



# Section 5

# Engagement

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## PREAMBLE

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*This section provides an overview of the engagement undertaken by the Applicant and its consultant team during the preparation of the EIS to identify the environmental, social and economic issues of interest to the surrounding community and relevant statutory agencies to be addressed in the EIS. The approach to, and results of, the engagement for the Project are fully documented in the Social Impact Assessment for the Project (RCD, 2021). The section concludes with an outline of the Applicants' intentions for future community engagement should the Project be approved.*

*This Section has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 3.6 of "State significant development guidelines – preparing an environmental impact statement."*

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## 5.1 Engagement Carried Out

### 5.1.1 Local Community

The Applicant commenced formal consultation in relation to the Project on 20 August 2020 when the Community Consultative Committee (CCC) met and a TGO Newsletter outlining the Project was distributed to the community. In addition to the scheduled quarterly CCC meetings, additional monthly meetings were conducted throughout late 2020 and early 2021 to provide specific information to the CCC and to gain feedback from the CCC on the Community Engagement Strategy. The Applicant's website community information page was also updated to coincide with the commencement of formal consultation.

Engagement undertaken for the Project was undertaken through a variety of means. **Table A16.1** (in **Appendix 16**) lists the engagement tools and the various stakeholder groups approached during the preparation of the EIS. In summary, community consultation has included but not been limited to:

- face to face meetings and phone calls with individual landholders and residents;
- provision of written letters and other Project-related material to key landholders and residents;
- provision of Project-related information via newsletter and on the Applicant's website; and
- community information evenings attended by key Project staff and RWC consultants.

### 5.1.2 Government Agencies

The Applicant initially consulted with the then Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), as required under Schedule 2, Part 2(3)(1) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* to obtain the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Project. This consultation involved providing the Department with a Scoping Report introducing the Project and providing an overview of the Project, its environmental setting, strategic and statutory context and proposed community engagement.

The DPIE circulated the Scoping Report to a range of State Government agencies and local Councils seeking their respective requirements for issues to be addressed in the EIS for the Project. The DPIE's requirements and those provided by the State Government agencies and Councils were collectively assembled and forwarded to the Applicant as the Project SEARs on 22 July 2021.

In addition to the consultation regarding the SEARs for the Project, the Applicant has undertaken individual consultation with the agencies identified in **Table A16.2** of **Appendix 16**. The Applicant has hosted multiple visits to the Project Site from representatives of the DPIE, EPA, NRAR, MEG, BCD, Department of Regional NSW and the Narromine Shire Council. The Applicant has also met with members of the NSW State Government and the Commonwealth Government to provide a general overview of the Project and to discuss the Applicant's experience with developing projects within NSW. Ongoing communication with key agencies during the planning and assessment stages of the Project has enabled the Applicant to ensure that the Project has been planned in consideration with agency and community expectations.



**Table A16.2** also presents a brief overview of the feedback from the agencies and the Applicant's actions following receipt of that feedback.

### 5.1.3 Other Key Stakeholders

In addition to the local community and respective Government agencies, the Applicant has engaged with a number of key stakeholders during the planning stages of the Project that are identified in **Table A16.2** of **Appendix 16**. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Narromine Local Aboriginal Land Council;
- Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council;
- Siding Spring Observatory;
- Vocus Group; and
- Telstra.

## 5.2 Community Views

### 5.2.1 Introduction

The Project is located within an area recognised over the past 100 years as an area of rich mining and agricultural history. Many of the surrounding landholdings and properties are owned and worked by direct decedents of the first European settlers, farmers and miners in the area. Over this time, there has been little change in land uses and property sizes within the recognised planning buffers around the designated residential areas which have effectively been enshrined within the various regional and local planning instruments over that period.

The key residential and commercial areas in the vicinity of the Project Site are Tomingley village and Peak Hill, to the immediate north and approximately 7km south of the Project Site, respectively (see Section 1.2 and **Figure 1.1**). To the immediate east, south and west of the Project Site, larger rural agricultural properties and associated residences are positioned sparsely across the landscape.

The Applicant has a long history of successfully operating in the Central West of NSW, including developing, mining and rehabilitating the Peak Hill Gold Mine between 1996 and 2005 and developing and operating the TGO Mine from 2012 until the present. As a result, the Applicant has a well-developed understanding of the local community and the groups and individuals with an interest in the Project.

The following sections describe the key results of the ongoing engagement and future engagements with the surrounding community and relevant government agencies that have been or are expected to be undertaken by the Applicant. The principal issues that have been identified by the relevant parties regarding the Project are also presented alongside where they have been addressed in this EIS.



## 5.2.2 Local Community

The issues raised during the engagement with the community are considered in three categories, namely environmental, economic and social. Each of the issues discussed below are listed in **Table A16.3 (Appendix 16)** together with the relevant section(s) of the EIS and SCSC where each issue is addressed.

### Environmental Issues

#### Noise and Vibration

- Noise from machinery operating within the Project Site, particularly given the proposed activities would be closer to some surrounding rural residences than the existing approved operations, is a concern to some neighbours.
- Noise and vibration from blasting has been a concern to some neighbours on occasions principally with respect to the perceived risk of blasting on livestock and wildlife.

#### Air Quality and Health

- Air quality, particularly dust with its potential health impacts, is a concern to some surrounding residents.
- The potential health impacts from the use of cyanide in the processing and as a residual in the tailings within the RSFs was a perceived risk to some neighbours.

#### Visual Amenity

- The potential visual impacts of the proposed SAR Waste Rock Emplacement was a key concern of many residences, given the general negative opinions of the Waste Rock Emplacements within the TGO Mine Site.
- The potential impacts of Project-related lighting on the local environment, including road users, was identified as a concern.

#### Water

- The impact of the Project on existing surface water flows, in particular the effect of altered down-stream environments and agricultural operations, and the potential for localised flooding impacts on local road networks.

#### Biodiversity

- The destruction of native flora and fauna and their habitat as well as the management of pest plant and animal species on non-productive or operational Applicant-owned land.

#### Traffic and Road Safety

- The changed traffic levels of Kyalite Road were of concern to existing users of Kyalite Road.
- The design of the upgrades to the intersections of the Newell Highway and Kyalite Road, McNivens Land and Back Tomingley West Road.



### Cultural Heritage

- Project-related disturbance resulting in impacts to Aboriginal and historic heritage values.

### **Economic Issues**

- The potential for the ongoing operation of the extraction area to impact upon property prices and saleability of properties was raised by some surrounding rural land holders.
- Business opportunities including the opportunity to lease Applicant-owned land during the operation of the Project.
- The impact of the loss of agricultural land on the overall economic potential of the area.
- The enhanced community wellbeing from continuation of job opportunities and community investment was noted as a positive impact.
- The impact of the proposed road alignments on travel times.

### **Social Issues**

#### Community

- Many residents also expressed that they were happy with improvements the Applicant had made to their properties including air conditioning units, insulation, double glazed windows, solid core doors and the ongoing annual financial assistance from the Applicant in respect of payment of power bills. Others also acknowledged the Applicants support for community organisations and infrastructure.
- Potential impacts to housing and rental pressures within Narromine were identified through surveys of Narromine residents.

#### Consultation and Decision Making

- Some local residents expressed a wish to “not be taken for granted or ignored” if they have issues, however, were happy with the level of consultation received so far and wanted to see it continue.
- General feedback was that the residents had not asked for the Project and would prefer that it not be developed.
- It is noted that during the preparation of this EIS, at least one resident and outspoken opponent of the Project has sold their property and has since left the immediate area.



### 5.2.3 Government Issues

The issues that the NSW Government agencies and Narromine Shire Council have requested to be addressed in the EIS were provided in correspondence from the respective agencies. It is recognised that some requirements provided were generic in nature and not relevant to the Project. Those issues that are relevant to the Project are listed in **Appendix 2** together with the section(s) where each issue is addressed. In some cases, the issues are addressed in the SCSC that accompanies the main volume of the EIS.

## 5.3 Engagement to be Carried Out

### 5.3.1 Future Government Engagement

The development of the numerous environmental management plans for the existing TGO Mine was, where relevant, undertaken in consultation with and consideration of multiple local and State government departments and agencies, as well as organisations such as the NSW Rural Fire Service. The proposed environmental management plans described throughout Section 6 and **Appendix 18** would, where relevant, be revised and/or developed in consultation with all necessary third parties as required by any approval conditions or otherwise.

In addition to the above, the proposed extensions and/or changes to the existing community funding currently (i.e. Planning Agreement undertaken by the Applicant) would be in consultation with the Narromine Shire Council.

### 5.3.2 Future Community Engagement

The Applicant proposes to maintain a proactive approach to ongoing community engagement through the implementation of the following.

- Direct contact with its fence-line neighbours at a frequency agreed upon with each neighbour, including an invitation for a site visit to view the existing operations and Project Site.
- Direct contact with other surrounding rural property owners when approached or at a frequency that is otherwise reasonably requested by the property owner.
- Ongoing participation in the Community Consultative Committee.
- Posting the following information on the Applicant's website.
  - The current EIS for the TGO Mine and supporting documents
  - All current environmental management plans
  - Recent Annual Reviews
  - Recent Environment Protection Licence monitoring data
  - Contact details for the Community Consultative Committee
  - Contact details for the Applicant's contact/complaints line

The engagement measures outlined above would be incorporated into a *Community Engagement Plan* for the Project (see Section 6.15.4) that would be used to integrate community impact awareness into the operation of the Project.



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