

# Annual Review

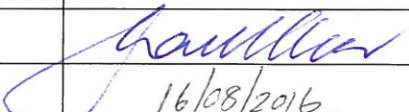
## Vickery Coal Project

Name of operation	Vickery Coal Project
Name of operator	Whitehaven Coal Mining Ltd
Development consent/project approval number	SSD-5000
Name of holder of development consent/project approval	Whitehaven Coal Mining Ltd
Mining lease number	ML 1471, CL 316
Name of holder of mining lease	Whitehaven Coal Mining Ltd (ML 1471), Whitehaven Coal Mining Pty Ltd (CL 316)
Water licence number	Not applicable <sup>1</sup>
Name of holder of water licence	Whitehaven Coal Mining Ltd
MOP start date	Not applicable
MOP end date	Not applicable
Annual review start date <sup>2</sup>	01-01-2015
Annual review end date	31-12-2015

**I, Jamie Frankcombe, certify that this audit report is a true and accurate record of the compliance status of Vickery Coal Project for the period January 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 until December 31<sup>st</sup> 2015, and that I am authorised to make this statement on behalf of Whitehaven Coal Mining Pty Ltd.**

*Note. a) The Annual Review is an 'environmental audit' for the purposes of section 122B (2) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. Section 122E provides that a person must not include false or misleading information (or provide information for inclusion in) an audit report produced to the Minister in connection with an environmental audit if the person knows that the information is false or misleading in a material respect. The maximum penalty is, in the case of a corporation, \$1 million and for an individual, \$250,000.*

*b) The Crimes Act 1900 contains other offences relating to false and misleading information: section 192G (Intention to defraud by false or misleading statement—maximum penalty 5 years imprisonment); sections 307A, 307B and 307C (False or misleading applications/information/documents—maximum penalty 2 years imprisonment or \$22,000, or both).*

Name of authorised reporting officer	Jamie Frankcombe
Title of authorised reporting officer	Director- Whitehaven Coal Mining Ltd
Signature of authorised reporting officer	
Date	16/08/2016

<sup>1</sup> Vickery Coal Project Environmental Assessment referenced a number of water licences for the Project however development, and hence utilisation of licences, is yet to commence.

<sup>2</sup> NSW Annual Review Guideline was released in October 2015.

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## STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The compliance status of the Vickery Coal Project as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 is summarised in Table 1. Table 2 notes non-compliances that occurred during the reporting period.

**Table 1 - Statement of Compliance**

Were all conditions of the relevant approval(s) complied with? <sup>1</sup>	
Development Consent SSD-5000	No
EPBC 2012/6263	Yes
Coal Lease 316	Yes
ML 1471	Yes
Authorisation 406	Yes

<sup>1</sup> Vickery Coal Project Environmental Assessment referenced a number of water licences for the Project however development, and hence utilisation of licences, is yet to commence.

**Table 2 - Non-compliances**

Relevant Approval	Condition Number	Condition Description (summary)	Compliance status	Comment	Where Addressed in Annual Review
SSD-5000	2(2)	Generally in accordance	Non-compliant	Refer below.	Section 10
SSD-5000	5(6)	Requirement for Community Consultative Committee (CCC) to be operational by December 2014	Non-compliant	CCC established in April 2015.	Section 10

**Compliance status key for Table 2**

Risk level	Colour code	Description
<b>High</b>	Non-compliant	Non-compliance with potential for significant environmental consequences, regardless of the likelihood of occurrence
<b>Medium</b>	Non-compliant	Non-compliance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential for serious environmental consequences, but is unlikely to occur; or</li> <li>• potential for moderate environmental consequences, but is likely to occur</li> </ul>
<b>Low</b>	Non-compliant	Non-compliance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential for moderate environmental consequences, but is unlikely to occur; or</li> <li>• potential for low environmental consequences, but is likely to occur</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative non-compliance</b>	Non-compliant	Only to be applied where the non-compliance does not result in any risk of environmental harm (e.g. submitting a report to government later than required under approval conditions)

# **1 INTRODUCTION**

This is the first Annual Review (AR) produced for the Vickery Coal Project, and has been prepared in accordance with Condition 4 (Schedule 5) of Development Consent SSD-5000. The AR follows the format required by the NSW Government Annual Review Guideline (October, 2015).

The Vickery Coal Project is located approximately 15 kilometres (km) south-east of Boggabri and approximately 25 km north of Gunnedah in New South Wales. Mining operations at the previous Vickery Coal Mine ceased in 1998, when approval from the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) was granted to suspend operations and complete rehabilitation works on-site. Rehabilitation activities at the open cut and waste emplacement areas are now complete and the site is currently in care and maintenance. Whitehaven acquired 100 percent (%) of Coal Lease (CL) 316 and Authorisation (AUTH) 406 from Rio Tinto Limited in January 2010.

The current Vickery Coal Project (SSD 5000) to which this AR relates was granted on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Operations are yet to commence under SSD 5000.

## **1.1 Mine Contacts**

The management personnel responsible for the Vickery Coal Project and their relevant contact details are as follows:

- Mr Nigel Wood, General Manager, Open Cut Operations - oversees Open Cut Operations for the Whitehaven Group. Contact: (02) 6741 9309.
- Mrs Jill Johnson, Group Manager - Environment – oversees day to day environmental and rehabilitation performance across the site. Contact: (02) 6741 9321.



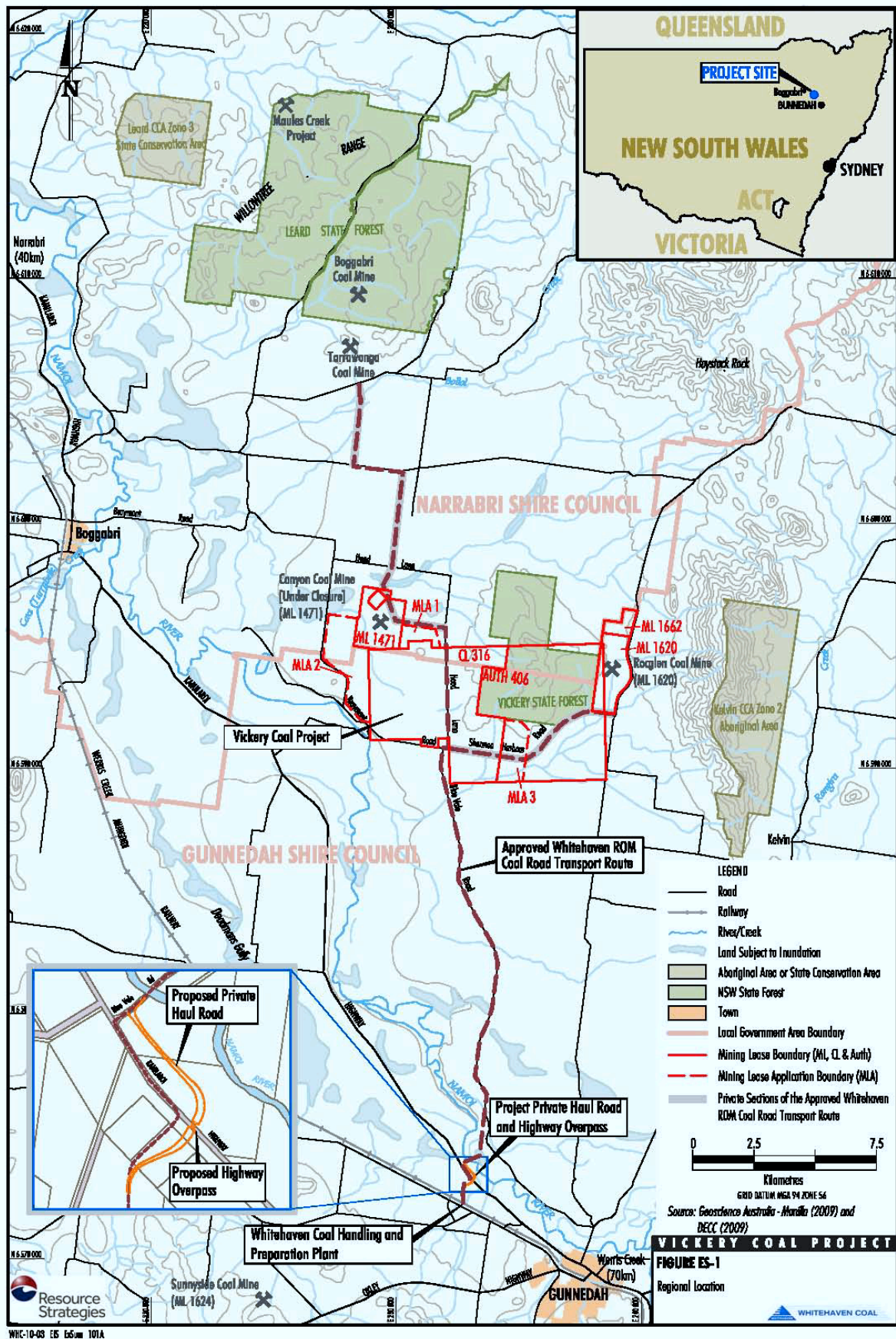


Figure 1 - Locality Plan

## 2 APPROVALS

### 2.1 Tenements, Licences, and Approvals

Table 3 identifies the approvals in place for the Vickery Coal Project at the end of the reporting period, the issuing / responsible Authority, dates of issue, expiry date and relevant comments.

**Table 3 - Tenements, Licences and Approvals**

Issuing / Responsible Authority	Type of Lease, Licence, Approval	Date of Issue	Expiry	Comments
Department of Planning and Environment	Development Consent SSD-5000	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2044	
Department of the Environment	EPBC 2012/6263	17 <sup>th</sup> May 2012		
Division of Resources and Energy	Authorisation 406	29 <sup>th</sup> November 1988	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	
Division of Resources and Energy	ML 1471	7 <sup>th</sup> September 2000	7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	

## 3 OPERATIONS SUMMARY

### 3.1 Mining Operations

No mining operations have commenced for the Vickery Coal Project.



**Table 4 – Production Summary**

Material	Approved Limit	Previous Reporting Period (actual)	This Reporting Period (actual)	Next Reporting Period (forecast)
Waste Rock/Overburden	1,269 Mbcm <sup>1</sup>	0	0	0
ROM Coal/Ore	4.5 Mtpa <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0
Coarse Reject	n/a	0	0	0
Fine Reject (Tailings)	n/a	0	0	0
Saleable Product	n/a	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Environmental Impact Statement – Life of Mine

<sup>2</sup> Development Consent SSD-5000

### **3.2 Next Reporting Period**

Operations forecast for the next reporting period are expected to be limited to environmental monitoring.

## **4 ACTIONS REQUIRED FROM PREVIOUS ANNUAL REVIEW**

As this is the first Annual Review for the Vickery Coal Project there are no previous actions.

## **5 ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE**

The following sub-sections document the implementation and effectiveness of the various control strategies adopted at the Vickery Coal Project.

### **5.1 Air Quality**

#### **5.1.1 Criteria**

The air quality criteria applicable to the Vickery Coal Project are specified in SSD-5000 Schedule 3, Tables 8, 9 & 10, which are summarised below.

- Acceptable mean annual increase in deposited dust – 2 g/m<sup>2</sup>/month.

- Mean annual dust deposition (all sources) – 4 g/m<sup>2</sup>/month.
- Mean annual Total Suspended Particulate (TSP) matter (all sources) concentration – 90 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.
- Mean annual PM<sub>10</sub> particulate level – 30 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.
- 24 hour average PM<sub>10</sub> particulate level – 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

### **5.1.2 Dust Monitoring**

Construction of the Vickery Coal Project is yet to commence and as such no air quality monitoring for compliance purposes is undertaken.

### **5.1.3 Key Environmental Performance/Management Issues**

No key environmental performance/management issues were identified during the reporting period.

### **5.1.4 Proposed Improvements to Environmental Management**

No improvements are proposed within the next reporting period.

## **5.2 Biodiversity**

### **5.2.1 Threatened Flora**

Investigations into the occurrence of threatened flora within the Project Approval Area were undertaken as part of the Environmental Assessment by Niche Environment and Heritage Consultants Pty Ltd, between November 2011 and January 2013.

The investigation identified one threatened flora species, Winged Peppercress (*Lepidium Monoplocoides*) which has potential to be affected by the Project. The location within the Project Approval Area where the Winged Peppercress was identified and an additional area where the species was identified outside the Project Approval Area have been fenced to provide protection from livestock.

### **5.2.2 Threatened Fauna**

Investigations into the occurrence of threatened fauna within the Project Approval Area were undertaken by Niche Environment and Heritage Pty Ltd as part of the Environmental Assessment between the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2011. These investigations identified

that 25 threatened fauna species could potentially be affected by the Project. These species and their potential for impact are provide below in Table 5.

**Table 5 – Affected Threatened Fauna**

Affected Threatened Fauna			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Likelihood of Occurrence	Potential for Impact
Grey Falcon	<i>Falco hypoleucos</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Square-tailed Kite	<i>Lophoictinia isura</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging habitat would be impacted.
Spotted Harrier	<i>Circus assimilis</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential habitat would be impacted.
Little Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus morphnoides</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Glossy Black-cockatoo	<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging and breeding habitat would be impacted.
Little Lorikeet	<i>Glossopsitta pusilla</i>	High	<b>Potential:</b> Potential habitat would be impacted.
Turquoise Parrot	<i>Neophema pulchella</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Superb Parrot	<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential habitat would be impacted.
Barking Owl	<i>Ninox connivens</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging and roosting habitat would be impacted.
Masked Owl	<i>Tyto novaehollandiae</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging and roosting habitat would be impacted.
Powerful Owl	<i>Ninox strenua</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging and roosting habitat would be impacted.
Brown Treecreeper (eastern subspecies)	<i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i>	High	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging and breeding habitat would be removed by the development.

Speckled Warbler	<i>Chthonicola sagittata</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Painted Honeyeater	<i>Grantiella picta</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Potential habitat would be impacted.
Hooded Robin (southeastern form)	<i>Melanodryas cucullata cucullata</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Grey-crowned Babbler (eastern subspecies)	<i>Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Varied Sittella	<i>Daphoenositta chrysoptera</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Gilbert's Whistler	<i>Pachycephala inornata</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Potential habitat would be impacted.
Diamond Firetail	<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging habitat would be removed by the development.
Squirrel Glider	<i>Petaurus norfolcensis</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging and nesting habitat would be impacted.
Yellow-bellied Sheathtail-bat	<i>Saccolaimus flaviventris</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Known habitat would be impacted.
Beccari's Freetail-bat	<i>Mormopterus beccarii</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> Roosting habitat (hollows) would be impacted.
Eastern Freetail-bat	<i>Mormopterus norfolkensis</i>	High	<b>Potential:</b> Potential foraging and breeding habitat would be impacted.
Corben's Long-eared Bat	<i>Nyctophilus corbeni</i>	Moderate	<b>Potential:</b> Nineteen previous records within the Liverpool Plains (Part B) IBRA sub-bioregion.
Little Pied Bat	<i>Chalinobolus picatus</i>	Known	<b>Potential:</b> One previous record

			from Vickery State Forest and potential foraging and breeding habitat would be impacted.
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Construction of the Vickery Coal Project is yet to commence and as such no monitoring of threatened fauna was conducted during the reporting period.

### **5.2.3 Biodiversity Offsets**

Schedule 3, Condition 34(a) requires the long term security for the Willeroi East Offset Area and Offset Areas 2, 3, 4 and 5 by the end of June 2015. The Department of Planning and Environment has provided an extension of the timing to secure the offset areas to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

### **5.2.4 Weeds**

Weed control is undertaken by Whitehaven's own qualified personnel on an as-needs basis. One instance of spraying, targeting African Boxthorn, was undertaken during the reporting period.

### **5.2.5 Feral Animal Control**

Feral animals are not a significant land management issue on Vickery Coal Project's landholding and are limited to isolated occurrences of pigs, foxes, hares and rabbits. In view of the low frequency of occurrence, and in the absence of an extensive programme by all surrounding landowners, no broad scale feral animal control programme was considered warranted during the reporting period. Mine personnel will continue to monitor feral animal occurrences and implement necessary control programmes if and when necessary.

### **5.2.6 Key Environmental Performance/Management Issues**

No key environmental performance/management issues were identified during the reporting period.

### **5.2.7 Proposed Improvements to Environmental Management**

No improvements are proposed within the next reporting period.

## **5.3 Blasting**

### **5.3.1 Criteria**

Blasting criteria for the Vickery Coal Project are noted in SSD-5000, however they are not relevant for this reporting period, as no blasting has been undertaken onsite.

### **5.3.2 Key Environmental Performance/Management Issues**

No blasts were undertaken during the reporting period.

### **5.3.3 Proposed Improvements to Environmental Management**

No blasting is proposed within the next reporting period.

## **5.4 Operational Noise**

### **5.4.1 Criteria**

SSD-5000 details the noise criteria for site operations and coal haulage, however there was no requirement for noise monitoring during the reporting period.

### **5.4.2 Key Environmental Performance/Management Issues**

No key environmental performance/management issues were identified during the reporting period.

### **5.4.3 Proposed Improvements to Environmental Management**

No improvements are proposed within the next reporting period.

## **5.5 Aboriginal Heritage Management**

### **5.5.1 Environmental Management Measures**

An assessment of the cultural heritage of the mine site was conducted by Landskape in 2012.

A total of 34 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites (including those sites that had been previously recorded and were reinspected as part of the field surveys) were identified during the field surveys of the Project mining area. See Figure 2.



Six sites were identified in the proposed haul road and overpass Project area. The sites comprise 25 scatters of stone artefacts, one containing axe-grinding grooves, and 15 isolated finds of stone artefacts.

The majority of sites located within the Project mining area were associated with the open plains and the banks of ephemeral streams or drainage lines. Lower artefact densities occurred along the ridge top and upper slope areas. Stone assemblages are generally small in size ranging from single artefacts to 67 artefacts discovered in one scatter.

A number of small to medium artefact scatters were located in the proposed haul road and overpass area on the banks of the Namoi River. The largest scatter (AHIMS site number 20-4-0037) comprised approximately 57 flakes and one core.

### **5.5.2 Consultation**

No soil stripping has been undertaken for the Vickery Coal Project. No additional Aboriginal cultural heritage items have been discovered during the reporting period and no consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders was conducted.

### **5.5.3 Environmental Management Measures**

Given the status of the site the environmental management measures for Aboriginal Heritage are limited to ensuring that any identified heritage sites remain undisturbed.

### **5.5.4 Key Environmental Performance/Management Issues**

No key environmental performance/management issues were identified during the reporting period.

### **5.5.5 Proposed Improvements to Environmental Management**

No improvements are proposed within the next reporting period.

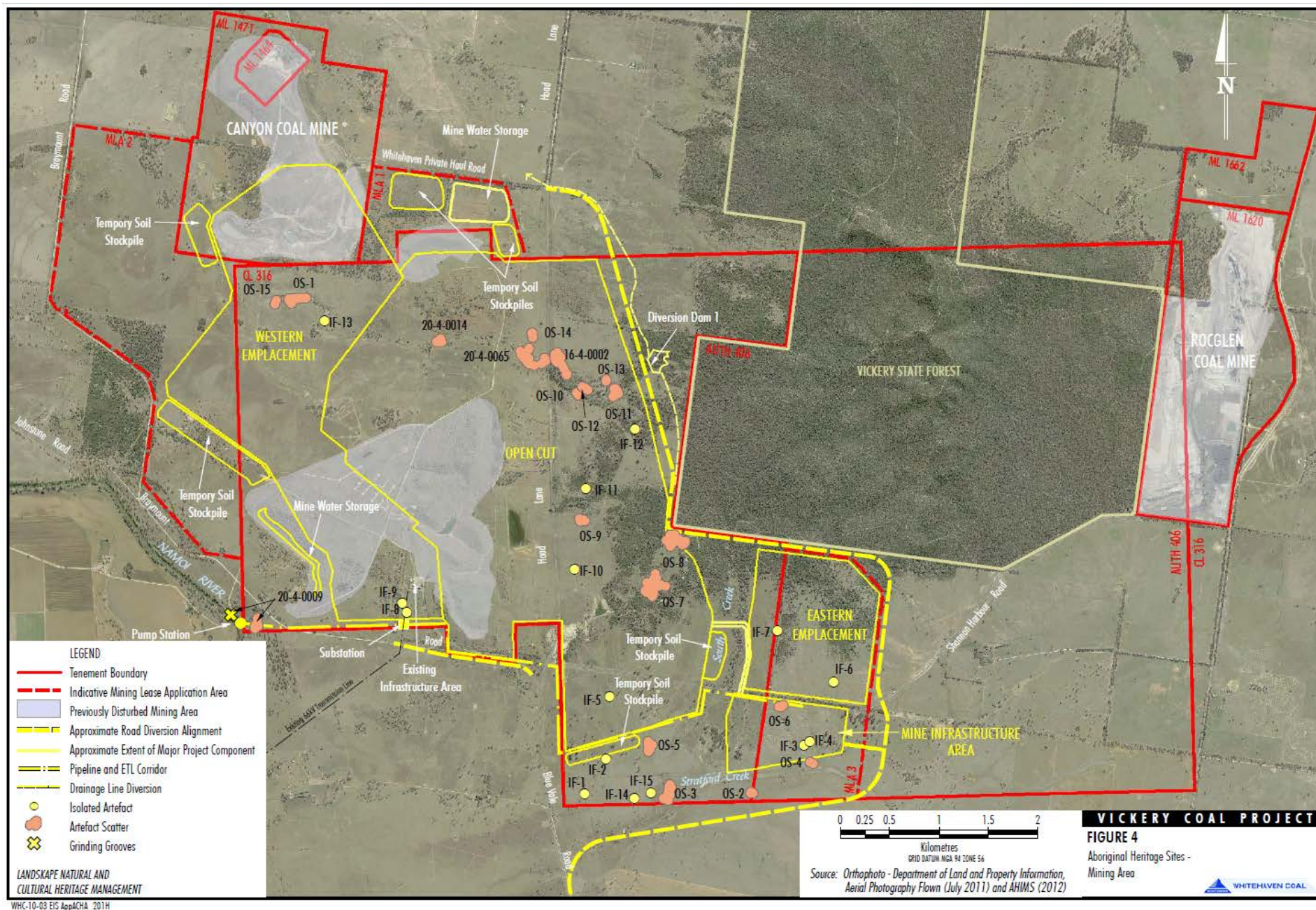


Figure 2- Aboriginal Heritage Sites- Proposed Mining Area

## **5.6 Natural Heritage**

There are no features of natural heritage within the Project Approval area and hence no specific management procedures are required.

## **5.7 Bushfire Management**

### **5.7.1 Environmental Management Measures**

Vickery Coal Project is located within an area of cleared agricultural land. Whitehaven Coal personnel liaise with the local Rural Fire Service, as required.

There have been no bushfire incidents on, or adjacent to, the mine site since SSD-5000 as granted.

### **5.7.2 Key Environmental Performance/Management Issues**

No key environmental performance/management issues were identified during the reporting period.

### **5.7.3 Proposed Improvements to Environmental Management**

No improvements are proposed within the next reporting period.

## **5.8 Public Safety**

### **5.8.1 Environmental Management Measures**

The Vickery Coal Project is located wholly on WHC owned land in a relatively remote area. The northern boundary of the mine site is adjacent to Shannon Harbour Road, a sealed coal haulage road for the WHC owned Rocglen Coal Mine. The site is fenced and appropriate warning signs have been installed. The access gates are locked whenever the site is unattended.

Access to the site is permitted only by authorised personnel.

### **5.8.2 Key Environmental Performance/Management Issues**

No key environmental performance/management issues were identified during the reporting period.

### **5.8.3 Proposed Improvements to Environmental Management**

No improvements are proposed within the next reporting period.

## **5.9 Environmental Performance Summary**

An environmental performance summary for Vickery Coal Project is presented in Table 6 below.

**Table 6 - Environmental Performance**

Aspect	Approval Criteria / EIS Prediction	Performance during the reporting period	Trend / Key Management Implications	Implemented / proposed management actions
Biodiversity	EPBC 2012/6263 and 3(33) of SSD- 5000, requiring the translocation and protection of the Winged Peppercress within the disturbance boundary.	The area of Winged Peppercress has been successfully fenced off and signposted for protection.	Nil	Upon approval of the Biodiversity Management Plan the translocation of the Winged Peppercress will be undertaken.

## 6 METEOROLOGICAL MONITORING

Meteorological monitoring is undertaken south of the Project Area as shown in EA Figure 4.14. A summary of weather data for the reporting period is shown in Table 5 below.

**Table 5 - 2015 Summary Weather Data**

Month	Rain (mm)	Minimum Wind Speed (m/s)	Average Wind Speed (m/s)	Maximum Wind Speed (m/s)	Average Wind Direction (degrees)
Jan	107.8	0	2.1	13.6	115.5
Feb	12.4	0	2.7	10.2	95.6
Mar	31.4	0	1.7	11.8	177.1
Apr	132.2	0	1.6	12.7	209.3
May	53.0	0	1.6	8.0	196.1
Jun	52.0	0	1.2	6.4	147.2
Jul	19.2	0	1.6	9.6	216.4
Aug	49.8	0	1.0	10.1	245.9
Sep	17.8	0	1.7	9.2	172.2
Oct	20.0	0	1.6	10.7	174.2
Nov	76.0	0	2.0	11.4	214.9
Dec	1.7	0	2.3	10.4	163.7

## 7 WATER MANAGEMENT

### 7.1.1 Surface Water Management

No surface water monitoring was undertaken during the reporting period, as construction of the Vickery Coal Project is yet to commence.

### 7.1.2 Discharges

There were no wet weather discharges during the reporting period.

### 7.1.3 Water Take

During the reporting period no water was used on site.

## 7.2 Groundwater Management

### 7.2.1 Environmental Performance/Management

No groundwater monitoring for compliance purposes has been undertaken during the reporting period, as construction of the Vickery Coal Project is yet to commence.

## 7.3 Rehabilitation Performance During the Reporting Period

### 7.3.1 Status of Mining and Rehabilitation

No disturbance has yet been undertaken for the Vickery Coal Project, and as such there has been no requirement for any rehabilitation.

**Table 7 - Rehabilitation Status**

Mine Area Type <sup>1</sup>	Previous Reporting Period (Actual)	This Reporting Period (Actual)	Next Reporting Period (Forecast)
	N/A	2015(ha)	2016 (ha)
A. Total Mine Footprint	0	0	0
B. Total Active Disturbance	0	0	0
C. Land Being Prepared for Rehabilitation	0	0	0
D. Land Under Active Rehabilitation	0	0	0
E. Completed Rehabilitation	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Refer Annual Review Guideline (p.11) for description of mine area types.



### **7.3.2 Post Rehabilitation Land Uses**

Two final rehabilitation land uses are to be established at Vickery, being land suitable for grazing (780 ha), and native forest/woodland (1,360 ha).

### **7.3.3 Renovation or Removal of Buildings**

No renovation or removal of buildings occurred during the reporting period.

### **7.3.4 Other Rehabilitation Undertaken**

No additional rehabilitation of explorations areas, infrastructure, shafts, adits, dams, fence lines or bunds occurred during the reporting period.

### **7.3.5 Departmental Sign-off of Rehabilitated Areas**

Departmental sign-off has not been requested for any rehabilitated areas.

### **7.3.6 Variations in Activities against MOP/RMP**

Not applicable.

### **7.3.7 Trials, Research Projects and Initiatives**

No rehabilitation trials, research projects or other initiatives were undertaken during the reporting period.

### **7.3.8 Key Issues to Achieving Successful Rehabilitation**

No specific issues in achieving rehabilitation success have been determined to date.

## **7.4 Actions for Next Reporting Period**

No specific rehabilitation actions are proposed for the next reporting period.

## **8 COMMUNITY**

No complaints were received during the 2015 reporting period, compared to 0 complaints in 2014, 0 complaints in 2013 and 0 complaints in 2012.

Community contributions are managed in accordance the Whitehaven Coal Donations and Sponsorship Policy.

## **9 INDEPENDENT AUDIT**

No independent audit was undertaken of Vickery Coal Project during the reporting period. The first scheduled independent audit will take place within 2 years from the commencement of construction.

## **10 INCIDENTS AND NON-COMPLIANCES DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD**

### **10.1 Reportable Incidents**

No environmental incidents occurred at Vickery Coal Project during the reporting period.

### **10.2 Non-compliances**

Non-compliance with Schedule 5, Condition 6 of SSD-5000 (requirement for Community Consultative Committee (CCC) to be operating by the end of December 2014) has been addressed by establishing the required CCC.

### **10.3 Regulatory Actions**

One formal warning letter was received during the reporting period, from the Department of Planning and Environment. This letter referred to a breach in relation to Schedule 5, Condition 6 of SSD-5000, requiring a CCC to be operating by the end of December 2014.

## **11                    ACTIVITIES TO BE COMPLETED IN THE NEXT REPORTING PERIOD**

The following measures will be continued, or implemented, in the next reporting period to improve the environmental or community performance of the operation:-

- Compliance with all relevant conditions of the lease, licences and consent,
- Review, and if necessary revision, of site environmental management plans,
- Continued undertaking of CCC meetings,
- Continued environmental monitoring and reporting, as required,