



Scone Equine Hospital

Dedicated expert care

The Secretary
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
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HUNTER VALLEY OPERATIONS OPEN CUT COAL CONTINUATION PROJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Scone Equine Hospital objects to the Hunter Valley Operations (HVO) Open Cut Coal Continuation Project (North and South).

The Scone Equine Hospital

The Scone Equine Hospital is a local business with a world class reputation. It is the largest equine veterinary practice in Australia, and indeed the Southern Hemisphere. We employ over 110 people (10 registered specialists, 30 veterinarians, 70 support staff) in a practice that is recognised as a world class centre of equine health and research excellence.

We have a proud history of over seventy years servicing our clients in Scone and the Upper Hunter.

We provide veterinary care for the second largest horse population in the world, the Hunter Valley's thoroughbred breeding industry. As a result of our specialist's and world recognised work in the Hunter Valley, we also provide veterinary referral services across Australia's eastern seaboard and internationally.

The Scone Equine Hospital has strong research relationships with leading universities in Australia and around the world and is sought after to field veterinary specialist and expert advice and speakers at national and international conferences.

In addition to our veterinary care, we provide practical training for over 40 veterinary students and 60 veterinary nurses each year.

In the Upper Hunter region, we are a large employer of professionals and skilled workers. Our staff and their families are long term residents and proud contributors to our local communities. Our practice sponsors and supports over fifty community groups and organizations and is a sponsor of major horse related events in the Upper Hunter.



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The HVO Open Cut Coal Continuation Project

We support the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders' Association and Coolmore Australia's submission in opposition to this Project and highlight the following concerns with this proposal:

- An inadequate economic analysis which underestimates the costs and over estimates the benefits of the project;
- The absence of cumulative impact assessments – importantly for air quality and water sources in the Hunter – contrary to the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and NSW Guidelines;
- Unacceptable air quality impacts and exceedances exacerbating already unacceptably dusty and polluted conditions in the Upper Hunter;
- Unacceptable resulting health impacts for humans and horses;
- Deficient surface and groundwater assessments, breaches of the Aquifer Interference Policy, and an undesirable final void that will be hyper-saline, take 1000 years to reach equilibrium and leave a perpetual legacy for future generations;
- Unacceptable visual impacts on residents, towns and roads at the southern Gateway of the Hunter's Thoroughbred Breeding Industry at Jerrys Plains;
- Deleterious impacts on investment and economic diversity in the region;
- Unassessed impacts on the Hunter's Equine Critical Industry Cluster; and
- Incompatibility of open cut coal mining with proximate international scale stud operations which are recognized as conflicting and incompatible land uses which cannot coexist in close proximity.

In addition to not complying with the SEARs and NSW Guidelines, breaching air quality noise water standards and policies, this project is at odds with key Government policies aimed at protecting the Hunter's equine industry cluster; protecting the environment; protecting our cultural and Aboriginal heritage and fostering growth and diversity as we transition away from coal and towards more sustainable, zero emissions future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Samuel J Nugent BSVc(Hon) MANZCVSc GIACD