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Submission to EIS on Bowden Silver mine, Project SSD-5765

## **OBJECTION TO BOWDENS SILVER EIS PROPOSAL**

My name is Jessica Nagel and my parents are the owners of a cattle property located just 8 kilometres as the crow flies from the proposed Bowdens lead/silver mine. Old Bara has been the place I call home for most of my life and it not only means a lot to my parents but myself and my entire family. There are so many reasons as to why this proposal shouldn't go ahead including proximity issues, noise pollution, threatened property values, trucks, water issues, potential lead poisoning, dust issues and potential acid mining draining...the list goes on and for those in the region the impacts will be catastrophic if this mine goes ahead.

The reasons why I object to this proposal are as follows:

1. **Water:** It's predicted the Bowdens mine will use approximately two gigalitres (2,000,000,000 litres) of water annually to operate. This is a HUGE concern as Silver Mines Limited (SVL) proposes to collect the majority of their water from on site. Some from bores and aquifers on the property and some from surface water. The ground water on the mine site will drop by 25 metres and the open cut pit will continue to draw on ground water for up to 100 years after the mine has been abandoned. The proposed mine will take more water from the Lawson Creek catchment than all the other water users in the valley combined. Further, the water, once used will be contaminated and will not be able to leave the site. Who will be overseeing this after the mine ceases to exist?

Given the extreme amount of water needed, it's very clear there's been no consideration what so ever for future droughts which the region like many other rural areas in Australia are very accustomed to experiencing. We simply do not have enough water to support this project. Droughts are difficult enough for farmers trying to keep not only their stock alive but themselves given the toll it takes both mentally and physically, let alone the addition of the impacts of a silver/lead mine like Bowdens.

If the creeks run dry, it will not only make the proposed Bowden mine no long viable, this will also have a massive impact on the agricultural land surrounding the mine site. Many well established sheep and cattle properties are reliant on this water, including my parents property Old Bara and I think it's pretty obvious that life without water is a life no longer.

2. **Health impacts:** The mine will produce 95,000 tonnes of lead - a highly toxic mineral. There is no safe level to exposure of lead. It is a cumulative toxicant that affects multiple body systems. A deadly cyanide processing plant is proposed to operate on site. Any exposure to lead can have catastrophic ramifications for the development of children and this site is only 2 kilometres

from the Lue primary school. Not only that given the fact my parents have a cattle farm like many others in the area, if there is any trace of lead in the livestock's blood they will be deemed unsalable to the Australian market. There are also risks for adults from lead exposure.

3. **Failing tailings dams:** A highly toxic large tailings dam will be constructed less than a kilometre from Lawson Creek and will be there FOREVER long after the mine has been abandoned - these dams have been known to fail. The result would be an environmental disaster for Lawson Creek which feeds into the Cudgegong River at Mudgee. It will pollute our water supply forever. Tailings dams regularly fail around the world, in fact 23 tailings dams have failed in the world in the last five years including the dam at Newcrest Mining's Cadia Gold Mine near Orange NSW.
4. **Acid mining drainage:** I don't believe the company has effectively addressed the threat of acid mining drainage despite 57 per cent of waste rock identified as potentially acid-forming in their surface water assessment. The mine will produce two massive dumps of 56 million tonnes of acid forming rock and tailings (crushed ore remnants post processing) above the water table and local creek catchments of Price Creek, Hawkins Creek and Lawson Creek. The pollution proposed mines like Bowdens can continue for hundreds of years after a mine is closed and society is left to bear the long-term burden of poisoned rivers.
5. **Trucks on local roads:** This project is talking about regular truckloads of lead, zinc, and silver concentrate (227,000 tonnes) to be exported along the narrow country Lue Road and through the Mudgee township. Our local road is already very busy, many people from Rylstone use Lue Road to commute to Mudgee and beyond for work. Currently B Double Trucks are restricted and yet I am under the impression the lead, zinc and silver concentrate will be moved by B Double Trucks. This is unbelievable and I think it's going to be extremely dangerous not only for local road users but tourists who are constantly visiting the region.
6. **Tourism:** The Mudgee region thrives on tourism, and it's their dollar that keeps our economy alive but if our water and air is polluted then it's likely this sector will diminish. My parents are a contributing factor to the tourism industry in the region as they operate a farm house and camping business and it's no surprise why people want to escape from the city and enjoy the peace and quiet, fresh air and clean water. But if this mine goes ahead there won't be much of that at all, with the mine operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week noise will be generated from the site and so will light pollution which will minimise the opportunity to see stars at night, which is currently a major drawcard for those living in heavily polluted areas like Sydney.

I believe this project should be REJECTED. Thank you for taking my submission into consideration.