Drayton South mine to undergo extra scrutiny

The NSW Government has heard the community’s concerns and has today moved to ensure further scrutiny of the proposed Drayton South coal mine near Muswellbrook and its potential impact on nearby horse studs.

Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Brad Hazzard has written to the independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) requesting that it defer its review of the proposed open-cut mine to allow the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to undertake further work on concerns raised in public submissions.

Public hearings for the project were due to commence in June.

“The Department is currently in the process of reviewing the submissions received during the project’s public exhibition late last year, including detailed submissions from both the Coolmore and Darley studs,” Mr Hazzard said.

“I’ve written to the acting chair of the PAC stating that the Department is concerned the proposal does not adequately address impacts on the studs.

“To ensure a thorough review of all issues can take place, I’ve asked the PAC to postpone its review of the project.

“Once the Department has considered the response from the mining company, I will be in a position to advise the PAC how to proceed further.”

Mr Hazzard said the adjacent horse studs form part of the Upper Hunter’s Equine Critical Industry Cluster (CIC), as identified in the Government’s Strategic Regional Land Use Policy.

The region’s thoroughbred industry is one of two CICs identified for heightened protection from mining and other resources activities, along with the winemaking industry.

The Drayton South mining proposal as well as all submissions received and the mine’s response to submissions can be viewed on the department’s website by visiting http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au and searching for Drayton South.