

# **WOLLAR PROGRESS ASSOCIATION**

## **C/O- POST OFFICE**

**WOLLAR NSW 2850**

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Department of Planning, Industry and Environment  
Major Project Assessment  
Locked Bag 5022  
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Monday 27 July 2020

### **Submission of Objection Project SSD-5765: Bowdens Silver mine**

Wollar Progress strongly objects to the proposed heavy metals mine at Lue in Mid-Western Regional Local Government area.

Our key issue with the project is the proposal to transfer up to 5.5 megalitres (ML) of water per day from the Goulburn River in the Hunter River catchment to the Lawson Creek/Macquarie River catchment.

The water captured by coal mining operations at the Ulan, Moolarben and Wilpinjong coal mines is drawn down from base flows to the Goulburn River.

A number of members of Wollar Progress Association have basic user rights with river frontage on the Goulburn River. Releases of water treated by reverse osmosis from the three coal mining operations provide critical flows in the Goulburn River during times of drought.

There are already approved water transfer arrangements between these three mines. It is not sustainable to share additional water with a mining project in a westerly flowing river system.

There have been no firm, guaranteed business arrangements made with either Ulan or Moolarben Mines, to our knowledge or referred to in the project EIS.

We have members sitting on the Community Consultative Committees (CCC) of the three coal mining operations. The issue of the Lue mine pipeline was raised at the most recent Ulan CCC meeting on 18 June 2020.

The minutes of that meeting state that there has been no conversation with Bowden's supporting the export of discharge quality water and that Glencore supports the community concerns on this matter.

We emphasise that it is during dry times when Bowden's are most likely to call on additional water. This is when the three coal mines most need water for their own operations and when replacement base flows to the Goulburn River are critical for the river ecology and for downstream water users.

The water balance for the Lue mine demonstrates that there is insufficient water supply to maintain a viable project for the proposed 23 years of operation. The impacts of a drying climate, as already experienced in the Macquarie River catchment, have not been adequately assessed in the EIS.

It is unsustainable to threaten critical human needs during extreme droughts. The proposal to transfer water away from the Goulburn River catchment has significant impacts that have not been assessed.

The proposed pipeline between Ulan and Lue is not consistent with the Mid-Western Regional Local Environment Plan. The proposed route transects Zone RU5 – Large Lot Residential Lands where water supply systems are prohibited.

Wollar Progress Association strongly objects to the Lue mine proposal on the issue of unsustainable water requirements. The proposal to transfer water from the Goulburn River catchment must be rejected.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "B. Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President