Dear Commissioners

My name is Dr Peter Bentivoglio, MBBS, Hons, FRACS. I am an Emeritus Consultant Neurosurgeon at St Vincent’s Hospital Sydney.

I was the Chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery, 1997-2014. In 2012 I established and founded the Peter Duncan Neurosciences Research Unit and I continue to be a Trustee of this research unit in the Academic Medical Research wing of the St Vincent’s Research precinct, Sydney.

My request to the IPC commissioners is to not approve the mine or if the commissioners approve the mine that Bowden’s purchase our whole property and all the equipment, at today’s prices, plus 100% because there will be 23 years and beyond, loss of our olive oil business and probably the eventual loss of the olive grove and their CO2 absorbing ability. No one will want to purchase our grove, olive oil facility and our business.

I own, with my wife, Jayne Bentivoglio, Bentivoglio Olives and Rylstone Olive Press, which we established 26years ago and has provided many services to the Australian olive growers.

We employ 8 FTE staff – the Rylstone Olive Press crushes olives and makes olive oil for many growers in NSW. We assist growers with their harvest, by supplying fruit bins free of charge and give advice on all matters olive and with the production of the highest quality extra virgin olive oil.

At Rylstone Olive Press we make high quality extra virgin olive oil (EVOO), as shown by our many awards both nationally and internationally.

We have been Champion EVOO at many major shows and gold medal winning internationally.

We have made many donations to the community:

$25,000 to Mudgee 200 Bales during the drought in 2019

$20,315 to Rylstone Hospital for oncology equipment in 2022

We sponsor the Rylstone Show and Rylstone Street Feast. We hold olive workshops annually for growers from all regions of Australia.

This is conducted in partnership with the Australian Olive Association, the Department of Primary Industry and University of Western Sydney. It is held in our conference centre, located in the Rylstone Olive Press and runs for 2 days.

We are one of the largest groves in the Mudgee/Rylstone region with 8,000 olives trees, with 8 different varieties.

We crush our own olives. We make and blend our own EVOO. We chemically analyse each batch of EVOO we produce for ourselves and other growers. We have a file library recorded of olive oil samples dating back 15 years.

We bottle and label our own olive oil and we market our own olive oil, supplying, retail, wholesale, online and restaurant sales.

In 2021, our grove yielded 400 ton of olive fruit producing 40,000 litres of extra virgin olive oil.

Rylstone Olive Press is a flourishing enterprise, benefiting many people locally and throughout the state of NSW. Providing the excellent health benefits of extra virgin olive oil.

The Bowden’s Mine poses major risks and unacceptable impacts to our successful olive oil production centre.

The toxic mine dust will coat our established 8,000 tree olive grove, affecting the photosynthesis of our trees. Cessation of pollination and crop yields.

This will last for more than the life of the Bowden’s mine and beyond, which is incomprehensible.

The International Olive Oil Council, which was affiliated with COP 22, as stated by Francesco Serafini, that olive groves decrease green house gas emissions and are CO2 sinks and fix CO2 in the soil.

That is 10 ton CO2/per hectare/per year. That is 4 ton CO2/per acre/per year.

Our grove is 80 acres of olives that is 320 tons of CO2, which is absorbed per year, an excellent benefit for the environment and climate change.

The mine will create large amounts of CO2 emissions from the trucks, electrical use in processing the ore, and indirectly from the smelter at Port Pirie of the ore removed. This is exactly what climate change and the environment does not need.

The toxic dust will settle on the roofs of our buildings, which will contaminate our drinking water with dangerous chemicals, like Lead, Arsenic and Cadmium, causing significant increased risks to health.

Chronic Lead exposure even at low blood lead levels of 5mcg/dL can cause medical problems, in particular, progressive cognitive impairment in elderly people and also has a reported association with Parkinson’s Disease. This affect was not even considered by the DPE when discussing health risks, and I draw your attention to, Professor Bruce Brew’s submission, a Neurologist and leading Australian researcher in Dementia.

The toxic dust which is in our water will foul our olive oil machinery and introduce faults in our olive oil which in turn affects the organoleptic assessment for certification of extra virgin olive oil and the quality of our extra virgin olive oil.

Olive growers will no longer use our Rylstone Olive Press processing facility to make their extra virgin olive oil which effectively destroys our olive oil processing business.

No person from Bowden’s Mine or the DPE has assessed our facility as obviously both the DPE and Bowden’s believe Rylstone Olive Press and Bentivoglio Olives do not matter.

Rylstone Olive Press and Bentivoglio Olives will not be viable with olive fruit production and olive oil processing.

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Also, to protect all tank water, appropriate mechanical filters attached to our tanks both on the delivery end and despatching ends to our tanks. These filters have to be able to filter out fine dust particles, PM <2.5 mcg/dL, this is to protect health issues and especially cognitive impairment and renal function of every person within a 30 km radius from the mine.

Peter Bentivoglio

**Dr Peter Bentivoglio MBBS, Hons, FRACS**

**Emeritus Consultant Neurosurgeon**

**St Vincent’s Hospital Sydney**