

Gunnedah Open Cuts 4.1 Mtpa Coal Haulage Increase Modifications

Modification Report

Appendix B - Road Noise Assessment





RWDI Australia Pty Ltd (RWDI)
Suite 602, Level 6, 80 William Street
Woolloomooloo NSW 2011

Tel: +61 2 9437 4611
ABN: 86 641 303 871

26 March 2026

Tony Dwyer
Whitehaven Coal Limited
231 Conadilly Street
Gunnedah NSW 2380

Re: Gunnedah Open Cuts 4.1 Mtpa Increased Coal Haulage Modifications – Road Traffic Noise Assessment. RWDI Reference No. 2512421.01.01

Dear Tony,

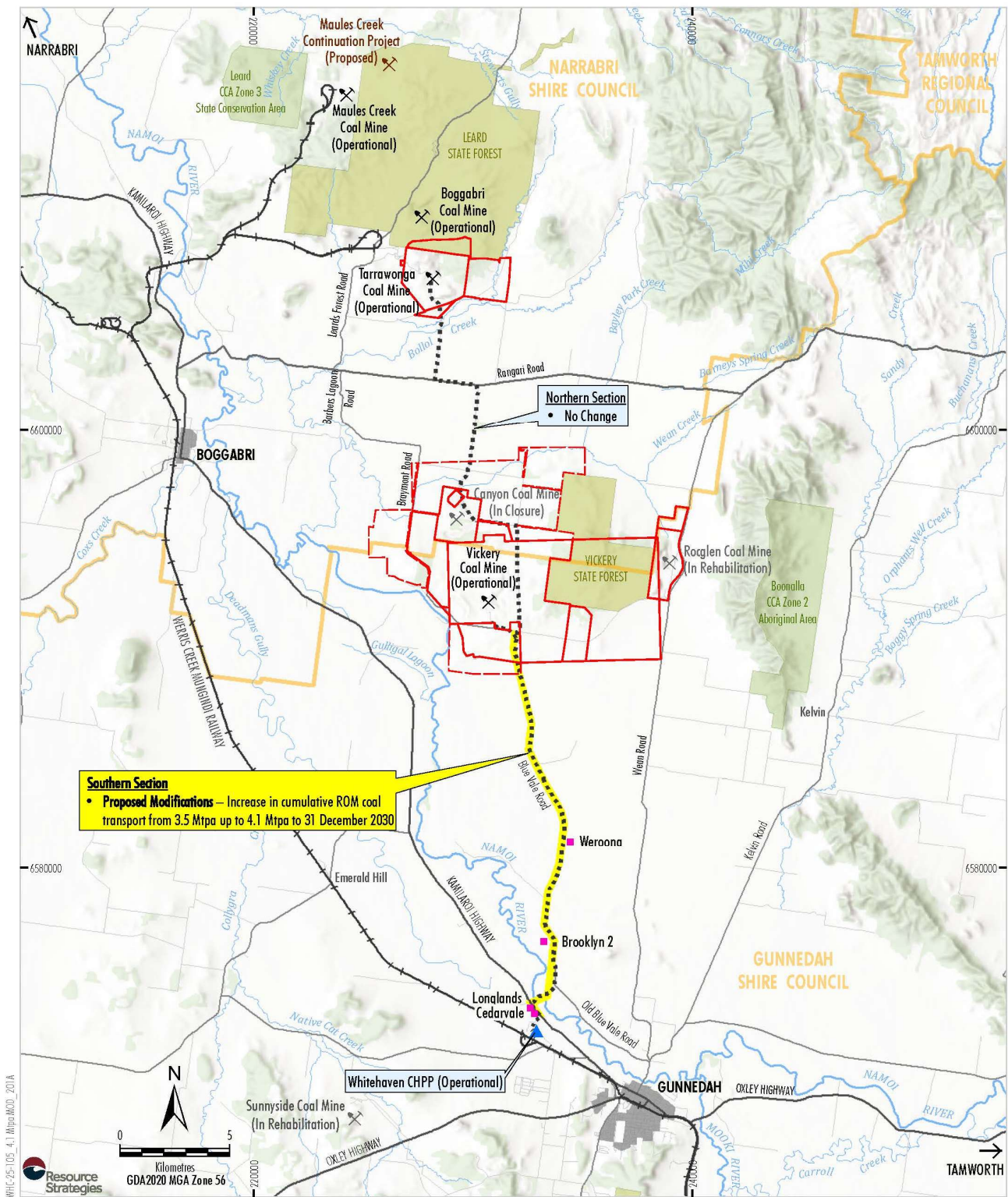
Introduction

Whitehaven Coal Limited (Whitehaven) owns the following open cut coal mining operations located in the Gunnedah Coalfield, New South Wales (NSW) (**Figure 1**), which are referred to as the Gunnedah Open Cuts (GOCs).

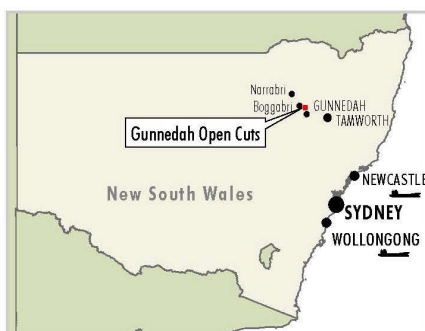
- Tarrawonga Coal Project (Tarrawonga Coal Mine) (Project Approval [MP11_0047]); and
- Vickery Extension Project (Vickery Coal Mine) (Development Consent [SSD-7480]).

Conditions relating to the transport of run-of-mine (ROM) coal from the GOCs have been modified over time, including adjustments to haulage hours, haulage limits from individual mines, and cumulative haulage limits across the GOCs mines. To support these Modifications, RWDI Australia Pty Ltd (RWDI) prepared a Road Noise Impact Assessment (*Tarrawonga Coal Mine - Road Haulage Hours Modification – Noise Impact Assessment* [RWDI, 2023]).

More recently, the cumulative ROM coal haulage limit was temporarily increased from 3.5 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) to 3.8 Mtpa in the second half of 2026, and RWDI prepared a noise assessment for this temporary increase (*Tarrawonga, Vickery and Rocglen Increased Coal Haulage Modifications - Noise Impact Assessment* [RWDI, 2025]).



Source: NSW Spatial Services (2024)



Whitehaven
GOC MODIFICATIONS
Proposed Modifications

Figure 1

Figure 1: Approved ROM Coal Transport Route



Whitehaven has since conducted further review of planned ROM coal production from the GOCs and identified an opportunity to increase the approved ROM coal haulage limit to 4.1 Mtpa for the calendar years 2026 to 2030, from the Tarrawonga and Vickery Coal Mines. This proposed 0.6 Mtpa increase above the consented 3.5 Mtpa maximum haulage limit (without constructing the Kamilaroi Highway overpass) would be distributed over the 12-month period, and The Transport Planning Partnership (TPPP) (2026) estimates that there would be a slight increase in the average hourly vehicle movements along the southern section of the Approved ROM Coal Transport Route south of Braymont Road (**Figure 1**) when compared with those previously assessed in the temporary increase noise assessment (RWDI, 2025).

For the ROM coal haulage increase, Whitehaven proposes Modifications to the cumulative ROM coal haulage limits in the following approvals to enable up to 4.1 Mtpa of ROM coal to be transported by road in calendar years 2026 to 2030:

- Project Approval MP11_0047 - Tarrawonga Coal Project.
- Development Consent SSD-7480 - Vickery Extension Project.

It is noted that the Rocglen Extension Project Approval (MP10_0015) no longer has road haulage limit conditions (Modification 5) as the Rocglen Coal Mine is in rehabilitation and has been under monitoring and maintenance since 2023 with no further mining currently proposed.

The Modifications would include no change to the following components of the GOCs:

- Mining operations at the approved GOCs.
- Surface disturbance at the approved GOCs or Whitehaven coal handling and preparation plant (CHPP) (e.g. to facilitate transport or stockpiling of ROM coal, product coal or coal rejects).
- Mine life(s), employment numbers, mining activities or other surface activities associated with the approved GOCs or Whitehaven CHPP.
- Haulage hours, type of haulage fleet.
- ROM coal transport route(s) from the GOCs to the Whitehaven CHPP or existing domestic customers.
- Coal reject transport route(s) from the Whitehaven CHPP to Vickery Coal Mine or Tarrawonga Coal Mine for incorporation into the final landform.

RWDI has been commissioned by Whitehaven to prepare a noise impact assessment in support of the above Modifications. This letter has been prepared to review potential noise implications on the nearby community.

Road Traffic Noise

The Project Approvals for the Tarrawonga Coal Project (MP11_0047) and Vickery Extension Project (SSD-7480) set the same road traffic noise criteria, stipulating that noise generated on public roads by the mining operations combined must not exceed the noise criteria summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Road Traffic Noise Criteria

Land	Day and Evening L_{Aeq} (15 hour)	Night L_{Aeq} (9 hour)
All privately-owned residences	60	55

Note:

1. L_{Aeq} = the equivalent continuous sound level.

The proposed 0.6 Mtpa increase of ROM coal transported in calendar years 2026 to 2030 would increase the average number of cumulative haul trips (Tarrawonga and Vickery Coal Mines) from approximately 22 to 26 trips per hour along the Approved ROM Coal Transport Route south of the Vickery Coal Mine (TTPP, 2026).

Updated haulage estimates provided by TTPP (2026) indicate that the proposed Modifications would generate approximately 492 vehicle trips per weekday and 364 vehicle trips per Saturday, based on an average truck payload of approximately 60.6 tonnes. Despite this increase in daily movements, road traffic noise levels are expected to remain well within the above criteria.

An increase of four extra trips per hour corresponds to an increase in noise levels of approximately 0.7 dB, which is deemed negligible under the *Noise Policy for Industry* (NSW Environment Protection Authority [EPA], 2017) (NPfI) and *NSW Road Noise Policy* (NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change & Water, 2011) (RNP), and would not be discernible by the surrounding community.

It is also noted that the conservative road traffic noise predictions conducted in RWDI's 2023 Road Noise Impact Assessment and based on an average of 40 hourly trips with the former lower payload fleet, were found to be significantly lower than the relevant criteria. This indicates that noise predictions based on 26 hourly trips would also comply with the criteria.

Therefore, the proposed increase in ROM coal haulage is not expected to adversely affect the acoustic amenity of the surrounding community.

Whitehaven is not proposing to construct the Kamilaroi Highway overpass for the proposed increase in the ROM coal haulage to 4.1 Mtpa for the 2026–2030. The assessment is therefore based on operations without the overpass. As the overpass would have consisted of a private haul road, it was assessed as an industrial noise source in the Vickery Coal Project Noise Impact Assessment (VCP NIA) (*Vickery Coal Project – Environmental Impact Statement – Noise & Blasting Impact Assessment*, Wilkinson Murray, 2013). For comparison purposes, the VCP NIA also provided $L_{Aeq,15min}$ noise predictions for both the overpass option and the ‘no build’ option, recognising that the latter involves public road sections and would not typically be assessed as an industrial noise source.

This comparison showed that three privately owned residential receivers (223, 224 and 292) would experience higher $L_{Aeq,15min}$ noise levels under the ‘no build’ scenario. This assumed eight truck movements in a 15-minute period (Wilkinson Murray, 2013), whilst updated haulage estimates from TTPP (2026) indicate an average of 6.5 movements per 15-minute (26 trips per hour). As such, the proposed Modifications are expected to reduce $L_{Aeq,15min}$ noise levels at these receivers by 0.9 dB.

It is also noted that the actual noise under the Modifications is expected to be the same or less than under the VCP scenario with the overpass as the haulage rate is lower (4.1 Mtpa, instead of 4.5 Mtpa) and larger payload trucks (i.e. less truck movements) are proposed.

Conclusion

RWDI has reviewed potential noise impacts associated with the proposed increase in the approved ROM coal haulage limit from 3.5 Mtpa to 4.1 Mtpa from the Tarrawonga and Vickery Coal Mines in calendar years 2026 to 2030.

The review has indicated that the resulting increase in truck movements along the Approved ROM Coal Transport Route remains negligible and would not impact on the acoustic amenity of the surrounding community.



Yours faithfully

Roman Haverkamp
Senior Engineer
RWDI



References

NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change & Water (2011) *NSW Road Noise Policy*.

NSW Environment Protection Authority (2017) *Noise Policy for Industry*.

RWDI Australia (2023) *Tarrawonga Coal Mine - Road Haulage Hours Modification – Noise Impact Assessment*.

RWDI Australia (2025) *Tarrawonga, Vickery and Rocglen Increased Coal Haulage Modifications - Noise Impact Assessment*

The Transport Planning Partnership (2026) *TTPP 2026 – 4.1 Mtpa GOC Haulage Modifications*

Wilkinson Murray (2013) *Vickery Coal Project – Environmental Impact Statement – Noise & Blasting Impact Assessment*

Statement of Limitations

This report entitled *Gunnedah Open Cuts 4.1 Mtpa Increased Coal Haulage Modifications - Road Traffic Noise Assessment*, dated 26 March 2026, was prepared by RWDI Australia Pty Ltd ("RWDI") for Whitehaven Coal Limited ("Client"). The findings and conclusions presented in this report have been prepared for the Client and are specific to the project described herein ("Project"). The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based on the information available to RWDI when this report was prepared. Because the contents of this report may not reflect the final design of the Project or subsequent changes made after the date of this report, RWDI recommends that it be retained by Client during the final stages of the project to verify that the results and recommendations provided in this report have been correctly interpreted in the final design of the Project.

The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report have also been made for the specific purpose(s) set out herein. Should the Client or any other third party utilize the report and/or implement the conclusions and recommendations contained therein for any other purpose or project without the involvement of RWDI, the Client or such third party assumes any and all risk of any and all consequences arising from such use and RWDI accepts no responsibility for any liability, loss, or damage of any kind suffered by Client or any other third party arising therefrom.

Finally, it is imperative that the Client and/or any party relying on the conclusions and recommendations in this report carefully review the stated assumptions contained herein and to understand the different factors which may impact the conclusions and recommendations provided.