

**I strongly oppose the proposed expansion of the Warkworth coal mine (DA 300-9-2002-i MOD 6) and request that this Development Application be refused.**

I chose to settle in Bulga in 1981 fully aware that open cut mines operated in the Singleton area.

I, along with other residents made the choice to live in Bulga as I believed that the Mt Thorley Warkworth (MTW) mine would not encroach any closer to Bulga. When the Ministerial Deed of Agreement was signed in 2003 we believed we were justified in our earlier thinking and this Agreement formerly and legally confirmed that our community and the precious local environment would be protected forever from further encroachment by MTW.

When this present NSW Government decided not to honour a Ministerial Deed of Agreement, ignore decisions by both the NSW Land and Environment Court and the NSW Supreme Court of Appeal and change the NSW State Planning Laws in such a way as to make those laws an instrument to promote development of mining resources we were shocked and outraged.

It is unconscionable that in 2013, Christopher Hartcher, the disgraced former Minister for Energy, amended this protective Deed of Agreement so the Warkworth mine could then mine through the Non Disturbance Areas. By doing this, the NSW Government is not only ignoring the findings of The NSW Land and Environment Court of 2013 and The NSW Supreme Court of Appeal 2014 but is unjustifiably supporting the foreign owned Rio Tinto and not this community and the constituents of NSW. Clearly this NSW Government does not share the community of Bulga's values or those accepted by a modern democracy of obeying the Law of the Land (i.e. court decisions) or even adhering to basic principles of honesty and integrity and the concept of a fair go. Both the International Council on Mining and Minerals and the International Finance Corporation recognise sustainable development requires an explicit balance of economic, environmental and health considerations. A recent Senate inquiry into the impacts of air quality on health in Australia found balancing a broad range of issues, including economic development, is essential for mitigating the health impacts of mining.

The present unacceptable level of exposure to Bulga residents of particulates, noise, vibration, and light pollution would be greatly increased if the MTW proposal were approved. The Federal Government pollution database shows that coal mining related pollution has doubled in the past twelve months in line with the mining industry's rapid growth. A total of 53,000 tonnes of particulate matter less than 10microns (PM10) was produced in the Singleton area in the past year - 96percent of that came from coalmining. The industry is also responsible for almost all of the particulate matter less than 2.microns in the area in the same period. In addition, tonnes of potentially fatal toxic fumes produced from open - cut blasting and diesel operated equipment are added to the airborne cocktail each day. This proposal by Rio Tinto will add to the cumulative effect of the pollution burden, this cannot be allowed to happen. If the present pollution trend continues the NSW Government may well find themselves culpable for knowingly exposing Hunter valley residents to harmful levels of pollutants .Sustainable ( a word that is missing in the planning amendment ) economic development is essential for the wellbeing of the community. But economic development cannot be the sole or even principle purpose of planning and development regulations.

Residents of Bulga continue to suffer deep distress about the possible demise of their village (first settled in 1820) and the damage done to their much loved landscape. This deep distress and anxiety will worsen if the mine expands even closer toward their town. It is impossible to sell a property in Bulga. People are at the mercy of a predatory foreign mining company and a corrupt government doing their bidding.

The screening effect of Saddle Ridge is of great significance, if it were to be removed the adverse visual impacts will greatly affect a large number of properties in and around Bulga and so create greater negative impacts as well as health issues and further stress on the residents. Owners of properties will be able to see first hand, 24 hours a day, the workings of this open cut mine in close proximity. Bulga residents invested their lives and finances to enjoy a rural vista, not an open cut

coal mine that operates 24 hours a day 7 days per week 365 days per year. The screening effect of Saddle Ridge is of great significance and if this proposal is approved the removal of Saddle Ridge will have a huge detrimental visual impact on Bulga and Millbrodale residents. Rehabilitation of Saddle Ridge will be impossible and the damage irreversible.

Warkworth Sands Woodland is described by the scientific community as “an irreplaceable ecological area, totally unique in the world”. Rio Tinto describe this incredible place as merely a “place of interest” and continues to press for its destruction. Rio Tinto say that avoidance of these areas is not possible for the continued viability of mining at the Warkworth mine despite the importance of these environmental areas as documented by both The NSW Land and Environment Court and The NSW Supreme Court of Appeal. After forensically examining both sides of the MTW expansion argument the four senior judges of the NSW Supreme Court of Appeal said “that on balance this proposal has no merit.”