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NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment  
GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001  
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To Whom it May Concern

**RE: Maxwell Underground Coal Mine Project. SSD-9526**

We are writing to you regarding Malabar Coal's Maxwell Underground Project.

We are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation farmers in the Hunter Valley and have two family beef cattle enterprises and lease an irrigation property in the Denman region. We are passionate about our industry and concerned about the increasing expansion of coal mining in the Upper Hunter area. We feel it is of utmost importance to preserve the rural integrity of the area for economic and social reasons after mining is completed or phased out.

We sold our irrigation property, "Carrington Park" to Spur Hill Agricultural (Malabar) in 2014 and have subsequently leased the farm from them. We have found the company very amenable to leasing agreements and we have a positive partnership with them.

We understand that the Maxwell Underground Project will generate a substantial number of new jobs for the local community. It is imperative that these jobs are sourced locally as much as feasibly possible to ensure the local area benefits from the disturbance the Project will impose. Malabar has promised to provide training for local people so they can develop skills to operate an underground mine. This will be a positive commitment to the local community.

Malabar appear to be very dedicated to ensuring co-existence with agricultural enterprises already operating in the region. Their proposal is vastly different to previous proposals for the site and with strict protocols for air quality, noise and water monitoring it has the potential to co-exist with current land uses. Being an underground mine will certainly lessen the visual impact in addition to reducing dust and noise compared to open cut mining.

Mining operations are significantly improving their rehabilitation techniques. Malabar have already started rehabilitating the Drayton site which is commendable. Their investment in a solar farm on rehabilitated land will be a positive outcome if approved. Hopefully the commitment to continually rehabilitate disturbed land to the best practice possible will ensure that at the end of the project the land use will be returned to similar use prior to mining. There is an opportunity for Malabar to be leaders in this field if they consolidate their promises.

Malabar have been active in the local community sponsoring many different ventures including sporting groups, schools and non-profit organisations. They have been pro-active in this area which is appreciated by the small town of Denman and surrounds which has relinquished some of its previous agricultural enterprises due to mining.

We would like to hope that mining and agriculture can co-exist with the correct guidelines put in place. Malabar have demonstrated a willingness to work with the community to ensure a viable future for all industries.

Regards,

Richard & Fiona Hordern

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