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WHC PLN VCM REHABILITATION STRATEGY			

WHC_PLN_VCM_REHABILITATION STRATEGY

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Vickery Coal Mine (VCM) is located in the Gunnedah Coal Basin, approximately 25 kilometres (km) north of Gunnedah in New South Wales (NSW) (Figure 1-1). The VCM is operated by Vickery Coal Pty Limited (VCPL) (a wholly owned subsidiary of Whitehaven Coal Limited [WHC]).

Development Consent (SSD-7480) was granted to VCPL on 12 August 2020 by the NSW Independent Planning Commission as a delegate of the NSW Minister for Planning under Section 75J of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979* (EP&A Act). Development Consent SSD-7480 allows for the development of an open cut mine and associated infrastructure with a 25 year mine life, extracting run-of-mine (ROM) coal at up to 10 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) and processing the coal, as well as coal from WHC's Tarrawonga Mine, at an on-site coal handling and processing plant (CHPP) for off-site transport by rail.

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Rehabilitation Strategy has been prepared by WHC (with input from experienced and qualified rehabilitation specialists Paul Frazier [2rog] endorsed by the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment [DPIE] on 21 October 2020) to satisfy the requirements of Rehabilitation Strategy requirements of Condition B104 and B105, Schedule 2 of SSD-7480 (Table 1-1).

Table 1-1 – Specific Rehabilitation Strategy Conditions in SSD-7480

VCM Development Consent (SSD-7480) Schedule 2	Relevant Rehabilitation Strategy Section
<i>B104. The Applicant must prepare a Rehabilitation Strategy for the development to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary.</i>	This Rehabilitation Strategy
<i>(a) be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced person/s whose appointment has been endorsed by the Planning Secretary;</i>	Section 1.1
<i>(b) be prepared in consultation with the Resources Regulator, DPIE Water, NSC, BCD and GSC;</i>	Section 1.2
<i>(c) be submitted to the Planning Secretary for approval within six months of the date of commencement of development under this consent;</i>	Section 1.2
<i>(d) build on the Rehabilitation Objectives in Table 12, describe the overall rehabilitation outcomes for the site, and address all aspects of rehabilitation including mine closure, final landform (including final void), post-mining land use/s and water management;</i>	Section 3.1 & 3.2
<i>(e) align with strategic rehabilitation and mine closure objectives and address the principles of the Strategic Framework for Mine Closure (ANZMEC and MCA, 2000);</i>	Section 3.2
<i>(f) describe how the rehabilitation measures would be integrated with the measures in the Biodiversity Management Plan referred to in condition B63;</i>	Section 1.3 & 3.1
<i>(g) describe how rehabilitation will be integrated with the mine planning process, including a plan to address premature mine closure;</i>	Section 3.3 & 3.4
<i>(h) include details of target vegetation communities and species to be established within the proposed revegetation areas;</i>	Section 3.3

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VCM Development Consent (SSD-7480) Schedule 2	Relevant Rehabilitation Strategy Section
<i>(i) investigate opportunities to refine and improve the final landform and final void outcomes over time;</i>	Section 3.3
<i>(j) include a risks and opportunities assessment and risk register;</i>	Section 4
<i>(k) include a post-mining land use strategy to investigate and facilitate post-mining beneficial land uses for the site (including the final void), that:</i>	Section 5
<i>(i) align with regional and local strategic land use planning objectives and outcomes;</i>	Section 5
<i>(ii) support a sustainable future for the local community;</i>	Section 5
<i>(iii) utilise existing mining infrastructure, where practicable;</i>	Section 5
<i>(iv) avoid disturbing self-sustaining native ecosystems, where practicable</i>	Section 5
<i>(l) include a stakeholder engagement plan to guide rehabilitation and mine closure planning processes and outcomes;</i>	Section 6
<i>(m) investigate ways to minimise adverse socio-economic effects associated with rehabilitation and mine closure; and</i>	Section 6
<i>(n) include a program to review and refine the final landform and final void outcomes every five years, in consultation with the Resources Regulator and GSC, NSC, to meet the relevant Rehabilitation Objectives in Table 12.</i>	Section 3.3.1
<i>(o) include details of the monitoring and management measures to ensure proper storage and protection of top soil.</i>	Section 3.2.5
Schedule 2 Conditions A1 <i>Obligation to Minimise Harm to the Environment</i> <i>In addition to meeting the specific performance measures and criteria established under this consent, the Applicant must implement all reasonable and feasible measures to prevent, and if prevention is not reasonable and feasible, minimise, any material harm to the environment that may result from the construction and operation of the development, and any rehabilitation required under this consent</i>	This Rehabilitation Strategy

The Rehabilitation Strategy provides the overarching standard for decision making in terms of rehabilitated landscape. The Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP), and Biodiversity Management Plan will provide further specific details for management and monitoring of rehabilitation aspects at VCM. The Rehabilitation Strategy will be implemented as approved by the Planning Secretary and demonstrated by monitoring and reporting.

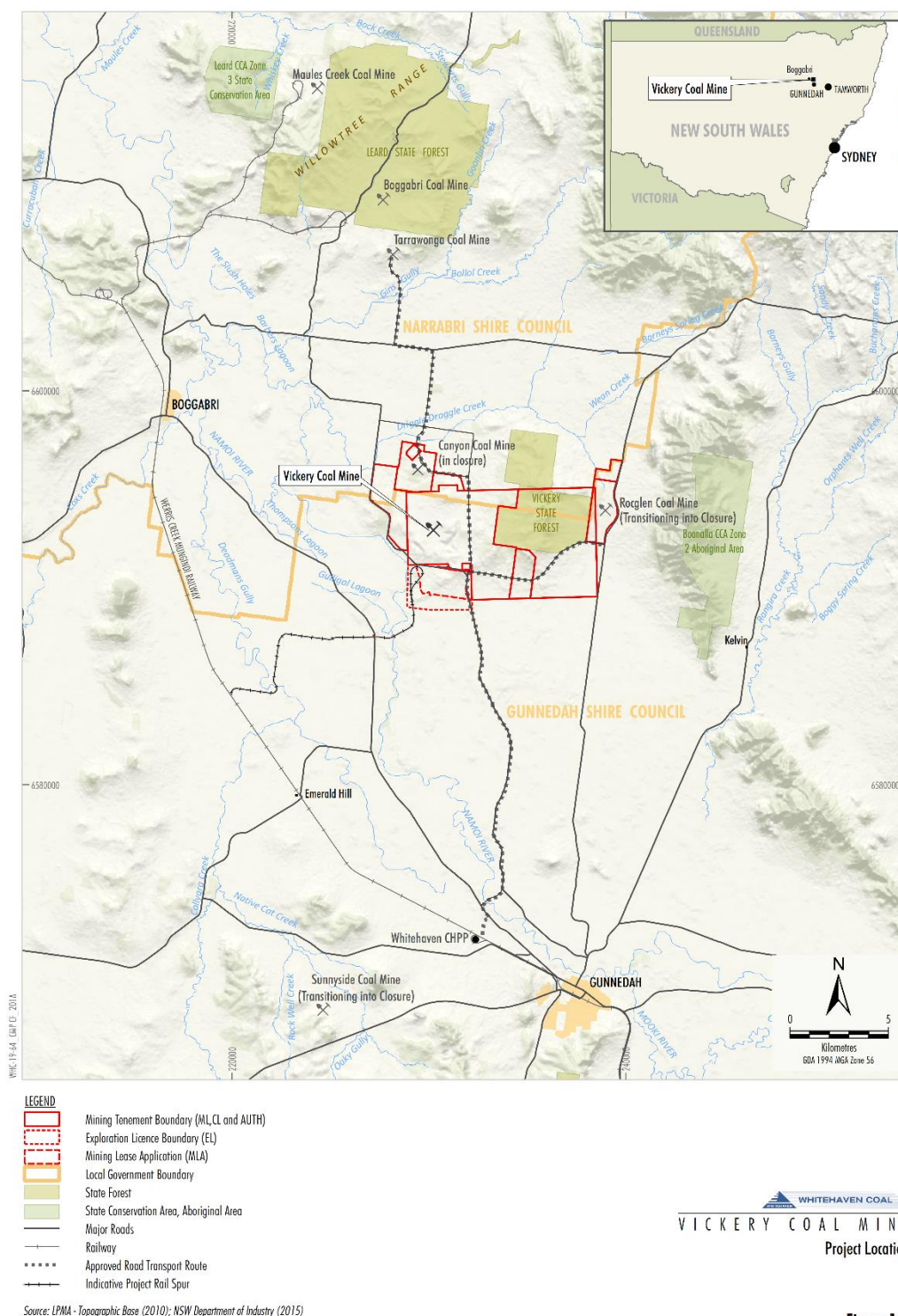


Figure 1-1

Figure 1-1 Regional Location

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On 24 August 2022 the Secretary approved the progressive submission of the Rehabilitation Strategy for the VCM in accordance with Condition A25(a), Schedule 2 of SSD-7480. The scope of this Rehabilitation Strategy is specifically related to the initial stage of the Project that includes preliminary investigations to enable the continuation of detailed design, that is required to be submitted within 6 months of the “commencement of the development”. The second stage of the Rehabilitation Strategy will be submitted prior the commencement of significant “construction” activities that relates to broader disturbance activities related to the initial development of mine infrastructure, box cut development, and associated bulk construction earthworks that are not minor.

A Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP) has recently been submitted to the NSW Resources Regulator under the new requirements of the *Mining Act 1992*. The construction and initial mining stage is anticipated to take approximately 30 months based on sequencing of the major construction activities, with the bulk of significant construction earthworks to occur within a 12 - 18 month period, and will include:

- construction of the CHPP;
- construction of the rail spur and loop and train load-out facility;
- construction of the mine industrial area (MIA);
- construction of ROM and product coal stockpile pads;
- initial development of the box cut;
- construction of temporary infrastructure facilities;
- construction of temporary ROM coal stockpiles;
- construction of workshops and offices;
- construction of water supply bores and Namoi River pump station and pipelines;
- construction of dams, sediment dams, up-catchment diversions, channels and other water management infrastructure;
- construction of soil stockpile areas;
- construction of access roads and internal roads;
- closure of a portion of Braymont Road;
- construction of connection to the existing 66 kilovolt powerline and construction of substations and power supply;
- construction of ancillary infrastructure including consumable storage areas, laydown areas, explosives storage facilities;
- ongoing exploration activities; and
- other associated minor infrastructure construction, use of other plant and other minor activities.

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The general arrangement of the VCM is shown on Figures 1-2 and 1-3. The VCM layout at the end of the construction and initial mining stage is shown on Figure 1-4.

Earthworks associated with the development of the above infrastructure would include the excavation of waste rock, gravel and coal material from within the VCM open cut footprint. The earthworks would include the initial development of the box cut, with a small volume of ROM coal extracted for stockpile pad treatment, commissioning activities and transport to the Gunnedah CHPP. Additionally, a small volume of coal from WHC's other mines may be delivered to the VCM for stockpile pad treatment and CHPP commissioning activities.

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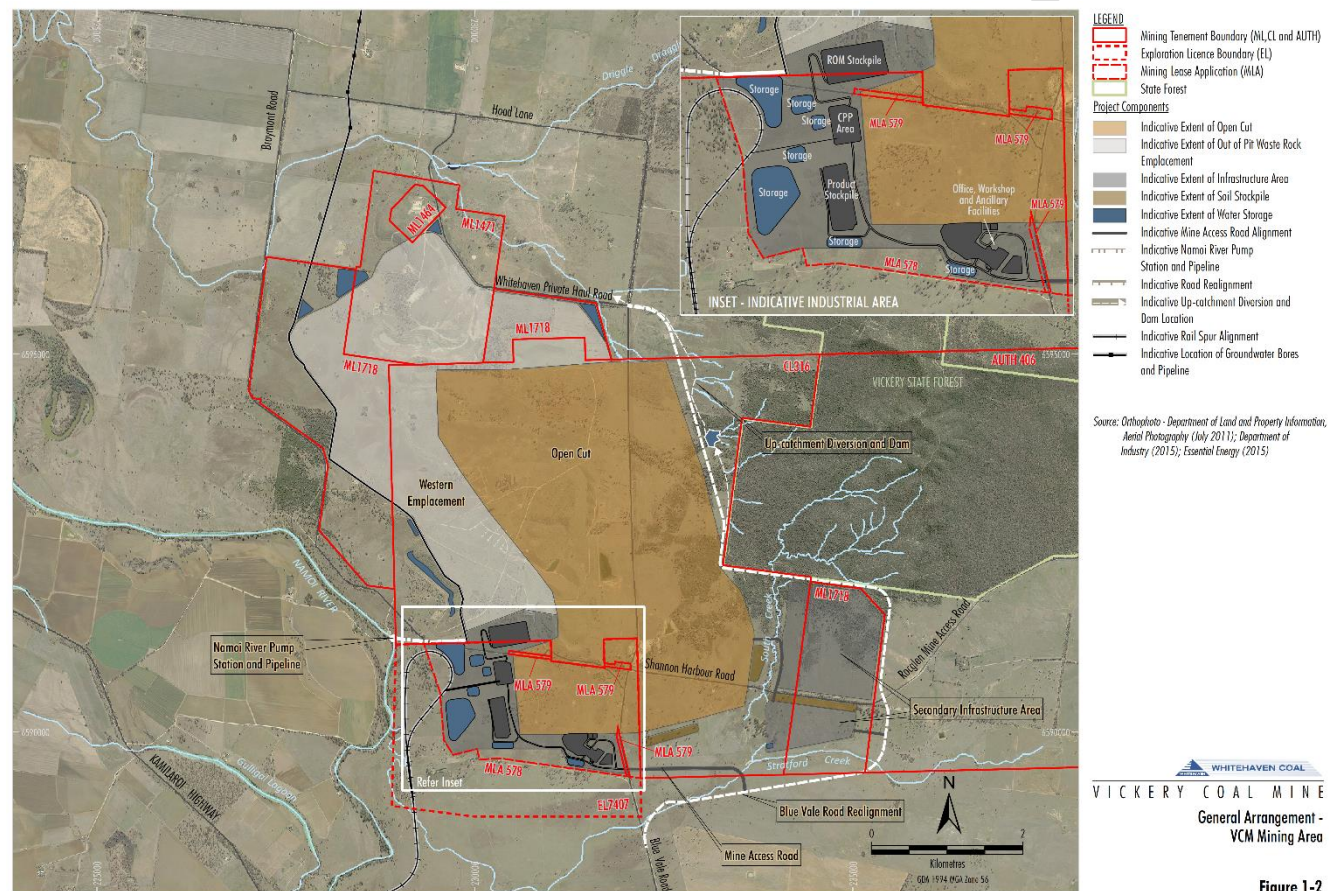


Figure 1-2

Figure 1-2 Vickery Coal Mine General Arrangement

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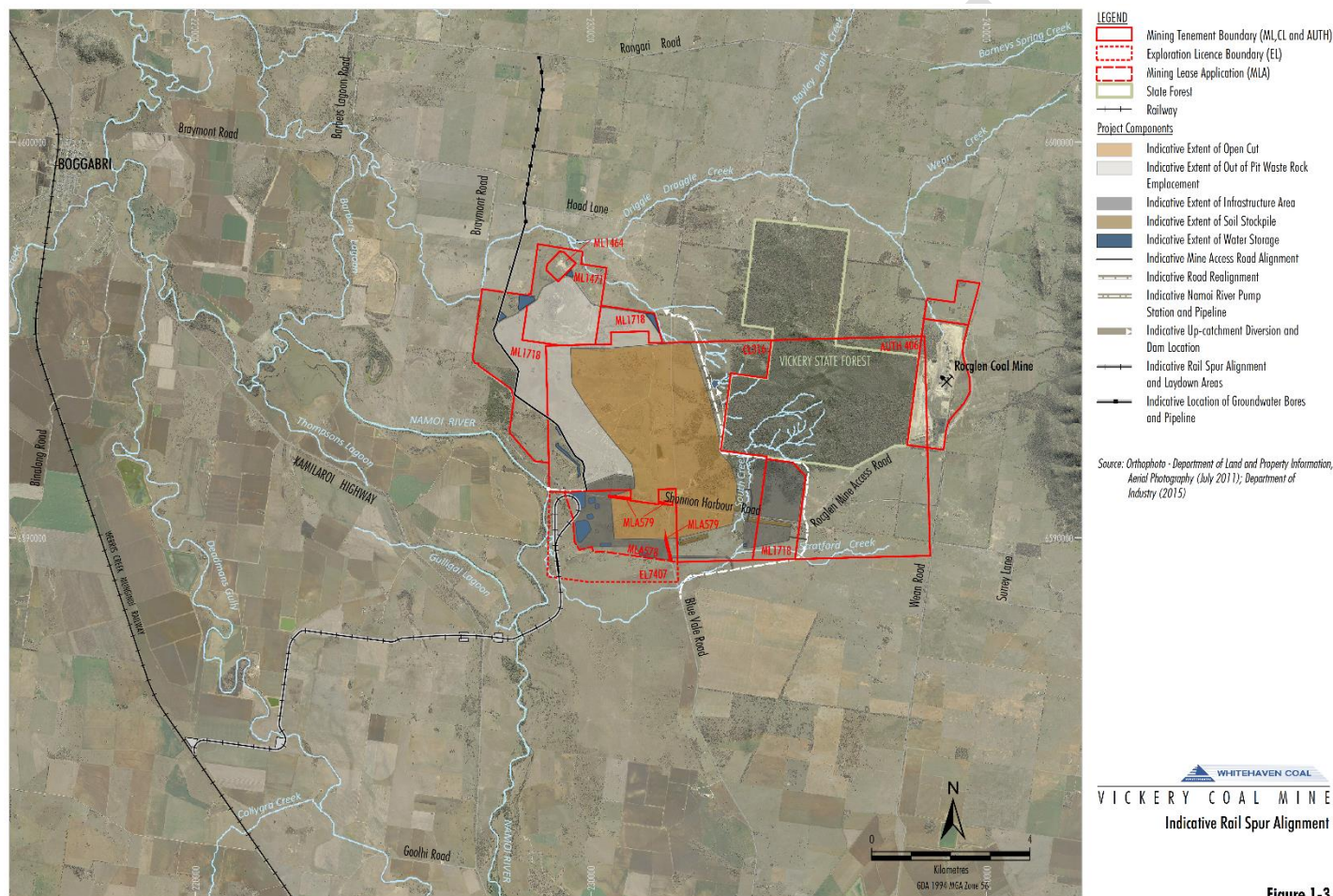


Figure 1-3 Indicative Rail Spur Alignment

Figure 1-3

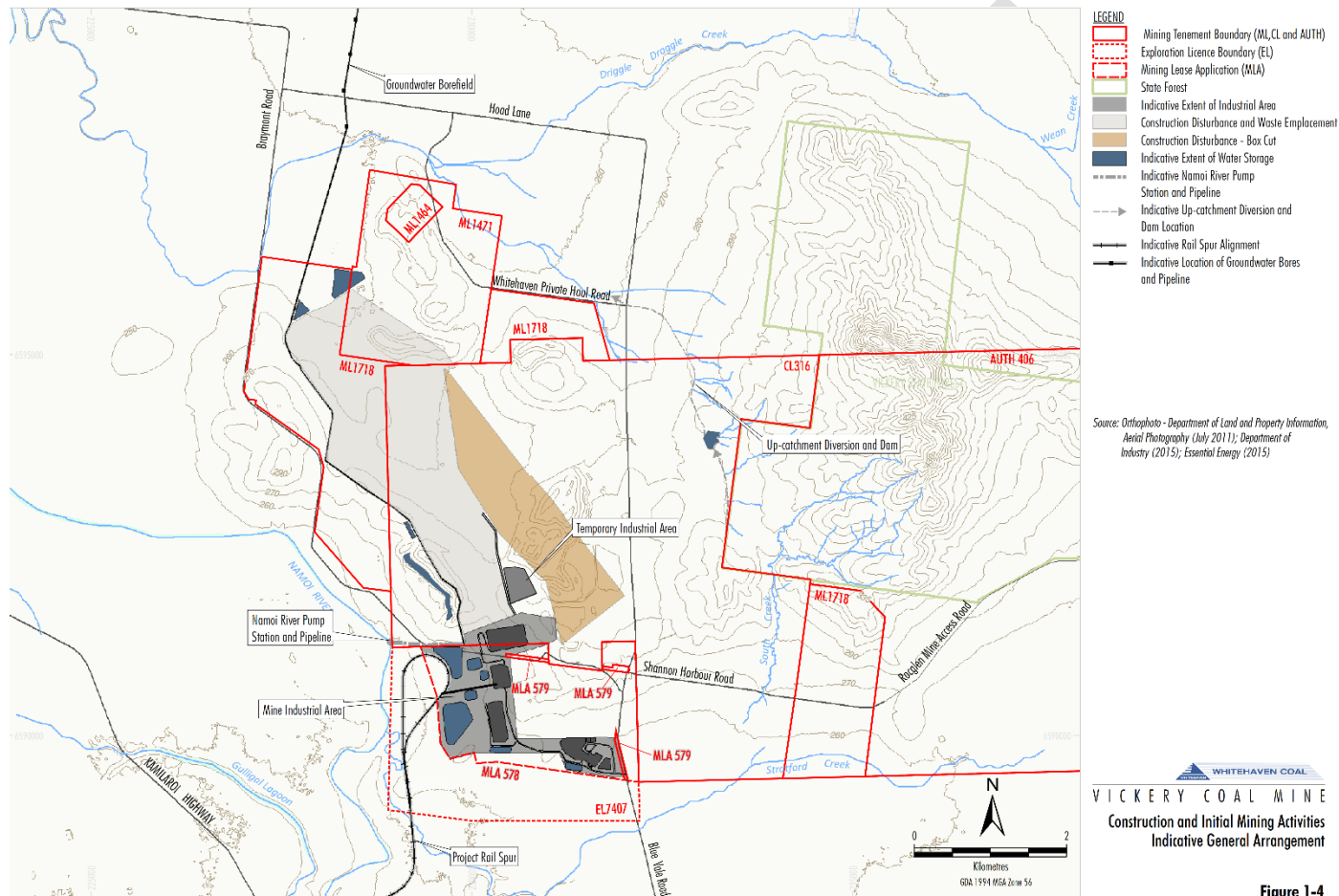


Figure 1-4

Figure 1-4 Construction and initial mining Activities General Arrangement

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1.2 CONSULTATION

In accordance with Condition B104(b), Schedule 2 of SSD-7480, and written acceptance of the staged preparation of this Rehabilitation Strategy, this document will be prepared in consultation with the applicable agencies during the next stage of the VCM development prior to the commencement of construction and mining to address the Department's approval requirements.

The current stage include works to inform the detailed feasibility and design of the Project. By nature of the minimal activities during the current commencement phase, consultation will occur prior to construction as per the Department's correspondence enabling the staged submission of this Strategy.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REHABILITATION STRATEGY

The remainder of this Rehabilitation Strategy is structured as follows:

- Section 2 Outlines the relevant statutory requirements and policies relevant to this Rehabilitation Strategy.
- Section 3 Describes the rehabilitation objectives.
- Section 4 Describes the risks and opportunities.
- Section 5 Describes the post-mining land use strategy.
- Section 6 Describes the stakeholder engagement plan
- Section 7 Provides references cited in this Strategy.

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Figure 1-5 identifies the relationship between the Rehabilitation Strategy and other documents.

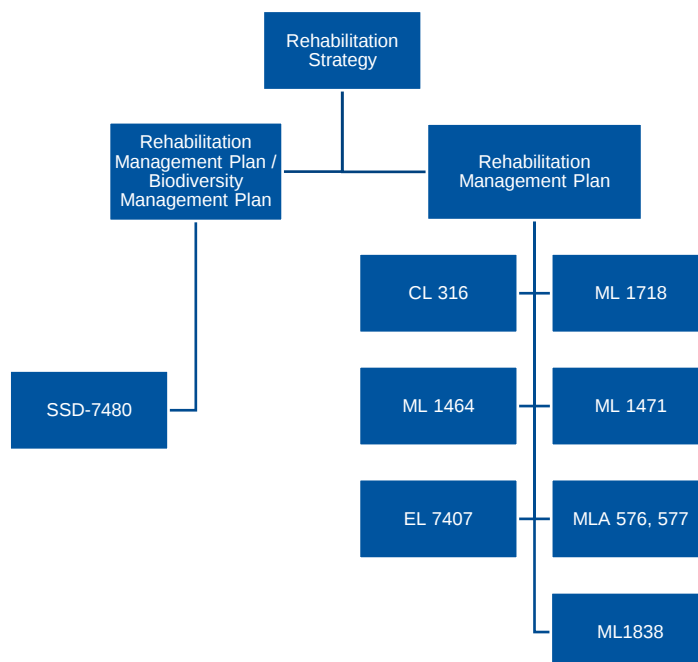


Figure 1-5 Relationship between Rehabilitation Strategy and other documents

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2 RELEVANT STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

WHC's statutory obligations relevant to the rehabilitation strategy are contained in:

- the conditions of SSD-7480;
- the relevant licences and permits, including conditions attached to mining leases; and
- other relevant legislation.

Obligations relevant to this Rehabilitation Strategy are described below.

2.1 DEVELOPMENT CONSENT (SSD-7480)

The conditions of SSD-7480 relevant to the content and structure of this Rehabilitation Strategy are described in Table 1-1 and Section 1.1.

2.2 LICENSES, PERMITS AND LEASES

In addition to SSD-7480, activities associated with the VCM will be undertaken in accordance with the following licences, permits and leases:

- Coal Lease (CL) 316, Exploration Licence (EL 7407), Mining Leases (MLs) 1718, 1471, 1838 and 1464.
- The VCM RMP and Forward Work Plan.
- Environment Protection Licence (EPL) No. 21283.
- Mining and workplace health and safety related approvals.

2.3 OTHER LEGISLATION

In addition to the statutory obligations described above, the following NSW Acts (and their regulations) may be applicable to the conduct of the VCM:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act, 2016*;
- EP&A Act;
- *Mining Act, 1992*;
- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act, 1997* (PoEO Act);
- *Water Act, 1912*;
- *Water Management Act, 2000*;

Other guidelines and standards that were considered during the preparation of this Rehabilitation Strategy include, but are not limited to:

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- *Leading Practice Sustainable Development Program for the Mining Industry – Mine Rehabilitation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016a).*
- *Leading Practice Sustainable Development Program for the Mining Industry – Mine Closure (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016b).*
- *Strategic Framework for Mine Closure (Australian and New Zealand Minerals and Energy Council (ANZMEC) and Minerals Council of Australia (MCA), 2000).*

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3 REHABILITATION OBJECTIVES

3.1 SPECIFIC REHABILITATION OBJECTIVES

Over the life of the Project, VCM will require the progressive disturbance of 3,037.8 ha which includes a mix of grassland, native woodland/forest, rehabilitation and cleared land. The rehabilitation objectives and measures for the VCM are detailed in Tables 9 and 12 of the development consent (SSD-7480, as replicated in Table 3-1 below), which is further outlined in the Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP). WHC are committed to ensure that all rehabilitated areas of the site affected by the future development in subsequent stages are:

- Safe, stable and non-polluting;
- Fit for the intended post mining land use/s;
- Established as soon as practicable after the cessation of mining operations; and
- Minimise post mining environmental impacts.

Table 3-1 – Rehabilitation objectives

Feature	Objective
All areas of the site affected by the development	• Safe, stable and non-polluting • Fit for the intended post-mining land use/s • Establish the final landform and post-mining land use/s as soon as practicable after cessation of mining operations • Minimise post-mining environmental impacts
Areas proposed for native ecosystem re-establishment	• Establish/restore self-sustaining native open woodland ecosystems • Establish local plant community types • Establish: - riparian vegetation, within any diverted and/or re-established creek lines and retained water features; - habitat, feed and foraging resources for threatened fauna species; and - vegetation connectivity and wildlife corridors, as far as is reasonable and feasible
Areas proposed for agricultural land	• Establish/restore grassland areas to support sustainable agricultural activities • Use species found in the local area that are suitable for pasture production • Achieve land and soil capabilities that are equivalent or better than pre-mining • Locate adjacent to surrounding agricultural land, where practicable

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Feature	Objective
Final Landform	- Stable and sustainable for the intended post-mining land use/s - Integrated with surrounding natural landforms, integrate with rehabilitation measures of the Biodiversity Management Plan, and other mine rehabilitated landforms, to the greatest extent practicable - Incorporate macro-relief and micro-relief and drainage features that mimic natural topography and mitigate erosion, to the greatest extent practicable - Maximise surface water drainage to the natural environment, excluding final void catchment (i.e. free draining) - Reduce highwall slopes to a maximum of 18 degrees (excluding slopes below the post-mining standing water level in any final void) - Minimise visual impacts, where practicable
Final void	- Designed as long term groundwater sink to prevent the release of polluting water into the surrounding environment, unless further mine planning and final landform design processes identify a more suitable outcome for the final void (see condition B104) - Optimise the size and depth of any final voids and ensure the final landform is stable and non-polluting - Minimise to the greatest extent practicable: - the drainage catchment of final voids; - any high wall instability risk; and - the risk of flood interaction - Maximise potential for beneficial reuse, where practicable
Surface infrastructure of the development	- To be decommissioned and removed, unless the Resources Regulator agrees otherwise - Structures over the Kamilaroi Highway to be demolished and removed, unless Transport for NSW (TfNSW) agrees otherwise

The rehabilitation objectives in development consent (SSD-7480, as replicated in Table 3-1 above) apply to the entire site, including all landforms constructed under either this consent or previous consents. However, the VEP is not required to undertake any additional earthmoving works on landforms that have been approved and constructed under previous consents consistent with condition B102.

3.2 OVERALL REHABILITATION OUTCOMES

The overall rehabilitation goal for the Project mining area is to enhance the cover and connectivity of native woodland, while retaining some areas of agricultural land capable of supporting cattle grazing. The rehabilitation and mine closure objectives for the Project will be detailed in the future stage of the RMP that is developed. The RMP specifies how the below goals will be integrated with the management actions (Section 3.2.1 – 3.2.5). The overall rehabilitation outcomes align with strategic rehabilitation and mine closure objectives and address the principles of the Strategic Framework for Mine Closure (ANZMEC and MCA, 2000):

- Stakeholder involvement
- Planning
- Financial provision

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- Implementation
- Standards
- Relinquishment

Further detail is provided in the RMP relevant to this stage of the Project.

3.2.1 Mine closure

Following mine closure, two voids will remain. The voids include the existing Blue Vale Void and the approved Vickery Void. Subject to no further use for the infrastructure being identified, the site infrastructure will be decommissioned and the disturbed land will be rehabilitated to land suitable for agricultural use unless otherwise agreed with relevant government agencies and landholders.

Planning for mine closure will be conducted over the life of the Project, in consultation with the GSC, NSC, DP&E and the local community, and would consider the amelioration of potential adverse socio-economic effects due to the reduction in employment at Project closure.

3.2.2 Final landform

The final landform outcomes are to provide safe, stable and non-polluting landforms that complement existing surrounding landforms in terms of slope, geomorphological characteristics, vegetation and land use. The conceptual final landform is shown in Figure 3-1, as presented in the Vickery EIS.

3.2.3 Post-mining land use/s

The final outcome for the post mining land use is to revegetate the mine landforms to predominately native open woodland. The Strategy for open woodland revegetation is to increase these areas to enhance the biodiversity value of the rehabilitated mining area and improve the connectivity of woodland between the Vickery State Forest and Namoi River.

The mine infrastructure area will be rehabilitated with predominately groundcover (i.e. grass species) and scattered trees that will return these areas to land suitable for grazing. The mine infrastructure area will be returned to the existing agricultural suitability of the areas (i.e. Class 3 and 4 Agricultural suitability land).

3.2.4 Water management

Rehabilitation of sediment dams and associated water infrastructure (eg such as drainage contours and diversion drains) will be further defined during closure planning. The rehabilitation of final voids will be co-ordinated towards creating a safe, stable and non-polluting post-mining landform.

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The rehabilitation outcomes for water management include the construction of the waste rock emplacement to incorporate micro-relief and landform features (macro-relief) similar to the natural landforms found in the Vickery State Forest whereby the final top layer of the waste rock emplacement will be constructed so that runoff drains in a natural, stable manner that minimises the use of engineered drop structures as far as practical.

3.2.5 Topsoil management

Topsoil will be stripped and managed in accordance with the Land Disturbance Permit (LDP) to ensure health of soil for later use in rehabilitation. Topsoil materials at the VCM are generally non-saline. In order to understand the selective handling of materials, characterisation of soils and overburden will be undertaken throughout the development of mining at the VCM. Topsoil and subsoil characterisation will be undertaken in order to:

- identify any physical or chemical deficiencies or limiting factors (including salinity) which may affect vegetation establishment and landform stability;
- develop selective placement strategies and/or develop suitable amelioration techniques; and
- Overburden and soil characterisation will be used to inform the future rehabilitation of the site.

In consideration to relevant sampling results for topsoil characterisation, management and storage of topsoil will be undertaken to maintain long-term soil viability through the implementation of relevant management practices such as a retained height up to generally 3 m, with slopes no greater than 1:2 (vertical to horizontal [V:H]). Soil stockpiles would be constructed to minimise erosion, encourage drainage, and promote revegetation.

Ameliorants such as lime, gypsum and fertiliser would be applied to stockpiles where needed to improve the condition of stripped soil.

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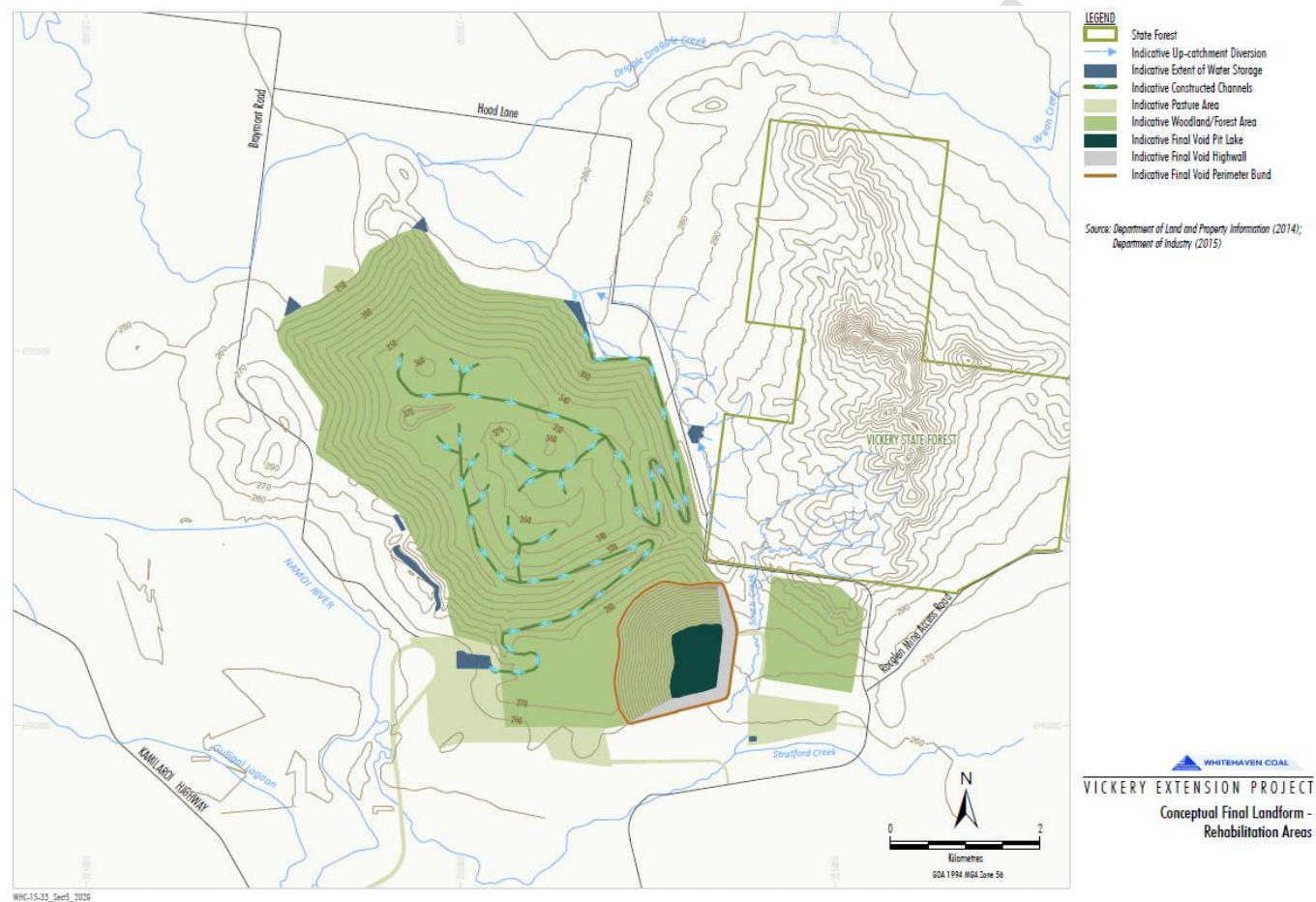


Figure 3-1 Conceptual final landform

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3.3 MINE PLANNING PROCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Rehabilitation is integrated with the mine planning process and is governed by mining titles, environmental assessments, project approval conditions and licences. Rehabilitation will be undertaken progressively during the life of the mine which brings about a reduction in environmental impacts and enables efficiencies through integration of equipment use during mining and rehabilitation. Rehabilitation management actions are guided by the RMP.

The woodland rehabilitation areas will aim to reflect the main vegetation community that will be disturbed at VCM which includes Dry Sclerophyll Forests and their associated shrub and grass sub-formation (eg. PCT 1308, VEP EIS, Appendix F). White Box – White Cypress Pine shrubby open forest of the Nandewar and Brigalow Belt South Bioregions (BVT NA225). The species in this PCT include Kurrajong, white cypress pine, white box, silver ironbark and narrow leaved grey box.

The grazing land rehabilitation will be returned to the existing agricultural suitability of the areas (i.e. Class 3 and 4 Agricultural suitability land).

Interim stabilisation and temporary vegetation strategies will be employed such as the use of cover crops and slope stabilisation techniques, including applicable erosion control measures.

3.3.1 Review and refinement

The final landform and final void outcomes have the opportunity to be refined over time, specifically through the mine planning process. Detail on the mining plan and progress, as well as topsoil management and target vegetation species and communities shall be provided in the RMP for the mine as it is developed and associated reporting on an annual basis. The ongoing refinement of the mine planning process is reflected in the RMP and this Rehabilitation Strategy.

Factors that could be considered include planning to consider the logical sequence of forming the waste emplacement area, water management, final void outcomes and progressive rehabilitation.

Every five years, the final landform and final void outcomes are to be reviewed and refined in consultation with the Resources Regulator, GSC and NSC, to meet the relevant Rehabilitation Objectives in Table 12 of SSD-7480. WHC implements an action tracking system within an internal software management system to ensure reoccurring review of the Rehabilitation Strategy and its associated documents are conducted on a five-yearly basis. These documents are then presented to the RR, NSC and GSC for external consultation.

3.4 PREMATURE MINE CLOSURE

In the case of premature mine closure, the Department of Regional NSW – Division of Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG) ensures the appropriate rehabilitation cost estimate (RCE) for mining authorisations is held, along with the appropriately valued security deposit.

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Whitehaven are required to submit a RCE whenever a potential change in rehabilitation liability occurs and at other key points throughout the tenure of an authorisation. This ensures that the MEG have the appropriate security deposit to cover the costs in undertaking rehab in the event of default and to minimise potential liabilities to the state. A list of the relevant mining authorisations is listed in Section 2.2.

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4 RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 RISK AND OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT

Risks are assessed and managed as per the risk register detailed in the RMP. Opportunity assessment is conducted as part of the annual monitoring process which is presented in the Annual Review and updates to the RMP as required.

4.2 RISK ASSESSMENT

As required under the *NSW Resources Regulator Guideline: Rehabilitation risk assessment* (2021), the Vickery RMP covers the environmental risk assessment associated with the activities relevant to the current RMP stage of commencement. Future RMP's will include further information in risk assessments related to conducting mining activities under the mining lease. The initial Risk Register is presented in Appendix B.

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5 POST-MINING LAND USE STRATEGY

Whitehaven has considered potential post-mining land uses (e.g. nature conservation and agriculture) taking into account relevant strategic land use objectives of the area in the vicinity of the Project and the potential benefits of the post-mining land use to the environment, future landholders and the community (Figure 3-1).

The conceptual post-mining land uses align with regional and local strategic land use planning objectives and outcomes, supports a sustainable future for the local community, utilises existing mining infrastructure, and avoids disturbing self-sustaining native ecosystems, where practicable.

The conceptual post-mining land uses of the Project will continue to comprise a combination of nature conservation (woodland) and agricultural (pasture) land uses. Disturbance is approached in a progressive nature, and disturbance of self-sustaining native ecosystems is avoided, where practicable.

The conceptual final landform and revegetation program will provide for a combination of approximately 2,385 ha of native woodland/forest and some 342 ha of agricultural land suitable for grazing (of which 256 ha will be located in the Project mining area).

The conceptual post-mining land uses will be consistent with the surrounding existing land uses (e.g. vegetation and fauna habitat in the Vickery State Forest and along the Namoi River and cattle grazing on flatter, lower lying areas).

The conceptual post-mining land uses are also generally consistent with the aims of the Gunnedah and Narrabri LEPs (e.g. to conserve and enhance the quality of valuable environmental assets and provide for ecologically sustainable agriculture).

Revegetation trials will be used to inform the ultimate land use for the Project. Revegetation trials will be used to determine species types and soil and weed management practices to be used to achieve the Project post-mining land use objectives.

The conceptual final landform has been designed to integrate with the surrounding natural landforms, including consideration of elevation, slope and drainage.

Natural landforms in the vicinity of the Project are characterised by:

- Dissected and steep topography within the Vickery State Forest to the east of the Project, which rises to an elevation of approximately 479 m AHD.
- Undulating grazing lands in the Project mining area with ephemeral drainage lines and some woodland regrowth associated with rehabilitated mining areas.
- To the north, south and west of the Project mining area the topography is gently sloping to almost flat, and generally drains towards the Namoi River.
- These floodplain areas typically have elevations of between 250 to 260 m AHD.
- Ephemeral drainage lines, with 'headwater' stream types typically in the steep topography within Vickery State Forest and 'valley fill' stream types typically found on the flatter areas (Fluvial Systems, 2012).

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Key features of the final landform include:

- A waste rock emplacement incorporating natural landform design features (i.e. micro-relief and macro-relief) that reflect characteristics of the topography found in the adjacent Vickery State Forest (e.g. elevated landforms with steeper slopes in some areas relative to the surrounding plains).
- Drainage features designed to be stable in the long-term.
- Rehabilitated infrastructure areas and rail corridor that are flat and contiguous with the surrounding agricultural areas.

Key features relating to long-term management of the post-mining landform includes:

- The final void will maintain a suitable factor of safety for long-term stability of the final void highwalls.
- Installation of perimeter bund around final void.
- Ongoing site maintenance including bushfire management, feral animal and weed control and long-term water management structures.

The features of the landform post mining will be reviewed and improved as the RMP is revised on a regular basis.

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6 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Throughout the preparation of the EIS, approval application, and public exhibition process, an extensive consultation program was undertaken by WHC.

The key stakeholders relevant to the currently approved and proposed Project, and engagement methods that have been adopted for each, are summarised in Table 6-1. The consultation undertaken during the preparation of the EIS' were in accordance with the respective Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and is adequate and appropriate for a State Significant Development under Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

Table 6-1 – Project Stakeholders and engagement methods

Project Stakeholders and engagement methods
Key New South Wales Government agencies were consulted during the preparation of the EIS.
Commonwealth government engagement on referral under Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999.
Engagement with Gunnedah Shire Council (GSC) & Narrabri Shire Council (NSC) in the VCP development.
Community information days.
Bore census and landholder engagement, including newsletters.
Aboriginal community engagement in accordance with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010.
Engagement with Local Government Agencies, NSW State Government Agencies, Infrastructure owners and services providers and Australian Federal Agencies in the preparation of the VEP EIS. Ongoing consultation occurs, and will continue to occur as the development application is considered and progressed by the appropriate authorities.
Engagement with GSC and NSC in the VEP EIS development, application and Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA).
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meetings are run by WHC to provide updates of the Project to Narrabri and Gunnedah Shire Councils and Community Representatives.
Public Consultation with the local community and landowners including a newsletter, meetings to discuss potential impacts, updates and fact sheets.
Aboriginal community engagement in accordance with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010.

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As noted in Section 1.2, consultation with applicable stakeholder agencies will occur during the second stage of the RMP prior to larger disturbance that will occur in relation to construction work. During ongoing consultation throughout the life of the VCM, investigation will be undertaken to minimise any adverse socio-economic effects associated with rehabilitation and mine closure. The stakeholder engagement plan will provide an opportunity for feedback from consulted parties and consideration of aspects that can be further improved within rehabilitation practices, where practicable. A future mine closure plan will be developed prior to formal closure that will require input and consultation to guide post-mining outcomes.

In accordance with Condition E5, Schedule 2 of SSD 7480, this Rehabilitation Strategy will be reviewed, and if necessary revised (to the satisfaction of the Secretary), within three months of the submission of:

- an Annual Review (Condition E9, Schedule 2);
- an Independent Environmental Audit (IEA) (Condition E10, Schedule 2);
- an incident report (Condition E7, Schedule 2); or
- any modification to the conditions of SSD 7480 (unless the conditions require otherwise).

The revision status of this Rehabilitation Strategy is indicated on the first page of each copy. The approved Strategy will be made publicly available on the WHC website, in accordance with Condition E14(a), Schedule 2 of SSD 7480.

In addition, the Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) will provide another platform to investigate and implement ways to minimise adverse socio-economic effects associated with rehabilitation and mine closure. The SIMP is required by condition B107, schedule 2, SSD-7480 and requires consultation with the CCC, NSC, GSC and the local community/other stakeholders.

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7 REFERENCES

NSW Resources Regulator (2021) Guideline: Rehabilitation risk assessment

Fluvial Systems (2012) Vickery Coal Project Fluvial Geomorphological Assessment. Report prepared for Whitehaven Coal Limited.

Whitehaven Coal Limited (2018) *Vickery Extension Project Environmental Impact Statement*.

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Appendix A Consultation Log

Date	Consultee	Comment
August 2022	DPE	Approved staging of the Rehabilitation Strategy
October 2022	DPE	Submission for approval
November 2022	DPE	DPE feedback
January 2023	DPE	DPE feedback

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Appendix B Risk and Opportunities Register

Final Land Use Domain	Rehabilitation Objectives	Risks to Rehabilitation	Management/Mitigation Measures & Opportunities
All Domains	Safe, stable and non-polluting.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified in this stage of the Rehabilitation Strategy.	Will be addressed by mining in the future as part of the Project.
	Fit for intended post-mining land use/s.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	
	Establish the final landform and post-mining land use/s as soon as practicable after cessation of mining operations.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	
	Minimise post-mining environmental impacts.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	
Final Voids	The final void will be geo-technically stable, safe and non-polluting.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	Will be addressed by mining in the future as part of the Project.
	The catchment reporting to the final void will be designed and constructed to provide flows that fill the void.		
	The final void lake will provide a permanent water resource with water quality suitable for native fauna and agricultural use.		
	Embankments above the permanent water level will be vegetated with native vegetation consistent with native vegetation rehabilitation areas to contribute to fauna habitat connectivity.		
Agricultural – Grazing	Establish/restore grassland areas to support sustainable agricultural activities.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	Rehabilitation monitoring identifies areas of erosion, instability and/or incomplete rehabilitation.

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	Use species found in the local area that are suitable for pasture production.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	Separation of soil material types where possible prior to replacement to ensure natural regermination. Reuse of surface materials in rehabilitation consideration to timing/season.
	Achieve land and soil capabilities that are equivalent or better than pre-mining.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	
	Local adjacent to surrounding agricultural land, where practicable.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	
Native Ecosystem	At least 132 ha of native vegetation with characteristics analogous to analogue sites will be established on areas disturbed by mining.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	Will be addressed by mining in the future as part of the Project.
	Native vegetation areas will contribute to maintaining the genetic diversity of flora occurring in the locality by utilising locally collected seed and preserving the topsoil seedbank	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	
	Native vegetation areas will contribute to habitat resources and linkages with adjacent native vegetation including the Vickery State Forest.	No risk to achieving the Rehabilitation Objective identified.	