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Thursday, 28 May 2015

Ms McNally
Secretary
The Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Email: through departmental website

Dear Secretary

Submission: Objection to Anglo American Drayton South New Mine Proposal

I am making a submission to object to the proposed new mine by Anglo America Drayton South.

I am also objecting and resent that I must participate in yet again another EIS to help protect the industry I work in and my livelihood. It is incredibly draining and pressurised for the community and individuals when we have already been through two PACs that determined the new mine on this site is not appropriate nor in the public interest.

The new EIS requires time for an independent technical analysis - more than 25 working days – recognising most people making a submission are trying to come to terms with the volumes of data and technical references outside of their normal course of business and don't have sufficient funds to hire "expert advice". It has also been clearly demonstrated in many PAC hearings for this mine and other proposed new mines or modifications that the Mine Proponents' applications generally lack transparency and have significant data gaps and questionable "beneficial" outcomes for the State/Public, and proposed mitigation measures for local landholders or businesses are also questionable and deficient. It has also been demonstrated that many mines do not meet their current conditions of consent while applying for further modifications…leading to mine creep…confidence in the future process is lacking.

I also resent that this mine saga and many others is pitting communities against each other. If there was certainty about where mines could or could not go in the first place, people and industries could strive for "co-existence". The use of "co-existence" to describe a happy non mining neighbour next to a mine within 10km (…or 1km as per the new proposal) of the said neighbour is misleading. Appropriate buffers, of no less than 10km, between intrusive extractive industries such as coal mining are urgently needed to provide confidence for both landholders and mining companies.

Other reasons for objection:

- Offsets do nothing to maintain threatened species and displace other activities. They are not in perpetuity and consents can be modified. How does Anlgo propose to maintain in perpetuity – the list of possible approaches in 3.2 Biodiversity Offset Strategy have they been tried and tested over any length of time pertaining to mining offsets?

- I cannot see how a shift of another 500 metres will provide any protection to the tourist or horse stud visual amenity. Anglo American's Drayton South open cut mine proposal remains less than 1 km from major horse studs and wineries. It will damage the brand of the Golden Highway tourist drive and the studs' market competitiveness and brand.

- What guarantee is in place if this new mine was set up just over 1,000 metres (not 2,000m as per EIS map) from Woodlands (ie the distance of the richest thoroughbred sprint race in world – The Golden Slipper, which can be covered by a horse in just 1.10 seconds), will not be visible, will not generate excessive dust and pollution drift, lessen noise and light spill, and mitigate any water

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impacts. A key reason for the PAC's refusal of Anglo American's previous application for a mine on this site was that "once the damage to the studs occur, it is irreversible".

- I object to this new mine as a private land holder who sees the creeping expanse of mining on prime agricultural land and in the heart of thoroughbred breeding setting precedents for other mines that will impact on my land – value, visual, water, loss of irreplaceable high value land, loss of employment opportunities (diversity of employment opportunities) and industry investment.

- I object to this new mine as a participant in the Thoroughbred Industry, reliant on the world's two largest stud operators Coolmore and Darley whose operations are threatened by encroaching mining developments.

- I repeat from previous submissions, in the capacity of someone who has friends and associates directly impacted by the proposed mine – this mine will create further detrimental cumulative impacts which have not been properly assessed. In particular this mine proposal will create a dominating almost contiguous mining corridor operation across the prime agricultural region along the Hunter River plains of Jerrys Plains – Denman – Muswellbrook – removing the only buffer between international scale horse studs and mining operations to their north. Should this mine proceed there will be no balance, no certainty and loss of other viable industries competing for land on an unleveled playing field. A no go zone of at least a 10km buffer zone away from thoroughbred breeding operations for mining is required.

The current EIS is deficient, the assessment process for this proposal and the proposed gateway process for future mines do nothing to provide certainty for the community or land holders, it only heightens the community angst against mining in this region. There will be no winners in this situation – entire sustainable industries, such as equine, wine and tourism, will be put at further risk for questionable short term outcomes. , The Government of the day has not provided certainty for any industry or community as to where mining interests can and can't stake their claim. Protecting the Equine and Viticulture Industry Critical Cluster boundaries seems of no consequence to the Government of the day.

As a taxpayer, a landholder and a directly affected member of the Hunter Valley's thoroughbred breeding industry, I object to the Drayton South mining proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of the issues raised.

Yours sincerely

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