

Statement by Susanna O'Brien in Response to the PAC November 2015

Commissioners,

Once again I appreciate the opportunity to reply by submission to your October 2015 Consent Announcement Recommendation for approval.

I am just devastated with your recommendations. To support employment for 1300 jobs with no guarantee attached is erroneous. These 1300 employees do not live locally. Only 1/3 of these employees live in the Singleton area, another 1/3 live in the Hunter Valley and the other 1/3 live on the Central Coast and Sydney Region.

Just recently Rio Tinto senior management confirmed a newspaper report that Warkworth and Mt Thorley Mines were up for sale, with or without consent approval. They would like this to happen by December 2015. Should this mine be bought by a Chinese company eg Shenua, then the 1300 local jobs could well go to 457 Visa employees. These employees would be receiving very much less per year to do the work in comparison to local employees now receiving about \$120,000 to do the job. In this case the economic benefits to this country are much reduced.

You also noted in your recommendations that Singleton Shire Council had reached a preliminary agreement with Rio Tinto which would include \$11 Million in contributions. This included 5 to 6 million to spent in Bulga for water and sewerage treatment. Please be aware Bulga residents were not consulted these matters. To my knowledge Singleton Council has not asked residents about their needs. Our country residence has a new septic system required by the Singleton Council as part of the building application. We also hold a 10 ML water licence from the Broke Fordwich Private Irrigation District. For this we pay \$5000 per year. Most of the Bulga residents are connected to this system. We bought shares into this private system to give us access to permanent water. We have two wells, one with a licence of 20ML and the other with no volumetric licence to be used for livestock water.

It is also interesting to note under a previous consent with compulsory acquisition Rio Tinto is now the biggest property holder in the Bulga Village, so guess who would benefit the most from a new sewerage treatment facility??

I am very disappointed with the recommendations as I feel the social and environmental impacts on Bulga residents will be horrendous. No dedicated buffer zone against noise, dust, blasting or light spillage. Destruction of the environment, loss of the unique Warkworth Sands, loss of Aboriginal Heritage, loss of Bulga's Historical Heritage. All this loss for an unwanted water & sewerage treatment facility as proposed in the VPA and over exaggerated economic benefits.

I had placed such faith in your decision to protect Bulga Residents especially after the court decisions. With your recommendations we are going to be sacrificed. It seems the demise of Bulga cannot be balanced against the economic benefits .

Susann O'Brien

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18/11/15

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