

SE news
HD **Trapped at Kogan**
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WHEN Tangalooma Brahman stud principals Bill and Lynette Dahlheimer first listed their **property**, Campbells Camp, for **sale**, they had retirement on a few acres in **Chinchilla** in their sights.

But five years and eight agents later, they feel they are further away than ever from selling their 455-hectare block at Brigalow, and all because of the neighbour, CS **Energy's** Kogan Creek **coal** mine and power station.

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Mr Dahlheimer said dealing with dust, noise, gas and water problems the operation had created for them, and trying to get the **company** and its owner, the Queensland government, to ensure they get a reasonable price for the place is like "death by a thousand cuts".

"They just bugger your life up. Who is going to **buy** next to a **coal** mine?" Mr Dahlheimer said.

He believes there is only one answer: the **coal** mine itself.

But because Campbell's Camp sits outside the power station and mine footprint and required buffer, where CS **Energy** acquired all the properties it needed to prior to start-up in 2007, a CS **Energy** spokesman said it had "found no **commercial** justification or legal requirement" to **buy** the place.

"The only offer they've made is to wash our walls and filter our water," Mr Dahlheimer said.

A CS **Energy** spokesman said this "has been done in good faith and in an attempt to address the concerns Mr and Mrs Dahlheimer have raised."

And the **company** wants its position to be clear: "CS **Energy** considers that it has no legal obligation to provide any assistance to the Dahlheimers."

According to CS **Energy**, independent testing it has organised has shown the Dahlheimer home's rainwater showed "no significant deposition to the drinking water system related to power station or **coal** mine **operations**".

Similarly, dust from within the home was found to be mostly "rock/soil dust (clay) and biological materials".

"Only very minor traces of **coal** and power station fly ash were detected."

However, having lived where they do since 1986, the Dahlheimers believe the colour and the amount of dust have changed markedly of late.

"Now you wipe a wall and the dust you get is black," Mr Dahlheimer said.

Mr Dahlheimer has lodged a number of complaints about CS **Energy**, while Mrs Dahlheimer tries to keep on top of the dust in and around the home.

"Each complaint has been thoroughly investigated by CS **Energy** and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has been informed of these complaints and investigation findings," the CS **Energy** spokesman said.

"In each case investigated to date, it has been found that CS **Energy** has met all of its environmental obligations."

That means Bill and Lyn Dahlheimer are stuck doing not just the normal things associated with running 90 registered breeders

and a home and farm, but temporarily destocking paddocks closest to the mine whenever there is a blast.

"That's because of the gases - the oxides of nitrogen - that can be given off during mine blasts, which are done two kilometres away from our boundary."

CS **Energy** informs the Dahlheimers well in advance of the blasts taking place, and two have occurred this year.

"Then we move the cattle up around the house, which is a kilometre back (from the river) to give them a bit of protection."

Mr Dahlheimer said Campbell's Camp had been "a most magic little **property**", but now had little hope of fetching what he

believed was its pre-mine value of about \$1700 per acre.

Mr Dahlheimer said he had contacted the offices of Premier Campbell Newman, Minister for **Energy** and Water Supply Mark McArdle and Treasurer Tim Nicholls, looking for some support in getting his **property sold**. But none has been forthcoming.

"I'm not asking for a donation. We just want to get for our **property** what it was worth before all this started."

Property Rights Australia vice chairman Dale Stiller said one option may be to sell Campbell's Camp at auction and have CS **Energy** pay the Dahlheimers the difference between what it fetches under the hammer and its pre-mine value.

"The Dahlheimers understand bank managers won't approve loans with Campbell's Camp as collateral because they do not believe they could recoup the value of the loan if they have to sell the place up. It's put Bill and Lyn in an awful situation," Mr Stiller said.

The Dahlheimers hope their local MP Howard Hobbs can help them get the government's ear, but they aren't holding their breath. "We've lost four years of our retirement already."

They have engaged a lawyer and are considering legal action if CS **Energy**, currently the subject of a scoping study which may see it privatised, does not help them sell up for what they see as a reasonable price.

"A rural counsellor has told us we should brace ourselves to walk off penniless," Mr Dahlheimer said.

"We'd love to retire and put dollars back in the economy but we're trapped."

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