



20 May 2025

The Department of Planning, Housing  
and Infrastructure  
Attention: Jarrod Blane

Contact: Julia Ryl  
Our Ref: DA 52/2025/6/1  
Your Ref: PAE-82435711

Dear Mr Blane

**Request for Advice – Major Projects (MP07\_0087-Mod-5)**  
**Description of Development – Modification 5 Bloomfield Colliery Continuation Project**

I refer to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (DPHI's) request of 11 April 2025 via the NSW Major Projects portal. It invites Cessnock City Council (CCC) to provide advice on the Modification 5 for Major Project MP07\_0087 Bloomfield Colliery Continuation Project, at The Bloomfield Colliery at Four Mile Creek.

CCC acknowledges that assessment of the balance of benefits and impacts is to be considered with the continuation offering a number of benefits to the community, through employment and economic benefits, and reducing final void at cessation of the mining operations along with the creation of increased landform suitable for grazing as a final land form.

CCC has reviewed the Modification Assessment prepared by GHD Pty Ltd (March, 28 2025) and provides the following advice to DPHI:

**1. Land Zone Permissibility**

The proposal is for the continued use of the existing extractive operations occurring across multiple properties. It is noted the subject land is zoned RU2 - Rural Landscape land use zone within *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP2011)* extractive industries are permissible with development consent.

**2. Scheduled Activity**

The activity is a 'scheduled activity' under Schedule 1 of *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* and Bloomfield Group holds Environment Protection Licence No. 396 for the Colliery. A review of the existing Environment Protection Licence and any need for a licence variation in relation to this proposed modification is to be undertaken by the issuing Authority. Council therefore has no comment in relation to matters covered by the Environment Protection Licence.

**3. Community Impacts**

The proposed modifications do not appear to represent a significant change from the current approved operations.

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#### 4. Ecological Considerations

Council's Ecologist has reviewed the submitted documentation and has identified that it is unclear what the total impacted area will be, from a Ecological perspective. The submitted Biodiversity Assessment Report (BDAR) states an area of 58.86 ha will be cleared, the EPBC referral states 51.69 ha will be impacted and the Modification Assessment states the mine will expand by 39 ha.

The BDAR submitted does not address important habitat corridors within Cessnock LGA. The vegetation proposed for removal forms part of the Cessnock LGA primary habitat wildlife corridor and vegetation corridor. These corridors provide important ecological benefits to the area that support natural processes within a healthy environment, they allow for species to move through the landscape to find resources such as food, water and nesting habitat. On-going fragmentation of important habitat corridors can negatively impact on local biodiversity by reducing food availability, gene flow and increase edge effects.

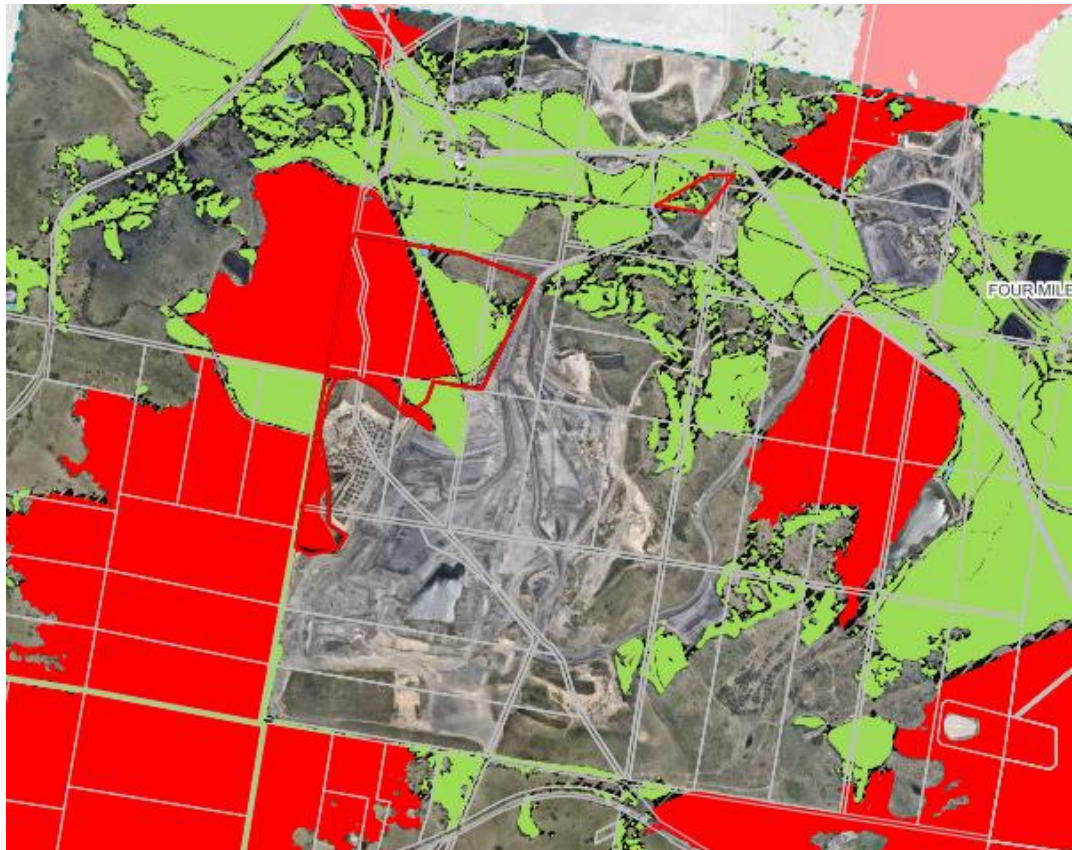


Figure 1: Wildlife corridor connectivity mapping in Cessnock LGA (Red: Primary Habitat, Green: Vegetation Corridor)

The proposed removal of approximately 51.69ha of native vegetation within a significant ecological corridor requires further assessment. The proposed development footprint is situated within a primary wildlife corridor that is connected to the surrounding vegetation and vegetation to the north within Maitland LGA. The corridor forms part of a corridor network as required under the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 and the previously adopted Lower Hunter Regional Conservation Plan. Therefore, the BDAR should take into account the significance of the wildlife

corridor/habitat connectivity as required by the Biodiversity Assessment Methodology under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

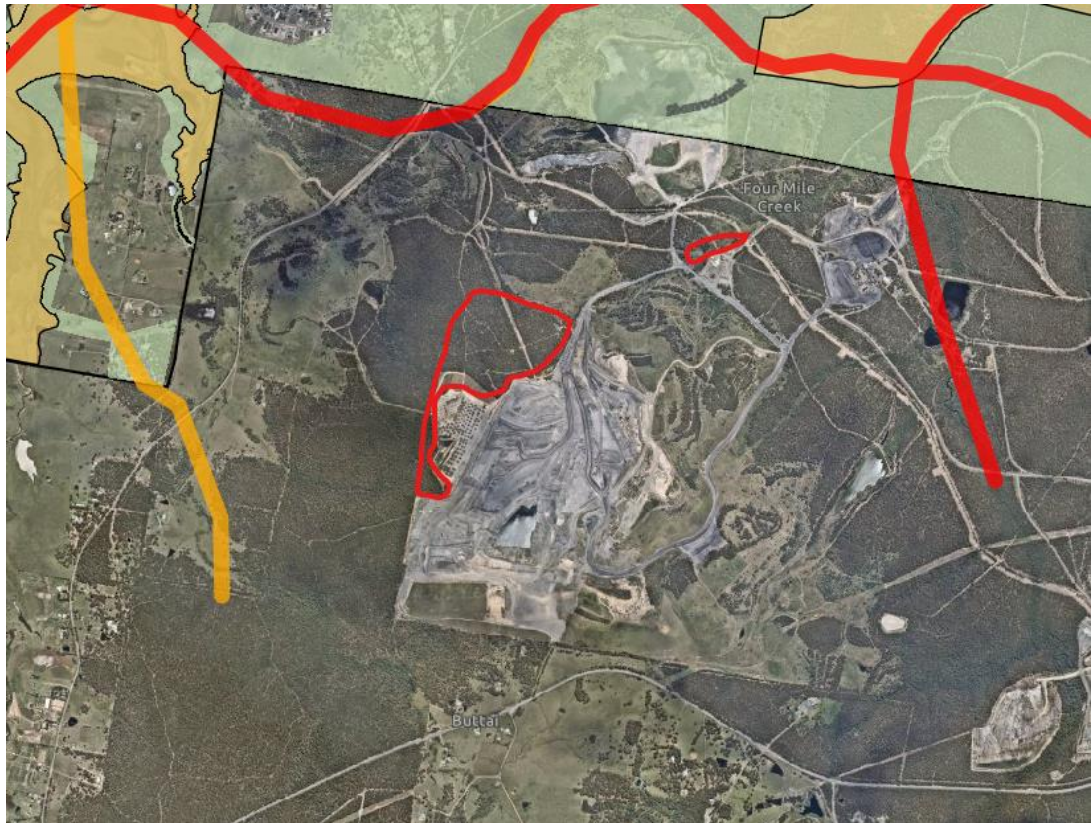


Figure 2: Maitland City Council nature corridor mapping (Red: Regional Corridor, Orange: Sub-regional corridor).

The Hunter Regional Plan 2041 is a 20-year land-use plan prepared under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*, it applies to Cessnock LGA. It sets out objectives under a strategic land-use framework. Objective six (6) of the plan sets out to Conserve heritage, landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, waterways and drinking water catchments.

The Hunter Regional Plan identifies the Watagans to Stockton link as an important biodiversity corridor in the region, it is located south of the Bloomfield mine, Bloomfield mine is not mapped under the link, the vegetation within the proposal area however, connects to this significant corridor in the north.

Outcomes expected to be achieved include areas of high environmental value are protected to contribute to a sustainable region. Areas of high environmental values have been identified to include; Koala habitat, key habitat for threatened species populations and threatened ecological communities, both of which have been identified to occur in the proposed area in the BDAR reviewed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide advice on the Modification Assessment. As outlined above CCC request these matters are considered by DPHI in the assessment of MP07\_0087-Mod-5.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on telephone 02 4993 4218 or via email [julia.ryl@cessnock.nsw.gov.au](mailto:julia.ryl@cessnock.nsw.gov.au).

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julia Ryl', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Julia Ryl  
Senior Planning Assessment Officer