

Thankyou for your time this afternoon Commissioners. My family has bred seedstock beef cattle for 105 years over 5 generations on our property Turanville located 9km North of the mine; and this kind of history is repeated across many other farms in the area. I have many concerns with this proposed modification and above all I believe there is no social license for this mine to re-commence operations as was clearly demonstrated on Sunday night at our community forum in Aberdeen.

I would firstly question how this is a modification when the mine has been closed for some 13 years and in its sun-setting days a first time miner presents such a weak case to begin operations again - weaknesses that have and will be outlined by many qualified people today.

This mine has been blamed by many of its neighbours for depleting their alluvial water and some will argue even in care and maintenance it has still not recovered. This evidence is all anecdotal because there was little or no monitoring conducted by the Department prior to development. This being the case the fact remains that the community has serious concerns about this valuable resource. As a local farmer I find it extremely distressing in our current drought with significantly depleted water available (as has been mentioned today) to see the photos of this mines contaminated water filling evaporation ponds! **You must protect our water.**

The Upper Hunter has a considerable footprint in terms of Beef Production. We have 2 major selling centres and 2 large processing plants; and along with other marketing options available the estimated annual turnover of cattle in this region is 500 million. That's half a billion dollars. A sustainable industry that takes care of its resources such as water has been here for generations and will continue for many more if we have security from being over-run by mines.

For the past 12 years I have run Upper Hunter Beef Bonanza now the largest junior cattle show in Australia. This event last year exposed over 800 school-aged competitors to the Beef Industry and more broadly agriculture in general; and the employment opportunities it offers. We may not employ the numbers in the short term the mines do, but our jobs are ongoing for generations. Our young skilled workforce is constantly being taken by the mining industry. We need an industry balance in this region. The Department of Planning needs to be aware of our other existing sustainable industries.

In our seedstock business we strive to improve our product in all aspects. Like many industries red meat has a challenge to improve its footprint on methane emissions. It is doing this by measurement and adapting diet and genetics. This mine was approved over 25 years ago and our community concerns have shifted considerably in that time with regard to climate change. **How do you the Commissioners guarantee us that this proponent will take the necessary steps to control their emissions?**

Our Beef Industry like other sustainable industries in the area need to be acknowledged by the Government and the Planning Department. Even Glencore one of our biggest miners has hit the pause button.

We need our Government and Department of Planning and Environment to do the same.

Thankyou.