

Monday, 22 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: SSD6875

I am writing [REDACTED] concerned resident to object to the second application by Anglo American for the Drayton South open coalmine project.

I currently work in the Thoroughbred Industry and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] my family moved to the area from the South Eastern Region of NSW over 15 years ago. My reasons for objecting to this proposal area follow:

[REDACTED] marked increase in responses to respiratory emergencies in the elderly and paediatric patients, especially on windy days once the mine creep was well in effect. Patients who had been able to manage their COAD (Chronic Airway Obstructive Disease) without intervention were having to call more frequently and required greater intervention earlier than expected.

I am also [REDACTED] concerned that what was once a sought after area known for producing exceptional animals, on land known to be prime equine grazing. Is now not only an eye sore to drive through to come and inspect my livestock but being reduced to small pockets isolated by the encroaching mines. I am better off to either drive my horses south to be inspected or send them to professional facilities that prospective purchases are able to attend without comment on passing the moving mountains that the mines create. This is an added cost to the production of my young stock, which I have had to make allowances for since moving back to the Upper Hunter.

With many years in the equine industry I have worked with studs south of the Hunter Valley who stated they will not leave their mare to foal out or send young foals to the Hunter Valley studs in close proximity to mines as they have a higher incidence of Rattles (*Rhodococcus Equi*). This disease is known to be caused by dust and found in soils, it affects horses under six months of age. It has approximately 28% fatality rate and is a great cost to breeders.

The changes to water courses and the overall cumulative effect on the entire watershed within the Hunter Valley have not been fully addressed. I find this impact of great concern having grown up with an agricultural community that spent years trying to work with a salinity strategy that brought grazing areas back to production. This area was not mined, and it took generations of work to rectify the damage to water courses. Mines have a drastic impact very quickly and the damage this has on the entire ecosystem is not known comprehensively regarding long term degradation and water table levels.

The family farm in a short space of time notice a marked increase in the ionization of star pickets, which would break off at ground level and either injure stock or create larger workloads to manage the stock. The cost of moving towards galvanised from bitumen coated as well as ensuring more wooden posts for fencing strength is a cost to the farmer.

Machinery requires strict maintenance as vehicles have much higher rust due to the acid rain effect from the high industrialisation. The dust levels that are high in acidic content also make an impact on the farming principles applied and the cost to neutralize the impact this has, to ensure pH levels are maintained in the required levels to ensure seed bed growth. The need to introduce grass species that can tolerate the variance in pH and costs to increase application of differing supplements to the soils or change/add to products already purchased is to the farmer each year.

Drayton South Coal Project has already been to PAC and I am saddened to see it is back on the table, I feel the Government needs to find an end date and apply it. The ability for Drayton South to be reviewed 2013, 2014 and now 2015 is of concern that this will be an annual event, that will place pressure on the local communities and undue stress to many individuals.

Farmers have a high incidence of self-inflicted mortality and [REDACTED] it concerns me that farming communities are yet again placed in a situation where their livelihood is at risk and this could impact already struggling operations. The way this impinges on not only the emergency personnel who have to attend, the communities who struggle to gather their resources before/during and after the review and families who are directly suffering the loss or stress is something that needs to be considered.

I respectfully ask that you register my objection to this proposal and seriously consider my objections when assessing the appropriateness of the Drayton South open cut coal Proposal.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]