Drayton South project referred to independent PAC for determination

The Department of Planning & Environment has referred the Drayton South Coal Project to the independent Planning Assessment Commission for determination.

The Department’s assessment of Anglo American’s latest plan for the mine near Muswellbrook found the project can be approved under strict conditions to manage potential noise, dust and environmental impacts.

The implementation of an extensive biodiversity offset area comprising approximately 2,300 hectares has been recommended by the Department.

Anglo American submitted a downsized mine plan in March this year, after a review conducted by the independent PAC late last year found the company’s original, larger proposal should not proceed because of unacceptable impacts on the Coolmore and Darley horse studs.

“The Department’s latest assessment acknowledges that horse breeding and mining are both very important to the Upper Hunter and found the two industries can coexist,” a Department spokesperson said.

“As recommended by the PAC in its review, the mine will not be visible from the primary operating areas of nearby horse studs.”

The independent PAC will make the final determination on the project, at arm’s length from Government and with additional public consultation.

Anglo American’s proposal estimates that the Drayton South project will net the people of NSW $330 million in royalties and provide for the ongoing employment of its 500-plus mine staff.

Further information on the project, including the Department’s assessment report and recommended approval conditions, can be viewed at www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au

Information on the independent PAC can be viewed at www.pac.nsw.gov.au

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