

16/7/17

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I am a home owner in Wingen NSW and had formerly been a property owner in Blandford. I have been forthright in opposing mining in our area for many years and have made formal objections in the past.

My objections are certainly informed and have been made with the best intentions for the environment, the agricultural based industries in the area (General farming, beef production, wine production and of course the Thoroughbred breeding industry which has always been my choice of participation and employment) and the good health of my family and friends.

I previously owner "Ballymore" 628 Timor Road, BLANDFORD. My decision to sell this farm saddened me however I could not see a fair and reasonable balance of mining in our area! Unfortunately, my fears are again being vindicated with yet another mining application being presented - I understand that governments do not have money and need income from whoever is paying the most in this case the mining industry however the reality is that nobody really knows the long-term impact, destruction to the environment and human health that these mines cause. I assume any environmental studies can be manipulated towards the outcome that the person/group/business wants.

My decision was to sell and at this point move from the area, I have maintained a home however my main business strategy has altered and I have moved internationally which is obviously a challenge for me however I would never have considered this move had there been a stable and balanced mining structure in the Hunter Valley – I aspire to again own a high end thoroughbred property in the Hunter Valley however that will not be a consideration until such time as there are long term mining exclusion zones and stability for land owners in the Hunter Valley.

There is so much genuine information in the world that categorically make us realise that mining in populated areas where there are intense agricultural pursuits taking place has a detrimental impact. Regardless of what studies are put forward the devastation to water, agriculture and the well-being of lands, stock and humans cannot be quantified therefor mining should be kept in isolated areas.

The argument that mining has gone on for decades and co-existed was when we had what would be considered old fashioned methods which for the population of the era was more than suitable and not destructive enough to make a major impact on the environment or at least we didn't realise it at the time.

We now know that with new technologies the environmental impact is greater with dust particles, water degradation, chemical pollutants and the unmeasurable long term effect on health.

Who is responsible for the clean-up when a mine has finished its extractions from an area, or if it is under financial stress or changes ownership, I know that it can be said rules and regulations apply, who is in fact responsible, The directors of the company, the council members? The members of the government that issued the licences? I know that members of the government or mines reading this would suggest I was naïve however we have seen mines go under before and the principals seem to be able to walk away.

It appears that when communities structure successful objections against mining whether it be expansions or new licences the mining companies simply alter the application slightly and go again hoping to eventually wear the community and negative campaigners out in respect to the intensity of their objections which can be the case – I won't be giving up.

I cannot support a mine in this location – it is basically slap bang in the middle of the main Thoroughbred nurseries and beautiful farming area's and would be a serious issue to the environment and the aesthetics of the area.

On an international investment point of view which I am qualified to comment on – Australian Thoroughbred racing and breeding is without doubt in as healthy a position if not the healthiest in the world – Internationals are continually asking and debating the mine locations in the Hunter valley and we are now seeing them directing investment away from the Hunter which is still recognised as the centre point of the Australian breeding industry however Hunter Valley councils and NSW government cannot be complacent as without doubt The Hunter can lose its credibility due to the state of the mining. A long-term exclusion zone establishing stability for all industries including the mining industry is the only way to proceed.

NO TO THIS MINE.