

Cobar Council

DA No: 2019/LD000023

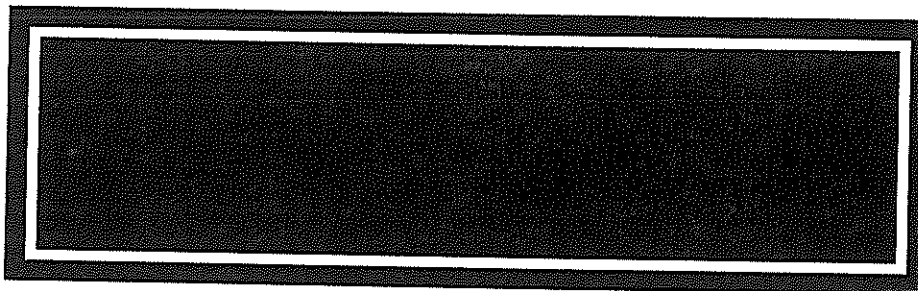
In answer to your ad re the application for expansion of the Mining Camp. I would like to voice my disapproval of any request to expand the Mining Camp. You don't have to be a genius to see the effect that the existing Drive/Fly In Drive/Fly Out has had already on our town.

My feelings is that these 7 on or 14 on rosters, whatever has raped our town. This has had roller coasted through the town it has affected our schools, stores, businesses (you only need to walk around the CBD), sporting groups they are all suffering. We need to be encouraging people to move to our community and support the town not drive/fly in earn the big bucks and take it somewhere else. I realise that not all jobs can be filled with locals, we need the engineers, managers etc but how many locals have left or families won't relocate her because of the present situation which will get worse unless like a number of other Councils, Cobar Council doesn't step up and look into making it not so easy for Drive/Fly In Drive/Fly out.

We hear a number of Councils are encouraging the mines to employ locally this is the future of Cobar def not giving them the ok to expand their workforce with employees that are not interested in Cobar.

[REDACTED]

2.



19 August 2019

Mr Peter Vlatko  
General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
36 Linsley Street  
COBAR NSW 2835  
**By Email**

**RE: Expansion of Mine Workers Village - DA No. 2019/LD-00023**

I refer to the above and write to you as a concerned citizen of the Cobar community.

I have read the application regarding the expansion and to express myself in a conservative manner, I am disappointed. It is hard to read such a document that is riddled with misconceptions.

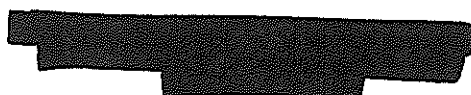
I wish to express my concerns and comments in regards to this application.

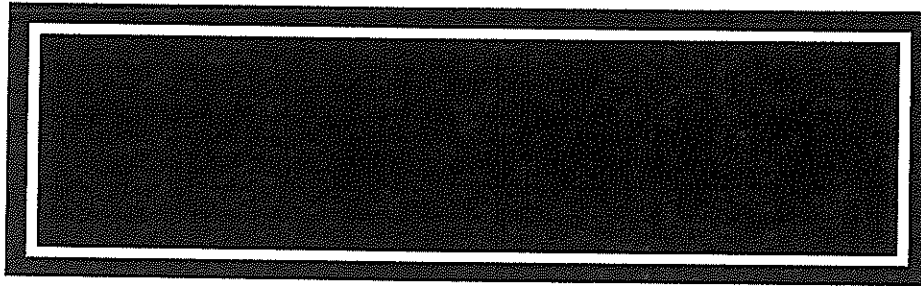
Cobar is my home, it is a place where I have grown up and a safe haven where I have chosen to raise my family. Myself, like many others have a deep connection with Cobar - we are a community.

We are invested in the town. We have purchased homes, our children attend school and/or child care locally, we are employed within the town limits, we support local businesses, we participate in sporting activities and other community based events - we care about one another.

The mining village was originally established to help mitigate the housing shortage within town. However, this is no longer an issue.

There are many, in fact over 100 houses to rent and/or purchase within the town.



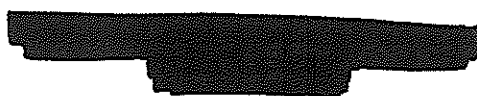


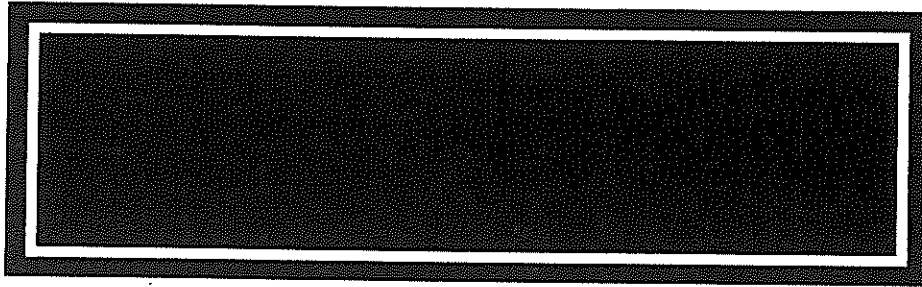
This application has no thought for the social or mental wellbeing of the community or the occupants of the camp. Cobar is a social and compassionate place to live. Isolating and removing employees to the outskirts of town will not just hurt our community, but the workers themselves.

Services that are in the town are not utilised by the mining camps residents. Miners placed at the camp have no reason to come into town, their meals and accommodation are provided for. They do their roster and retreat back to their respective "homes". We don't encourage miners to shop locally - they don't need to, when everything is included at the camp.

It is sad really. Our town, our community was founded on being residential. All of the mines in our town have built homes to integrate the mining employment into the community. But over the years, they have slowly been letting these houses become unoccupied. Mines changing their business models - changing solely for profit and not their employees, or the town. I also understand this is not a revelation, this is what businesses do. But when you have mines operating at such a close proximity to the town, we should have regulations in place to protect the community and its residents. We need similar legislation introduced in Queensland in March - the *Strong and Sustainable Resources Communities Act*.

In a mining town, not everyone works at the mine. The town feeds off the mine.





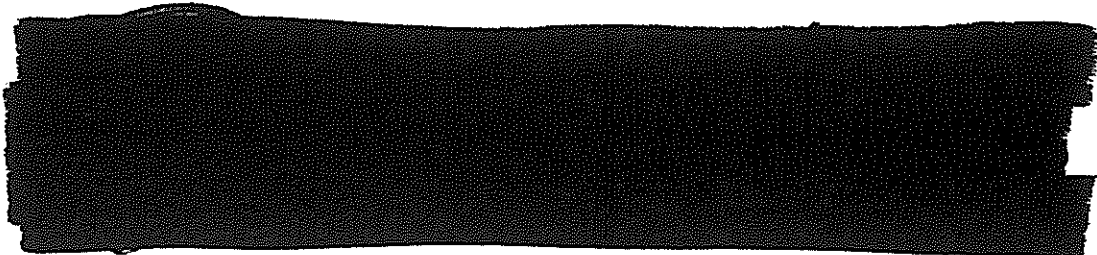
We are already struggling to maintain and attract medical professionals and teachers to our town - should our town size decrease due to the camps expansion and FIFO/DIDO mentality we will be forced to either travel more for basic facilities or to relocate.

The whole idea of Cobar is a community. Families are what make a community. Families don't stay at the camp. If a singular person is only coming to town the likelihood of them staying in town is very slim. Who wants to work somewhere isolated, in a small room without your loved ones? Children can be educated here, other family members can be employed within the community - yet we aren't attracting the broader family.

As a homeowner in town, should this application be approved what happens to our house prices? Will our homes be worthless?

Please consider this application carefully as this affects everyone in our community; and not in a good way.

Kind regards



# writer

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Danielle Locke 5 days ago 3 min read



## Mining Camp

*To say I am frustrated would be an understatement.*

*I am currently 23 pages into the "Proposed Cobar Mine Workers Village Expansion 12769 Barrier, Cobar NSW" and I want to cry.*

*How can people produce a document that is riddled with lies?*

*How can this be a positive thing for Cobar?*

*Oh wait, it's not.*

*In the introduction they quote the Cobar Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP)*

*"To encourage a range of housing, employment, recreational and community facility to meet the needs of exiting and future residents of Cobar;*

*To promote the efficient and equitable provision of public services, infrastructure and amenities".*

*Please, can someone explain to be how expanding the mining camp from housing 119 people to 199 is beneficial?*

*Under Context and Setting it is stated "Due to the large size of the site, and the comparatively small footprint of the mining village area, the amenity of the surrounding area will not be affected by the expansion of the mining village".*

*"Land immediately adjacent to the site is generally undeveloped. The closest residential receiver to the site is on the northern side of the Barrier Highway, approximately 200 metres to the north. Beyond this, the next closest residential receiver is over 700 metres away. This separation distance means that the mining village expansion is unlikely to give rise to any significant amenity impacts on this residential property."*



*Of course, because it is not inside the town. It is in the middle of no where.*

*Under Servicing*

*Water - "Potable water will continue to be supplied from the existing town water supply connection as per the existing arrangement". Ok, so what happens when we run out of water?*

*Noise & Vibration*

*"The expansion of the mining village may result in a slight increase in generated noise, however it is not considered that there not be any significant detrimental impact to any nearby receiver in relation to noise or vibration from the village."*

*Noise, no, no one in Cobar will be able to hear them at all because they are out of town.*

*Under Social Impact*

*"People affected by the project are likely to be limited to the occupants of the facility. Limited downstream impacts to local residents are predicted on the basis that the facility is well removed from the urban area of town. Noise and similar direct impacts are no predicted".*

*Ok, so you expand the mining camp on the outskirts of town because you are being considerate to the locals? It has nothing to do with the fact that the miners who stay have to eat, sleep and socialise at the camp therefore no money gets spent in the town.*

*"Notwithstanding, this anecdotal view that housing supply is under pressure is therefore alleviated by providing an alternate and specific form of accommodation that responds to the demands and needs of this particular development sector".*

*Last I checked on Domain, Cobar currently has 119 homes for sale. Sorry, but I am at a loss to understand the housing supply we have here.*

*This "magical" application is trying to sell the idea that it is a good idea to expand the camp. An additional 80 people to live at the camp, meaning a 1.7% growth in the local population. Fun fact, they don't actually live here. They stay for their shift and then they go back to where they come from. The town doesn't grow.*

*I could continue, but at the moment this application makes me sick. The people who have complied it have no connection to the town, to the people, to our community. Expanding the camp does not increase the town's population, the camp does not attract people to bring their families to town. Their kids aren't going to school here.*

*Dear Mining Camp Owners,*

*Buy houses in town.*

*Let them socialise in town with the locals. Have an agreement with the local businesses to supply their meals. Have an arrangement in place for these houses to be maintained. Attract families, as your employees are more likely to stay if they are with their families.*

*Just a thought.*

*In the meantime, let's start a petition.*

*If you would like to read the application here's the link*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



f t in @

1,673 views 2 comments

1 ❤️

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*Fantastic, amazing, wonderful pieces will be written here shortly! D.r*

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rutho\_bato


5 days ago

*This is a fantastic piece of writing. I am not a resident of Cobar, but over the past 7 years have found a reconnection in my heart. I am an iron ringer from 1963. DIDO and FIFO work practices are killing country towns. Understandable for mines in the middle of nowhere, but not when a town*

*has full and complete infrastructure. where are the unions in the whole show. Once upon a time work practices said shorter working hours. Not now, it's work to excess for a period and get paid a heap more in overtime etc and this apparently works better for the companies. I don't get it. If I was in the industry I would rather try to see my kids every day. Cobar will survive because of its people (I hope) - but we are killing country towns*

2 



5 days ago 

*Thank you for commenting. It is sad. I don't want to see Cobar and so many other towns like Cobar to continue to decrease. Something needs to be done*



Be happy





3

[Redacted]

3

**Karen Warren**



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**From:** mail CSC  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 August 2019 1:38 PM  
**To:** Karen Warren  
**Cc:** Garry Ryman; Stephen Poulter; Peter Vlatko  
**Subject:** FW: General Manager, DA No. 2019/LD-00023



**Christine Baker**

Records & Information Supervisor, Corporate and Community Services  
Cobar Shire Council | 36 Linsley Street (PO Box 223) | Cobar NSW 2835  
P: (02) 6836 5888 | F: (02) 6836 3964 |

E: [christine.baker@cobar.nsw.gov.au](mailto:christine.baker@cobar.nsw.gov.au) W: [www.cobar.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cobar.nsw.gov.au)  

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**From:** [Redacted]

**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 August 2019 1:06 PM

**To:** mail CSC

**Subject:** General Manager, DA No. 2019/LD-00023

Attention General Manager

DA No. 2019/LD-00023 EXPANSION OF COBAR MINE WORKERS VILLAGE

Dear Peter,

I am against the proposed expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers Village.

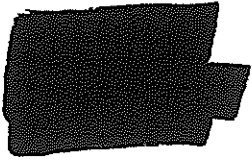
For the following reasons

1. There should never have been a camp approved in the first place with the township of Cobar so close.
2. This has a negative effect on the town in so many ways.
3. Workers come in and do their panel and leave.
4. They do not contribute in anyway except to work. volunteer, committees, play sports.
5. They do not have their families with them therefore the school numbers are dropping.
6. There are houses for rent
7. There are houses for sale - too many.
8. What does the owners of the Mining Camp contribute to the town of Cobar?
9. It impacts extra on the facilities that Cobar Shire provide - water, sewerage and rubbish.
10. Apart from the miners that fill positions - it creates very few jobs for those who do live in Cobar.
11. They purchase everything that is required to run the camp from outside of Cobar - food, cleaning, furniture and linen etc.
12. At anytime they can sell off the mining camp and it will be moved to a new location - leaving Cobar with WHAT?

I ask that when this is expansion is discussed and considered that the vote be in favour of Cobar and its residence. As a rate payer - who due to current circumstances is not living in Cobar I feel this is just one more huge nail in the Cobar coffin.

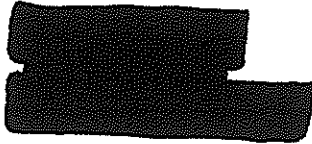
VOTE NO TO THE MINING CAMP EXPANSION

Yours sincerely



4

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019



Peter Vlatko  
General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
PO Box 223  
Cobar NSW 2835

Dear Mr Vlatko,

**Development Application 2019/LD-00023 Rovest Holdings Pty Ltd**

As a ratepayer and business person of Cobar and I've been a resident for over 30 years I wish to raise my concerns and objections with the expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers Village at Lot 991 Barrier Highway, Cobar.

While the following aims and objectives have possibly been addressed:

- (a) to promote the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources,*
- (b) to facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment,*
- (c) to promote the orderly and economic use and development of land,*
- (d) to promote the delivery and maintenance of affordable housing,*
- (e) to protect the environment, including the conservation of threatened and other species of native animals and plants, ecological communities and their habitats,*
- (f) to promote the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal cultural heritage),*
- (g) to promote good design and amenity of the built environment,*

*(h) to promote the proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health*

*and safety of their occupants,*

*(i) to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning and assessment between the*

*different levels of government in the State,*

*(j) to provide increased opportunity for community participation in environmental planning and assessment.*

My concerns for our town are set out below and I hope these factors will be considered in this development application:

1. The land zoning is RU1 - primary production

Does this legally allow for a paddock full of "dongers" to accommodate a commune of mine workers and contractors?

2. Only one lot of rates are being paid, where as if this were subdivided to be a housing Estate like other areas of Cobar, more rates would be paid allowing for more money (approximately \$35,000 per annum calculating on 20 dongers being 20 houses) to Cobar Shire Council to benefit the Cobar community in facilities and infrastructure. Money that could possibly even be put towards more water storage.

3. On a local survey which I walked the streets and conducted: Currently over 100 houses up for sale in Cobar at present. Why can't Rovest Holdings Pty Ltd buy some of these to put mine workers and contractors in if they MUST have the "accommodation market" in town.

A lot of empty houses in town that both Endeavor and Peak Gold Mines own. Why can't workers be put in these to help fill our dying town.

One real estate business in town has approximately 17 rental properties empty they cannot fill. This is affected by the Camp putting more and more people out there.

Hot bedding in this camp is not being acknowledged. The camp cleaners have told me this is quite often the case. For example day and night shift workers hot bed the one room which gives double amount of people to be accommodated out at the camp.

The Great Western Hotel cannot fill rooms at present as the camp has taken patrons away from their accommodation.

The Cobar Town & Country Motor Inn is down by 50% filling their rooms this past financial year. Their second dwelling across the road (previously known as the Barrier Motel) used to be filled with mine contracting companies. Most of these have moved out to the camp.

4. In the past Development Applications have been put to council for new sub-divisions and housing estates in Cobar and has improved the town. A mining camp does not improve the town or bring people to live in the town.

5. Those at camp are not spending very much money in town. Even the camp cooks buy groceries in Sydney and Griffith.
6. The social impact has a snow ball effect. With workers drive in and drive out also fly in and fly out retailers are suffering (and shops closing), school numbers have dropped and sporting teams are struggling. Pubs and clubs are closing early as people aren't patronising these facilities.
7. When you lose the support of "a localised community" the town starts to lose visiting doctors, medical specialists, professionals like accountants, financial advisors and Counsellors. Already banking hours have reduced in town because the numbers are not coming through the doors.

My family, including myself in the past and also present have had rental properties that have accommodated mining families and contracting companies. This has been hard work, however an additional income for us that has been spent in Cobar. Taking this away will take away some of our livelihood which means less spending in Cobar. I am asking you not to do this to us and others in the town who work hard to survive.

So many businesses and facilities have been lost as our town deteriorates and dies. Additional units out at the mining camp will not help this problem. It must be addressed with sincere consideration to our community's welfare and sustainability.

Sincerely yours,

A large, solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the letter.

5.

General Manager,

Cobar Council

Re: Expand Cobar Mine Workers Village, DA 2019/LD-00023.

I am writing to oppose the expansion of the Cobar Miners Village and will outline the reasons why below.

I am the Lessee of 2 Motels in Cobar and employ both Backpackers and locals. We are a rate payer in the Cobar Council Area.

My main objection is that the Cobar Miners Village is accommodation for Miners that is in DIRECT competition with Motels and other accommodation suppliers such as hotels, boarding houses, caravan park and houses for rent in Cobar.

All accommodation suppliers are under stress at the moment as occupancy rates are low and have been for a number of years. An expansion of more accommodation in direct competition with us will make our situation worse, possibly causing our business to fold.

Rovest Holdings Pty Ltd has a connection to Pybar, as that is the company that has first option on accommodation at the Mine Village. When they are not fully utilising the village, they then offer to other mining companies.

I know above to be true, as those other companies come and ask us to give them a quote. Most of the time we can not compete, as they have a lower cost base.

In relation to the "Statement of Environmental Effects" in Support of the DA, I wish to challenge some of the points raised.

4.2.1.2 – The land is zoned Primary production.

This is clearly not being used for primary production. Granted it was passed by Council in 2012 because mining accommodation was "not expressly prohibited, it was permitted as an innominate use". This may need to be looked at again by Council.

5.17 – Social Impact.

The current Mining Village is a Fly In Fly Out situation, where the workers do not integrate much with the town. Nearly all their resources are sourced out of town including food, other goods, labour for cleaning, cooking and transport as well as Buses and Planes. Outsourcing all of goods and services does not help with social impact of the town. If their was to be an expansion to the Mine Village, this would be more of the same.

The following point from pg 18 is pertinent.

"community, including its composition, cohesion, character, how it functions and sense of place".

The Mine Village does not add anything to "Sense of Place". In fact I would argue that it actively takes away from this sense of Community, as it is separate from the community. It is an "Us and Them" mentality.

"personal and property rights, including whether their economic livelihoods are affected, and whether they experience personal disadvantage or have their civil liberties affected".

Certainly, The Hotels, Motels, Caravan Park and house renters are currently disadvantaged by the current Mine Village and will be more disadvantaged, if expansion was allowed.

The above 2 points show that the expansion of the Mine Village will take even more away from the social fabric of Cobar than it is now.

TABLE 3 pg 19.

I dispute the following –

"anecdotal view that housing supply is under pressure is therefore alleviated by providing an alternate and specific form of accommodation that responds to the demands and needs of this particular development sector".

Both Housing supply as Rental Houses and Hotel and Motel Rooms are not under pressure. There are plenty of all types of accommodation available.

Pg 21.

I dispute the following –

"It is relevant to note that the existing and expanded facility is designed to provide accommodation for workers from a range of mining sites within the Cobar district and does not serve one particular mine or mine company. The accommodation arrangements at the village are sought by the mining companies associated with the various mine sites and represent their ongoing workforce needs".

The Mine Village Company is a related Company to Pybar. Pybar generally has first option on Mine village accommodation. I know this, as have been dealing with other mining companies who want quotes from us to compare to Mining Village. Pybar used to be one of our largest customers before they built the Mine village in 2012.

Table 5.5

Option 1, the do nothing option has the below negative points.

- Workers already coming to region would need to be accommodated elsewhere, putting pressure on housing availability and affordability
- Mine companies would need to source other accommodation options, placing increased pressure on traditional forms of tourist and visitor accommodation.

Cobar needs these Mine workers in the town, not in the Mining Camp. Cobar's accommodation businesses and house rentals are currently at low percentages. So, I again disagree with points being made above.

Option 3, of increasing the size of Mine village Advantages points below, I also disagree with.

- Increased flow on benefits to local shops and services through greater patronage
- Increased flow on benefits to local suppliers through larger orders
- Economic benefits during construction through employment of local trades
- Economic benefits during construction through purchase of local construction supplies

The Mine Village extension will have very little flow on for local businesses and suppliers. The Miners arrive and work. Most do not have personal transport and can not access the town.

Most food and supplies come from outside of town, so their will be little or no increase in sales for local economy.

Nearly all tradesmen and materials will come from outside of Cobar. So, little or no benefit to local economy here either.

Pg. 23

I also disagree with the below quotes-

"Current demand at the facility is high, due to a thriving mining industry, driving the need for additional accommodation."

Current demand in Cobar is not high. Maybe Pybar need accommodation for their own purposes only.

"In the absence of this facility, mining companies would be forced to use other forms of accommodation, be it dwellings, forms of tourist and visitor accommodation or other options, which would reduce the availability of these forms of accommodation to the remainder of the public, thereby putting increased pressure on the community".

The other forms of accommodation would welcome the extra occupancy as they are struggling currently.

Pg 24.

I disagree with following statement.

"As noted in the table, sectors where pressure would be expected in the absence of the development of the expanded mine workers village are centred around other forms of accommodation. Without expansion of the mine camp, these other sectors are likely to expect increased pressure, making it more difficult for tourists and local residents alike to



find accommodation when needed. By increasing the supply of accommodation, the town can expect to benefit”.

If the Mine Village expanded, the town would NOT benefit. It would suffer.

I must also disagree with some of the points in the conclusion-

“Providing accommodation in the mining workers village reduces the pressure on traditional forms of housing and on forms of tourist and visitor accommodation, both of which would be impacted in the event the expansion did not proceed. The proposal in its own right is unlikely to lead to any change to the demographic structure of the community”.

The expansion will take away occupancy from the existing Accommodation providers, who are already struggling with decreased occupancy.

“The development is therefore unlikely to result in some individuals or communities being significantly disadvantaged”.

All Accommodation providers, including people with houses for rent will be disadvantaged.

“As discussed above, impacts to local community resources would be minor and generally positive, through increased patronage at local stores and businesses, and positive flow on effects as a result of this. Improved trade leads to improved local employment opportunities and an improved local economy. Any impacts in this regard are therefore anticipated to be positive”.

This expansion will not lead to any improvement to local trade. In fact the opposite will be true. More Miners at Mine camp mean less in the town, where they might spend money on rent, motels, food, coffee etc. The money spent in town stays in the town. If expansion of mine Village were to happen, that money would be spent outside of Cobar.

For all of the above reasons I object to the expansion of the Cobar Mine Village.

Regards,

A large, solid black rectangular redaction covers the signature and any text that might have followed it.

6.

[REDACTED]  
Cobar, 2835

23/08/19

To who it concerns,

I would like to express my concerns about the proposed expansion of Cobar Mine Workers Village, DA 2019/LD-00023. I feel the negative social and economic impact this development would have on the Cobar community is significant and are grounds for declining the approval.

There is no need to build an extension to house more mine workers. The original camp was approved and built at a time when there were very few viable alternatives to house contract workers. There were very few houses available for sale or rent and the motel and lodge accommodation was heavily booked. Much has changed in Cobar since then, and with the introduction of the 7/7 roster many families have left town. There are now dozens of houses vacant- available for rent or sale. There is no need to provide new accommodation, particularly accommodation which promotes a DIDI/FIFO workforce instead of encouraging workers to move to town, or at the least to rent or buy houses in the local community.

Furthermore, the provision of services such as food, laundry and gym at the camp results in a reduced income for the local businesses that would otherwise benefit from having 120 more people access their services. The food provided to the miners is sourced outside of Cobar, with the exception of bread. This is a significant loss of revenue to the local economy.

The workers choosing to come to Cobar for work are being offered the accommodation as part of the job application. There is no incentive to investigate a 'live local' option. If the companies employing these workers were to incentivise the option of accommodation within the town there would be a significant positive impact on the local community and also on the mental health of those DIDO/FIFO workers themselves.

Given that the camp services DIDO/FIFO employees of a number of companies, and companies themselves report a preference to employ local residents as it is financially beneficial for the employer, surely it would be worthwhile for those companies to investigate opportunities to incentivise the residential option rather than add to the profits of a company that is not bringing any business to or supporting the local community.

This DA ignores the current social climate in Cobar and is essentially tone deaf- the community is shrinking and this proposal expedites that process. To suggest there is no negative economic or social impact on the local community is inaccurate, ill-advised and ignorant of the context of what makes a community. This miners camp serves only the financial greed of it's owners, and it's construction brings nothing positive to the community. The proposal should therefore be declined.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7

[Redacted]

Cobar, 2835

23/08/19

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Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted address]

8.

[REDACTED]

Cobar, 2835

23/08/19

To who it concerns,

I would like to express my concerns about the proposed expansion of Cobar Mine Workers Village, DA 2019/LD-00023. I feel the negative social and economic impact this development would have on the Cobar community is significant and are grounds for declining the approval.

There is no need to build an extension to house more mine workers. The original camp was approved and built at a time when there were very few viable alternatives to house contract workers. There were very few houses available for sale or rent and the motel and lodge accommodation was heavily booked. Much has changed in Cobar since then, and with the introduction of the 7/7 roster many families have left town. There are now dozens of houses vacant-available for rent or sale. There is no need to provide new accommodation, particularly accommodation which promotes a DIDI/FIFO workforce instead of encouraging workers to move to town, or at the least to rent or buy houses in the local community.

Furthermore, the provision of services such as food, laundry and gym at the camp results in a reduced income for the local businesses that would otherwise benefit from having 120 more people access their services. The food provided to the miners is sourced outside of Cobar, with the exception of bread. This is a significant loss of revenue to the local economy.

The workers choosing to come to Cobar for work are being offered the accommodation as part of the job application. There is no incentive to investigate a 'live local' option. If the companies employing these workers were to incentivise the option of accommodation within the town there would be a significant positive impact on the local community and also on the mental health of those DIDO/FIFO workers themselves.

Given that the camp services DIDO/FIFO employees of a number of companies, and companies themselves report a preference to employ local residents as it is financially beneficial for the employer, surely it would be worthwhile for those companies to investigate opportunities to incentivise the residential option rather than add to the profits of a company that is not bringing any business to or supporting the local community.

This DA ignores the current social climate in Cobar and is essentially tone deaf- the community is shrinking and this proposal expedites that process. To suggest there is no negative economic or social impact on the local community is inaccurate, ill-advised and ignorant of the context of what makes a community. This miners camp serves only the financial greed of it's owners, and it's construction brings nothing positive to the community. The proposal should therefore be declined.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

9  
27 August 2019

Mr Peter Vlatko  
General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council

Via email: [mail@cobar.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@cobar.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Vlatko,

**RE: DA No. 2019/LD-00023**

The Australian Workers' Union (AWU) is deeply concerned by the development application by PYBAR Mining Services for the expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers Village at Lot 991 Barrier Highway, Cobar. This development will facilitate a greater reliance on Fly-In/Fly-Out (FIFO) or Drive-In/Drive-Out (DIDO) work, at the expense of employing workers who live locally.

The AWU strongly believes this development would have negative impacts on the Cobar and its negative impacts on workers.

### **NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON COBAR**

We believe this expansion will have a negative impact on the town of Cobar. Residents of the camp are supplied with consumable goods within the camp, and access to the town of Cobar is limited due to its location and workers' lack of access to vehicles.

The impacts of FIFO work on regional communities are extensively documented in the House Standing Committee on Regional Australia report titled *Cancer of the bush or salvation for our cities? Fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforce practices in Regional Australia*. Moreover, the report found that the future of regional communities such as Cobar were at risk by the expansion of the FIFO/DIDO work model.

The foreword to this report, by Tony Windsor MP, stated that:

*There are simple and practical measures that can be put in place to provide more incentive for FIFO/DIDO workers to become residential workers but foremost, governments at all levels must acknowledge that, for some communities – particularly those traditional resource communities, FIFO/DIDO is a cancer.*

*This report ... recognises that there are some circumstances where FIFO/DIDO is warranted – for construction and very remote operations. But for operational positions located near existing regional communities, every effort should be made to make FIFO/DIDO the exception rather than the rule.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia *Cancer of the bush or salvation for our cities? Fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforce practices in Regional Australia*, 2013, pviii. See

For this reason, Council should make every effort to support residential employment that enables people to live, work and play locally, and to contribute to the Cobar community.

### **NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON WORKERS**

The continued shift to Fly-In/Fly-Out or Drive-In/Drive-Out employment at the Aurelia mine will have a negative impact on the wellbeing of mining workers. It is well established that this form of work is isolating, stressful and had adverse consequences on workers' mental health.

The Centre for Transformative Work Design's report titled Impact of FIFO work arrangements on the mental health and wellbeing of FIFO workers, which was prepared for the WA Mental Health Commission in 2018, was unequivocal in its assessment of the link between work and poor mental health outcomes. According to the report:

*The research shows that, even when taking account of associated risk factors such as age and education, there is a greater risk of mental ill health amongst those workers operating under FIFO work arrangements. Indeed, one third of the 3000 FIFO workers surveyed experience high or very high levels of psychological distress, as measured on an extensively validated scale ...*

*Crucially, poorer mental health and riskier alcohol and other drug use are risk factors for suicide, and both of these risk factors are present in the FIFO sample. In addition, FIFO workers have a demographic profile (gender, age, education, job role) in which suicide likelihood is greater, while also reporting feelings of loneliness, stigma, bullying and perceived lack of autonomy. Altogether, this pattern of findings suggests that FIFO workers are likely to be at greater risk of suicide.<sup>2</sup>*

For this reason, an increased reliance on FIFO/DIDO workers at the Aurelia mine will lead to increased incidence of mental health problems among mine workers in Cobar. In turn, this is likely to lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour and social dislocation among the mining workforce.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The AWU has already met representatives of the council on four separate occasions between 16 October 2018 and 27 February 2019, to discuss the transfer of mining operations at Aurelia Metals to the contractor PYBAR Mining, and the impact this could have on the local community, and health and wellbeing of the miners. During these meetings we discussed the possibility of the mines expanding and the possibility of more FIFO/DIDO employees. Furthermore, the AWU suggested that all mining companies including PYBAR Mining, should provide council with information on how many employees are employed locally, how many workers are employed on FIFO/DIDO arrangements, and what incentives they offer to employees to relocate to Cobar.

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[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/House\\_of\\_Representatives\\_Committees?url=ra/fifodido/report.htm](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=ra/fifodido/report.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Transformative Work Design, *Impact of FIFO work arrangements on the mental health and wellbeing of FIFO workers*, September 2018, p1. See <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/2547/impact-of-fifo-work-arrangement-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-of-fifo-workers-full-report.pdf>

From these meetings, the AWU understood that councillors shared our concerns about the impact of an increase in FIFO/DIDO operations. We believed that the council also supported the notion of employing 'local first', and that when FIFO/DIDO employees are required, they should be housed in town at premises that are clean and well maintained.

In light of the above, the AWU seeks:

- A further meeting with all elected members of the Cobar Shire Council, along with the General Manager, in order to discuss the proposed development, its impact on the community, and broader issues around the future of FIFO/DIDO employment in the Cobar region; and
- A commitment from council to conduct a report into the use of FIFO/DIDO employees and the impact it has on the community; giving special consideration to the mental health of employees and their families.

Please contact Nicole Alexander via [nicole.alexander@nat.awu.net.au](mailto:nicole.alexander@nat.awu.net.au) from my office to arrange a mutually suitable time.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature and name of the sender. The redaction is composed of two main horizontal bars, with a smaller one above them, all obscuring the text underneath.

10.

Dear General Manager,

I write this letter on behalf of myself, family, friends, business, community & colleagues


In regards to the notice of proposed development (12769 Barrier Highway, Cobar) DA No.2019/LD-00023.

As a business owner employing eight full time locally based staff members directly and many other local trades and Services indirectly, also a rate payer in this community I see no advantage to the Cobar community by allowing the proposed development to be made larger than it already is, the reasoning behind my concerns are as follows.

- The distance from the camp is not greater than 2.5km from the town centre
- The current camp is set up the same as a remote site
- Meals and crib packs are provided by camp, this avoids needing to use community businesses and services
- Majority of staff working on the camp are rostered from out of the community
- All tenants of this camp are not involved or live in the community
- The tenants work rosters equal to or greater than one week on one weeks off
- The earnings of the tenants are mostly spent else wear
- All of the tenants to my knowledge work for contracting companies that are not based Locally
- The family's of these tenants can live any where in the world and benefit from our community with out spending one cent to allow it to grow to its full potential
- The catering company that manages this camp is Sydney based and has been for more than six years
- The food that this company uses is mostly sourced from a metropolitan area (Sydney)
- There are many vacant houses owned by locals and investors that are empty
- To my knowledge this camp has not contributed to the community and has slipped under the radar

Being a local born and bred, local Builder and working on current State funded projects in Cobar this development truly makes no sense to what the state is trying to provide, encouraging growth in remote communities like Cobar.

The State is providing much needed support to infrastructure upgrades and tourism that are required for remote communities like Cobar to survive in the future under the current environment.





My concerns are amplified when I think of the next generation of the town, being my own children as an example, I use local Day care centres, Schools, Sporting clubs, Facility's like the Youth Centre/Pool that are Council owned and require community support to be operational for the locals hopefully for many years to come.

The Cobar community provides above average standard of living for a regional Town, keeps as we know local people employed and creates jobs = Growth is that not what we are trying to achieve or is every effort of the Community and statements made to the public by Local, State and Federal Government propaganda.

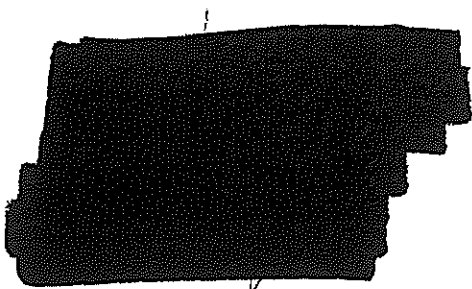
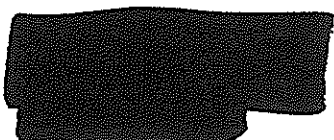
I was involved in the construction from start to finish of the abattoir as a apprentice with a local building company that this camp currently occupies, the original development was designed to create growth in the community through the harvesting of its local resources and has become the complete opposite.

The type of development on this site currently is a serious issue nationwide.

I condemn the fact that it already exists for whatever reason and strongly suggest it be scaled down slowly or shut down slowly, not scaled up.

It is honestly one of the worst examples of alienating that this community has ever seen, the mineral rich soils in this baron land scape should be contained to provide for the future of the people that grim the hard times to enjoy the good times.

Yours Sincerely

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

28th August 2019.

General Manager

Boban - Shire Council

Re. DA Number: 2019/2D 00023

Expansion of EBR. Mine Workers Village -  
Rowest Holdings Pty Ltd.

We Request.

1. No odour to come from development
2. No excess dust pollution
3. No excess noise.
4. No Expansion of EBR Mine Workers Village.

Boban's vision is for an attractive healthy environment in which to live.

Boban's values are to conserve, protect the natural beauty of this area, keeping with the environment & residential lifestyle.

This is the life style in which we wish to live.

Please table this letter at your next meeting

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Attention. Mayor Brady, councillors.

I personally object to an increase of FIFO workers in the mines in this town.

They do not support this town which is slowly dying. Cobar need families to

be housed and settle here.

Living in close proximity to the mining camp. Are all men policed checked before

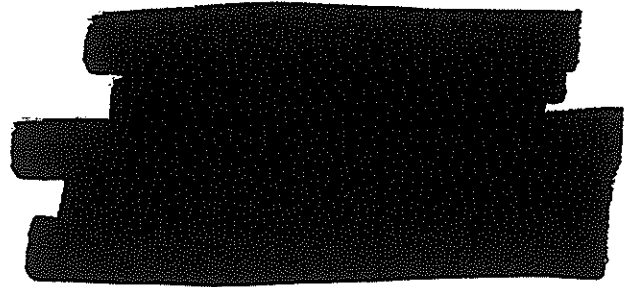
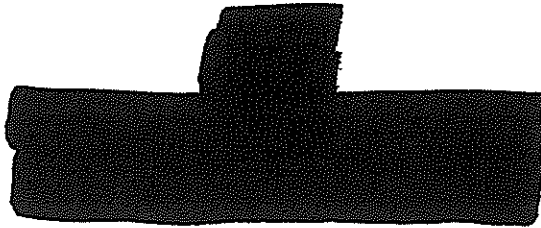
arriving as i have grandchildren playing around on our property.

Hoping you take into consideration of the majority of townfolk who are against  
this increase of FIFO personal.

Regards

[REDACTED]

13.



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Our Ref: CIS:LN  
Your Ref: DA 2019/LD-00023

2 September 2019

General Manager  
Cobar Council  
PO Box 223  
COBAR NSW 2835  
Via Email: mail@cobar.nsw.gov.au

**ORIGINAL SENT VIA REGISTERED POST**

Dear Sir or Madam:

**PROPOSED EXPANSION OF MINING CAMP – COBAR: DA 2019/LD-00023**  
**COBAR MOTEL INVESTMENTS PTY LTD – COBAR MOTOR INN (Lot 111 on DP1123352)**  
**CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN INVESTMENTS PTY LTD - TOWN & COUNTRY MOTOR INN (Lot 331 on DP1087968)**

Our office acts for the two property owners who respectively own the Town and Country Motor Inn and the Cobar Motor Inn.

The respective property owners have held both of these properties for more than a decade.

We would like to submit the following reasons as to why your Council should not permit the mining camp expansion:

1. For the year ended 30 June 2019, rates paid by the respective property owners were as follows:
  - a. Cobar Motor Inn: \$14,439.49  
(general rates: \$8,435.00 plus sewage rates: \$6,004.49)
  - b. Town & Country Motor Inn: \$10,923.32  
(general rates: \$8,910.00 plus sewage rates: \$2,013.32)

With respect, we would suggest that the land on which the mining camp has been constructed does not pay a fraction of the above annual rate commitment.

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*Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation*

2. The owners have presently allowed a significant discount to the lessee on both of the properties because the occupancy of the motels is so low.
3. Annual occupancy is well below 60%.
4. Until a motel has occupancy of around 50% on an annual basis, it struggles to break even, let alone the prospect to return a profit for its owners and operators.
5. Statistical information provided above would indicate substantial ratepayers in your community are already under pressure to remain profitable.
6. The properties are capable of expansion to include further accommodation, if the investment was warranted in the longer term.
7. An increase in the occupancy of these properties would allow owners to reinvest and refurbish the properties to a level IV standard and also to provide excellence in town accommodation for the mining community.
8. Offers have been made to provide a bus service to transport miners from the town accommodation to the mining site and return. If a long-term contract was available to the motel operators, the property owners would fund the purchase of an appropriate vehicle.
9. The current operator of the motel acquires all of his goods and services in the local community, often waiting long periods of time for tradespeople to service air conditioning units, kitchen equipment et cetera. If your Council is serious about retaining the appropriate tradespeople in Cobar to service both commercial and residential properties, we are not sure this endeavour will be served by external contractors who will be hired by the mining camp operators.
10. In our past experience as property owners in "mining towns" such as Chinchilla in Queensland, restrictions on the mining camp operators to only provide accommodation for their own employees will not be successful.
11. In the case of Chinchilla, accommodation owners in the township were forced to take their issues to the land court in Queensland in order to have a directive around who the mining camp could provide accommodation for.
12. This exercise was costly to all parties and while ultimately achieving the desired restrictive outcome, should be avoided as a long-term strategy.

As owners of the above properties, we would be very comfortable to meet with local Council in person setting out our plans for the two properties which are owned and which form a vital part of providing short-term accommodation and work opportunities in Cobar.

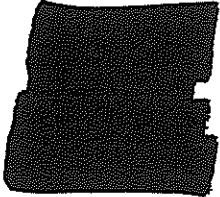
With respect, we believe your Council will be putting the future of these properties in jeopardy, should you agree to extend the mining camp.

Finally, we would comment that given the acute shortage of water in Cobar and the press releases regarding mining life in the area, it would seem totally inappropriate to be considering the provision of more long-term accommodation which is not needed now and could be avoided in the future.

September 2, 2019

Perhaps a constructive approach would be for ourselves to meet with the mining representatives, understand their reasons for wanting more accommodation and undertaking to provide that accommodation to the benefit of all and the disadvantage of no one.

Yours faithfully

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Mr Vlatko

I first moved to Cobar in 1960. This town was thriving and had a variety of businesses in the main street. The mine then employed families who lived in the town, lived in mine homes and worked 5 days on and 2 days off.

As the mines have changed their working hours to 7 on and 7 off we have seen a decline in this lovely town.

We need families to come and live here and spend money in the town. Not stay for 7 days then leave for 7 and spend their money elsewhere.

The town and businesses are struggling. We do not need to expand the Cobar Mine Workers Village.

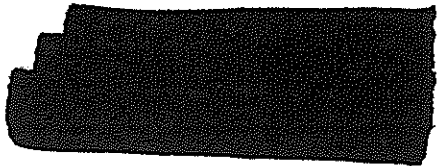
As rate payers, my husband and I are dead against any expansion.

As rate payers we would like this noted.

More thought has to go into helping our town and we don't think this is going to help in anyway at all.

We strongly urge you not to go ahead with the expansion.

Regards

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15.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

The General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
PO Box 223  
Cobar NSW 2835

Dear Mr. Vlatko,

I write with regard to DA No. 2019/LD-00023, expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers' Village, specifically Section 5.17 – Social Impact.

As a resident of Cobar, I lodge objection to the DA on the grounds of negative social impact. The current DA does not address the negative social impact of:

- Declining school enrolments attributable to the increased availability of non-residential accommodation. The Mine Worker's Village commenced operation in September 2012. In 2013 the Cobar High School enrolment was 267 and Cobar Public School enrolment 314. In 2019 these enrolments are 230 and 227 respectively. As the schools lose enrolments so to do they lose staffing entitlements, resulting in the loss of wages and the subsequently reduced expenditure through local businesses.
- Reduced junior sports options attributable to the increased availability of non-residential accommodation. In 2013 junior Rugby, Soccer, AFL, League and Cricket were available options for the youth of Cobar. In 2019 only League remains.

Additionally, there is disingenuous representation of the positive impact on population growth and the local real estate market attributable to the expansion.

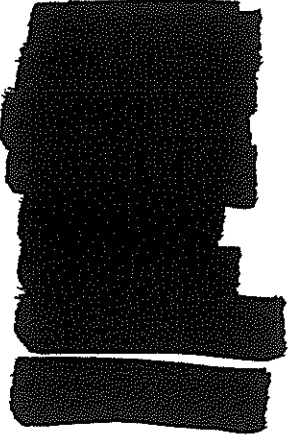
Page 21, paragraph 4. The DA states that the expansion of the Mine Worker's Village will result in a capacity increase of an additional 80 people, representing a population growth of 1.7% which would reverse the town's population decline since 2011. Objection to this is raised as the DA incorrectly equates the intermittent occupation of the village by non-residents as being the same as population figures based on residential occupancy. This inaccuracy is restated in Table 5.5, section 3.

The DA, Section 5.17.2, point 1, states that the expansion of the village "reduces the pressure on traditional forms of housing...which would be impacted in the event the expansion did not proceed." Objection to this is raised as there is a failure to clarify what pressure exists and to what market segments of "traditional forms of housing" it applies to. Local real estate agents confirm 115 pieces of stock currently for sale in Cobar, with an average days to sale of 742 days, both figures far higher than comparably sized towns. The existing observable impact on the local housing market attributable to the increased availability of non-residential accommodation from 2013 onwards is reduced sales.

[Redacted]

Whilst it is acknowledged that the owners of the Mine Worker's Village are not involved with the engagement of mine workers, it is clear that their commercial activity is responsible for unreasonable and negative social impacts to the Cobar community. Objection to the expansion is raised in response to these.

Yours truly

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16  
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Cobar NSW 2835

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28 August 2019  


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Cobar Shire Council  
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Cobar NSW 2835

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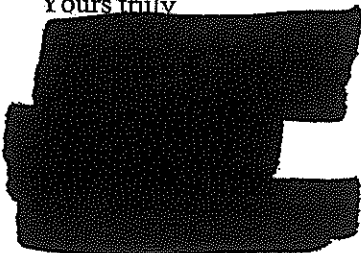
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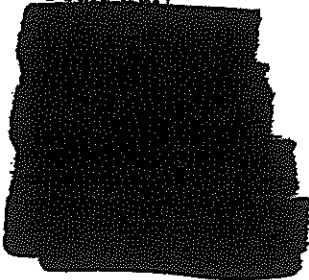
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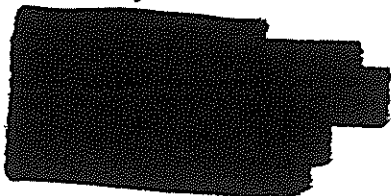
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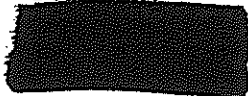
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Additionally, there is disingenuous representation of the positive impact on population growth and the local real estate market attributable to the expansion.

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Whilst it is acknowledged that the owners of the Mine Worker's Village are not involved with the engagement of mine workers, it is clear that their commercial activity is responsible for unreasonable and negative social impacts to the Cobar community. Objection to the expansion is raised in response to these.

Yours truly

  
 Resident of Cobar  
 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019



The General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
PO Box 223  
Cobar NSW 2835

Dear Mr. Vlatko,

I write with regard to DA No. 2019/LD-00023, expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers' Village, specifically Section 5.17 – Social Impact.

As a resident of Cobar, I lodge objection to the DA on the grounds of negative social impact. The current DA does not address the negative social impact of:

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A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area, obscuring the name and any handwritten notes.

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Yours truly



39.  
Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019

DA No. 2019/LD-00023

In regard to the proposed expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers Village we feel that an expansion to the current village set up is not required now or in the future.

We cannot find one positive or good reason to expand the current mine workers village and in fact feel that it should be reduced or shut down altogether!

This expansion would directly affect our business as we supply accommodation.

We have noticed over the last 12 months business has slowed down and that this proposal would make that even worse.

On the DA itself, water is a critical issue at the moment as we are in the worst drought on record and are running out of water. That should be enough reason on its own to stop the proposal until Burrendong dam fills up.

Also they have used the 2016 census which has Cobar's population at 4700 which is 3 1/2yr old data and you the Cobar Shire have publicised recently that Cobar's population has reduced to 4100 at present and we all know that that is still falling. We should at least wait until the next census to get the true picture of where Cobar is really at!

These decisions should be made not on short term but on the long term good of all businesses and residents of Cobar. We need to make this kind of accommodation harder to be established not easier as once its there its there for good and won't give a damn if Cobar is gone!

We realise its part of the mining industry but it should be discouraged for the good of the town not encouraged.

At the end of the day if the DA application is rejected the mines will still go on as normal nothing will change for them they will still make a profit, it will not affect production and they will still be able to accommodate their employees in Cobar.

The same cannot be said about Cobar it would be the final nail in the coffin the undeniable death of a town that could have been saved!

[REDACTED]

40.

Refer Application 2019/LD-00023

Lot 991—DP1029946

Proposed expansion of Cobar Mine Workers Village.

I have multiple concerns about this development application which are list below.

These concerns are all from the Statement of Environmental Effects support document...

Page 3: List that the current waste water treatment can treat up to 16,000 litres per day with proposed increase to 20,000 litres per day. This same document lists on Page 13 total waste water is 24,118 litres per day. ( 24,118 X 365 days= **88,030,070 Litres**)

This is **88 Megalitres** per year that Cobar Shire Council wastewater treatment plant should be treating and re-purposing for town parks, grassed ovals and golf course.

This wastewater is a significant amount that should not be just placed into a rubble drain/absorption pit, especially as Cobar has to allow for future droughts and water entitlements.

I see no plans to provide bunding for containing the wastewater treatment area, for the proposed 24,118 litres per day or any reference to what level of treatment this waste water is going to be subject to. This site drains to the north under the Barrier Hwy to a residential property and to the south towards the new Cobar water treatment plant. The drainage of the site has not been addressed in this document.

Further to the lack of detail regarding level of treatment of the wastewater, one proposal is to irrigate away this water with no reference to NSW Health requirements for wastewater for irrigation purpose's. There is no reference to any Australian Standards, NSW Health or World Health Organisation Water Quality Guidelines in this material.

The current wastewater treatment system has no provision for treatment plant failure. The ability to hold or increase treatment capacity in the event of pump failure has not been addressed in the current system or the proposed system.

Page 17: Proposes a stand alone potable water storage tank of **250,000 kL** which is 250 Mega litres (250,000,000 Litres).

Cobar has two water storage tanks, 4.5 Megalitres at Fort Bourke hill and 7 Megalitres on the Louth Road. There is no provision for Chlorine dosing plant as per water standards for this tank. There is no provision for containment bunds for the potable water storage that in the event of failure it doe not encroach on the wastewater treatment area and capability.

This document has no provision for water hydrants for the purpose of fire extinguishment, I am sure that the new Multi Purpose Centre on Woodiwiss Ave & the Lillian Brady Village have standards to meet, how is this development exempt?

There is no reference to NSW Health: Non Health care Buildings where occupants sleep, Class 1b,2,3,4,& 9c

Page 11: Should the Cobar 50 km/hr signs be moved to the east of the camp access driveway to reduce heavy highway truck (roadtrain) interactions with camp traffic, as these heavy vehicles require longer braking distances especially at 100km/hr.

Page 12: 80 additional workers supposedly limited social impact, these workers will spend very limited amounts of money in Cobar. They definitely will not be paying rates, Cobar Shire Council is for the rate payers of Cobar and therefore has duty to encourage residential workers as a means of survival and expansion.

How did this original development be allowed to go ahead on land that is classified as rural? I fail to see how it is in any way related to a deemed rural operation, an abattoir could be deemed a rural related industry but accommodation is far from rural.

As a small business owner who depends on both residential customers and the mines for work I have to question the logic of reducing families in Cobar Shire and there for my business.

[REDACTED]

41.

COBAR 3-9-19

THE GENERAL MANAGER

COBAR SHIRE COUNCIL

COBAR N.S.W.

DEAR SIR,

SUBMISSION REGARDING PROPOSED  
DEVELOPMENT DA NO 2019/LD-0003 RELATING  
TO EXTENSION TO COBAR MINE WORKERS VILLAGE.

REGARDING THE PROPOSED EXTENSION TO  
THE COBAR MINE WORKERS VILLAGE, I AM STRONGLY  
OPPOSED TO THIS APPLICATION.

THERE ARE PROBABLY WELL OVER 100  
HOUSES IN COBAR UN-OCCUPIED AND THIS  
IS A SIGNIFICANT REASON WHY WE HAVE A  
UNTIDY, NEGLECTED LOOKING TOWN, JUST  
LEAVE THE MARCHALL ST. AREA SURVEY THE  
REMAINDER OF TOWN, YOU WILL FIND NEGLECT  
IN MANY AREAS - OVERGROWN FRONT YARDS  
AND NATURE STRIPS ETC. THE OVERALL PICTURE  
IS A SAD LOOKING NEGLECTED TOWN. WATER

RESTRICTIONS MAY BE TO BLAME TO A SMALL DEGREE BUT NOT SIGNIFICANT.

ENCOURAGING CAMPS SUCH AS THE ONE IN QUESTION IS A GREAT DEAL OF THE PROBLEM AND I WOULD LIKE TO SEE COUNCIL DIRECT THERE EFFORTS IN CANCELLING THE LICENCE THAT THE CAMP HAS NOW RATHER THAN EXTENDING FURTHER.

THIS CAMP DOES NOT DO ONE THING FOR COBAR, THEY SPEND ALL THERE MONEY OUT OF TOWN, AND ANY PRO<sup>EI</sup>JECTS ALSO GO ELSEWHERE. FOR EVERY JOB THIS CAMP MAKES LOCALLY WE LOSE TWO JOBS IN OUR CBD AND OTHER PLACES.

I HAVE HEARD THAT 'MUDGE' HAS A POLICY THAT IF YOU WORK IN 'MUDGE' YOU HAVE TO LIVE IN 'MUDGE' CITY COBAR IS NOT THE SAME

YOURS SINCERLY

[REDACTED]

42-45

[REDACTED]  
COBAR NSW 2835

[REDACTED]  
COBAR NSW 2835

[REDACTED]  
COBAR NSW 2835

[REDACTED]  
COBAR NSW 2835

20 August 2019

Mr Peter Vlatko  
General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
36 Linsley St  
COBAR NSW 2835

Dear Peter

**RE: DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION 2019/LD-00023**

Please accept this letter as our submission against the proposed development of the Expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers Village on Lot 991 Barrier Highway, Cobar.

We are Cobar residents that have been born and raised in Cobar, most of us having lived here for over 70 years. During this time we have witnessed the local mines endure many downturns due to various reasons but they have always managed to continue to operate and the long term jeopardy of our community has never been severely affected, all the while employing a local workforce.

However, during recent years Cobar has suffered dramatically both socially and economically and if we continue to allow the mining industry dictate their employment terms, we cannot see that Cobar will be able to replenish what has already been lost, leaving nothing but an ageing population, a broken community and a mining village surrounded by a ghost town.

We believe this is due to a variety of reasons but predominately the shift change/rosters and in more recent years the 7 on 7 off roster effectively allowing Cobar to become a transient community. A FIFO (fly in/fly out) and DIDO (drive in/drive out) workforce has raped our community of a growing population, which in turn has had far-reaching effects on our way of life including but not limited to:

- dwindling enrolment numbers in our schools,
- a substantial reduction in viable retail businesses,
- a downturn in the real estate market and residential building work, in particular dwellings,
- the decline in numbers of our local sporting and community organisations,
- our inability to attract and retain duly qualified tradespersons in and around building, commercial and industrial industries,
- our inability to attract and retain medical professionals, engineers, school teachers and the like,
- fewer government funding opportunities for our town,
- a large drop in patronage for our local establishments; therefore not being viable to provide entertainment/social gatherings etc, consequently not being able to retain the younger generation,
- and the hardship faced by so many businesses that once thrived and profited within our community.

The application submitted to Council states that the expansion of the Mine Workers Village will accommodate an extra 80 people and as we understand, there is currently adequate accommodation available in Cobar for either tenancy or sale that would lodge these miners, contractors and any other transient workers. Why can't these dwellings/units be utilised for accommodation? This would contribute to improve the economic downturn that Cobar is currently experiencing.

The Mine Workers Village currently accommodates 119 workers and if this application is approved it will accommodate a further 80, totalling 199 workers. Imagine if these workers, plus their families, lived in and

supported our community. The benefits and flow on effect this would bring to the Cobar community, both socially and economically would be endless but under this current proposal it is unlikely that these benefits would be re-invested in Cobar.

We are also concerned for the transient employees working in this industry. Their mental health and social wellbeing must be affected having being isolated from their respective communities or any community for that matter. Work fatigue; working long periods for many consecutive days and the obvious; working and living away from their families, their loved ones. The detrimental effect this must have on their lives and their families. This certainly does not promote a healthy family lifestyle.

Cobar's current planning instrument is the *Cobar Local Environmental Plan 2012*. One of the aims of this Plan is:

*To encourage a range of housing, employment, recreational and community facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents of Cobar.*

I struggle to see how this development meets the objectives of our Plan.

We appreciate that Cobar is a mining town and its livelihood and growth is strongly dependant on the industry but the cumulative impacts Cobar has faced and will continue to face, if this application is approved, is not only devastating but heartbreaking and we as a community have allowed this to happen. Queensland have implemented new legislation (*Strong and Sustainable Resources Communities Act 2017*) to control the negative impacts brought from FIFO and DIDO. This is written proof that it can be done. We just need to make a stand together, fight together to force change and the first beneficial step would be to refuse this development application and secondly, lobby to ban those rosters, specifically 7 on 7 off that permit a transient workforce and get back to a roster that helps support sustainability and longevity for the township of Cobar and one that will entice people to live locally.

I strongly urge Council to consider the negative impacts that this development will have on our community if approved and implore that you refuse this application.

Yours faithfully

[Redacted signature]

For and on behalf of

[Redacted name]

[Redacted signature]

For and on behalf of

[Redacted name]

[Redacted signature]

For and on behalf of

[Redacted name]

[Redacted signature]

For and on behalf of

[Redacted name]



46.



**Karen Warren**

---

**From:** mail CSC  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 September 2019 8:04 AM  
**To:** Karen Warren  
**Cc:** Garry Ryman; Stephen Poulter; Reid Jermyn  
**Subject:** FW: PYBAR MINING CAMP



**Sharon Moore**

Records Officer, Corporate and Community Services  
Cobar Shire Council | 36 Linsley Street (PO Box 223) | Cobar NSW 2835  
P: (02) 6836 5888 | F: (02) 6836 3964 |  
E: [mail@cobar.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@cobar.nsw.gov.au) W: [www.cobar.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cobar.nsw.gov.au)  

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This e-mail and any attachment to it are intended only to be read or used by the named addressee. It is confidential and may contain legally privileged information. No confidentiality or privilege is waived or lost by any mistaken transmission to you. Cobar Shire Council is not responsible for any unauthorised alterations to this e-mail or attachment to it. Views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender, and are not necessarily the views of the Cobar Shire Council. If you receive this e-mail in error, please immediately delete it from your system and notify the sender. You must not disclose, copy or use any part of this e-mail if you are not the intended recipient. Before printing, please consider the environment.

**From:** [REDACTED].com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 3 September 2019 9:03 PM  
**To:** mail CSC  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** PYBAR MINING CAMP

To the general manager of the Cobar shire council,

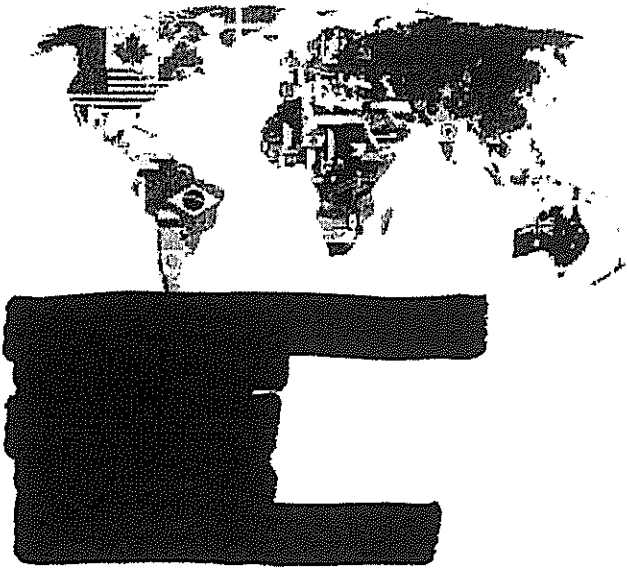
I Ward Arnold proprietor of the crossroads motel Cobar ,strongly

disagree with the development of extra rooms for the pybar mining camp for the following reasons.

- 1.we already have local people including myself that have put there life savings into this town and are catering for the workers, and are not running at 100% occupancy rate...
- 2.we also have locals born and bred here that have investment houses that the mine/pybar can buy or rent and help build our community back up, it's very sad to see the town in the condition that it is in now.
- 3.the development is of no, or very little financial benefit to our town and will create very little employment for our locals..
- 4.it will not encourage family's to come and live in our town
- 5.we have always catered for the mining in Cobar ,well before the mining camp was built.

I, myself have been in the mining game over 30 years, I have been to 10 different mine sites, and lived in 6 different mining camps ,when you live in a mining camp you contribute very little to the town, or the surrounding towns, after a 12hr shift 95% of the workers get on their phone and ring there wives /girlfriends and go to bed, camp life is not very exciting, even if you are in a 5star camp with everything that you can think of supplied. Then when you finish your swing, you get on a plane and fly home. Our council needs to encourage family's to come and live here. and build our community back to its former glory. We don't want our workers living on the edge of town in a miners camp, WE WANT THEM IN TOWN, TAKING PART IN OUR SCHOOLS,OUR SPORTING EVENTS,AND OUR COMMUNITY IN GENERAL.

THE DEVELOPMENT/ EXPANSION OF THE MINERS VILLAGE WILL BE OF NO BENEFIT TO THIS TOWN WHAT SO EVER.....



47.

Attn: General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
Lindsey St  
COBAR NSW 2835

19th August 2019

**Reference: DA No. 2019/LD-00023.**

Proposed erection of miners camp extension for 120 extra beds, a Gymnasium & Laundry.

I write in connection with the above planning application. I have examined the plans and I wish to object strongly to the extension development.

The proposed development is particularly ill-considered for social and economic effects on Cobar itself.

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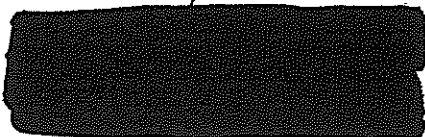
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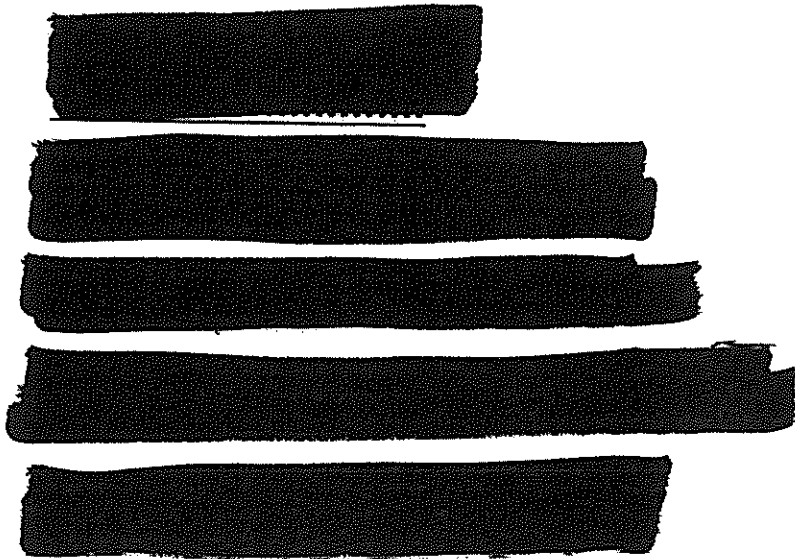
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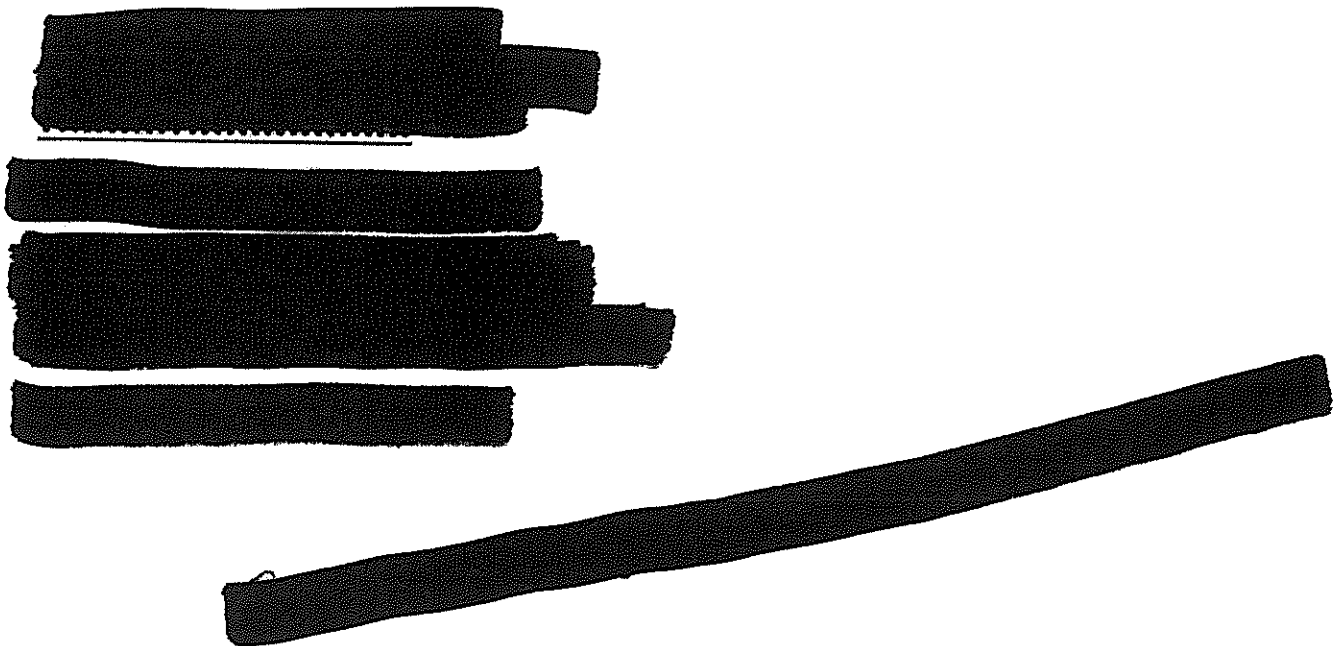
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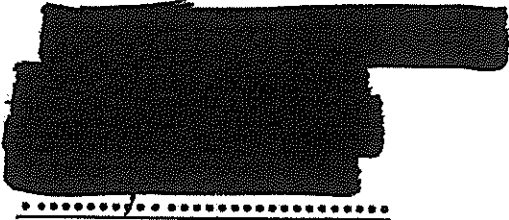
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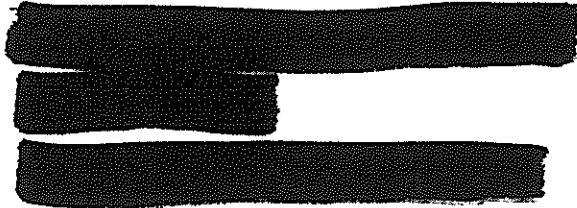
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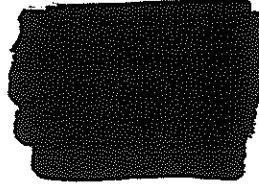
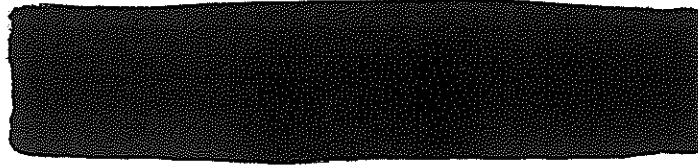
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Dear Mr Vlatko,

**Re: Development Application No. 2019/LD-00023 – Proposed Expansion of Cobar Mine Workers Village, Lot 991 Barrier Highway, Cobar**

We would like to have our objection noted to the above proposal to further expand the Cobar Mine Workers Village.

We are former local business owners of construction & mine contracting company Copper City Investments Pty Ltd, from 1982 to 2012.

At the height of our business we were the largest single employer outside of the mines and the council, facilitating more than 100 employees. We were also the builders of the original abattoir, which now houses 120 contractors as a mine camp.

It pains me to think that something I personally had a hand in creating, which was originally built on a vision of prosperity and sustainability for the town, could now be at the centre of such ill-will, angst and growing hardship for our community.

If I'm not mistaken, Cobar's Local Environmental Plan sets out as one of its aims to "*encourage a range of housing, employment, recreational and community facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents*". We fail to see how this proposal meet the needs of 'existing and future residents of Cobar' more than it lines the coffers of a company which has no local ties, by allowing it monopolize the community and add to the millions-of-dollars it already sends out of town.

The Statement of Environmental Effects provided by Rovest Holding Pty Ltd, is flawed by nature – notwithstanding inaccurate claims that it would firstly help stabilise our current population decline, or that the camp would help relieve pressure on community resources.

It is in our firm opinion that, in fact, Cobar has never been better positioned to capitalise on the continued growth of our biggest sector.

As former business leaders we prided ourselves on providing something which in essence was much more than just a job – it was a culture and a lifestyle – and it worked.

Our employee base was a mix of 'iron-ringer' local families and newcomers whom we welcomed into our fold by facilitating and fostering a sense of community. While some employees came and went, many others stayed on to raise their own 'iron ringers' - an opportunity they might never have had, had we not insisted on a locally employed workforce.

Our business model not only supported and created opportunities for the three families involved in the business, but for hundreds more through direct employment, business partnerships and sponsorships of local sporting and community organisations.

We also did this at a time in our town's history where our population was buoyant despite not having essential infrastructure we do now to support it.

In the decade since we have retired, we have watched new housing subdivisions go up and create a more diverse mix of living and lifestyle alternatives to choose from. More recently we've had renewed investment in our filtration plant, airport. Millions more has been invested in our roads, tourist facilities and attractions, parks and gardens. There has even been a \$24 million investment in a new hospital.

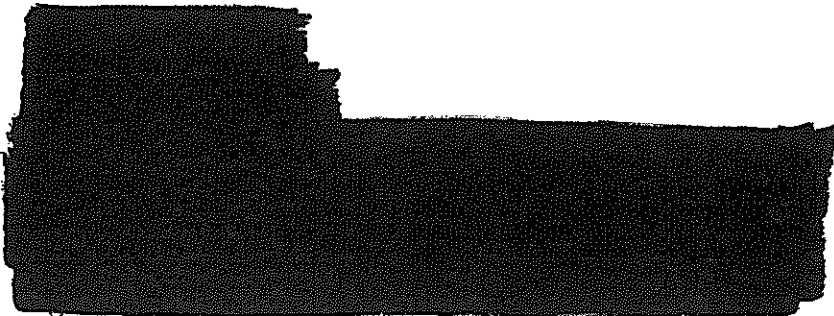
I cannot think of a time where we have been so well set up to support another boon in our most critical industry. We are a vibrant community and the cultural heartland of far-western NSW.

To suggest, as one of our elected representatives recently did, that we are a "dust bowl" that "nobody wants to live in" is nonsensical.

Our town has been forged on a dynasty of travelers who've stopped overnight and stayed a lifetime. There's an old saying that goes without saying, that 'everybody knows somebody from Cobar'.

So to support this development would be to support the unpicking of our unique social fabric and incense our proud cultural identity. We ask that you carefully consider the longer-term, broad-reaching implications of this development before imposing it on our town.

Yours sincerely



52.

Attn: General Manager  
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COBAR NSW 2835

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As a resident of Cobar, I lodge objection to the DA on the grounds of negative social impact. The current DA does not address the negative social impact of:

- Declining school enrolments attributable to the increased availability of non-residential accommodation. The Mine Worker's Village commenced operation in September 2012. In 2013 the Cobar Public School enrolment was 314 and Cobar High School enrolment 267. In 2019 these enrolments are 227 and 230 respectively. As the schools lose enrolments so do they lose staffing entitlements, resulting in the loss of wages and the subsequently reduced expenditure through local businesses.
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Resident of Cobar  
28<sup>th</sup> August 2019

[Redacted]

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019

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Planning and Environment Services  
Cobar Shire Council  
36 Linsley Street  
Cobar, NSW 2835

RE: Application to expand Cobar Mine Workers Village - DA No. 2019/LD-00023

SUBMISSION OF THE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS OF THE COBAR COMMUNITY  
TO DENY EXPANSION OF COBAR MINE WORKERS VILLAGE AT LOT 991 BARRIER HIGHWAY, COBAR.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED WISH TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING CONCERNS AS OUTLINED IN THE ABOVE  
MENTIONED DA No. 2019/LD-00023 AND HEREBY REQUEST THAT COBAR SHIRE COUNCIL DENY THIS  
AND FUTURE EXPANSION APPLICATIONS FOR THE REASONS EXPRESSED BELOW.

1. An additional 20 accommodation units are proposed to house 199 guests ( Already existing 30 Units ). Each accommodation unit houses four single persons, with each room containing a toilet, shower and hand basin.
2. Kitchen to accommodate 199 Single guests.
3. Laundry to accommodate 199 single guests.
4. Recreation room to accommodate 199 single guests.

As residents and Business owners of the Cobar Community we feel that the town is in desperate need of long term residents who will move to the township to seek employment within the mines, bringing with them partners and children who can contribute to our local businesses, schools and clubs by way of renting or purchasing property in the area and having a vested interest in the future of our small community.

There is an opinion formed by those who would condone expansion of these Accommodation units that "we" don't have a right to say where people should live and that the small contribution they make by using facilities mentioned in the above application such as the Gym and making small purchases in our stores will contribute to the town.

Yes there will be a small contribution to the town but ....

Will the 199 "guests" of these camps be spending upwards of \$300 per week on weekly groceries in our grocery stores?

Will they use our local laundromat for their uniforms?

Will they spend time in our pubs and clubs using their entertainment facilities on a regular basis?

Will they be investing in the town by renting or buying property, paying rates etc?

Will they have children in our schools?

Will they bring their spouses to work in local businesses or volunteer in community groups?

Will they contribute to and join local sporting groups which desperately need to increase their numbers to stay afloat?

Will they care about the future of our town in the long term?

These are the fundamental questions we as a community and you as the Council representing our community should be asking yourselves.

In the past individuals were drawn to Cobar seeking work within the mines. They knew that to work here meant living here and many of them came for short term contracts and stayed bringing with them their families and friends.

Mining companies were encouraged to provide these individuals with financial incentives and options to settle in homes located within the township where they would rely on the same amenities and services that other members of our community were using. Many of those individuals have remained here and contributed to the community.

However with the introduction of 7 day rosters and Fly In, Fly out options, the town has seen a significant decline in population and the ability to increase it's long term growth.

This has had a detrimental affect on our local businesses and services.

One only has to look at how many empty stores haunt our main street to see that no one is willing to invest their time and money in rejuvenating them in order to operate a small business under current council / legal requirements.

By offering individuals an option to "camp" or "fly in / fly out" we as a community are sacrificing our ability to expand the town's potential for it's long term residents.

The mines have always been Cobar's draw card to bring people into the community. By allowing mining camps we are giving away our primary means of expansion.

Tourism will not sustain this town to it's full potential and it has already become clear that many long term residents are growing tired of Council's inability to be firm in it's resolve to encourage people to live here.

We therefore request that Cobar Shire Council deny this expansion in favour of encouraging future mining employees to seek settlement within the Cobar Community by way of renting or purchasing property and insisting that mining companies provide incentives for their employees to settle here bringing family members who will be active in all aspects of living in our town.

NAME	ADDRESS	CONTACT NO	SIGNATURE
[REDACTED]			

[REDACTED]

The General Manager  
Cobar Shire Council  
PO Box 223  
Cobar NSW 2835

Dear Mr. Vlatko,

I write with regard to DA No. 2019/LD-00023, expansion of the Cobar Mine Workers' Village, specifically Section 5.17 – Social Impact.

As a significant stakeholder and employer, we lodge objection to the DA on the grounds of negative social impact. The current DA does not address the negative social impact of:

- Declining school enrolments attributable to the increased availability of non-residential accommodation. The Mine Worker's Village commenced operation in September 2012. In 2013 the Cobar Public School enrolment was 314 and Cobar High School enrolment 267. In 2019 these enrolments are 227 and 230 respectively. As the schools lose enrolments so do they lose staffing entitlements, resulting in the loss of wages and the subsequently reduced expenditure through local businesses.
- Reduced junior sports options attributable to the increased availability of non-residential accommodation. In 2013 junior Rugby, Soccer, AFL, League and Cricket were available options for the youth of Cobar. In 2019 only League remains.

Additionally, there is disingenuous representation of the positive impact on population growth and the local real estate market attributable to the expansion.

Page 21, paragraph 4. The DA states that the expansion of the Mine Worker's Village will result in a capacity increase of an additional 80 people, representing a population growth of 1.7% which would reverse the town's population decline since 2011. Objection to this is raised as the DA incorrectly equates the intermittent occupation of the village by non-residents as being the same as population figures based on residential occupancy. This inaccuracy is restated in Table 5.5, section 3.

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Whilst it is acknowledged that the owners of the Mine Worker's Village are not involved with the engagement of mine workers, it is clear that their commercial activity is responsible for unreasonable and negative social impacts to the Cobar community. Objection to the expansion is raised in response to these.

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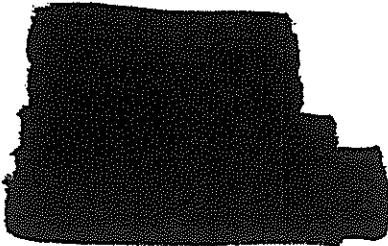
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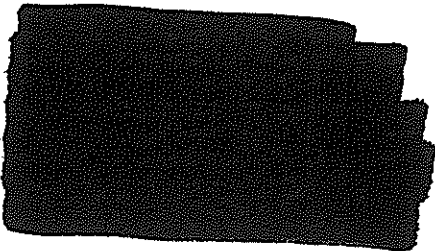
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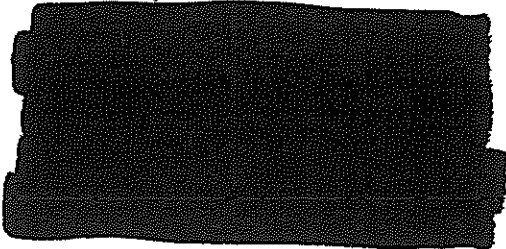
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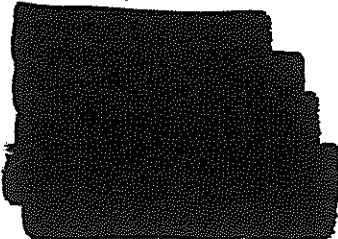
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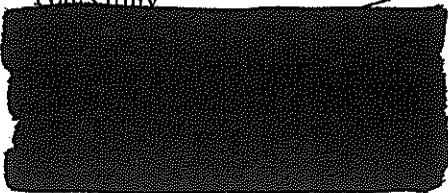
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Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a resident of Cobar of 49 years, and I've been in the local mining industry for approximately 29 years. I've seen a lot of changes in the town, positive and negative, and I've been a part of the mining booms, roster changes, the retrenchments and the uncertainties.

So this brings me to write to you of the effects that the mining camp extensions will have on Cobar. With the camp holding 100 + fly in fly out workers, these who could potentially be 100 + families living in the Cobar community. Some of the negative impacts of the camp which are already present, and will continue to worsen if the mining camp extension goes ahead, are:

- The housing market, which local residents have invested their hard earned money in, has, and will continue to fall
- Local business profits in decline, leading to business closures (so many vacant shop fronts as it is)
- Declining numbers in school enrolments reducing the funding allocations and teaching positions, resulting in parents being dissatisfied with the local education and leaving town to find better education prospects for their children
- Government and Medical services are declining and being referred to larger centres, meaning more travel expenses and time away for the local residents
- Senior and junior sports are finding it increasingly hard to find numbers to make teams

A town like Cobar, with 5 or 6 mines close by, should be growing, not declining. If this mining camp is extended, what's going to stop more mining camps from being established? A lot of people are talking now about "if things don't improve" that they are not prepared to invest in local real estate or start that new business. Some are talking about leaving our fabulous little town to raise their families in a more economically stable environment. Some sadly, already have.

We need to look at ways of encouraging more families to come to Cobar, and to stay here. This mining camp is not encouraging families.

Please put Cobar first, and don't allow the mining camp extension to go ahead.

Yours Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

66.



Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

To Whom It May Concern,

I have been a resident of the Cobar community for approximately 11 years. I worked at the local post office for 9 of those years, and I have seen many changes to the town, the people and the economy.

My partner has been a resident of Cobar his whole life. He has been through the mining changes with rosters, retrenchments and the uncertainties that surround. He has witnessed first hand the devastating effects that the mining industry has on men and women and their families.

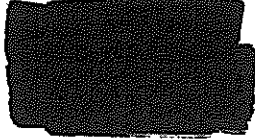
We don't want this mining camp extension to go ahead. We would like to see more families being encouraged to move here, to boost our economy, our housing, and our education system. So many people are leaving town as it is. We need to try hard to turn it around. Shopping local is one way, but in order to shop locally in Cobar, you really need to be living here, permanently.

We have so many vacant houses in Cobar as it is. Shouldn't we be encouraging people to move here permanently instead of fly in fly out.

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Please put Cobar first, and don't allow the mining camp extension to go ahead.

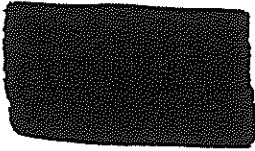
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67.

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28<sup>th</sup> August 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to express my concerns regard the proposed expansion of the miner's camp on Nyngan Road.

I am currently a self-employed painter and have also worked in the mining industries for many years. I feel very strongly about the effect of a mining camp in Cobar. The employees arrive in Cobar and go straight out camp. They work and go back to camp, where all their meals and needs are taken care of. There is no need for the workers to come into town for a meal or to fuel up, therefore no opportunity to meet the locals or experience our community.

My family moved to Cobar when I was aged eight for my father to commence work at CSA mine with the plan to stay for five years (I am now 46). My parents feel in love with Cobar and the community and never left. My mother passed away last year and she insisted that her funeral service be held in Cobar, her chosen home town not Maitland were she was born, raised, married and had her children.

Having mine employees not living within our community (so living at camp) they are not spending money within our community, they're not bring their families , they're not buying or building house or schooling children. This affects every aspect of our community, local business, sporting bodies, schools ect. If a mine employee moved to Cobar and lived in our community they may be like my parents and never leave.

I would urge our local council to refuse the proposed extension of the miner's camp and encourage new employees to live in our wonderful community.

Kind regards,

