

The Cockfighter

Linking the Communities of Broke Fordwich Bulga & Milbrodale

FREE



**BROKE
FORDWICH**
WINE REGION

The tranquil side of the Hunter Valley

September 2015



**BOOT SCOOTIN, WHIP CRACKING
& PROUDLY SMALL**

**MILBRODALE PUBLIC SCHOOL
LAUNCHES**

**MILBRODALE FAMILY FUN
DAY**

From the Editor

When international recognition becomes apparent in the course of any good cause in our wide brown land, there would seem to be a fair basis for suspecting that somebody's on to, well, a pretty fair thing. So it emerged with the visit, over the last sagging days of winter 2015, of a group of Japanese activists, dedicated to the great green philosophy of the environment, the eco-system, and clean air-- and the menace to these of ill-considered projects like the expansion of Rio Tinto's loss-making dinosaur at Mt Thorley.

The Bulga-Milbrodale Progress Association welcomed our visitors from Japan at a BBQ event at the Bulga Recreation Ground, representing an opportunity to discuss the problem our two countries face—especially (in the case of Australia) with a distinct lack of political vision or national leadership in the area of renewables. If the slide in the demand and price of oil and gas continues, and as more and more world-shakers like China, Germany and the USA invest trillions in solar, wind and hydro-energy alternatives, even the most callow conservative in our political system would have to admit it's time to start re-thinking where we are headed. Fittingly, it appears that in their blind loyalty to Ol' King Coal, our Federal law-makers are fuelling their own fossilisation. Something tells me the Greens should do quite well at the next Federal poll, whenever it is. One of the telling reflections on the hard financial facts facing traditional mining operators these days was delivered in the last days of

August, courtesy of the Sydney Morning Herald's Business Day commentary on the serious slump in the fortunes of Santos. This is the outfit behind the controversial Pilliga project, now severely hampered by local resistance and of course, the steady downward trajectory of coal prices. But the story told at the Bulga event wasn't about coal per se; rather, hard on the heels of Newcastle City Council's decision to can all investments in fossil fuels, was the disclosure of the brilliant move by the Australian National University (derided at the time by such Economics 101 gurus as Joe Hockey and other savants) to sell all Santos shares and replace them with renewables stock. When the University did this, Santos shares were \$12. Now they are barely five dollars. And things could get worse. Indeed, there is something in the air—not so much the clang of rusted, derelict coal industry machinery screeching to a shut-down, but the sweetly silent impact of Australia's sunshine on millions of solar panels dotting our communities in the next few years, as improvements in the modelling of areas like storage and reduced pricing lead the way, charge.

With this slightly soggy start to spring—hey, we always need rain in the Hunter—here's hoping the weather gods behave come September 13 for the big bash at Broke—more details herein. COCK-FIGHTER will be there of course, within handy reach of our sub-region's inimitable boutique wine providores and all sorts of gourmet eatables. To sum it up (and don't forget Art in the Vines at Broke Village Hall September 11)—Fair go!

(Tom Jackson)

September 2015

August Rainfall 31 mm
YEAR TO DATE 616 mm

Diary Dates

11th September
Art in the Vines

13th September 2015
Broke Village Fair
and
Vintage Car Display

4th October
Jazz at Catherine Vale

26th September
Wollombi Music Festival

20th September
Family Fun Day

5th December 2015
Community Christmas Party

31 December 2015
New Years Eve Dance

9th -10th April 2016
A Little Bit of Italy in Broke

First Sunday of the Month
Community Markets

Sacred Spaces Fine Music Concert
Series 2015

For dates go to:
www.sacredspaces.org.au



12-13 September, Broke Hall

ART IN THE VINES

Broke Hall
Adair St Broke

Opening
Night 7pm
Friday 11th
September
2015

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and good food

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BOOT SCOOTIN', WHIP CRACKING & PROUDLY SMALL - MILBRODALE SCHOOL

Milbrodale Public School is a proud small school. There's many advantages that come with being a school of only ten students. There's plenty of one-on-one attention and multi-age play. And the kids behave like a big family - being exceptionally considerate of each other.

However there is one downside to being such a small school. A school fete for only a handful of families wouldn't be much fun. We've found a solution to this problem. Our fete has evolved into the Milbrodale Family Fun Day - an event so full of fun activities that it attracts visitors from far beyond our small school community.

The 2015 Milbrodale Family Fun Day is being held 9am - 2pm Sunday 20th September. It's a day for everyone in our local community and beyond.

Visitors will be entertained all day by country music singer Jessie Read. Jessie is a regular at the Tamworth Country Music Festival and pubs around Tamworth. She's even sung with Troy Cassar-Daley at the CCMA Country Music Awards of Australia. We're fortunate she has recently moved into our region and is part of our school community.

Greg Ellison, local cutting horse breeder and competitor (& school dad), will be giving whip cracking and calf roping demonstrations all day. We won't have real calves - but will have the next best thing.

There's also a playdough and craft corner for the kids (and their crafty parents). A playdough competition has some wonderful prizes and kids can learn how to make pom poms and newspaper pots.

The day begins at 9am with registration for the inaugural Milbrodale Ultimate Man Challenge. Competitors will need to navigate a challenging course that will test their skills in farming, carpentry, house-keeping and sport. Timed heats commence at 10.30am and the final race will be held at noon.

Other scheduled events include an Evolution of Dance performance by Milbrodale students (9.45am and 12.30pm) and Children's novelty races (11.30am and 1.30pm).

Jessie Read and the Milbrodale students will be giving a boot scootin performance and lesson at 12.40pm.

There's also a chocolate wheel (drawn 10.20am and 1.15pm) with some incredible prizes, including a Samsung Galaxy tablet. Local vineyard Ascella Wines have donated a selection of organic wines and we invite other local businesses to donate prizes.



The school also welcomes donations to our trash and treasure stall.

Prizes or trash and treasure stall donations can be dropped off at the school. Or give the school a call (65745163) and someone can collect donations from you.

Our handmade wood-fired pizza oven will be going all day - cooking pizzas and jacket potatoes. There will also be a sausage sizzle and a cake stall selling Narelle's famous cakes. Anyone who's visited our election day cake stall will know why they are famous.

There will also be a range of market stalls. Market stall sites are available for only \$10. To book a stall contact Narelle on 65794649.

The Milbrodale Family Fun Day is the main fund-raising and community engagement event for the Milbrodale Parents & Citizens Association this year. We welcome your support and hope to see you there.

Tricia Hogbin, a proud Milbrodale mum.

Family Fun Day

*9am - 2pm Sunday 20th September
VENUE*

*Milbrodale Public School,
2616 Putty Road
Milbrodale (intersection of Putty and
Milbrodale roads)*

Images Tricia Hogbin:

ABOVE: Country music singer Jessie Read - a regular at the Tamworth Country Music Festival - will be entertaining visitors to the Milbrodale Family Fun Day.

COVER: Jessie Read and Milbrodale Public School students Olivia Lloyd and Chanel Ellison - preparing for the boot scootin demonstration and lesson they will be giving at the Milbrodale Family Fun Day.

Singleton Council locks in event dates for 2016

Singleton Council is calling on 2016 event planners to get their dates locked in for next year.

To assist event coordinators in planning their events for next year an event calendar for 2016 is now being prepared and will be available on the council website soon.

The event calendar will give every organisation in Singleton the opportunity to check dates before planning their own event to ensure important community functions do not clash.

Event planners are encouraged to contact the Singleton Visitor Information and Enterprise Centre (SVIEC) on 02 6571 5888 as soon as possible in order to lock in their preferred date. The new calendar will also assist with the planning of next year's Singleton Festival. Every second year a shorter program

of events is facilitated and next year is that shorter year. The Singleton Festival Advisory Committee is considering changing the date from the traditional July time of year to a period when the weather is a little warmer. Any comments on this suggestion can be made directly to the staff at the SVIEC.

Community groups, charities and sporting bodies are also advised that they can submit their own events on the council website www.singleton.nsw.gov.au at any time free of charge or via www.visitsingleton.com.

For further information contact the SVIEC on 02 6571 5888.



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Complaints Hotline - 1800 656 892

Read:
Singleton and Muswellbrook Community Newsletters, distributed direct to your letterbox

Blasting hotlines:
HVO: 1800 888 733
MTW: 1800 099 669

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NEWCASTLE, HOME OF COAL, JOINS FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT PUSH

Amanda Saunders

Resources Reporter SMH

Newcastle, home of the world's biggest coal port, has joined the global fossil fuels divestment push after the city's council voted on Tuesday night to exit holdings in the big four banks if they continue to fund fossil fuels projects.

About 80 per cent of the City of Newcastle Council's \$270 million investment portfolio is held in the big four banks, mostly through term deposits. Those investments are spread evenly across the big four.

But after the council passed a motion recently, six votes to five, it will dump holdings in the banks for more "environmentally and socially responsible" institutions when deposits come up for renewal.

This will be done only if the rate of return is comparable with the council's holdings in the big four and the council's credit rating criteria is met.

Minerals Council of Australia coal chief Greg Evans said the "stock in trade of the divestment activists is to get public attention through empty symbolism.

"You would expect the City of Newcastle council had more pressing business, such as supporting local economic activity, rather than participating in such a pointless sham."

Labor councillor Declan Clausen, who moved the motion after winning a byelection this year,

said while Newcastle was the world's largest coal-exporting port, it was "important that the city looked at diversifying its economy".

"Writing is on the wall"

He said the coal industry in NSW "understands the writing is on the wall, coal is not going to be a leader long into the future" and suggested clean technology could in part replace coal's economic contribution.

NSW Minerals Council data shows mining's direct spend in the City of Newcastle council was \$1.8 billion as at June last year, which includes \$160.5 million in salaries (1118 local jobs) and \$1.64 billion in direct community and business purchasing.

For the wider Hunter region, the mining industry spent \$5.9 billion, including \$1.5 billion in salaries (11,078 local jobs), and \$4.4 billion in business purchases and contributions.

Steven Munchenberg, chief executive of the Australian Bankers' Association, said: "Fossil fuels continue to be a major source of jobs and income for Australia and a major part of our energy mix, so at the moment a number of banks continue to support these industries.

"If customers don't like that, they are within their rights to change banks."

Anti-coal activists welcomed the move.

"We applaud the Newcastle City Council in its decision to divest from fossil fuels that are as bad for a balance sheet as they are for our air, water and climate," said Isaac Astill, a fossil fuel divestment campaigner with 350.org Australia.

But Mr Evans said Newcastle Council "should also be aware that despite the efforts of divestment activists, their strategy is an abject failure and coal remains well supported, with banks continuing to lend to new and existing projects".

No previous environmental criteria

Even the anti-coal group BankTrack was disappointed to report that global financing for coal mining rose to \$US66 billion in 2014, up from \$US55 billion in 2013 and a 360 per cent increase from 2005, Mr Evans said.

Newcastle's investment policy previously didn't include criteria ensuring that investments were environmentally and socially responsible, Mr Clausen said.

Now, when choosing investments, the council will invest in banks and financial institutions that "don't invest in things that produce pollutants, greenhouse gases, habitat destruction, uranium, potentially abuse human rights, have involvement in bribery and corruption, or the manufacturing of alcohol, tobacco or gambling products".

All else being equal, we are going to choose the greenest option

The council's \$270 million portfolio is split across 20 term deposits, which come up for review every three to six months.

"Every time they come up for review, we will be moving money away from [the big four]. All else being equal, we are going to choose the greenest option," the Labor councillor said.

"There have been plenty of times when the big four banks are less competitive than what other institutions can offer."

The council will look to the Responsible Investment Association Australasia and activist group Market Forces' tool to compare the green rating of institutions and banks. Mr Clausen said there were at least 20 to 30 institutions that would meet the council's requirements. He nominated industry super fund-owned bank ME as an example.

'Large change' in investment portfolio

Mr Clausen expected that in the next six months there would be a "large change" in the council's investment portfolio. "Obviously my view would be that we move away, almost completely, in time, but it will depend how it plays out," he said.

Newcastle is the seventh council in Australia to announce it will shun fossil fuels. To date, 35 institutions in Australia and 350 globally have pledged to exit from fossil

fuels. Newcastle's announcement follows a divestment commitment from the ACT government last week.

Newcastle's council usually votes in two blocks. The first block of seven has five Labor councillors and two Greens, and the second has six Liberal Independents. The new investment policy review passed six votes to five, with two absent.

"Newcastle's economy has changed a fair bit. In the past we have obviously been very reliant on coal, but before that we were very reliant on steelworks," Mr Clausen said.

"There are an increasing group of start-ups in Newcastle that are looking at a clean-tech future, we are embracing those opportunities. The coal downturn has particularly affected the Hunter Valley. Clean techs are going to be a significant employer moving forward. Council is being on the front foot about that."

The birthplace of Queensland coalmining has also declared it won't support new mine operations and expansions.

Ipswich City Council has adopted a mining policy that calls on the state government to block new mines and expansions as well as coal seam gas operations.

Councillors say there's no long-term future for mining in the area because of urban growth and environmental concerns.

Ipswich was built on mining and Queensland's first mine began operations there in 1843.

The Redbank mine was also home to the state's first strike, with disgruntled miners stopping work over a pay rise in 1861.

Councillor Paul Tully says the city's growing population, which is expected to double in 20 years, is a major reason why the council can no longer support mining.

"We just think that coalmining and coal seam gas mining are inconsistent with urban areas and adjacent to urban areas," Mr Tully told AAP.

"The only area with a lot of land (for residential development) is west of Brisbane and that's through Ipswich, and out towards Gatton and Toowoomba."

"At the end of the day we have very little control," he said.

The council said it would work in partnership with the Queensland government and mining companies to "extinguish" coalmining tenures where possible.

It has also promised to facilitate the transition of those involved in mining and will support the rehabilitation of mined land.

"In relation to any future for coal seam gas, the policy identifies the largely untested nature of coal seam gas extraction and impacts on the environment," Mr Tully said.

VERDELHO MASTER-CLASS TAKES CLOSE LOOK AT A POPULAR HUNTER VARIETAL

On Thursday 27th August the Hospitality sub-committee of the Hunter Valley Wine Tourism Association held a Verdelho master-class to look at the various aspects of this varietal grape that is so successful in the Hunter Valley. The class was held at perhaps the spiritual home of Australian Verdelho: Tulloch Wines in Pokolbin and was chaired by their cellar door manager Steve George. The panel of experts featured viticulturist Brett Keeping from Two Rivers Wines in Denman: probably the man that grows more Verdelho than anybody in the Hunter; wine-maker Liz Jackson from First

Creek wines: she probably makes more different styles of Verdelho through her contact wine-making at First Creek, and show judge / winemaker Usher Tinkler from Tinklers Wines, from one of the oldest of the Hunter Valley Verdelho growing families.

Brett took us through the history of the variety in the Hunter, making especial note of the role of Fordwich's John Tulloch in planting, developing and nurturing the variety. Brett invited discussion of the problems with powdery mildew and how best to avoid this, the growth habits and quirks, the strengths and weaknesses. We then started on a tutored tasting, we had 5 brackets of wines:

The first four were from different regions: Pokolbin, Upper Hunter, Victoria & Western Australia. The two Hunter wines shone (Tinkler & Two Rivers). An interesting take from the Victorian wine (2013 David Treager from Nagambie Lakes in the Goulburn Valley), barrel fermented and quite textural, not all what we expected. There was a fairly unimpressive wine from Moondah Brook in WA's Swan Valley. For my money the Tinkler 2015 was the star of the whole afternoon: fresh and with brilliant varietal characters.

JAZZ AT CATHERINE VALE

SUNDAY
4th October 2015

Featuring the Frenchman Street String Jazz Band who play New Orleans, Dixieland style Jazz.

Come and join us for this free community event in a relaxed atmosphere where everyone can sit and enjoy this great music.

Light meals are provided and the event is a "NO BYO".

Times are from 12pm to 3pm.

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Before the tasting most people didn't think there was any potential for aging

The second bracket were some of the award winners from the 2015 HV Wine show, and the comment was made by Liz Jackson that you can either make wines to win medals or wine to sell to the public, but that the criteria set for judging did not always gel with what the wine buyers wanted. I didn't rate any of them as being all that interesting. Briar Ridge had won Gold & Trophy, but I couldn't see why. I've tasted the winners at the Show many time, and always have this same problem: what the show judges look for is technical, not what people want to drink. Briar Ridge 2015 The Dam (gold and trophy), Pepper Tree 2015 (silver); Tulloch 2015 (bronze) and Gartelmann 2015 Jessica (bronze).

Then came three varying styles: bone dry (2104 First Creek), off dry (2014 Constable) and sweet and sparkling (Tulloch NV 'Verscato'): the off-dry style stood out to me (Constable Vineyard). It seems they have 4 styles of Verdelho there and this sells the best. The touch of sweetness brought out the fruit. The Verscato is Tulloch's take on Moscato, pink, fizzy, sweet and a sure hit with the Hens' groups.

Then the aged bracket: 2007 Sweetwater (made by Andrew Thomas), 2005 Elysium (made at Tyrrell's) and 2003 Tullochs (made by Jim Chatto). All three acclaimed to some degree and the Elysium was the pick for winemaker Liz Jackson. Before the tasting most people didn't think there was any potential for aging at all, so a number of eyes were opened. I personally preferred the 2003.

Finally three fortified: a 2014 and a 20-year old blend from Usher Tinkler's private stock, and a 40-odd year old from Drayton's. Wow! Fabulous wines. It is probably not economically viable to make wine like this these days, but wonderful wines, and we are glad to see young winemakers continuing the tradition.

A very fair and balanced and interesting look at Verdelho with some searching questions asked of Brett, Liz and Usher. Usher walked us through some of the pitfalls in winemaking that went a long way to destroying that all important varietal character, so the knowledge of how to make wonderful Verdelho is out there!

Tastings like this are held on different themes a couple of times a year and are open to all: let me know if you want to know more.

Mike Wilson

Mike Wilson is Secretary of the Broke Fordwich Wine and Tourism Association and is a member of the Lindeman Wines Cellar Door team.

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AT THE BULGA COMMUNITY CENTRE:

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Broke Fair - Gravity powered cars \$450 Prizes up for grabs

At the Broke Fair for the second year, The Rocker Cover Car contest will be on.

Cars built from engine rocker covers compete on sloping two-track raceway.

The organisers will have cars there for you to use or you can bring your own.

The competition involves placing the car on the track and letting go - the first to the bottom is the winner.

Singleton-based *wiK'ed Frogs Board Room* vouchers are up as prizes:
1st prize value \$200
2nd \$150
3rd \$100

Organiser, Jody Derrick said, "This is easy to

win and great fun, just register at the information tent by 11:00 am."

More info on brokefordwich.com.au



BROKE VILLAGE FAIR AND VINTAGE CAR DISPLAY

SUN 13TH SEPT
9am - 3pm
McNamara Park, Broke

BULGA COAL

GLENCORE

Environment and Community Contacts

Ralph Northey - Bulga Coal
Environment and Community Manager
T: 6570 2539 M: 0418 439 874
ralph.northey@glencore.com.au

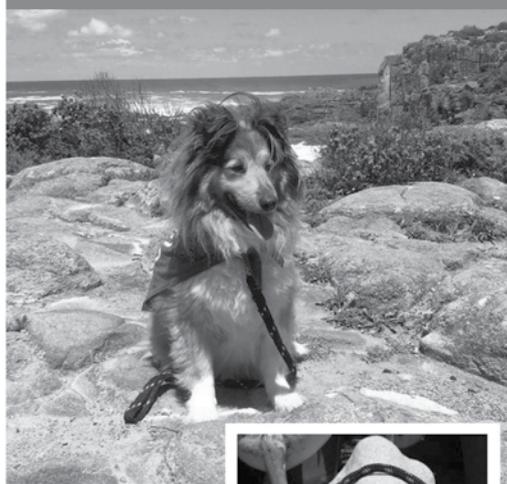
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Environment and Community Coordinator
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Community complaints line, 24 hours a day,
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Singleton bulk waste collection begins this month

Singleton Council's popular annual bulk waste collection will be held over a two-week period next month, just in time for spring cleaning.

The collection is open to residential residents who currently pay for a waste and recycling service in Singleton and surrounding areas.

Waste is to be placed kerb side, or at the front gate for rural properties, by 6.30 am on the Monday of your collection week. Any waste placed out after this time will not be collected.

Materials should be placed on the footpath verge in a position that will not obstruct traffic or pedestrians. All items should be neatly stacked with two separate piles for general waste and scrap metal. Loose rubbish should be placed in bags or boxes.

The bulk waste collection is for excess household rubbish only and must not be used for vacant allotment clearing or commercial/trade waste.

Due to contamination and health and safety issues, green waste will not be collected and can be disposed of by residents at the Singleton Waste Management Facility.

Items that will be collected:

- General household waste
- Furniture
- Household building waste, only small quantities, must not exceed two wheelbarrow loads and bricks must be stacked
- Floor coverings, rolled up to 1.5m
- A limit of two box trailer loads per household applies.

Items that will not be collected:

- E-waste eg computers TVs, small household appliances. These items are accepted free of charge at Singleton Waste Management Facility.
- Green waste, including tree stumps and branches
- Hazardous solids and liquids including paints, oils and chemicals
- White goods, including fridges, freezers, stoves, microwaves and washing machines
- Mirrors, glass panels
- Tyres
- Batteries
- Windscreens
- Material cleared from vacant lots, including loose earth, bricks, rubble, commercial builder's rubble

Pick up dates and locations:

21 - 25 September 2015

Broke, Bulga, Fordwich, Milbrodale, Mount Thorley, Paynes

Crossing, For more information on the bulk waste collection contact 02 6578 7310 or visit www.singleton.nsw.gov.au/bulkwaste

Investigation works under way for Hermitage Road Upgrade project

Singleton Council has engaged Douglas Partners to undertake geotechnical investigation works as part of the Hermitage Road Upgrade and Cycleway project.

The works will be undertaken in two stages and kicked off this week with performance testing of the existing road pavement. The work involves using a trailer mounted testing rig to test the road pavement deflection under an applied load.

The process requires the test vehicle to frequently stop at specified intervals for a short time of between 30 and 60 seconds.

The testing is being undertaken down both the north and southbound lanes of the entire length of Hermitage Rd within the Singleton local government area of approximately 10.6km.

The work is being undertaken under traffic control and will not cause any damage to the road.

Stage 2 of the investigations will include borehole drilling and ground sampling and will start next week.

Works will include site drilling of approximately 43 x 300mm diameter boreholes using either a bobcat or mini excavator. Boreholes will be drilled through the existing road with samples of the road pavement and underlying materials recovered for laboratory testing.

Boreholes will be drilled approximately every 250m along the entire length of Hermitage Road within the Singleton local government area and are likely to be staggered from side to side of the road corridor.

The boreholes will be backfilled with the excavated material and compacted and topped up with additional gravel (if required). The road surface will be reinstated using cold mix asphalt and the road surface swept clean.

The work will be undertaken under traffic control and, while some minor disruption to traffic is expected, the road will not be closed.

The Hermitage-Broke Road Upgrade and Cycleway Project is being funded by a \$16.734 million grant from the NSW Government under the Resources for Regions program with contributions from Singleton and Cessnock councils.

For more information on the geotechnical investigation contact Singleton Council's Customer Service Centre on 02 6578 7290 or visit www.singleton.nsw.gov.au/majorprojects

Water supply funding sought for the townships of Bulga and Camberwell

Singleton Council will submit two expressions of interests for funding of a water supply for the townships of Camberwell and Bulga as part of the NSW Government's Water Security for Regions initiative.

The program allows Council to pursue funding opportunities for a safe, secure water supply for Bulga and Camberwell that may not be available in the future.

Singleton Council's General Manager Lindy Hyam says improved quality of drinking water for villages is a high priority for Council.

"Council's detailed Strategic Business Plan for Water and Sewer includes consideration for water and supply augmentation in villages and townships," she says.

"The provision of good quality treated drinking water is significant for the townships of Bulga and Camberwell given their close proximity to large mining operations.

"Council is only participating in the expression of interest process at this stage, no commitment to funding the water supply services will be made until the project planning and costing have been fully completed."

The program will only meet 50 per cent of the capital costs of the project and Council will have to provide funding for the balance as well as all operations and maintenance costs.

"Provided that there are adequate funds to achieve the desired outcome the project would be considered," says Ms. Hyam.

Expressions of interests for funding close on 31 August 2015.

JERRYS PLAINS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Ph: 02 6576 4162

Vet in attendance
Jim Rodger



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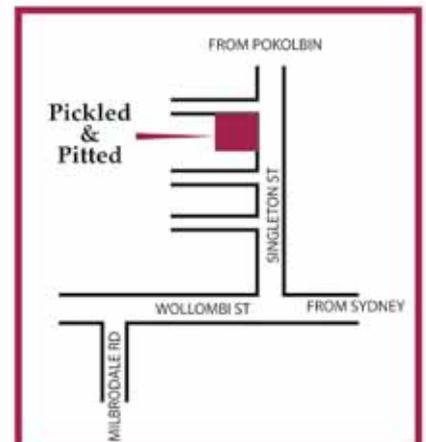
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Bloomfield Group and Glencore buy Integra mines

Towards the end of last month, a deal was signed between Vale, the Bloomfield Group and Glencore to purchase the Integra Coal Open Cut and Underground Mines. The deal should be completed within 4-8 weeks.

Under the terms of the sale, Bloomfield will acquire the Integra Open Cut, the rail loop and washery, while Glencore will

acquire the Integra Underground.

In both cases, the pits are adjoining existing leases - Rix's Creek for Bloomfield and Mt Owen for Glencore.

GM of Mining for Bloomfield, Garry Bailey, told the Chamber this morning that they plan to get the open cut back into production with 1 excavator crew over

3 shifts. It will be known as Rix's Creek North Pit and will be run from the Rix's Creek current operations.

It is understood that Glencore have no immediate plans for the Underground.

PAC reviews for both Mt Thorley Warkworth and Drayton Mines are currently under way

Extract from AGL annual report to shareholders 2015...re CSG

3.2.3 Natural Gas Operating EBIT: Decreased 76.9% to (\$23 million) from (\$13 million) On 6 July 2015 AGL announced that following a comprehensive review of the Upstream Gas business it would focus on core gas projects and divest non-core and under-performing assets and activities. The core projects to be retained include the Camden Gas Project, Gloucester Gas Project, Silver Springs underground storage facility, Wallumbilla LPG plant and the recently opened

Newcastle Gas Storage Facility. Assets to be divested include the Hunter Gas Project licence interests (PELs 4 and 267) and associated agriculture activities. Other assets to be divested include AGL's interests in PEL 2 (adjacent to the Camden Gas Project), the Cooper Oil assets (ATP 1056P), CSM Energy and the Spring Gully assets. PELs 2, 4 and 267 will be sold as part of the NSW Government's PEL buy-back scheme. The Moranbah assets have been de-designated as "held for sale"

but a sale process for the assets is ongoing. Natural Gas Operating EBIT is lower as a result of reduced oil sales revenue in Silver Springs, reduced gas sales revenue in the North Queensland Energy (NQE) joint venture and increased operating costs, largely due to well workovers and field related expenditure in Moranbah, partially offset by lower Moranbah depreciation expense."

Yet another Public Hearing re Mt Thorley

The Minister for Planning Rob Stokes has requested the PAC to hold a second review of the Warkworth and Mount Thorley Continuation Project Applications in the form of another Public Hearing at Singleton on the 7

September. The result of the Public Hearing is to be provided to the Dept of Planning by the 21 September.

Curiously the PAC is inviting further submissions which close the day after the Pub-

lic Hearing. PAC is also inviting interested parties to register to speak at the hearing

The reason for another Public Hearing is not apparent in the advice from the Minister.

Beginning of the end – Hunter Thoroughbred Industry

The HTBA is very disappointed at the Department of Planning's recommendation that favours one mine over the potential destruction of a world renowned sustainable agricultural industry and the thousands of jobs it supports throughout the Hunter Valley.

"This is the same department that disregarded the advice of 9 Independent Government experts last time in favour of this mine and was appropriately overruled by the Drayton South Determination PAC in October last year" Dr Cameron Collins said.

The Determination PAC in 2014 rejected Anglo American's Drayton South proposal because:

The proposal did not demonstrate that it would not adversely impact on the operations of Coolmore and Darley;

Once the damage occurs to the operations of the studs it is irreversible;

The economic benefits of the project did not outweigh the risks to the wine, equine and tourism industries in the Hunter Valley.

The PAC determined, correctly, that this project was not in the public interest.

Nothing has changed. This mine remains less than 1km from the operations of the Darley and Coolmore horse studs. Concerns regarding impacts on water, blast-

ing, noise, dust, equine and human health, destruction to lands and threatened species, visual amenity and the reputation of one of the world's leading thoroughbred breeding industries remain.

"Each and every reason the previous mine was refused remains valid today. They are compelling reasons why Anglo American's second Drayton South application should be rejected. Once damage to the studs occurs, studs which are the epi-centre of our entire industry, it will be irreversible." Dr Collins said

No effort has been made to properly assess the socio-economic consequences of this mine or the impacts of this mine on the operations of Coolmore and Darley.

"This is an unacceptable situation. We expect the Department to be an independent arbiter and to apply the highest levels of scrutiny and rigorous scientific triple bottom line assessment to these matters at arms length from the Proponent."

Allowing this one mine to proceed will devastate the Hunter's thoroughbred breeding industry and the thousands of jobs it supports in the Hunter Valley.

"How can we have faith in the planning process? Despite a rejection last year, Anglo American is allowed to submit any number of applications regardless of their

consequences to strategic agricultural lands, industries and our environment while ordinary landholders are stripped of their appeal rights."

During the Premier's and Minister Stoke's visit to the Hunter Valley in April of this year, Premier Baird acknowledged that "mining cannot go everywhere, more protections should be put in place and we need to get the balance right."

"It is time the Government delivered on its promises to protect strategic agricultural industries, land and water before it's too late. We hope sense will prevail and the Government's Independent experts find as their predecessors did, that this mine poses unacceptable risks, will destroy entire sustainable industries and is not in the public interest." Dr Collins said

BACKGROUND: *The Hunter Valley's Thoroughbred Breeding industry contributes over \$5 billion annually to the national economy and \$2.6 billion annually to the NSW economy. It supports over 230,000 jobs throughout Australia. It is one of three international centres of thoroughbred breeding excellence in the world – alongside Newmarket in the UK and Kentucky in the USA. It is Australia's largest producer and exporter of premium thoroughbreds. It is an iconic part of Australia's sporting history and an industry worth protection.*

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OUR WILDLIFE

EASTERN LONG-NECKED TURTLE. (Chelodina longicollis)

This freshwater turtle has a long neck and webbed feet, it is fawn to black above with black edged plates and cream below. Hatchlings are black with orange markings. They search for prey in shallow water, keeping its neck bent close to the shell and striking with its mouth open.

If alarmed it emits a foul smelling milky fluid from glands in its legs, in droughts it buries itself in mud or under leaf litter and may travel up to 2 km looking for a new water hole. Southern Turtles hibernate in winter buried in the mud. Females lay 8-24 brittle-shelled eggs from late spring to early winter, buried in moist soil in



dams, swamps or stream banks. The hatchlings dig their way out at night 3-6 months later and dash to the water. Long-necked-turtles diet is fish, molluscs, tadpoles, frogs, snails, crustaceans and carrion.. They live in swamp, dams, billabongs and slow moving rivers.

These are the Turtles we see trying to cross the road. You can help them by moving them off the road and across in the direction that they were going. Always have your own safety in mind before helping any animal on the roadway.

Elizabeth

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