



Scone Equine Hospital

Dedicated expert care

The Secretary
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
4 Parramatta Square
12 Darcy Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

28 March 2025

DARTBROOK COAL MINE – MODIFICATION 8

The Scone Equine Hospital objects to the Dartbrook Coal Mine Modification 8 proposal.

The Scone Equine Hospital

The Scone Equine Hospital is a local business with a world class reputation. It is the largest 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 specialists 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 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 Dartbrook Coal Mine Modification 8 Proposal

We support the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders' Association submissions in opposition to this modification 8 and highlight the following concerns with this proposal:

- Unacceptable air quality impacts, exceedances and greenhouse gas emissions exacerbating already unacceptably dusty and polluted conditions in the Upper Hunter;
- Unacceptable resulting health impacts for humans and horses;
- Unacceptable risks to our surface and groundwater systems;
- Deleterious impacts on investment and economic diversity in the region;
- Unassessed impacts on the Hunter's Equine Critical Industry Cluster;
- Lack of genuine community consultation by the Proponent;
- The absence of credible cumulative impact assessments – importantly for air quality and water sources in the Hunter – against which proposals like this one can be benchmarked and assessed;
- Incompatibility of mining with international scale stud operations which are incompatible land uses.

In addition this proposal 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;
- fostering growth and diversity as we transition away from coal and towards more sustainable, zero emissions future;
- achieving the State's legislated targets for net zero emissions in 2030, 2035 and 2050; and
- the principles of ecologically sustainable development and inter-generational equity.

For the above reasons, we recommend the Department refuses this modification proposal.

Yours sincerely

Dr Cameron Collins
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Managing Director

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