



TWO RIVERS

HUNTER VALLEY

David Mooney
Project Manager
The Department of Planning & Infrastructure
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Re: **Objection to Mangoola Coal Modification 6 of Project Approval 06_0014**

Dear Sir

I am writing as a concerned landholder, business owner and resident of the Upper Hunter to object to the Mangoola Coal Modification project.

Our company has been growing grapes in the Upper Hunter and making wine under the Two Rivers label since 1988. We have some 70 Ha of wine grapes planted, supplying premium fruit to the Two Rivers, Tulloch Rosemount and Lindeman's brands. We also have a significant investment in wine tourism through our Cellar Door and on site accommodation.

Over the past 25 years, Two Rivers have gained a reputation as a premium wine producer, with awards including gold medals and Trophy's at national wine shows and gold at the International Chardonnay Challenge. We have also been awarded the Hunter Viticulturist of the Year as well as being a previous winner of the overall Hunter Farmer of the Year. Our cellar door has won numerous hospitality awards and is a hub for wine tourism in the Upper Hunter.

The Hunter Valley Wine Industry is an important contributor to the diversity of our region. The vineyards and wineries of the Hunter Valley provide significant employment opportunities and the flow on effects of wine tourism create economic, social and cultural benefits to the region. The Upper Hunter makes a vital contribution to the Hunter Valley Wine Industry accounting for almost half of the grapes grown in the area.

My reasons for objecting to this proposal are as follows:

- 1. Impacts on the Wine Industry** – The ongoing expansion of the mining industry in recent years has had a significant impact of the wine industry in the Upper Hunter Valley and the proposed modification will further damage the reputation of the Upper Hunter Wine Industry as a whole. The wine and tourism industries need a critical mass to survive and the constant expansion of mining impacts on the viability of our industry and the credibility of this area as a serious wine region. There are numerous tourism development proposals (including projects at Two Rivers, Hollydene and Cruikshanks) that are constrained by current levels of uncertainty created by existing and proposed mining developments. The proposed

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modification will further undermine the future viability of our industry, which has been already seriously impacted by the rapid expansion of the mining industry in recent years. This mine has already taken out at least six operating vineyards in its first stage and any expansion will only further impact our industry.

2. **Cumulative Impacts** - The Upper Hunter is already a very large coal producer with a high concentration of coal mines in the area. We do not believe that the cumulative impacts of mining in the Upper Hunter have been fully considered. This modification proposal will further impact on the areas dust and noise pollution, leading to further deterioration of the local environment. These impacts will also affect the health and wellbeing of the local communities.
3. **Lack of Certainty** – The incremental creep of mining projects that seek ongoing modifications means that local communities cannot plan with any certainty. The size and scale of this mine today is vastly different to what was initially proposed and had local communities been fully informed of the mines intentions at the outset, different decisions regarding the original approval process would no doubt have been made. More scrutiny of all mining proposals is required to ensure that landholders and local communities are fully informed from the outset of the likely impacts from these developments.
4. **Loss of Diversity** – The further expansion of this development will result in a continued reduction of the agricultural diversity of the area. Our region boasts some of the world’s best thoroughbred studs, wineries and a vibrant agricultural sector which enjoys secure access to irrigation water and some of the most fertile land in the country. All of these industries contribute to the prosperity of our community and if the dominance of mining in this area is not brought into some sort of balance, we risk losing these industries to this area for ever.
5. **Air Quality impact** – As landholders and community citizens we are seriously concerned about the impact of dust from mining to the overall health and air quality of our region. In this respect, we strongly request that a *cumulative* air quality and health impact assessment be conducted on this project and other existing mining operations before a decision is taken regarding this expansion. We note that Denman does not have an air quality monitor that is part of the Upper Hunter Air Quality Network. Until Denman is part of the air quality network expansion of this mine and establishment of new mines near Denman should be halted.
6. **Water Resources** - Any industry that threatens or pollutes and damages the water supply of the Upper Hunter will threaten the future viability and reputation of our industry. We are not confident that appropriate attention has been paid to this aspect in the environmental assessment.

Finally I would like to state that our company realizes that we need to try and co-exist with the mining industry, and we make a genuine effort to do so. The balance in recent years however has shifted so dramatically, that if mining continues to expand we are very close to the tipping point that will see industries like ours forced out of the Upper Hunter forever.

The objections raised above are all serious issues for our company and the Upper Hunter Wine Industry, and should be addressed before further expansion is allowed to proceed.

Should you have any queries or require further information, please contact me on the details below.

Yours faithfully,
Brett Keeping

General Manager
Two Rivers Wines