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From: [Mineshaft](#)
Sent: Tuesday, October 30, 2018 2:11 PM
To: MintabieOpalMining@sa.gov.au
Subject: Submission Mintabie Mining Review

SUBMISSION from Peter Blythe

I spent twelve years mining at Mintabie. I also own and run a well known Opal Retail business based in Canberra supplying Embassy personal, Tourist and locals and we market through the internet as well.

MINESHAFT CANBERRA (Go to website at min shaft.com.au).

I have great concerns on the negative effect the closure of Mintabie would mean at many levels and I would like the committee to explore these in detail before making any decision

to alter anything at Mintabie.

1/ Opal production in Australia is at record lows. Anything that *contributes* to any further reduction in production has widespread implications for the Opal business and tourism. The industry cannot sustain any form of backward step.

Opal is our national stone and deserves SUPPORT from government bodies.

2/Mintabie was a major field, producing much of Australia's opal for more than a decade.....I believe (and I mined many areas at Mintabie over twelve years) there is enough opal yet to be found that could initiate another growth spurt.

Opal requires a certain amount of luck....All that is required is for one of the remaining miners to have a good find and mining would increase with miners from other fields joining in to chase their dreams (this has always been the nature of opal mining). This would happen because Coober Pedy also has had little new discoveries over recent years so any news of close by finds would generate intense interest.

3/ Miners need to live close to where they are mining. Relocating to Marla is simply not realistic and would not be an option for most miners. Security of machinery, spare parts, maintenance and the day to day running of a mining operation requires a camp as close as possible.

4/ Future tourism potential SHOULD be encouraged to ALL our opal fields.....Mintabie was a major player in the opal history of Australia and could be developed as a place for tourists to visit on their trips, even for a day. It is not spoilt by "tourism" hype and the feedback I get from those who do go there is that it is unique, the residents fascinating, helpful and full of knowledge. I personally write articles about Mintabie and my time there for magazines (See Metal Stone & Glass – any issue for the last 6 years). with the view of encouraging people to visit and promote the Opal industry.

5/For many residents it is their final home. They have no desire to leave and just want to live in peace (I took my family there a few months ago to talk to many of these). These people are "the salt of the earth" and deserve far better than this scenario.

6/ Closing Mintabie would not stop any ratbag drug or alcohol business, as they would still find their market whoever, wherever and however they can. It is absurd to punish not only the local residents AND destroy a potential local industry over the dealings of a very few ratbags. The logic is naive....would you close down Kings Cross for the same reason?

We in the opal business value and understand the importance and potential of places such as Mintabie. This does not have a simple black and white solution with a clear cut positive solution as suggested by those implementing the closure and or changes to the situation at Mintabie. Their plan has been made without the knowledge and understanding of the industry and the implications of it are far more complex than they would like the committee to believe.

May I suggest it would be far more practical to remove the ratbags when and wherever they can (This being the normal procedure in our democratic country throughout) instead of removing society and workplace all together.....this just does not make sense!!!

Thankyou

Peter Blythe

(Director and founder of MINESHAFT CANBERRA – former resident and miner of Mintabie)