



YARRAMAN PARK

28 March 2025

The Secretary
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2000

Dear Secretary,

Dartbrook Coal Mine Modification 8

The principals of Yarraman Park support the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders' Association submission and object to the Dartbrook Coal Mine Modification 8.

Yarraman Park

Yarraman Park Stud has been home to thoroughbreds for over 100 years, dating back to the early 1900's when the Thompson family of the historic Widden Stud raised many fine horses on the farm including the great champion Eurythmic, foaled in 1916.

Since 1968 Yarraman Park has been a family-owned and run operation by the Mitchell family. It is situated on 1,500 hectares of mineral-rich, undulating country in the Hunter Valley, near Scone, at the heart of Australia's thoroughbred breeding capital.

Yarraman Park farm stands a select group of stallions, led by three-time Australian Champion Sire **I Am Invincible** (2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24). His Group 1-winning son, **Hellbent**, was crowned Champion Third Season Sire in 2023/24, while **Brave Smash** – a multiple Group 1 winner – sired his first Group 1 winner in 2024 with **Kimochi**, out of an I Am Invincible mare.

Yarraman Park employs on average, 24 people many of whom live on farm in addition to veterinary practitioners, farriers, and many other local contractors. We are committed to supporting local businesses as much as possible and we are proud to support the jobs of many people in the equine support and other local businesses.

Dartbrook Modification 8

Our main concerns regarding this application for a six year extension centre around:

1. increased air pollution and further worsening of air quality in the Upper Hunter generated by coal mining;
2. the risks posed by the Dartbrook underground mine to our water sources, systems and alluvial aquifers;
3. the relentless uncertainty for individuals, farmers, employees and local businesses due to mining expansions in the Upper Hunter.

Despite the Government's commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect the environment and heritage of our region and our industry, there seems to be no scaling back and transitioning away from coal in the Hunter.

Yarraman Park has serious concerns about the air quality and air pollution in the Upper Hunter.

It is unacceptable that the Upper Hunter has the worst air quality in all of NSW because of coal-related air pollution. The media, credible research reports and Air Quality Alerts from the EPA reminds us of this on regular basis.

Australian Pacific Coal recognises that mining operations at Dartbrook will result in air quality exceedences over the six year extension period they have requested under this modification. We implore the NSW Government to exercise a duty of care for the community of the Upper Hunter, and on this point alone, reject Dartbrook modification 8.

Yarraman Park is totally dependent on the Dartbrook alluvial aquifer for stock, domestic and irrigation water. Any threats to this water source and climate induced changes to weather, particularly droughts, place our business at serious risk as there are no alternative water sources.

As a farming industry, we are very concerned about the predicted increases in the severity and frequency of climate induced droughts and floods which combined with the potential extension of mining operations, such as Dartbrook, places industries like ours at heightened and serious risk.

The stress and uncertainty created by mining applications, is significant. It affects us, our families, potential investors, employees and our community. We are provided very little time to consider and respond to serious issues that affect our livelihoods, our families and our futures. Two weeks is not sufficient time to seriously consider complex technical reports on issues of this importance.

We fully concur with the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders' Association submission particularly:

- those regarding the unacceptable environmental impacts of this project – particularly air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, water and noise;

- the need for independent scientifically based cumulative assessments of air quality, water and noise impacts of mining operations in the Upper Hunter to provide a basis upon which mining proposals can be assessed;
- the incompatibility of thoroughbred breeding operations and coal mining – which are recognised incompatible land uses; and
- the inter-generational inequity which this project will create.

We are firmly of the view that you cannot have “co-existence” without proper boundaries and buffers between coal mining and agriculture and without certainty for the future.

We object to the Dartbrook modification 8 proposal and request the Department to refuse it.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Arthur Mitchell', written in a cursive style.

Arthur Mitchell

Principal