

I am a member of a family which has farmed cattle in the Upper Hunter for the last 100+ years. I am in my 20's, I have a great love of the land and the Upper Hunter area. I wish to help ensure it remains intact to be enjoyed for future generations. I have major concerns about and oppose the Dartbrook Coal Mine Modification 7 application based on the following:

- I have concerns regarding the direct impact of coal operations on air quality and thereby the health of residents in the Upper Hunter. There have been recent multiple repeated air quality exceedances due to the already existing mine operations in the Upper Hunter. If approved, Dartbrook would only serve to increase exceedances and directly impact the communities of Aberdeen and Scone.
- I don't believe this company, as a new and untried mining company, has the experience to provide or guarantee a safe working environment for local workers. The mine was previously managed by a leading mining company which was unable to contain the issues and resultant risks from gas, spontaneous combustion and flooding; and therefore the mine was mothballed in 2006. I feel there is no evidence that this company can appropriately manage similar issues.
- Our water resources are critical to the residents and the already existing sustainable industries in the area. I do not feel it is appropriate for any amount of risk to be presented to the water resources in the area.
- I feel there should be consideration of the climate change issue and that no further mining operations should be developed in this area. Instead there should be priority and focus placed on development of sustainable industries and renewable energy alternatives to mining.
- I am extremely concerned that the company has indicated that if the underground operation is approved, they will then have the opportunity of proceeding to an open cut operation; thereby exacerbating all concerns already listed above.

I am currently studying an Economics Degree at University with an Agricultural Economics major. I feel enough is enough in the Upper Hunter Region. It is time the Planning Department and the NSW Government realised we need some balance in the equation of mining versus sustainable agricultural businesses. As a future farmer continuing as a fifth generation member of my family in this region, I want to see some certainty and protection of agriculture for my future and generations to come. It's time to start listening to the people who have directly experienced the repercussions of so many other mines in the Upper Hunter, as well as those who will be directly affected by this one.