

GAS WATCH 212.

Mining Industry claims of co-existence rebutted by Bulga Coal.

Bulga Coal's own Environmental Impact Statement contradicts the official advertising blitz of "World Class Miners" and the Minerals Council.

"World Class Miners" and the Minerals Council loosely claim that "research (unquoted) and the experience of Bob (Kennedy) and other grape growers (unidentified) shows that it is possible for mining and farming to work together".

1. Bulga Coal disagrees.

2. Xstrata says that not all mining and agricultural relationships work.

In its Environmental Impact Statement lodged with the proposed expansion of its open cut coal mine close to Beyond Broke vineyard, Bulga Coal discloses:

- "The Project will impact on land that is primarily low productivity grazing land, along with the removal of a vineyard and olive grove."
- Dust levels are predicted to exceed the relevant short term maximum air quality criteria at up to 4 private residences.
- A further 41 residences are predicted to have noise levels above the noise level criteria at some stage of the Project.
- Approximately 734 hectares of woodland/forest vegetation will be impacted.
- Four endangered ecological communities will be impacted.

This just underlines how mines and agriculture cannot work together – Bulga Coal is to pull out a productive vineyard and olive grove. Why? Because clearly they cannot co-exist no matter what one lone grapegrower may say.

The last few decades have seen much of the Hunter Valley turned into a coal mine wasteland and the coal miners now want to expand their operations to the detriment of the environment, to the detriment of agriculture and to the detriment of the health of the residents of the Hunter. As the methane gas industry did in Queensland, they have found a local farmer prepared to be the face and voice of their campaign in a desperate effort to give their official advertising blitz some semblance of credibility.

On top of all this the gas miners want to attack the Hunter Valley as well. Fortunately the O'Farrell Cabinet has endorsed the exclusion of residential areas, vineyard areas and thoroughbred horse breeding areas from coal seam methane gas activities and the SEPP confirming that should be released shortly fulfilling the pre-election pledges of Barry O'Farrell and George Souris.



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