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88 Maitland St. (02) 6543 4255

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20 Munibung Rd. Cardiff (02) 4954 5933

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97 Elsham Ave. Orange (02) 6360 2944

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4/61 Barnes St. Tamworth (02) 6762 0600



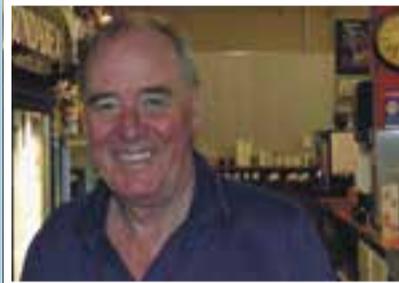
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24 HOURS - 7 DAYS
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POPULAR PLAN

WE HIT THE STREETS AROUND MUSWELLBROOK AND SINGLETON TO TAKE A QUICK LOOK INSIDE THE MINDS OF A FEW LOCALS AND GET THEIR THOUGHTS ON MALABAR COAL'S PLAN TO BRING DRAYTON SOUTH INTO THE SPUR HILL UNDERGROUND MINE PLAN.

@ the Coalface believes our people are the number one consideration in this proposal. Competing industries are clearly very important too, as is the economic health of our communities. Like the people we randomly spoke to on the street, we believe this can work for all with next to no negative impacts. Without exception everyone we spoke to wants to see this happen and no we didn't omit any negative perspectives – people really want to see this happen.



Greg of Muswellbrook It's a common-sense thing and that's what scares me the most, there is not a lot of common sense left these days. If they can go underground and cause no problems then well why not, go for it. We've got to start putting people first and then consider all the other issues after that.



Les of Muswellbrook I can't see that there is an issue with the horses with this being underground. I worked at Coolmore and Arrowfield in the '70s and they knew then that there were coalmines over the fence into the future. I'm probably a little biased as I worked in the industry for a few years, but I can't see how an underground mine can affect them that much. I'd like to see it go ahead and with everything already there to process the coal it makes sense. I hope it has a strong preference for local workers and local suppliers though. It's definitely a good thing.



Alex of Muswellbrook I agree with the proposal to go ahead with this new plan because I feel like the town needs it and the economy and the town will improve a lot by bringing more workers and stuff on. It will do the town a world of good. I believe they can coexist with the horses as they have previously. I feel this new plan would be much less invasive on their property and I can't see how this would affect them on a trading level. It could really be a win win for all.



Gus of Muswellbrook This is a no brainer. In some ways I can understand some of the previous worries that inevitably go with open cut plans, but now that this new proposal takes it underground and on top of that uses some existing infrastructure instead of building more, it's a great option. This really can keep the neighbours happy. On the business side I reckon it's even better for the town as an underground will bring plenty of new opportunities to local businesses that open cut doesn't. Really this is a good option that can solve a lot of issues if everyone is honest about it.



Skip of Muswellbrook For the community it's vital that we keep maintaining jobs for the region. The infrastructure is already built, and it would be very minimal harm to the environment. The mining industry is vital to the Upper Hunter and has been for as long as I can remember. I think that they can both work together, but I think that one industry is trying to basically heighten the issues and impacts on the opposing industries. We can coexist and the vital thing is that we have many different ways that we create income within the community and everything has its strengths. Diversification is important, and we have to find a happy medium to coexist. This projects existing infrastructure combined with going underground would change a lot of what the horse studs problems were from the beginning.



Bronwyn of Jerrys Plains Going underground I can't see it affecting me too much. It's a much better plan than open cut that should mean everyone can get along a bit better. Anything that's good for the local economy and done right should be given a chance.



Scott of Singleton I think it's great, keeps people employed. It's definitely a better outcome for the horses. I'm no expert, but I would hope they could co-exist. It seems to be a win-win so I hope everyone can be happy. Keep Muswellbrook going a bit. We can't have the horse industry going. We need a few winners!



Rod of Muswellbrook It shouldn't have been closed down. If they keep a good distance away from the studs it'll work and should be positive. Personally I think it should never have closed down and going underground is good for everyone. Everyone can work together and this mine could do plenty for us. It's a positive thing overall I would say.

Dianne of Muswellbrook I think anything for local employment is good and if it can work well with the other industries, which it should, do then I think it's good. Coexistence has happened for many years, and if both industries remain aware of everything that's going on I don't see any reason it can't work.



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