



# Scone Equine Hospital

*Dedicated expert care*

Director, Resources Policy  
NSW Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

14 December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

## **PROPOSED JERRYS PLAINS OPEN CUT MINING PROHIBITION**

The Scone Equine Hospital makes this submission to the Department of Planning on the proposed amendment to the State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007 ("Mining SEPP) and State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SRD SEPP) to prevent open cut mining at the mapped site of the Drayton South Exploration Licence (EL 5460).

### The Scone Equine Hospital

The Scone Equine Hospital is a local business with a world class reputation. It is the largest veterinary practice in Australia, and indeed the Southern Hemisphere. We employ over 100 people (5 specialists, 30 veterinarians, 70 support staff) in a practice that in itself is recognised as a world class centre of equine health and research excellence. We have a proud history of over fifty years history servicing our clients in Scone and the Upper Hunter.

We provide veterinary care for the second largest horse population in the world, the Hunter Valley's thoroughbred breeding industry. As a result of our specialist and world recognised work in the Hunter Valley, we also provide veterinary referral services across Australia's eastern seaboard and internationally.

The Scone Equine Hospital has strong research relationships with leading universities in Australia and around the world and is sought after to field veterinary specialist and expert advice and speakers at national and international conferences.

In addition to our veterinary care, we provide practical training for 40 veterinary students and 60 veterinary nurses each year.

In the Upper Hunter region, we are a large employer of professionals and skilled workers. Our staff and their families are long term residents and proud contributors to our local communities. Our practice sponsors and supports over fifty community groups and organizations and is a sponsor of major horse related events in the Upper Hunter.

**SCONE EQUINE GROUP**  
Veterinary Excellence

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## Our Future – Inextricably linked to the Thoroughbred Breeding Industry

The Scone Equine Hospital has substantial plans to invest and grow. These plans include:

- building a State-of-the-Art Veterinary Hospital (an investment in excess of \$12m resulting in construction and on-going employment opportunities);
- increasing the equine-related training and research opportunities available in the local area;
- investing in diagnostic equipment and infrastructure to draw horses and horse people to the area and enhance Scone's reputation as the Horse Capital; and
- expanding and increasing our support of local horse organizations and events.

Our future is tied inextricably with the future of the Hunter Valley's thoroughbred breeding industry.

For some years now our investment plans have been on hold as the future of the Hunter's thoroughbred breeding industry remains uncertain. Decades of bad planning decisions and the issuance of explorations licences for individual mining projects that have the potential to destroy an entire industry have forced us to put on hold our investment in the region. This uncertainty is having a negative effect on investment and the future of our industry.

The Hunter Valley's thoroughbred breeding industry, its critical mass and the benefits that flow from it, including to the network of support industries like our own. Mining and Gas extraction are relatively short term activities, they take the resources and move on. The Thoroughbred industry has been a sustainable land use for nearly 200 years and counting.

The Scone Equine Hospital firmly believes that the Hunter Valley's horse industry is a major, sustainable contributor to the economy and the amenity of the area. The Hunter Valley is recognised as the "Horse Capital" of Australia – a brand that has been developed on a clean and green image, which in turn attracts investment, industry, tourism and residents to the area.

The cumulative effects of mining and resource extraction in the rest of the Hunter have pushed the area to a tipping point which if allowed to further expand and develop will destroy the Thoroughbred industry here and cause the area to lose its international identity and reputation.

## Proposed SEPP Amendments

We consider the amendments proposed for the Mining and SRD SEPPs do not go far enough to provide the certainty needed for our practice and the Hunter's thoroughbred industry to invest and grow in the future with confidence.

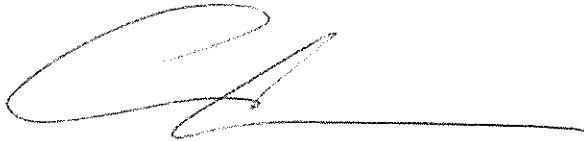
For the past 10 years the thoroughbred breeding industry, including our practice, have advocated for the restoration of certainty, sustainability and balance in the Hunter Valley and for the protection of the Hunter's Equine Critical Industry Cluster. For the past 8 years the NSW Government has promised to protect the Hunter's State, Nationally and Internationally significant Equine Critical Industry Cluster. For the past 6 years the thoroughbred breeding industry, and our practice, have provided technical and other expert evidence to demonstrate that mining and thoroughbred breeding in close proximity – as now again contemplated by mining at the Drayton South site - are incompatible land uses and pose significant threats to the future our world recognised, iconic, established agricultural industry, our employees, the operations of our market leaders, the water sources we rely on, the region's economic

diversity and certainty to our regional communities. In its 2017 Determination Report on the Drayton South Coal Project, the Planning Assessment Commission was persuaded by the substantial and credible body of technical evidence presented in our industry's submissions.

The Scone Equine Hospital is strongly of the view that the Government should take this opportunity to provide the investment certainty our industry needs. Accordingly, we support the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association submission and recommend the Government should amend the Mining and SRD SEPPs to:

1. prohibit any form of mining (open cut, underground, coal seam gas) on the mapped Drayton South (EL 5460) site;
2. implement the PAC (2015) recommendations to safeguard the Hunter's important ECIC and provide investment certainty by developing and enforcing appropriate buffers, exclusionary zones or preservation measures; and
3. prohibit underground and open cut mining on that area of Exploration Licence 5460 that Malabar coal has "voluntarily" relinquished south of the Golden Highway to provide confidence and certainty that this area, which traverses both Goldolphin and Coolmore properties, is permanently out of bounds for any form of future mining.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Adkins', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr Angus Adkins  
Director