

OBJECTION TO MINE EXPANSION

I am writing this in relation to the planned mine expansion/optimisation at Mount Pleasant in the Hunter Valley. I cannot object more strongly to this latest threat to our valley.

We are long past a point where enough is enough. I am not anti-mining per se – I am fully aware of the revenue and jobs this has brought, not just to the Hunter Valley but to the country at large. What I am totally opposed to is the ongoing destruction of some of our most valuable and productive rural areas, not to mention the increasing negative impacts on our climate and conditions for future generations.

I recently had cause to email a local government employee and the first sentence in the reply I received referred to “Mining communities like ours”. We are NOT a mining community. The Upper Hunter is and has always been a RURAL community. It remains such but is increasingly severely impacted by and under threat from the proliferation of coal mining in the region.

There are families who have lived in this area and raised cattle, sheep, horses, produced milk or grown crops or grapes for generations. As it should be, much is made of the connection of our first peoples to their land and, like them, those who have arrived since European settlement, while it may be an infinitesimal time by comparison, also have a deep connection to the land. They also have a deep sense of responsibility and custodianship to look after it for the generations that came before and to protect it for others in the future. For this to be viable, not only the land itself but the quality of air, water, lifestyle and sustainable long-term industry and jobs all need to be protected.

The Hunter Valley has long been a showcase rural area, not just for NSW but for the whole country. Are we to be left with vast areas of it reduced to nothing more than degraded land and enormous voids? It is beyond time to say “Enough is enough”!

Scone, NSW 2337.

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