



Voluntary Land Acquisition and Mitigation Policy

Tuesday 2 December 2014

Object to the Proposed State Environmental Planning Policy Amendment (Gas Exploration and Mining) 2014 and the short time period for comment.

Introduction

Capertee Valley Alliance Inc.

Background

Mission Statement

Capertee Valley Alliance Inc. is an incorporated community group dedicated to assisting the Capertee Valley Community.

Statement of Purpose

The Capertee Valley Alliance Inc. is the coming together of the people of Capertee Valley and surrounds. We are privileged to live and work in, and enjoy a place of great natural beauty and special significance. Its environment has tremendous biodiversity and it is an important Bird Area world-wide. CVA strives to maintain strong supportive links with the extended community and represent the community on issues that affect the sustainability and enjoyment of this unique place.

The Alliance endeavors to inform residents on issues that affect the community, and is willing to work closely with residents and the local community groups to:

- Assess, represent and communicate the interests and desires of the whole Capertee Valley Community including residents, ratepayers, business owners and their employees to government and other organizations and agencies at all levels.
- Research, develop and maintain plans programs and undertake or sponsor projects where appropriate ensuring that the Capertee Valley Community and its unique environment become safer, stronger, sustainable and proper.
- Provide a non- profit entity to seek funding, encourage sponsorship and receive contributions and government grants for community enhancement and facilities in the Capertee Valley as identified in the above statements of purpose.

The members of the public most directly impacted by the proposal are those represented by Capertee Valley Alliance Inc. The members living in the valley carry on business in the fields of eco-tourism, farming, grazing, environmental conservation and heritage preservation.

- The Voluntary Land Acquisition and Mitigation Policy is not democratic and does not consider cumulative impacts of land acquisition on rural communities and rural industries – it destroys communities like ours where we have in excess of 1000 rate payers, these strong handed tactics are quite offensive.
- There is very little thought to existing businesses which some have quite happily existed for over 100 years and the socio-economic impacts on rural towns and villages are not taken into account anymore, Capertee Valley ratepayers economically contribute to many rural towns such as Lithgow, Bathurst, Mudgee, Capertee, Rylstone and Kandos, it's not just the localities that will be affected. It will have a huge flow on affect.
- Why should this proposed Policy give special dispensation to any one industry such as the mining industry over all other considerations, what about duty of care to all?
- The Policy is silent on how 'net benefit' is to be calculated! Why?
- The Policy does not require a mining operation to comply with relevant assessment criteria, is this fair and reasonable, we don't believe it is.
- How can this Policy draft not protect human health from air and noise pollution? It merely provides a poor 'choice' for some land holders to either accept identified health impacts or sell to the mining company, Sibelco and High Rock in this area have already polluted and with little regard to the surrounding communities health. This will only add to the health bill for this state. It also gives these companies a green light to not carry out risks analysis and not comply. Just a further nail in the coffin.
- Does this Policy allow national standards for ambient air quality to be exceeded, heading in the same direction as China and India are we stark raving mad? How much will this cost to rectify in years to come? Where is the science to back up the acceptance of exceeding national standards, do we open the doors for class action?
- Why is this policy so bold as to not fully compensate the value of a farming business or any other business or home if land is acquired, this is also not democratic, again what gives the right for a Mining Company most likely overseas owned to have access to an open cheque book in this State because of a Government written policy. Where do these displaced persons go to live? Certainly not in Sydney or suburbs, who can afford the prices. It will create an additional dependent set of people on the Government and the flow on affect will be felt. Has the Government lost its morals? Who do you work for? Companies or ALL taxpayers.
- The Policy does not recognise the issue of 'stranded assets' when landholders are not identified for 'voluntary' acquisition but cannot sell their property on the open real estate market because of mine impacts. This is an issue for residents in the Capertee Valley and has largely been ignored by Local and State Governments by allowing Centennial Airly Mine Extension EIS. Again not democratic and open for class action.

CVA strongly objects to this draft Voluntary Land Acquisition and Mitigation Policy, its horribly undemocratic and we cannot understand why it is necessary in the first place, unless of course there is pressure to bare from Mining.

Yours Sincerely

Donna Upton
Secretary