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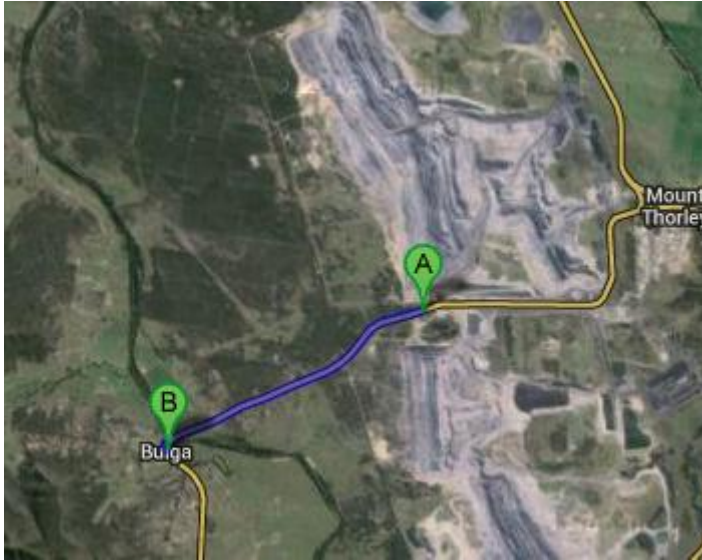
MT THORLEY OPERATIONS
Application No 6465

It appears the only reason for the Mt Thorley proposal is to continue to dump the overburden from Warkworth into Mt Thorley, as the EIS states *emplacement of overburden material providing service critical to the viability of Warkworth Mine, and the proposal does not involve any additional disturbance beyond that currently approved under the development consent*. With no revenue from coal at Mt Thorley the economic benefits seem to depend entirely on Warkworth so how can economic significance of the resource be claimed for this proposal.

Noise

All reasonable and feasible measures have been applied to control noise from MTO This is a very wide statement when the residences of the Bulga, not just the village, suffer extreme noise from both Warkworth and Mt Thorley mines. The EIS for Mt Thorley states *cumulative noise levels would satisfy INP & Mining SEPP night criterion at all but two locations in Warkworth village*. Bulga area is between Mt Thorley mine and Warkworth village which is much further from this mine and this is one of the villages mining has already destroyed as no one lives there

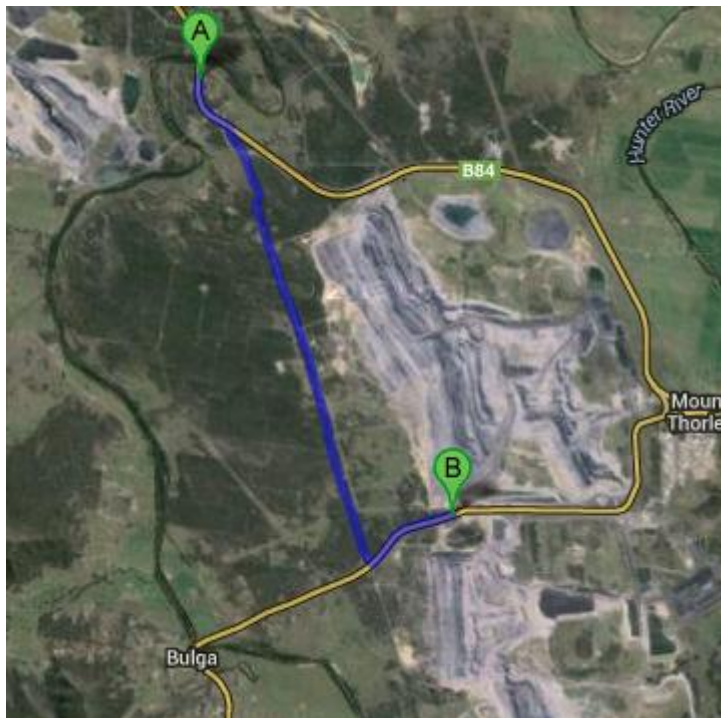
Following the establishment of the Wambo, Lemington, United and Warkworth Mines from the early seventies to the eighties Warkworth Village people began to complain about noise and dust; the mine offered acquisitions and as neighbours properties fell into the hands of the mines and became rented or demolished the remaining residents feared for the loss of the village and sought acquisition. As the village shrank the school closed and the last to go was the service station and general store.



A Mt Thorley Mine

B Bulga

Distance 4.8ks approx.



A Warkworth Village

B Mt Thorley Mine

Distance 10ks approx.

It is unbelievable that such garbage could be written into this EIS and expect it to be believed, most of the paragraphs are a copy of MTW EIS.

Community Consultation

The community consultation re Mt Thorley mine has been almost non-existent as Rio have been pushing Warkworth mine and even this consultation has been very poor. As for the

community information session where the EIS states '*feedback was captured on the day with details of the attendee's matters of concern*' There was no member of the mine staff taking any notes of any residents concerns, we were told only '*this is what we are doing*'

Dust & Fumes

In addition, the massive consumption of diesel in the open cut mines extraction process (approx. 1 litre per tonne of coal produced) adds to the cocktail of health harming particulates in the atmosphere surrounding villages and towns close to open cut mines. A large open cut mine close to villages in the Hunter Valley produces 12 million tonnes of coal per annum and thus burns and releases into our local atmosphere approx. 12 million litres of diesel. It has been stated that diesel fumes are carcinogenic.

The photo below shows the dust haze which is an everyday occurrence in the middle to upper Hunter Valley region. This dust is a result of open cut mining at the Mount Thorley pit close to the villages of Bulga and Broke. The PM2.5 particles travel far beyond the site boundaries of the open cut mine and in our view have a detrimental effect on neighbouring residents.



In the conclusion paragraph on air quality the Mt Thorley EIS states *that three privately owned assessment locations (77, 102, and 264) may experience concentrations above the criterion for annual average PM10*. All of these residences are at Warkworth 10ks away when Bulga is only 4.8ks from the mine, does this mean we being told all this dust will bypass Bulga.

The mining companies cannot prevent the dust pollution of towns in the Hunter Valley and yet the State Government is continuing to approve new mines and extensions to existing mines.

Blast fume emissions

Blasting is a daily event in the Hunter Valley mines. These blasts cause enormous plumes of toxic gases and dust which often travel outside of the mine sites and into local residences. This one being from Mt Thorley mine travelling towards Bulga



This travelling towards Milbrodale

Rio's EIS talks of management, monitoring and predicted modelling on noise, dust, fumes and vibration. We do not get any relief from any of this now and reporting problems to Rio hotline is to no avail

Water

When an area is subject to Open Cut mining, all water will fall into the pit. At the simple equation of 25mm of rain on 1 hectare = 1 megalitre of water, then if the 768 Hectares is mined, at the average annual rainfall of 600mm per annum, the potential is to lose at least 18,432 megalitres of runoff water per annum. A total of over 313,000 megalitres over the projected life of the project. This number does not take account of the consequent loss of flows from unidentified underground aquifers that are in the area that will be impacted by these mines, neither does it take account of interrupted flows from the amended plan for Mount Thorley Mine. It is well known that exposed ground of Open Cut mines and the consequent unfilled pits create and collect polluted water, mainly saline, this will increase if the mine goes ahead and creates a huge new void.

Social Impact

Professor Albrecht's evidence at the Land and Environment Court was that solastalgia is an apt descriptive term for the combined environmentally induced desolation and powerlessness the impacts on people in the zone of affectation of coal mines and power stations.

The evidence is that the existing mining operations at Mount Thorley Warkworth mine complex are having impacts on amenity which leads to social impacts. Any lack of compliance with air quality criteria would result in air quality impacts and hence social impacts on the residents of Bulga.

Considerable work was done by the consultants to the Mine, EMM in interviewing local residents and assessing their 'perceived', 'subjective' views – none of this material is included in the EIS

I object to this proposal for Mt Thorley

P Rayner