

20 November, 2020

To the Independent Planning Commission,

I write in strong opposition to the Maxwell Underground Proposal.

The Hunter Valley has the honour of being considered one of three centres of excellence for the breeding of thoroughbred racehorses in the world. A status that will be severely compromised should this proposal be granted approval.

Coolmore Australia has a long history of producing some of the best racehorses seen in Australia, and plays host to some of the world's most successful and important stallions whilst standing at stud. The treatment of horses under their care is of the highest possible standard; ensuring progeny that thrive and go on to take their place in racing history.

Access to water is vital in the operation of any successful agricultural enterprise, and a stud farm is no different. Coolmore Australia is dependent on the flow of the Hunter River to provide a continuous, reliable, good quality water source – ensuring healthy horses, cattle, and pastures.

The potential impact of this mine on the Hunter River is significant, and of great concern. This impact is unable to be reliably confirmed and quantified at the present time, leaving enormous uncertainty.

Those advocating for the approval of this mine quote the creation of jobs in the area as a benefit. However, based on the figures circulated it would appear that the number of jobs the mine will allegedly create will not be significantly different to the number of those potentially lost if the impact on both Coolmore Australia, and Godolphin is such that their operations can no longer continue to their current standard.

The presence of an additional mine may create a job, but it will not create a community – in the way that community created by the presence of Horse Studs in the area. The majority of staff live on premises; they shop locally; they socialise locally; their children go to school here and add to culture of the community. Miners will travel from their place of residence, work their shift, before returning home.

Further to this, there are many local businesses that are dependent upon Coolmore Australia for their own business success. It has long been Coolmore Australia's preference to source from local providers whether it be for motor vehicles, horse supplies, hay, IT consultants, or irrigation parts. Coolmore Australia's commitment and contribution to the surrounding area is not inconsequential, by any means.

If the supply, and or quality, of the water is affected by the Maxwell Coal project, the potential impact of removing Coolmore Australia and their business operations from the Hunter Valley would be decimating to the local community. Coolmore Australia has been breeding horses for a very long time, with plans to be here well into the future; considerably longer than the coal seams are likely to last.

I appeal to you to consider these impacts.

Kind regards

Alison Murphy

Accountant – Coolmore Australia