

I ask the IPC to refuse the project for all of the reasons put forward by the Lue Action Group experts, as well as the following 5 reasons.

1. OUR LOCAL TOURISM PROVIDES MANY JOBS AND INCOME FOR LOCAL PEOPLE, BOTH WORKERS AND TRADES. IN FACT THE SAME DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING WHO RECOMMENDED THE APPROVAL OF THIS MINE RECENTLY AMENDED THE PLANNING RULES IN A PUSH TO ENCOURAGE THE FAST TRACKING OF AGRI TOURISM VENTURES
2. THE ECONOMIC REVIEW OF THE PROJECT DOES NOT CONSIDER ANY OF THE NEGATIVE FINANCIAL IMPACTS THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF AN OPEN CUT MINE AND CONSEQUENTIAL SHUTTING DOWN OF TOURISM WOULD CAUSE. THE ECONOMIC REVIEW DOES NOT ADOPT THE ADVICE OF THEIR OWN CONSULTANT CIE, BUT RATHER ACCEPTS BOWDEN'S POSITION
3. PROPERTY VALUE IMPACTS HAVE BEEN DISMISSED AND/OR NEGLECTED TO BE ASSESSED
4. THE MISLEADING CONDUCT BY BOWDENS IN REGARDS TO SOURCING OF WATER AND UNWORKABLE WATER COMPENSATORY CONDITIONS
5. THE DPE HAVE NOT PROVIDED CONDITIONS THAT WILL ADEQUATELY PROTECT THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE MINE. THEY ARE MOSTLY ASPIRATIONAL AND THERE ARE NO CONSEQUENCES FOR ANY EXCEEDANCES OF DUST AND NOISE.

I ask that the IPC protect the existing and approved use of agriculture and tourism in this region and refuse the mine.

My name is Margaret Cameron I have owned my farm WYUNA for 26 years and it is the place I love best. Whilst small it is very productive as we are fortunate to have over a kilometre of frontage to the Lawson Creek. We are situated approximately 2.2km from the planned mine pit, around 1km from the tailings dam and waste rock storage area, and we are also just under 600m to the new Maloneys Road. Over the years our little farm has produced oats and fattened cattle and is also home to a couple of rescue race horses.

AGRITOURISM

More recently since 2018 it has become a successful AirBNB. Scenic nature and farmland is our business. Our guests choose us for the natural beauty, clean air and water and for the peace and quiet and stunning dark night skies.

When they are not enjoying the farm they are out shopping in local supermarkets and gift shops, eating at local restaurants, drinking at our pubs and clubs, visiting our Olive press and doing our local wine tours.

Most of my guests eat and shop in Rylstone and Kandos as it fits with the quintessential small town country experience. In September 2022, the Mudgee region won the major national award of Top Tourism Town for the second year in a row at Australia's Top Tourism Awards. This open cut lead mine would tarnish the Mudgee region's clean and green image and leave a scar that we may never recover from.

The towns of Rylstone and Kandos have enjoyed the growth that tourism brings. Since the UMWELT Social Impact report in 2019, so much has changed leaving this assessment outdated and inaccurate. We have had droughts, covid, floods and despite all of this these towns have flourished due to tourism.

In Rylstone I hear the phrase 'you can't get a park there on the weekend' this is due to tourism. Kandos has become a town that attracts artists and other visitors, largely thanks to Cementa and the flow on of similar initiatives. City people are choosing it as a tree change destination, the town is so unique and the surrounding mountain landscape stunning. This success is evidenced by the increase in home values in the region.

The cement works in Kandos closed 12 years ago and, whilst these changes are different to what mining may have brought to the region, they are nonetheless critical to the future of these towns. The evolution has been slow but it is real and the future of all the new shops and businesses in these towns rest on the success of the tourist trail that travels through Lue from Mudgee. In this small part of the world tourism and mining cannot co-exist. Tourists do not visit mining towns.

We ask that the IPC please help us to continue to allow the existing use of our land and allow us to operate our businesses and employ local people and trades as we have done for the past few years. Why are mining jobs more important

than tourism and agricultural jobs. We are already employing local people and these jobs are important to us and to them. The introduction of an open cut green field mine will ensure the closure of ours and many similar local offerings.

I am aware of at least 20 of these AirBNB's that are within a 20km radius of the mine site, most are closer and new ones are opening all the time. Those that I have consulted feel that they will be forced to close their businesses. According to the Mid Western Council figures, under the tab TOURISM/VISITOR EXPENDITURE each person visiting our region will spend \$398.00 on food and accommodation.

On further research our BNB's they tell me that the number of guests they host each year ranges from 350-660. If I use a conservative average of 400 guests each and over 20 BNB's it equals 8000 visitors each year and each visitor spending \$398.00 equates to \$3,184,000.00 lost to our region each year.

The DPE paid a site visit to my property in November 2021. During this meeting I explained my fears for the future of our farm, and the future of my business and other tourism businesses in our region. I was asked to follow this up with a confirmation email which I sent on 30 November 2021, listing the 20 plus local AirBNB businesses that I knew would be affected. On the same day, a staff member of the DPE responded via email as follows:

Hi Margaret,

Thanks for sending this through. It's definitely a consideration.

It was good to meet you last week. Thanks for your time and input.

However, the DPE completely failed to acknowledge any of this in their Assessment report.

ECONOMICS

I searched the DPE's Economic assessment to see where these above figures were included and was surprised to see that they were not included at all. In fact there was no mention of negative cost for loss of revenue at all to the region. Like others, I also searched the word tourism in the Assessment and found it just 3 times with very little commentary. I was further surprised to read the following on page 74 of the DPE Assessment report where they discussed financial benefits and I quote this paragraph as follows:

467. *While these direct financial benefits are not as large as many other mining projects and are significantly lower than a typical coal mine would generate, the Department notes the strategic importance of the mine to the NSW economy. In this regard the NSW Government is committed to building on the State's potential to become a major global supplier and processor of critical minerals and high-tech metals, including silver and zinc, and to reducing its reliance on the coal and fossil fuels mining sector. The Bowdens silver deposit is the largest undeveloped silver deposit in Australia and one of the largest globally, and development of the project would be **consistent with the NSW Government's vision and commitment**. Development of the project would also potentially encourage further investment and development of similar silver deposits, which in turns would generate more jobs and income for the State.*

I then understood why there were no negative numbers in the financial assessment and why the DPE had overlooked advice by their own financial experts CIE and Earth Systems in regards to so many other matters. It seems that the DPE had already decided that they would push this project through at all costs. I understand the importance of future mineral mining but this is simply the wrong fit for this region....we have way too much to lose here.

Bowdens Economic review by Gillespie in the EIS uses the word 'tourism' once, and states that it should be considered when doing LEA (LOCAL EFFECTS ANALYSIS) however it never does.

Bowdens CBE (Cost Benefit Analysis) when looking at *Potential environmental, social and cultural impacts* refers to agricultural impacts (only in regards to their mine owned land, and not any others that would be grossly impacted due to lack of water), surface water impacts, groundwater impacts, air quality impacts, noise and vibration impacts etc and offsets these against Wage benefits to employment and non-market benefits of employment. However, these benefits are assessed by CIE who say that they both should be zero due to the uncertainty of the figures they used.

Why is it that the DPE again uses projected numbers provided by Bowdens that are refuted by their own experts, and never consider negative costs associated with destruction to tourism and agriculture.

On page 75 of the Assessment report, the DPE state as follows:

471. *It is also worth noting that the CBE only focuses on product benefits and costs and, as discussed above, does not account for the full range of*

employment benefits, which are a major way in which mining projects contribute to the local economy.

Again I ask, where is consideration given for the full economic loss of current employment benefits and tourism revenue.

PROPERTY VALUE IMPACTS

Bowdens Economic Assessment from EIS - Gillespie

5.5.4 Property Value Impacts Around the Mine

An issue raised in consultations with the community, was concern about the impact of the Project on property values around the Mine Site.

However, the existence of property value impacts and the distance gradient of these impacts are expected to be related to actual or expected physical impacts from the site rather than a simple distance relationship. Where noise, dust, vibration, odour and visual impacts are contained, no impacts would be expected to occur.

DPE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Impacts on Surroundings and Social Amenities

396. Residents and landholders in the locality value the agricultural, rural residential and tourism uses of the area and these are important to the locality's sense of place. Some people feel the project is not compatible with these land uses, that there would be amenity impacts and that the project would negatively impact on property values.

Bowdens/Gilliespie dismiss any impact on property values as they claim that all negative impacts will be 'contained'. We know this will not be the case. The DPE acknowledge that the community is concerned about the negative impact on property values and yet, says nothing further about it.

Again the DPE has demonstrated a lack of attention to negative community concerns.

WATER

Our community has always been reassured, that should this mine be approved, that anxiety over water loss would be avoided by a water pipeline that would be used to import water to provide for what was required by the mine onsite.

When this water pipeline failed, Bowdens quickly discovered that they could harvest adequate water onsite. This option had been exhausted and acknowledged as unviable by previous owners of this mine.

The pipeline amendment was objected to by 89% of the 302 submissions received. These being local land owners and genuinely affected people. This is a true image of local sentiment to this project.

Early on in our discussions with Bowdens I noted a map that showed our stretch of the Lawsons creek was highlighted with a notation 'Predicted Drawdown beneath Lawsons Creek' (copy attached). Upon requests for further information about this, the map promptly disappeared and was explained away with a lot of confusing dialogue and modelling information. Corkery's proceeded to discuss what was 'normal' and what would be a 'rare occurrence' for our Lawsons creek. I find this concerning that they would try to reassure me about observations of our creek when they acknowledge that they have never actually studied it, and had only ever used modelling for these predictions. We have confidence that we will lose all of our water from the Lawsons creek.

The piece below from the DPE assessment report under the Social Amenity heading further illustrates how the DPE do not understand the project and nor the project's reliance on a secure and continuous water supply. It suggests that during drought, the mine might offer supplementary income to workers (presumably farm workers). How would this be so, when a drought would mean that the mine would need to cease processing, and would require standing down of its own workers. The suggestion that they might be able to provide jobs in drought simply makes no sense whatsoever. Please see below extract:

408. The Department also notes that the diversification of local industry may provide a measure of resilience to the community during drought periods, as workers may be able to supplement their income with additional employment. Furthermore, there may be sufficient additional mineral resources in the deposit to support a future expansion of mining and sustain ongoing employment and community investment.

CONDITIONS

The DPE claims that there are strong conditions attached to the approval of this project.

Strong conditions do not use the words, reasonable, minimise, manage, monitor, mitigate etc. The conditions should be quantitative and assessable and show actual penalties for exceedances and failures in process and damage caused by incorrect modelling and human error.

Our experiences with Bowdens have always been that exceedances were downplayed, and underestimated and it was suggested that we would only be somewhat affected. Our close proximity to the mine site, tailings dam, waste rock placement area and new Maloneys road would ensure that we are grossly affected and our property would be uninhabitable and unusable should the mine go ahead .

I ask, should the project be approved, that the special condition in regards to our property R87, be strengthened so that conditions are appropriate under the circumstances and expected exceedances. Currently the condition are vague and generic and do not reflect the gross exceedances that we expect to experience.

We ask that the conditions be amended as follows:

Should the project be approved, and upon our written request, that we be granted voluntary land acquisition rights at twice the market value for our property, (valuation to be done as if the mine were not there) and in addition all the heads of compensation set out in the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act. This must be a trigger action response, and not one that requires onerous, costly proof of the burden on our part.

This option should be made available for all properties who experience any exceedances of dust or noise. It should also apply to all those who suffer from failure of water supply of all types, or fear of contaminated water due to the mining operation. The notion of compensatory water, whilst absolutely necessary in this case, would be wide spread and create an untenable demand on the resources of the DPE to manage, as was found in the recent IPC Hearing of the Hume Coal case in the Southern Highlands.

Alternatively,

That we be compensated for our loss of future income for at least 23 years and possibly in perpetuity for the business/s that we have worked hard to establish (values provided in original objection against DA application SSD5765) as follows:

AGRI TOURISM SHORT TERM RENTAL:

CROPPING/OATS:

CATTLE PRODUCTION:

This compensation option should also be offered to any affected landowners who are forced to close their businesses due to the mine's operation, without the burden of proof being borne by them.

We (the community) have been let down by the DPE and we trust that the IPC will ensure a just and fair outcome in making their decision on the future of this project. Again I ask that you refuse this project for all of the above reasons.

PREDICTED DRAWDOWN

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