

Ipc

I'm writing as an extremely concerned landholder – my land is identified by Whitehaven Coal as 127 a b c. On this land which is important Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL), I operate a very successful agricultural business.

I'm the closest neighbour to the proposed mine site. I will be significantly impacted by the mine. I have been told that I will be granted voluntary acquisition rights under any approval that may be granted for the mine.

As I have explained to the IPC previously, voluntary acquisition rights give me absolutely no comfort at all and is a source of significant stress.

There has been very little dialogue between myself and the proponent in the last 12 months.

As it stands, I've been offered two things by the mine, mitigation measures for noise for all residences in which one of them they agreed the noise would be hard to mitigate given the age of the building. The other, a lump sum of money to move into town for the life of the mine, which would not begin to cover the costs to myself and my agribusiness.

I have tried to negotiate an agreement with Whitehaven Coal, with more reasonable terms, taking into account the circumstances. Yet my efforts to negotiate have not been met in good faith. It seems Whitehaven misunderstands the word and meaning of negotiation, to date my efforts have been met with a take what we are offering, or leave it approach. It's the same approach experienced by Narrabri Shire Council in relation to the terms of a Voluntary Planning Agreement.

I'm a fair and reasonable person, yet I feel like I have not been treated fairly or reasonably from the very beginning. Mr Paul Flynn CEO of Whitehaven Coal, told me he wants to coexist! I've requested meetings as director of my company to sort this out and to progress an agreement that would be fair and reasonable, in the event the mine is approved. But what is clear to me is if this mine is approved, the way it stands there is no coexistence! It leaves only one choice, involuntary acquisition. I will be forced off my land, forced to watch the successful agricultural business that I have worked hard to build suffer and forced to suffer personally at the hands of an unjust system and a company that frankly doesn't care.

James Barlow
Mirrabinda Pty Ltd

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