



**1st December 2017**

**Malabar Coal's proposed underground mine should be assessed on facts and evidence**

The NSW Government's renewal of the Exploration Licence for Malabar Coal in the Upper Hunter is a common-sense decision that will ensure the potential for a new underground mine is properly assessed based on facts and evidence.

The renewal of the Exploration Licence is not an approval to build a mine, but an early step in the process to determine whether or not a mine is feasible.

Renewal of this Exploration Licence will now enable commencement of a process to determine whether an underground mine at the proposed location can deliver jobs, investment and royalties for NSW, while also providing adequate safeguards for other local industries and the environment.

A proposed underground mine at the site will be completely different from past open-cut proposals. If approved, the mine at EL 5460 would be completely underground, invisible to the local horse studs, would involve no mining underneath any other properties, and feature a mine entrance at least five kilometres away from the closest studs.

For well over a century mining, agriculture, horse studs and a wide range of other industries have successfully operated side by side in the Upper Hunter. The Hunter mining sector has generated long term economic benefits, delivered jobs, supported local businesses and contributed to improved infrastructure, facilities and services.

The process of independent assessment to determine if an underground mine is feasible should now be allowed to proceed without interference.

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