



Maxhett

Mr Joe Fittell
Team Leader
Energy & Resource Assessments / Planning & Assessment
Department of Planning & Environment

RE: DA 106-04-00 MOD 1 – ANTIENE RAIL SPUR LIFE EXTENSION (DRAYTON RAIL LOOP)

I, David Paul Sorensen, wish to express my support for Malabar Resources (Maxwell Ventures Pty Ltd) the applicant, and the Antiene Rail Spur Life Extension Modification (DS 016-04-00) formerly known as Drayton Rail Loop.

I have thoroughly reviewed the Life Extension Modification Report. The Modification to extend the operation of the Antiene Rail Spur will align with the approved operating life of the Maxwell Mine (ie: until 2047). Importantly, the proposed Modification will not change key components of the already existing development that was originally commissioned in 1983 for the former Drayton Mine, and will not result in any new surface disturbance.

I fully support the Modification as there is clear evidence within the Life Extension MOD application that Malabar Resources will provide a number of significant and positive benefits, for example;

1. Extend the operation of the Antiene Rail Spur to align with the approved operating life of the Maxwell Project (Malabar) (until 2047),
2. Deliver significant local, regional & state economic benefits through subsequent mining royalties & taxes, with the Maxwell (Malabar) Mine expected to generate approximately \$955 million in royalties & a total net benefit to the NSW economy of over \$1 billion,
3. Allow the Hunter Region to maintain existing freight transport networks that would minimise negative impacts of freight movements on urban amenities, in accordance with the Hunter Regional Plan 2041,
4. Continue to provide efficient access of coal to National & International markets; and,
5. Facilitate local & regional employment, including more than 250 Construction jobs & more than 400 operational jobs at the Maxwell (Malabar) Mine.

The Modification is located within the Muswellbrook Local Government Area (LGA), and is covered by the Hunter Regional Plan 2041

The Shire of Muswellbrook is centrally located in the Upper Hunter Valley, approximately 130km north-west of Newcastle. Lake Liddell delineates the Muswellbrook Shire boundary to the east, Wollemi National Park to the west, Aberdeen to the north and Coricudgy State Forest to the south. Muswellbrook Shire covers 3,402km², of which 1,455km (43%) is national parks.

Muswellbrook Shire consists of two larger towns, Muswellbrook and Denman, as well as a number of outlying rural communities including Sandy Hollow, Wybong, Baerami, Martindale, Widden, McCullys Gap, Muscle Creek & the cusp of the small semi-isolated rural village of Jerrys Plains

Industry in Muswellbrook Shire includes industries such as Agriculture, Viticulture, Equine, Cattle production, Power Generation and Coal Mining. Muswellbrook Shire is the main centre for New South Wales' Power Generation capacity. It has become the major centre of Upper Hunter coal mining, with

the largest concentration of coal mining operations and major expansions of mining approvals over the last few years and the second highest rate of coal extraction in New South Wales.

I support of my submission of support for the Application, it should be noted that the unemployment rate of the Muswellbrook Shire currently sits at 5.3% of which is considerably higher than the NSW State average of 3.2% and the National average of 3.6%. Malabar Resources has made a commitment within its application to address part of this issue, which is clearly demonstrated in the relevant aspects of compliance of the **Hunter Regional Plan 2041**, noting (Section 2.4) **KEY STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS** (Subsection 2.4.1) **Hunter Regional Plan**, which acknowledges the provided blueprint for greater prosperity of the Hunter Region which is included in Part 5. of the significant & positive benefits.

Additionally, the Relevant strategies in the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 (DPE, 2022) include:

- Strategy 4.9 Local strategic planning will consider opportunities to:
 - protect, maintain and improve the existing and approved freight transport networks
 - balance the need to minimise negative impacts of freight movements on urban amenity with the need to support efficient freight movements and deliveries
 - limit incompatible uses in areas expected to have intense freight activity
 - limit incompatible freight uses in and near residential areas

Malabar plays an active role in the Local Community including local businesses and community groups as described in Section 6.5 of the MOD application (Economic Consideration). Malabar has a unique approach to developing its assets, of which is through employing less intrusive underground mining methods, focusing on metallurgical coal, developing large scale renewable resources, & rehabilitating previously mined areas for sustainable activities including renewables & agriculture, in line with the Australian Federal Governments National Guidelines & Proposals commitment on renewable resources commitment.

Malabar has demonstrated that it can co-exist with the local communities and other local industries.

Therefore, I have no hesitation in fully supporting the Antiene Rail Spur (DS 106-04-00) Life Extension Modification application.

If you seek any further additional comment, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Forwarded for favourable consideration.

Regards,

Dave Sorensen

NPSM, AESM, NPM, ASM, MAITD, DipVSc, DipRM, DipBCH, DipLaw, JP.

5 June, 2023