



## **ROCGLLEN COAL MINE**

### **Community Newsletter, March 2010**

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#### **Background**

Whitehaven Coal Limited (Whitehaven) operates the Rocglen Coal Mine 25 km north of Gunnedah and 23 km south-east of Boggabri on the Wean Road.

The Rocglen Coal Mine was originally approved by the Minister as a Major Project in April 2008 under Project Approval (PA) 06\_0198. Coal production at Rocglen commenced in late 2008 under Mining Lease (ML) 1620. The mine currently produces approximately 1.5 million tonnes (Mt) of thermal coal annually for domestic and export markets.

#### **Proposal**

Following further exploration and definition of the local geological features, as well as additional reviews of the mine plan, Whitehaven has identified an opportunity to maximise resource recovery and allow for improved mine progression. Under the provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, a new approval would be required by the Department of Planning in order to facilitate these changes to the Rocglen Coal Mine. The Rocglen Modification represents an expansion to the current mining operation, with the proposal comprising the following key activities –

- **Expansion of Open Cut Pit** – expansion of the open cut pit design limit in order to access up to 5 Mt of coal not previously considered in the life of mine plan. Coal will be extracted from the expanded pit using the current approved open cut mining methods and at the currently approved production rate of 1.5 Mt per annum, with the final year of extraction scheduled being 2020.
- **Expansion of Northern Emplacement** - expansion of the footprint and height of the out-of-pit Northern Emplacement in order to accommodate additional overburden from the current operations and proposed pit expansion.
- **Altered Coal Transportation** – redirection of a portion of the coal mined at Rocglen from the Whitehaven Coal Handling and Preparation Plant (CHPP) to the company's Canyon site, located approximately 14 km west of Rocglen. This coal will be stockpiled at the existing Canyon run-of-mine (ROM) pad for crushing and subsequent dispatch to domestic customers. A separate approval process is being followed with regard to the establishment of the existing Canyon ROM pad as the domestic coal hub. The redirection of this portion of coal to Canyon will be via roads currently approved for coal haulage.

The proposal will not involve any change to the current open cut mining methods, coal production rate, mine operating hours, coal handling and processing techniques, or workforce.

#### **Environmental Assessment**

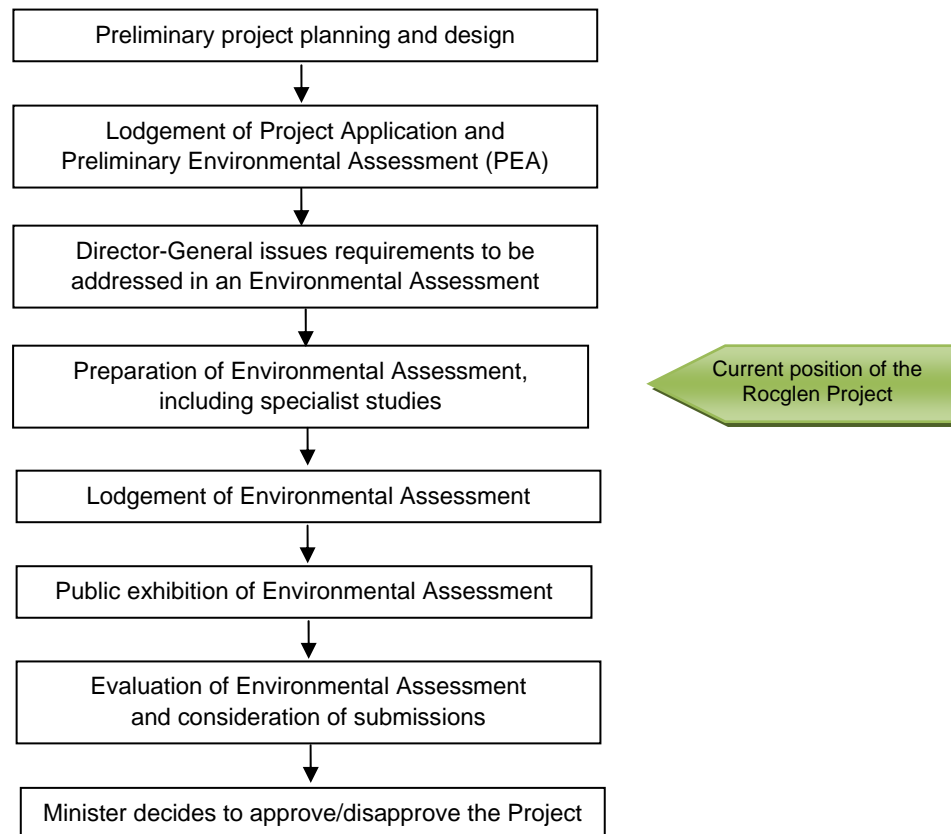
As part of the Environmental Assessment process, a number of specialist studies are being undertaken to assess potential impacts on –

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|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ▪ Soils and land capability; | ▪ Noise and vibration;             |
| ▪ Surface water;             | ▪ Air quality;                     |
| ▪ Groundwater;               | ▪ Visual amenity; and              |
| ▪ Flora and fauna;           | ▪ Mine closure and rehabilitation. |
| ▪ Cultural heritage;         |                                    |
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The Project will employ best practice operational regimes and adopt numerous mitigation measures to effectively manage these and other environmental aspects associated with the proposed expansion.

### Approval Process

The Rocglen Project has been identified as requiring a new Project Approval from the NSW Department of Planning (DoP) under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)*. The flow chart below provides a summary of the process.



### Consultation

Appropriate stakeholder and community consultation will be undertaken for the Project to ensure that any issues and concerns are identified and addressed in the Environmental Assessment. The following activities have/will be undertaken to provide an opportunity for comment and input into the process –

- Newsletters, such as this, will be circulated to surrounding residences and relevant stakeholder groups to inform of Project status, findings, and outcomes. You will note on the bottom of this page, contact details are provided for anyone seeking additional information or wishing to discuss the Project further.
- Whitehaven has consulted, and will continue to liaise, with relevant local and state government agencies.
- The Department of Planning will exhibit the Environmental Assessment for a minimum of 30 days. An advertisement will be placed in the local newspaper(s), relevant agencies will be notified, and adjacent landholders will be notified if required. The Environmental Assessment will be made available for inspection during the exhibition period and any person is able to make a written submission to the Director-General regarding the Project.

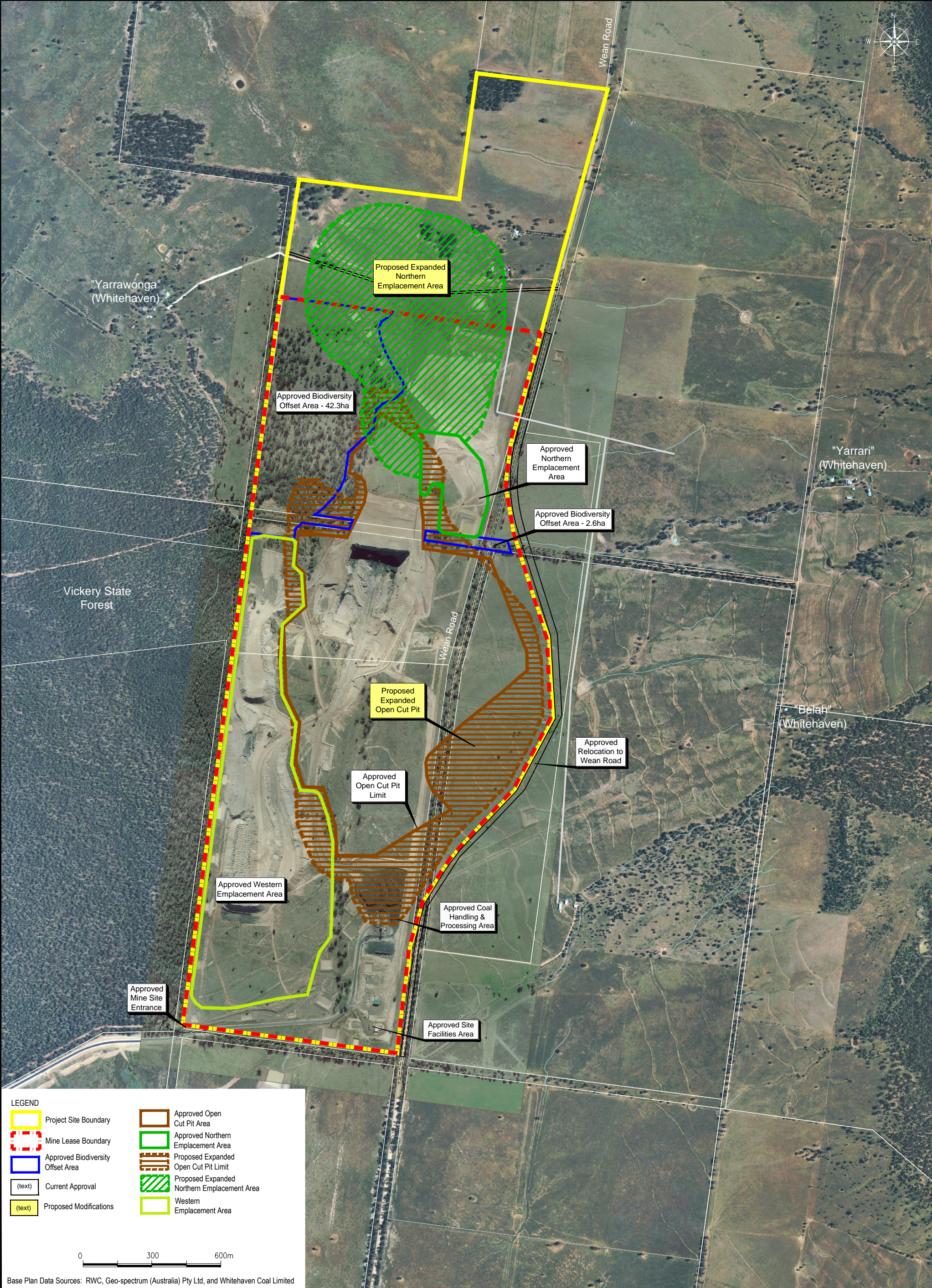
### Further Information:

If you would like additional information or wish to discuss the Rocglen Project further, please contact Whitehaven's Group Environmental Manager, Danny Young –

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Base Plan Data Sources: RWC, Geo-spectrum (Australia) Pty Ltd, and Whitehaven Coal Limited