

9 March 2021

Office of the Independent Planning Commission  
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

To whom it may concern

## **Mangoola Coal Project**

The Hunter Business Chamber (the Chamber) is the largest regional business chamber in Australia. Established in 1886, the Chamber independently represents over 3,000 member and affiliate businesses to all levels of government and is the peak business and industry association in the Hunter region, reflecting the interests of all sectors of the economy.

The Chamber is an integral part of the Business NSW and Business Australia networks. We advocate to local, state and federal government for business-positive policies that promote investment and growth to deliver flow-on benefits to all in our community.

The Chamber notes the Mangoola open cut coal mine is an operation within the Hunter region. The Chamber is supportive of the proposed extension of the project submitted by Mangoola Coal Operations Pty Ltd and particularly the economic and social benefits the project would bring to the local area and the region.

The Chamber is well aware of the role and significance of the mining industry in terms of the entire Hunter region. The industry supports the economic wellbeing of the Hunter and also directly supports a number of communities that rely on its employment and patronage. This is in the context of the largest regional economy in Australia with a gross regional product in excess of \$50bn – an economy which ranks above that of Tasmania, the ACT or the Northern Territory. Mining represents over 38 per cent of the output of the region and accounts for around 10 per cent of employment. The industry employment rate is far greater in the Upper Hunter and, in particular, around the centres of Muswellbrook and Singleton.

The Chamber believes the region needs to support projects where they highlight real net economic and social benefits and have demonstrated and documented a capacity to meet or exceed the requirements of the planning assessment process. We note the Mangoola application includes an assessment of the economic and social impacts of the proposal and where negative impacts are generated, there is means to mitigate the effects. It is also an extension to an existing project, the circumstances of which are well understood. The proposal will enable mining to continue through to 2030 with no change to current approved maximum production levels or train movements, and using existing major infrastructure, such as the coal preparation plant, rail loop, workshop, emplacement areas and administration facilities.

We understand the project will provide ongoing employment for up to 480 operational employees and temporary employment of up to 45 construction workers. The Chamber notes that 73 per cent of current employees at the Mangoola Mine live within the Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter LGAs.

We also understand the project will support more than 330 Hunter businesses during the estimated nine-year operation of the mine and will generate income in the local area of around \$92.6 million to 2030. The flow-on economic benefits are also significant and have the capacity to generate \$408 million to the NSW economy.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit to the Commission and would be pleased to provide further information if required.

Yours sincerely



**Bob Hawes**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Hunter Business Chamber**