I would like to strongly object to the proposed underground mining project. I am a racing manager for a Sydney horse trainer based at Warwick Farm racecourse. Despite being based over three hours from the Hunter Valley the jobs of all staff who work in metropolitan Sydney is dependent on the strength of the Hunter Valley as a centre for breeding racehorse. The Hunter Valley is a unique environment in which to breed racehorse and the strength of Sydney racing as a national and indeed international centre for horse racing is directly dependent on its proximity to the place where many of the world’s best racehorse are bred and raised. It is clear that the planned underground mine provide great risk to this natural environment and if the land were to be damaged there is no doubt that the world class stallions and the breeding industry as whole would move elsewhere. If this were to happen and the breeding of such horses moved interstate there is a huge danger that these future champions be trained and race interstate. If this were to happen the jobs of the thousands of people involved directly and indirectly in racing in the Sydney metropolitan area and indeed throughout the state would be put at risk.

Whilst I appreciate that the planned mine would present some economic benefit; it is worth noting the changing global attitudes to coal. As the rest of the world presses towards being carbon neutral by 2050, if not earlier, in the long term this coal may not even be worth digging up. It would be a particular shame where this mine to be built and destroy the racing industry, only for the resource it is being built to dig up become effectively worthless.