

16 August 2021

SUBMISSION RE: BOWDENS SILVER PROJECT – APPLICATION SSD-5765

I am a Bathurst based historian and heritage consultant. I recently became aware of Bowden's Silver Mine Project on Maloney's Road at Lue.

I wish to firstly object to the new amendment to Bowdens Silver Project EIS to move 500KV powerlines closer to Lue Village.

These powerlines will forever destroy the peace, the views and the nature of the village.

I secondly wish to object to Bowdens Silver Project at Lue per se.

The Lue Action Group engaged a number of technical experts to undertake an Independent Technical Review of the Project to consider the effect of a silver mine at Lue on local biodiversity, groundwater, health impacts, lead dust, mining operations, noise social impact and surface water. The experts engaged by LAG found the Bowden's Silver Project EIS was lacking in its assessments and data used was opaque, insufficient, vague or incorrect.

Lue (originally Loowee, a Wiradyuri name meaning chain of ponds) is rich in both Wiradyuri and colonial settler history. It is now a peaceful pastoral hamlet. Its farms and farm stays, small wineries, and olive groves provide much of the charm that have made the Mudgee Region a premier Australian tourist destination. A silver mine will destroy the village and negatively impact on the whole of the Mudgee Region which is dependent on the tourist dollar. Silver mining will be short-term, benefit the few and will leave a destructive environmental legacy in its wake.

“There appears to be no means of ensuring that after the proposed 15 years of operation, the village will be a safe place for people and especially young people, to live. The likely social impact on the village of Lue, and residents of the suburb of Lue, of a silver, zinc and lead mine within 2km is a decline in the social viability of the village due to risks to health, noise and dust intrusions in daily life, loss of sense of place and amenity and population decline.” Social Planning Consultants, Ziller and Walton, Lue Action Group (LAG) submission dated 27 July 2020, pp 6 -7.

I object to the Silver Mine project on the grounds of the negative environmental, social and health impacts it will have on Lue Village.

The silver mine will use 1857 megalitres of water annually, taking water from Lawsons Creek and sucking up groundwater. Lue and that whole Mudgee Rylstone area cannot afford to lost this amount of water. The recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows that global temperatures have increased by 1.4C this century and will continue to increase. Water is needed for a growing population in Mudgee, in times of drought and in times of fires, when it is needed for firefighting.

Silver mining is particularly polluting of the environment and the effects last for centuries after the mine has closed. Bowden's Silver Mine will store a pile of roughly 40 million tonnes of waste rock above the Lawson Creek water table. The pile of waste rock will be between 50m and 90m high and is potentially acid forming.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the NSW Dept of Planning and the Environment to reject Bowden's Silver Mine project at Lue.

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