

Director Resource Assessments, Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Submission

Applicant – Bowdens Silver Pty Limited
Application Number - SSD-5765
Application – Bowdens Silver Mine

I object to the BOWDENS SILVER MINE proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission expressing my concerns regarding the Bowdens Silver Mine Project at Lue NSW.

EIS – Amendment Report - The construction of a new 500kV Transmission Line to replace a 3.5km section of the existing Bayswater to Mt Piper 500kV Transmission Line which is to be removed to allow for a mine pit.

Although the Bayswater to Mt Piper 500kV Transmission Line was included in the original EIS submission it was always assumed by Bowdens and readers of the EIS and other interested parties that this major component of the Project would be subject to a separate development application. Transgrid and the public now have an opportunity to make a comment.

On page 17 of the 514 page Submissions Report it is stated “the proposed location would actually be further away from privately-owned residences than the existing transmission.” In fact the new transmission line is 500 metres closer to Lue. It will be 500m closer to the Lue Hotel, which is not privately-owned but is owned by companies associated with the project. The Lue Hotel is frequented by employees and supporters of the project. It will be 500m closer to every home in Lue and every paddock and landholding to the west of Lue and the Bowdens mine site.

The existing Transmission Line is constructed in the most appropriate location and should not be removed or reconstructed or re-aligned to accommodate this project.

1. Unique Submissions

The Amendment Report on page 10 states “Finally, the overwhelming support demonstrated in submissions on the EIS supports the strategic context for the Project. 1 504 submissions or 79% of all submissions received provided support for the Project. A similar level of support exists within the Mid-Western Regional LGA with 682 submissions or 74% of all submissions from this area supporting the Project.”

It should be noted that Bowdens state that they have received 1504 submissions in support of the project but these include duplicates, even two from the Chairman of the board, many from people as far afield as Western Australia, who might or might not be stakeholders, many on forms written in the same handwriting and unsigned, with a one word comment such as “jobs”, several from employees and over 900 submissions supporting the project with the comment “jobs” or similar as well as submissions from people from all over Australia and at least 12 submissions with no name, no address and not signed.

From Lue there are less than 40 supporters, many supporting submissions are unsigned, written in the same handwriting and with only a few words. See below five separate examples downloaded from the DPIE Public Submissions with a Lue address with similar messages and handwriting. (Search conducted by searching Name Withheld and then checking for a Lue, NSW address.)

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

BRING WORK TO LIFE

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

IT WILL BRING WORK & MONEY TO THE AREA

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

MINING BRINGS JOBS & MONEY TO THE TOWN

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

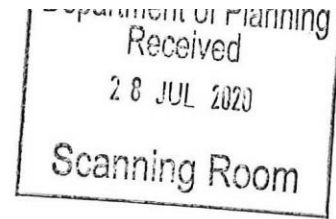
☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

Create Local Jobs

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

Create local jobs

It should be remembered that the EIS was submitted during the COVID lockdown in June 2020 when many people lost their jobs and were suffering extreme hardship. In any event many submissions including those from Rylstone and Mudgee are not from “stakeholders”. A submission from a person in Kandos whose comment is “jobs” cannot compare to the submission from a mother of young children living nearby, within sight and downwind of a lead mine site and having to share her narrow dusty gravel road with heavy vehicles and workers vehicles. No amount of sponsorship to Lue Public School is going to compensate for her loss of amenity.

What is the consequence if Bowdens does not create the jobs it promises?

Most Bowdens supporters are unaware how close the project is to Lue, the population of Lue, or how environmentally dangerous this project is. Appendix 5 of the Submission Report, for example, does not mention Lue or its proximity to the mine site in its description of the project. It is doubtful that a person from MacMasters Beach, or Bellevue Hill, or someone living in an apartment in Darling Point has read the entire EIS and its attachments and has gained enough knowledge of the district to be able to state that this project is environmentally sound and will have no social impact on Lue.

What is the consequence if an individual or company or organisation knowingly makes a statement or comment that will endanger the health and wellbeing of another individual?

The Bowdens website <https://bowdenssilver.com.au/> does not show a map indicating the proximity of the project to the homes and properties in Lue. It is very likely many supporters of the project would be unaware that they are supporting a project that will result in an enormous negative social impact to those people who live and work in and near Lue. What is the consequence if Bowdens does not fulfil all its promises?

There were 84 submissions which gave their address as Lue and of those 44 are opposed to the mine. They are unique, thoughtful and concerned about the impact of the project on Lue and their properties, their friends and neighbours. Of the supporting submissions some had a one word comment, several were written in the same handwriting and unsigned, and the CEO of Bowdens resides in Sydney but listed his address as Lue. He is a very large shareholder (and recently received 10,000,000 shares as a bonus) and has an interest in the Lue Hotel. The Lue Hotel was a place of special interest in Lue prior to its purchase by people associated with the project. Now it is not included in the maps and is a place that caters for employees and other mine associates and according to the manager will soon be turned over to mine or FIFO workers. The Lue Hotel will have a very good view of the new Transmission Line and although is outside the boundary of Lue Village it is one of the closest buildings to the Transmission Line. Bowdens shareholders are most likely the only individuals guaranteed to gain financial benefit from the project. While the CEOs annual remuneration and package of 10,000,000 shares and million dollar bonuses are not unrealistic for a mining CEO it is a significantly greater income than a small business or tourism operator or a farmer or a resident in Lue would expect to receive.

This analysis of submissions from the Lue area also includes the localities of Havilah, Bara, Hayes Gap,

Monivae, Pyangle, Camboon, and Breakfast Creek as well as some residents and properties outside these areas that will be affected by the contaminated water pipeline from the coalfields, the new transmission line (not in EIS), the increased traffic on the Lue Rd, the AMD and the contamination of Lawsons Creek. 131 submissions from the wider affected area opposed the project while only 73 submissions supported the project. Many local supporters of this project stand to gain financially or have received some sort of sponsorship or are hopeful of a job or are already employed or contracted to the project. Many opposers of this project are opposed to the project because their homes and properties, lifestyles, health, surroundings and businesses will be damaged and changed in a way that is out of proportion with the minor benefits of this project for a few.

The DPIE has stated on more than one occasion that they are only interested in the first 50 opposing submissions that will trigger the IPC. Unfortunately Bowdens have used all the submissions, whether unique or not, duplicated or not, genuine or not, to promote the project in the Amendment Report, the Submission Report and in a Media Release to encourage investment in the company based on the assumption that this project has a majority of community support. Not only is this kind of reporting disheartening for Lue residents and those adversely affected by the project, shareholders and others are being misled in a way that may lead to the loss of their investment when the project is refused or has conditions placed on it that will prevent the project from going ahead. Even the Lue Hotel manager is under the impression that he will be welcoming mine workers to his establishment in the immediate future. The press release in the Mudgee Guardian states "...that a peer reviewed DPIE report shows the silver mine will 'present no health risk of concern to the local community'". Surely the DPIE has not made this statement when it has access to numerous reports and documents showing evidence of the dangers of noise and lead and lead dust, amongst other things, to the health and wellbeing of Lue residents.

The Minister has a duty of care to the residents and landowners and others who live and work in Lue to protect them from the adverse consequences resulting from mining and associated activities at or near Lue.

See below examples of submissions downloaded from the DPIE website. (The submissions are cropped to save space and the originals can be found on the DPIE website)

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

Good for the community

Submission from a supporter in Lue whose partner works for Bowdens

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

<i>Jobs & Money</i>

Another submission from a supporter in Lue

In the areas that will be directly affected by the mine and the mine components, such as the pipeline, increased traffic, living and relying on Lawsons Creek most submissions are opposed and against the project.

See the below submission comment from a supporter in the wider area who it seems is undecided as to the importance of the environment versus financial gain.

Bowdens Silver

Application Number: SSD-5765

☒ Support ☐ Object or ☐ Comment only

Reason / Comment:

<i>The impact on the environment far outweighs the economic benefit</i>
<i>I support the application for the</i>
<i>jobs and the business it will bring</i>
<i>to the community</i>

Supporting Submission example (Name was supplied but submission not signed)

2. Strategic Context

The Amendment Report states on page 10 "In terms of the strategic context for the re-alignment of the 500kV transmission line, the western limit of the main open cut pit would be constrained until the transmission line is moved. Therefore, it is considered essential to the successful development of the main open cut pit and access to the identified Mineral Resource. While alternatives were considered that proposed refined development of the main open cut pit in order to avoid re-alignment and impacts to existing towers, these were rejected as it would risk interrupting power supplies throughout NSW."

The map Figure 1.2 on page 4 of the Amendment Report indicates (poorly) that the "re-aligned" Transmission Line and towers will be within 500m of the Mine Pit and adjacent to the south western boundary of the mine site . I remind the reader that the Transmission Line is not being realigned but re-constructed followed by the demolition of the existing power line. Power supply in NSW cannot be interrupted. There are other unidentified lines adjacent to the Transmission line on Figure 1.2 and when another map of the Mine Site Layout is inspected it can be seen that these lines indicate a soil stockpile area.

Where is a map located in the EIS, the Amendment Report, the Submissions Report or the EIS Summary

that shows the finished vegetated height of the soil stockpiles adjacent to the Transmission Line and what is the height of the rehabilitated landform.

How is it intended that the Transmission Line will be protected from mining operations, blasting and vibration, low level noise, construction traffic, acid damage and other operational hazards. As is stated in the Amended Report there is a risk of “interrupting power supplies throughout NSW”.

The Amendment Report on page 10 also states there is a need for environmentally and socially sound projects to support the local economy.

The Bowdens Silver Project is neither environmentally nor socially sound.

3. Visibility

At the time of the construction of the Bayswater to Mt Piper Transmission Line there was a great deal of concern and discussion and debate in the district about the effect the powerline would have on the beautiful landscape at Lue and the existing land use and every attempt was made to avoid Lue and as many homes as was possible. A compromise was reached ensuring that the transmission line is not visible from Lue Village and only one tower can be seen from further west of Lue. The transmission line currently goes through Dungeree which is the original settlement to the east of Lue and now has about 8 or 9 homes. As you know a photograph of these 60m towers does not really indicate how enormous they are and how much they dominate the landscape.

The existing transmission line crosses the Lue Rd at Dungeree and can be seen, from all land and homes in this area, heading north behind a hill and out of view. At this point it is proposed that the new transmission line will be constructed on the ridge to the west and to east of Lue. It will then be seen clearly by all the homes on the east of Lue (please advise location of the map in the Amendment Report showing homes in this area) and the homes in Dungeree will see many more of these towers than at present. The homes on Pyangle and Maloneys Rds will also see the relocated towers. Most likely 6 or more additional towers will be visible from Dungeree along the ridge.

There are many homes and thousands of acres of beautiful countryside, farmland and bushland that will have a view of the towers and powerlines. They will overwhelm the village and be visible from almost every home and property. The properties adjacent to the mine site and along the western boundary and to the north of Lue are very badly affected and while there may be no homes on this land, this land is still a place to be enjoyed by its owners and occupiers. And of course this land may be built upon in the future. The nearby residences are much more than a residence and the owners enjoy a rural lifestyle spending time outside with animals, gardening, growing vegetables and doing all the other things that people who live in the bush enjoy doing.

According to Figure 1, Mine Site, on Page 4 of the Amendment Report the Transmission Line will be constructed along the western boundary. The construction of the Transmission Line will require clearing of up to 70m x 3500m of bushland or more and the cleared and bare hill will be visible from neighbouring land and the wooded skyline will be bare of trees and be replaced by 60m towers and bundles of cables that are easily seen in the sun. The Transmission Line is simply a drawing on a map, it has not been surveyed or planned or costed or been discussed in depth with Transgrid. What would the result be if Transgrid surveyed the proposed route and found that it was an unsuitable location for a transmission line?

Bowdens must supply plans and costings and construction times to the DPIE and the residents of Lue so that they are able to provide an informed opinion on the construction of the new Transmission Line.

Bowdens stated in the Submissions Report on page 378 “However, no exceedances of relevant criteria are predicted for any properties within Lue nor would any components of the Mine Site be visible from within Lue”.

At best this statement is wishful thinking.

Bowdens must provide accurate maps and photomontages that show the relocated Transmission Line from every direction, not just from the Lue Rd to the east of Lue. There are many properties in Lue which will be unaware of the changes to their views.

Bowdens must provide a shaded map that will accurately indicate which lands will view the new Transmission Line. Lines on a map from one point to another do not accurately describe the visual impact of these enormous towers and the cabling.

Properties as far away as Havilah will see the new towers and wires on the skyline. Bowdens must provide accurate photomontages from the south, east, west and from the north showing the new Transmission Line from various distances. Lines on a map from various residences do not accurately show the view a landowner will have from their entire property. Provide a shaded map. Landowners have the right to be properly and accurately informed in a way that is easily accessible and easy to understand.

Bowdens must also provide accurate maps and photomontages that show the new Transmission Line from all the homes on the western side of Lue on the southern side of the Lue Rd. The photomontage in the Submission report showing the view from one property on Lue Road does not use a wide angle lens and therefore the eastern view from this home is not included. Due to the lack of information provided to the landowners of this property they will not be informed of the changes to the extraordinary panoramic views of the district from this property.

Bowdens should also provide a photomontage with both eastern and northern views from the home north of the railway line immediately west of the village. The resident of this home has supported the project but is most certainly unaware of the impact on his views. Please also provide for this resident a photomontage from his property facing west so that he can be informed of the impact of the new Maloneys Road and the new 2 lane Railway Bridge. Most maps and photomontages are hidden in the pages of Appendices, tables and figures and not easily accessible to the general public or any other reader.

4. Cost

It is noted on Page 5 of the Amendment Report that the re-aligned transmission line would be constructed during Year 3 of operations and will take 6-10 months to complete.

In the Bowdens Silver Project Environmental Impact Statement Summary Booklet on page 10 the new Transmission Line is clearly marked on the diagram showing the End of Site Establishment.

This same booklet lists the Project Components and Summary of the Project on Page 7. The new 500Kv Transmission Line is not listed as a Project Component.

And yet the Amendment Report on Page 9 states that the "500kv transmission line was a component of the Project as described in the EIS and the amendment is largely administrative as it amends only the process for seeking development consent for the works."

The Amendment Report on Page 10 states the need for environmentally and socially sound projects. They are correct but unfortunately this project is not environmentally or socially sound.

Why is the relocation of the Transmission Line not listed as a Project Component?

Why is the Transmission Line shown on a diagram of the components constructed at the End of Site Establishment?

Why is the construction of the new Transmission Line and demolition of the existing Transmission Line not included in capital costs?

Why is the construction of the Transmission Line not listed as a component in Appendix 5 of the Submissions Report.

The Amendment Report page 8 states ...avoiding the re-alignment would provide a significant cost saving to Bowdens....

Describing the construction of 10-14 new 60m towers and the removal of 10 or more existing 60m towers as realigning the transmission line is an understatement. The reader is given the impression that the Transmission Line can simply be moved to the new location with very little effort. The new 500kV Transmission Line with its 10-14 towers 60m high and the associated clearing and roadworks must be constructed and connected live to the existing 500kV Transmission Line before the existing Transmission Line can be removed. Without the necessary surveys, plans, costings and an accurate time line the construction of a new Transmission Line must be refused.

Any project that needs to use the excuse of “the substantial economic benefits of this section of the main open cut pit including royalties to the State of NSW” is surely grasping at straws. The unbudgeted costs of constructing the project components include a 56-58km water pipeline through a heavily wooded narrow road reserve bringing contaminated water to the project, (the majority of landowners are opposed), a new 2 lane railway bridge and the relocation of a public road, a new creek crossing which will most likely require a two lane bridge, the relocation of 10-14 60m towers in a 3.5 km section of a 500kV Transmission Line and the redesigned Tailings Dam constructed on a fault line over existing watercourses. In addition there are the important components that are not components of the project including the power supply needing to come 20kms through hostile properties, road widening and repairs to Lue Road, Bara Road, Hayes Gap Road, the bond payable to Mid-Western Regional Council to cover the failure of the tailings dam amongst other things.

5. Construction and Dismantling Activities

The dismantling of the existing transmission line is a huge task. Dealt with in a 12 line paragraph. The existing towers are 60m high, constructed of steel and concrete with 3.5 km of cable bundles. This is a huge amount of material to remove from the site. None will be able to be reused because the new towers will be constructed and connected live before the existing towers and cable can be disconnected and removed. It is doubtful that only minor earthworks will be required as articulated semi-trailers and Franna Cranes are listed as equipment involved in the re-alignment works and removal of the redundant towers and will not be able to travel on minor access tracks. The list does not include concrete trucks that will be required to deliver the concrete needed for the footings. The ridge where the proposed new Transmission Line is to be constructed is very steep and rugged.

It is possible that unusable materials would be disposed of at the Mudgee Waste Management Facility.

Where else would the unused materials go? After these 60m towers are delivered to the Mudgee Tip then where would they go?

How many towers would be removed? The map indicates 10.

Is the Mudgee Waste Management Facility capable of handling 9 or 10 x 60m towers, bundles of cable, concrete footings, and other waste.

Is the Lue Road capable of handling the trucks needed to transport this huge amount of waste. The equipment list states that 5 semi-trailers will be used for this job. The prediction is 6 laden heavy vehicles every day would be used for this task. Lets all picture that!

It is no wonder Transgrid asked for the construction and removal of its valuable asset to be included in the EIS.

6. Employment

The Amended Report states “An estimated three light vehicles would originate from the east and travel through Lue and the relocated Maloneys Road”.

Does that mean that during 8-10 months only 3 people from Lue, Rylstone and Kandos will be employed by Bowdens. Or is it 30 people, or 15? The numbers in the Amendment Report (on Page 7) regarding employment, travel to and from the work site vary.

How many people will be employed at this mine site and what is the consequence to Bowdens if those stated jobs do not eventuate.

Why haven't Bowdens employees made submissions in favour of the mine? For example there is no submission supporting the project from the Human Resources Officer or from all the Community Liaison Officers.

What is the definition of a FIFO worker? Are the senior management, and the board of this company FIFO workers?

7. Property Management and Tourism

Bowdens associates own and manage the historic Lue Hotel and adjacent buildings. The tenant has been removed from one building. These buildings are in a very dilapidated state and bookings are accepted and patrons are served while having only one working bathroom facility.

The fences on their properties are in a poor condition and are not stock proof.

In the Submission Report Bowdens have expressed a desire to welcome tourists to their site. Are they aware that these visitors and all workers on the site would be required to wear PPE.

8. Bushfire Impact

Submission Report Appendix 5 is a very good example of the approach by Bowdens in presenting information to the public.

This assessment of the Bushfire Impact Assessment of Matters of National Environmental Significance is very nicely formatted, pretty colours and nice font but is lacking in facts.

A paragraph from Appendix 5 is copied below and it is noted that the location does not include the proximity to Lue. The project is 2 kms from Lue.

“ 2. Description of the project

2.1 Project overview The Project is located approximately 26 kilometres (km) east of Mudgee, New South Wales (Figure 1).

The Project comprises seven principal components:

1. A main open cut pit and two satellite open cut pits collectively covering up to approximately 52 hectares.
2. A processing plant and related infrastructure covering approximately 22 hectares.
3. A waste rock emplacement (WRE) covering approximately 77 hectares.
4. A low-grade ore stockpile covering approximately 14 hectares (9 hectares of which overlaps the WRE).
5. An oxide ore stockpile covering 8 hectares.
6. A tailings storage facility (TSF) covering approximately 117 hectares.
7. A southern barrier to provide visual and acoustic protection to properties south of the Mine Site covering approximately 32 hectares.

The above components would be supported by a range of on-site and off-site infrastructure. The on-site infrastructure comprises haul roads, water management structures, power/water reticulation, workshops, stores, compounds and offices/amenities. The off-site infrastructure comprises a relocated section of Maloneys Road (including a new railway bridge crossing and new crossing of Lawsons Creek) and a water supply pipeline for the delivery of water from the Ulan coalfields area.

The total impact area (subject land) of the Project would be approximately 495.67 hectares of which approximately 381.84 hectares is native vegetation. Of this native vegetation, 147.82 ha qualifies as EPBC listed Box gum woodland TEC (EnviroKey 2021)."

The relocation of the Transmission Line is not listed as a component of the project even though Bowdens have stated that its relocation is vital to the viability of the project.

This Bushfire Assessment fails to consider in its assessment

1. The proximity to Lue
2. The location and presence of a 500kV Transmission Line
3. The location of the new power supply line (not in EIS)
4. The amounts of explosives on site and their proximity to the items being assessed
5. The amounts of fuel on site and their proximity to the items of national significance
6. The amounts of inflammable materials on site and their proximity to the items being assessed.
7. The amounts of Sulphuric Acid on site and its extremely corrosive nature.

9. Environment

The Amendment Report (page 17) states

"No threatened flora and fauna or listed migratory species were identified in vegetation within the proposed easement for the 500kV transmission line, despite comprehensive surveys. The outcomes of field surveys for flora and fauna for the Project are presented in Figure 6.2." Figure 6.2 can be found in the Amendment Report (page 18).

It is the responsibility of the DPIE to determine the accuracy of this statement but it should be noted that the Transmission Line Corridor is 70 metres wide and 3.5 km long. There is no cleared land identified in Figure 6.2 and the new Transmission Line route is heavily wooded and very rugged. Even when driving along Maloneys Road adjacent to the Transmission Line large numbers of kangaroos can be seen.

It is stated by Bowdens in the Submission Report that 2 years is not long enough to amend and update information provided in the EIS, the Amendment Report and the Submission Report. Individuals opposed to this project have 28 days to provide a submission to the DPIE and in documents so full of contradictions, omissions, typographical errors, suspected fraudulent material and over 2000 pages (not including the EIS) of exaggerated, overstated or understated comments and statements, as well as 1504 supporting submissions, Bowdens are correct 2 years would not be sufficient.

Bowdens are formally requested to provide the following

1. reissue the Submission report with a proper analysis of unique submissions
2. Provide accurate maps of the project location showing its proximity to Lue in order to avoid a legal action from shareholders and other investors
3. Provide evidence of payments made to any employees who are also local councillors
4. Provide accurate plans, costings and construction time of the following components
 - a. Water supply pipeline
 - b. Transmission Line
 - c. Maloneys Road construction,
 - d. Maloneys Road railway overbridge construction
 - e. Maloneys Road Lawsons creek crossing
 - f. Tailings Dam
5. Provide evidence that all required water entitlements and licences are held by Bowdens
6. Provide a list of all sponsorships and amounts donated to each sporting group and event and organisation
7. Provide evidence that all land within the mine-site is owned by Bowdens
8. Provide proper responses to all submissions
9. Respond to all EPA, NRAR and DPIE submissions

10. Respond respectfully to all submissions from Aboriginal elders and others concerned about Aboriginal sites
11. Respond respectfully to all submissions from landowners and residents in the Lue area. Accusing a group or individual opposing an environmentally dangerous project that will have a great adverse effect on all land, properties and residences of providing misinformation and bullying is disrespectful and untrue. It is a very poor attempt to discredit reports and material provided by very well regarded professionals.
12. Ensure Bowdens website is up to date with an accurate map of the mine site and its location and its proximity to homes and properties in order to avoid legal action by shareholders and investors
13. Ensure fencing and other farm management tasks are performed as they are advertised on the Bowdens website
14. Correct all false or misleading statements found in the Amendment Report and the Submission Report, the EIS Summary Booklet and Media Releases.
15. Please publish a full page retraction of the Media Release published 23 July 2021 in the Mudgee Guardian
16. Provide a written apology to the person in Rylstone who felt intimidated by the Rylstone newsagent, Australia Post representative and Bowdens employee. (I'm sure the councillor in question knows who he has intimidated)
17. Please provide a high level report on the Cadia Tailings Dam failure and its effects on the people, land, water and environment around Cadia with reference to the Bowdens Tailings Storage Facility.
18. Please provide a disaster management plan should the tailings dam fail or overflow or spill with particular reference to the road that will be used should Maloneys Road be blocked with debris, how many vehicles will pass through Lue, how much contaminated dust will be released into air, how much contaminated material will be released into the surrounding land and any other relevant information for nearby and downstream residents.

10. Tailings dam failures in NSW, Orange and other places

I have included these photographs of tailings dam failures as a reminder to Bowdens and others of the kind of environmental disaster they are knowingly being a party to. Bowdens plan to construct a tailings dam, not a coal mine tailings dam but a silver & lead mine tailings dam, that will contain acid, cyanide, arsenic, lead, zinc, and many other poisons and hazardous chemicals dangerous to humans and animals over a watercourse and a fault line just metres from Lawsons Creek. The dam will certainly fail because Lue is in an earthquake hazard zone, like Cadia (2018) and Newcastle (1994), and there is no back up wall or back up plan. When this dam fails it will block the access road to the mine site, poison Lawsons Creek and the aquifer (remember it is constructed on a fault line), spew its sludge and muck all over the land and then the dust that is left will cause asthma and other respiratory diseases in neighbouring landowners, visitors and workers. By simply googling, anyone can find reports, articles, photographs and a great deal of information about tailings dams on the internet. I have not named these photographs below in the hope that others will research for themselves and perhaps learn something about how deadly and unstable tailings dams are.

No responsible person or organisation can knowingly approve a tailings dam of this size and type in the Lawsons Creek Valley, upstream from homes and farms and Mudgee's water supply.

The Minister has a duty of care to all people who live and work in Lue and in this valley, and those who rely on the water in the valley as well as the people of Mudgee whose water supply may be poisoned.

Tailings dam failures

Photographs below.



Dust clouds from the failed Cadia tailings dam.



"We've invested more than \$24 million to work on dust suppression on our site," general manager Aaron Brannigan said.





3.2 Pre-failure dam construction

High resolution satellite imagery (53 cm, WorldView-2) acquired at 10.28 am local time on 9 March 2018 indicates that construction activity was taking place on the northern TSF dam wall on and/or before the day of failure (Figure 8). The imagery appears to show evidence of a dam raise – a process of increasing the height of the dam wall to increase the overall capacity of the TSF. The visual evidence of a newly graded surface and the presence of a bulldozer to the east of the dam wall suggests this may be the case.



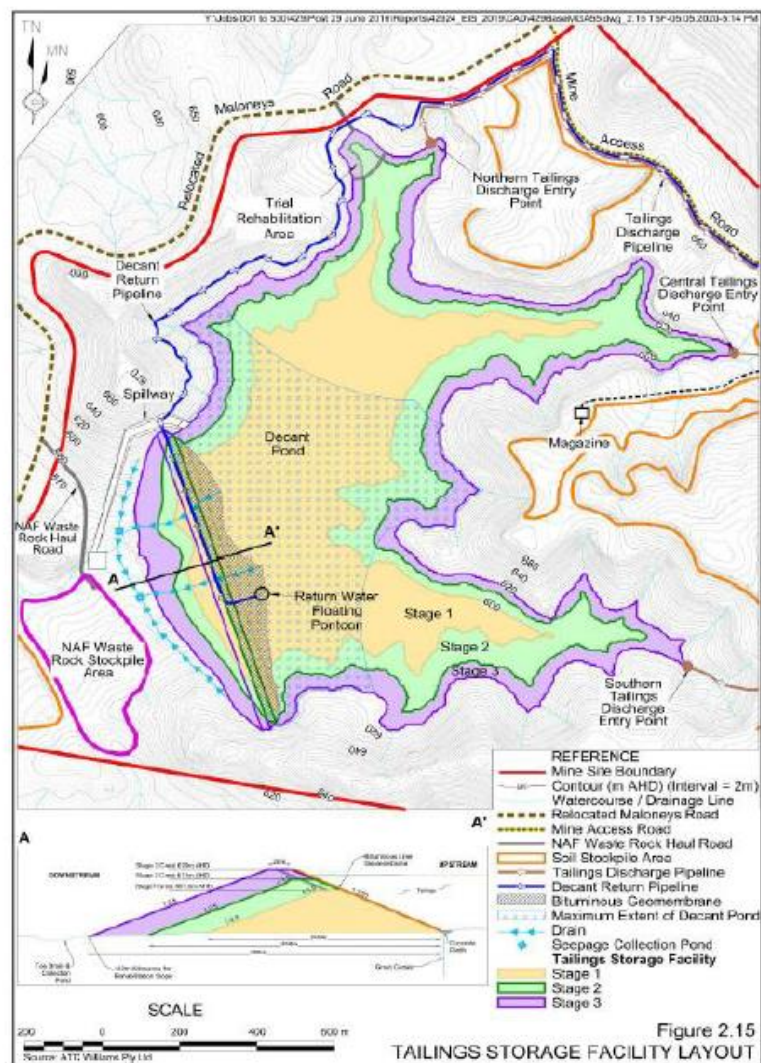
Figure 8 WorldView-2 imagery acquired at 10.28 am local time on 9 March 2018. White circles indicate construction activity, © DigitalGlobe 2018



Examples of tailings storage facility failures: (a) shows the July 2017 failure of the Mishor Rotem mine, Israel (Copyright REUTERS/Baz Ratner 2017); (b) shows the November 2015 failure of Samarco/Bento Rodrigues, Brazil (Copyright Corpo de Bombeiros/MG 2015); (c) shows the October 2010 failure of Kolontar, Hungary. Photos sourced from AGU The Landslide Blog (2018)



EIS Tailings Storage Facility Layout¹⁴



Bowdens tailings dam (TSF).



Plate 5.3 Photomontage R81 – Year 8

Photomontage of the Tailings Dam Wall.