

Cecelia O’Gorman
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17th June, 2015

The Secretary
The Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Via email: matthew.sprott@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms McNally,

Re: Objection to Drayton South Coal Project Application Number: SSD 6875

I am writing as an extremely concerned member of the thoroughbred breeding industry and employee of Coolmore to object to the second application by Anglo America for the Drayton South open coal mine project.

I moved to the area three years ago to take up a position with Coolmore as Contracts Manager. As someone who has grown up in a family who have bred and raced thoroughbred horses for 30 years, the opportunity to work for a company as highly regarded as Coolmore was once in a lifetime and simply too good to refuse. However, it has become increasingly apparent that the proposed Drayton South open coal mine project poses a serious threat not only to my home and my job, but to the existence of the New South Wales Thoroughbred Breeding Industry as a whole.

Throughout my time here I have progressed to the role of Client Relations, whereby I spend a lot of time interacting with horse owners, industry professional, prospective clients and the general public. All of those familiar with Coolmore are unanimous in their praise for the farm, commenting on the world-renowned facilities and the picturesque landscape; I am often told how fortunate I am to be able to call the farm home – a statement I whole-heartedly agree with. The magnitude of open cut mines and their destructive nature is visually confronting and in my opinion, if the Drayton South application was to be approved, it will have a detrimental effect on the aesthetic character of the area and deter both current and prospective clients from visiting the farm. As the person entrusted with maintaining client relations, this causes me great concern.

Not only does the encroaching mine site pose a threat to the amenity of the area but there is cause for concern regarding the impact it will have on the air and water quality, and what effect this could have on equine health, as well as the health of those living and working on the farm. Mine dust is already evident in the atmosphere. It visibly settles on the exterior of my home and if I leave windows open for extended periods of time, I notice a build up of black dust on the window sills and near-by furniture. This same dust is settling on the pastures grazed by our horses and being washed into our water systems. If the project was to be approved and the mine come within 1km of Coolmore, I would be very concerned about the increased concentration of dust and how this would

negatively impact on human and equine health. Looking to the future, this is something I would take into great consideration before deciding whether or not it would be in my best interests to raise a family here. Until it can be definitively proved that mining dust won't have adverse health effects, I think it is unacceptable to expose people to the potential risk.

I am also concerned about how horse owners will react to the increase in mine dust and the potential for contaminated water sources. Owners invest considerable amounts of time and money developing their breeding programs and caring for their stock. If they perceive the expansion of Drayton South to be having a negative effect on their business, the fear would be that they remove their horses and relocate them to other regions. This would not only have serious consequences for Coolmore (and other major Hunter based breeding operations such as our neighbour Darley), but the flow-on would seemly affect a multitude of other local business and industries, namely the viticulture and tourism trades which rely heavily on visitors to this area.

Coolmore is synonymous with the Hunter Valley and the Australian Thoroughbred Industry. Its reputation for standing world-class stallions and breeding and rearing racehorses of the highest calibre is one of global recognition and its contribution to the industry (one which generates over \$5 billion for the Australia economy) is immeasurable. The proposed Drayton South project places a question mark on the stud's future, along with the future of thoroughbred breeding in the Hunter Valley. Home to the second largest concentration of thoroughbred studs in the world (second only to Kentucky in the US), and the largest domestic producer, supplier and exporter of thoroughbreds in Australia, the Hunter is at risk of losing both Coolmore and Darley – the two largest studs in Australia.

As a company, Coolmore have afforded me opportunities to grow professionally and develop my knowledge of the industry that I would not have been given anywhere else. I can genuinely say that I love my job and the people I work with and that there is no other industry I would rather be associated with. The expansion of Drayton South jeopardises all of this and I ask you to please consider my objections to the proposal. For me, it isn't about a pay cheque at the end of the week; it's about preserving a sustainable industry that has been here for 150 years, and which has the potential to exist for many generations to come.

Yours sincerely,

Cecelia O'Gorman