

26th April 2017

Dear Chairperson and fellow Commission members,

I am writing to you to formally support the approval of the Bylong Coal Project with the condition that any request for the approval for a temporary workers' accommodation facility (workers' camp) now, or in the future, be denied.

As a Director of the Trustee for Caerleon Mudgee Trust, the landowner of Caerleon Estate in Mudgee, I can confirm that we are proud supporters of the town of Mudgee and its future growth, driven primarily by the nearby coal mines that are arguably some of the most efficient, well run coal mines in the country. The opportunity to continue this growth, with the support of the town's local council, Mid-Western Regional Council, is a huge boost for the area and something many country towns can only dream of as they face declining populations, increasing unemployment and rising socio-economic problems.

Personally, Mudgee has been a big part of my family since the early 2000's. Over the years my brother has been married in Mudgee, my family has spent many weekends in and around the town and made many trips to the incredible wineries around the area and in 2011 we started the process of identifying and then securing a large parcel of land within Mudgee which we have since rezoned to allow for the future housing supply of the town. In fact, over the next decade we hope to deliver over 2000 new homes – from standard residential houses through to rural-residential homesteads – within our Estate.

The coal mines located 25 to 45 minutes from Mudgee have proven over the years to work hand in glove with the town and its community. The mines have been successful in providing a large number of jobs to the local workforce, increasing the population by bringing outside workers and their families to the town and giving back to the community with grants and sponsorship. The opportunity to have another mine operating in the Mudgee area is something that should be embraced with both hands by the town. It will create further employment opportunities, increase the town's population which in turn will create further employment opportunities, and increase the economic standing of the town immeasurably.

While it is obvious that a new mine will help with the continued success of Caerleon Estate as more people to the town will mean more houses are needed, the multiplier effect of an increased population with more jobs will have a huge benefit to the town as a whole. As regional areas and country towns around NSW and in fact, all of Australia, face economic hardship as populations decline, young people move away and socio-economic problems start to rise, not decline, Mudgee has an incredible opportunity to buck the trend with the approval of the Bylong Coal Project. This new mine presents the town with the chance to continue to grow and get stronger – creating more jobs for the current population plus the future residents that are attracted to the Mudgee area. Based on research that says one mining job creates 2 or more new jobs in sub/supporting industries, the approval of this mine stands to benefit even those that don't work in the mining industry within the township. More people in town means you will see more people employed at places like restaurants and cafes, more retail shops, more cars sold and more people in general shopping and being employed by local businesses to keep up with the increase in demand a growing population creates. All these things are a huge boost for the local economy and an incredible opportunity for the town of Mudgee and its people.

It is for this reason I am formally writing to you to support the Bylong Coal Project. I also am formally requesting that the Commission not support any workers' camp of any kind with the approval of this mine. The approval of temporary workers' accommodation, no matter how small or even for only a short period of time, will remove the benefits of this coal mine to the town. With a camp in place, the mine's workers will not live in or near Mudgee and will not socialise or spend their money in Mudgee. They will return home (sometimes interstate) in their days off and not come back until they are rostered back on. There is no benefit to the town of Mudgee from this mine if a camp is approved. The mine should go ahead, the camp should not.