190a Watkins Road

Wangi Wangi 2267

17 November 2020

Office of the Independent Planning Commission

Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street

Sydney 2000

To the Independent Planning Commission,

My name is Deborah Moore and I am a semi-retired teacher who has taught in the Upper Hunter for the last 28 years. My husband is a retired bloodstock agent and has been involved in the racing industry for over 50 years.

I strongly object to the opening of the Maxwell Underground Mine and ask you to refuse this application for several reasons.

Firstly, and most importantly, is water. Having just come out of a major long-term drought, it defies belief that a mine would be considered in a rural landscape which is home to two major international horse studs. Water is a vital resource for farms and anything that could potentially affect the surface water flow along with the precious groundwater must be a threat to the operation of any farm. Maxwell have admitted to a drop of up to 2 metres in the Hunter River Alluvium, furthermore, it will lower the water table level under the nearby farms.

I cannot believe that we are in 2020 and still having to argue against the establishment of new coal mines. The world is moving on and Climate Change is no longer something that may happen in the future, it is happening right now. We have seen the devastating consequences of the bush fires last year in Australia and as I write, California has lost over 4 million acres in the last couple of months. National Science, Technology and Environmental reporter for the ABC Michael Slezac wrote, “Despite a global pandemic dominating headlines, concern about the impact of climate change is at a record high in Australia, with 80 per cent of people thinking we are already experiencing problems caused by climate change and 83 per cent supporting the closure of coal-fired power stations.” (ABC News 20/10/2020). In addition, SMH journalist [Nick O'Malley](https://www.smh.com.au/by/nick-o'malley-hve9s) wrote on August 15, 2020:

“….Coal’s problem, says Sam Mostyn, an experienced non-executive director and deputy chair of the Centre for Policy Development, is that as the most carbon polluting of fossil fuels it is running out of friends. Around the world central banks and governments are frantically building life rafts to keep key sections of their economies afloat until the pandemic recedes, says Mostyn. But there is not room to save it all. Hard decisions are being made and in some countries, indeed in some regions, coal is being cut adrift.”

Finally, there is the fact that areas of this mine cover five sacred sites of Wannarua Traditional Custodians. We can no longer say that we do not understand the value of sacred sites to the indigenous community. It is totally unacceptable to dismiss this issue. Mines such as this have a very short life span and our indigenous history is the oldest living culture on earth, estimated to be 60 000 years. If we continue to prioritise short term financial gains over the land, we will be leaving a sad legacy for our future generations.

Therefore, we have precious water under threat, the devastating reality of climate change and indigenous sacred ground to consider. I ask that in light of these important issues this approval should not be granted.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to have my say,

Yours sincerely,

Deborah Moore