

Att Rose-Anne Hawkeswood:

rose-anne.hawkeswood@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Rose-Anne,

Re: State Significant Development No. 5765

My name is Saskia van Schie and I regularly come to the Mudgee district to visit my relatives on their farm at Lue and enjoy the local environment.

I am writing to you to register my objection to the proposed Bowdens Silver mine - State Significant Development No. 5765.

I have many toxicity-related concerns about this proposed mine, including lead, other heavy metals, arsenic, cyanide, and acid forming rock. I'm also particularly concerned about the impacts the mine will have on water because, as we have seen in the recent drought, it is in short supply and farmers and local communities in Lue and Mudgee need ALL the currently available water (in an uncontaminated state).

The EIS indicates most of the water for operations will be obtained on site by breaking through aquifers as the pit is developed and drawing down the ground water that is so critical to maintaining the waterholes along Lawson Creek – these water holes were vital to keeping stock alive on farms all along Lawson creek during the drought.

Notwithstanding use of ground water and local surface water, this project does not have sufficient water for its operations. The EIS indicates they are planning to source about one fifth of their water via a 58km pipeline from Ulan and Moolarben coal mines – even though no agreement is in place with these mines to do so!

Ulan and Moolarben coal mines are obliged under their mining leases to return all excess water to the Goulburn catchment to help maintain environmental flows – they have no approval to sell eastern-fall water over the Great Dividing Range for a proposed western-fall mine. Also, these coal mines need to guarantee their own water supply regardless of seasonal conditions. They will always prioritise their own water needs ahead of Bowdens, particularly in drier periods.

The EIS makes no reference to any approvals, or potential difficulties in gaining approvals for the proposed pipeline corridor and associated infrastructure.

Given this extremely uncertainty in water supply, which is so vital to the mine's operational and financial success, could the Dept. of Planning, Industry and Environment in good conscience grant a mining lease?

My request to the DPIE is to require Bowdens to formalise and gain approval for this completely novel eastern-western water transfer prior to contemplating granting the mining lease. To do otherwise would be a major oversight and likely to result in all the environmental damage associated with construction of a mine, only for it to fail and be abandoned part way through its operation.

The DPIE has the responsibility to protect the environment and the community and not allow the creation of preventable long-term liabilities and negative impacts on the people of NSW and the environment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. M.T. van Schie'.

Saskia van Schie