

**Submission
No 179**

**INQUIRY INTO CURRENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF
GOLD, SILVER, LEAD AND ZINC MINING ON HUMAN
HEALTH, LAND, AIR AND WATER QUALITY IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr Hunter White
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04 September, 2023.

Submission to the PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 2 – HEALTH

- Inquiry into current and potential impacts of gold, silver, lead and zinc mining on human health, land, air and water quality in New South Wales

My name is Hunter White and I live at Havilah near Lue. My home is located on Lawsons Creek 10km downstream of the Bowdens Mine. I expect that the mine will have significant impacts on my business of farming. I fear it will also significantly affect human health and the Environment.

I live on Lawsons Creek and have lived here all my life. I have been working on this land for 50 years. I pump water from the creek for stock water, garden water and household use. I have 7 houses on my farm that depend on this water supply.

My farm is well known in NSW for its quality of livestock produced including Superfine Merino sheep, Thoroughbred racehorses and beef cattle. It has been in my family for 140 years. My business provides employment for up to 50 people.

I feel the proposed mine will have a significant impact on my land and the community of Mudgee. I fear significant impact to the Mudgee Brand that all have worked so hard to build.

The process of mining lease approval feels more like a box ticking exercise for a government decision already made rather than a critical review of EIS submission and listening to concerns of community and experts by the Independent Planning Commission.

My concerns include:

- No right of appeal on merit
- Environmental risks are not properly addressed and economic issues are not understood.
- Benchmarks set too low by government for an activity in a rural area. The mine will generate noise, dust and water pollution in excess of safe levels for human health and land used for the production of food.
- Not enough water for the project to proceed.
- Loopholes found in regulation to acquire water licences.
- The Industrial process is a high risk activity in a vulnerable location leaving toxic residues which may damage water supplies.
- The damage is irreversible leaving a legacy far into the future.
- The Regulator seems powerless and influenced by government.
- Local communities are carrying the cost for others. No equity from all levels of government including local government.
- Not a proper process for approval of a heavy metals mines in locations such as Blayney and Lue in the Central West of NSW.
- The approval process and engagement with the Community Consultative Committee (CCC) has provided high levels of anxiety in the community and potentially affecting mental health.

I am supporting and have participated in preparation of research undertaken by the Mudgee Region Action Group. I am happy to provide more information if asked.

The question from the community is, will what leaves the Bowden site be at a level that will **not** pose a significant immediate or cumulative risk to water, human health and the Environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to be listened to.

Yours Sincerely,

Hunter White OAM