfortably and is currently selling between 20 and ... uh, \$10 and \$20,000 an acre. I do not support the mine for the following reasons.

We have got three creeks running through the property. And in 2018, in the middle of the drought, the springs opened up and filled one of our dams, keeping us out of trouble. This spring is fed by a creek, which would come off the northern end of the proposed tailings dam.

Bore water. During the dry times here, we are ... we are solely reliant on our own water supply. There is no run off and the creeks don't run for up to three years at a time. So when this happens, we are solely reliant on our two bores on the property. If the, um, mine goes ahead, it could affect the levels of these bores and we could be completely out of water.

Uh, traffic. None of the local roads meet any sort of design standards. And they're already ... uh, they're already 10-ton truck rated limits on the northern side of our property, heading towards Vittoria and Millthorpe.

Um, noise. Our back- background noise levels are so quiet that we can hear everything, birds, crickets, sheep, cattle and some traffic going up and down the Guyong Road. On a stai- ... this day this year we could hear the Millthumpers band playing at the Golden Club at Millthorpe,

which is eight kilometers away. Most days, we can hear the trucks and trains, and they're five kilometers away. If the mine is approved, we'll lose all this and make our property part of the run. We'd just have to put up with constant background noise, day and night.

Vibrations. When we first had dealings with Regis 11 years ago, there was a distinctive vibration. Um, as soon as you go to bed at night and put your head on the pillow. I complained with Regis about this at the time and they told me it could be from Cadia or something else. I found out later they were drilling 24 hours a day and did not have approvals to do this. This, this sound was like a jackhammer from someone 50 meters away, but it was five kilometers away.

Local heritage sites, there is a rip line running through our property, which was, um ... followed the old Cobb and Co routes. This line went straight through ... would go through ... straight through the proposed, uh, tailings dam. Um, this history would be lost forever if the mine goes ahead. There is also a lot of Aboriginal significance on the western end of our property. Dust. There are two houses on Stonehaven which directly ... are three kilometers directly east of the tailings dam. Our property would be significantly affected by dust, um, with the wind blowing off the, um ... off the tailings dam. This area can be quite windy. That's why there's a wind farm in Carcoar and another one in construction at Flyers Creek. Um, it would be impossible to stop the dust if the, um ... when it gets dry and windy.

Our young people in the mining industry have got a lot of younger friends working in the mining industry for various reasons. Last year in Orange there were three young girls, they finished their building course, with a builder's license. This number should be at least 20 to sustain building growth in the area. This is common with a lot of trades and businesses in the area. Um, the Orange mining tax report, look how well you'll do in business. They'll purchase a lot of materials in the local area. There's a definite 30% price difference between Orange and surrounding towns like, uh, Bathurst, Dubbo and Cowra.

Uh, mining payment terms. A lot of mining companies operate on the 30-, 90- or 120-day terms. And a lot of small businesses cannot accept these terms and they will deal with other businesses. Thank you for hearing my speech.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you. Thanks very much, Mr. Packham. Um, any questions?

Commissioner Sykes:

Uh, I just wanted to, um ... Thanks very much, Mr. Packham, for your submission. I just wanted to clarify exactly the location or locality of your property?

Tim Packham:

Uh, so - - -

Commissioner Sykes:

You mentioned three kilometers from the western side of the mine area. Do you have access from Dungeon Road?

Tim Packham:

No, we're on the Guyong Road, just a little bit west. So it's three kilometers to the west.

Commissioner Sykes:

Three kilometers to the west.

Tim Packham:

Yup.

Commissioner Sykes:

Okay. Um, and it, it's more towards the northern end of - - -

Tim Packham:

Yes.

Commissioner Sykes:

- - - the mining operation?

Tim Packham:

Northwest, yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:

Okay. Thank you very much.

Tim Packham:

No, no.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much, Mr. Packham, for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next, uh, person to address the Commission is Cyril Smith, who will, uh, address the Commission for the Orange and region Water Security Alliance.

Cyril Smith:

Thank you. I'm Cyril Smith, representing the Orange and region Water Security Association.

The association is a stakeholder in the Community Consultative Committee. We represent CCC. So I extend a welcome to the Commissioners.

Now, to save time, I'll limit my presentation to a few important points, mostly referring to water issues, and leave detailed discussions and further issues, and suggestions, to the written submission. Most of us should be aware of the State of the Environment Reports. As it was recorded extensively this last year, whether international, national, state or local, all indicate that

much of the attention should be given to retaining, restoring and enhancing the natural environment, which is created by the DPE.

The first recommenda- ... um, condition is development consent, schedule one. Should be rewritten to reflect this aspiration as neutral or beneficial environment impact. We are all eager to fix a leaking tap. It is time we stop gradually ... the gradual decline of our environment. This project would be a good starting point. We must exercise, eh, prevent and not minimize or advocate for the inefficient and inadequate offsets. It's only right and necessary that water availability continues to be a major consideration for this project.

The aprone- ... The proponent must be able to prove that sufficient water is legally guaranteed before any consent for the project is given. The DPE Water expressed concerns, regional water strategies fact sheet, about the future water availability over the life of the project. The Macquarie-Castlereagh and Lachlan draft Regional Water strategies states, "New South Wales water supply is less secure than we thought. A four-step approach was adopted by the Regional Water Strategies and found ... created from it, and found that the minute was consistent with this practice in the field. And the maker events, they were using historical records or only climate models."

The strategies are a roadmap for the next 20 to 40 years, stated the rural water ... the Regional Water Strategies. And the Association would suggest are applicable for the likes of this mine. Best practice should be a feature of this proposal and sadly is not. The EIS, the environmental impact statement, for this project is subsle- ... essentially based on the 130 years of historic data. The Regional Water Strategies states even 500 years worth of ... it assumes that everything will stay the same. We all know that his is not the case and must conclude that the project environment impact statement is not fit for purpose in the evaluation of this project water needs. So in submission 62 from the second draft of Macquarie-Castlereagh Water Strategy, which deals with reducing stream flows in the Central West. It mentions two research papers that were sent about this to regional council. Paper one, Climate Change Impacts on the Stream Flow, a Local Bathurst Focus, 2022 by Norm Weiss, retired water efficiency, um, from Water New South Wales. Well, now. And Richard Cook, senior hydrologist Macquarie River management. Paper two, Bathurst Town Water Supply, Background, an issues paper. 2022, unpublished. Report to Bathurst Regional Council, February 2022, by Norm Weiss.

The conclusion, in the second draft Macquarie-Castlereagh rainwater strategy, submission 62 states, "Over the past 30 years, 1991 to 2020, linking stream flows of the essentially taking ins in New South Wales have decreased by 50% to 65%, compared to the 30 years, 1961 to 1990. Median rainfall for the same period has decreased between 11% and 12%. So we can see that in the su- submission. Professor Mark Howden at the Murray-Darling Basin Authority river reflections conference at Griffith, in his presentation predicted a possible further reduction in stream flows in the Murray-Darling Basin of possibly 30% over the next 30 years.

These findings and predictions are very concerning. It would be prudent to prevent any flow impacts to the local river by not approving this project. At least a serious review of B39. Regis representatives dismiss this concern about reduced stream flows when raised at the CCC meetings and no further information on stream lo- ... stream flows was provided. The

Association would ask the commissioners to gain further details before consenting to this project. The combination of great reduced flows and additional take by Re- Regis would be devastating for the Belubula River. It would be useful to have some assurance of the expected flow relating to the river during the life of this proposed mine, as it would be difficult to settle any later, compensate with water claims.

Referring to B42, 43, 44, was it in the mine or, you know ... We have to determine whether it was the mine or natural changes that caused the reduction in the water flow of the Belubula. Local water authorities, Central Tablelands Water, RNC Council and Bathurst Regional Council acknowledge the changes in stream flows and reduce runoff to storages. And are actually actively to di- diversify their water supplies by pipelines, water reuse and possibly purified water. Confirming the stream flow should be rigorously assessed. There are no processes accounting for water loss for eternity. If the void is not filled. There is no water license or social license that would last for eternity. The reta- rehabilitation strategy, including RDA, should include a section requiring the void to be filled and restore appropriate vegetation. The planning approval does not include a provision for ensuring profits for the proponent, but to ensure protection of the environment, humans and natural. Remember, the gold mine in Pe- ... uh, Friskies pet food location was filled and this possibly, future pit, should be filled. In conclusion, Orange and region Water Security Association believes that McPhillamys gold mine cannot be justified for approval because of water availability over its life. Um, thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you, Mr. Smith. Okay. Any questions?

Commissioner Sykes:

Um, yeah, I just had one. Or did Neal have a question?

Commissioner Williams:

Uh-huh.

Commissioner Menzies:

Thank you for your presentation, Cyril. Um, you indicated in there that, um, additional information would be useful to help us to understand the impact.

Cyril Smith:

Hmm.

Commissioner Menzies:

What sort of information were you thinking of?

Cyril Smith:

So ... And someone said this before me, mentioned stream flows. They haven't properly been assessed. This latest research has given us an indication. The Department of Planning, um, had that information on their books already, but it would take them some time to review it.

Commissioner Sykes:

Just asking if he could give his references to papers, that - - -

Commissioner Williams:

Yeah. Do you want me to ask, or you?

Commissioner Menzies:

No, I can ask.

Cyril Smith:

So, yes, you know, you can't say in the last 10 years that this project has been seriously investigated by Regis, that they haven't undertaken serious stream flows on the river just behind the shopping center here. It's all boggy here.

Commissioner Menzies:

Yup. Thank you.

Cyril Smith:

All make a - - -

Commissioner Williams:

Okay.

Commissioner Sykes:

Thank you very much Mr. Smith, for your submission. I just wondered whether, um ... you mentioned quite a few different reports and regional strategies that had been submitted to councils. I was just more wanting to request that you could please submit your, um, your speech, um, with ... as part of your submission, 'cause that would be helpful for us to reference, um - - -

Cyril Smith:

Yes.

Commissioner Sykes:

- - - those, you know, those documents, as well as those, um, studies that were undertaken.

Cyril Smith:

No, will do. And I will fine tune my presentation and include it in my written submission.

Commissioner Sykes:

Thank you.

Cyril Smith:

Okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Yes, uh, thanks, Mr. Smith. I noticed the submission you've prepared this morning for us, the written submissions. So, if you want to fine tune those and, um add anything to that and just submit to, to the Commission online would be great.

Cyril Smith:
Okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Tha- than- thanks for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
The next speaker to address the panel is Kyle Manning. And by Kyle Manning, let, um- Kyle Manning. Invite Kyle Manning to the lectern. Is, is Kyle Manning here? We might do, if, um...

The next speaker after Kyle Manning is Robert Cox. If Robert Cox is here and ready address the, the Commission, I'll invite Robert Cox to address the Commission now and we'll come back to Kyle Manning. Thank you, Mr. Cox.

Robert Cox:
Hello, everyone. My name's Robert Cox. I'm a geologist at MacQuarie Geotechnical.

I established the company in 2001 and we now employ about a 120 staff. Our head office is in Bathurst and we have other officers in Dubbo, Sydney, Rockhampton, Gold Coast and Melbourne. Uh, we employ all degrees and levels of staff from laborers, trainees that work in laboratory, mainly the soil, uh, and rock Laboratories. We have, uh, degree qualified engineers, geologists, environmental officers, uh, and petrologists also around drilling oil, um, so we employ drillers, um, that, that also work, uh, within, within the company.

Um, what we identified is that, um... We identified about 40 years ago, our staff retention was, that if we recruited locally, our staff retention for that, for that employee was a retention in the company of around six, six years, nine months. And if we recruited them primarily from Sydney, it would take us only two years, two months. So we focused on going back to grassroots level, we focused on bringing, uh, young people up through work experience, to work in the company. And then they stayed on and, and work for the company. So for, for mining, mining projects for us, they're long term projects. We've been involved with the Civil Earthworks, we've been involved with this project from the very early stages. Uh, the concept design, detail design. And then through the construction period, we have staff working on, on projects like this.

Um, for instance, we, we started working on the Malabar project back in 2003, 2004. And we've been on that project for, for almost 20 years now. So that's, uh, local staff that are able to, to work on that, that project. We also work on big civil infrastructure projects. So we're getting involved with the Inland Rail project and we, we do a lot of work on the parts to Narromine, uh, section of that project. So in that project we ramped up about 150, 160 staff, but at the end of the project, it was a 18 month, two year project, at the end of the project [inaudible] to, to employ

those staff, so we had to come back to our staffing levels which is about 120. So we had to let about 30 staff go.

So for us, mining projects give us long term, uh, projects that we can, we can be secure about. We know that as the, as the, as the projects go on, they're going to need more infrastructure, they're going to need tailings dams. So for us, it gives us that opportunity for, for young staff to, to have a focus. And also, for them to go earn that remuneration. Um, the average age, um, in our company is, is currently 24. So, we're, you know, we're a young employer with, uh, employees, with focus on, on those staff for the training. We've had staff come through that program that have been with us now, 14, 15 years. You know, they're, they're now degree qualified.

Also, um, you know, we've got, I think we've got 10 trainees, we've got, uh, five Aboriginal staff that work with the company. Uh, we also work with a disadvantaged, uh, skills program at Kelsa high school, where we get kids that probably don't work well in the school system, they start working with us in, in year nines and 10, they do one day a week. So these long term projects give us the security to allow us to put that time into training staff. Um, because for us, the staff are, are our biggest asset. So projects like this gives us that security, that we know that that project's going to be there, that we can make those business decisions.

Um, like I said, we've had those long-term commitments with Malabar, we also had other mining projects in, in the Central West, and we work at Cadia, uh, Tomingley, um, [inaudible], Manuka Mineral Hill, uh, out the back at Kondo. Uh, and we're also involved with, with, uh, mining projects out at, uh, Cobar, CSA and Endeavor. So long-term mining projects allow us to continue to employ young people, to, to give them that, the re, the remuneration that's going to, you know, allow them to, to buy a house. And we've all seen what housing prices have done in, in Orange and Bathurst, so it allows them to actually earn, um, really good money.

Um, some of the, like I said those, those civil infrastructure projects, they're, they're quite short. They create problems for us. Because then we're suddenly ramping up, and then we've got to, got to ramp down. Also, some of the flow-ons for us, we're, we're very focused in supporting other local businesses, we buy all of our Toyotas from Bathurst Toyota, they do all the servicing. We use Adam Cope, uh, a mechanical in Bathurst. We get all of our uniforms from a Bathurst supplier, all our electricians. So we're very focused on, on using local businesses. So a project like this will, will give our, our young people jobs. It'll give security. It allows us to, to, for them to progress from a, from a trainee at the age of 17 and 18, through to our, our, uh, oldest trainee that started with us now, I think it was 15 years. He's degree qualified, you know, he's bought the family farm. So he's had that security working on those mining projects. So for us, you know, we're a big advocate for this project because it gives, uh, younger people jobs in the Central West, they stay in the Central West. You know, they don't need to go to Sydney. And they don't do fly in, fly out projects.

Commissioner Sykes:
Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Great. Thank, thanks, Mr. Cox. Any questions?

Commissioner Sykes:
Um, no.

Commissioner Menzies:
Mr. Cox, just a quick question about recruitment of staff because you indicated that, you know, you're, you both of a reasonable size employer, but at times are very hijacked by it. Are you able to recruit locally to get the quality of people that you need?

Robert Cox:
In the current environment, we are struggling to recruit staff. But the process where we start at the grassroots, where we start at year 10 work experience, and then they then, if they're good, we then try and get them back through years 11 and 12. They work with us, uh, and then, you know, when they finish year 12, we, we offer them traineeships. So it's a very difficult, uh, market to, to employ at the moment. Um, like I said, historically, we had to look outside. We looked at Sydney, we looked at visas bringing, bringing staff in. It's a very difficult... It's the hard, like, we're at 20 years, and this is the hardest I've ever had, trying to employ and retain staff.

Commissioner Menzies:
Okay.

Robert Cox:
But if we had these long-term projects where we can sit there and go, "Well, you can go into this project, and you can earn 70 and \$80,000 as a, as a 22 year old. You're going to work long hours, but you've got those opportunities." Um, you know, it, it just gives that carrot that, that we can put out there to say, "Well you can, you stay with us and you can earn good money."

Commissioner Menzies:
Excellent. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you, Mr. Cox. Uh, um, we haven't already done so, also invite you for anything you want to put in writing to the Commission as well.

Robert Cox:
Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Thanks for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
Can I ask, is, has, has Kyle Manning arrived? Our next, well, this, uh, um, speaker who we were going to invite, if he has arrived since the last speaker is Kyle Manning. Is he here? No.

Um, the Commission then will, will, adjourn for the morning break. Can I ask, because I don't want to put anyone on the spot, but is Gemma Green, who is the next speaker after the break, is, is Gemma Green already here?

I don't want to rush her because she was told she wouldn't be on until 11:15. Um, but if we can resume at say 11:05 or 11:10, that would assist the Commission.

Commissioner Williams:
Yeah.

James Emmett SC:
All right. Could I ask everyone to take their seats and then hearing will resume.

The next person to address the panel will address the panel remotely, it is Kyle Manning, who is hopefully on the audio line.

Kyle Manning:
Hello.

James Emmett SC:
Mr. Manning you're, uh, live, the Commission can hear you, as can everyone attending the public hearing. Um, my name is James Emmett, I am the council assisting, um, the Commission is ready to hear from you.

Kyle Manning:
Nice to meet you, James. S- sorry I can't be there in person.

James Emmett SC:
No, no that's fine. Um, the Commission is ready to hear your submission when you're ready.

Kyle Manning:
I guess, uh, my submission is around, um, the idea that, that, that I'm a local subcontractor living and working in the Orange region, and have been operating, uh, a business here, a, a mom and dad size business here for, you know, close 15 or, or 20 years in media production and, uh, digital, you know, digital services. We create all sorts of content from photographs, video, podcasts, build websites and do anything that you can think of in the digital space. Film makers, um, creatives, I suppose in one way. But also, uh, we've expanded into providing all sorts of services to corporate, um, corporate entities, uh, for video production and photographic work and drone work. And we're licensed, uh, with CASA as, as drone operators.

So, um, having grown up in the, in the region, uh, I was born and bred in Bathurst, uh, only just down the road from Blayney. Uh, I've lived in Orange for 20 years. And there was a, a small part in between where I traveled the world and did all of that. But essentially the Central West has been my home all my life and continues to be. Uh, and I'm, and I'm a, you know, a proud resident there, and business person. Um, so that, that's a bit of background to I, I guess give you context that I'm not an outsider in, in terms of that region. Um, Blayney is a place I've visited many times, done business in many times and, and know, and know many people from there. Um, some of my good close friends are actually Blayney people and, you know, we're all a community here. So, uh, we have, my company is called Little Image Co. We have been, over the last few years, been doing quite a bit of work for Newcrest and, and Cadia, uh, there's a

connection there with my partner, Sarah, who, uh, worked with Newcrest for many years and was actually a PA to the, to the general manager out there. And she, she knows mining, you know, backwards. So we were lucky enough to, to get some, some work through Newcrest, who have been, they've actually been amazing, um, in supporting local contractors across all, you know, all scopes of work.

And we were recommended to, to do some work at Regis, um, through those connections in mining. And over the last couple of years we've been working closely with, with the team at Regis on, um, documenting their, uh, environmental work that they're doing, all the pre-work that they're doing on this part, to, to make sure that that's, those sustainability, uh, boxes are ticked there. Um, I've got a degree in horticulture as a, as a bit of a side project, so I have a real interest in all of that, that side of things as well. Actually like to consider myself to be pretty green, to be honest, um, in, in the, in the spectrum. And I can see that, that they're pretty serious about what they're doing there. Um, they're all, you know, planting a lot more trees and looking at their carbon stuff.

So that's, that's a lot of the stuff that we've been documenting for them. Um, as well as their work in the community. Um, and I know that there's a... I can feel that there's a social responsibility there from this company to engage with all the stakeholders and, and become part of this community, which I think really they've been doing for 10 years. And you can see that they've put, you know, so much back into the community, as, as Newcrest has done for Orange. I, I really feel, having worked in, worked and lived in Orange for the last 20 years, I, I always have to chuckle, you know, when, when you look at the social media spectrum and what Orange is known for, uh, it always comes up with food and wine and tourism.

And you just think, if you've already got your, what you saw on Instagram, you would, you would kinda believe that there was nothing in Orange except for restaurants, cafes, coffee shops and wineries. And while I love all that, I think everybody who work, who works and lives in Orange, knows that Orange is pretty much built on, you know, three things. Mining, agriculture and health. And I do believe that more that 50% of the jobs in the Orange region are attributed to either mining or health. So don't quote me on that but I, I'm sure I've read that somewhere. So I guess, when you look at Blayney and, you know, what a, what a beautiful little town it is, uh, I would love to see it grow, I would love to see it thrive, I'd love to see shops in the main street stop closing and, and start opening. Uh, I, from a, from a local point of view, with my kids now, leaving school, they're, they're leaving public school in the next couple of years. Got a boy in year 12 at Orange High, and a boy in year 10 at Orange High. I'd love to see them have opportunities for education and stay in the region, uh, instead of have to go elsewhere for employment. And companies like Regis are, are just gonna provide those pathways for kids that are interested. My, my kid in year 12, for example, is really interested in-

James Emmett SC:

Mr. Manning, I'm, I'm sorry to, to interrupt. Mr. Manning, can you hear me?

Kyle Manning:

Is that my time?

James Emmett SC:

Uh, yes. That is subject to the discretion of the Chair. So the Chair is here and, and that will be the next voice you hear.

Commissioner Williams:

Yes. Uh, yes, Mr. Manning. Yep, just another 30 seconds or so, you can finish up. Quickly please.

Kyle Manning:

Yeah, absolutely, absolutely.

Commissioner Williams:

Sorry about that, thank you.

Kyle Manning:

Uh, look we've been here, we couldn't, we couldn't be happier with how we've been treated by Regis. As a local subcontractor, we know that they're serious about keeping, uh, employment in the town. Not just for the full-time employees that they'll, that they'll be putting on, but for all of us in mining services and related industries. So I'm looking forward to, to this mine bringing, uh, life to the, to the Blayney community, and to the, to the region as a whole.

Commissioner Williams:

Great, thanks very much, Mr. Manning, uh, for your time. Uh, if you do also want to make written submissions, uh, you're more than welcome to. They'll, uh, the, uh, obviously these submissions that you've made are, have all been transcribed and, and uh, we'll have note of those as well. Uh, thanks very much for your time, Mr. Manning.

Kyle Manning:

Pleasure.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to address the Commission is Gemma Green for the Cadia Community Sustainability Network. And I invite Ms. Green to the lectern.

Gemma Green:

Good morning, Commissioners, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to object to the proposed McPhillamys mine project, on behalf of the Cadia Community Sustainability Network.

I'm very grateful to be here. My name is Gem Green and I live in the Errowanbang Valley, approximately five kilometers from Cadia Valley Operations. I wish to share on behalf of the Cadia Community Sustainability Networks members, our lived experience two and a half decades into Cadia Valley Operations current mine license. Our intention is to convey

perspectives and diversity of experience on behalf of our members of approximately 200 and growing.

CDO is 27 kilometers to the west of the proposed McPhillamys gold mine. The CCSN was established by the community to safeguard the economic, social and environmental future of this region. And our clear intention is to continue working with Newcrest and evolve this relationship into the future, to create more win-win outcomes for all in the region, regardless of the industry in which they work. As you can see from the slideshow, this is what we all currently live with, after the slump of the northern tailings dam wall in March of 2018, five years ago. And when I state all live with, the wider Central West lives with this, and not just near neighbors. In April of 2022, the CCSN tracked by plane, a visible dust cloud more than 1600 meters high for some 50 kilometers. Depending on the prevailing winds, dust can move over thousands of residents in the Central West. This easily includes residents of the Blayney Shire and Blayney itself.

The community was initially told repairs would take a couple of years, and it is now anticipated to be complete and operational again in approximately seven and half to eight years. This equates to about 20%, 25% over the current mine license timeframe. ANCOLD requires tailings dams to have a life of 1000 years. The northern dam wall lasted approximately 13. In addition to the tailing stuffs, the Central West also contends with the vent dust coming unfiltered from the underground mine. In an independent air quality audit that was a condition of the recent MOD14, the community received the first tabulation of what is in the vent dust, and it is not condensation as we have been told for years.

One of the vent stacks is omitting 18 times the legislated safe level of particulate matter, PM2.5 and 10, respirable silica, heavy metals, diesel particulate matters into the atmosphere, at a rate of 4000 tons per year. And that's from one vent only. In late July 2022, a third event, BR-14 collapsed whilst under construction. The impacts on the local water table and road closures affecting the community for almost five months. And my point is this, regardless of which mining company we, as a, an entire community, will live with the daily impacts. No mining company can guarantee these kinds of events won't happen. And when it does, it deeply impacts. This destroys the social license of that corporate entity with the community.

The concept of the tailings dam being built over the headwaters of Belubula is no incept, no exception. This is an environmental disaster simply waiting to happen, and it defies any form of logic. With many members of the CCSN living downstream of the project, decreased water flows and pollution concerns are very real. Many old mines in the Blayney Shire are polluting our region, specifically Browns Creek and Junction Reefs, and they are leaching into the Belubula. Why would we think this would be any different? There is every statistical chance that the Cadia tailings dam will also leach into waterways. And experience shows that once there is a problem, it is incredibly impossible, mostly, to fix.

With climate cycles changing and evolving, there is recognition of CDO's water draw down, downstream and impact of McPhillamys drawing water upstream on the, on the landscape. Have both these projects been reviewed together, with regards to natural resources impacts? Droughts are naturally occurring events and they will happen over the next 10, 15 years, the estimated [inaudible] life of McPhillamys. Should McPhillamys be approved, how will this impact the

agricultural sector downstream, who require water for their enterprise operations? These producers are also competing with CDO for water resources. When is enough enough? At what point do we draw the line between the balance of food production, environmental and earth protection, and mining resources, and say, "No." We are past that tipping point and we need to view things seven generations from now, what will that decision look like?

Blayney already has worse health outcomes than the state average, despite ready access to doctors, the hospitals, dentists, and pharmacies. In the 2021 census, Blayney Shire showed higher than average, national and state levels of cancers, arthritis, heart disease, lung conditions, such as emphysema, and mental health conditions. Tailings dust moves across the shire from Cadia mine, and the de-watering facility on the edge of town in Blayney, and with a quarry on the doorstep to town as well. Is the community expected to pay for this development with its health? The proposal found this project and tailings dam in the headwaters represents a significant risk in perpetuity to the quality of the water in the Belubula.

The risks, forever, particularly to the water quality far outweigh any short term benefits of a couple hundred jobs McPhill, at McPhillamys for the next 15 years. Getting the experience of residents living in the Panuara, Errowanbang and Cadia valleys and surrounds to CDO, it is actually really challenging to imagine 85 dwellings being within two kilometers of the McPhillamys project. With a mine site proposed to sit this close to a population center, based on our daily experience, the CCSN struggles to understand that this a reasonable and safe, safe proposition for Blayney and the Blayney Shire. Any perceived benefit to Blayney Shire, we believe, would be insufficient to justify the perpetual destruction of grazing land, including the submerging of the headwaters under the tailings dam for generations to come.

In November last year, members of the group were incredibly fortunate to meet Professor Deanna Kemp and John Owen, from the University of Queensland. One of these professors actually specializes in involuntary land acquisitions. And much of what they shared with us as a group was enormously enlightening. He essentially shared that the levels of trauma involved is acutely real, and we have seen this chronically within our area, and you can feel it acutely in many of these presentations as well. And as such, in summing up, I wish to share some quotes from a research paper they both contributed to. In the business strategy and the environmental journal, a paper published in August 2020 by professor Deanna Kemp and others for the University of Queensland titled, Tailings Facility Failures in the Global Mining Industry: Will the Transparency Turn Draft Change?

And I quote, "This work identifies several patterns present in the conditions surrounding failure. Local people," Just like me and us, "Had little choice about their risk exposure. They lacked direct influence over management, and safeguard measures, and were either unaware of the dust disaster risk, or so distracted by mining's upside benefits, that risk was overlooked. People who did question the conditions in which they lived or worked, were reassured by frontline company representatives or state regulators that there was no cause for concern. Only to learn later that the reassures themselves unaware, were unaware of the risks involved." This research paper applies to the proposed project and others in the Shire on every conceivable level.

Further information, research and links will be submitted in the CCSN's written submissions to the IPC, and I thank you for your time today.

Commissioner Williams:

Um, thank you, Ms. Green. Yes, that will be helpful with the written submissions, particularly as you refer to a number of research papers and so on, so we, we can access those as well. Uh, any questions - - -

Gemma Green:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

No, but thank you very much for your time as well.

Gemma Green:

Great, thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank, thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to address the Commission is Carolyn Hedge.

Carolyn Hedge:

Good morning. I come bearing many hats. I'm a resident of Kings Plains, and I'm also an equestrian. Could we have the map, please? I'm the closest resident, my name's Carolyn Hedge. I live directly opposite - - - There should be a map up there showing exactly where our property is.

Ah, there we are. So, okay. It's fine. So this is my carriage driving way. This is my house, my horses live in these paddocks here. This is the highway. This is at the edge of the McPhillamys area, and that is the pit. So my horses are the closest residents, albeit they're four-legged. My home is Kareela. Kareela is directly opposite the proposed mine site, across the Mid-West highway. My paddocks border the highway, we are the third family to reside at Kareela, when we purchased the, the property from Robbie Crops, Croffs, he had been there for 47 years. Robbie had bought the property in a very large holding from the Depp family, who had built the house in 1902.

Robbie and his wife Carlene's ashes are buried in our garden. I feel I'm a caretaker of this old homestead, the land and the animals that live there. We came to live here 14 years ago, after living in London, Jakarta and Sydney. I believed I had found paradise. A friendly welcoming community, fertile acres on which to graze my beloved horses, a safe haven for native birds and animals and our Labradors. As a family, uh, in farm of Queensland and Victoria, this place is our family.

The visual scene that greets me every time I enter our property, is, is of the hill studded with Gum trees which will disappear. From my stable where I spend hours each day, I look across the

beautiful grazing, grazing lands. We grow vegetables in excellent soil, have clean rainwater to drink, and relish in peace and quiet. At night, I check my horses around 9:30 either by torchlight or moonlight. I gaze in wonder at the black star-studded Milky Way. The quiet tranquility in dark would not exist if this mine goes ahead. As we are elevated, there is no way newly planted trees can stream the mine. I love where I live. It's home to six horses, two dogs, four chooks, and numerous kinds of birds and animals. It is also the resting place of five of my beloved horses and two cherished dogs who are buried under the pine trees.

My life will be severely disturbed by the noise, vibrations, light, blasting and impact the freshwater by dust if this project goes ahead. Let me take you through my day. I rise early, let the dogs out, feed the horses, maybe exercising one or two. Feed the chooks, clean the stables and groom. Some days my instructor from Blayney comes to school my horses. A friend keeps three horses at Kareela, and visits daily, working her horses on my sand arena. She also has an instructor who comes to coach her and her daughter.

As a carriage driver, so it's my other vein. So we wear helmets and I drive horses in carriage. As a carriage driver, I train my ponies in the paddocks and along Walkom road. I've competed and written in carriage events at Royal Shows in three states of Australia. At night, after dinner, I feed the stable horses under the starry night. The proximity of Kareela to Blayney is wonderful, animal and a Christian center is very important, as is the area that I live in. So you see, horse riding and activities are very important. And moving on, we build our stadiums and dressage arena and fences to keep our horses safe. I'm seriously concerned as to the welfare and expected noise and vibration of the mining activities. Horses are flight animals, they run from sudden noise, and are greatly disturbed by vibrations. I have raised these concerns with Regis and been told they'll get used to it. Well, no. In a seriously injured horse or rider, maybe that's too big of a price to pay. Our house was built in 1902... Sorry, I've got another page to go, can I keep going please?

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, yes. Quickly. Yes, please.

Carolyn Hedge:

Our house was built in 1902, it's a perfect home for us to live. What impact will blasting have on an old house and it's foundations? A serious impact on my daily life would be how I managed to look after my horses when blasting is taking part. I will have to take them in stables, round them up. What time of the day will I be able to be doing that? What else can I do in my day? Our home is old, as is Iralee, which is the Russes home opposite. Nobody has really addressed the heritage of old homes in the area, uh, they talk about Aboriginal heritage, but not of the old homes, as, and the Russes are significant landmarks.

We came to live here, making Kareela our final home. At 72, I'm hoping to continue my riding and driving, as did our late Queen Elizabeth and her husband the Duke of Edinburgh, into their 90s. This makes the next 11 years, the life of the mine, predominantly important for me. I believe we have the responsibility of the land and its creatures. Kareela, it's wildlife and horses, dogs, chooks can't voice their feelings, so it's up to me. Please consider my arguments against the mine, and feel my emotion in respect to this intrusion of our lifestyle and sanity. If we're f-

forced to leave here, where will we find somebody else, somewhere else like this to live? And to my wonderful neighbors of Kings Plain who have welcomed me into their lives, I'm proud to be a part of your community, and will continue to strive to make our world a better place.

Commissioner Sykes:

Okay. No. Oh, Neal do you have a question?

Commissioner Williams:

Um, thank, Neal? Ok.

Thanks very much Ms. Hedge. It felt a little bit rushed at the end there. Um, please also put in a written submission, if you feel that, uh, there's more points you'd like to make also. But thank you very much for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to address the Commission is Christopher Cooney. I invite Christopher Cooney to the lectern.

Christopher Cooney:

Good morning Commissioners, ladies and gentlemen. Uh, my name is Chris Cooney, uh, I'm not a resident of Kings Plains, I'm not a resident of Blayney. I am a resident of the Central West and New South Wales. I moved here, uh, after initially planning to do so 15 to 20 years ago. Took a while to come to fruition but in 2019 I moved, and I'm a solicitor practicing as an accredited specialist in property law in the Central West region of New South Wales and until recently also on the North Coast of New South Wales, in fact until Tuesday of last week.

Uh, since I've moved in the region in 2019 I've been actively involved with McPhillamys Gold Project as a consultant to Bathurst law firm steel and co who, uh, advise in Regis Resources, uh, along with many other legal firms but, uh, as the only, um, regional law firm in New South Wales doing so. And I've been able to observe to an extent on a weekly basis the attention of Regis Resources to all issues addressed in the EIS and in the legislation. What has impressed me and in fact result in my personal support for the project is the active process of researching requirements, engagement with landholders, stakeholders and residents by their staff, their consultants, and in fact the board of Regis Resources and the last five years of my engagement with, uh, this project. I've no reason to doubt that commitment will continue if approval is granted throughout the project.

I'd like to touch on a few points that have stood out for me since I became aware of and involved in the project. It's been said by many people with they submissions and in fact by the Department that the project has significant economic benefits for Blayney at the central west and in fact New South Wales. And as a, and this has been acknowledged in the assessment file of the Commission. In particular, the opportunity for employment training and retention of employment for the future of this area, of our youth. I have, uh, two sons in the region, one being here for 20 years, one here for five years, thro- five grandchildren who are growing up here. I made a commitment to do a reverse through change, I'm not that far away in Bathurst and I want to see a future for those grandchildren where they don't have to leave the area. I feel that is a very

important point to take in, to be taken into account by the Commission. I refer to two previous speakers, Damien Porter, yesterday afternoon and Robert Cox this morning. I was fortunate enough to see both speakers and they're all expert in, in the employment issues that I've just mentioned and I really, uh, I reiterate and support the things that they said to you yesterday and today.

And also, Mr Kyle Manning, who spoke, two speakers ago, I think... Three speakers ago. Um, his personal experiences with going away from the area, coming back. Um, I've read all of the submissions in writing in November and early December. Um, there were many of them, uh, where th-, it was in, the, uh, s-, people making their submission referred to their need to move away in the past and now hoping to be able to come back and apply their or their profession in this area, and also hoping that their children will be able to do the same. Another aspect to the project that had been part of my directing Department is reuse of water from Lithgow mine sites that otherwise, would impact the environment and an endeavor to reduce the amount of water required for the needed area. The water pipeline over 90 kilometers through private, public lands, uh, has been, uh, negotiated over the last five years and that continues. The measures that Regis has taken to identify possible issues and proposed amelioration to be taken to mitigate dust and noise, which would otherwise have significant impact on nearby residents on my observations have been and will be extensive.

Regis Resources has actively engaged extensive with affected landholders and potentially affected landholders in accordance with the legislation, and the, and some negotiated agreements. Quite a few negotiated agreements have resulted and it be my privilege to be part of that. And I've been terribly impressed by the way Regis Resources approached those documents.

James Emmett SC:

Uh, Mr Cooney, it's... Um, matter of the Chair's discretion at this point.

Christopher Cooney:

I have a little bit more.

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, just very quickly if might. Thank you.

Christopher Cooney:

Thank you. There is an obligation for rehabilitation now and in the future. In fact, Regis during that five-year period of being engaged in acquisition of property by Regis on a voluntary basis, no compulsion, they're not an authority to set aside and, and for r-, pur- pur purposes of the habitant and also to rehabilitate habitat around the mine site. That I can only see continue. I have no reason to believe that their, um, commitment to those, uh, rehabilitation and the protection of the habitat. As I, I dare will say was conducting a viable mine that is of benefit to the community. I've got no reason to doubt that that will continue. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks Mr Cooney. Uh, just before you leave if I'm right, uh, my... Uh, as, as with all the other speakers, if there's any other matters or issues you raise, please do so in written submissions.

Christopher Cooney:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Could I just ask one question of clarification, uh, please? Um, towards the end of your presentation, you mentioned that negotiation for the 90 kilometer pipeline continues. Uh, could you clarify that? I mean, is the pipeline guaranteed?

Christopher Cooney:
I, I have no reason to believe it's not. Personally, uh, I've taken part in, uh, I don't know, I would say 50 or 60 deeds of agreement between landholders with commitments in relation to the grant and easements. Uh, government authorities, uh, at a local government and state level, uh, agreements are being placed for either easements or licenses. Um, there are, uh, at least one or two agreements where that work continues but the, the, uh, the actual basis is there, there just hasn't been a final execution in dating. But I'm talking of one, maybe two at the most. And, and that's continually worked every week. Uh, I wo- wo- work as the firm does with Regis Resources every week on those matters and there's a weekly meeting as a follow-up to make sure that we can report back to the landowner's representatives continually as needed, um, provide updates when requested.

Commissioner Williams:
All right. Thanks Mr Cooney. I'll just see, if there's any questions - - - No. Thanks for your time Mr Cooney. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
The next speaker to address the Commission is Gregory Hooper. Can I invite Gregory Hooper to the lecturn?

Gregory Hooper:
Uh, good morning Commissioners. Uh, thanks for coming to Blayney to, uh, hear us.

Um, I'm Greg Hooper, my family property and residence in 2745 Mid Western Highway, Kings Plains and is identified in the documents as R15. We have been custodians of this property for over 30 years and, uh, built our home and lived on the site for about 28 years. We plan to continue our retirement life in the place of rural paradise with easy main road access to Blayney, Bathurst and Orange or other activities. However, this development threatens to significantly adversely affect our way of life and enjoyment of our environment and community. I'm an immediate neighbor to the proposed development being located on the south side of the Mid Western Highway, directly opposite the proposed mine site entrance, and diagonally opposite the proposed waste rock mountain at the southeastern corner of the mine site. Due to our location in the elevation of a thousand meters, our residence is clear and unobstructed line of sight, over 135 degrees covering the proposed intersection access road, waste rock mountain and light glow, noise and dust generation from the mine tailings and process facilities. The photo montage figure 10, uh, BP4 or BP5 closely represents the visual effect of the waste rock mountain on our residents. I'm nearly retired, my background in nearly 40 years of public services and local government engineer principally involved in road design, construction and maintenance. In

retirement, I remain as an active volunteer in several community organizations including community transport. I'm very concerned about many aspects of the mining development, both of the effects on us personally, and effects on the local Kings Plains community, and the wider community including road users of the Mid Western Highway. Many issues have been addressed and many issues have been inadequately assessed by the DPE's report and recommendations. Today I'm going to talk about, or I'll summarize issues relating to the community issues of road and traffic, particularly in the vicinity of the mine side entrance, electricity and greenhouse gases and I will expand on these issues in, uh, my written submission.

What do I want from the IPC? You recognize the opposing views and for lots of reasons the development, developer and the community, in particular the people who live in the 85 homes in close proximity to the proposed development. They have every right but the developer wants everything for nothing or as little as they can get away with. If they don't ask, you'll never get it. Uh, the residents want fairness and protection of our lives, and homes, and our environment. Today, the residents and landowners of Kings Plains are being required to bear an extremely disproportionate impact of the cost of the development for protection of their lives and the environment forever. It is up to our community and regulating authorities to determine the real impact of the developer proposing and assess an adequacy of the EIS and compensation for the affected stakeholders. How much do local residents have to have the quality of their life reduced, and how much does our community have to sacrifice and subsidize the greed of these developers?

How much does the environment have to deteriorate? If society and the world determines the need for gold is greater than the need to protect their people and their environment, then society and the world inadequately compensate those who have, who are disproportionately impacted by the development. We're looking to the IPC to ensure fairness to all parties and to share the impacts and benefits. We recognize our differences and glad there's an independent arbitrator to hear our differences and make a decision on which both sides must accept. Thank you for being that Independent Planning Commission. It is up to you as IPC Commissioners to decide on the holistic level of responsibility that Regis has to the environment, the community and the individual affected land owners. Uh, the issue of the rise in traffic is, is quite complex and I will try and summarize it but, um, my main issue is that the Mid Western Highway's a public road and classified estate road and is managed by the state road authority which was known by RTA, RMS , Transport for New South Wales would be the name is tomorrow.

Um, the section of Highway from their pr- proposed mine entrance towards Bathurst to east of towards pounds Lane, including the two overtaking lanes is constructed to RTA's standards on the existing alignment in about 1990. It is one of the few overtaken opportunities between Blayney Bathurst and is a significant road safety facility. The section of the road from above the entrance westerly towards Blayney is constructed to stand by the RTA on a new alignment in about 2000. Proposed intersection involved, or modification these relatively new sections of road. DPE's recommendation for conditions of consent includes some detailed clauses on public infrastructure and road upgrades which will be added in the written submission. Um, on the surface the public protect the public except for the provisioning words unless the, and the applicable authority agree otherwise. The latest RMS agency advice on the intersection is dated 28th of the 10th, 2019 and it relates to the access located west of Walkom Road. There appears

to be no correspondence on the current proposed location east of Walkom Road and the developer claims an EIS pending security, the ongoing discussions with the road authority. There does not appear to be any notification by the road authority of approval of the the 2020 concept design. Condition base 71I requires the, the applicant to construct the concept design and this has, this concept devo-, design has not been approved by Transport for New South Wales and I think he d-, he overstepped its mark in, in putting this as a condition that's gotta be constructed in that condition. Uh, road users of the Mid Western Highway of Kings Plains will soon be expect to lose publicly founded road safety and amenity infrastructure at the requested developer due to the close relocation the mine entrance to the site. The access design proposes to eliminate the westbound overtaking lane in short and amend the eastbound overtaking lane with the Sydney-bound lane. Both overtaking lanes were constructed to stand by the state road authority who's nows laid claim an understood length, um, and should be enclosed, one of them used as private acceleration lane with traffic exiting the mine.

Should be recommended that the developer be required to modify this intersection including all... Oh, sorry. Uh, that relates to, uh, up to where ounds lane was coming on to the Highway as, uh, was mentioned yesterday. Um, developer should be required to operate that intersection and, uh, probably commit traffic to turn towards Bathurst and then go into a U-turn by... Mm. Um, I'll include the rest of the stuff - - -

Commissioner Sykes:
Mm.

Gregory Hooper:
- - - on the, uh, the roads and - - - But the other thing is the greenhouse gas emissions and the electricity. Whilst these are separate issues I link with the developer because 26 to 28 megawatts of electrical power to be available 24/7 on the mine, the developer proposes the purchase of electricity from trans-grid. This one consume the usage is apparently equivalent to about 23,600 houses. The usage by this one consumer represents that half the total capacity of Gathega or Hume Highway power stations, half the Moree Solar Panel, uh, power Farm and about 2% of the, um, Mount Piper P- Power Station. With regards to greenhouse gas emissions, Australian law is reducing greenhouses gases by 43% below the 2005 models by 2030 to the commitment to... Can I just have a bit, one moment please?

Commissioner Williams:
I... Just quickly. Thank you.

Gregory Hooper:
I'll put the other in the submission.

Commissioner Williams:
Please. Thank you.

Gregory Hooper:
Yeah. According to the table, uh, 12.1, this project will emit about 1.9 million tons of carbon dioxide during its proposed life, of which 1.2 million tons will be from purchased electricity. It

will take the whole output of renewable Snowy Hydro Power Station, uh, steam five months to counteract this, uh, greenhouse gas emission. The nation needs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions no add to it. New South Wales in Australia generation power crisis, including generation transmission and usage. The dwindling supply of base power loads from fossil fuels across the state in which generation is not reliable 24/7. Transition lines need operating interstate connectivity and transmission. [inaudible] Allows available supply when supplies needed. All consumers are already affected in terms of price and availability, with continuing forecasts of maximum price increase and limitations to supply. This project will exacerbate the supply problems as well as the pricing of the limited resource. The whole of society in New South Wales will be affected in both price and availability of this one consumer. How much does the rest of the community have to contribute or sacrifice or subsidize the corporate greed and profits of this one development? I'll conclude there.

Commissioner Williams:

Good. Thank you very much Mr Hooper. Uh, there's a lot. There's a lot of material there Mr Hooper. Sorry if we've had to - - -

Gregory Hooper:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

- - - hurry along. But you, you've come with the main points - - -

Gregory Hooper:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

- - - which is good. Um, you've mentioned your written submission so if you can elaborate on those points that you've had to just summarize today for us would be very helpful. Uh, including particularly the information on, on road and traffic comments that you had as well that you just had. You're a-... Just summarized, if we can have - - -

Gregory Hooper:

Mm.

Commissioner Williams:

- - - full information on that would be very helpful.

Gregory Hooper:

Okay.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much Mr Hooper.

James Emmett SC:

The next person to address the Commission is Robert Russ. I invite Robert Russ to the lectern.

Robert Russ:

Good morning, my name's Robert Russ as my mother called me. Much more people probably know me as Bob.

Our house is a kilometer of the open cut mine hole, an open cut mine hole that will be there forever. Noise will obviously be a major problem 24 hours a day. Lights and dust will be a problem, especially for our rain water tanks and for livestock, plus our line. Well water will be a major problem, especially for drinking water. The springs in the area will be affected including the springs beneath the tailings dam. No one has been able to supply w- what effect the mining will have on the springs and the water in the Kings Plains area. There's a , a spring bed creek on our property and no one has explained what effect the mine will have on the springs. We have boar on our property, they, it gets pumped up into a tank on a hill and that supplies four neighbors, ourselves and three others. We also have a windmill that s- supplies out house water. The effect that the mine will have on the flow of the Belubula River has not been properly diagnosed or explained by Regis. Our house was built in 1918 when my wife's grandparents were married, therefore my wife is the third generation to live in that house. Well, they ended being my wife's family since 1858, that is five generations ago. The house will be open to damage from blasting and other mining activities. We came back to to Blayney 21 years ago with our whole intention of that we would live at 84 Walkom Road and we look after the property for one day our children to take over. This would end and we're not about to, and they have stated that they would not live there if there is a mine at Mcphillamys. This would end over a hundred with our property connection from the same family line. We will have to make other arrangements for our inheritance. W- we don't intend to sell our place and I know that some people have and do they but I, until that time, we've got no intentions of selling. Uh, so I d-, not too sure what the mine can do to mitigate, help our situation.

On our front veranda we will have a perfect view of the dissipation of the trees and landscaping area. This world will be repla- replaced by a large hole in the ground and I know that when you came on the trip around I think the bus pulled up at our front gate, I had offered you a coffee but you wouldn't come in, which I understand (laughs) for obvious reasons. Uh, because I, I couldn't make, make the coffee for you- - -

Commissioner Sykes:

(Laughs).

Robert Russ:

- - - You could of had a real good look at the, at the house. And that's what we have got to live with forever, not just for 11 years, but forever. Um, in the EIS it is full of foreign words: maybe, reasonably, possibly, problem. What does this mean? And no one's been able to answer that to me. They claim a social impact study done and I presume and hope that you're gonna copy this and not, so I won't go through (laughs) all that. It has been and will be differences between residents of Kings Plains, the different agreements have been offered and to different ones. So therefore there's, there's been a conflict in the, created in the area by the mines, by Regis. And there's also, there had been a difference from the businesses in Blayney who are supporting the mine from the people who in Kings Plains and in Blayney who will not be dealing with those

people for the future. And I know they think it's a great idea now to have Regis as a customer, but, uh, they will need Regis because they won't, mine have a lot of, uh, uh, local people. Um, we don't think we've got much chance to this stop this going here 'cause our local government, our state government and our federal government are all for it, 'cause they just want the money. So I don't think we got much of a chance and this is, this three days is probably gonna be a waste of time. Now I noticed that everyone that has spoken for the mine has had a connection with Regis. So they either getting paid by Regis, so they're the ones at the for it. And s-... I think everyone else in the local community out there, uh, don't get anything out of it. Even the local council, they not going to spend money at the Kings mines, they've said that. Let them spend it elsewhere. So I can't see that we really in a position where we are going to get anything I think I'd be better off to put in a written report.

Commissioner Sykes:
Mm.

Robert Russ:
Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you Mr Russ. If there's more you'd like to put before us, um, please do in a written report 'cause we take... There's, there's much weight to a written reports as oral submissions, so any information you can provide in a written report would be most appreciated.

Thank you very much for the offer of coffee when we're on one of our site inspections, uh, but we don't want to just knock on your door unannounced but we appreciate the offer (laughs).

Robert Russ:
I thought Regis would make a better offer.

Commissioner Williams:
(Laughs).

Robert Russ:
Say so.

Commissioner Sykes:
(Laughs).

Commissioner Williams:
Thanks for your time Mr Russ. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
The, the next speaker to address the Commission is Sarah Lockwood. Can I invite Lockwood to the panel, to the lectern.

Sarah Lockwood:

My name is Sarah Lockwood. I'm speaking because I'm extremely concerned on the potential impacts the mine may cause to my family, God forbid it goes ahead. If the mine's approved, I would never have my mind at ease, not only for the immediate impacts it will cause to my family but for the long-term silent consequences that slowly evolve.

I'm a mother of three boys Billy nine, Max eight, and Henry four, all who has ASD and ADHD. We're in a long process of further syndrome diagnosis, there's potential cardiac issues and one has a learning disability. What this means is the, that the boys have s- specific needs and sensory challenges. Noise is a particular issue. The mine will create noise from earthquakes and explosions which we strongly oppose to have near our house. Noise sends Billy in distress, it gives him physical pain and extremely anxiety. Hand dryers, hair dryers, fireworks, alarms, vibrations, sirens, engines, loud music, crowds and much more all send him in a painful meltdown.

Max loses his ability to process thought and his coherent function, which often becomes unintentionally dangerous. And little Henry has silent, um, has sudden violent outbursts of pure rage. The type where you hide the knives, pointy pencils and sharp or blunt objects that can be cau-, that can be used as a projectile or weapon. And this is just the effect from noise. Max is an asthmatic and has unresolved cardiac problems, anxiety and depression. He's only eight. Our property boundaries the Victoria State forest, we are within two kilometers of the proposed tailings dam. We are only westerly breeze away from dust and contamination. Pine trees come and go and there's not much in between to stop the dust or noise traveling from explosions and earthquakes. I would like to express my disappointment in Regis as I've not received any correspondence whatsoever. My home in not identified on the impacted properties map published by the DPE. My family have been forgotten. To my knowledge I thought it was high priority for all residents within two kilometers to be consulted.

You see, we moved here mostly because of the boys' condition, to a quiet, calm, beautiful property, away from hustle and bustle, away from anxiety, threats and noise to a place where they can enjoy, explore and be a boy without external pressure, and desensitized from the busy world. We spent a large amount of money renovating our, the house accommodate the family and make the boys feel at home, close to the local schools and future high school that will accommodate their needs. This is not something that can easily be replaced. Relocating is not an easy task and special needs children struggle with change, changed routines, surroundings. They get very particular with familiarities and small changes cause big upsets. Sometimes it's not an obvious meltdown, it's a behavior or a new fixation, or new sensory issue that arises from change. We had to prepare the boys for [inaudible] before actually moving and that in itself is not an easy task. It's something that others do not understand or even consider when dealing with their typical children.

My husband John and I have had endless conversations about our uncertain future due to the mine. We are stressed, which is having a horrible impact on our family's mental and physical health. The children overhear our worries even though we try to hide it. I'm in constant consultation with medical professionals due to the boys' diagnosis. Pharmacists, GPs, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, psychologists, pediatricians, ANE, just to name a few. The medical system, especially our local hospitals are at boiling point. It is a constant

struggle to even obtain appointments, I feel adding more families to the district will increase pressures on the fractured and exhausted medical system, putting people at risk. It is also, it will also increase pressures on the housing issues our communities all currently face. Homes are unavailable and there is not much rented properties around of, uh, um, rented properties available for everyone as it stands now. Bringing more families in will be detrimental. Local families are already doing it tough and can't compete.

Our children are being taught about climate change and the impacts, um, humans cause that accelerate it. We are not doing a good example of leading by example, um, not doing a good job of leading by example. Children are being told to look after the environment, whilst the adults do the opposite. This mine is a good and perfect example of, to the analogy, "Do as I say, not as I do." We've all have learnt about the proposed mine, I can see how detrimental it will be on our future. The mine is a constant niggle in the back of my head, wondering if we will be given a death sentence. Whether it be slow poisoning from contamination to our tank water, breathing and and accumulating harmful elements from dust, mental health and well-being, asthma attacks, me- meltdowns, and injury. Dramatic as this might sound, it's a mother's truth. I plead you not to simply tick the X box and allow the mine to happen. Please take a moment to consider the consequences on a family from our perspective. On behalf of myself and my children, I thank you for your time.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you. Questions?

Thank you.

Sarah Lockwood:
Surely, you have a question.

Commissioner Williams:
I've got... (laughing) not really. Um, I, I think we would have driven past your property a few days ago on the Victoria State Forest. Um, so we're aware of where it's located in relation to that part of the then proposal. Um, and we note that, uh, as the two other speakers have noted that, uh, those properties appear not have been, uh, assessed.

Sarah Lockwood:
Unless you went down Gardeners Road or the future highway, you wouldn't have driven past that property.

Commissioner Williams:
I think we might well have.

Sarah Lockwood:
Okay.

Commissioner Williams:
Um, yes. We, we have gone a site inspection - - -

Sarah Lockwood:
Okay.

Commissioner Williams:
- - - the locality, uh, map that's, on the website I think it might of gone up today or, um, that shows where we've, we've gone. So, we, we are aware of the location - - -

Sarah Lockwood:
Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Williams:
- - - which was important because we need to also understand the, the lo- location impacts.

Sarah Lockwood:
Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Williams:
Um, what I was going to say, uh, have- - - you have covered all- - - all your points is good but if it felt there's more you like to add, please do so in, in written submission.

Sarah Lockwood:
I will. I had to, um, cut this down significantly- - -

Commissioner Williams:
Yes.

Sarah Lockwood:
- - - um, to fit it in five minutes.

Commissioner Williams:
Yes. I, I, I gather that was the case, so- - -

Sarah Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
- - - so, please also include any additional information in writing to put before us in the written submissions as well, please. Good.

Sarah Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you very much for your time this morning. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The, the next speaker to address the panel is, um, Andrew Wannan. I invite Mr. Wannan to go to the lectern.

Andrew Wannan:

Thank you. Commissioners. I'm Andrew Wannan, and I support the McPhillamys Gold Project. I am involved in the project as a consultant, but today present to you from the perspective of a professional in planning and assessments, environmental management, and regulatory approval over 40 years, predominantly in the Central West, including mining. I'm also a longtime district resident, having mostly lived in Bathurst and Orange since the 1970s and helped raise a family in Orange.

I passionately support development of the Central West that complements its character and resources. My experience provides insights into the issues and opportunities that mine developments bring to the area and why I consider the McPhillamys Gold Project is in the public interest and should be approved.

When I first came to this area, the country towns and villages were very insular, and couldn't retain their youth. Many school-leavers would leave for good for education and jobs. Orange employment was dominated by Email white goods, Bathurst residuals, and Blaney had the abattoir. Only egles remain today. Economic diversity and opportunities were limited. Gold mining has shaped the area since the gold finds at Ophir, north of Orange, led to the 1851 gold rush bringing miners to the district through to the 1920s and '40s, many who stayed and enrich their communities. Gold mining returned in the 1990s with contemporary mining methods, and has since played a pivotal role in contributing to Blaney, Cabonne, and Orange communities. You heard that from John Davis yesterday.

McPhillamys Gold Project is fitting as the next phase for gold mining in the district. I appreciate the planning decisions, the complex projects require weighing up several influences and factors which lead to decisions being made on balance. The Department recognizes this enough. The thorough assessment of the project rightly considers that the project is appropriate for approval. What stands out for this project for me is the guidance from formal planning strategies declaring the importance of mining to this area in meeting community aspirations. As New South Wales transitions away from a dominance of coal mining to other minerals and metals to meet society's future and changing needs, McPhillamys is well-placed to deliver.

I have experienced planning assessments becoming increasingly more challenging, with more regulatory requirements particularly for greenfield mining projects despite government attempts to promote modern mining in the state. A large brownfield mining development in Blayney area could be determined in under two years in 2010. The McPhillamys project has already taken over four years to progress to this point since the Department's environmental assessment requirements were issued to Regis. Those requirements involve 175 discrete matters to be addressed.

Regis has needed to respond with a daunting amount of information framed around complex technical studies and the Department's detailed consideration of the impacts. The resulting time, cost and demands on everyone affected has, understandably, been the source of much frustration,

and, understandably, emotions. This process may fail public administration efficiency principles, but does highlight, highlight the complexity of SSD assessments and the range of matters that are addressed to protect the environment and community within the framework of government policies. This also means that the key matters have been thoroughly considered, and there are no showstoppers. Comparisons have also been made linking McPhillamys with recent issues occurring in other mines, many of these misinformed. Those circumstances are specific to those developments. This project has to be considered on its specific merits and circumstances. The key issues have been identified and appropriately addressed through the planning process. The project is required to meet updated and improved requirements as these that apply today. The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036 lists gold mining as one the, one of the top three economic opportunities for Blayney and combined LGA. The ministers forward to the plan mentions and I quote, "We've heard community and stakeholder aspirations for the region and drawn on this feedback to create a regional plan that focuses on a diverse economy supported by expanded connections to the rest of New South Wales and beyond, with vibrant communities and prosperous centers." Yesterday, we heard current and former mayors discuss their aspirations for the prosperity of Blayney. The regional plan has been updated and released just last December, extending the vision to 2041. Mining is mentioned more than 70 times in this plan. It's the community's plan for the Central West and mining plays a significant part. The plan sets the framework for the region. The Department, it's in... in its assessment report also acknowledges that region- regional New South Wales fact sheet for gold opportunities in New South Wales identifies McPhillamys as one of the most significant gold resources in the state. The new 2041 regional plan identifies McPhillamys as a significant development for Blayney. The plan also states that securing audit for smaller towns that rely mainly on unregulated rivers and creeks will become challenging as the climate changes. With little imagination, the proposed McPhillamys pipeline can transfer water from east of the divide to provide an opportunity for improved water security for Blayney and other towns after mine closure. There are a range of sources which the pipeline can tap into.

McPhillamys supports the plan in more than one aspect. We've heard the principles for the McPhillamys Gold Project are based on avoidance and minimization. The category of state's significant development by its very nature acknowledges that large complex projects have potential impacts that require increased scrutiny. It's how these impacts are addressed and managed that is central to assessment.

Avoidance in full is not possible in this case with Kings Plains in proximity. The 2041 regional plan recognizes that minerals can only be mined where they occur, and it is often difficult to predict the location of viable deposits. This makes it important that known resources are protected from sterilization by inappropriate zoning or development and that access to land mineral exploration is maintained over as much of the planning area as possible. This is too late for McPhillamys since Kings Plains has incrementally grown over time through planning concessions to housing the rural land holding. The rural land state policy in 2008, and the Blayney Local Environmental Plan 2012 attempted to phase these out, but unsuccessfully. I estimate that about half of the houses in Kings Plains have been established after the introduction of these provisions, and after Regis has announced it had, uh, it had acquired tenements in 2012. Land use conflict has increased the challenge for Regis and the regulators to manage and mitigate impacts and generate uncertainty for residents. Notwithstanding, the project has

successfully responded to all issues, through considered adaptation and mitigation. Measures are in place for the mine in Kings Plains to coexist.

Establishing a new mine in Blayney LGA is consistent with New South Wales mining strategies and regional and local plans. Mining establishment in New South Wales remains difficult. It is time-consuming, costly, and uncertain. There's been an increasing gap between the expectation of the enabling state regional local strategies and the ability to establish new mines in New South Wales. The Commission can redress this through the appropriate approval of the project.

The Commission should grant conditional consent to this project consist of the policies, standards, and community expectations relevant to McPhillamys Gold Project. The Department's recommended conditions address all matters appropriately and proportionately. The project should be approved in the public interest subject to the rigorous conditions as pro- uh...

McPhillamys project will build on the mining tradition of the area. It expand community opportunities. The principle of intergenerational equity focuses on providing opportunities for future generations. I have personal experiences such opportunities provided by mining in my family, and not just for me. My son, Nick, has grown up in the area. He chose mining as his career as a local 18-year old. He received a local mining scholarship and, through hard work, gained a mining engineering degree and has returned to this area of working as a senior mining engineer in the Blayney Shire. His success is a source of pride and comfort to his parents. Nick lives with his partner, a metallurgist, and has just commenced building a house in Orange. And his story is not unique. He works with o- other young people from the area he grew up in. Nick's experience is a far cry from a generation ago where local opportunities to school-leavers were extremely limited. McPhillamys provides further opportunity for young people to participate in the industry, this time with a clear focus on mining. To conclude, it's Blayney's turn directly reap the rewards of the endowed resources on its doorstep, consistent with the state, regional and local planning framework, to accept the challenge and to deliver on a prosperous future envisaged for the Central West, where more young local people can experience what my family has. The Co-Commission can help make these plans a reality and approve the project. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Questions?

Commissioner Sykes:
Um, I have a broader question but, did you want to go first?

Commissioner Williams:
I'll go first, if that's all right, please.

Commissioner Sykes:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Um, thanks, Mr. Wannan. Um, sorry, just a point of clarification. At one point, um, you said that, uh, being SSD, the project has undergone thorough assessment, and, uh, I think you made the point that there, there are no showstoppers.

Andrew Wannan:
Yes.

Commissioner Williams:
Uh, and, and a little bit later on, you mentioned that avoidance in full is not possible, in particular in the context of Kings Plain.

Andrew Wannan:
Yes.

Commissioner Williams:
Could you just reconcile those statements, please?

Andrew Wannan:
Because of various number of measures that have been required to be done, and, and we've heard a number of those through, um, adaptation of the mine site from Regis in terms of how they've rescheduled, and, um, adjusted operations proposed to, uh, address that. There were negotiated agreements that have been, been addressed. So, the measures have been addressed, and that's where the Department of Planning has come to the conclusion that project is approved.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you.

Commissioner Sykes:
Thank you very much, um, Mr. Wannan, for your submission. Uh, we, um... you know, we've heard from, um, previous speakers, just now on the potential, you know, pressures to health services and access to health services should the project proceed due to population growth in the area and also yesterday around other sort of broader, um, pressures as well related to accommodation and other, um, you know, workforce pressures as well. Um, so my question was more around, you know, as a long term residents, um, who also has extensive experience in the local and regional, um, planning process as well, you know, uh, how confident are you that the project can accommodate not only meeting the workforce skills requirement for the project itself, um, but also how the region can accommodate, um, this growth?

Andrew Wannan:
Yeah. I was involved in settlement strategies for Blayney, Cabonne, and Orange when I was, uh, the director of development in, in Orange. Um, that was some time ago though, but that did set the scene. Um, we heard from, uh, the mayor yesterday from Blayney regarding the villages and they're looking to accept new development in those areas.

Um, in regards to the various other services, um, I determined the Orange Hospital as well, um, as a delegate for the, um, planning in 2009, um, it has potential... has, uh, uh, services that have increased and improved in regards to Orange. Um, for this project, specifically, the main focus of dealing with accommodation, workforce, social impacts, operates through a social impact management plan, and that involve the engagement with service providers as well.

Commissioner Sykes:
Mm-hmm.

Andrew Wannan:
I'm speaking personally on this, not from Regis' perspective.

Commissioner Sykes:
Yep.

Andrew Wannan:
Um, so there are... these are the measures that are addressed. We've heard many things raised over the last couple of days regarding the social impact assessment, and the Department of planning's website looks at the responses to those made by Regis and also by the, um... So, there will be a combination strategies involved with service providers, and I think that's for Regis to dec- to declare in more detail out of their submissions. The opportunities exist in the region has been growing, and I'm very proud for where are we.

Commissioner Williams:
Thanks, Mr. Wannan, for your time. Appreciate that. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
We're running slightly ahead of time, and our, um, next speaker is scheduled for after the lunch adjournment, but has indicated that she maybe willing or- or she was earlier willing and hopefully is still willing to make a submission to the Panel now. If that's the case, can I invite Stephanie Luke to the lectern for her submission? This is for the Bathurst Community Climate Action Network.

Stephanie Luke:
Yeah. Good afternoon. Um, I'd like to acknowledge we're on Wiradyuri land and sovereignty was never ceded.

So, um, today, I'm representing Bathurst Community Climate Action Network, BCCAN. We support Bathurst and Central West transition to a post-carbon economy with net zero emissions. Uh, these are our recommendations.

Again, Bathurst residents are worried about water security. Back in 2015, BCCAN helped fight off a water grab from this company, managing to save the Macquarie River from another Regis pipe dream. We want an absolute guarantee that this pipeline will not tap into any water source in the Bathurst LGA, initially, I said during the life of the mine, but after listening to the last speaker, I'm going to say ever, if he's talking about water sources that can be piped around these catchments. Huge concern, this mine anticipates using up to 16 megs of water a day, while the whole of Bathurst was operating on just nine megaliters during the drought, and had only 12 months water remaining. As for the water from Lithgow, we want that decontaminated before it's piped 90 kilometers across three local government areas. So, if there is an incident, the harm will be minimized.

Most crucially, we insist Regis ensures this project against any events whether manmade, climate-induced, or act of God. And as backup since the Department considers benefits of the project outweighs the public costs, the government can underwrite any shortfalls. This liability covers everything from the beginning of the pipeline at Lithgow to the mine site and downstream of the tailings dam, as far as damage extends.

As an ex-South Australian, I can say we're fed up with east- eastern states mismanaging river systems. And I am stunned the way you treat food bowls in New South Wales. It doesn't get any better the further west you go, you go, and it's only becoming hotter and dryer. Sorry, this is a little bit emotional.

On that note, BCCAN would like more evidence that Regis and the Department have considered the impact and consequences of another water-intensive industry in the Central West, even evidence that climate change was acknowledged. We were surprised, for instance, that the latest flooding events were not included in the modeling because methods of record keeping have changed since the 1950s, and serious consideration needs to be given to the carbon emissions from the open pit gold mine.

In 2019, a report in mining.com revealed nearly a ton of CO2 emissions per ounce of gold. Given the precarious state of rural economies due to changing climate, we recommend this mine should only be approved if it is entirely powered through renewable energy, and this be factored into the set of costs.

Local residents do not want to bear the financial burden of upgrading the grid to supply McPhillamys' energy needs. We also have serious concerns about the integrity of the proposed carbon offset scheme using preexisting standard vegetation on a property that is already under a stewardship agreement and was in no way threatened starts to sound fraudulent. While some attempts were made to find a koala, we've heard nothing about plans for the rarest butterfly in Australia, the Bathurst copper wing, its habitat lies along the pipeline in [inaudible] area. So, if all these seem too hard and not economically viable, then BCCAN respectfully suggests again that this project is not appropriate for this region at this time, a time of uncertain climate and insecure water resources.

Thank you. And I put a written submission.

Commissioner Williams:
Uh, you will or you have? Sorry.

Stephanie Luke:
I will.

Commissioner Williams:
Will. Good. Thank you very much, Ms. Luke. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The hearing will now take a break for, for lunch, and we'll resume at 1:15. So, could everyone, please, ought to be seated by 1:15.

The public hearing is resumed. The next person to address the Commission is Mark Ward for Lachlan Valley Water Incorporated. I invite Mr. Ward to the lectern.

Mark Ward:

Afternoon everyone. Good afternoon, Commissioner. My name is Mark Ward, and I'm actually representing the Belubula Landholders Association, who are part of Lachlan Valley Water Incorporated. And we represent 45 licensed irrigators from Carcoar Dam to the Lachlan River, Gooloogong. And, uh, we work with WaterNSW on allocations and water planning, and the usage of what's available in Carcoar Dam.

And we've been in discussion with McPhillamys mines for some time about their water economies. And, um, through those discussions, um, we've had two main issues that we, uh, wish to resolve. The first issue is that as Carcoar Dam has inadequate supply for irrigators, um, there's always a shortage, we're always restricted, we had no desire to allow them to draw water from Carcoar Dam because there was not sufficient there for them to get water out.

And the second issue we had was the effect of their, uh, mine site on reducing the inflow into Carcoar Dam. Uh, it was being advised to retain their runoff water on site. So, this had meant that there's a slight reduction in the inflow into Carcoar Dam. With the decision by Regis to apply for a SPAL, a special purpose allocation license, which requires them to trade existing licenses, and these licenses, they can't use for extracting water since they are needed to offset the... need to offset their reduction in water, the water they are preventing from getting into Carcoar Dam from their mine site, so they have to secure that amount of water in licenses. And these licenses cannot be use- used for extraction and, um, for, for, for the period of the model or for the period that they hold the licenses. And slight positive result for in- uh, irrigators is that it takes away some of the license that's going to extract from the dam, so it does reduce the demand on the Carcoar Dam.

So, uh, in conclusion, Belubula Land Association, Landholders Association has no objection to the water access plans as proposed.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Ward. Um, that's very, very concise, uh, you, your submission. Uh, if I understand that correctly, um, the two main issues, firstly, were the, um, not taking water from Carcoar Dam - - -

Mark Ward:

Yes.

Commissioner Williams:

- - - has been resolved. And the other one was the effect of reduction of any water going into the dam, and you feel the SPALs have been instrumental in alleviating - - -

Mark Ward:
Compensating for that thing.

Commissioner Williams:
For that problem?

Mark Ward:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Right, okay. Are there any - - -

Commissioner Sykes:
No.

Commissioner Menzies:
Yeah, it's very clear.

Commissioner Williams:
Um, once again, if, if, if you've got, got anything also you'd like to put into writing to Commission as well, uh, in addition to your oral presentation that would be fine... we'd receive that as well.

Mark Ward:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you very much for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
The next speaker to address the Commission is Craig Hort of Hort Enterprises.

Craig Hort:
Uh, thank you for having me today. Allow me to, uh, I guess, say a few words alto- altogether on behalf of our company. So, my name is Craig Ward. I'm the managing director and one of the owners of Hort Enterprises whose main office is based in Orange. Uh, Hort Enterprises was established in 1995, uh, to service a local mining and quarrying industries in the Central West. Uh, we set up in Orange because both my father and myself, at the time, had a, had a lot of background in the mining industry, uh, especially hard rock. And we were aware then that the Cadia, who's, uh, I guess, the approval process to start and saw that, um, Orange would be a, a good to... for us to set up a business and to provide service. Uh, today, we employ 147 full time staff. We utilize numerous subcontracted, subcontracting companies out of the Central West and metropolitan areas, uh, have 55 casual staff on our books. Uh, quite a number of these casuals come from farming backgrounds, uh, where they use Hort as a way to supplement their income, uh, during the quieter times. Uh, and also has gone a long way to keeping some of them on the farm during times of drought, fire, and recently floods.

Uh, although Hort spread their risk, uh, by also carrying out works in the state, there is also, there is always the possibility that, that this work could be lost to local industry in, in the state that we're working in. Uh, this for us is why it is so important to have mines in the local area to provide a baseline of work to allow us to be sustainable business in the local community. Uh, to be able, able to offer local people flexibility in their working arrangements is, is important, uh, because not everybody wants to work, uh, I guess, you know, away. Uh, they don't want to spend weeks, uh, away [inaudible] working at mines. Uh, and it goes a long way towards, I guess, you know helping people with some mental health issues that want to just work from home that we can actually provide that for them as well. Uh, so it is, it is really important that a company like ours has the ability to provide the flexibility, uh, and having another mind in the local area just gives us leverage to be able to do that.

Uh, the Hort have always been strong advocates for training. Uh, to date, Hort has successfully put through in completion 230 apprentices and trainees, uh, basically school-leavers and mature aged people.

Our investment back into the local communities is written into every business plan that we do. Uh, today, there are numerous companies in the local area where the owner started with Hort. There are numerous supervisors and managers working in local companies that, that started with Hort. Uh, we don't have mining companies working in our area to provide work and opportunities at Hort. None of this possible.

Six years ago, uh, we started the construction business called Hort, uh, Hort Constructions. This is, this is a partnership with another local company, Sara Engineering. Uh, in part, this was to compete against interstate and a bunch of foreign companies coming into the Central West to carry out construction works. This also allowed... has allowed us, uh, to focus on wherever possible to employ people from the Central West for these projects. Some of these employees are coming from places like Nyngan, Bourke, Tumora, to name a few, uh, which in turn brings money into those communities, which in turn supports their local businesses.

Uh, we also understand that any development, whether it's a car park, shopping center, a mine, a road, they all come with environmental impact. Having worked within the mining industry, and now providing a service to the mining industry, I know the work that goes into minimizing their impact, and the strict guidelines that need to follow to be able to operate in. This, in turn, also focuses companies like Hort to work to the same high standard, which then becomes a win-win for other areas of the operating.

Uh, I wanted to finish on a note... on that note because for Hort, it's not just about growth and profits, but it's also, uh, just as important to be a responsible member of the local community. I do believe the, the development, the operations, they feel these mind get fitted for this. And that's why we support it.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you, Mr. Hort. might have a couple of questions - - -

Commissioner Sykes:

Um, thanks very much Mr. Hort. I, I just wondered, in your submission, can you just describe in a bit more detail what your company provides in terms of services? You mentioned you service mining and construction. Is it earthmoving?

Craig Hort:

No. So - - -

Commissioner Sykes:

- - - planning or engineering?

Craig Hort:

- - - so Hort Enterprises primarily supplies, I guess, a, uh, maintenance service.

Commissioner Sykes:

Makes, sense. Okay.

Craig Hort:

Uh, so we do have the fabrication work. We have a full design drafting team. We have mechanical engineering, uh, backing that up. Uh, we provide, um, I guess maintenance services to the shutdown works, uh, which is my whole point was primarily explain it. Uh, so in the concentrated areas to go through, we provide labor for shift coverage, uh, goes through there with the smaller private support enterprises, not just for the project type works, uh, in those mines when they're doing upgrades and then to go through.

Uh, and then Hort Constructions is more on the construction side. So, I guess when McPhillamys, for instance, will... uh, gets the go ahead, and is mining gold, that we wouldn't be tendering on supply and preparation items, but also the actual installation of the, the steelwork that we go through. So, the apprentices and trainees that I'm talking about, um, most of those and school-leavers, uh, and its in the fields of fitting and machining and fabrication primarily to those people are getting trained.

Commissioner Sykes:

Okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much, Mr. Hort. Um, if there's anything you want to add, uh, probably, you can submit your, uh, presentation in writing as well to the, uh- - -

Craig Hort:

I have done that.

Commissioner Williams:

You have done that.

Craig Hort:

Yes.

Commissioner Williams:

And with closure and submissions on the 15th, if there's anything you want to add in addition- - -

Craig Hort:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

- - - uh, we can also... we, we would... can receive that as well.

Craig Hort:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you very much for your time.

Craig Hort:

Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next person to address the Commission, Phil Gunn. I invite Phil Gunn to the lectern.

Phil Gunn:

Good afternoon, Commissioners, and ladies and gentlemen. My name is Phil Gunn. And while I'm not a Regis em- employee, I work as a consultant to Regis on the, on this project. I've now worked this project for nearly four years and, in total, have worked in the mining industry for more than 40 years. Although I began my working life as an electrical and instrumentation technician, I wanted to become an engineer. And through my employer's support, I undertook further tertiary study, externally. Through that process, I acquired tertiary qualifications in electrical engineering and electronic Engineering. And later on, I also acquired a master's degree, with support from my employer. And here is my point, the employment and career opportunities offered by mining in Australia are simply immense, not only through direct involvement, but also through support to undertake career enhancement, by further education, leading to roles with increased responsibility, and therefore, better remuneration and greater job satisfaction. So what will be the benefits and opportunities created by the McPhillamys Project? If approved, the McPhillamys Project will provide not only direct local employment, but, for some, it will be the start of lifelong careers in the mining or a related industry.

On this point, there are children in school, at, at school in Blayney today who will be able to participate in the opportunity, and that opportunity if this mine is approved. In addition, because of the increased demand, for services, local businesses will also expand, generating further employment opportunities and bringing increased prosperity to Blayney. Of course, the

McPhillamys Project is not just about local jobs and direct benefits to local businesses, as important as these are. It is also about the benefits that accrue to all three tiers of government through taxation with examples such as a larger rate base in the local government level, mineral royalties and stamp duty at the state level, and federal taxes such as payroll tax, income tax, and company tax. The increased revenue helps to pay for all of those additional all services that we now all demand from our governments.

So why do we need, actually need gold? Following are some facts and figures of that gold and the value of gold. Gold is Australia's fifth-largest export commodity, and in 2021 generated 23 billion in export revenue. Australia is the third-largest producer of gold in the world behind China and Russia. In 2020, the gold industry in Australia had directly employed 31,000 people. For each direct mining job, it is estimated that there are further eight indirect jobs resulting in over 240,000 jobs in Australia related to the gold industry.

I'll now take a couple of minutes to talk about gold's role in the provision of technology and, and electronics, and this is an area where I do have some professional expertise. Here are just a few examples. Because it is so valuable and ductile, does not tarnish or corrode, and is an excellent conductor of heat and electricity, gold is used extensively in electronics. In fact, it is vital for the existence of the electronics industry. In medicine, gold nanoparticles are at the heart of the hundreds of millions of rapid diagnostic, diagnostic tests used globally every year to de- detect disease.

Gold's low reactivity make it safe for use in the human body and is used as a non- corrosive coating of pacemakers and stents. Gold nanopa- particle technology is being developed to specifically attack cancer cells in betw- in between radiation treatment and chemotherapy sessions. The following is a real-world example of gold used in a, in a technology by almost every one of us in every day of our lives. That technology is, is the smartphone. Almost everyone here will have one of those in their pocket. While the value of gold contained in the smartphone is only a few dollars, its presence is vital. Only with use of gold can we have the tiny wires, the corrosion-resistant contacts, and the heat dissipation, and conductivity properties that allow this device to be so small, but to do so much.

A final point on gold and it's use technology. We are at all, at the beginning of one of the greatest technological uplifts in human history. This is the transition from fossil fuel for sourced energy to renewable energy, that we must all now undertake to mitigate global warming. The transition, this transition will require the extensive use of microprocessor and computer-based technology. And as I explained earlier, gold will play a part in every one of those devices. By mining resources discovered by mining companies like Regis, who invest shareholders' capital and take risks with that capital, the beneficiaries are all of us, as this gives us access to minerals that ultimately result in those devices and technologies that we now all re- rely so heavily on. But why do we need this project? The real answer is that we need new gold projects to replace existing projects that are coming to the end of their payable life or the available resource. If we don't replace old with new at all, we will eventually not have an industry. Apart from anything else, we won't be able to have the technology that is gold dependent. This is a shovel-ready project that has had years of work, with hundreds of millions of dollars of shareholders' capital already sunk. It's ready to go.

I would now like to take a couple more minutes to talk about risks associated with this project. I'll introduce this topic in this slide. For several years, I worked for an insurance company headquartered in London. Their office is in London's financial district almost, almost next door to Lloyd's in London. The company I worked for provides insurance only to mining companies, and my role with them was principal risk engineer. The purpose of my role was to assess the insurance risk at individual mining operations throughout the world. That assessment would ultimately be used to determine insurance premiums if the operation was insurable, that is. Some weren't or some components weren't.

Insurance and assessing risk, I can't understand, it as a very complicated business. Some of the mining operations in South America, for instance, are enormous, and therefore, the insured values are enormous. Assessing their risk incorrectly can be very career limiting. This brings me to one of the more emotive topics or aspects of this project, which is the tailings dam and its location. While I'm not a tailings dam engineer or a geotechnical engineer because, because of my work in the insurance world, I have inspected as, inspected and assessed the risk of many, many tailings dams, with many of those subjected to what the insurance classifies as natural perils. These may include geotechnical, seismic, volcanic, typhoons. The list goes on a bit. The company I worked for had a worldwide database of more than 1,000 tailings dams, and we knew what risk were and where they were.

Given my experience in the insurance world and in mining generally, my opinion is that the design of this tailings dam will make it one of the safest and most secure you will find. For example, the risk of release of water by the emergency spillway will require a greater than one in 10,000 year rainfall event. In summary, there would not be one insurance company that would refuse to provide insurance for this tailings dam, and insurance companies do not take on risk lightly. The rest of, the rest of the project has a similar risk profile. Everything proposed from the mine and mining method, to the processing system, and the tailings disposal method that I've already mentioned is all very conventional and is proven technology. From an insurance perspective, this operation will sit at the very low end of the insurance risk curve.

In conclusion, I would like to restate that the benefits of this project far outweigh any risks. Any resulting environmental impacts are controlled and managed, and the process for mining to processing the tailings, to processing to tailings disposal is well known and used extensively in the mining industry. The gold to be mined is a necessity for our society, and the benefits such as direct and indirect employment, taxation, and royalties are considerable. I will now return to a very important point I made at the beginning. When I think about this project, I think about the next generation of students at school in Blayney today. In the very near future, some of them will directly benefit from this project through employment and training and potentially a lifelong career, lifelong and well paid career in mining.

Finally, it is often said that Australia is a lucky country, and indeed it is, but it is also true to say that you need to make your own luck. These days, Australia's prosperity is largely dependent on mining, and only by under- undertaking projects like the McPhillamys does their luck continue, with the prosperity that it will bring to be shared indirectly by all. Thank you, commissioners for the opportunity to speak in support of this project.

Commissioner Williams:

Tha- uh, thank you, Mr. Gunn. Um, we've gotten a couple of questions, uh, just, uh, for a moment just, uh, [inaudible] for this. Uh, did you... You mention the, uh, the insurance risk and, and, and, and the, the level of insurance risk. Um, I presume that's mainly the environmental risk of the project.

Phil Gunn:

Yes. It's, so we insured for, um, business interruption and property damage. So the environmental risk is contained within the business interruption components. So if the business has to stop because of an environmental issue- - -

Commissioner Williams:

Hmm.

Phil Gunn:

- - - um, that might trigger the insurance risk.

Commissioner Williams:

Right. And so the environmental risk and the insurance risk, is it purely the project per se in terms of what happens on the site? Is it a broader calculation and broader environmental risk off-site, in situ, sort of, environmental risk?

Phil Gunn:

It's a bit of a hard question to answer that one because it's, it's up to the, you know, the actual negotiation between the mining company and the insurance provider or providers. Insurance does not give a provider in this context, provided by one organization, and they, they, um, they spread the risk between many, many different insurance companies. So they don't get, get caught with one big issue. Um, sorry, I, m- we need to get back to your point. I've missed it.

Commissioner Williams:

Oh, what do actually do you actually assess or measure in, uh, in terms of identification of risk. What, what is the... Is it the risk is purely of any adverse environmental impacts or, or, uh, uh, adverse events occur on the site itself? Or you've also tried calculating a potential ex sit- ex situ off-site?

Phil Gunn:

Yes. So an- anything that provides this to the organization that's insured by the insurance company in terms of what I did, it would be assessed.

Commissioner Williams:

Okay.

Phil Gunn:

And off-site risk, uh, for, for instance, um, as an example, a bit of a different management environmental risk that would be supply chain risk. So if a, if a, uh, mining company were

operating in a, say, say in Africa, um, and they had a long supply chain in terms of inputs they needed, uh, for that project, then, then you would assess those risk as, as part, as part of the insurance assessment.

Commissioner Williams:

Right. Great. Thanks, Mr. Gunn. That might be the only question - - -

Commissioner Menzies:

Mr. Gunn, I'm also interested in your views on risk, and you, you, you listed the tailings damage, of particular interest here, and expressed the view that, that the risk was low. And I wondered what the, you know, what the dimensions of your thinking were there. What, what are the aspects of this particular tailings dam relative to others that lead you to form the view of low risk.

Phil Gunn:

Uh, in, in terms of insurance, one of the f- first things we look at is... And I've mentioned that in my speech is natural perils. So let, let's think about something that's quite, that's happening right now- - -

Commissioner Menzies:

Earthquakes.

Phil Gunn:

- - - which is the big earthquake in Turkey. Uh, so if I was looking at a, at a tailings dam in Turkey, which our company did by... Uh, the company I worked for did by the way. Uh, as far as looking at those, of course, earthquakes are natural perils. You, you can't do much, to predict them other to know that they, they will occur. Uh, a better example of that is in South America, and there's some massively big, a couple of mines in Chile. There, Chile sits right on the earthquake fault line. But in terms of mitigating that risk, the tailings dams are built to withstand, you know, this most severe earthquake. So as an insurance person, you look at those, uh, uh, those construction methodologies. And I mean, it's a subject of assessment. You're, you're, you're, you're looking at what's been done in terms of mitigating that risk.

So just to answer your question about the tailings dam at McPhillamys, um, you know, the, the natural perils that I was talking about, um, largely don't exist. Um, the tailings dam is just, is designed to run at 10,000 year rainfall event. You expect, as an insurance person, you would expect that, that, that risk not to be troubled. Uh, the tailings dam will be built with the downstream lift or construction methodology, makes it much more secure, um, than, than other methods. So there's a couple of reasons - - -

Commissioner Menzies:

Okay.

Phil Gunn:

- - -that cause me to say that.

Commissioner Menzies:

And, and look, I, I suspect I might be asking a question. It, it may be beyond your knowledge or expertise. And if so, just tell me that. But a lot of people referred to Cadia and the incident there. If you could give a view, if you are able to give an informed viewpoint of why this tailings dam is different to and lower risk than the Cadia tailings dam that would be useful to the room and to me.

Phil Gunn:

Like one of those, I've already mentioned which is that the construction methodology, which is the dam's strength, lift method. It's more expensive to construct the tailings dam using that method, um, and it makes it much more secure in terms of, uh, being subjected to any sort of failure.

Commissioner Menzies:

Okay.

Commissioner Williams:

Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Menzies:

Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much, Mr. Gunn, for your presentation and for answering our questions. Thanks, thanks for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to address the Commission is Paul Flitcroft.

Paul Flitcroft:

I would just like to take the opportunity to thank the Commissioners for allowing me to speak today, and it's good to see you out here. Uh, good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Paul Flitcroft. I'm an exploration geologist, with over 11 years' experience in the New South Wales mineral exploration sector, as well as eight years in the public sector with the Geological Survey of New South Wales. I grew up in Orange, where I've lived for the past 40 years. I've put, completed my schooling, raising my family, and I've progressed in my career as a geologist there. I've worked exclusively in the Eastern fan belt around the Orange District.

I'm speaking to you today in support of an approval for the McPhillamys Gold Project. I have a strong connection with McPhillamys Gold Project, having worked there as a geologist for six years. During this time, I was involved in two mineral-resource drill outs, which provided Regis their major reserve estimate for the McPhillamys deposit. I was also involved in regional exploration across Regis' other tenements in the Central West. The exploration work we conducted during this time was always done by way of heavily-regulated approval issued by the New South Wales Resource Regulator for mineral exploration, so no distur- disturbance to the land could take place until these government approvals were in place.

During my time at McPhillamys, Regis completed all the work safely, efficiently, and importantly, with minimal disturbance to the surrounding environment, as required by the conditions of these government approvals. Uh, Regis has always implemented best-practice rehabilitation methods at McPhillamys for exploration. The New South Wales Regulator, and Association of Mineral and Exploration Companies, and the Australian Earth Education Organization showcased images and methods of this rehabilitation at McPhillamys. I think this demonstrates that Regis go above and beyond to required standards for rehabilitation. It is also common practice for exploration mining companies across New South Wales and across Australia to employ a fly-in/fly-out or a drive-in/drop-out workforce. Regis has always committed to employing a local workforce. Where professionals have been sourced from outside the region, they are required to relocate. Contractors are always hired locally prior to looking further afield. So I'd say that the mining and exploration industry is a pillar of the New South Wales world economy. Mineral exploration expansion in New South Wa- in New South Wales during the COVID pandemic years, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics was \$765 million, and that's a statistic from the Australian Bureau. Simply put, mineral exploration did not stop. In fact, it increased.

In 20 21 alone, mining delivered over 2 billion in royalties to the state of New South Wales, and that's an important number. The mining mineral exploration industry in New South Wales has never been stronger. More exploration titles have been granted in the last few years than ever before according to the New South Wales Mining, Exploration and Geoscience section of, region of New South Wales. This is evident, that this is evidence that there is a desire in the minerals industry throughout Australia and overseas to acquire projects within Australia. Oh, sorry, within New South Wales.

A quick search of the Department's minview website, which is all publicly available, anyone can jump on there and see this, will show you that there's a large number of exploration files and applications in the Blayney and Central West regions. There are 3 main reasons for companies wanting to explore in New South Wales. It's an existing mineral province with large proven, with, with proven large mineral deposits. Cadia, North Park, Lake Cowal. The list goes on. It has a low sovereign risk. It's a safe place to explore. We're not South America. We're not in the Congo in Africa. We also are moving towards decarbonization, which has been talked about before. We're moving away from your lines of, of fossil fuels. We're looking at at critical minerals. Gold was not listed as a critical mineral. It's still a very important mineral moving forward in the future. I know, first hand, there are many companies operating in the Central West region that have very advanced projects on their exploration tenements that are at a stage where they could be progressed to mining.

However, many of these companies are awaiting the findings of this hearing prior to investing further money in their projects. If McPhillamys is not approved, there's a real risk that exploration companies will choose not to invest in the state of New South Wales and in particular the Central West. This will result in a loss of millions of dollars in royalties and income in the regions where it's most needed. There are plenty of small towns... Excuse me. There are plenty of small towns that would love to benefit from a project of this size. In my opinion, Regis is the right company to take this project through to development. They have a face here in town. They don't hide away in a foreign country, and they've stuck to this

project from day one and have, and have invested significant amounts of money into it. They are already an accomplished miner in Western Australia with a proven track record of successful projects.

So in closing, I believe the time is right for an approved, for the McPhillamys Gold, Gold Project. McPhillamys is one of the largest undeveloped gold deposits discovered in the last 20 years in Australia. With metal prices and in particular the gold price at an all time high, the New South Wales State economy, post COVID, needs all the large projects, projects it can get. And the approval of a state-significant project will give a much needed injection into the Blayney economy and the state for all to benefit. New South Wales keeps saying they're open for business, so I'm looking forward to seeing the McPhillamys gold mine approved in the near future. Thank you for your time.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much, Mr. Flitcroft. I'll just see if there's any- - -

Commissioner Sykes:

One quick question.

Commissioner Williams:

- - -questions. Thank you.

Commissioner Sykes:

Thanks, um, thanks, Paul. I just had a question, just given your expertise in geology exploration programs in New South Wales and the Central West.

Paul Flitcroft:

Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:

Uh, you know, the mine life or the operational life for McPhillamys is, is planned for, I believe, 11 years. Um, could you just explain what that means in terms of the resource, um, at McPhillamys. Like, does the resource potential go deeper, or are there other similar styles of deposits within the immediate, um, vicinity of, of this area?

Paul Flitcroft:

Look, there's, there's plenty of potential along strike from McPhillamys, what we call along strike, so along particular geological features and structures. Um, I no longer work for Regis, so I can't comment on, on their exploration program.

Commissioner Sykes:

Hmm.

Paul Flitcroft:

Uh, but they certainly can be potential in the area. Uh, that's why- - -

Commissioner Sykes:
Yeah.

Paul Flitcroft:

- - - there's so much investment in the area. Um, so, yes, there is potential, uh, and they will be exploring that if there was approval given for the project within the next few years.

Commissioner Sykes:
O- okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Hi. Thanks. Thanks very much, Mr. Flitcroft, for your time, thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to address the panel is, Vicky Lockwood. Can I invite Vicky Lockwood to the lectern.

Vicki Lockwood:

Good afternoon, Commissioners, and those present today. My name is Vicki Lockwood, 63 years of age, and the matriarch of my family businesses.

Under the Goldfields umbrella are the following companies. Goldfields Honey Bee And Pollination Services Proprietary Limited. Goldfield Honey Australia Proprietary Limited, Goldfields Aperies , the Beekeepers Inn. I'm also a consultant advisor to the Lockwood Family Trust, Lockwood Beekeeping Suppliers, Central Rangers Brewing Company, and the Beeswax Factory. I refer to these businesses as Goldfields in my presentation. My four adult children, John, Mark, Claire, Sam, and their partners are all part of these businesses in various roles. I also have eight grandchildren and two on the way.

I give this presentation today to help you understand our industry, the apery industry. I wish I had a week, but I'll do my best in 15 minutes to make you understand why Goldfields, the Lockwood family, and the beekeeping industry opposes the recommendation for the proposed mine at Kings Plains, which is located two kilometers from Goldfields side. Grant Lockwood founded Goldfields, started beekeeping at age 16 on Orange Bee Farms. This is just the history of where we get to. Um, in 1975. Orange Bee Farm, some of Australia's largest beekeeping companies, was established in the 1950s, post-war.

Grant did his apprenticeship and was a naturally talented skilled beekeeper. His expert knowledge of bees, flora, climate, geography, and farming is irreplaceable. These skills passed on by mentors who were pioneers in the beekeeping industry in Australia. Grant has those skills onto his children, as well as his love for history, tourism, and hospitality. I myself was raised on a merino sheep farm in the area. My family now has five generations in Australian agriculture. My working history is in banking and accounting. Grant and I established Goldfields at Lucknow [02:40:45] in 1989. And I eventually moved to our current site on the Mitchell highway, in Victoria in 1999, selected because of its, surrounded by clean environment suitable for

beekeeping, honey production, and queen bee breeding, and complement his love of history of a cobb and co stop over.

Our bee sites in the Victoria State forest is just 200 meters from the proposed office facilities. Also, it is located on a major freight route. A new honey extracting and packing plant was built in 2010. The beekeeper's inn, a cobb and co stopover, built in 1859 is the first perfect place for our cafe, tourist and educational facilities. Sadly, Grant passed away suddenly in 2017 from melanoma. Goldfields operates 12,000 beehives, and is the largest beekeeping business in Australia. Goldfields also has a honey-packing facility where we pack honey for major supermarkets, a tourist shop, retail outlets, and two export companies. Our facility is SQF accredited food safety.

The process of this whole proposal is very unjust. It has been approximately 10 years since the mine was first proposed, and now it's at this point. It is a very unfair system where Regis has been given extension after extension to submit information but an individual like me is just given weeks to submit responses. My mental health, uh, the pressure is huge not only on myself, my mental health, but my family and my businesses. How could one proposal hold up the lives of so many people for such a long period of time? During the past five years, myself, and my family, and Goldfields have endured grief of the death of my husband, hence the restructure of new business models.

One of Australia's worst droughts, bush fires that burnt a lot of our resources, COVID restricting movement of bees over borders, a mouse plague which took crops and added stress to food safety programs, veromite incursion, that is a major ongoing catastrophe to our beekeeping industry. Recent floods that caused bee losses and where even we can't access bees or can't travel on the unrepaired roads to get to our resources, lack of staff across all areas of Goldfields, especially hospitality, my time and the time of my family would have been more beneficial dealing with these issues rather than reading through reams mining papers that we did not understand.

Photo, yeah. Uh, expansion, the photos will be a bit out of [inaudible]. Goldfields recently purchased a second, a 70-acre property at Callunda adjoining our factory with a house that's located just two kilometers from the tailings dam. The decision to purchase this was not taken lightly but was always part of our ongoing business plan and expansion. With the proposed mine looming over our heads, what do you do? Put your life on hold?

My son John, his wife Sarah, and their three small boys have recently renovated and moved into the farm house. My concern is that the boys, as you know, have various forms and degrees of autism. Can Regis guarantee the blasting will not be heard from the house as one of the boys is noise sensitive? Can Regis guarantee that the dust will not attack, not... The dust will not affect my other grandson who was recently diagnosed with asthma? Of course, these boys, my grandchildren are already doing their bee keeping apprenticeship. Next. I have noted that the Department noted the house on any of their receptors, even though it is in very close proximity to the mine, mine. The factory or the Beekeeper's Inn is not noted either. I'm extremely confused with maps. [inaudible] is almost a near neighbor, with only the Victoria Fo- State Forest between us, and within two kilometers of Regis boundary, and I'm not included on the

maps. Further expansion. As part of our further expansion, Goldfields has its own proposed development which is a new factory.

We've outgrown that farm by [inaudible], the plan currently awaiting approval with Bathurst Regional Council. It will be housed on site of our new property. This factory will have storage, a state-of-the-art, honey-extracting facility, cool rooms for the control of pest and diseases, workshops, and other facilities. This development worth is in excess of \$5 million. This will allow over the next 10 years, a doubling, if not more, capacity in all areas including employment. Next. Employment, Goldfields employs approximately fifty- 40 full-time staff, and most of them are extremely concerned as to the security of their jobs. This whole process has created uncertainty. The staff come from the surrounding areas, of Orange, Bathurst, and Blayney. Goldfields is also an approved employer with the Department of Immigration and source of staff and 402 visas, who are professional beekeepers. And I'm proud to say some of them have become permanent citizens of Australia.

Gold fields is also an approved partner, a Pacific labor employer. We currently host and employ three people from Papua New Guinea, and one from Fri- Fiji. First from our Pacific Island group are taught beekeeping skills to take home to their own communities. The ongoing employment is in jeopardy if the propose mine is to proceed. Beekeeper's Inn was built in 1959, and to this day, it's a very historic building which houses our honey shop, farm shop, license cafe, honey tasting, and live bee display, and an outlet for 1859 beer, which is brewed on-site, and candles from the beeswax factory.

The live beehive and honey testing attracts many visitors. I've extensively renovated and extended over the years to create an iconic place for locals and visitors to our area. We're located on the mitchell highway, the gateway to the food and health of New the South Wales. Visitors to the inn come from all over the world and interstate and local. Our immediate areas hosts events such as Food and Wine Week in Orange, car racing at mount panorama, the Australian National Field Day just to name a few.

We have a function facility that has birthdays, special events, and approximately 25 weddings per year, the ceremony, held on site, often. We host the educational tours, bus groups, school groups, disability groups, many clubs who wanna learn about our industry. Commissioners, any guarantees that these events will not be affected by blasting, noise, or dust? These are very, very special events.

The brewery. Uh, our onsite brewery uses our pristine borehole water, which is proven to be harvested all for brewing. Commissioners, are there guarantees that our borehole water will not be affected? My son and I will be speaking to my, to you tomorrow about the brewery. The beeswax factory. Chemical-free beeswax is produced, candle making. The wax is built, placed in the molds, and sent to an export company that specializes in beeswax for the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries.

Exported wax must be free of residues. Australia is the only country in the world that produces beeswax free of contaminants. Any wax that will be produced adjacent to the mine will have to be stringently tested, wax-melting machines cleaned to avoid cross-contamination. Can Regis

guarantee that wax produced from a mine will be free of residues and Regis will cover the cost of cleaning and testing? Next. Our community. We can't be a business without a community, we can't have a business without a community. We live in the local government area of Orange. My business, housed in Bathurst, our local shops and post office, Blayney, and our bees kept throughout all the regions, including [inaudible]. Our staff and my family live in these four local government areas. I know if this mine is approved things like housing, childcare, medical, roads, education will be strained on the already strained services. My own secretary will not be returning to Goldfields after maternity leave as she cannot access adequate childcare.

Communities will be segregated. People's homes, not houses, their lifetime hopes, dreams gone. I am particularly concerned about Kings Plains community that is already seeing its demise. This cannot happen. Help. Help. I, as I read through reams and reams of submissions and responses, scientific reports over many years, I find Regis and the Department of Planning and Environment baffle me with gray reading. Nothing's black and white. No yes or nos. For example, terms such as where practical, sufficiently minimize, the Department recognizes, the Department considers, minimizing activities, could be managed, reasonable and favorable measures, reduce the impact as far as practical (laughs). Noted, noted, noted. Just to name a few.

I'm not a scientist or a technical specialist either, [inaudible]. And nor do I have the expertise or thumbs to empower people to respond or sort through the reams of papers, emails, messages, reports that are issued, been issued over the year, last nine years. However, I did engage Macquarie University under the instructions of the then professor Mark Taylor to do baseline studies so we had a record as to the condition of our environment in case the mining company insists.

I did ask Regis to contribute financially to these studies but I got a flat rejection. Also over the years I've had the odd many in Regis... Sorry. Um, uh, Regis. In our recent email I wrote to the DPE and said I had not heard from Regis in years. The next week, Regis contacted me for a meeting. Not even acknowledges the receipt of your correspondence, extreme bad manners. On one occasion a man by the name of Chris Rach from Regis rang me and said he was ringing me as he touched base with the neighbors. I discussed some concerns with him. He said, "I'll get back to you." I placed some trust as he seemed like a nice man. Never got back to me and I found out he'd left the company (laughs) very shortly after I was speaking to him. I lost all confidence with Regis.

The whole process is so confusing. I'm sure it's designed for people like me to give up. But here I am. And acronyms, I can't even comprehend report... Okay.

James Emmett SC:

It's a matter for the discretion of the Chair.

Commissioner Williams:

Okay, let... Thanks. Uh, sorry, just one que- how much longer?

Vicki Lockwood:

Um, a minute?

Commissioner Williams:
Okay, thank you.

Vicki Lockwood:

Uh, Regis or the DPE have never bothered to know about how our business is structured. Goldfields operates a diverse enterprise with, without one branch, the other falls over. We overlook each other, propping each other up in struggling times. That's what families do. If this line were to go ahead, the destruction is irreversible, not only to my business but the endangered flora, flora and to the endangered animals destroyed. Our beloved Moruya will never be what it was. Our natural springs to be blocked up with cement. The river is already stressed, what with our other lines on it. Our dirty tailings dam with a huge hole? I still don't understand, if you dig a hole or a pit that big and make huge amounts of money that Regis says it will, why they can't fill it, the hole, back in and return the land we know to how it was. Not just fence it off, walk away, and leave everything to the environment for the next 400 years.

Commissioners, I hope that you consider each point that I and others have made. I will be near 80 at the end of the project, so it's not me I'm concerned about. It's my family, it's our environment, which is, has to be spared for future generations. My ch- grandchildren, your grandchildren. If this project is approved a condition must be placed on it that mine and processing plant must be decommissioned and a date set in concrete, no extensions. The environment must be brought back to normal. Climate change is impacting too fast on our earth. I know we need mines, I know we need progress, I know we need jobs. I know the government needs to collect royalties. That the world, Australia, our communities, our families, ourselves need to eat. With- without helping these, commercial pollination does not happen. Our food security is in major jeopardy.

Recently I heard our government is considering a minister for food security. Thank goodness. Our businesses are in jeopardy. How can a business that has a long history, spanning over seven decades, and has a future, be quitting the situation for the sake of a business that just comes and leaves? Leaving in its path destruction and a scarred environment. One in every three mouthfuls of food you eat is due to a bee. Our beekeeping resources are valuable. Climate change is impacting severely on them. We need to prevent manmade, unnecessary destruction for the sake of mankind. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, thank you, Miss Lockwood for that, uh, detailed presentation. I v- could this, just might have a couple of questions if you wouldn't mind. Thank you very much. You had a lot of material, uh, and you were racing through it, so please submit all your material to us in writing so we can - - -

Vicki Lockwood:
I will.

Commissioner Williams:

- - - uh, have, can, um, consider it more, more closely. Um, it was a short 15-minute presentation. Um, we did drive past your business.

Vicki Lockwood:
Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Um, and a lot of Victoria State Forest a few days ago, so we are aware of the proximity and, and, and those sorts of issues that, that you've, you've mentioned. Um, uh, I know there's a number of other presentations from other - - -

Vicki Lockwood:
Yes.

Commissioner Williams:
- - - members in, in, in, in Goldfield. We heard yesterday from the Acre industry about the impacts on bees. Uh, we, would be also be good to hear something about the specific impacts on bees in your particular business as well some, sometime along the line amongst the presentations.

Vicki Lockwood:
You're welcome. Uh-

Commissioner Williams:
Uh, any other questions?

Commissioner Sykes:
No.

Commissioner Williams:
Okay. Okay, thank you very much.

James Emmett SC:
The next person to address to Commission will be Jon Lockwood from Goldfield Honey Australia.

Jon Lockwood:
Good afternoon, Commissioners. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Jon Lockwood, managing director and co-owner with my mother, Vicki, of Goldfields Honey Australia. Goldfields Honey is Australia's largest beekeeping business. We run 12,000 beehives, employ 25 people, produce 1,000 ton of honey in a good season, and our bees pollinate the food we eat. I'm regarded as an industry leader and I'm an executive member of the Australian Honeybee Industry Council. I regard myself as an expert in my field.

I'm not only speaking today against the project in question but to outline the lack of consultation and incompetence of the DPE and Regis itself. Goldfields, Goldfields is constantly taking the front foot to communicate with Regis. Unfortunately, we have met with a hostile and condescending attitude towards us. If the mine were to be approved, my business, generations of work in the beekeeping sector and future generations will come to an end. This has had an

impact on me personally and has affected my family through negative media coverage and a constant disc- discussion about our uncertain future.

This project is having a significant impact on our business financially. Administration, obtaining samples, employing consultants and hundreds of hundreds of hours working on this mine has taken priority over our business. It has cost in excess of hundreds of thousands of dollars. We've asked Regis to contribute but they've blatantly refused. Goldfields has written to Regis and the DPE for a guarantee that our business will not be affected in any way. I still await a response. Goldfields is located at Victoria for several reasons. We're on a main highway which suits our freight and distribution networks, a central hub for our beekeeping activities, and a frontage of our tourist outlet. The key attribute, pure location, is that we border this Victoria State Forest. This high altitude, high rainfall and diverse range of flora resources, Victoria State Forest is a vital resource to our business. Goldfields have a long-term lease through the Forestry Corporation for beekeeping in the forest. The proposed mine site borders the state forest for six kilometers. We place beehives annually along the entirety of the boundary.

Victoria St- State Forest is a perfect location for honey production, queen rearing, and producing hives to pollinate, pollination, literally on our back doorstep. Queen breeding is very crucial to our business as they're the heart of a beehive. Queen breeding takes up a lot of time and energy and we, we need that close to our, our businesses as it's a, it's a, it's a weekly job and you're, you're set on a, a set calendar.

In the immediate area around the proposed goldmine we also place hives in other state forest, local land reserves and many private properties of farmers, many of which are here today. On a good flowering event, Goldfields places half of our hives in the vic- vicinity of the mine. Our apiaries within Victoria State Forest, they're not alone at their risk. In fact, the entire district. Reading through the DPE's recommendation to Regis regarding bees, I am to wonder how seriously I'm being taken. The recommendations are proposed of one-line sentences that have no real meaning or give me confidence that our business or bees will be safe. I will briefly address each of the recommendations. I refer to the DPE's recommendation report. Section 6.7.3. The bee industry. The report identifies three key potential impacts. One, clearing of box gum woodlands, losing foraging resources for bees. The DPE identifies 21.2 hectares of box woodland would be cleared, which provide an important source of pollen and nectar. The DPE have not commented that the endangered Blakely's Red Gum will be destroyed. They have not noted that only mature trees provide adequate resources for bees. The DPE recommend Regis plant trees on site to offset what they will destroy. These will not be productive for bees in my lifetime.

Point two. Bee exposure to dust and water that are potentially contaminated by toxic metals and cyanide. I quote from the DPE's report, point four, 51. The risk assessment identifies that bees could be exposed to metals concentrates from deposits dust in plants, soil and water. Or, if they are present in nectar, pollen or water they drink. Next I quote from the end risk executive summary. Concentration of metals or cyanide may be present in water, in the tailing storage facility, are all estimated to be below concentrations that might indicate effects on the survival or health of bees could occur. Commissioners, the DPE and Regis's own environmental assessment have stated that contamination could occur. You could not make this stuff up if you tried.

The debark- Department has simply passed the buck to Regis and have recommended they implement a hairy-fairy monitoring system. This just isn't good enough. Because of the lack of groundwater during the last drought I had a lot of issues with bees foraging for water in nearby houses and sheds. Our apiaries would seek water from dog bowls, dripping taps, swimming pools, anywhere possible. Under such circumstances, bees fly kilometers for water. There is no guarantee my bees will not drink from the tailing scheme. In fact, entirely likely. Words such as may, estimated, might and could do not help me sleep at night.

As mentioned, Goldfields has already engaged Macquarie University to develop baseline data on water, dust and honey. If the mine were to proceed, Goldfields would be conducting their own monitoring program. We will hold an- any negligent parties to account.

Point three, attraction of bees to night light. Not only have the DPE identified the risk, but also the Department of Primary Industries and myself. After several discussions with Regis, I feel they simply do not understand. In warm summer nights, bees are attracted to night lighting. We cannot place hives within close proximity to a house or pull into a truck stop at night with bees on, or the bees fly for the lights. This is an OH&S issue because bees drop from the lights on people and get stung. An individual died several years ago of bee sites, uh, of bee stings on a mine site. Regis's response has stated that they'll be putting shields over the lights to prevent the bees from being attracted. This will simply not work. You cannot have a physical shield... You can put a physical shield on a light, but the beels- bees will still be attracted to the light. I currently have an apiary that is 200 meters from the proposed mine office sites. This demonstrates as lack of insight and understanding. I can't help but feel overlooked. The Department have identified that beekeeping industries play a vital role in the nation's food security. Well, this I can actually agree on. In fact, bees pollinate, pollination and honey production, uh, products directly contribute \$14 billion to the Australian economy annually. The importance can be highlighted by the recent response to the varroa incursion in New Castle. The infected parties, including the New South Wales state government spending \$200 million to free Australia of a pest that will decimate the beekeeping industry. So on one hand the state government are doing all they can to eradicate varroa and support our industry, but on the other hand are recommending a mine that will decimate Australia's largest beekeeping business. Let's put things into perspective. Every August the Australian bee industry supplies the almond industry with bees to pollinate their trees. This is the single biggest movement of livestock in Australia at any give time. Almonds are 100% reliant on bees. No bees, no almonds. Goldfields supply Australian farming services at [inaudible] with all our hives, worth \$2 million to our company annually. According to my calculations, a farming ce- Australian farming services have 2,500 hectares of almonds under plantation. Almonds are worth \$24,000 Australian per ton. 3.2 tons of almonds are produced per hectare. This is worth approximately \$60 million Australian to the Australian economy annually, and this is just one crop that we pollinate.

I simply cannot comprehend why we're considering a gold mine that will put this in jeopardy. Offset site- sites for beekeepers. In the DPE report it states that beekeepers and mining can coexist. In the next breath the DPE are speaking about offsite, offset sites for beekeepers. I am confused, Commissioners. Why are we being offset if we can coexist? Regis have offered us their property, Azeal, to offset our resource in the Victoria State Forest. Why are they offering an offset if we can coexist? At the time we pointed out to Regis that Azeal is biodiversity

stewardship that prohibits commercial activity and, in fact, prohibits bees, as they compete with native fauna. The DPE have also asked Regis the same question in their report.

Am I to assume that my leases in the forest will be revoked or not renewed in time? Is it legal for the state government to take away such vital resources from me and the beekeeping industry because of a new neighboring project? To me, the answer is unknown as I have not been consulted. I would like to touch on a phenomenon called colony collapse disorder, CCD. In 2006, in the United States, the United States reported losses of up to 90% of their bees. The issue was taken so seriously that the Pentagon were investigating an attack on the US food security. This sudden, spontaneous death is still happening around the world today. The best minds in the world have been working to come to a conclusion. No, no one cause can be identified. Rather, a collective group of stresses and factors that result in their demise.

Bees are a sponge for our environment. Pollutants such as dust and contaminated water inevitably end up in our hives. Stresses such as night lighting, vibrations and not being able to orientate due to the dust all takes its toll. Regis and the DPE claim that all indicators will be within safe limits. Truth be told, Commissioners, no amount is safe for bees. There is no acceptable limit. Albert Einstein once said, "If the bee disappears off the face of the earth, man would only have four years left to live." He did not mention the stinking gold mine.

I have asked the Department and Regis for a guarantee that my business will not be affected by the mine in any way. Today I asked the independent planning Commission the same guarantee. Thank you for your consideration.

Commissioner Williams:

Any questions? We just might have a couple of questions for you. Mr Lockwood, you, you've also got another presentation following straight on? I understand?

Jon Lockwood:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

You've got another presentation straight after?

Jon Lockwood:

That's correct, Sam, my brother has a presentation. Yes. Yep.

Commissioner Williams:

Oh, right, okay. Um, we'll have a couple questions now for you, if that's all right.

Jon Lockwood:

Sure, yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

His brother is presenting as well.

Commissioner Sykes:

Oh, okay. Um, I just had a quick question on the, you mentioned the baseline studies that, um, have been commenced or commissioned with Macquarie University. Could, could you just expand on that a little bit in terms of what a baseline study involves and what it, what it monitors?

Jon Lockwood:

Yeah, sure. So we, we engaged Macquarie University, uh, Professor Mark Taylor was our consultant.

Commissioner Sykes:

Okay.

Jon Lockwood:

Um, early on the piece Regis suggested that, uh, perhaps they could help fund that, uh, baseline data and when, when we, um, actually went to do it they, they reneged. Uh, as a result we've had to pay for it ourselves. So we, uh, we collected data monthly. We had hives at Victoria State Forest, right next to where the mine site will be. So you can literally throw a rock at the tailing stand. Uh, at that spot. Uh, we also collected water samples [inaudible] the river in the state forest. And dust samples from... Dust and water samples from our factory in my house. Um, so we collected those samples annually, uh, monthly. Uh, we collected honey, dust, water and air. So we, we've collected all, all those figures, uh, yeah, we collected all that data rather. And, um, that's being composed into a report which I'll be adding to my written submission-

Commissioner Sykes:

Okay.

Jon Lockwood:

... by the, uh, Macquarie University.

Commissioner Sykes:

Fantastic.

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, Mr. Lockwood, the, you, you mentioned there were three, um, uh, areas in the assessment report, three known impacts in the DPE assessment report.

Jon Lockwood:

Yes.

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, part, what, the first one was the, the clearance of, of some of the native vegetation. Uh, exposure to, to metal concentrates and, uh, and the attraction of bees to, to night light. Uh, things like, um, the, the impact of, of water quality or if the tailing stand, for exactly, dri- uh, drinking the tailing stand, w- uh, w- were those sorts of issues also, were they captured at all by Professor Mark Taylor's report, or the possibility of that or, or are we just doing baseline data collection?

Was, was there any of that in- information that could assist in providing any evidence in relation to these sorts of assertions or, uh, uh, findings by the, uh, Department.

Jon Lockwood:

Well, I find that a very good question, actually, I don't think that's my job. I believe that's the DPE's job to determine whether there's a risk or not. Uh, but to answer the question, we just did baseline data-

Commissioner Williams:

Mm-hmm.

Jon Lockwood:

... of what's in the environment, um, just so that if this mine happens that we know what was there before they came along.

Commissioner Williams:

Sure. That's fine. That's, no, that's what I'm trying to, to clarify, what the - - -

Commissioner Williams:

And I think also, Commissioner Sykes' question - - -

Jon Lockwood:

There's, there's actually no real proper studies into, into this subject. Um, which is why, um, Regis's own, uh, environmental report, in their executive summary, doesn't really come to a proper conclusion. They don't know.

Commissioner Williams:

No, thank you. No, w- we just wanted to find out what, what was actually covered in the, in the, the, that data collected by Professor Taylor, uh, and to see in, in what way they, that might somehow feed into - - -

Jon Lockwood:

Yip.

Commissioner Williams:

... the, the findings of, of, of the Department. That's, that's really the gist of that question.

Jon Lockwood:

Yeah. That's our own private, um, data that we've collected on our own.

Commissioner Sykes:

Mm.

Jon Lockwood:

It's not to do with the DPE at all. Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Okay. No, thank you very much. No more questions?

Commissioner Sykes:
No.

Commissioner Williams:
Once again, also, uh, as I've said with most other speakers, uh, Mr. Lockwood, it, you've got a lot of material there so we'd like you to submit that in writing as well, it'd be very helpful for us.

Jon Lockwood:
Thank you very much for your time, Commissioners.

Commissioner Williams:
Thanks, then. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
The next person to address the Commission will be Sam Lockwood, who will address the commission first, uh, on his own behalf. And, and, um, will then speak separately for Lockwood Beekeeping Suppliers.

Sam Lockwood:
Hello, Commissioners. Thank you for allowing me to speak at this week's hearing.

I'm Sam Lockwood. SQF practitioner, HACCP coordinator and QA manager from Goldfields Honey Bee and Pollination Services, proprietary limited. The founding company, which I will refer to in my speech today, is Goldfields Honey. I would like to talk to you today on why I object to the proposed Regis McPhillamys mine project.

Goldfields Honey is a honey packing facility that is located two kilometers from the mine site. I run this company with my mother, Vicki. Her succession plan is for me to take over the co-company in the years to come. I would firstly like to say the lack of, or, if any consultation, has been made to our company from both Regis or the DPE is pathetic. My company has no, has had no communication about the mine. In fact, our company has been confused for another company, Goldfields Honey Australia. Goldfields Australia is a beekeeping operation and is run by my brother, Jon. They are two completely different operations.

I find it frustrating that Regis have never taken the time to really understand the structure of how our group of company works. However, I will point out that in a meeting my brother Jon and mother attended with Tony McPaul many years back. The meeting was in regards to Goldfields Honey Australia. None of the other companies were mentioned or asked about. I attended the meeting to listen in. I recall the intimidating manner in which Tony addressed the meeting. Tony mentioned the mine had an 80% chance of succeeding. I took from the meeting that we did not stand a chance.

I will take my 20% chance. We will not be intimidated. We will not be silenced. We will fight for what is right. Goldfields Honey, as mentioned, is a honey packing facility. We pack our honey for major supermarkets all around Australia. In recent years we have also exported our honey to many countries including Japan, China, Pakistan, and have new markets in the works for export to the US and Vietnam. Our factory is SQF accredited. SQF is a worldwide stringent food safety standard. We take pride in our food safety, never scoring below 95% in our annual SQF factory audit.

We are also HACCP accredited. HACCP analysis critical control points. Food and a potential nearby mine will require a lot more hazard analysis. We currently pack, on average, 750 ton of Australian honey. That's roughly 1.3 million bottles of honey per year. My concerns for the proposed mine are as follows. Honey supply. Goldfields Honey purchases honey from around our local area to be processed and packed. However, Goldfields Honey Australia is by far my biggest supplier, supplying 95% of all our honey. My concern is that Goldfields Australia's beekeeping resources and potential contamination risk will cripple GHA's ability to provide my company with enough honey to keep our contracts going. The flow-on effect is immense. Will Regis guarantee my business a sustainable honey supply?

Honey testing. Goldfields Honey needs to conduct product testing throughout the year to verify compliance. The frequency of testing is risk-based. As the DPE has mentioned in the, their report, a potential contamination may occur, therefore additional attesting... Additional testing would be required if there is a known potential risk of environmental contamination or contamination of the honey. A few of the tests we conduct are biological testing. C3, C4 sugar testing. Pollen analysis. Reducing sugars. Nutritional. Heavy metals. MRL residue testing. Just to name a few. These tests are very costly. These tests are requested directly from the supermarkets themselves.

Water testing. We test our water regularly for potential heavy metal, chemical and biological contaminants. With the risk of a contamination higher with a nearby mine our testing schedule will have to increase to maintain certification. Will Regis compensate for the increase in testing due to, to a potential risk? The risks are dust, airborne contamination. The honey processing area is constructed to exclude the entry of dust. However, if there is a contaminated dust it may settle on the outside of IBCs, which are used for the storage and transportation of bulk honey. Or on the outside of rack pallets for packaging materials and be transferred into the storage and production areas with the potential of contaminating the production environment and the honey. The majority of the water used for the cleaning of equipment in the honey processing area, including equipment with direct honey contact, is rainwater collected from the factory roof. If there is contamination on the roof due to dust it will be collected with the water from the roof and washed into our rainwater tanks. Our existing filtration system of the rain water will not remove heavy metals or other similar contaminants. The presence of contaminants may be transferred to the honey, and if it is present at levels higher than the maximum residue limit it would lead to the rejection of the product and/or the recall of finished products. If the mine were to proceed and contamination of our water was to occur, would Regis guarantee an immediate clean source of water?

Recall and traceability. Every kilogram of honey we pack is traceable. Batches can be traced right back to the individual hive of where the honey was produced. Not only does our company do a huge amount of testing to verify compliance and food safety, our customers and other agencies do random off- the-shelf testing. Our company already has baseline data from before a mine was present. It would be quite easy to trace a heavy metal contamination back to the mine. If a contaminant was detected, there would have to be a national, if not global recall of our honey. This has huge economic ramifications for a lot of parties involves.

As you know, major food recalls are done through the media. Can you imagine the headlines of a food recall being traced back to a mine site? Is the DPE, Regis, and even the IPC willing to take the risk on a global food recall? If the contamination was to be traced back to the mine, would Regis compensate for major economic losses, loss of contracts, loss of customer confidence? Food security. Our climate is changing. In my short lifetime our country has seen some of the biggest disasters in living memory. 2017, '18, '19 droughts and intense fires. The 2021 mouse play. The recent floods. COVID. Our population is growing. When will the agricultural sector get a break? When will the government agencies, mining companies realize food security is real? When will we be taken seriously? To construct a mine in the middle of a pristine apiary, beef, lamb, poultry, and cropping area is absurd. To put it on a river that feeds orchards and vineyards downstream is ludicrous, and not to mention the potential food contamination if it were to proceed. Jobs, my company has the plan to triple our production and expand our current facility within the next five years. I am concerned that if the mine were to proceed, the competition for jobs in the local area would be tough. This expansion will depend on employment. Currently, it is very difficult to find good employees, not only for our factory, but most our customers and suppliers have the same problem.

Our business cannot survive without teacher, nurses, daycare centers, truck drivers, retail outlets, mechanics, just to name a few. They are all critically short-staffed. Please don't allow a mine not to only poach these people or add to the problem with staff from outside our area adding extra strain to our services. Tourism: Tourism plays a huge role in my business. We don't forget our roots. We still attend the Orange Farmers Markets once a month, and have done so for 20 plus years. We attend the Milford Market which attracts approximately 15,000 tourists to our area twice a year. Other section of our group of companies is a tourist outlet and honey shell. My business packs a sus- substantial amount of honey, which is sold through our tourist outlet. I'm concerned that with the current housing prices in our area and Regis stating a lot of workers will need to be brought in for the mine, where will they stay? Will they be booking out all the local motels, pubs, caravan parks? This had happened before with another local mine. If this is the case, where will the tourists be able to stay? Will they have to find another regional area to visit? For Pete's sake, they are building dongas right across the road of Arcadia. Tourism is worth \$30 billion to the New South Whales economy. 44% of that is spent in regional areas like ours.

Future generation: I'm particiially worried about the future of our business if the mine were to proceed. I'm the second generation to take on the business, which has a lifespan of 40 plus years. I'm only 30 years old and have a full working life ahead of me. I have a two-year-old and another on the way. In no way will I pressure my children to join the family business, but if they were to join, I don't see it fair for a mine, that has a lifespan of only 11 years, to potentially end the future

generations of not just my business, but dozens of family-run businesses and the farms within the area.

As mentioned earlier, we don't forget where we come from. Like my father before me, we still attend local markets. This is a great learning experience for the next generation. I'm so proud to be in the stand with my daughter, nieces and nephews, this gives them great life skills, people skills and a start within our family business, if they wish to pursue. I'm deeply saddened that this may not continue if the mine to... where to proceed just to fill the pockets of foreign investors. This leaves me with my last and most important concern, community. As I recall, yesterday Regis stating at 70% of the community are in support of the proposed mine or where are they today? It is easy to sit in a shopping center or buy people coffees at a local market to just get a few written submissions. Again, where are they all today? I recently moved to the Shire of Blayney, I found the sense of community amazing. Many businesses within Blayney support our business, the local supermarket, butcher shops, restaurants, and I support theirs in return. Commissioners, with all the submissions we have heard in the last couple of days against the proposed mine, I think you can agree with me in saying how community is certainly not for this proposed mine.

Food is a far more necessity than gold. If the mine wants to proceed, I would like the following conditions put into place: for Regis to pay for any additional honey and water testing put upon our business to ensure a safe food product; for Regis to compensate any costs and damages related to a national or global report on our honey, if it were to be traced back to the mine; for Regis to supply an immediate supply of clean water to keep our factory in operation, if our water supply were to be contaminated; for Regis to supply adequate accommodation for their staff not to damage our tourism industry; and finally, if you can dig the hole, you sure as hell, can fill it back in. Thanks.

Commissioner Williams:
Thanks, Questions?

Commissioner Sykes:
Uh, thanks very much, Sam, for your presentation. Um, I was just trying to understand a little bit more around your point around testing - - -

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
... um, both the product testing and the water testing.

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
Do you have a feel for or have you had any feedback from... You said the testing is a request of the, like in terms of the supply chain your customers?

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
Um, you know, have you had indication that additional testing would be required, um, you know, in terms of the risks related to the project?

Sam Lockwood:
- - - well, everything. Uh, all the testing we currently do, um, would be covered, um, from potential mine contamination, um, for water, heavy metals, um, and we're already testing for honey, heavy metals, um, MRL residue testing, we're already testing for. Um, but I definitely will be speaking to the, um, QA guys at our, um, supermarkets to follow on, um, with extra testing if needed.

Commissioner Sykes:
And, and just on your point around the, um... your production facility is aiming to triple production - - -

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
... over the coming years.

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
And you mentioned that in terms of your supply inputs that, um, around 95% comes from, um, Goldfields Australia and the remaining 5% - - -

Sam Lockwood:
That's correct.

Commissioner Sykes:
Do you see that mix changing and just understanding a production facility in relation to the proximity of your supply source?

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
Um, d- um, your other suppliers, um, do you see that mix changing or that volume increasing and, and where is that other supply coming from?

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
Are they also in close proximity to the site?

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah. Uh, some are. Some have close proximity. Uh, in recent years, drought has halted our expansion. Um, the last few years has been, uh, a very large honey producing, uh, for few seasons. Um, my brother, Jon, has very large stockpiles of honey - - -

Commissioner Sykes:
Okay.

Sam Lockwood:
... which will give us the backing for our expansion.

Commissioner Sykes:
I see.

Sam Lockwood:
Um, yeah, and there's lots of beekeepers, we can, um, continue our expansion on it. Yeah.

Commissioner Sykes:
Yeah. No, thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Uh, just before we move on to the, the next presentation, Jon, there's a lot of material that you presented for us with, uh, a lot of detail in terms of, uh, the impacts as you see them. Uh, could you please make sure you submit that, it'll be very helpful in writing.

Sam Lockwood:
Sure. Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Thanks. Let's move on to the next presentation.

Sam Lockwood:
Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
Mr. Lockwood. Can I have the, the mic. One minor matter just to ensure the Commission understands aspects of the corporate structure that you referred to, the, um, con- I confirm for the

Commission, the honey packing company, the one that you're asking for now, is that... is the full title of the Goldfields Honey Bee & Pollination Services Proprietary Limited?

Sam Lockwood:
That's correct.

James Emmett SC:
And I think Vicki Lockwood, in her written submissions that she's managing director of that company, is that right?

Sam Lockwood:
That's correct.

James Emmett SC:
Thank you, Mr. Lockwood.

Sam Lockwood:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you.

Sam Lockwood:
Commissioners, thank you again for your time today. I am Sam Lockwood, managing director and owner of Lockwood Beekeeping Supplies. And I would like to let you know why I object to the proposed mine.

I currently employs seven staff and I plans to double if not triple this workforce within the next four to five years. Firstly, my mental health for myself and my family over this proposed mine has been greatly affected. I am a sufferer of severe anxiety, and depression. Throughout the drawn out process, this mine has been going on for, I've made many trips to my GP to manage my mental health. Throughout any of registers or DPE's papers, I could not see any mental health support lines or agencies recommended. This is a disgrace.

LBS is one of Australia's largest beekeeping equipment manufacturers in Australia. We send out timber bee wares all throughout Australia for both hobby and large commercial operators. Not once has my company been reached out to by Regis or the DPE with concerns I raised in my original submission. As a near affected business... As a nearby affected business I find the lack of, well, no consultation unsettling. I'm located on the Mitchell Highway at Victoria, along with the Goldfields Group. Goldfields Honey Australia is my largest customer. If the mine were to proceed, I would be very concerned that Goldfield Australia's future may not be viable or expansion seized. This will be a massive blow to my business, and most likely result in loss of jobs. The flow on effect is massive.

As stated before, I send my equipment to all states around Australia. There is a potential to expand and take this international. I have seized expansion in the last five years due to the

proposed mine, um, and my mental health, it's just all up in the air. And I don't want that on at the moment. I'm also concerned that my extension will be halted due to the competition for jobs. I pay my staff a good above award wage. However, I cannot compete with the money the mine will be offering. As we have been hearing from some of the contractors that will be involved in the mine, they too are having great difficulty sourcing and securing staff. There are already dozens of jobs available at Arcadia.

I have friends that work in the mining industry. They have mentioned to me, the industry is very cutthroat with labor. Poaching of workers between contracting companies, I just don't see where the workers are going to come from. One friend fairly high up in the contract mining company has stated staff is very short in Arcadia. They are concerned Regis will poach their staff expect a written submission from other mining companies rejecting this project. I'm only 30 years of age. I've achieved a lot in my businesses in the first decade since leaving school, and I feel I'm only just getting started with many more decades hopefully, to come. The life of the mine is only 11 years, the lifetime of my company and many others within the district are generational. On a personal note, uh, I'm an avid birdwatcher. And go to the next photo. I'm an avid birdwatcher. I do a lot of bird watching in Victoria state forest, with hundreds of species of birds using both the forest and the proposed mine site for harborage. I worry for the future of these birds. Many are uncommon to endangered superb parrot, yellowtail black cockatoo and regent honeyeater. I've been lucky enough to see the endangered regent honeyeater in close proximity to the mine site. The Australian government has actually a national recovery, recovery plan for the regent. The destruction of box gum and Ironbark plantations is the main reason for its demise. On my bird watching adventures, I was deeply saddened to see the neglect of the mines buffer tree plantations.

Next photo, please. More than half the trees were dead, and hundreds of plastic tree guards flying through the forest into creeks and dams. I picked up as many as I could. If Regis cannot look after a tree buffer, how can they be trusted to regenerate the mine once completed, if it were to proceed. I wrote this speech some time ago. So I decided to go for another drive in the state forests yesterday to see if Regis has decided to clean up their mess and replant the dead trees. These photos were taken yesterday. I was distressed to find the more plastic tree guards neglected and majority of the tree buffer still dead. This is just one tree guard I picked up out of the state forest, let alone thousands flying around the tree buffer. I asked Regis to please pick them up or fix them, as I do not want to access your property. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Questions. Thanks, thanks. Sorry, um, thank you very much for your time this afternoon. Yeah, so there's two different sets of submissions you've got.

Sam Lockwood:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, if you do want to send them to us as two separate submissions, that would be very helpful.

Sam Lockwood:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much for time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to the Commission will be Patricia Powell. I invite Patricia Powell to the lectern.

Patricia Powell:

Uh, good day, Commissioners. Um, thank you for this opportunity to address this issue with you. Um, as you know, I'm Patricia Powell. Um, I'm a Sister of Mercy, and an educator. Um, in 2019, I was awarded the Order of Australia for my work in environmental education that has two prongs. Um, the first prong is making available to people the knowledge that has come to us in the last 100 years probably, um, about the planet Earth, uh, its evolution, uh, how it operates, how it functions, particularly the life support systems. And the second prong is raising our awareness about, um, the damage and the degradation human activity is causing, because we didn't know about the planet when we were creating the civilizations that we've got now. So they were the two prongs of my education, uh, program.

I'll respect- respectfully submit my opposition to the proposed McPhillamys Gold Mine at Blayney, Kings Plains, and my primary concern is water. I would briefly like to situate the proposed Regis goldmine in a larger, much more significant context than Kings Plains, important as all is that is namely planet Earth. This planet has evolved to enable life to emerge and be sustained through the development and interaction of the life support systems of fresh water, healthy soils, oxygen producing forests, clean air, and relatively stable climate and ocean temperatures. These life support systems know no regional or national boundaries. The environment is not something separate from us to be manipulated and exploited with no regard for the consequences. There is an interconnectedness throughout the whole planetary ecology. On any scale of values, water is more precious than gold. Gold is just another market commodity in a consumer society. Water is essential to life. There is no excuse in our day and age for anyone to be ignorant of the significance of water, or the workings of the water cycle, or the threat to water on this planet from human polluting activities, and mismanagement for the sake of expedience or profit. Whether it be freshwater or sea water, rivers or lakes, wetlands, groundwater or rainfall. I believe that projects such as this Regis Goldmine, stand on the wrong side of history, as we move from an outdated understanding of our planetary home, as a resource to be plundered to knowledge the appreciate its uniqueness and fragility, and its need to be protected.

Australia is the driest continent on the planet. A fragile coastal fringe, watered by a network of rivers that depend entirely on rainfall, supports the human and other life forms that survive here. That fact in itself should make freshwater and its protection, the number one priority for the citizens of Australia and their democratically elected governments at federal, state and local levels. The proposed McPhillamys Gold Mine at Blayney, Kings Plains is located at the headwaters of the Belubula River with a tailings dam of contaminated water to be situated over springs that feed part of the Lachlan catchment within the Murray-Darling Basin, the main river

system that supplies water to inland New South Wales and South Australia. May I have a bit more time, please?

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, yes, you have, uh, another minute. Thanks.

Patricia Powell:

Allowing the mining operation to be conducted at the headwaters of the river is inviting disaster. Capping the spring is an irresponsible act of environmental vandalism in itself. But building a tailings dam on top of the cap Springs is sheer madness and cannot, I believe, be justified under any circumstances. A proposed 90 kilometer pipeline to pump excess water to the mine from two coal mines and a power plant at Lithgow situated at the western foot of the Blue Mountains, constitutes an additional threat to the fresh waterways at the area.

How can any conditions placed on the mining company for construction materials for the dam or monitoring water quality guarantee that seepage will not occur within the 10-year project or beyond the 10 years. When Regis walks away from the area, leaving a contaminated dam and a degraded environment, that was once primed grazing and grain producing land to say nothing at the destruction of the livelihoods of people. From first-hand recent experience, the drought, fire, flood, earthquake... Could I have one more minute, please?

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, just one minute. Thanks, Sister.

Patricia Powell:

Thank you. Um, earthquake, COVID pandemic and most plague in Central Western New South Wales, with the accompanying damage to critical infrastructure, we're beginning to realize the potential unpredictable impacts of catastrophic weather events due to climate change. To assume these a once in a hundred-year events is no longer defensible. The precautionary principle is surely relevant in any proposed human-made environment where there's a possible threat to human and other forms of life, or the life support systems of the planet, as is the case with this goldmine.

There are thousands of people in rural towns and cities downstream of this proposed mine as well as animals and vegetation, who are dependent on the fresh clean water of the system. For them, there's no plan B. Australia's economy has become heavily dependent on the extraction of minerals and fossilized carbon from the soil. While the economy depends on the planet's... planet's resources, and I'm not opposed to gold mining per se, where there's competition for resources, the resource that constitutes the planet life support system must take precedence over their vested interests. We must have laws to protect these resources, particularly in a capitalist consumer society, where even people are now treated as commodities to be exploited and profits given precedence over basic needs.

The employment opportunities of this mine will be short-term, 10 years. However, attractive mining salaries may appear in the short term, and with the mechanization of mining that's occurring, and the expertise required, jobs available for the local area will be limited. Just as

industry and commerce going into the future, we'll need to make decisions that put preservation of the life support systems of the planet, above company profits and individual gain. So also the scale of values that informs the job market will need to reflect the value we put, not just on the welfare of our own family or local community, but also on preserving a continent that can sustain life and contribute to planetary community of life. The shift to a new sustainable jobs market needs to be accelerated. The [inaudible] people of Aus- The indigenous people of Australia, over 60,000 years and more, learn how to create a society that respected and cared for the ecosystems that supported and sustained life on the Australian continent. While modern humans may not wish to duplicate that social structure, we are beginning to appreciate that there's much to be learned and appropriated from Aboriginal land care practices, and respect for the natural environment, and more to be done to ensure that the planet's life support systems are protected for present and future generations. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you very much for your presentation, Sister. Um, sorry, Sister, you, you... there's a lot of material that you covered there, um, if you would also like to make a written submission of that or submit that in, uh, written material to us as well, we'd appreciate that also. Thank you for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next, uh, speaker to address the Commission will be a Ian Manning. May I invite Ian manning to the lectern.

Ian Manning:

Uh, Commissioners I am Ian manning, i appear on the protest. I am from Victoria on the eastern side of, uh, of the Mc- McPhillamys mine site. With a comment was made earlier this afternoon, possible you travel along or adjacent to the western boundary of my. Excuse me, the pipeline route passes within meters of my land, where it passes across my neighbor's land, which sits between two palm plantations. My family has continuously occupied since 1856, some of the land currently used by my wife and I for beef cattle production.

I'm not just make an aside there, but perhaps if there was such a thing as a spectrum, Lo-Lockwood's and their neighbors might be at one end of the spectrum of the hunting industry. We are probably at the other end of the Australian beef industry. But that beef industry has very strict rules which have to be observed by even little lttle punters like me. And, um, and currently, a section of our place, probably the size of about a tennis court is currently, um, fenced off and under quarantine, because there is a concentration of a heavy, of, uh... Sorry, of, uh, um, uh, a, a pesticide of one part to 7 million, instead of the threshold of one part to 50 million. I will be coming here on that, you know, (laughs), in a written submissions, but I just given the tone of what has been said, um, I thought I would mention that.

Uh, anyway back to me, our herd, herd of, herd of cattle as opposed to by virtue of no female cattle having been bought onto the property since May 2000. We are 20 years into a perpetual program of continuous improvement to obtain top quartile genetics in our herd and maintain bio-security. And I might just add, um, bio-security is a, is a component... Oh, sorry, um, contamination is an element of bio-security.

Totally reliable water supplies with which we are currently blessed, uh, critical for that type of operation, where to buy and sell cattle according to seasonal conditions, is not permitted. Our request the commission to fu- refuse outright development consumed from McPhillamys. The IPCs expressly required to consider whether it would be in the public interest for the development application to receive consent. My previous ex- attempts to extinguish the DPE's finding for approval of McPhillamys with conditions would be in the public interest apparently fell on deaf ears.

Stellar performances by some of the previous speakers heartened me, because my disgust with the DPE's re- um, procedures in response to this application is clearly not in isolation. That said, Mr. Commissioners, uh, I will now try to persuade you to reject, uh... Sorry, that to reject McPhillamys would not be contrary to the public interest, which I will look at from four angles, namely job creation, costs versus benefits, compliance with investment strategies and greenhouse gas abatement.

By convention, the creation of employment opportunities been regarded as a positive pillar of public interest. Who could challenge such an argument when they have double-digit unemployment and stagflation. But that was decades ago, and times of change. The issues about supply and personnel shortages have been caused... have been raised by several previous speakers, and there have been no concrete suggestions about how to mitigate the consequential disruption. So I ask the Commission to break that convention and remove job creation from being a positive element of the public interest in the context of McPhillamys. Cost benefit is another parameter of public interest. The creation of a 70 million ton waste rock stockpile to win about 60 tons of gold will create an ISO which will not be offset by other benefits to the local community. That stockpile and the unfilled pit will hamper, if not stop any future attempts, attempts to reenact or even understand events such as the 19th century murder of seven Kings Plains pastors. The evidence presented to the Commission yesterday, by the wiradjuri Bill Allen elevates the importance of being able to understand the lead up to those murders. My understanding of the history of the Baptist wars increased dramatically since recently... since I recently began to read a biography of Ben Chifley Later on the day after the funeral of my distant cousin, John Starr, from Brucedale Pe- Peel north of Bathurst. My Aunt Lucy, John's mother was particularly instrumental in the permanent preservation of Winterdines grave on Brucedale.

The importance of this type of heari- heritage for future learning about our past cannot be offset by the goal to be one from McPhillamys. Global gold markets will barely, if at all, notice the impact of whether or not McPhillamys goes ahead. Yesterday, an accountant told the Commission the royalties from McPhillamys will make almost no difference at all, to the table mining royalty revenue, preceded by the... re- receivable by the New South Wales Government. All of the gold in the entire McPhillamys project could be carried locally by three semi trailers or west of the Newell, highway. All of the gold from McPhillamys could be carried on a single big triple truck. Those couple of truckloads have gone will not offset the expense of enormous greenhouse gas emissions, plus countless truckloads of toxic chemicals and explosives to u- to be used to win that goal. The intrinsic, intrinsic value of that 60 tons of gold is nothing in the overall scheme of things. It is yet to be demonstrated how single life will be saved, or enhanced by the gold which could be one of McPhillamys.

In comparison, the commission has received evidence about the real and tangible distress already caused by the McPhillamys adventure, that anguish will only worsen if McPhillamys receives consent. Anyone with any sense of compassion and judgment, who listened to the presentation of this hearing, and saw the distress which has already been caused by McPhillamys would have to conclude it just ain't worth it, having regard to the foreseeable benefits of the gold to be won from McPhillamys. Hence, from a cost benefit perspective, our request for Commission to find the adverse impact of McPhillamys exceed the benefits.

Compliance with investment strategy is another component of the public interest. Regional strategies to the type, uh, mentioned in the DPE assessment report from McPhillamys are a statement of the motherhood or broad principle designed to be a red flag for prospective investors to have a closer look at a particular type of investment opportunity. Strategies to promote investment in particular industries such as mining would apply equally to an all body regardless of whether that all body is located in Kings Plains or other more sparsely populated localities in New South Wales. Gold project... Good projects do not need a strategy to attract investment and get them across the line. In any event, McPhillamys is not a good project. Implementation of strategies still required for the individual projects... project, uh, rigorously assess by deeply understanding whether the New South Wales Government is apparently so obsessed with its desire to ensure that McPhillamys gets the green light. A possible explanation is New South Wales Government regards McPhillamys as a some sort of a bellwether to the investment community, and that the success of its strategies to promote mining in New South Wales is contingent upon McPhillamys not being rejected. All I can say to that is New South Wales Government relax. Your strategies to promote investment in mining New South Wales are going gangbusters and will continue to do so regardless of whether McPhillamys is rejected.

A representative of the New South Wales Farmers Association, recently told that currently the major challengers for its members in West of New South Wales are arising minerals exploration and land being transitioned from farming to national parks for greenhouse gas abatement purposes. It will be against the public interest to give priority to broad statement of principle such as a strategy designed to promote investment in mine. Overbalanced and adequate assistance of a project when deciding whether to reject the mining application. So accordingly, I request the Commission to give no more than little weight to the object of broad strategies when deciding whether to reject the McPhillamys application.

Greenhouse gas abatement is another strand of the public interest. Regis's apparent light bulb moment during this hearing to give some thought to about how during 2023, it might catch the train towards reduced greenhouse gas emissions is simply too little and too late. During 2016, the New South Wales government stuck its neck out with its climate change framework, which stated its aim to reduce its 2005 emissions by 70% by the year 2035. The New South Wales government's net zero plan stage 1, 2020 to 2030, is the foundation for its goal to reach net zero emissions by 2050. I don't recall being overwhelmed by the attention of the DPU Assessment Report into McPhillamys gave to the question of how McPhillamys would be part of this New South Wales government framework.

During 2017, Meat & Livestock Australian, excuse me, adopted the ambitious CN30 Program to lead the Australian red meat industry towards being carbon neutral by 2030. At the outset for this, the applicants should have recognized that as a greenfield project, McPhillamys could break new ground and aim to set the benchmark for stamping out greenhouse gas emissions by gold miners, instead of addressing, addressing this issue as an apparent afterthought at the 11th hour during the public hearing into its three-year-old DA.

Waking up a few solar panels in the remote middle of Western Australia is again, too little, too late on this important public issue. After all, it's probably not easy to use fossil fuel to generate electricity at that location. So I again, request the Commission to find McPhillamys fails the public interest test for greenhouse gas abatement.

Besides McPhillamys abject failure to meet at least four public interest tests, the McPhillamys' project doesn't cut the mustard on transparency. No person with any sense of reality could seriously doubt the viability of McPhillamys as presented in the DA Currently before the Commission.

Yesterday, the managing director and chief executive officer of the owner of McPhillamys told the Commission that to date, about \$300 million had been sunk into McPhillamys. That amount could be eclipsed by the yet to be spent upfront cost of the project before production begins, if McPhillamys is not rejected by the Commission.

The DPU assessment report states there are known gold reserves below the proposed McPhillamys pit. Unless there is evidence to the contrary, the Commission should assume that Regis will not leave those resources when extraction of the ore covered by the EoS has all been extracted.

Blind Freddy could see the possible benefits from using the McPhillamys processing plant to process all from sources other than the proposed McPhillamys pit. The Commissioner's a- has already been told that Regis is currently exploring for minerals at Discovery Ridge and Bald Hill. Regis's Exploration on my land just over the ridge from McPhillamys, appeared to go into hibernation about the time of McPhillamys preliminary environmental assessment was lodged during mid 2018. It could be surprising it was only a question of time before McPhillamys revisits that exploration unless the Commissioner refuses consent for McPhillamys.

During an induction of Cadia, June 1998, the presenter asked questions, "What is the first thing a miner does after it begins to operate a mine it's just built?" No one answered the question correctly. The correct answer was then given. You then begin serious exploration for more ore to feed the mind processing plant. I don't think anyone would challenge that assertion.

It is difficult having that, regard to Cadia's history, it is difficult to imagine such a strategy is not uppermost in the minds of the owner of McPhillamys. If the Commissioner rejects McPhillamys, it could give Pybar an opportunity to get its house an order. So it could give Regis an opportunity to get its house an order and wants to have another bite, openly put forward a new plan under a fresh DA, which shows clearly either how Regis intends to process all from those other prospects, or even with that modification or with modification, the processing plant of

McPhillamys would be unsuitable to process the ores from sources other than the McPhillamys pit. Under these circumstances, the community would be more reliably informed about Regis's real intentions for McPhillamys.

James Emmett SC:

Mr. Manning, that's the allotted time and subject to the discretion of the Chair.

Commissioner Williams:

I can give you about 30 seconds more, uh, a bit more.

Ian Manning:

I won't press it. Um, I, I won't finish in 30 seconds. Um, I'll just read the (laughs), um-

Commissioner Williams:

If you... Well, just sum up if you can, Mr. Manning, in that, that time.

Ian Manning:

In one sentence.

Commissioner Williams:

Yeah, if you can. Thank you.

Ian Manning:

I thank members of the panel for listening and wish the Commission well in its consideration of the McPhillamys and I, yeah, I don't want to leave anyone in any doubt.

Commissioner Williams:

No.

Ian Manning:

I, I pray that the Commission, um, rejects the application.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks Mr. Manning. Um... Well, I thank you. You've, you've got a lot of material there. It's very detailed. Um, so as I've been saying to most other speakers, indeed, for all the speakers, uh, to take advantage, um, please submit a written submission to us so we can go through your full material that you've prepared for presentation today, please.

Um, we did have a look. We had decided a locality inspection, um, around your locality, uh, a few days ago, uh, around Victoria State Forest, uh, to try and get an appreciation of potential impacts from, from the area in which, which, which you live. Um, so we found that very helpful. Um, but it also would be useful to get, uh, your, your full submissions on, on, on, on your concerns that you've got in writing as well.

Ian Manning:

Uh, Chairman, and I might just mention that, um, I was, this time yesterday, I was proposing not to present anything and not to speak apart from to endeavor to present, uh, a photographic, um, display of probably what you've by now seen. Um, and I'm glad, with what I've learned this afternoon, I'm glad I did not, um, pursue that, um, activity any further. Um, but it is, um, it's something I, I don't know what you saw there, um, yesterday. I will just say now probably rather than try and reinforce it, uh, in my written material, which I present to the Commission, but, um, the thing that, the issues that I most wanted to demonstrate to the Commission, um, from going to that location west of my property is, one, that you can stand on my boundary fence and overlook the tailings dam and the next thing you see is Mount Conobolis. That's if you look west.

If you look at the southwest, um, and you're then overlooking the side of the processing plant, the, the next thing you see if the vision's right, um, is the Blayney Wind Farm, which is just near Carcoar Dam, which I understand the Commission has also visited.

Commissioner Williams:

Mm. That's fine.

Ian Manning:

Um, the other, um, well, the third, um, thing that I really wanted to demonstrate, there, there's going to be a fourth, the other thing I wanted to demonstrate is the proximity of the processing plant to two houses that don't, that aren't occupied by me, just on, uh, this watershed there. In fact if you start at the west processing plant, you go to the top of the ridge, that is the watershed, and within a kilometer of the other side of that watershed, there are two residences.

Um, and perhaps the other thing I wanted to try and demonstrate, um, is that, um, if at Maclean's Creek, which is down, um, which runs parallel to the Mid-Western highway, at the foot of Mount Fitzgerald, um, if the pipe burst there, um, unless they're really have a, um, special things, and I'm not an engineer, but, um, if that pipe burst in Maclean's Creek and the, and the in- ID, internal diameter of the pipe is about 600 mls, I estimate that all the water from that watershed that I'm talking about in, um, gardeners section of Victoria State Forest, would run back down into Maclean's Creek. About 1.5 million liters on my back-of-the-envelope calculations. And that's assuming that the pump was pushing that water, which I estimate would be around about 400 liters a second.

Um, assuming the pump stopped automatically so that it is possible that a pipe burst of that location, that, um, one and a half million liters of contaminated, at least one and a half million liters of contaminated water could spread in, could be discharged in Maclean's Creek within, literally within moments. And, uh, because (laughs) we're so close to the watershed, to the Lachlan and Macquarie, um, that water will find its way down in the Maclean's Creek very shortly find its way into the Macquarie River. But anyway, I'm glad we have had at least that (laughs) opportunity

Commissioner Williams:

No, look, that's, that's great though, but even though you haven't shown those, uh, those slides you've been, you know, able to explain or describe those concerns to us. Um, so if you could conclude those in written submission as well, we would find that very helpful. Thanks.

Ian Manning:
Apply my mortal skills.

Commissioner Williams:
Thanks so much for your time. Mr. Manning.

Ian Manning:
Okay.

James Emmett SC:
Next person to address the panel will be Danielle Wallace.

Danielle Wallace:
Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Danielle Wallace and I'm the Health Safety and Environment Manager with Regis Resources on McPhillamys project. Several years ago, my partner and I decided to move to the Central West and start our family. As you've heard here today, it's not only a great place to live, but a great place to work as well.

Development of the McPhillamys project would not only result in direct employment within the mining industry, but locals who currently work away, may themselves return, bringing with them their wives, husbands, children, who then may go on to work in other businesses and industries in the surrounding area. For those that may wish to work for Regis directly, should the project be approved, I can attest that Regis is a fantastic company to work for. As a new mother with a newborn baby, I have found Regis to be a flexible, supportive, and understanding employer. Regis not only supports women in the workforce, but also encourages and fosters career development around maternity leave and return-to-work arrangements.

As HSE manager for the McPhillamys project, I would like to touch on a few key environmental aspects. Next slide, please.

Firstly, in relation to baseline monitoring, I note that modeling for the project has been based on actual data collected at the mine site and surrounds over many years, including the use of supplemental externally available data, including catchment data from DPE Water. I'd really like to emphasize this point, because yesterday claims were made that Regis was not using appropriate baseline data. These monitors have been installed throughout the assessment period. For example, a number of flow sensors have been installed within the Belubula River catchment. This includes a v-notch weir on the Belubula River directly downstream of the proposed mine disturbance footprint.

Baseline monitoring also included an assessment of water quality and flow observations of identified springs within the proposed mine development area. Regis recognizes the value of springs to local landholders and to the local and regional environment. This is why Regis has undertaken several specialist studies prior to and since submission of the EISs to investigate and monitor the springs within the mine development area and the greater catchment. Where springs will be disturbed by proposed project infrastructure such as the TSF, the water will not be lost from the system. Instead, the water will continue to move underground and will seep out further

downstream, still flowing into the Belubula River and remaining within the catchment. Next slide, please.

Looking forward and consistent with other projects and as outlined in all of the documentation provided by Regis to date, detailed environmental management, monitoring and compliance systems will be in place for construction, operations and post-closure. The environmental monitoring system and broader management plans are currently in a high level of development and design and will be subject to regulatory approval and consultation with relevant stakeholders prior to finalization. This consultation not only includes government agencies, but also local councils, the CCC members and representatives of the indigenous community as outlined in the recommended conditions of consent. For certain management plans, this also includes a requirement for consultation with local industry and businesses.

One of the issues that has been raised during the EIS assessment and consultation process is the potential impacts of the project on agriculture and specifically bees. Next slide, please. There are a number of local apiary businesses in the surrounding area. Through ongoing consultation with local honey producers, we note that while not all of these businesses have concerns with the project, we acknowledge that some remain wary and continue to be concerned in relation to potential impacts. In this regard, and as an example, I note that the recommended conditions of consent requires Regis to engage a suitably qualified expert to prepare an apiary monitoring and management program. The program is required to be prepared in consultation with DPI Agriculture and local apiary operators, and would ultimately need to be approved by the Department before any mining operations can commence.

Furthermore, and in addition to the over 10,000 trees already planted by Regis to date, Regis would be required to enhance, establish, and restore a minimum of 22 hectares of box gum woodland approximate to the Victoria State Forest to support bee foraging. Regis has commenced planning in relation to this initiative. More broadly, the proposed management systems for the project will include a combination of real-time, static and attended monitoring, and would clearly be described and presented in the publicly available environmental management plans being developed for the project. All key environmental aspects will be captured by the monitoring, including but not limited to, noise, air quality, water parameters, biodiversity and meteorology. The results of the monitoring will be used to inform operations and have a proactive approach rather than a reactive approach. This will ultimately result in a better outcome for the local community in relation to reducing potential impacts such as noise and dust.

The monitoring results will also be used to inform compliance with key criteria and limits imposed by the developing consent and other regulatory instruments. This will be supplemented by regular internal audits and assessments, as well as external and third party audits, such as the independent audits undertaken by the Department. As a result of the compliance results, these ongoing audits and other internal reviews, the management plans and monitoring systems will be under constant review and will continue to be adapted and modified in consultation with the Department and required stakeholders as conditions change.

Regis will be transparent in relation to all reporting for the project, in particular, in relation to environmental and community compliance and data. Monitoring data will be publicly available on the project website and accessible by both regulators and the general public. The data will be published on a regular basis and will be presented in a clear and easy-to-read manner. Next slide please.

Finally, I would like to touch on the CCC. Similar to all mines and projects in New South Wales, the McPhillamys project has a CCC, an independently chaired community consultative committee, and has been holding meetings for a number of years now, approximately every three months. The CCC is a great forum to provide information to the community and obtain feedback on key concerns and issues, and gives Regis an opportunity to provide regular updates on the environmental monitoring systems and compliance as the project moves forward. A great cross-section of stakeholders are involved in the CCC, including representatives of the councils, members of the Belubula Headwaters Protection Group and the Kings Plains community. I have personally been involved with the CCC for several years now since my commencement with Regis, and I am proud to say that the issues raised in the meetings are formally addressed and considered responses are provided by the company. The CCC minutes are publicly available on the project website, including documentation of all community questions and answers. I respectfully encourage the Commissioners to review these minutes and meeting notes. Above all else, the CCC is a proven mechanism that works well, and Regis will continue to support and facilitate the CCC for the life of the project. Thank you for your time, Commissioners.

Commissioner Williams:

Uh, thanks, uh, Ms. Wallace, just a couple questions - - -

Danielle Wallace:

Sure.

Commissioner Williams:

Um, the, the data collected that, the, the data you've collected for the modeling - - -

Danielle Wallace:

Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Williams:

... um, particularly the flow gauging stations, tell me how many there are and, on the site, uh, that you've used and, and how long? What's the timeline of that data?

Danielle Wallace:

Sure. Um, so for the flow monitoring, we have used a combination of stream flow gauges. Um, some of those have been in place since 2014 at various locations along with the Belubula River. And we also have a v-notch weir, that was installed in January, 2020, um, that is located downstream of the project development site. Um, more than happy to provide a map showing all of these locations and further information in Regis's written submission.

Commissioner Williams:

That, that would be very helpful, both the lo- the numbers, location and, and the time that they've been set up so we have some recent data.

Danielle Wallace:

Yeah. Yep.

Commissioner Williams:

Um, final question from me. There might be others from the other Commissioners, um, you mentioned also 10,000 trees have been planted to date.

Danielle Wallace:

Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Williams:

Do you know what species they are?

Danielle Wallace:

It's a combination of a whole bunch of different local species. I don't, I couldn't list them all here right now, um, but again, happy to provide a list of the species that have been planted to date, if that would assist the Commission.

Commissioner Williams:

Um, does it include like native species box gum?

Danielle Wallace:

They're all native species, and yes, it does include, um, box gum community species.

Commissioner Williams:

Okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Menzies:

Uh, Danielle, uh, you talked about monitoring and adopting, I, I don't remember your exact words, but I, I think it was something along the lines of proactive response regime.

Danielle Wallace:

Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Menzies:

Could you elaborate a bit more on that and, and perhaps through to sort of, uh, a tangible example - - -

Danielle Wallace:

Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Menzies:

... you know? "We measured this. We'll do that."

Danielle Wallace:

Sure, no worries. Um, so what I was referring to there is the ability for Regis to proactively manage our operations based on our real-time monitoring network. So the way that it would work is that we would have internal triggers set well below what the compliance limits would be, for example, in relation to noise, so that as operations are occurring, we will see if our internal trigger limit is being met, and we would then be able to alter our operations accordingly to prevent any exceedance or to prevent noise levels approaching an exceeding level.

Commissioner Menzies:

Can you give me one for dust? Because a lot of people have raised dust as an issue. It, it... Cadia has clearly, you know, given the community examples of just how bad that can be.

Danielle Wallace:

Okay.

Commissioner Menzies:

What strategies could you have dealing with with dust?

Danielle Wallace:

Mm-hmm. So again, we are proposing a realtime network for dust as well. I'm not sure what network Cadia has in place, so I can't speak for that, but we would be proposing to have a realtime network, again, with internal triggers set below, so that if dust levels are being recorded that are approaching, um, higher levels, are approaching our consent condition limits, we would be able to, for example, turn off equipment in a certain area, have a look at the way that the wind direction is traveling. If the wind is trending the dust towards, for example, Kings Plains community, we can look at modifying our operations, um, moving equipment around to try and prevent that.

Commissioner Menzies:

And, and just a further elaboration still on dust, um, your monitoring, um, where are you gonna set up your monitoring stations? Okay. The... and my concern here is that, um, the vagaries of the way wind blows dust-

Danielle Wallace:

Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Menzies:

... if your only monitoring is on your own side, um, material could be picked up, miss your sensors and dump on somebody's house. Uh, how do you deal with that?

Danielle Wallace:

Sure. So we are in the process of developing our draft air quality management plan. Um, and that will have the location of all of these monitoring, um, sites, which would again, need to be approved by the regulators. However, at this point in time, we are proposing, again, subject to

regulator view, to have not only monitoring sites on our site, but also located offsite at key locations, um, yet to be determined. As I said, we're working through that at the moment.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much for addressing us today, Ms. Wallace. Appreciate your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The, the Commission will now take a short break, um, and we'll resume at 10 to 4:00, please.

The, the public hearing will resume now.

Can I invite the next, uh, speaker to address the Commission? That's Kaysy Sutton. I'd invite Ms. Sutton to the lectern.

Kaysy Sutton:

Thank you. Hello. Thank you. Um, I acknowledge that we, that I speak on wiradjuri land today and I acknowledge any other First Nation people here present.

I'm strongly opposed to the Regis mine. Um, I reside at Receiver 25166 Walkom Road. I'm 1.3 kilometers from the center of their proposed pit and 500 meters from this mine site boundary. I work here in Blayney as a school teacher. As you heard from my husband yesterday, our plan is to build our family home and dwellings for our extended family have been put on hold after finding out about the proposed project.

Our relationship with the company didn't start well. My neighbors and I attended, um, an eco meeting and were just blatantly lied to at the meeting saying that they were in talks and working with... that we were working with the company already, when in fact we hadn't even heard of them. Um, they were called out by ourselves and they quickly tried to make good and recover themselves in the meeting.

While in the beginning, Tony Paul was really friendly, um, always willing to have a chat, um, verbally offering solutions, meeting with us when we wanted to know information, we found that that behavior in the beginning was simply to placate us. As soon as they had the EIS ready to go, that positive relationship ended. We found that they just wanted to sell to us, that they were gonna be a dream neighbor. Everything will be made good. Um, as you heard, um, we put all of our building plans on hold and have only recently, um, built with, um, a contract from Regis saying that they will, um, provide us those mitigation measures that we changed our property.

Um, they've contributed, they've... Sorry. They've continued to demonstrate that their only objective is to maximize their profits of this venture. They've isolated the neighbors in Kings Lane. They've refused to meet with us as a community and hear our concerns, and they only contact those neighbors that they perceive, uh, positive for them. Um, I've had talks with my neighbors who receive weekly phone calls, check-ins, making sure that they're okay, um, even when, um, their, uh, their workers have come out and made social calls, um, at their homes.

When we discussed with representatives when they came out with their EIS in 2018 about our building concerns, we asked for an acquisition agreement and they said that they weren't in the property market and would not be willing to do that. So that is why we did put our plans to build on hold.

We received a message, a letter from the GM at the time, stating that the com- co- company wanted to work closely with us to help us to understand the impacts and how they'll manage the impacts. While they did work with us for mitigation plans, at no point in this process has Regis come to us to explain any of the impacts and simply say to any of our concerns that, "Our modeling does not suggest that we will have any impact on you, whatever and whatsoever." Um, and that, "We are doing you a favor by giving you this, because we are not required to under [inaudible]."

Um, once we received our land acquisition agreement, um, or landowner mitigation agreement, we trolled through that. Um, we contacted many solicitors trying to uh, educate ourselves, because Regis were not willing to do that for us. Um, and when we went back to them with our own, um, ideas of things that we might needed to discuss with them or things that we wished to change, their solicitors sent us, um, a letter saying that, "No, we do not agree to any of these," um, and they refused to clarify further. In fact, my husband contacted one of their employees and he said, straight up, "We are not willing to talk to you until you speak to a solicitor." And then it took a further 12 months and for that employee to not be employed with them anymore, for the Regis to even come and meet with us, and a further two months after that for them to, um, come back to us about that meeting as well.

My husband and I have spent the better part of the last five years begging Regis to come to the party, begging them to be honest with us and treat us fairly. They are still refusing to do that. We have spent many evenings trolling through the documents, reading all of these, um, contractual agreements and all of these higher order things that we weren't originally able to understand, because we were just regular members of the community. Now we understand them and we really shouldn't have, because of all of this.

Um, sorry. So I have personal concerns about my own health. Regis have not contacted us about any, or, or any of my neighbors, about any of the health concerns or any of our existing health, um, impacts. They've just taken a general study of the general Center, um, Central West area. I suffer asthma, which get serious enough that I'm required steroids when there are high pollen and dust areas. Um, I worry that due to these impacts, I'm not going to be able to enjoy my property, which I purchased to live outside. I'm not going to be able to enjoy any recreational time or walk my animals.

I believe that the DPA has not properly addressed the impacts on Walkom Road or the wider Kings Plains and Gyong Road area. Only 18 of these people have been offered-

Commissioner Williams:
You've - - -

Kaysy Sutton:

I have two paragraphs. Um-

Commissioner Williams:

No worries. Thanks.

Kasy Sutton:

Um, um, only 18 of these people have been offered, sorry, presented with agreements with mitigation. The DPA suggested that there were 88 dwellings in this area. That's only 20% of residents in our King's Plain environment region that are offered. How is that fair? How is that contributing to becoming a good neighbor? It only causes community decent and resentment. If the Commission gives consent, there needs to be further conditions so that these other residences in our area are treated fairly as well. Um, I have also concerns for our local Blayney community, being that 86% of our school catchment zones come from lower each- econo- socioeconomic homes and I'm concerned that, um, that it's going to push those families out of Blayney and into more vulnerable situations.

The land is useless once Regis is done. Right now, it is a sustainable agricultural land and it can leave a legacy for future generations. I urge you to please, please preserve our future in King's Plains and do not offer consent to them. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you, Ms. Sutton. Um, so, just, just one point of clarification by me. Um, just in your presentation if I gathered correctly, you said that you originally sought an acquisition agreement, but that was refused?

Kasy Sutton:

We contacted, um, Tony McPaul and Chris Roach and said that the only reason they work with, urging us to build our property, that they wouldn't have any impacts and to stop putting our life on hold. Um, we obviously said that we weren't willing to make that financial sacrifice at the time, because if we left, we'd be starting at phase zero again. Um, when we asked for this, Tony McPaul and Chris Roach said, "No, we are not in the property business."

Commissioner Williams:

But then eventually?

Kasy Sutton:

Yes. After, um, after they had given us the land- the landowner mitigation, um, contract and we'd gone through it. Um, it was then later added in.

Commissioner Williams:

Right. No, thanks. Just trying to clarify - - -

Kasy Sutton:

Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:

... the sequence of events.

Kasy Sutton:

Yep.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much for your presentation, as well.

Kasy Sutton:

Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The, the next speaker to address the Commission is Megan Joerg.

Megan Joerg:

I'm glad I wore my heavy boots. Good afternoon. I'm Megan Joerg. I'm an Equestrian Australia accredited coach, level two dress arch specialist, level two general, which is show jumping and cross-country. I also hold an international trainer's license. Um, I'm a coach educator. I'm a national assessor. I'm also employed as an eq- equine forensic expert.

I've lived in a couple of different countries, and I lived in Madrid, in Spain. I lived in Zurich, Switzerland. I went to university in Kent in England. So why did I move to Blayney? Little old me. Three reasons. Lifestyle, quiet country town. Two. Clean water and good pasture which is essential for my business. And three, to grow my business. Now with gold mine, that's going to impacted severely. If the mine goes ahead there's reasons cease to exist for me. The rural lifestyle will no longer be a quiet country sleepy little town, with giant trucks rumbling through, digging up the roads even further. Clean water and good pasture. My property was used in days gone by to fatted cattle for market. Access to clean water is a must, that now Regis want to pollute that resource. Other people much more clever that I have spoken about the water, so I won't labor that point. I just can't believe, polluting water here has to be the most rid... reckless idea possible. Okay, thirdly a place to grow my business. Now, I train horses, riders and coaches. I have a duty of care to assess arenas and places of training as safe. With Regis blasting and producing noise and vibrations, I will not be able to assess an arena in this area as safe.

Let me explain why. Horses do not have the cognitive ability to become habituated to noise and vibrations. And sights for that matter. They're a prey animal so their instinct, if anything is perceived as a danger, is to run away. And they don't just run away, they often run away blind. That's when they're running the fences, running the trees, dump riders and are left to pick up the pieces. They just don't have the ability to do this. To, to work out and say, "Okay, that's not, not such a danger. That's just the mine going off." I asked Regis to clarify their position on the blasting. Now the grammar's not great in their reply so apologize for that, but I'm quoting. "5.6.1. Impact to agricultural production. Noise, vibration and blasting. Section 6.5 and appendix J of the amendment report. [inaudible] report concluded that over pressure and vibration levels from blasting activities at the mine will be well below the regulatory criteria and considerably lower than other sources of over pressure that livestock are likely to acclimatize to any new sources as introduced as part of this project."

This is absolutely wrong. They will not. I don't know where they got their information, but there is no reference to any, any um scientific research as to back their, "It's okay. They'll be fine. They'll get used to that noise." They don't. They won't. It's someone's opinion. It's not valid. And I feel that my very real request was treated disparagingly. While talking about blasting, you can not ignore the dust problem. Regis can not control the dust. No mine can. We all know that. Working outdoors I will be exposed to dust from the mine. Not only silica, but also pollutants used in the operation of the mine. I have lost two colleagues due to silicosis. I don't coach on un-watered arenas, because of that very reason. So, how will this proposed mine impact me? Mainly my income, my health and my lifestyle. Okay, I'm going to make it person. My life's pretty important to me. To have a mine so close to a town beggars the question, why. Of course the answer is to make the company more rich at the expense of us and the environment. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Right. Just one question if I might Miss Joerg, Um just for our benefit, could you just indicate the location of your business in relation to, to the mine.

Megan Joerg:

Um I teach at Cassie Hedges' place, which is very, it's just opposite the mine.

Commissioner Williams:

Right.

Megan Joerg:

And I, I live uh on Hills lane, which is three k's from the post office.

Commissioner Williams:

Great. Good. That's, that's very helpful. Okay. Thank you very much for your time presenting today. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to address the Commission. Uh, Michael Logan. If I can invite Michael Logan to the left.

Michael Logan:

Uh thank you Commissioners for this opportunity. My name is Michael Logan and I've lived in Blayney Shire for 15 years, and within the greater Orange district for 41 years. And today I wish in favor of the McPhillamys gold project. I was the inaugural chair of the Cadia district enhancement project. Community based Cadia sponsored project, aimed at improving the Cadia district as a place to live and work. My wife and I also own a small property of 250 acres. With Cadia mine as close neighbor. We share in the many positive benefits that accrued of a community through a mining company sponsored community enhancement program. I was also witness to the willingness of the mine administration to operate as a responsible landlord- Uh sorry, landlord. Land holder and neighbor. Some of the challenges that face small rural communities, the opportunity to achieve sustainable economic growth. Sustainability and

retention of small and medium sized enterprises. And the provision of secure employment opportunities locally.

I would suggest that all these challenges can be met in large part, by community-based partnerships with highly capitalized initiatives such as the McPhillamys gold project. Mining industry is subject to demanding regulations through legislation. Subject to consistent performance and compliance monitoring by state and federal governments. And it's constantly subjected to close scrutiny by self-regulating industry bodies, community bodies, close neighbors and various other agencies. My experience suggest that within the Blayney Shire, we are within the McPhillamys gold project, being presented with an opportunity to establish a mutually beneficial trust based partnership, that will contribute substantially to a prosperous the future for the Blayney district and it's residence. It's unfortunate we only seem to regard large scale enterprises such as the mine, as intruders rather as new neighbors, land holders and community members.

Obviously, there's a cost associated with any initiative or enterprise of this magnitude, and I've listened and I hope empathetically to the stories of those that are currently overcome by uncertainty around their future in their dealings with Regis resources. Fortunately, my own experience of having a mine as a neighbor has been quite different. What is sometimes mistakenly labeled as a cost, is in fact on closer scrutiny seen to be a investment in the future of the community, it's people, the region and the country. My engaged in the Cadia district enhancement project, I was able to observe firsthand the benefits to that area that was supported by the staff and management of Cadia mine. These people were not the enemy. They were new neighbors. New friends. New families who became part of our social and support network. Sure, they sought a career in the mining industry, just as we sought careers in banking, education, the military or farming. It would be a great injustice indeed to label them as anything other than hard working, genuine people setting out, earning a quid and building families.

These are the people who instigated community-based programs for the local community of which they are now inherently a part. Some of the programs sponsored by the mine provide to anybody in that community, free training and agricultural support programs for regions.

Chemical analyst certificate. Weed and pasture management. Fox baiting. There are scholarships to support personal education on development endeavors at the university and tafe. Significant in kind contribution to local art and fests. Equipment provided for the Orange hospital. Support for district schools. Cash grants to local community activities tied to volunteer hours. These are all quantifiable measures that the level of community support provided by the mine and it's people. The CDP provided a conduit for the community to identify as opportunity to enhance the local area as a place to live and work. I can not remember a time when Cadia failed to respond to a request in a positive way. We've already seen similar initiative sponsored by the McPhillamys project. I believe it to be reasonable to expect that level of support to continue and increase once the project is approved.

I've also worked with the majority of training and development areas of the mine and heavy manufacturing sectors, and aware of the difficulty in attracting well qualified operators at every level. In my experience the training and development opportunities provided by these sectors, the

transferal of skills they foster and the subsequent employment opportunities improve individuals and communities, and an opportunity not to be lost. In the Blayne community this has been clear. Commercial growth market support for property values. Fresh opportunities for existing and new businesses. Fresh opportunities for Blayne community facilities, financial support for individuals. Thirty seconds? Financial support for individuals. Supporting community initiatives. Personal training and development of job opportunities and the list goes on. Blayne has a proud history of prosperity, built mainly on the astute use and conservation of natural resources within the district. Mining has featured prominently in the building of that history. Having lived with the mine as a neighbor, having seen first hand the opportunities and benefits of the [inaudible] locality, that are prepared to build trust based partnerships on neighbors.

One thing of which I am sure, is that none of us has the right to arbitrarily deny these opportunities to those who will follow us in this delightful region. We are simply custodians for the time being and therefore burdened with the responsibility to ensure continuing stewardship of the resources locally and their allocation in the best interest of the entire region and its people.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you Mr Logan. Uh, I just think there might be any questions - - -

Commissioner Sykes:

I didn't have any.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you. Um I don't know about rushing the end to to complete. But if you also want to submit that as a witness submission also.

Michael Logan:

Yep.

Commissioner Williams:

- - - We'll take that on board as well. - - - Did you?

Commissioner Menzies:

I would like to ask him. Thank you for your presentation. You, you you found to have a whole lot of broad benefits. But as a neighbor, a near neighbor of Cadia, you have to have been impacted by the dust. By, you know, by the bad events that have happened there. Could, could you just give us a little bit of an insight into how that had... I think it's negatively impacted on your life at some level? Could you give me a sense of that?

Michael Logan:

Look I hate to disappoint you, but um, yes we were impacted, but very positively.

Commissioner Menzies:

Okay.

Michael Logan:

And it was because of the endeavors of the people of the mine. Now I can't guarantee that this mine's going to operate exactly the same way. But I think it's important to understand that having been a close neighbor, um that's the impression I have. Uh the only negative aspect I think was one referred to yesterday as an earthquake, um which I think was probably a bit of an overstatement. It was a seismic event. We felt it. There was no damage done. And it was an isolated one in the number of years that we held that property. So really I, I honestly can't think of any, ongoing negative impact at all.

Commissioner Menzies:
Thank you. All right.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you very much mister Logan. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:
The next person to address the Commission is Rex Wilson. Can I invite Rex Wilson to the lectern.

Rex Wilson:
Thank you very much. Uh, my name is Rex Wilson. I'm here on behalf of the Wilson family and also TWS. Ted Wilson and Sons evolution. Um I'd like to thank the Commission very much for this opportunity. I'd also like to reach out here at the hall, the presenters and all of those people that have made a fantastic effort to come and give your voice to your concern too. This is not the first and this won't be the last. But this is what our community is needing. We're needing people to step up and say how they are feeling, and what they are needing for our community. This is what matters. So thank you to all. My name is Rex Wilson. I'm a father of four. I'm a husband. I'm a son. Our family's been heavily involved in this area for 49 years. Um we do a little bit as far as council representation, community sponsorship and education cetera. We're a local family company primarily involved in the pumping sector, pipe lines, construction, infrastructure but also servicing the main lines. I'm standing before you today to be in support of the McPhillamys project.

I do this with a very, very careful manner. My community is very much my number one and the people around it. Uh we all need to be able to perform and do my task for my family business. There has been a lot of comment made, in particular these last few days as to what the impacts are going to be on employment. And how challenging very much in small business we already find employment and finding staff and managing those processes and those costs. And then trying to then justify that to our customers, our community. Back in 2018 we as a family business experienced a project going very, very bad, whereby we virtually lost our entire family business. Over the last few years we have re-established ourselves in a different structure to try and re-develop as TWS Evolution. And this has been a tremendous learning exercise, whereby we must make sure we are operating with integrity, with honesty, and with what we all know now in our staffing era, call our care factor. And this is what I'm reaching out for the Commission and for Regis to also make sure that they are doing for our community.

This project has an enormous sphere of influence. It may only be that it's been termed as Blayney and as Bathurst. And as Kabong and Orange, but it's much further reaching. Our area around here is phenomenally well known for food and for wine. For farming. Bed and breakfasts. Clothing manufacturing. Agriculture. Watches. It's also very well known for mining. Mining has a very personal impact on our company and our family. We were very very tragically affected where one of our staff members was actually killed on one of the local mines around here. And I send out my thoughts to the passed overs as we do every day. For this reason, for this care factor that we termed, we must make sure that the learnings from what what we have been involved in are getting assessed by all of those people that have the skill basis to do so. This comes the questions unnoticed. The DP assessment report. The community feedback. The perceptions of conflict. So many site inspections.

All of these inputs, and that is why Regis resources are being to task on these fronts and why they are performing the way that I believe, they need to perform for us to be a support to them. And we do want to support them. We want to make sure that the lessons are being learnt from those other mining issues that have occurred in our region that have had negative impact. That can not occur again. We need to make sure that our region faces the further challenges. Whether they be from the mining sector, very much through the changing weather conditions. The drought, the flooding, the management of those issues. We need to make sure that our people in control and our council have the funding and have the people available to manage our way and manage our future. We need to make sure that our health for our community, for our staff, for our people, for our families are being well managed. Mental, physical, support agencies. And that's been touched on in some of the representations these days. We need to make sure there are community partnerships making sure we are planning for our families of the future.

My children's children et cetera. This is what we call our care factor. And this why I'm here to support the way that Regis resources are going about the McPhillamys development. I want more for our community, and I see that the McPhillamys mine is the way that we can all get there. Through employment. Through education. Through the growth of our community. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks Mr. Wilson. Um, sorry just before you go. Just wanting to see if there might be any questions at all. Um just to remind you, if you do want to want to also submit something in writing to the commission, you're welcome to do so as well. Thank you. Thanks very much for your time. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next speaker to address the Commission is Brett Duroux. Can I invite Brett Duroux to the panel? To the lectern

Brett Duroux:

Good day. How you's all going? Um I'm from Grafton New South Wales. But um, I'm here in the concerns for the traditional custodians and the way that aboriginal cultural heritage impact studies have been, been done. They've not been done properly at all. It's actually very disheartening to see how you can just forget the traditional people so easily. The stories that

made Australia. There's so much that you are missing out on, you going to sit there and forget the bathurst wars. That's, that's important. It's all the song lines, custodians are people who care about this land. Custodians take care of it. We don't take anything off it. And I really get upset with that fact that people are so quick... I've had mines come to my land. They seem to forget about the environment. The impact you have on waters. Bees. All of the bush heritage. Our bush Tukka. There's so much that is not being put into the report. I've sat there and read. Listen to the uncles. Listen how a land's council can totally disrespect it. Aboriginal cultural people and the way that they feel, for profit and gain, over the people.

Now our next generations are going to miss out on something so beautiful. The colonials and the black fella got along back in the day. Everyone forgets that. They used to work together as stockman. As ca- We didn't always fight. But when we did it, was over this. And that was to do with land. The disrespect towards each other. But this is... Regis is... I had an officer come to my land and try to dictate how to deal with our land. They even disputed the fact that our knowledge was not good enough for them that they read. He got removed off our land because he tried to put the high way through a massacre ground. He was removed. He was never to come back to our country again. I've been a site officer, cultural heritage officer for over 35 years. I run a aboriginal corporation. I train aboriginals. I even train my people on how to identify and understand the bush. How much? There's, there's so much that's been forgotten, mining it, just digging a hole killing off the land.

Natural springs are going to go. Natural springs do a lot to our bush tukka. There's so much that add on to it. Like grinding grooves roots. Where we camp. How we could travel and navigate the land. It was- There's so much. When I get asked, why about this, there's no words that I could write down to actually let us know that, what this mining company is doing is forgetting about the people, the history, the land's history. It's part of... There's so much. There's cattlemen that looked after this land for generations. I mean five generations. And you want to come in and disrespect what they know about the land. And not to mention the land. Asbestos. Really? You're going to muck around with that stuff? There's been conversations going, because if you kill off my mob. And you going to let that dust fly around people? That's, that's killing them off. That's why we had to... The asbestos mines in our area. And you got asbestos on the ground. Come on. That's more... Let me just... I just can't believe like... That's hurts respiratories.

So soon as you go digging up and drive the machines around, putting people's lives at risk. Now the blasting, I'm with people... The horses. I'm a black fellow. I even know horses. They get, they get scattered and gun shy. So are you going to be the ones who pay for the people that go and rides when a horse comes running out and get hit by a car? You have considered that? All of the death that like, we've got so many things that you haven't put in accountability but, jeez. And I'm only a black fellow. But I can see that what you are doing is totally, is putting profit before people, land, heritage, lives. You've got... People who move from the city is to come to this beautiful life of a small town. We want our kids to grow up with morals, respect and knowledge of our old ways. Everyone should gather experience. Like you have lived in the city. You come to the bush. How do you feel? You feel so much beside a normal life. You feel better. But to sit there and watch it mined, that's just going to make it worse. What, what are you going to do? Sit there and have a hole in the ground. There going to be dust, poisons, sickness.

Ah, they're going to put a penny into the hospital and a little cockoo. Really, what are they going to do? If you don't comply to them, they're not going to do anything. It's up to their choice. Their discretion. I really appreciate you bringing us on board, because there is things wrong with this. There is a problem. And the people should be heard. There are concerns that are really, really warranted. Aboriginal, well everyone's. Farmers. I'm sick of not being heard. We, we sit there and we try to work with you. Do everything to cross. Anything... Penalties everywhere, to be compliant, whatever you need. But when we got people there who are not in the even from the country half the time, they're going to bring then over to work on our land who have no respect for the way the land is lived. And people have lived and worked blood, sweat and tears on this land. And, and they're investing from us just, just going for gold. What else are they going to do? There's not, there's not that much gold here. Why bother? There's more value in actually looking after the land and having beef cattle.

And the people in grave who had smarter brains growing up, didn't have them being done down by dust and poisons and mines. Really? I can't get it. Why don't you... There so much rich in culture you could... Bring cultural heritage. We love coming out here and experience our lives. Go without electricity. Go without phones. Enjoy it. I do it with once but... I take you to back to the old ways. Before technology. And the respect I have. I have to walk up straight. Hi uncle greg. "Ah, when you going to take us out bush again? We really like it." I don't want to go and deal with a mine. I've dealt with mines, dams. It's, it's unfathomable why you want to ruin perfect, beautiful water. The water's... You, you can't... Our national waters. Are beautiful The healing. I have uncles who can go to the bush all banged up sore, walk back out there like they're a young fella again. You'd feel after burn out the bush? Not worried? But, but the healing properties will be taken away by this progress.

I'm up for progress. Don't get me wrong. But at the right places. Place... A mine here... You've had shit go wrong at other ones. I don't see how making a new one is going to make any difference. Especially for a ten-year plan? Ten years. Jeez that's, that's one young one going through high school to find out that, "Oh shit there's no job for him either." Promises of jobs. There is an expiration. So what's going to stop them once they finished digging out all what they got? Are they going to further? "Well we've already started. So what's the difference now? We can go dig. We'll expand. We'll expand." Continuing this God almighty mess in the ground. Poisons. Green water holes. You got accidents. You got deaths. You got heavy machinery just rusting. Leaving them around on land. And I've had bush region. The lesson. If they ever did that to my land, leave a mess like that, I'd be straight up in my dung bush region. There's no... I can't believe what I've seen now in photos. Just leaving... I feel sorry for you. In my land I would've throttled it. And it's a damn shame that they think that that's deemed credible to do, do good for you.

I haven't seen anything come out of what they've said so far is good for you at all. And I really love the fact that you can see it too or else you wouldn't need... There's, there's so much wrong with what's going on here. And it does need to be looked at. It does need to be. They, they just sit there and just keep coming over this land, take their emissions from their country and say, that they're doing the right thing because they're not digging over in their lands. But they're digging here. I've done the [inaudible]. I had the Americans sit there on TV going, "Oh we're going to do our mission part." They're going to come over to Australia to mine. And what did Scott Morrison

do? Sat there and said nothing. Now look at, look at how much he's in, and yet we're still putting up with people getting fast tracked. Mining. There's no... Oh yeah locals getting totally ignored. And believe that's not an Australian way. We don't ignore our people. Australians are proud. They are. If we got a problem, we speak up. That's why we're Aussies. Other people want to come here and not listen to us.

Course we want to get going. Keep going. I'm not going to stop. I'll come back again for these people.

This is ridiculous. It's upsetting to know that they've got a plain old mine. They're going to take out natural springs. They're going to take out the honey. Bees. Such an important factor. We're having problems with our bees around Australia. I've got places where we'd love to put these. Native bees, bees out of Cadia. Manundow. Do you know what it was like getting their water back? Now they are going dam somewhere else. Birdie. Industrializing bush country, farm land. It's for someone else to take it off the land. Not for anything to do with this land. And they're going to deem it. "Oh it's about physical viability and economically sound" To who? 'Cause all I'm hearing is the people who've had five generations move off the land and still happy. And then to find out that they got no future. People can't build because they're on... Why would... Ouch. Like really? There's a lot more words that I'd like to say, but I'm polite. That's... How dare they control the future of a family? That's, that's just disgraceful. Australia is the land of the proud, the free and the rich. Rich in our land. We have the most beautiful country.

And all the other people want to do is turn it into a cess pit. They don't care. They don't live here. They go away. Or they're not even here to start with. They got other people, cronies to do their work. They're not actually giving it care. It's just for profit. And I'm for one is sick of everyone treating our place, my backyard, as a profit to them. There's so much like... I just can't believe that the fact is their consultation is... there's a lot to be denied. The DPI shouldn't even have gone this far. They should be... This should've been stopped a long time ago. They disrespect the people. Their lack of empathy, consideration. Think a couple of dollars is going to change people. Changing their lifestyles from what they were to what they are. Not everyone looks at money. Everyone looks at their family. The value of family and the value of your pride and your land. Custodians care for their land, enrich it. Keep it regional. Keep it alive. Now they're going to miss out on all of it. The trees, they have their stories. They're our guardians.

This... They've got... There's potential... Bees. There's ceremonial stuff that we do. You, you going to let them just walk us out? And then you're going to grow in them little windrows in trees. Really? And they couldn't even... Wow. Couldn't even tell us what they're going to grow. Whoops. I'll get there. Um. But um, seriously I really do hope there's understanding and work, and go for the community and really pull these mines up. I'm sick of people coming to our country and disrespecting it. They have no respect for it. All it is is a little... We have the richest land. Yes. People love it to be rich and stay rich because the way we live with it. Not what we take off it. And I'm just... There's so much of the natural way of keeping our lives, to having a foreign identity come over and say, "Well we can do this." They haven't done anything except make mental health issues, worries. A lot of worries. A lot of disheartenment. A whole community held by ransom by one mining group. And that's what it looks like to me.

They don't even know [inaudible]. Bells. But I'll shut up now, but just please. Thank you for turning up. Thanks for listening to these people. It's really important. I'm glad you did, because what's going on, shouldn't be going on. And I really hope that we do pull up really for that whole strategy, start again. Their impact studies, their whole... The cultural heritage. They haven't even done it. That's, that's advertising two pages and the Land's Council, the Land's Council doesn't even listen to the traditional people. The Land's Council is a government body. It is not a traditional custodian of the tradit... of the elders who are trying to get their voice out there and they're getting ignored.

Their reports are getting told they're hogwash. Their reports are gospel. They have a reason. I have a culture that I learnt by handed down knowledge spoken, and I protect my land. The same as what uncle] does for his. And I respect that. And it's hard to do.

But then when you have government bodies that want to sit their and put profit before people, it's got to stop. Sorry.

Commissioner Williams:
No, ah thanks.

Commissioner Sykes:
Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:
So just before you leave us, Mr. Duroux, sorry, did I hear correctly at the beginning of the presentation, you said you're, you're from Grafton?

Brett Duroux:
Yes.

Commissioner Williams:
Just want to thank you very much for traveling all this way to spend the time to address us.

Brett Duroux:
That was worth it for the people.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you, thank you very much for coming, thank you.

James Emmett SC:
The next person to address the Commission is Peter Hildenbeutel. And I invite Mr. Hildenbeutel to the lectern.

Peter Hildenbeutel:
Ah, good evening Commissioners. My name, Hugo Peter Hildenbeutel, known as Peter. Been an ex-councilor on the Blayney Shire Council. Been in Blayney for 40, not, I think nine years. So, um, I have had very large extended family here. Out of that extended family, 90%, ah, are in

favor of the mine. There's quite a few that are working at the mine, at Cadia and whatever else. Ah, I'm totally in favor of the mine.

I've worked at, ah, Junctions Reef and Browns Creek in the construction side, and ah, so, um, thrilled to see the re-establishment of Junctions Reef, which was done probably a little bit long, long-handed, but ah, it was brought back to a very, very, to my mind, a very good standard. Now, as far as, um, Regis, I've been... I'm a CCC member. I'm the, ah, I'm a CCC and, ah, I've haven't said too much, but I would like to keep the, um, I would like to, um, give the, um, the upper river, the Belubula's River people, a bit of a serving over the three years. All I lal, all I heard was complaints. Complaints about everything, ah, trivial all the way. But never any action. The river is a disgrace. An absolute disgrace. Um, I've invited a lot of people to come and have a look at it through the drought, ah, through ah, through the years, and nobody bothered. I had a, um, picture taken up there where the blue-green algae was in the river. The river is choked up. We talk about loss of water. Well, how much... If you look in, in the books, they'll tell you how much, ah, the [inaudible] suck up each year. And that's a fact that ah, well, everybody knows that.

Now, note the river needed cleaning out from day one, and what have they done? Nothing, but complain. Ah, we'll see what happens after this. I don't believe that the, the, ah, the river mob will probably do anything which is a shame, because I'd like to see, ah, the river in better condition than what it is.

Now, the little bit of, ah, water that's going to be, ah, affected, ah, in the tailings dam. Most of the water, as you might be aware, is divid... ah, diverted around the Dam, back into the river. Now, ah, they probably, Regis has probably got the right to sink about 20 dams in, ah, over that area, because you, as a farmer or whatever else, you're left with so much per hectare, ah, you know, water storage. And you find that that tank probably doesn't go anywhere near what they legally could probably, um, put in.

But okay, let's move away from that. My parents, ah, came to Australia 70 years ago. Ah, up in been here, ah, they come here for, for work, for jobs. Now I'm the same. I'm moved to Blayney 49 years ago for work. And, um, I survived in Blayney, but I'd loved to have seen it grow a bit more than what it has.

I'm really saddened to think that, um, if this doesn't go ahead, ah, my grandchildren, my extended family may not have an opportunity to learn trades. Ah, this is one of the questions I put to Regis in the, um, in the, on the CCC, that ah, they would give me insurances that locals would be given an opportunity to, to learn trades. So I really feel that's one of the big factors.

Economically, ah, yes nearly every town, ah, businessperson, ah, would be, ah, would, have said there'd be only one or two that were, ah, against it, the rest would want to see Blayney flourish. I was talking to one of the main, ah, ah, ah, Blayney fro... ah, Frozen Foods, when he, the king man and he said to me he also was in favor. And I said, "Have, have you put a submission in?" This is apathy.

A lot of people don't bother to stand up and see the other side of the coin. We have a crowd here that are one side, but nobody wants to listen to the other side. I feel so sorry for Blayney if this doesn't go ahead. I have a, um, I'd like to submit a small note here, because I, I felt like I might run out of time to, um, and please copy and have a look at it at your convenience.

Ah, but as far as um, Aboriginals go, my wife is, ah, an elder in her own right, and she said to me, "No Aboriginal would be that stupid to live on that windswept hill, 100 year, 100 year ago, that that Blayney had snow drifts up to a meter deep and that, that can all be confirmed."
(laughs) You know, it's a bit of a joke. You find one koala bear and then you find something else. Now Regis has done a fantastic job as far as I'm concerned.

James Emmett SC:
Mr. Hildenbeutel - - -

Peter Hildenbeutel:
They've, um, offered, ah, they've offered a, um, ah, 800 acres as a offset. Now this is-

James Emmett SC:
Mr. Hildenbeutel, I'm sorry to interrupt. You've past your time, subject to - - -

Peter Hildenbeutel:
Oh, have I?

James Emmett SC:
... subject to the Chair's discretion.

Commissioner Williams:
Just very, very quickly because we're well out of time, please.

Peter Hildenbeutel:
Yeah.

Commissioner Williams:
Could you finish up, please?

Peter Hildenbeutel:
Ah, I'm happy to leave it at that.

Commissioner Williams:
Sure.

Peter Hildenbeutel:
I, I'd like to submit this, um, letter and, um, I could cover a lot of these. But, ah, just, ah, probably to summarize, I was at that property before even any mine even thought about doing it. I'm a bit of a gold prospector from way back. And I know the bloke that owned it, Mr. Tate. He

used to have little fires and here and there, and I didn't know that Aborigines used flint 200 year ago. That's what I always say.

I think, ah, if you looked at every part of what's been in, in opp- opposition to it, it's so trivial it doesn't even exist. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Just before you go, Mr. Hildenbeutel, I, ah, I, I've noticed you've got some, um, extra notes, which you haven't been able to get through. So you can make sure you can submit them to us, to the, to the Commission.

Peter Hildenbeutel:

Submit it, not give it to you?

Commissioner Williams:

Ah, no, you can give it to the Secretariat if you want to, now, over there. Or, you can submit it, um, online if you wish.

Peter Hildenbeutel:

I'll give it to her now. I'm not computer...

Commissioner Williams:

Okay. No, that's fine. Certainly just submit the hard copy now. And we'll take - - -

Peter Hildenbeutel:

Well, I thank you's very much for hearing me out.

Commissioner Williams:

No, thank you, Mr. Hildenbeutel. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

The next person to address the Commission is Peter Johnson. And I invite Peter Johnson to the lectern. Is, is Peter Johnson here? If not, we'll move to the next person and come back to Peter Johnson if, um, he arrives. The next, um, person to address the Commission is Nick King. Do we have Nick King here, please? Can I invite Mr. King to the lectern?

Nick King:

Commissioners, ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to address this meeting. In doing so, I do, I do so on behalf on the Central West Environment Council, of which I am president. The Central West Environment Council consists of elected representatives from 12 environmental groups within the Central West.

At our meeting on the 5th of this month, we decided to oppose this particular project on the grounds of its detrimental environmental impacts on water, biodiversity, climate change and contamination. Um, many of our, our members have had prior experience with dealing with

mining companies and they've had very adverse experiences in doing so. So they have little faith in some of the reassurances which have been given, um, on behalf of the proponent.

With water, respect to water, um, Sister Mary Powell gave a very powerful, um, talk about, on this issue, which basically covers the particular concerns we have as well. Um, Australia is the driest inhabitable cont... inhabitable continent on earth, and basically for that reason, as she pointed out, water is more precious than gold.

We know that our climate is becoming increasingly chaotic, and but what we do know for sure is that at some stage in the future, we'll be subjected again to severe drought, in which case, we will need every drop of water for the purposes of, ah, agriculture, drinking and the environment. We can't afford to support a water intensive industry such as the Regis Mine because of, in, in, in our, um, in our, in our region. And one of the reasons, of course, is that, ah, it's har... heavily dependent on the, on the, um, Berry Garling Basin system.

Ah, not only does it affect the local springs, that's been mentioned, the ah, local, um, Belubula River, it also affects the entire Berry Garling Basin which has been in dire straits, um, in the past and probably will be so in the future. If we can't afford to have a lot of water intensive industries such as the mine, ah, situated at the headwaters of the, and in the catchment of a river system which we will depend on very heavily in the future.

As far as biodiversity is concerned, we are very concerned that there will be main clearing of a significant amount of native vegetation. Um, being, bearing in mind that Australis is, ah, leads the world in, um, species extinction. Ah, one of the reasons, of course, being the eradication of habitat for some species. There's a significant list which we'll see in the environmental statement and, ah, the EUIS of the species which will be affected by the removal of, um, native vegetation, one of which was mentioned by Sam Lockwood as the Regent Honeyeater, which is highly endangered. Ah, there's also mention of koala habitat.

This is independa... indefensible given the rate of extinction that we, um, are subject to in this country for us to remove any more native vegetation. Um, there were mentions of reassurance of offsets or offcuts as we like to call them, which have been proven over and over again as being ineffective. Um, so that biodiversity will be severely affected. It will one of the death of 1,000 cuts to our land clearing, um, inadequate land clearing laws that have committed.

Also, we also have a problem with climate change. As was mentioned earlier, there's a significant amount of greenhouse gases and carbon emitted from the project which is found unacceptable given the fact that we are committed to carbon targets, ah, 43% federally and 70% at state level.

Um, contamination is quite a terrifying thing. Ah, we look at the statement, the list of highly toxic chemicals which will be involved in the, um, mak... in the processes of mining. Um, and also they have to be transported, they have to be used. They have to be disposed of at the end of their life. Ah, we could... accidents do happen despite the reassurance that the company said that they have, they will be able to manage the detrimental affects of the, ah, of some of the, the, um, the chemicals.

We could end up with a leg... toxic legacy which could last long after the mine has, miners have packed up and gone. So, basically, um, we, Central West Environmental Council does not share, the members do not share some of the optimism of, um, which was expressed today as far as the management of environmental affects. So basically, thank you very much for listening to my talk.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you.

Commissioner Sykes:
It's just a question about who of their council will be making a written submission - - -

Commissioner Williams:
Oh, yeah. Sure.

Commissioner Sykes:
... on behalf of the members and if he could name who the members are in the Council record.

Commissioner Williams:
Sure. Sorry, just a question, Mr. King, or an inquiry. Um, ah, just if you, ah, if you're making a written submission?

Nick King:
Yes, we will be making a detailed submission.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you.

Nick King:
Um, prior today.

Commissioner Williams:
Got it.

Commissioner Sykes:
Great.

Commissioner Williams:
And could you also list the, the members of your, members of that comprise the Central Western Environment Council.

Nick King:
Central West Environment Council consist of-

Commissioner Williams:
Oh, if you could name them in the written submission, that would be - - -

Nick King:

That, we could do that. There's 12, there's 12 - - -

Commissioner Williams:

12.

Nick King:

12, um, member groups which, ah, are situated in, um, Lithgow, Bathurst, Orange, Mudgee, Rylstone, um, Oberon, Dubbo, and Bel, ah, the Belubula Headwaters Protection Group is also a member of the Central Western Environment Council.

Commissioner Sykes:

Yep.

Commissioner Williams:

I mean, you've got a good memory.

Nick King:

And we have, ah, have had presentations from the Bathurst Climate, um, Club at Midwick, which is also a member of the Central West Environment Council.

Commissioner Williams:

All right. Thank, thank you.

Commissioner Sykes:

Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

But if you include that list in your - - -

Nick King:

We will, yes.

Commissioner Williams:

Thanks very much for your time, too.

James Emmett SC:

The next person to address the Commission is Sally Neaves. I invite Sally Neaves to the lectern.

Sally Neaves:

Thank you, Commissioners. I acknowledge we gather here on Gundungurra country and pay my respects to all elders, including, Bill Allen, present here today.

I am a resident of South Bathurst and have been a full-time community environmental educator throughout our region for the past eight years. Employed by the Sisters of Mercy and Wamberal

Permaculture. I'm also a member of several environmental groups, ah, community groups mentioned by Mr. King, just before.

I'm opposed to the proposed mine for all the environmental and cultural reasons already raised, and I wish to raise one more point to do with carbon emissions of gold mines.

As a teacher of permaculture, the curriculum is standardized around the world. Students learn that changes in land use are rapidly becoming the most direct cause of climate change. And that all land and vegetation currently intact needs to be undisturbed, protected and restored as a matter of highest urgency.

One of the reasons is that these places act as a carbon sink, returning carbon in its natural cycle to be stored in vegetation and in soil in the form of humic acid. Students learn to avoid soil disturbance, nor leave it exposed. Disturbing soil prevents the natural carbon storage from happening and releases more carbon into the atmosphere in the form of gas.

I am concerned that the DPE assessment has not adequately addressed the issue of carbon emissions of this mine. In, ah, 2019, S&P global study it was recorded that gold mines emitted almost one ton of CO2 equivalent per ounce of gold that was produced. One ton per ounce. Consider this applied to the millions of ounces proposed by this mine. At this time, the writing's on the wall from the UN COP meetings and climate change causing catastrophes around the world. We're seeing the large emit- emitting companies now taking responsibility, de-carbonizing in a way that is accountable to the public.

Many communities are changing the shape of their economy away from large emitters like mines, including Lithgow, where I recently attended an exciting new economy symposium. I can say with certainty that these polluting activities are rapidly becoming part of an outdated economy and should not be thought of nostalgically as some speakers have referred to it as tradition to be perpetuated at any cost.

Blayney runs the risk of taking on an outdated economic strategy of the past while the rest of the world transitions. Our young people know this and want a future to be proud of as the new world unfolds. Not an embarrassing, ugly, dirty, derelict option for employment.

In Australia, new EPA rules now allow the imposition of sanctions for greenhouse gas emissions as with any other form of pollution. Our region already has a major carbon emitter in a nearby goldmine, and the community has a right to know what introducing a new mine might mean for future generations left to mop up the mess.

So what plans does Regis have to, to account for this? I didn't hear, ah, carbon emissions from the actual disturbance of soil listed as a monit- monitoring area, ah, by the Regis representative earlier. When I read the EIS I could not find any comprehensive carbon counting information for this project.

By carbon accounting, I not only mean the construction and life of the mine, but the carbon released in the disturbance of soil from an intact landscape as well as the ongoing year-by-year

accounting for the amount of carbon that would have been continually absorbed and stored in that soil, if the landscape had have been left intact.

The farmland, woodland and grassland are not only valuable for their biodiversity and food growing, but for their ability to suppress the carbon in this community now, and into the future, when we need it most.

My question is has the full carbon accounting for this project actually been done and made available to the public? Anything less would be a kind of brainwashing. Thank you.

Commissioner Williams:

Thank you, Ms. Neaves.

Would you happen to put all this in your written submission to us as well, particularly might be interested to look a little more closely at, ah, carbon sequestration and, and soil disturbance, particularly those issues you raised. We'd like to probably look at that a little bit further. So we appreciate the written submissions. Thank you, very much.

James Emmett SC:

Ah, before moving to the next speaker, can I ask of a, ah, speaker we skipped over a moment, or a few minutes ago, is Peter Johnson here? No, I guess. Can I move to the, um, next speaker in the schedule, who is Tim Tyrrell and I invite Tim Tyrrell to the lectern.

Tim Tyrrell:

Thank you, Commissioners, for allowing me the chance to speak today. My name is Tim Tyrrell and I live at 2460 Midwestern Highway, Fitzgeralds Mount, with my wife and two children. Our boundary fence is 1.98 kilometers east of Regis' boundary. And our dwelling is about 500 meters inside our boundary.

We are a small cattle farm and are still rebuilding our stock numbers from the drought in 2019. I was born and raised on this farm that my father purchased in the early 1970s. And he died on this farm 10 years ago. He now rests on top of his favorite hill. I was hoping to do the same.

With the position of the waste rock and placement, I believe that my property will be impacted by dust, noise and the lighting. From what I can see there are currently no implications in the deep area assessment for failure to comply with emitting their noise blasting and air quality limits.

What happens to the residents of the Kings Plains and surrounding areas when we are impacted? Emma Green's talk earlier today showed exactly what we're afraid of.

Our home is on tank water. Our only source of clean, drinking water. Dust and blasting exceedances could lead to our tank contaminated with asbestos and mine related chemicals. Regis Resources have told me that I won't be impacted. But what if I am? What if their modeling is wrong?

Where is my family and property protection? The loss in value of our property if we had to sell, the inability to drink our tank water, or open our windows due to dust, noise and the lighting to our quality of life.

In the social impact assessment expert review, section 2.1.1, the applicant has indicate that the rural amenity of me and neighbors would be impacted because of the biophysical changes including noise levels and the reduction of visual quality.

It also mentions reduced enjoyment of outdoor spaces at night due to intrusive light and mine development negatively affecting the existing rural way of life. Even after risk mitigation, the applicant deemed the impact to still be high.

To save reduction in the value of private property due to the proximity of the mine development and anticipated amenity impacts to the property, after risk mitigation it was deemed to be extreme. I believe the DPS investment was not adequate based on the results of the social impact review. If this proposal is approved, our business and our family would require protection. There needs to be a condition that gives current owners of properties within five kilometer radius mitigation and acquisition agreements.

But how do you put a value on something with emotional attachment? A couple of months ago, my mom said to me, "Won't it be great when the new mine opens?" And I said, "Why?" And she hesitated. She said, "All the jobs." And I said, "Okay." I then said, "The tailings dam is going to be there forever once the mine is gone." I said, "How big do you think that's going to be?" She had no idea.

I said, "It's going to be as big as my property one day." And she laughed, see that's not right. I said, "The dam wall, how big do you think that's going to be?" She didn't ans... And I said, "You've been to Carcoar Dam, and you've looked over the edge? It's going to be as big as that." She did not believe me. And to this day, she still does not believe me. She said I had my information wrong. So in closing, um, I believe that- - -

Commissioner Williams:
Keep going, please.

Tim Tyrrell:
... um, I'm not against mines, mining. I'm not against the Regis people. I just want what's right for the people in the area, and the environment. The other thing is, they turn up each week because their [inaudible] has gone up. They've paid particular operators to get this through and that's where the difference is. I don't get paid to turn up. I live there, that's my life. Thanks.

Commissioner Williams:
Thank you, sir. Just one moment. Okay, thanks. Sorry, I might have missed at the beginning, I apologize if I did. Just to get some idea of the location of your house in relation to the, to the proposed mine site.

Tim Tyrrell:

Yeah, so Midwestern Highway, before Fitzgeralds Mount?

Commissioner Williams:

Right.

Tim Tyrrell:

So basically, um, yeah, well it's one point... Our boundary is 1.98 kilometers east of Regis' boundary.

Commissioner Williams:

Right. Right, no, that's, that, that's gives us a bit of context of your concerns. Right. Thanks very much, Mr. Tyrrell. Thank you.

James Emmett SC:

Can I, one last time ask if Peter Johnson has arrived? Ah, if, if not, can I hand over the Chair to close?

Commissioner Williams:

I guess. Thanks very much. Um, I think all the speakers that have registered who are here, who have been here today have had a chance. So I think we hopefully haven't missed any, anyone.

Ah, so, ah, thank you. Um, that brings us to the end of Day Two of this public hearing. Ah, thank you to everyone who presented today, ah, for your thoughtful presentations.

Ah, a transcript of today's proceedings will be made available on our website in the next few days. Um, just a reminder, again, that the Commission will accept written submissions on the McPhillamys Gold Project up until 5:00 PM Australian Eastern Daylight Time, on Wednesday, 15th of February 2023.

It's particularly helpful if you can comment in your submissions, um, at this stage, on, on the assessment report of this project prepared by the Department and the associated proposed draft conditions.

You can submit your comments using the main case submission portal on the Commission website. Ah, we'll be back tomorrow morning at 10:00 AM for the day three proceedings. Ah, thank you for your, your comity and, and presentations today.

Ah, from all of us at the Commission, enjoy your evening and good on. Thank you.

END OF TRANSCRIPT