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## **Post-mining land use report highlights opportunities and priorities**

Business Hunter has welcomed the release of the report of the NSW parliamentary inquiry into [beneficial and productive post-mining land use](#), saying it highlights steps that need to be taken to ensure former mining and power generation sites continue to support jobs and local communities as our region's economy diversifies.

The Standing Committee on State Development, chaired by Hunter based MLC Emily Suvaal, has tabled a 158-page report that recommends the NSW Government comprehensively review post-mining regulatory frameworks and processes to support innovative post-mining land uses.

"The issue of the reuse of mining, power station and associated buffer lands has been topical in the Hunter region for some time," Mr Hawes said.

"We know that priorities have changed since many of the original consent conditions for these lands were put in place and there is an increasing imperative to ensure that, where appropriate, former industrial lands can continue to be used to provide jobs and economic benefit for surrounding communities.

"The scope of opportunity for beneficial reuse of former mining lands is extensive. Business Hunter understands in the Hunter Valley there are over 38,000 hectares of mining land that is either rehabilitated or being rehabilitated, disturbed or supporting current operations."

The committee's report also recommends the NSW Government undertake a program of reform of current land uses and future opportunities across regions experiencing mining and energy transition, including an audit of industrial sites, surplus and industrial lands.

Mr Hawes said he was pleased to see the report address the issue of skills transfer between traditional and emerging industries in mining regions. It recommends that relevant government agencies undertake a skills audit of the mining workforce in NSW and invest in reskilling, retraining and educational programs to support mining communities during resources and energy transition.

"[Our submission](#) to the inquiry recommended that these processes take place while the economic transition is under way so that there is continuity for the workforce and supporting businesses as they move from one industry to the next," Mr Hawes said.

"The approach should be to have new industry and business develop in addition to current ones, not instead of them.

“Communities can fall into a hole as they wait across the period from mine closure to the implementation and integration of the next land use.

“Having future land use clearly articulated and reskilling under way will reduce the loss of jobs and economic activity as the land merges from one use to another.”

Mr Hawes said Business Hunter would continue to review the findings and recommendations of the report in detail, in consultation with members and stakeholders, and looked forward to the Government’s response, which is due in July.

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