



8th November 2016

The Director General
The Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Objection to the Anglo American Drayton South Open Cut Mine Proposal

The Upper Hunter Winemakers Association represents the interests of Grape Growers and Winemakers of the Upper Hunter Valley. The Upper Hunter has a long history in the Wine Industry and is an important contributor to the regions prosperity. The areas vineyards and wineries provide significant employment opportunities and the flow on effects of wine tourism create economic, social and cultural benefits to the region. The proposed mine will directly affect some of our individual members and seriously impact the future viability of our industry.

The UHWA has made submissions and presentations to the previous three PAC's and find it extremely disappointing and frustrating that the community has to endure this process for a fourth time. The Strategic Land Use Plan for the Upper Hunter was formulated at great length and was supposed to provide the various industries of the area with some certainty over the future use of our land. As part of this process, areas of the Upper Hunter have been declared to be Critical Industry Clusters for both Viticulture and Thoroughbred Breeding - meaning we are fortunate enough to have a set of *unique* attributes that should be protected and nurtured, a fact that the previous three PAC's have recognised and endorsed.

The UHWA has once again considered this issue at length and our position on this development has not been taken lightly. We support job creation and balanced, sustainable development however this proposal places our industry and its future in the Upper Hunter at risk. The UHWA therefore continues to oppose the Drayton South open cut mine proposal for the following reasons:

1. **Impacts on the Wine Industry** - The proposed mine will directly impact one of the Upper Hunter's key vineyards, Hollydene Estate and the knock on effect will damage the reputation of the Upper Hunter Wine Industry as a whole. The wine and tourism industries need a critical mass to survive and the removal of some of our more prominent vineyards impacts on the viability of the industry and the credibility of this area as a serious wine region.

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There are numerous tourism development proposals that are constrained by current levels of uncertainty created by existing and proposed mining developments. The proposed mine will have a serious impact on the future viability of our industry, which has been already seriously impacted by the rapid expansion of the mining industry in recent years.

2. **Cumulative Impacts** - The Upper Hunter is already a very large coal producer with a high concentration of coal mines in the area. We do not believe that the cumulative impacts of mining in the Upper Hunter have been fully considered. This mine proposal will have an additional impact on the areas dust and noise pollution, leading to further deterioration of the local environment. These impacts will also affect the health and wellbeing of the local communities. The agricultural impact assessment does not adequately address the impacts on neighboring farms or land uses within the area.
3. **Loss of Diversity** - This development will result in the significant loss of agricultural land and a reduction in the agricultural diversity of the area. Our region boasts some of the world's best thoroughbred studs, wineries and a vibrant agricultural sector which enjoys secure access to irrigation water and some of the most fertile land in the country. This region needs balanced development that creates an environment where all industries can survive, grow and prosper.
4. **Critical Industry Clusters** - This proposed mine is within the Critical Industry Cluster area for the viticulture and thoroughbred industries as defined in the Upper Hunter Strategic Land Use Plan.

By the Governments own definition the CIC's must, among other things:

- *Consist of a unique combination of factors such as location, infrastructure, heritage and natural resources*
- *They must be of state, national and/or international importance*
- *And they must contribute to the regions identity*

The wine and thoroughbred industries certainly meet this criteria and we urge the PAC and the Government to uphold the intent of the CIC declaration and protect our industries.

If this mine is allowed to proceed it will undermine the CIC declaration and make a mockery of the entire land use planning process.

5. **Impacts on the Thoroughbred Industry** – This mine will have a dramatic effect on one of the Hunter Valley's most iconic and important industries. The Hunter Valley is one of three centers of excellence for thoroughbred breeding in the world and is home to two of the largest thoroughbred studs in the southern hemisphere; Coolmore and Darley. We are proud that when visitors drive to the Upper Hunter they are greeted by these magnificent studs - it is what sets this region apart.

The proposed Drayton South development, and its impact on the two largest studs in the Hunter Valley, has many parallels with a similar situation that impacted the wine industry.

In 1996 Bob Oatley, who owned the largest wine business in the Hunter Valley, Rosemount Estate campaigned against the proposed Bengalla Coal Mine. At the time, Rosemount was Australia's most successful family owned wine company with some 250 employees, over 1,000 acres of

vineyards and a production facility in Denman that sent wine all over the world. The flow on benefits to the community from this business were enormous.

The matter went to court where Mr Oatley won (twice), however a Government decision overruled the courts and allowed the mine to proceed. The Oatley's then made the decision to exit the Upper Hunter and relocate their business to Mudgee. The once great Rosemount facility – the flagship of the Upper Hunter wine industry is now an empty shell surrounded by a 6' chain wire fence.

The impact of losing this region's leading wine business is still being felt. It has affected the areas reputation as a credible wine region and devastated the viability of vineyards that were established to supply Rosemount. Once the big players and leaders of industry are forced out, the areas credibility is damaged and the flow on effects will impact the rest of the industry, the community and the region as a whole.

We need to learn from the mistakes of the past and make sure the same thing doesn't happen to the thoroughbred industry with the potential loss of Coolmore and Darley. It is unthinkable that the future of these operations could be put at risk.

6. **Visual impact** - The Drayton South mine is located at the gateway to the Upper Hunter wine region and directly opposite an existing vineyard/winery operation (Hollydene Estate) where significant further tourism investment is planned and being undertaken.

The Wine and Thoroughbred industries are fundamentally incompatible with large scale open cut coal mining and cannot co-exist in such close proximity. This new mine proposal is just too close and the impacts are too great.

7. **Water Resources** - The Hunter River is the lifeblood of the Viticulture industry in the Upper Hunter. Any industry that threatens or pollutes and damages this supply of water will threaten the future viability and reputation of the industry. We are not confident that appropriate attention has been paid to this aspect in the environmental assessment.

Should you have any queries or require further information, please contact me on the details below.

I respectfully ask that you register the Upper Hunter Winemakers objection to this proposal and give serious consideration to the above points when assessing the appropriateness of the Drayton South open cut coal Proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Thomas Hordern
PRESIDENT
Upper Hunter Winemakers Association