

21 Social

21.1 Assessment objectives

The DGRs for the social aspects of the Project are:

- assessment of potential impacts on local and regional communities, including:
 - increased demand for local and regional infrastructure and services (such as housing, childcare, health, education and emergency services); and
 - impacts on social amenity.
- detailed description of measures to be implemented to minimise the adverse social (and economic) impacts of the project, including any infrastructure improvements or contributions and/or voluntary planning agreement or similar mechanism.

In relation to the second DGR above, economic aspects are reported separately in Chapter 20 and Appendix R.

21.2 Assessment method

EMM prepared the social assessment (Appendix S) and the results are summarised in this chapter. The assessment had referred to the guidance document specified in the DGRs, *Techniques for Effective Social Impact Assessment: A Practical Guide* (NSW Office of Social Policy 1995). The method used the following steps:

- documenting social aspects of the Project, particularly workforce characteristics and the probable residential distribution of workers and their dependants;
- developing community profiles for the primary and secondary assessment areas;
- documenting the relevant local and regional policy context;
- consulting with key stakeholders, including landowners, community groups, councils and service providers;
- assessing potential impacts of the Project on the primary and secondary assessment areas, including a sensitivity analysis for Mid-Western Regional LGA that considers two scenarios;
- analysing potential cumulative impacts of the Project and others that will occur concurrently;
- developing appropriate mitigation and management measures for any adverse social impacts as well as measures to enhance positive impacts; and
- identifying ongoing monitoring processes to ensure social impacts are progressively reviewed and responsively managed over time.

EMM prepared the *Cobbora Coal Project Workforce Accommodation Study* (Appendix T) and the results are summarised in this chapter.

21.2.1 Social aspects of the Project

i Workforce characteristics

a. Construction workforce

The mine construction workforce will begin with 110 workers in late 2013 and then build up to a peak of around 550 workers during mid- to late 2014. Based on an analysis of the skills of local workers and their travelling distances to the Project site, it is considered that about 40% (206 workers) will be recruited within the region (EMM 2012b). They are likely to be sourced as follows:

- 61 workers from Dubbo LGA;
- 22 workers from Warrumbungle LGA;
- 65 workers from Wellington LGA; and
- 58 workers from Mid-Western LGA.

The balance of construction workers, 60% (344 workers), will temporarily relocate to the area. Relocated construction workers will nearly always be unaccompanied, meaning the population will mainly be those directly employed on the Project.

b. Operations workforce

Mine operations will start during 2015. The initial workforce will be some 170 workers, increasing to 470 by 2020, and reaching a peak of around 590 in 2027 to 2030.

The *Workforce Accommodation Study* (Appendix T) concluded that with effective training programs, about 65% of the total operations workforce could be sourced within the region by 2020, increasing to about 70% by 2027. However, a conservatively low assumption of 50% of the total operations workforce sourced within the region from 2020 onwards has been used in the social assessment. Operations workers are likely to be long-term residents who would be accompanied by their families.

ii Workforce residential distribution

a. Construction workforce

The Project includes an on-site construction workforce accommodation village for up to 400 workers. It will ensure the Project does not place additional pressure on the local housing and temporary accommodation markets. This village will also help to attract skilled construction workers to the Project and minimise any potential risk to the Project's development schedule from a shortage of necessary skilled workers.

b. Operations workforce

CHC is committed to working with all councils to maximise local recruitment. Operations workers, being potential long-term residents, will show a preference for relocating to larger centres. The likely residential distribution is shown in Table 21.1 for two scenarios. Scenario 1 is more likely as Mid-Western Regional LGA's existing workforce is already substantially committed to existing mining projects in the region. However given the range of possible outcomes, a sensitivity analysis, Scenario 2, assumed a higher percentage of in-migrant workers residing in the Mid-Western Regional LGA (increasing the number of workers residing in the Mid-Western Regional LGA from 10% in Scenario 1 to 30%).

Table 21.1 Residential distribution of relocated workforce for operations

LGA	Percentage of operations workforce – Scenario 1	Percentage of operations workforce – Scenario 2
Dubbo	60%	40%
Warrumbungle	15%	15%
Wellington	15%	15%
Mid-Western Regional	10%	30%

Source: Workforce Accommodation Study (Appendix T).

For Scenario 1, this translates to the following residential distribution for different stages of the Project:

- Start of operations (2015) for 46 workers:
 - Dubbo LGA – 28 workers;
 - Warrumbungle LGA – 7 workers;
 - Wellington LGA – 7 workers; and
 - Mid-Western Regional LGA – 4 workers.
- By 2020 for 235 workers:
 - Dubbo LGA – 141 workers;
 - Warrumbungle LGA – 35 workers;
 - Wellington LGA – 35 workers; and
 - Mid-Western Regional LGA – 24 workers.
- Peak operations workforce (2027–2030) for 295 workers:
 - Dubbo LGA – 177 workers;
 - Warrumbungle LGA – 44 workers;
 - Wellington LGA – 44 workers; and
 - Mid-Western Regional LGA – 30 workers.

For Scenario 2, the following residential distribution for different stages of the Project is predicted:

- Start of operations (2015) for 46 workers:
 - Dubbo LGA – 18 workers;
 - Warrumbungle LGA – 7 workers;
 - Wellington LGA – 7 workers; and
 - Mid-Western Regional LGA – 14 workers.
- By 2020 for 235 workers:
 - Dubbo LGA – 94 workers;
 - Warrumbungle LGA – 35 workers;
 - Wellington LGA – 35 workers; and
 - Mid-Western Regional LGA – 71 workers.
- Peak operations workforce (2027–2030) for 295 workers:
 - Dubbo LGA – 118 workers;
 - Warrumbungle LGA – 44 workers;
 - Wellington LGA – 44 workers; and
 - Mid-Western Regional LGA – 89 workers.

Workers that are relocating will be accompanied by their families. It has been assumed these families will be the same size as those in the current workforce at Ulan mine — 3.05 people (Coakes 2009), which is larger than the current average household size of 2.42 people across the four LGAs (ABS 2012). On this basis, the Project under Scenario 1, is likely to result in population increases as follows (totals may have slight discrepancies due to rounding):

In 2015, 140 people distributed across:

- Dubbo LGA – 84 people;
- Warrumbungle LGA – 21 people;
- Wellington LGA – 21 people; and
- Mid-Western Regional LGA – 14 people.

In 2020, 717 people, distributed across:

- Dubbo LGA – 430 people;
- Warrumbungle LGA – 108 people;

- Wellington LGA – 108 people; and
- Mid-Western Regional LGA – 71 people.

At its peak, in 2027, 900 people, distributed across:

- Dubbo LGA – 540 people;
- Warrumbungle LGA – 135 people;
- Wellington LGA – 135 people; and
- Mid-Western Regional LGA – 90 people.

Under Scenario 2, the Project may result in the following potential population increases for Mid-Western Regional LGA:

- 2015 – 42 people;
- 2020 – 215 people; and
- 2027 – 272 people.

It is assumed in Scenario 2 that 50% of population will reside at Gulgong (due to closer proximity to the Project) and the other 50% will reside in Mudgee (due to the larger range of higher order facilities).

21.2.2 Community profiles

Two geographical scales were used in the assessment to reflect the need to account for different social conditions at local and regional levels. The two scales were:

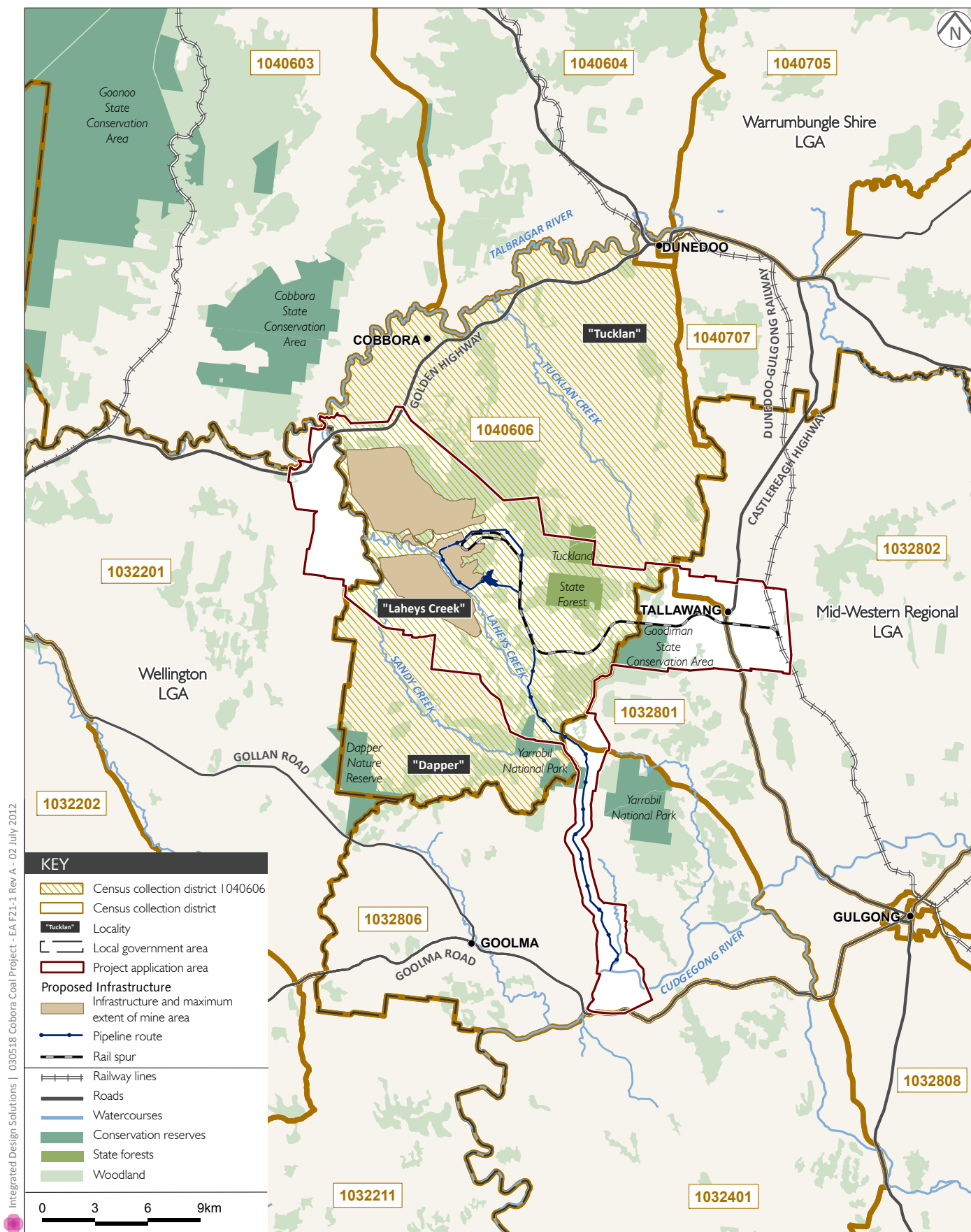
- primary assessment area – Laheys Creek locality and surrounds (Figure 21.1); and
- secondary assessment area – Dubbo, Warrumbungle, Wellington and Mid-Western Regional LGAs (Figure 21.2).

i Primary assessment area

The primary assessment area is the immediate surrounds of the Project around Laheys Creek. Laheys Creek is not classified as a 'state suburb' by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) due to its small population. Therefore, it has been combined with the nearby localities of Tucklan, Cobbora and Dapper which forms Census Collection District (CCD) 1040606 as shown in Figure 21.1.

ABS removed CCDs in the 2011 census and replaced them with statistical local areas (SLAs). This is because ABS considers that CCDs are not the most efficient method to capture changing demographics. This prevents direct comparison of 2006 and 2011 data. Therefore, 2006 census data has continued to be used in this analysis.

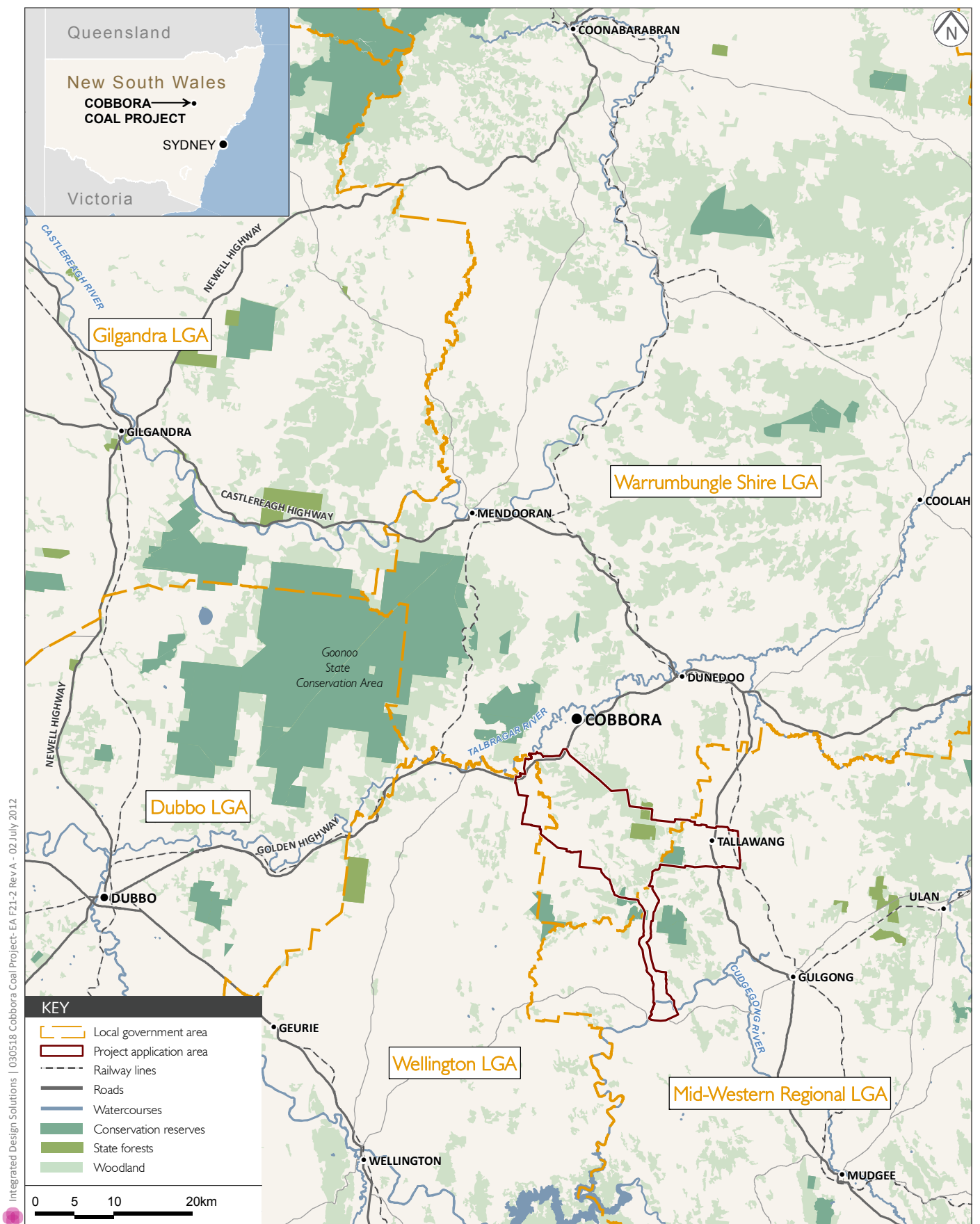
The primary assessment area focused on the Laheys Creek locality for community profiling. However, references to Cobbora, Tucklan and Dapper localities were carried out for statistical and demographic purposes.



Primary Assessment Area - Laheys Creek Locality and Surrounds

Cobbara Coal Project - Environmental Assessment

Figure 21.1



Secondary Assessment Area - Local Government Areas

Cobbora Coal Project - Environmental Assessment

Figure 21.2

ii Secondary assessment area

The secondary assessment area is defined as the Dubbo, Warrumbungle, Wellington and Mid-Western Regional LGAs, which contains the larger towns of Dubbo, Mudgee, Wellington and Coonabarabran. Broader social and economic impacts will occur in this area and the following specific factors were considered:

- employment;
- regional economy;
- social infrastructure (eg housing, education and childcare services); and
- health infrastructure (eg primary health and emergency services).

The secondary assessment area used both census and information from targeted stakeholder consultation across the four LGAs. Consultation was conducted during November 2011 and May 2012. Workforce and industry statistics are based on 2006 census data as the latest data will be released from October 2012.

21.2.3 Stakeholder and community consultation

Community engagement is an important part of the social impact assessment as it allows stakeholder values, issues, impacts and opportunities to be identified and included in the Project's design and implementation. A second important function is to properly inform interested parties about the Project and its potential impacts.

The program of stakeholder consultation activities included:

- interviews with key stakeholders, including landowners, community groups, local councils, as well as local businesses and industries;
- stakeholder presentations and briefing sessions initiated both by CHC and upon request by various stakeholders;
- community information sessions held at Dunedoo, Wellington, Gulgong and Dubbo during May 2012;
- a project website (www.cobbora.com.au);
- a project hotline number (1800 239 894);
- distribution of responses to frequently asked questions and a Project fact sheet;
- a full-time consultation specialist based in the local area to brief stakeholders and respond to requests for meetings with both groups and individuals; and
- a full-time CHC Property Manager based in the local area to respond to landholder queries and manage ongoing property issues with CHC-owned land and properties being leased back to previous landowners.

Matters raised in the stakeholder consultations are outlined in Chapter 5 ('Stakeholder consultation'). A full list of stakeholders consulted as part of the social assessment is provided in Appendix S ('Social assessment').

21.3 Existing environment

21.3.1 Primary assessment area

i Population characteristics

Based on the latest statistical data, the primary assessment area (Laheys Creek, Cobbora, Tucklan and Dapper localities) is characterised by a stable but ageing, rural population. The primary area had a population of 250 people at the 2006 census. This remained unchanged from the 2001 census.

A total of 3.2% of the population identified themselves as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders compared with 2.2% of the state's population.

The largest age cohort is people aged 65 years and over (18.1%), followed by 35 to 44 year olds (17.7%) and older children (5 to 11 year olds) at 13.7%, which is typical of a 'middle-aged' family structure. The smallest cohorts are younger and later working age cohorts: 12 to 17 year olds (4.8%), 18 to 24 year olds (6.4%), 0 to 4 year olds (6.8%) and 45 to 54 year olds (9.6%).

The median age in the locality is 39 years in 2006, compared with 35 years in 2001.

ii Households and income

There is a higher proportion of families with children (66.0%), followed by families without children (19.5%), and single person households (6.8%).

The average household size in the primary area is 2.9 compared with 2.6 for NSW.

There are fewer low income earners (11.8% below \$349 per week) in the primary area than the figure for NSW (14.9%). The median household income in the primary area is \$774 per week compared with \$1,036 per week in NSW.

iii Industry and employment

'Managers' at 48.6% are the main occupation in the primary assessment area, which reflects the high number of farmers in the area. This is followed by 'professionals' (13.7%) and 'clerical and administrative workers' (11.7%). As there is a lack of employment diversity in the locality, it is assumed that many of these workers would commute to nearby towns.

Reflecting the rural character of the primary area, 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' are the largest employing industries with over half of the working population (54.8%) employed in these sectors. 'Health care and social assistance' and 'professionals and technical services' are equally the next largest employing sectors at 6.7%.

iv Community infrastructure

The primary area contains a Rural Fire Service (RFS) block at Laheys Creek, the Union Church at Dapper and a community hall at Cobbora. There are no shops, schools, community facilities or sporting fields serving the primary area. Most residents travel to Dunedoo or Gulgong to access basic goods and services.

v Proponent's measures to date

The Project will directly affect some landowners who will have to relocate. This could cause some community fragmentation and uncertainty. To mitigate these potential impacts, CHC has put in place the following measures:

- purchased or otherwise compensated owners of all land directly affected by the mine and associated infrastructure;
- purchased or otherwise compensated owners of land where modelling has predicted that impacts will exceed thresholds for noise and dust; and
- where properties have been purchased, formal agreements have been made with landholders for them to remain and continue farming operations until an agreed date.

These measures have largely removed uncertainty and helped those landowners who wish to retire and relocate.

21.3.2 Secondary assessment area

i Population demographics

The key socio-economic characteristics of the four LGAs are given in Table 21.2.

Table 21.2 Socio-economic characteristics summary: secondary assessment area (2010)

Socio-economic characteristics	Dubbo LGA	Warrumbungle LGA	Wellington LGA	Mid-Western Regional LGA	NSW
Population	38,805	9,588	8,493	22,319	6,917,660
Indigenous population (%)	12.8	9.2	20.0	3.9	2.5
Population growth (2006–2011) (%)	2.5	-2.26	4.59	5.85	5.6
Population growth (2011–2036) (%)	0.46	-0.84	-0.59	0.02	1.12
Median age	36	45	41	41	38
Working age (15 to 64 years) (%)	63.3	57.88	60.6	61.59	66.0
People aged 65 + years (%)	14.2	22.0	18.8	18.1	14.7
Industry structure (ABS 2006)	Retail trade, health care/social assistance and education/ training	Agriculture/ forestry/fishing, retail trade and education/ training	Agriculture/ forestry/fishing, retail trade and education/ training	Retail trade, agriculture/ forestry/fishing and manufacturing	Retail trade, health care/social assistance and education/ training
Occupational structure (ABS 2006)	Professionals and technicians/ trade workers	Managers and labourers	Managers and labourers	Managers and technicians/ trade workers	Professionals and clerical/ administrative workers

Table 21.2 **Socio-economic characteristics summary: secondary assessment area (2010) (Cont'd)**

Socio-economic characteristics	Dubbo LGA	Warrumbungle LGA	Wellington LGA	Mid-Western Regional LGA	NSW
Unemployment rate 2010 (%) (ABS 2006)	4.3	6.2	8.6	6.0	5.7
Average household size	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6

Sources: ABS (2006 and 2012); ABS Regional Population Growth: Australia: March 2010 (2011); DoP Population Forecasts (2010)

Important socio-economic characteristics of the secondary area can be summarised as follows:

- relative size of towns: Dubbo is the largest town by a considerable margin and it contains the broadest range and majority of higher order facilities. These features will make it an attractive location for the Project's workforce;
- population structure: Dubbo's population is relatively young whereas the other three LGAs are generally older than the NSW average. Household sizes are generally similar across the LGAs and NSW. The proportion of Indigenous people is much higher than the NSW average;
- population growth: Mid-Western Regional, Dubbo and Wellington experienced recent population growth. Warrumbungle experienced a population decline;
- future population changes: Dubbo is likely to continue to grow through to 2036. Warrumbungle and Wellington are likely to experience a decline. Mid-Western Regional is likely to remain stable;
- economic structure: retail and community services dominate in Dubbo, while primary industries dominate in other areas; and
- workforce and occupation structure: there is a higher proportion of managers (which includes farmers), technicians and trades workers and labourers than the NSW average. Unemployment is generally above the NSW average except in Dubbo.

ii Community infrastructure and services

a. Education

The secondary area has a high percentage of school-aged children compared with the NSW average and has a selection of government, private and special schools. Discussions with Department of Education and Communities (DEC) stated that although schools within the secondary area were generally experiencing growing enrolments all the schools (primary and secondary) in the region can accommodate growth.

Most private schools in the regions stated they were experiencing strong enrolments but could still absorb more students.

A range of tertiary education services are provided in Dubbo. Charles Sturt University services the central western region of NSW, with one of its five campuses located in Dubbo. The University of Sydney's School of Rural Health has a Dubbo campus. It has been in operation since 2001 and accommodates 30 medical students.

TAFE NSW-Western Institute has colleges at Dubbo, Dunedoo, Wellington and Mudgee. The Western Institute provides the majority of certified training courses for mining and its associated sectors (eg heavy transportation) in Western NSW. Dubbo has another four registered training organisations that offer courses from personal interest to vocational training, including work tickets through to diploma level.

b. Childcare

There is a relatively high proportion of younger families with children (0 to 5 year olds) who reside in the region, notably Dubbo and Wellington LGAs. There are a number of childcare centres offering a range of services, including pre-school, playgroups, occasional and long day care, after school care and vacation care services across the four LGAs.

Nearly all childcare centres across the secondary area have reported waiting lists for 3 to 5 year olds, with long waiting lists reported for 0 to 2 year olds.

The recent introduction of the Commonwealth National Quality Framework Guidelines for early childhood has resulted in a new ratio requirement of one staff member to four children for 0 to 2 year olds (DEEWR 2009). Discussions with councils and childcare providers indicated these guidelines will have a considerable effect on the number of spaces available, or even, the viability of some centres. Wellington Council indicated that one centre may need to close due to the new guidelines.

The estimated numbers of 0 to 4 year olds the Project will generate in 2015 will be very minor. However, based on existing childcare capacity in the region and the longer-term impact of the new guidelines, there may be some strains on existing childcare services in 2015.

c. Health

The secondary area comes under the jurisdiction of the Western NSW Local Health District.

Dubbo is a major rural health service centre. It has three major hospitals serving the local and wider catchment population: Dubbo Base hospital, Lourdes hospital and community health centre, and Dubbo private hospital. Dubbo Base hospital has received NSW and Commonwealth funding for major redevelopment. The \$79.8 million redevelopment project is in the planning stages and will improve existing delivery of services and facilities in maternity, paediatric, renal dialysis and surgical areas by September 2014.

In Gulgong, the hospital closed in 2010. In mid-2011, construction of a new multi-purpose health centre facility began. This will be completed in 2012.

The secondary area contains a number of medical centres and specialist health practitioners. Dubbo is serviced by 28 medical clinics, 12 dentists, five chiropractors, nine physiotherapists, three podiatrists and three diagnostic services. Many residents from the region travel to Dubbo to access these services.

The Australian Medical Workforce Advisory Committee recommends one general practitioner (GP) per 950 people. There are 46 GPs in Dubbo (recommended level 44 GPs), eight GPs for Wellington (nine recommended), 11 GPs in Mudgee (19 recommended), two GPs in Gulgong (three recommended) and two GPs in Dunedoo (two recommended).

Discussions with the Dubbo Plains Division of General Practice advised there were enough GPs in the Dubbo, Wellington and Warrumbungle LGAs to meet current demand. Although Wellington was slightly below the recommended ratio, its closeness to the major health facilities at Dubbo meant a high number of registrars and medical students could visit Wellington to help out local GPs. Discussions with the Dubbo Plains Division of General Practice advised there were enough GPs in the Dubbo, Wellington and Warrumbungle LGAs to meet current demand. There is a shortfall in Mid-Western Regional LGA. The Division stated that medical centres in the region were adapting to meet the changing pattern of working families by staying open longer during the week and working on weekends.

d. Housing

The Project includes a construction accommodation village containing 400 beds. It will meet the needs of the 350 construction workers and visitors and ensure the Project does not place additional pressure on the local temporary accommodation market.

There will be a small number of visiting technical staff during project operations. Short-stay accommodation supply of hotel/motel rooms and units was calculated in the *Workforce Accommodation Study* (Appendix T). The supply of short-stay accommodation in each LGA (for 2010 and 2011) for the following towns was calculated:

- Dubbo LGA had about 1,700 rooms and units in a variety of hotel/motel units with an average yearly occupancy rates typically between 65 to 69%;
- Warrumbungle LGA had about 900 short-stay accommodation beds (ABS 2010), of which around half (450 beds) are in daily commuting distance of the Project area, in and around the towns of Dunedoo, Coolah and Mendooran;
- Wellington had about 157 short-stay rooms and units available in a variety of hotels, motels and apartments; and
- Mid-Western Regional LGA had about 1,222 beds in hotel/motel units, apartments and caravan parks (ABS 2010).

The total short-stay accommodation supply of hotel/motel rooms and units within the study area is 2,435 rooms/units. Its current prevailing occupancy rates are generally up to 70%. Assuming the supply of short-stay accommodation remains steady, around 30% of such accommodation would be sufficient to meet the small number of visiting technical staff to the Project.

Although the rental costs have been increasing each year, particularly in the Dubbo and Mid-Western Regional LGAs, the level of house purchase prices has been relatively stable since 2005, with only minor or modest growth in the median house price in any LGA.

The supply of new housing can be estimated from the recent annual rates of residential construction in each LGA (ABS 2010):

- Dubbo LGA: 213 new dwellings made up of 179 new houses and 34 new dwellings in multi unit residential buildings;
- Warrumbungle LGA: 13 new houses;
- Wellington LGA: 8 new houses; and

- Mid-Western Regional LGA: 46 new dwellings made up of 26 new houses and 20 new multi unit dwellings.

The above figures illustrate the capacity of the local building industry and assuming current construction rates continue the following supply will be available by 2015:

- Dubbo LGA: 852 dwellings;
- Warrumbungle LGA: 52 dwellings;
- Wellington LGA: 32 dwellings; and
- Mid-Western Regional LGA: 184 dwellings.

This could provide a total new supply of some 1,120 dwellings by 2015. Assuming this rate of construction remains constant, the following dwellings could be available by 2027:

- Dubbo LGA: 3,408 dwellings;
- Warrumbungle LGA: 208 dwellings;
- Wellington LGA: 128 dwellings; and
- Mid-Western Regional LGA: 736 dwellings.

This could provide a total new housing supply of some 4,480 new dwellings.

e. [Emergency services](#)

The region is serviced by the District Emergency Management Office based at Dubbo, which comes under the jurisdiction of the Central West Emergency Management District. Dubbo is the regional headquarters for the Ambulance Service of NSW, State Emergency Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and NSW Police Force. It is also the centre for the Central West District Rescue Committee that oversees operational capacity and capabilities.

Dubbo, Mudgee, Gulgong and Dunedoo all have ambulance, emergency services and accredited rescue units.

There are aero-medical retrieval providers in the Central West District, including the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS), which operates from Dubbo airport. There is a rescue helicopter based in Orange, which is crewed by Ambulance Service NSW paramedics. Also, Mudgee airport is registered as suitable for RFDS operations.

The closest RFS units to the Project fall in the Castlereagh RFS zone. They include the Dapper Brigade — Laheys Creek (17 members), Dunedoo Brigade (25–30 members) and Cobbora Brigade (15 members). As these brigades are mainly volunteer-based they range in capacity to respond to fire emergencies.

f. Youth services

Dubbo offers a range of facilities and services to cater for young people's needs. Structured sporting activities are provided through a wide range of associations at a range of venues. There are also voluntary and cultural agencies such as Scouts, Guides, music, drama, dance, art/culture and church-based youth groups that work to support young people. However, discussions with Council revealed limited provision of formal facilities and services for young people.

Youth unemployment in Dubbo, at 12.4%, is above the national average of 5.2% (ABS 2006). Council is working with the Dubbo City Development Corporation to attract industries and businesses that will improve the prospects of youth employment.

Without transport, young people cannot access employment opportunities, recreation or education and training. There are initiatives with private transport companies to provide young people with transport options outside of the bus operating hours. However, most of them are subject to future funding grants.

Wellington and Mudgee provide some youth facilities and services, but they are limited at Gulgong and Dunedoo. As with Dubbo, poor transport options limit many opportunities for young people in these towns.

21.4 Environmental management

21.4.1 Economic development – employment, education and training

CHC will maximise local employment and provide training and education opportunities by:

- offering apprenticeships, traineeships and scholarships for young people through partnerships with local tertiary and educational providers;
- preparing labour force recruitment strategies that initially focus on in-house training for less skilled operator positions;
- actively pursuing equal employment opportunity in hiring the workforce; and
- working closely with the Aboriginal community to promote ongoing employment.

CHC is actively working with local training providers and participating in local forums with agencies, councils, education providers and businesses to discuss and promote employment and training opportunities in the region. These include:

- working with TAFE NSW Western Institute to create a new education module dedicated to training individuals for a mining industry career. The course will give students entry level employment qualifications for surface extraction mining;
- playing a central role in both the Central West and Orana regions' Education Skills and Industry forums recently facilitated by Regional Development Australia in Orange and Dubbo. The focus in these forums will be on developing better pathways to employment for people within both regions;
- developing a pilot training program with local councils and industry groups so there will be a ready supply of apprentices in the region that will alleviate potential shortages in the future availability of suitably trained apprentices;

- developing a scholarship and graduate training program that will support local students in mine-relevant tertiary education, that will lead to employment upon completion; and
- partnering with Aboriginal Affairs NSW to drive the development of the Central West Aboriginal Mining Steering Committee, which will aim to develop, implement and monitor the Central West Aboriginal Mining Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), negotiated by mining companies, government agencies, service providers, Aboriginal traditional owners, Aboriginal land councils and the community. In partnership with TAFE NSW Western Institute, the committee will develop strategies to help Aboriginal participants complete the newly created mining module.

21.4.2 Economic development – local businesses

CHC will maximise local business opportunities by:

- giving preference (where cost-effective) to local suppliers for the Project's requirements;
- developing a register of local businesses that will be used to notify them of upcoming tenders; and
- assisting in the development of systems that will be required for businesses that will service the mine operations.

21.4.3 Local housing

The Project includes an on-site construction workforce accommodation village for up to 400 workers. It is envisaged the village will be able to cater for short-term visits by technical staff during the Project's construction so that the Project does not place additional pressure on the local housing and temporary accommodation markets.

Based on the current availability and estimated future supply of new housing in the region, there will be enough housing to cater for the relocated workforce and their families. The operations in-migrant workforce is estimated to be 46 people at the start of operations in 2015, occupying approximately 4% of the total new dwellings and 7% of the total new dwellings by 2027. To facilitate the smooth production of required housing, CHC will regularly update councils and developers on planned workforce intake.

21.4.4 Community infrastructure and services

Overall, the Project is likely to have only minor demands on community facilities. Principally, this is because Dubbo, the largest town in the region, has the capacity in its facilities and social services to cope with the Project. Also, the region's population has been, and will continue to be, generally stable or declining, so that facilities will not be under pressure from other sources.

CHC will regularly update councils and service providers about the schedule for Project development and planned workforce intake so they can respond to any increase in demand for community facilities and services. There will be particular emphasis on the needs of a younger population, including childcare, young children and youth facilities and services where the analysis identified a potential shortfall.

CHC is consulting extensively with the four councils (Dubbo City Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council, Wellington Shire Council and Mid-Western Regional Council) to work towards forming voluntary planning agreements (VPA) under Section 93F of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to address social and public infrastructure impacts arising from the Project. While these discussions are ongoing, the VPAs are forecast to be finalised by late 2012.

CHC is currently formulating the proposed parameters for the agreements that are envisaged to:

- be based on principles established in recent comparable agreements;
- reflect changes in population and demographics arising from the Project;
- address resultant impacts on services and facilities in the LGAs; and
- be for the life of the mine.

It is proposed that separate funding will be provided by CHC for road upgrades and maintenance.

21.5 Impacts

The following impacts and benefits will accompany the management measures described in Section 21.4.

Potential cumulative impacts from surrounding mining projects in the region indicate there will be:

- sufficient capacity within the primary and secondary education system to accommodate increased numbers;
- initial strains on health services, mainly in Mudgee, and to a lesser extent Gulgong, before easing by 2020;
- strains on existing childcare services, mainly in Dubbo, Mudgee and Gulgong, before easing by 2020; and
- initial pressure on councils to deliver quality services and facilities, especially for children and young adults, before easing by 2020.

CHC will work with local stakeholders in devising housing development strategies for relocated workers and their families in the Dubbo, Wellington and Warrumbungle LGAs, which will reduce potential cumulative impacts in the Mid-Western Regional LGA. While some strains on facilities and services are likely, the principal effects of the cumulative mining projects will be to arrest the rate of population decline and provide well-paid employment, both of which will be positive outcomes.

CHC is committed to supporting the community as a local employer, economic contributor and community partner. It already plays an active role in local communities through financial contributions as part of its Community Support Program to local and regional events and facilities.

Unemployment across the region, with the exception of Dubbo, is generally above the NSW average. Aboriginal unemployment rates in the region are higher. CHC is working closely with councils, government agencies and local communities to maximise the Project's economic benefits in the region and minimise its impacts.

In terms of benefits, the Project will stimulate local communities by:

- creating approximately 6.5 indirect jobs in the regional economy from each job it creates;
- providing jobs for young people and incentives (ie improved infrastructure and services) for them to remain in the region;
- employing local people and supporting them with appropriate training, while protecting the labour pool available to existing local businesses;
- working with Aboriginal communities to create initiatives that generate meaningful employment;
- supporting local businesses and the employment they provide by purchasing their goods or services;
- strengthening and diversifying the region's overall depth of labour skills through the relocation of skilled workers and training of local recruits. This stronger workforce will give the region greater potential to attract industry and foster economic growth; and
- preserving local councils' rate base by arresting population decline and maintaining land values.

21.5.1 Sensitivity Analysis

Under Scenario 2, the incoming population of 272 people to Mid-Western Regional LGA by 2027 represents a marginal population increase and only 1.5% of the cumulative in-migrant workforce. This will cause a proportionally small increase in demand for community facilities. Even where capacity is currently stretched, this will cause no noticeable decline in service levels.

21.5.2 Social outcomes

There was broad support for the Project in the primary assessment area as the Project will provide meaningful employment for the younger generation and stimulate economic growth in the community. Since 2009, CHC has implemented a range of measures to assist directly affected landowners and provide certainty for those wishing to retire and relocate. CHC will address any Project-related concerns of landowners during the EA process and throughout the life of the mine.

The Project generated positive feedback during stakeholder consultations and from the Gulgong, Dunedoo, Wellington and Dubbo communities during the four community information sessions held in May 2012. CHC is committed to supporting the community as a local employer, economic contributor and community partner. CHC's Community Support Program will continue to support a range of charities and community-based activities and facilities in the region.

A construction accommodation village will be built on site to accommodate the in-migrating construction workers. This will ensure that there are minimal impacts on the short-term local accommodation market. The additional relocated operations workforce population will be only a small proportion of the total population in the secondary assessment area. Based on the population forecast across the region, the principal effect of the Project will be to arrest the rate of population decline or contribute to a small increase.

Overall, the Project alone is likely to place low demand on housing and community facilities. Dubbo is the largest town in the region and it has the capacity to cater for the Project's housing and social service needs. These needs will also be met by other towns, particularly Wellington. CHC is working with the four councils to put in place VPAs to ensure potential social effects of the Project are mitigated. Emphasis will be on needs of younger people, including childcare, children and youth facilities and services where there is a shortage. CHC will regularly update councils and service providers with the Project's timing and planned workforce intake so they can respond to changes in demand for community facilities and services.

CHC is participating in a range of initiatives, strategies and programs to maximise the opportunities and benefits the Project will present for the region.

21.6 Monitoring

CHC will monitor and review potential impacts associated with the Project over time. CHC will continue its comprehensive stakeholder engagement program to ensure:

- community issues and perceived impacts on CHC activities are understood;
- working partnerships with stakeholders to address community needs are fostered; and
- CHC's social impacts are managed effectively.

Principal activities within the stakeholder engagement plan will include:

- producing and distributing a Project newsletter outlining the opportunities for community members to review the Project's EA document, once it is lodged. Additionally, on-the-ground briefings and meetings will be conducted with stakeholders in relation to the EA document;
- forming the Cobbora Coal Project Community Consultative Committee, should Project approval be granted;
- ongoing participation in local stakeholder briefings, meetings and public speaking requests;
- ongoing employment of a full-time property manager, based locally, to respond to landowner queries and manage ongoing property issues with CHC-owned land and properties being leased back to former landowners;
- regularly updating and promoting information sources. CHC's website will be frequently refreshed with information on environmental monitoring and management, local community initiatives and other relevant information; and
- carrying out regular visits to the region by senior Project personnel to meet with stakeholders and regular media interviews to relay important information to local communities.

CHC will continue to work closely with local government and business organisations in the region to plan for and manage the expected increase in population, and other impacts, associated with the mine opening.

After the Project is approved, CHC will produce an annual environmental management report reviewing its activities and performance in key areas. This document will be publicly available on the website and in hard copy upon request.

