


Rockingham Thoroughbreds Pty Ltd



23rd November, 2016

Commission Secretariat
Planning Assessment Commission
Level 3
201 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000

**Re: Objection to Drayton South Coal Project Application Number: SSD
6875**

I write to express my objection to the referenced application.

Dear Commission Members,

I write to you as an active participant in the Australian racing and breeding industry. The bulk of my breeding stock currently resides at Coolmore Australia and has done so since the sale of my family's Denman based property to Godolphin in 2008. My family's involvement and passion for the racing industry is extensive having bred and raced champion horses Octagonal and Lonhro. More recently we have owned and maintain interests in Cox Plate winning stallion Adelaide, Golden Slipper winner Capitalist and the winner of this year's Melbourne Cup, Almandin.

The rationale for keeping our breeding stock at Coolmore is twofold. First and foremost the service provided by Coolmore is second to none. The land on which the stud is situated is unquestionably some of the best to be found in Australia, as is the experience and standard of care brought by the staff that Coolmore employ. This is self-evident when one considers the list of champion thoroughbreds that have been raised on the farm. As long established commercial breeders and owners, we understand that it is essential that our stock are given every chance to fulfil their genetic potential. We are unequivocal in our belief that an approval of the Drayton South mine will subject our foals and broodmares to variables that may compromise this. Thoroughbreds are famously sensitive to environmental factors, perhaps most notably noise and dust. To subject them to the impacts of


mine dust and blasting from an open cut coal mine less than a kilometre away in the name of 'coexistence' is undoubtedly ludicrous.

The second reason for keeping our breeding stock with Coolmore is the world class stallions that it gives us near immediate access to. It is hard to overstate the role that these world class stallions have had in the success of our breeding programme. Both Coolmore and Godolphin stand a greater number of commercial stallions than any other operation in the Southern Hemisphere. Should these two operations relocate outside the Hunter Valley, it is inevitable that our stock would have to move accordingly. I can also say with a considerable degree of certainty that we would not be alone in relocating our stock in the event of these moves proceeding. The reasons for a breeder wishing to base their mares in close proximity to the country's leading stallions are innumerable and range from the economic practicality of mitigating/reducing transport costs which however must be considered in context to the service fee, through to the fact that there is a time sensitive window within which a mare is fit to be covered and must be presented to the stallion. Consequently it is with confidence that I can assert that the broodmares in the Hunter Valley would ultimately follow the stallions. The economic consequences for the breeding industry in NSW would unquestionably be stark.

I understand that it has been argued that were Coolmore and Godolphin to leave the region, that they would duly be replaced by newcomers to the industry. I believe this rationale to be unfounded. Both Coolmore and Godolphin are multimillion dollar operations with a global presence. Their reputation, experience and resources are considerable, but this has been over 20 years in the making. To assume that a newcomer could seamlessly occupy the void that would be left by these two operations blindly ignores the time, experience and financial investment it has taken for them to cultivate their previous and current stallion rosters. To assume that they could be replaced overnight is simply naïve.

Consequently I urge you to reject this application on the grounds that it would potentially force the relocation of both Godolphin and Coolmore which would invariably result in near imminent, irreparable damage to the NSW breeding industry.

Yours sincerely,


John Ingham 