

→ Shane Davy

I thank the panel for giving me the opportunity to present this submission.

I am here today in strong support of the Warkworth and Mt Thorley Continuation Project.

My name is Shane Davey, for a living, I promote the contribution our mining community brings to life in the Hunter region through an independent industry and community magazine.

our traditional owners and I would also like to acknowledge -

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the residents of Bulga, their concerns, their questions about the whole process and journey, and put on record that I have tried my best to consider your position, feelings and opinions. Even though we do not agree on everything and sit on opposite sides of the debate. I respect your tenacity and commitment. We understand this is as difficult for you as it is for us in the community who support the project, we share some of your pain and are not ignorant to the stress you are experiencing and would experience should the project proceed.

That said we need this mine, because that stress will be felt in the same way but in far greater numbers should it not be approved. People's lives will be destroyed. We need a viable current economy and to work hard to establish the future economy. We need to understand the realities of the world we have all created and like it or not, our industry, this industry, this mine play and the Mt Thorley Warkworth family play a major part in what every individual in this room takes for granted.

I am a bit tired of coming to these hearings and listening to divisive opinions and I would love to hear more about working together. The Upper Hunter Mining dialogue is great example of how issues can be discussed and addressed constructively.

People of far greater intelligence than I know that the potential of this project has merit and the ability to do a lot of good things locally, in NSW, Australia, and beyond. My view has been formed by countless conversations with everyday people from all walks of life, the industry and from what I witness and hear when I walk down the street and talk to people in the course of my life and business.

Lets sort out these complications and divisions as much as we can and give both sides surety and confidence instead of a frame work that seems throw confusion and set us up for failure from the start.

Lets explore the potential of our resources alongside exploring the potential of our future through a journey of respect and evolution in all our communities and with all stakeholders. We can get this right and restore some kind of security and certainty.

Many in this room are proud Hunter people, attracted to this region for its beauty (yes even with mining), amazing quality of life, and what was a stronger prosperity and communities that mining allowed us to create, and can continue to allow us to create. We want to continue with our dreams and set up our families and communities with a foundation to achieve their dreams as well.

All voices, opinions and opposing views are not only welcome, but a vital part of societies debate, but that debate needs to be sensible and realistic. Imagine what we could achieve if we constructively combined our collective brainpower and passion, overlaid it with some common sense and got things moving in a realistic time frame and way. We have to use the times ahead wisely and constructively, and without division and hatred.

We cannot hate each other because we are one at the end of the day.

To say we are some-what scared of what will happen should Mt Thorley - Warkworth not be given the green light to continue operations is a bit misleading. By 'some what scared' I mean 'terrified'.

Following recent approval rejections, I have seen and heard first hand of the gut wrenching anguish people our community are facing, and I am not just talking about miners. I am also talking about beauticians, café owners, suppliers of hardware, publicans and many others. But of course, I am also talking of our mining and mining support industries and mining families.

Recently, standing as community individuals only, I and nearly 100 other concerned people and discussed a future we are all beyond scared for. It was unanimously agreed that a future for our mining, agriculture and breeding businesses needs to continue, and that stability and coexistence for all, can and should be achieved in some kind of workable form.

*I have heard directly from
some people who considered ending it all from
the stress*

Unfortunately the true sentiment and attitudes of much of our community are seldom accurately heard or reflected in the media and broader debate, and regularly misrepresented by opposing factions.

The people of our industry are well informed, and anchored in reality about how change will happen and just how long that may take. The vast majority if not everyone connected to coal in conversations I've had and opinions I have heard, ultimately want a renewable energy future, but enthusiastically support our industry as the medium term reality of transition over the next 20, 30 40 or 50 years.

Mt Thorley Warkworth people want a bright future for the Hunter, and to be able to enjoy their futures in the Hunter. They want a world leading resource industry in The Hunter that strives to coexist in the best way possible with grazing, breeding, viticulture, the thoroughbred industry, communities and everyone else. People in our community and at Mt Thoreley Warkworth and beyond are aware and realistic of the broader issues that need to be addressed and worked with as well.

We are sick to death of protestors and objectors for hire, along with fame seeking, headline grabbing media commentators and high profile ring-ins from Sydney believing they have a greater right to make our decisions for us than us ourselves, while they conveniently and ignorantly live lives of comfort and luxury substantially contributed to by us each and everyday.

On militant protest vs constructive dialogue, planning and evolution, what do you think you lock yourselves to the gate with, get to the gate in, and tweet, watch and share pictures stories and opinions from? The very products that we work hard to produce and make possible. Again, the reality is that everyone in our communities, and this room and beyond lead a life that relies on what our industry does. Stop being so militant and narrow minded and start collaborating for the change you and all of us ultimately want. Stop being so impatient that that we do more fighting than achieving. We can achieve these goals at relative speed, and together, but we wont see it finished in our life time, but you can take pride that it can be achieved not too long after.

And why do so many have a self righteous belief of our right to secure energy supply in our first world lives v's those who need it to rise from poverty in third world countries? Why do some not understand that closing our industry will be devastating to those in developing countries who don't share our circumstantial luck. Why do some not understand that taking coal production to less regulated countries and allowing people who do not share our passion for responsible mining will take many lives, and will take our environmental needs, aspirations and achievements back many years.

Understand that coal production will continue and should continue for a while yet. And it should continue right here at Mt Thorley Warkworth and right here by the worlds best miners.

Being part of a community means contributing, and this community understands just how much Coal and Allied contributes, through volunteer work, donation and commitment. I could talk for another two hours about the actual things that have been done and are being done, along with the passion and commitment I experience when talking to the people actually doing that important work on behalf of Mt Thoreley Warkworth, themselves and their families.

What happens at Mt Thorely Warkworth and other mines in the Hunter, and to the communities and people it is connected to and represents, is at a crossroads of our future success or failure. What happens here goes beyond this hearing, and will dramatically affect everyone in the Hunter.

Compromise, and an open mind is something the Mt Thorely Warkworth family and our community understands. Any destruction of our industry, community viability, and future is not.

This community wants stability and prosperity – not just for them, but for everyone. We want a social fabric that is inclusive of all, and in some kind of workable harmony. We want a post mine life landscape and economy designed and engineered to be better than it would ever have been should mining not have been undertaken. This is not only possible, but there are people already working to make that happen. Mt Thorley has a universal desire to be part of that kind of journey and not just the profit outcome in isolation.

I am disappointed that some people who tried to register and did it in a timely manner were not allowed to speak. I know that is not this panels fault. I know that the panel will consider their decision with great care, because this decision is one of great importance. Thank you for that care and thank you for your time today.