

37

**2016 SUBMISSION**

**DRAYTON SOUTH**

**ALLEN BARRY**

## **OBJECTION TO DRAYTON SOUTH – NOVEMBER 2016**

**Author – Allen Barry**

**Land holder – Jerry's Plains**

**Engaged In – Equine Industry**

**Engaged In – Tourism**

**Engaged In – Beef Production**

**Fifth Generation – Upper Hunter**

**Contact – 0417 498964**

### **Drayton South Should Not Be Approved**

***“Regional NSW is full of hard-working, decent people that want to see their Government supporting them and otherwise let them live their lives as they see fit.” Troy Grant – 15 November 2016***

I wish he practiced what he preached. One of the benefits of living in a democracy **should be** that elected officials and non- elected government officers work in the best interests of all constituents. Well if you live in the Upper Hunter and are opposed to further expansion of coal mining or try to engage in sustainable business, you are left with no doubt whatsoever that you are a second class citizen with less access to politicians, government officials and certainly less rights. Tell me that I am exaggerating when you consider that government has supported the mining industry in crushing the community of Bulga and introducing legislation to prevent VOTERS from appealing mining approvals. Tell me that I am exaggerating when you consider that the proposed new mine Drayton South has been rejected on three previous occasions, yet members of the public are forced to present at this PAC, the fourth PAC, effectively to beg for the right to lead their lives and operate their businesses, quoting Troy Grant 'AS THEY SEE FIT', without the continuous pressure of uncontrolled mining expansion.

The fact that we are here today demonstrates the unhealthy relationship that the mining industry has with the Department of Planning and successive NSW governments from both sides of politics.

Three PACs have rejected this mine yet the Department of Planning keeps approving it! There is no mechanism to stop this continued abuse of process by Anglo American and the mining industry as a whole. It is beyond belief.

### **The Government**

Where are the politicians? I can tell you where they are, worried more about the health and wellbeing of greyhounds than the health and wellbeing of the people of the Upper Hunter who are not involved in coal mining. That health and wellbeing extends to the mine workers who have been used as political pawns in this process. Again, normal people living with uncertainty due to politicians too scared to make firm and clear decisions and the Department of Planning who are still working under the rules that were set under a then corrupt Labor Government.

True, this coalition government didn't start this debacle that honor lies with the previous Labor Government. I was told by one Craig Munnings a then senior staff member of corrupt minister Ian MacDonald, that in relation to mining, 'NSW was for sale. Too right it was! Nothing can exemplify this more than the EL that was issued that covered the Jerrys Plains cemetery, where my father, his father and his father are buried.

Despite all of their promises in opposition and as a new government, the Coalition has continued to bury their collective heads in the sand and do nothing to protect those people and those industries who are not involved in mining. In fact, they have followed Labor's footsteps and in some cases behaved far worse, with far less social or moral conscience than any government that has preceded them, by openly supported coal mining against the people who elected them. What should have happened 20 years ago was buffer zones around towns, farming land, horse studs and vineyards. It didn't happen. This should have happened when this government came to government. It didn't happen. Why, because individually and collectively this government is gutless and/or either intimidated by, beholdng to or in bed with the mining industry.

The '4 SALE' mentality was the forerunner to a now out of control mining sector in the Upper Hunter, an industry that cannot and will not accept the umpire's decision, a sector that continues to look at every option to expand their unhealthy control of the Upper Hunter, a sector that is aggrieved if things don't go their way.

Why shouldn't the mining industry feel agrieved? Pretty simple, the mining industry has no experience at all in losing. They have been and continue to believe that they are a law unto themselves, an industry that once an EL is established that a mining license will follow as night follows day, an industry that talks about 'co-existence' through gritted teeth.

## **People Opposed To Mining Expansion**

Today, you must recognize that people and organisations who are opposed to the further expansion of mining in the Upper Hunter that have continued to front up at PAC meetings, spending millions of dollars and tens of thousands of man hours trying to arrest a problem that the Department of Planning has created and Government has failed to address. Why are normal people mobilizing in their thousands against the expansion of coal mining in the Upper Hunter. Clearly, a million blowflies can't be wrong. Something is off, something is out of balance. Yet, even after three rejections if you approve the Drayton South Mine, that is it, it's all over, mining wins again! It's like playing solitaire on your computer. If you don't like the cards you get, just redeal until you do.

## **Community Conflict**

There is enormous conflict in the Upper Hunter in relation to mining and proposed mining expansion. Mate against mate, family against family. Why, because mining and mining expansion has created such an imbalance in the area that any further expansion will impact on the future sustainability of the Upper Hunter. I hope that the members of PAC 4 have had a chance to look at the Upper Hunter from the air where you would see the enormity of the mining footprint. I trust that you have taken note of the wonderful air quality that we are forced to confront on a daily basis.

The reality is that the mining industry has expanded 18 fold since 1981 in the Hunter all on the back of high coal prices which no longer exist. The mining industry in the Hunter now has over 40 open cut mines and 5 underground operations currently operating. The mining industry is the mines that cover over 30,000 hectares of land in the Hunter Valley. The mining industry includes the companies that hold exploration licenses over some 60% of the Hunter Valley. This is not co-existence. It is a straight-out take over and social engineering.

Whether we like it or not, the coal mining is not sustainable. No doubt you will see in submissions and have heard today about the buoyant nature of coal prices and how this will solve all of Australia's monetary problems. What we really should be talking about today is how the internal policy of another country (China) can have such an impact on our GDP. What will happen to coal prices when China reopens the mines that they have closed and reintroduces 365 days a year production? You don't have to be Einstein to work out what will happen to the coal price.

## **Drayton South**

One of the Department of Plannings' justification for the last approval was 'overwhelming community support' for the Drayton South project, a great deal of which was generated through various kiosks that Anglo American Coal has set

up in the community. Most of the support will be around, jobs and the livelihood of the community. The recent downturn in coal prices leading to job losses and a downturn in spending by mining companies, clearly showed how vulnerable a community based on one industry is. However, the real concern in this process is the potential job losses in equine, wine and tourism industries in the Hunter Valley should this mine be approved..

Government is entrusted with, and should be responsible for, ensuring sustainability for the Upper Hunter, not only for today but for next 100 years. By focusing on today only and approving Drayton South and other extensions such as Warkworth which is in the process of destroying Bulga, government will assign the Upper Hunter to become a social and environmental waste land.

Why, because the only certainty in this debate is that mining will one day not exist in the Hunter Valley. This may be as a result of the resource being exhausted, coal prices falling, a greater awareness of the health impacts of coal mining and/or the now rapid expansion and uptake of renewable energy. As an aside, everyone is worked up about China, yet China is the biggest user and developer of renewable energy in the world. There are 2 million people in China working in the renewable energy field.

Whatever the catalyst, coal mining will disappear in a relatively short time in terms of known civilization. It may be a generation, it may be two, but it will end. Government must ensure that there is balance in the Upper Hunter NOW, to ensure that sustainable industries will continue to prosper and there still is an Upper Hunter in 100 years.

### **Sustainable Industries**

Mining poses a threat to sustainable industries in the Hunter Valley, most importantly the thoroughbred breeding industry, the wine makers and the tourism industry.

The proposed Drayton South has a direct impact on the thoroughbred breeding industry, specifically the Coolmore and Darley studs. The real fear in this process is that Coolmore and Darley will leave the Hunter Valley should the Drayton South mine be approved. Coolmore and Darley are the heart of the thoroughbred breeding INDUSTRY in the Upper Hunter. Without these two studs, there is NO thoroughbred breeding INDUSTRY in the Upper Hunter.

Coolmore and Darley are two massive operations that are recognized around the world. Pictures of the studs should be used by the government to showcase the State instead of threatening their very existence. Coolmore and Darley are not the understated operations as described in some of the Department of Planning documentation.

They are not operations that anyone else could come in and replicate on these properties and run like Darley and Coolmore, as the Department has previously suggested. Every stud in the Upper Hunter feeds off or is reliant on Coolmore and/or Darley in some way. Every agistment property feeds off or is reliant in some way on Coolmore and/or Darley. The support businesses created by the mere presence of Coolmore and Darley and supported by these two businesses is massive.

Coolmore and Darley are THE HEART of the thoroughbred breeding INDUSTRY in Australia, and will remain so, wherever they are located in this country. It just so happens **that at the moment** they are here, in the Upper Hunter, in the path of overseas mining companies.

Will the thoroughbred industry in the Upper Hunter collapse if the Drayton South Mine is approved and Coolmore and Darley leave? Without a doubt YES. Secondary level studs would follow the two main studs. Studs without the capital to follow will fold. Support industries such as equine hospitals, agistment farms, farriers, veterinarians, fencers, farm staff, so on and so on, would all be without work. The job losses, the business closures and relocations would far exceed the losses in the Drayton South project and spread more widely through the Upper Hunter. An industry would be destroyed, along with a large part of the future of the Upper Hunter.

### **Land Rehabilitation**

Mine site rehabilitation is the 'elephant in the room', the next major issue that government must address for the entire mining industry. The Drayton mine is the first mine to close in NSW. Mine rehabilitation does not materialize until a mine closes. This is a major issue for Anglo American. There is around \$65 million in rehabilitation to be done.

A previous PAC has criticized Anglo American for their lack of rehab on the Drayton site. You only have to look from the air and see the lack of rehabilitation work that has been done across the entire Upper Hunter, including the Drayton site. In the past, it has been so much more economical for mining companies for the Department of Planning to grant an extension, or a mine to go into 'care and maintenance'. The result NO REHAB. Even miners are saying privately that unless something is done now, the area could turn into an economic wasteland.

People smarter than me estimate there is at least 1 billion dollars in rehab to be done in the Upper Hunter, again \$65 million required by Anglo American. Pretty good reason to try and sell it. More importantly, if Anglo American are successful at this PAC, whether they sell it or mine it, Anglo American or a new owner will not have to complete the rehabilitation on the first mine site until the cessation of the second site. Is this in the best interest of the Upper Hunter?

## Activism

I am not an activist. I am not a socialist. I am politically conservative by nature, something that I now question given the broken promises made by the coalition whilst in opposition. I consider the environment wherever I may be, at all times, but I am not a greenie. I am pro-business.

There is a ground swell of unrest in many many communities throughout Australia, not the least the Upper Hunter over coal mining and coal seam gas extraction.

This unrest is being played out on radio, television, print media and the internet on a daily basis. The feeling is that things must change. The feeling is enough is enough! Mining has gone too far in the Upper Hunter.

At the same time, residents in affected areas, including mine workers, are sick with worry. The stress levels are beyond description and have been unabated for years! This is a direct result of an inept and untruthful Department of Planning and poor business acumen by successive governments.

## Custodians Of The Future

As custodians of the future, the government and the people must look past this generation and the next generation towards a sustainable future for the Upper Hunter. Mining is not sustainable to any stretch of the imagination. Once the coal is gone or the price falls, the jobs are gone, so are the people, so is the environment.

On the other hand, wine, tourism and thoroughbred breeding industries are all long term sustainable enterprises. These industries will be sustainable for the next 200 years if and I say a big if, the conditions that makes these industries strong in the Upper Hunter are not further destroyed by mining.

The starting point is to ensure that the heart of the thoroughbred breeding industry, Coolmore and Darley do not leave the Upper Hunter. To this end, you must reject the proposed **new mine**, Drayton South.

Further, the government should put an end to this farce and clearly ban future open cut and underground mining within 9 kilometers of critical industries such as horse studs, wineries, towns and quality farm land.

Government should govern for everyone, not a few and especially not corporations over individuals.

Allen Barry

**2015 SUBMISSION**

**ALLEN BARRY**



8th September 2015

**OBJECTION TO DRAYTON SOUTH**

**Author – Allen Barry**

**Land holder – Jerry's Plains**

**Engaged In – Equine Industry**

**Engaged In – Tourism**

**Engaged In – Beef Production**

**Fifth Generation – Upper Hunter**

**Contact – 0417 498964**

***“The big increase in mining profits in 2012, from which the Australian government’s budget benefited handsomely, was due to an unsustainable boom in Chinese steel production.....The commodity bubble upon which this country’s view of itself has been based is over, and probably won’t be coming back...If it comes back, it won’t be for a long time, and it won’t be the same...Australia needs a new strategy...”***

***Alan Kohler – The Australian – 1 September 2015***

## OBJECTION TO DRAYTON SOUTH – SEPTEMBER 2015

### ***“Anglo American To Cut Thousands of Jobs And Sell Off Assets.”***

Australian Mining on 27 July 2015

***“Anglo American will cut 6000 jobs and sell a number of assets in a bid to right-size the company after posting a \$US3 billion write down for the first half of 2015.”***

### ***“Severe mining downturn forces Anglo American to slash jobs and sell assets.”***

Courier Mail on 27 July 2015

***“We will make tough calls. At the end of the day if two or three projects are not able to be sold we will close them if they are losing money.”***

### **Drayton South Should Not Be Approved**

A major part of the push by Anglo American and the Department of Planning for the approval of the Drayton South mine is job security and continuity of employment for the Drayton mine employees. The two articles referenced above which quotes senior Anglo officials, cast significant doubt that should the mine be approved that the 400 (alleged) employees will have any job security. Anglo American are in 'sell mode' with a number of mines including in Australia, up for sale. Anglo American expects to further reduce their workforce worldwide to a figure which will be 35% less than their current employee level once they sell an allocated number of mines. Non profitable mines will simply be closed (tough calls).

These articles are freely available on the internet. Yet, none of this information appears in the Department of Planning recommendation for approval document. Anglo American officials who provided information to the Department of Planning must have been aware of it. Department of Planning officials should have been aware of it, either through diligent research or seeking the correct information from Anglo American. Yet the complete opposite appears, in writing, to support justification for the approval of this mine. Is it **incompetence or dishonesty?**

Whether it be incompetence or dishonesty, clearly job security **cannot** be guaranteed to any of the current Drayton employees if the Drayton South project is approved, based on the current business plan of Anglo American. Anglo Americans' position also significantly weakens the plea from support businesses that their livelihood depends on the mine being approved, with a quoted **reduction of \$1billion in capital expenditure** by the end of 2016.

If Anglo are closing or selling mines, why not Drayton South? I trust that the PAC sees through the deceptions and misinformation that permeates the Department of Planning recommendation for approval and the propaganda war that Anglo American is waging.

We have reached a critical point for the future of the Upper Hunter. As a community member, I believed that we had worked through this critical point concerning Drayton South on two previous occasions, with respected community leaders showing vision for the future of the area. Vision, objectivity and balance are qualities severely lacking within the Department of Planning and in successive State Governments.

I agree with Alan Kohler, Australia needs a new strategy. Any business that continues to follow the same path when confronted with commercial adversity is doomed. The NSW Government is our major State based business. Yet in the face of continually falling commodity prices, large strategic investors moving away from investment in coal mines, international mining companies quitting or reducing their market exposure, global warming concerns (real or perceived) and a massive global push for renewable energy sources, the NSW Government continues to support mining development, above all other sustainable industries, with a hope that prices will return and royalties will again flow in abundance to them. The government, through the inertia driven Department of Planning, is setting the Upper Hunter up to fail. Should the Upper Hunter fail, there will be no recovery.

The Department of Planning appears to be entirely focused on ensuring that major projects comply with regulation, rather than preparing the State, or parts of it, for potential change. Rather than plan for decline of the coal industry, the department works with the coal industry to refine mine assessments, to make them 'work'.

The Drayton South project is a classic example, with two recommendations for approval of the mine by the department followed by two rejections by PACs. I trust that you will review the previous approvals. The commonality of the documents is striking. What does this show? Sheer laziness on the part of the Department of Planning and a lack of vision for the State of NSW, its people and the environment.

The **past** is the critical word. There is enough evidence to suggest that the past is the past and will not be the future. This has been recognised by community leaders in the Upper Hunter in March 2015 in a forum to address the future of mining in the Upper Hunter.

I quote from the Singleton Argus (underlining added), 31 March 2025.

***Dr. Ellem, a conjoint senior lecturer at Newcastle University's School of Environment and Life Science, said one of the drivers for innovation would be sensible and smart regulation.***

***"...While the industry is planning for open mines in the Upper Hunter to cease production in the next 15-20 years market conditions may have a greater impact on this outcome. Dr. Ellem said China was the biggest driver in coal demand is pushing ahead with plans to become energy self-sufficient.***

***"Should this happen then we won't see another coal boom but if China fails in this drive then we may see coal prices rise again," he said. When asked what his opinion of China's likely success, he said given their history one would expect them to become self-sufficient.***

Irrespective of whether coal prices return or not, the process that the government has followed to date smacks of a lack of proper and rigorous risk management strategy for the **entire** region.

Significant risks have been clearly established, sufficient to reject further coal mine expansion in the Upper Hunter, yet the government is clearly happy to gamble with the future of other sustainable industries, the thoroughbred industries, viticulture and general farming to 'protect' what has been a significant cash contributor to the economy in the **past**.

This is not responsible government. It demonstrates that we have the wrong people in control, elected representatives and public servants who are ill equipped to run our most important business, the State.

## **Commercial Viability Of Drayton South**

I have no qualifications to assess the commercial viability of the Drayton South Project. I can only comment on what has unfolded during this process.

At the first PAC meeting, senior executives of Anglo clearly stated that the mine would not be commercially viable unless it was approved in its entirety. This theme is well documented throughout Anglo American's submissions, PAC reports and the Department of Planning's own reports (including those of their advisers).

It is a 'remarkable' achievement that in such a short time period, even allowing for historically low coal prices, this reduced footprint is now viable. It may be that Anglo American has moved to improved technology or reduce their cost base to prove the profitability of the proposed Drayton South mine.

## **Job Security**

This is a critical issue when one considers that the Department of Planning received over 4000 public submissions supporting the project, citing job security and the broader economic benefits of the project. The Department of Planning and Anglo American **continually** refers to the 400 odd jobs that the project would save if it was to go ahead. I do not question the rationale of the support, only to say that this support is focused on the **now** and not supported by industry trends and statements made by Anglo American.

I will address the issue of **now** at a later point in my submission. However, two ways that Anglo American can reduce their cost base is to reduce their reliance on manpower and increase their reliance on technology. It is clear that this is a management/financial strategy that the mining industry in Australia has been following since 2012, with approximately 8,500 jobs lost in the mining industry, a significant proportion in the Hunter Valley.

In actual fact, Anglo American's strategy was set out in Australian Mining on 27 July 2015 in an article (underline added) entitled –

### **Anglo American To Cut Thousands of Jobs And Sell Off Assets.**

The article:-

***“Anglo American will cut 6000 jobs and sell a number of assets in a bid to right-size the company after posting a \$US3 billion write down for the first half of 2015. The miner reported a half-year profit before tax of \$1.9 billion, or 36 per cent less than in the same period last year, blaming weaker commodity prices.***

***Commodity price-driven impairments totaled \$US3.5 billion after tax...Anglo says it is now focused on accelerated cost and capex reductions to mitigate price weakness. The company is targeting a saving of \$US500 million through the reduction of 6,000 overhead and other indirect roles.***

***It also expects to generate at least \$US3 billion in proceeds from the sale of assets, reducing its assets from 55 to 40. Anglo said once these assets are sold, total employment will be reduced by 35 per cent, or 53,000 roles.***

***Capital expenditure is also under the spotlight, with Anglo targeting additional capital expenditure reductions of \$US1 billion by the end of 2016.***

***Anglo CEO Mark Cutifani said the first six months of 2015 saw considerable further price decreases for its products amidst a volatile market environment and economic uncertainty in certain key markets. “Looking to the balance of this year and into next, I expect the current period of volatile markets and economic uncertainty, fuelled in part by pockets of geopolitical tension, to continue,” Cutifani said.”***

The anomaly is that the Department of Planning and Anglo American have constantly pressed the point that by approving this project will save 400 odd jobs. This is a critical point in the argument for the mine approval. However, this statement is completely at odds with what is actually happening in the broader industry, what is predicted in the industry and Anglo American has publicly stated. The bottom line is, even if the mine was to be approved, none of the Anglo employees are certain of any continuity of employment. Yet the Department of Planning and the government blindly quote saving these jobs as one of the key issues for the mine approval.

Will Anglo American guarantee every job of every current employee?  
Statements by their own CEO show that the answer is a clear **no!** In fact, if the mine is approved, Anglo American may not own it in the future. I refer to an article in the Courier Mail on 27 July 2015 (underlining added) entitled:-

**Severe mining downturn forces Anglo American to slash jobs and sell assets**

***“MORE Queensland coal jobs are in doubt after global mining company Anglo American said it would sack 53,000 of its workers around the world and sell off a swag of its assets as the mining downturn hits its lowest point. While predicting an even tougher six months ahead, the company said it will move from 151,000 employees to about 98,000 after previously shedding about 10,000 people in its first wave of massive job cuts.***

***The London-based company was hit with a \$US3 billion (\$A4.1 billion) loss for the first six months which foreshadows a nightmare reporting season for Australian mining companies...***

***Anglo has not detailed where the jobs will go but it has a coal office in Brisbane and said losses will occur in its regional headquarters.***

***It also has a handful of coal mines in Australia including Moranbah North, Capcoal, Foxleigh, Dawson and Callide in Queensland and Drayton in NSW. Dawson and Foxleigh have already been slated for sale if Anglo can find a buyer.***

***About 12,000 jobs have already gone from the coal sector and an upturn in the near future appears unlikely. Anglo’s chief executive Mark Cutifani said the challenges for the company were considerable and prices were continuing to deteriorate but the transformation of the company was progressing...***

**“We will make tough calls. At the end of the day if two or three projects are not able to be sold we will close them if they are losing money.**

***I expect the operational turnaround to generate \$US1.2 billion of underlying earnings before tax over the next 18 months, in addition to the \$US1.7 billion already delivered,” he said. “Having defined our portfolio and significantly improved operational performance now is the right time to accelerate the right-sizing of the organisation that supports the future of the business.***

***Anglo is targeting 14 of its projects around the world for sale and a \$500 million cost saving through the reduction of 6000 overhead and indirect roles. Overall, it expects to shed 35 per cent of its staff...”***

#### **Future Coal Markets**

What about our future markets for coal? China and India are two of the main areas for export of Australian coal (current and potential). China currently uses 50 percent of the world's coal. As indicated, academics believe that China is working towards internal sustainability. Yet, China is also the largest developer and user of renewable energy. Is this a growth market or a shrinking market?

According to the Asia-Pacific Journal, volume 12, issue 44, 3 November 2014:-

***“We highlight that while the Chinese energy system as a whole is shifting in a green direction, at its leading edge (where new capacity is being added, and fresh electrical energy generated) it is turning green very rapidly. This provides a foundation for predicting future directions for the system as a whole, and eventual reductions in absolute carbon emissions.***

***We note that China’s increasing reliance on renewables is consistent with a concern to enhance energy security, based on the observation that renewables are products of manufacturing rather than of extractive activities.”***



## Sustainable Industries In The Upper Hunter

Mining poses an enormous threat to sustainable industries in the Hunter Valley, most importantly the thoroughbred breeding industry, the wine makers and the tourism industry. This is due to the unbelievable spread of mining over the last two decades.

The Drayton South application is a prime example of the reasons behind the enormous conflict that exists in the Upper Hunter in relation to mining and proposed mining expansion. Mining and mining expansion has created such an imbalance in the area that any further expansion will impact on the future sustainability of the Upper Hunter.

The reality is that the mining industry has expanded 18 fold since 1981 in the Hunter all on the back of high coal prices which no longer exist. The mining industry in the Hunter now has over 40 open cut mines and 5 underground operations currently operating. The mining industry is the mines that covers over 30,000 hectares of land in the Hunter Valley. The mining industry includes the companies that hold exploration licenses over some 60% of the Hunter Valley.

This is not co-existence. It has been a straight out take over and a classic example of social engineering. A clear barometer of the negative impact that mining has on the community, including the effect on miners, is shown in the local news articles from the Singleton Argus from 1 January 2015 to 30 August 2015. Of the approximate 660 local news items, which includes police matters, elections, sporting achievements, individual achievements, normal community interest stories, articles relating to the impact of mining account for approximately **17 percent** of all local news. This is staggering and in itself is a telling indicator.

This is a real and present problem that the current NSW Government seems unwilling to address. It is stuck in the past, hoping and praying that mining will return to the days when royalties just roll in. There are absolutely no indicators that this will **ever** occur. Where is the government planning for the next decade, the next 50 to 100 years for the Hunter Valley? The lack of leadership and vision from the Department of Planning and the current State Government is almost beyond belief.

## Coolmore & Darley

The proposed Drayton South has a direct impact on the thoroughbred breeding industry, specifically the Coolmore and Darley studs. The real fear in this process is that Coolmore and Darley will leave the Hunter Valley should the Drayton South mine be approved.

Coolmore and Darley are the heart of the thoroughbred breeding **industry** in the Hunter. Without these two studs, there is **no** thoroughbred breeding **industry** in the Hunter, of any consequence.

Following is a direct quotation (underline added) from the latest Department of Planning approval for Drayton South. This paragraph on its own should be sufficient to justify the rejection of the Anglo American application.

**“The Hunter thoroughbred industry is one of the largest and most important thoroughbred breeding clusters in the world, along with Newmarket in the United Kingdom and Kentucky in the USA... The industry produces around half of all the thoroughbred horses in Australia and around 70% of Australia’s thoroughbred horse exports. The industry generates around \$300 million in income each year, including horse exports estimated at over \$100 million....The industry is also a significant employer in the region, directly providing jobs for around 1,100 people and a significant contributor to the regional economy with over 85% of all operating costs being spent in the region ...”**

If the Hunter thoroughbred industry is one of the largest and most important thoroughbred breeding clusters in the world, why would the Department of Planning recommend a mine on their doorstep? It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever to jeopardise the longevity of Coolmore and/or Darley in the Hunter Valley by adding another mine to the area.

The Department of Planning has not altered its assault on industries other than mining, showing enormous bias, a lack of knowledge of the operation of horse studs in particular and/or a lack of understanding of the status of both Coolmore and Darley in terms of their influence and reach over the thoroughbred breeding industry in the Hunter Valley, in Australia and across the world.

I quote from the most recent approval document (underline added):-

**“While there remains some uncertainty, the Departments view is that the changes to the mine plan have shifted the weight of evidence significantly... the project would not result in adverse impacts on the health of horses...”** page 6

If there is **uncertainty** in the risk assessment of the Department concerning animal welfare how can they say that the project would not have adverse impact on the health of horses! The comments are at odds with each other and consequently have no credibility. Uncertainty equals risk. Risk to such unique operations should support a rejection of the mine.

Again, I quote from the most recent Department approval document:-

***“While the Department accepts that reasonable people may disagree about the significance that should be given to these impacts, it has concluded***

***-they can be mitigated to some degree***

***- are common in the Hunter Valley where mines are located in close proximity to several horse studs in the Equine Critical Industry Cluster and***

***-are unavoidable consequences of co-existence of these two important industries in the valley.”***

I will comment on these value judgements.

### **Mitigation**

An extremely important point that you must consider is given the massive expansion of mining in the Upper Hunter over the last two decades, how many mines has the thoroughbred industry protested against, prior to Drayton South? The answer is **one**. Why now? Because the Drayton South mine and other proposed mines will impact to an unacceptable level on their business operations. Whatever mitigation proposed is simply not sufficient. If co-existence is a real concept in this debate, greater weight must be given to a massive industry such as the thoroughbred breeding industry, who merely seeks to carry on their business in the manner in which they choose, in a sustainable environment.

### **Impacts of Mining Common In The Hunter**

Yes, impacts of mining are common in the Upper Hunter. I feel extremely fortunate that in the Drayton South matter that businesses such as Coolmore and Darley are prepared to fight for the area. Otherwise, the **new** Drayton mine would already be operating, such is the lack of empathy from the Department of

Planning and successive governments for any other business/person in the Upper Hunter who is not involved in mining.

There are countless examples where landholders have been isolated by mining companies and 'forced' to sell their land for mining against their will. One of my own family's properties was taken after a fight that went on for decades. That was a property which was first settled by our family in the early 1800s.

Yes, mining is common in the Upper Hunter. How could it not be when successive governments, directed by the same Department of Planning has issued ELs for over 60% of the Hunter Valley.

In the last decade, of the many ELs issued, this Department issued an EL to Peabody Mining that took in parts of the township of Jerry's Plains including the cemetery where my father, grandfather and great grandfather are buried. This Department issued an EL and supported Doyles Creek Mining with their EL that was found to be issued corruptly.

What did not come out in the media was that the proposal included allowing Doyles Creek Mine to set up the entrance to the mine within the designated town limits of Jerry's Plains, stockpiling coal at the back of the town and operate the mine 24x7. I could go on. The salient point is, how can any weight be given or any trust bestowed on the judgement of the Department of Planning.

Yes, the impacts of mining in the Upper Hunter are common, but also horrendous and totally unacceptable. We have learnt to live with it always believing that when a mine was supposed to finish it would, averting your eyes away from mines at certain locations, accepting the constant dust haze over the valley, accepting the black dust in your house as part of the 'greater good'.

**Our guests who stay at our farm stay at Jerry's Plains cannot understand why such a beautiful area is being destroyed.**

Yes the impacts are common but they are not right. The imbalance is bordering on ridiculous. The imbalance has been created by the incompetence of the Department of Planning. They have created the 'commonality' and now pass it off as the norm. This does not make it right.

**Are Unavoidable Consequences of Co-Existence of These Two Important Industries in the Valley**

This statement again demonstrates the total bias of the Department towards mining. This issue is extremely easy to avoid, do not approve the mine. Bring some balance to the area and recognise the importance of the Coolmore and

Darley operations and what they contribute to the thoroughbred industry on the world stage and their contribution to the local area.

Co-existence was not a term that mining **ever** used until the last few years. It has been the groundswell of protest from ordinary people that has made the mining industry and now the Department talk about co-existence.

### **Upper Hunter Strategic Land Use Plan**

I quote from the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan.

***“ The intent of the plan is not to favour one industry over another, but to ensure land use planning decisions are directed towards allowing both industries to prosper but not at the expense of the other.” Pp5***

Drayton South Mine is not the mining industry. Will the mining industry fold, collapse or not prosper if Drayton South is not approved? No it will not. The industry will collapse because of one of the many other reasons outlined above.

There is an entirely different picture when you consider a descriptor for the thoroughbred breeding industry in the Upper Hunter. The **heart** of the **industry** is Coolmore and Darley, two massive operations that are recognized around the world. Pictures of the studs should be used by the government to showcase the State instead of threatening their very existence.

Coolmore and Darley are not the understated operations as described in some of the Department of Planning documentation. They are not operations that anyone else could come in and replicate on these properties and run like Darley and Coolmore, as the Department has suggested.

Every stud in the Upper Hunter feeds off or is reliant on Coolmore and/or Darley in some way. Every agistment property feeds off or is reliant in some way on Coolmore and/or Darley, including my business operation. The support businesses created by the mere presence of Coolmore and Darley and supported by these two businesses is massive.

Coolmore and Darley are the **heart** of the thoroughbred breeding **industry** in Australia, and will remain so, wherever they are located in this country. It just so happens they are here, in the Upper Hunter in the path of a marginal mine.

Will the thoroughbred industry in the Upper Hunter collapse if the Drayton South Mine is approved and Coolmore and Darley leave? Without a doubt **yes**.

Secondary level studs will follow the two main studs. Studs without the capital to follow will fold. Support industries such as equine hospitals, agistment farms, farriers, veterinarians, fencers, farm staff, so on and so on, would all be without work. The job losses, the business closures and relocations would far exceed the losses in the Drayton South project and spread more widely through the Upper Hunter. An industry would be destroyed, along with a large part of the future of the Upper Hunter.

I quote from the current Departments approval document.

***“It (the Dept) does not consider these impacts to be significant enough to cause the thoroughbred operations to leave the Hunter Valley...In this regard, the Department notes that there are likely to be a number of economic and practical barriers to the relocation of these thoroughbred operations (such as the proximity to other thoroughbred operations in the Hunter Valley and Sydney and the existing capital investment in the studs) and even if the owners of these operations did decide to leave the area, there is no reason why the properties could not continue to be used to breed thoroughbred horses in the future, albeit in all likelihood by operations without the international reputation of Coolmore and Darley. pp 7***

At the risk of repeating myself, it is clear by these statements that the Department of Planning has no concept whatsoever of the importance of Coolmore and Darley to the thoroughbred industry in NSW, Australia and the world. The Department has no concept of the ability of both studs to simply pack up and leave for areas where they would be recognized and respected. The Department has no concept of what is required to run operations such as Coolmore and Darley. There is no other organisation currently in Australia with the capital, the expertise, the horse flesh and the reputation to run similar operations on either of the farms.

***“The Department...considers the risk of the studs departing the Hunter Valley has been overstated.” pp44***

Another offensive value judgement that is clearly incorrect. However the Department seems willing to gamble on the future of the thoroughbred industry in the Hunter Valley for the sake of one mine. Pretty high stakes!

## Drayton South

During this process of assessment for the Drayton South project, there will be a bombardment of support for the mine. Most of the support will be based around jobs and the livelihood of the community. Balancing this is also the potential job losses associated with the equine, wine and tourism industries in the Hunter Valley. This is a very real concern as any job losses will have a flow on effect through the community. I have addressed job security previously in my submission. However, it is not the only issue.

Government is entrusted with and should be responsible for ensuring sustainability for the Upper Hunter, not only for today but for next 100 years. By focusing on today only and approving Drayton South and other extensions such as Warkworth which will destroy Bulga, the NSW Government will assign the Upper Hunter to become a social and environmental waste land.

Why? Because the only certainty in this debate is that mining will one day cease to exist in the Hunter Valley. This will be sooner than later. This may be as a result of the resource being exhausted, coal prices continuing to remain low or falling further, a greater awareness of the health impacts of coal mining and/or the now rapid expansion of renewable energy.

Whatever the catalyst, coal mining will disappear in a relatively short time in terms of known civilization. It may be a generation, it may be two, but it will end. Government must ensure that there is balance in the Upper Hunter **now**, to ensure that sustainable industries will continue to prosper and we still have a sustainable area known as the Upper Hunter in 100 years.

Two PACs have rejected this mine. This is/was a process introduced to independently assess mining applications on their merits. Twice, it has been found that there is no merit to this mine.

This third application, enabled by the Department of Planning, is allegedly a reduced footprint, from the original plan and from the second mine plan. I repeat, any reduced footprint from the initial application, according to senior management of Anglo Coal, was not commercially viable. This is well documented throughout Anglo American's submissions, PAC reports and the Department of Planning's own reports (including those of their advisers). What is more astonishing is that at previous PACs, experts were unchallenged by the mining company when they showed that previous mine plans were also not commercially viable.

## Land Rehabilitation – The Environment

Mine site rehabilitation is the next major issue that government must address for the entire mining industry. Recently there have been two conferences in the Upper Hunter where extensive discussion was had concerning what to do with the voids left by open cut mining. It has been described as 'the elephant in the room'. Even miners are saying that unless something is done now, the area could turn into an economic wasteland.

Currently the Hunter Valley is facing more than 10,000 hectares of land consumed by 'final voids'. Currently there is no clear plan on what to do with them. Is it environmentally correct, is it in the best interest of the community to create another void to satisfy an overseas company who are hell bent on developing a mine that is at best, marginal?

Anglo American have already been criticized by the first PAC for their lack of rehabilitation on their existing mine site. Of great significance, should this new mine be approved, Anglo American **will not have to complete the rehabilitation on the first mine site until the cessation of the second site, potentially two decades from now!**

Is this in the best interest of the Upper Hunter?

## Activism – Social Impact Of Mining

The many polarising issues of mining and mining expansion have turned normal people into activists. The really sad aspect is that if successive governments had governed for all people and all industries, this ever expanding level of public outcry would not be necessary.

The lack of foresight by successive governments and government officials from the Department of Planning is staggering. Failings of government and government departments have mobilized conservative people, across the State, in dramatically increasing numbers, to oppose the creation of new mines and gas wells.

The reality is that we, the people of the Hunter Valley including the mine workers, should not be in this position. What has brought us to this decisive conflict point in the Upper Hunter and whether we like it or not, **into a community conflict situation where friend is against friend, family are against family**, is decades of poor planning, decades of incompetency in government and an over reliance by successive governments on royalties received from mining companies.



Hindsight is a wonderful thing. However, foresight is what we entrust the government with. This has obviously been in short supply in previous governments. What should have happened, decades ago to ensure that co-existence meant exactly that, was to quarantine the towns and villages, the areas containing sustainable industries, prime agricultural land and create fair and reasonable buffer zones. If this had occurred, we would not be in this position now.

However because there is such an imbalance towards mining, if the government wants sustainability for the Upper Hunter, it must start taking corrective action immediately. The corrective action must include rejecting Drayton South and other similar projects. Yes there will be pressure on the community. The alternative is that we leave this pressure point for our children and/or their children to deal with. If that occurs the exponential impact would truly be a disaster. It will be far better for the economy of the Hunter if this pressure is spread over the next 15 to 20 years. The time to start is now.

## **Conclusion**

I am not an activist. I am not a socialist. I am politically conservative by nature, something that I now question given the broken promises made by the coalition whilst in opposition. I consider the environment wherever I may be, at all times, but I am not a greenie. I am pro-business.

There is a ground swell of unrest in many many communities throughout Australia, not the least the Upper Hunter over coal mining and coal seam gas extraction.

This unrest is being played out on radio, television, print media and the internet on a daily basis. The feeling is that things must change. The feeling is enough is enough! Mining has gone too far in the Upper Hunter.

At the same time, residents in affected areas, including mine workers, are sick with worry. The stress levels are beyond description and have been unabated for years! This is a direct result of an inept Department of Planning and poor business acumen by successive governments.

I have chosen not to speak at the third PAC. I found the first two experiences difficult for no other reason than it became a conflict between friends and neighbours. **The real conflict and what should be played out, is between the Department of Planning and the community.**

As custodians of the future, the government and the people must look past this generation and the next generation towards a sustainable future for the Upper Hunter. Mining is not sustainable to any stretch of the imagination. Once the coal is gone or the price falls, the jobs are gone, so are the people, so is the environment.

On the other hand, wine, tourism and thoroughbred breeding industries are all long term sustainable enterprises. These industries will be sustainable for the next 200 years **if** and I say a big **if**, the conditions that makes these industries strong in the Upper Hunter are not further destroyed by mining.

The starting point is to ensure that the heart of the thoroughbred breeding industry, Coolmore and Darley do not leave the Upper Hunter. To this end, you must reject the proposed **new mine**, Drayton South.

**Allen Barry**



**2014 SUBMISSION**

**ALLEN BARRY**

## **DRAYTON SOUTH – AUGUST 2014**

### **Presenter – Allen Barry**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Allen Barry. My family has lived in the Jerry's Plains area since the mid 1800s. I am part of the fifth generation of this family in the Appletree Flat valley, which adjoins Coolmore. There are now members of our extended family who can claim to be 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> generation in the Jerry's Plains area.

In fact, I trace my ancestry back 7 generations in the Upper Hunter to Benjamin Singleton, who was part of John Howe's successful expedition that broke through the ranges into the Hunter Valley eventually crossing the range in the upper section of Doyles Creek, which borders Coolmore. The town of Singleton is built on part of Benjamin Singleton's original 200 acre land grant.

#### **Retreat**

I am a landholder and conduct a business from our property Retreat, located in the Appletree Flat valley, some five kilometres from Jerry's Plains where the original 1912 homestead still stands proudly. My wife and I have spent a significant amount of money, around \$2 million, developing the property to cater for equine agistment and tourism.

Our equine agistment relies heavily on Coolmore who is our major client and the catalyst for drawing other clients to our facility who send their mares to the Coolmore stallions. At the moment, business is good. I reinforce, AT THE MOMENT. That is, as long as Coolmore and Darley are still in the Valley.

#### **The Workers**

I would like to recognize all of the ordinary Australians in this room, mine workers, horse people and everyone else who simply wants to work to make a dollar. Everyone has the right to work.

Unfortunately, what has brought us here to this point today and whether we like it or not, into a community conflict situation, is decades of poor planning, decades of incompetency in government and an over reliance by successive governments on royalties received from mining companies.

I will avoid talking about the number of ministers from both sides of politics who no longer hold office due to ICAC hearings over the last 12-18 months.

Unfortunately, the Hunter Valley has far too strong a connection with all of these politicians. Failings of government and government departments have mobilized conservative people, across the State, in dramatically increasing numbers, to oppose the creation of new mines and gas wells.

Why are ordinary Australians spending ridiculous amounts of time, energy and money on protesting the further expansion of mining and gas in certain areas? There is an old saying - 'a million blow flies can't be wrong'. In other words, something is rotten, something is out of step with a broad section of public opinion. Something is out of balance.

The proposed Drayton South is part of this imbalance. After hearing today's submissions and the further inquiries that you make, there is no doubt that the correct decision will be to reinforce the findings of the December 2013 PAC in relation to Drayton South and again recommend that the mine NOT be approved.

I quote from the last PAC findings

" The project could cause Coolmore and Woodlands (Darley) horse studs to leave the Hunter Valley and this would have a significant effect on the regions equine, critical industry cluster as a whole, principally because these studs play such a critical role in the cluster's operation."

Obviously the authors of the planning department document, the reason we are here today, didn't read the last PAC report.

### **Department of Planning**

The real fear in this process is that Coolmore and Darley will leave the Hunter Valley should the Drayton South mine be approved. You should leave here today fully understanding that Coolmore and Darley are the heart of the thoroughbred breeding INDUSTRY in the Upper Hunter. W/out these two studs, there is NO thoroughbred breeding industry in the Upper Hunter.

### **Department of Plannings' Interpretation Of The Studs**

I refer to the most recent Dept of Planning document that has 'approved' the new mine, their words not mine, Drayton South, subject to the PAC review.

There are a significant number of statements in this report that allegedly demonstrated the authors' insight into the minds of the owners and management of Coolmore and Darley, the operations of these studs and the industry in general.

I quote:-

*"it does not consider these impacts to be significant enough to cause the thoroughbred operation to leave the Hunter Valley, even though there is always a risk that this may occur."*

*'in this regard, the Dept notes that there are likely to be a number of economic and practical barriers to the relocation of these thoroughbred operations'*

*"... even if the owners of these operations did decide to leave the area, there is no reason why the properties could not continue to be used to breed thoroughbreds in the future."*

I thought that there must have been considerable discussion with the two studs with the Department, based on some of the statements made.

My inquiries reveal that there was NONE. The Department has made assumptions and sweeping statements in order to support their decision to approve this mine. The accuracy and the honesty of these statements are truly in question. The comments are nothing more than a fairy tale, a fabrication at best, self-fulfilling lies at worst. I bet they spoke at length to Drayton South people even though they had the PAC report rejecting the mine, even though they knew that they were dealing with a decision that would impact on the two major players in the thoroughbred breeding INDUSTRY in AUSTRALIA.

There is a clear message there and a clear intent by the department. Mining, mining, mining.....

### **Industry**

Let's focus on the word industry and what it really means. The Department of planning quotes regularly through the most recent document the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan. I quote

*"The intent of the plan is not to favour one industry over another, but to ensure land use planning decisions are directed towards allowing both industries to prosper but not at the expense of the other." Pp5*

Well, let's be clear, Drayton South Mine is not the MINING INDUSTRY in the Hunter as you may interpret when you read the Department's most recent document.

The reality is that the mining industry is the industry that has expanded 18 fold since 1981. The mining industry in the Hunter is the over 40 open cut mines and approximately 15 underground operations currently operating.

The mining industry is the mines that covers over 30,000 hectares of land in the Hunter Valley. The mining industry includes the companies that hold exploration licenses over some 60% of the Hunter Valley.

Will the mining industry fold, collapse or not prosper if Drayton South is not approved? No way in the wide world. In the overall context of THE INDUSTRY, it is immaterial.

Will there be some impact? Yes, there will be some job losses and some support businesses will suffer but there are other mines to work at and other mines to look for business opportunities.

It would be for the 'greater good' of others, other than mining when this mine is not approved. The 'greater good' is what non mine people have been told for decades in the Upper Hunter when they have been forced to leave family farms or watch townships simply disappear off the map. **The GREATER GOOD.**

### **Thoroughbred Industry Upper Hunter**

There is an entirely different picture when you consider a descriptor for the thoroughbred breeding industry in the Upper Hunter. The heart of the industry is Coolmore and Darley, two massive operations that are recognized around the world. Pictures of the studs should be used by the government to showcase the State instead of threatening their very existence.

Coolmore and Darley are not the understated operations as described in the Departments last report.

They are not operations that anyone else could come in and replicate on these properties and run like Darley and Coolmore, as the department suggests.

Coolmore and Darley attract thoroughbred breeders and visitors to the Upper Hunter. The Coolmore and Darley stallion parades, which are on this weekend are the catalyst for other studs to put on smaller stallion parades, based around the Coolmore and Darley parades.

Every stud in the Upper Hunter feeds off or is reliant on Coolmore and/or Darley in some way. Every agistment property feeds off or is reliant in some way on Coolmore and/or Darley. The support businesses created by Coolmore and Darley presence and supported by these two businesses is massive. Coolmore and Darley are THE HEART of the thoroughbred breeding INDUSTRY, wherever they are located. It just so happens they are here, in the upper hunter in the path of a marginal mine.

Q. Will the thoroughbred industry in the Upper Hunter collapse if the Drayton South Mine is approved and Coolmore and Darley leave? Without a doubt YES.

Secondary level studs would follow the two main studs. Studs without the capital to follow would fold. Support industries such as equine hospitals, agistment farms, farriers, veterinarians, fencers, farm staff, so on and so on, would all be without work.

The job losses, the business closures and relocations would far exceed the losses in the Drayton South project and spread more widely through the Upper Hunter.....

An INDUSTRY would be destroyed. It would then confirm to everyone not associated with mining, that mining is the only thing that matters to the bureaucrats and the government.....

Go back to the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan:-

*"the policy intent is not to favor one industry over another but to ensure land use planning decisions allow both industries to prosper, but not at the expense of the other."*

It's a no brainer isn't it! Why would the department of planning place the thoroughbred industry in a position where it would even contemplate leaving the Hunter Valley. Simple answer, they've been rubber stamping proposals for so long, they don't know any different. It is not so much about planning as it is about royalties.

You should acknowledge the lack of activism by the thoroughbred industry until recent times. Why, because the INDUSTRY, although they have not been happy with the destruction of the valley by mining, have accepted co-existence. What has brought the thoroughbred industry to arms is proposals such as the Drayton South proposal, which is not co-existence. It is one mine in the wrong place.

I will leave you with this question and answers?

Q. What would happen to the mining industry if BHP or Rio Tinto left the Hunter Valley?

A. It would cripple the mining industry.

Q. What would happen to the thoroughbred breeding industry if Coolmore and/or Darley left the Hunter Valley?

A. It would cripple the thoroughbred breeding industry.

As custodians of the future, the government and the people must look past this generation and the next generation towards a sustainable future for the Upper Hunter. Mining is not sustainable to any stretch of the imagination. Once the coal is gone, so are the jobs, so are the people, so is the environment.



On the other hand, the thoroughbred breeding industry has been sustainable in the Upper Hunter for nearly 200 years. The thoroughbred breeding industry will be sustainable for the next 200 years IF and I say a big IF, the conditions that makes this industry strong in the Upper Hunter are not further destroyed by mining.

The starting point is to ensure that the heart of the thoroughbred breeding industry, Coolmore and Darley do not leave the Upper Hunter. To this end, you must reject the proposed Drayton South mine.

Allen Barry

**2013 SUBMISSION**

**ALLEN BARRY**

## **DRAYTON SOUTH – OCTOBER 2013**

### **Presenter – Allen Barry**

In Australia circa 2013, I am dismayed that any review into coal mining in the Upper Hunter does not include an assessment of social and health impacts of the people who live here.

In 2012 a research report, written by Sydney University academics, titled 'Health & Social Harms Of Coal Mining Report', was launched at the Sydney University. In brief, the report shows increased levels of poor health, specifically respiratory and cancer of residents living in close proximity to mining compared with non-mining areas.

Sadly, I have had two neighbours die within the last few years from cancer in the brain. Maybe coincidental. However, this report by Sydney University professors, also discusses the social distress suffered by residents and the environmental injustice that exists in the Upper Hunter. The report really is questioning sustainability of the Upper Hunter under the enormous weight of coal mining.

This report by Sydney University professors, states what every affected resident of the Upper Hunter has been saying for years. Mining has gone too far. There is no balance. The sustainability of the people, the environment and businesses not associated with mining are under IMMEDIATE AND SERIOUS threat.

The residents know that the government doesn't listen to the people who vote for them. But why is the government not listening to academics from Sydney University? This report has identified a critical health risk.

Under NSW WHS legislation, if this report was delivered to an employer and it related to the workplace, that employer must act to remove the risk for his employees. If the health warning was ignored, that employer would be open to criminal prosecution and/or substantial fines. Is the NSW Government above the law? Apparently so.

**I PRODUCE THE REPORT**

I am dismayed that the coalition government has abandoned the residents of the Upper Hunter in relation to expansion of coal mining. There has been some minimal movement, yet they have not kept their promises to the voters in the Upper Hunter.

projects (current and proposed) that immediately impact on and around our property. So what that means is that there was a potential \$1 million not spent with businesses NOT associated with mining? The mining industry, in my case, was the catalyst to suppress investment in the Upper Hunter, investment with traditional businesses, heritage architects, builders and the like.

This scenario is not uncommon. We simply stop spending through fear of what is going to happen to us, the remaining pristine land, the water and the air quality in and around Jerry's Plains. Many simply up and leave, reducing the resistance to the mining industry, replaced by miners. This is social engineering at its best.

### JERRY'S PLAINS

The township of Jerry's Plains (circa 1830) is under siege from mining. The accumulative effect of mining has placed Jerry's Plains in grave danger of following the same path as other small towns in the Upper Hunter that no longer exist or simply exist in name only.

Wambo has an extension that will take it to the very edge of the town. Coal & Allied a similar extension that will mine hunter river flats, which in itself is nearly enough to just turn the lights out, shut the door and leave. And there is NuCoal with the now infamous Doyles Creek Mine EL, who has marked out a 24x7 mining operation within the township.

Drayton South extension (which on my review of the maps and I stand to be correct) is a new mine and not an extension, will complete the 'black circle' around the township.

My home is approximately 5 kilometres as the crow flies from the open cut mines of Wambo and Coal & Allied. However, I can run my hand along the side of my house, on the side facing the mines and wipe black coal dust from the weatherboards and window sills. Yet the mining industry would have you believe that there is no such problem. On a quiet morning as I sit and try and enjoy what we have created - in the distance is the drone of the mines.

Take a drive along the Putty Road from Windsor, through pristine country. Watch the air colour and the vista change when you reach Bulga, dust, dust and more dust on the horizon. This is the present state of the Upper Hunter.

The proposed Drayton mine will be closer to me than the mines aforementioned. The sheer size of the proposed mine will ensure that I, along with my family and 'any' tourists I may attract to the area, are also affected by additional coal dust and noise. The real question is do the residents of Jerry's Plains count? Clearly not.

A major part of the business of both studs is their visual presentation to visitors, many of them from overseas. This is a critical factor in the thoroughbred breeding industry. We have attempted to mimic this presentation, albeit on a much smaller scale.

What the Upper Hunter has been inflicted with in terms of poorly planned mining is currently beyond the realms of logic. Moreover, to allow an open cut mine next to such an important industry such as thoroughbred breeding is ludicrous.

I have seen the reaction of visitors to the area when you show them the beautiful landscape, the many historic features of the area, then the existing mines and the proposed mining leases.

The response is standard:-

“absolute shock and dismay”

#### THE GOVERNMENT DILEMMA

This is a watershed moment. What would it mean to the Upper Hunter to lose businesses such as Coolmore and Darley? Putting aside the real driver for coal mines, that is profits for shareholders, one aspect of mining that individuals such as myself find hard to argue against is the fact that mining brings employment to the valley, albeit at the expense of existing residents and landholders.

The old chestnut ‘for the greater good’. Be prepared to sacrifice your heritage, your sense of place, your chosen lifestyle FOR THE GREATER GOOD. My family has faced this ‘greater good’ questions for over a decade.

This is a reality that we have lived with in the Upper Hunter for longer than I care to remember. The mine that wants to move closer to the township of Bulga, for example, is attempting to withdraw on all previous promises made to the community, has an alleged primary driver to provide continuous employment. Drayton South, I will call it a new mine, has a driver to provide ongoing employment.

As custodians of the future, the government and the people must look past this generation and the next generation towards a sustainable future for the Upper Hunter. This is the central issue in the dilemma. There is no question that employment in the mining industry in the Upper Hunter is limited in time. Once the coal is gone, so are the jobs, so are the people, so is the environment.

industrious area, the second most recognized thoroughbred breeding area in the world, where people have lived for generations, making a living in pursuits other than mining.

If mining brings so many riches to the Upper Hunter, why isn't there a world class hospital at Singleton or Muswellbrook? Why is there no public transport link between outlying villages such as Jerry's Plains to Singleton or Muswellbrook? I think the area has given a fair bit to the relationship, where is the return?

Simply, the Upper Hunter is over mined. The Upper Hunter has given enough to the NSW economy. The Upper Hunter has given enough to major corporations.

It is now time to give back to the sustainable businesses such as thoroughbred breeding, to the families who have chosen to make their homes in the Upper Hunter, to the families with generations of history in the area.

To commence to correct this massive imbalance, there is a need, no an obligation, to recognise the thoroughbred breeding industry and their commitment and input into the community over and above any short term benefit from any proposed or future coal mine. The Drayton South extension should be rejected simply on this basis.

If the decision is to approve Drayton South or any new mining lease in the upper hunter region, the government should build a fence from Singleton to Tamworth and mine the lot. Because taking bits at a time is like watching someone die with terminal cancer, a long and painful death.

There is an obligation to protect sustainable industries in the Upper Hunter. The government must protect the thoroughbred industry. If they don't, then there is no hope whatsoever for the Upper Hunter.