

OBJECTION TO BOWDEN'S SILVER MINE, LUE NSW

Introduction and Background

My name is Thomas Roderick Gordon of 499 Lue Road, Milroy, NSW 2850.

My wife Stephanie Marion Gordon is the sole shareholder in Wilgowrah Pty Ltd which owns the rural property "Wilgowrah" located at 499 Lue Road, Milroy NSW 2850. My wife and I operate the property as Wilgowrah Partnership ABN 75 001 827 791.

The property comprises approx. 193 hectares in area and is zoned for Intensive Agriculture under The Mid-Western Local Government Local Environmental Plan.

The property has approximately 1.9 kilometres double frontage to Lawsons Creek which is the primary water source for stock, irrigation and domestic needs. We hold a 60 megalitre license for irrigation from Lawsons Creek.

We operate a beef cattle breeding and fattening, farming and hay production operation. In addition, we currently operate a short stay accommodation facility "Tom's Cottage" with plans to open two more, one in September 2020 and the second in January 2021. The second "Lawsons Creek Church" is a heritage listed building which we restored.

I object to the development of Bowdens Silver Mine for the following reasons.

A – MISLEADING AND INNACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

This project has been labelled, described and promoted as the Bowdens Silver Mine at Lue.

The facts are that this is a silver, lead and zinc mine. Whilst silver may return the greater amount of revenue as claimed by Silver Mines Ltd the fact remains that Lead and Zinc will be the major component produced by weight and a waste.

Silver has a public perception of being a relatively clean when compared the zinc and particularly lead.

Lue is a small village located between Mudgee and Rylstone. The description is accurate however the impact of the mine is far more reaching than just Lue. The reality and potential extend from the Lue district to Mudgee and beyond. The fact that this mine is located in the Lawsons Creek catchment extends the impact area to the Cudgegong River downstream from the junction with Lawsons Creek and into Burrendong Dam in the event of an environment accident arising from the mine.

The point is that limiting the description to a silver mine limits the possible objections made by the Lue and Mudgee community. Had lead and zinc been included in the description and publicity it would have drawn a far greater negative response.

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B – WATER SUPPLY AND QUALITY

Lawsons Creek is the lifeblood of primary production along its course. It supplies water for farming and grazing, intensive hay making and viticulture. And the same applies to land downstream from the junction with the Cudgegong River which flows through the major wine producing areas of Mudgee. Properties such as Goree (viticulture, livestock production and thoroughbred stud), Oatley properties (viticulture, and large scale cattle operation), Paspaley's Bunnamagoo (livestock and viticulture), and LOWE WINES (signature Mudgee cellar door) along with a myriad of other farmer, graziers, viticulturalists and cellars doors rely on the Cudgegong River for the continued existence.

Is it worth risking the Mudgee Region's viticulture and wine industry, tourism and other intensive agriculture industries?

Lawsons Creek and ground water are undeniably linked. Drawing underground water for the mine WILL affect the flow in Lawsons Creek. On our property our water supply comes from a well, the level of water in which is directly dependent upon the flow in Lawsons Creek. The drought of 2019/2020 resulted in our well drying up leaving us without water. The same occurred in surrounding properties, just ask the businesses in Mudgee who specialise in water.

Taking vast amounts of water from the Lawson Creek Valley will result in a permanent drought downstream.

CONCLUSION

As a private person I do not have the skills or resources to provide researched and scientific evidence. However, I accept and rely upon the professional input and judgements of those specialists engaged by the Lue Action Group.

This development should not proceed for the same reasons and more that halted the Mount Penny Coal Mine in the Bylong Valley.

WATER IS OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE.

Thank you.

Thomas R Gordon