

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the Vickery Project Community Consultative committee

Meeting held: 1st March 2017 – 11.30am-1.00pm

Venue: Boggabri Golf Club

Present:

Roberta Ryan (RR)	Independent Chair
Sandra Spate (SS)	Minute taker
Colleen Fuller (CF)	Gunnedah Shire Council (GSC)
Ron Campbell (RC)	Narrabri Shire Council
Brian Cole (BC)	Executive General Manager, Project Delivery, WHC
Keith Blanch (KB)	Community Representative
Ron Fuller (RF)	Community Representative
Grant McIlveen (GM)	Community Representative
Barry Thomson (BT)	Community Representative
Tom MacKillop (TMac)	Resource Strategies

Apologies:

Lloyd Finlay (LF)	Narrabri Shire Council (NSC)
Jill Johnson	Group Manager, Environment, WHC
Tim Muldoon	Group Manager, Community Relations and Property, WHC

Item	Description	Action/ Responsibility
1	Present, introductions and apologies	
1.1	RR welcomed attendees. Apologies are listed as above.	
2	Declaration of pecuniary or other interests	
2.1	RR and SS as are paid by Whitehaven to facilitate meetings and take minutes.	
2.2	RR outlined Department of Planning changes to guidelines introduced in 2016, including requirements for members to provide details of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests and a requirement that CCC members include contact details on Whitehaven website. Minutes also go onto the website for the broader community to see. RR outlined the procedure for minutes which are a record of the conversation at meetings.	
2.2	GM suggested a contradiction between discussion at the last meeting that members not identify what others said and this being in the public domain. RR clarified that people can talk about what is said here but need to respect other people's privacy to allow open discussion to take place. As a rule people will want to have their comments attributed to show the community their input. However, members can ask for their comments to be off the record or not attributed.	
2.3	GM asked whether Maules Creek CCC records their meetings on audio recordings. BC replied this isn't the case.	
3	Previous minutes and matters arising	
4.1	Acceptance of minutes from the November 2016 meeting was moved by CF and seconded by RF. The minutes were accepted.	
4.2	Item 4.3 from November 2017. Bus tour of the site to be organised when practical. This has been arranged for today. The action is closed.	

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4.3	Item 7.6 from November 2017. BC to provide flood photos and maps for the two western rail options at the next meeting. 1998 aerial flood photos were emailed to GM. The action is closed.	
4.4	An issue was raised at the previous meeting around Civeo not buying from local businesses. BC reported he has since spoken to the manager of the camp who responded that they need to buy from a supplier with quality certification for the numbers catered for. BC was told Civeo buys meat locally for staff functions but there is challenge for smaller suppliers in getting certified. The contract with the current supplier runs out later this year and BC will continue to pursue the issue. RF disputed the veracity of the claim and had concerns of Civeo questioning local quality. CF noted all businesses selling food have to be registered under the Health Food Act, as is Meals on Wheels. RC suggested difficulties may be round the need to provide quality assurances in writing. BC will continue to follow the issue up.	
5	Canyon Environmental Monitoring Update	
5.1	BC noted current approval for Vickery requires reporting to the CCC on Canyon monitoring results. The mine is closed but ongoing monitoring continues. Dust monitoring results indicate the annual average doesn't exceed limits at any location. There have been no wet weather discharges. There is an indication of an upward trend in PH readings at the monitoring point and the environmental team is investigating. Groundwater monitoring in August 2016 shows consistent readings but there is a slight increase in conductivity at the monitoring point. An environmental audit undertaken by ERM in early 2016 is on the website. An action table was compiled to address findings. No complaints have been received since the last meeting.	
6.0	Vickery Environmental Monitory Update	
6.1	BC noted there is no requirement for environmental monitoring till operations commence but monitoring is being undertaken to collect baseline data which is being used in the EIS Assessment. RC asked what equipment is used for monitoring. TMac replied it is a weather station with a 10m mast recording wind and temperature, groundwater monitors and an air quality monitoring station.	
7.0	Vickery Extension Project – EIS Update	
7.1	BC delivered a presentation (attached to the minutes and tabled at the meeting). In late 2015 Whitehaven reported it would seek approval for a bigger mine at Vickery that has current approval for 4.5 million tonnes. Whitehaven now has access to a larger deposit in the southern area previously owned by Coalworks. The stripping ratio of the deposit lends itself to operating the mine at a higher run rate. Last year work towards an Environmental Impact Statement was initiated. At meetings in April/ May last year the concept was presented for a rail spur to transport coal off site. It was envisaged that this sized mine could not use trucks to transport coal to the Gunnedah CHPP given increasing development in Gunnedah. Coal would be trucked from Tarrawonga and Rocglen (if still operating) to the plant at Vickery. Assessments have been undertaken around noise, air quality, groundwater, surface water, biodiversity and Aboriginal and cultural heritage. Early stage assessments were based on the rail spur going north to join the mainline but potential issues around capacity of the rail spur and the mainline and the extra distance and cost in transporting coal to	

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	<p>Newcastle via Boggabri has resulted in the recent focus on a rail spur traversing south west across the floodplain to the mainline.</p> <p>Three options were presented to the last meeting: the northern option, western option and south western option.</p> <p>The option currently being considered crosses the highway to link with the mainline just north of Emerald Hill. It crosses Broadwater and the Milchengowrie property.</p> <p>Noise and air quality studies for the mine and rail spur indicate negligible noise or air quality impacts on private properties other than Mirrabinda which is already in the mine acquisition zone. Consultations are underway with the owners.</p> <p>Groundwater effects will be minimal due to favourable geological conditions.</p> <p>Surface water can be managed and there will be offsets for any bio diversity impacts.</p> <p>Given the location has previously been mined and heavily farmed the location is generally conducive for mining.</p> <p>The proposed rail spur also has the advantage of not running additional rail traffic through Boggabri.</p> <p>Maps of the extension into Vickery south and Blue Vale were presented along with the maps for the proposed rail spur.</p> <p>Additional noise modelling shows more specific impacts related to different stages of mining. Consultants have been engaged to peer review all studies. Wilkinson Murray undertook noise studies.</p> <p>The EIS is being finalised and Whitehaven is working to finish this during March. A decision will be made on when to submit this to the Department of Planning. After Planning reviews the EIS it will go to other government agencies. Planning has indicated that it intends to run a public meeting during the exhibition phase.</p> <p>Noise blasting and air quality models have been developed.</p> <p>Apart from Mirrabinda, no additional residences are identified as in the noise affected zone.</p> <p>A new Flood Plain Management Plan is being developed by OEH and the flood analysis is consistent with the draft management plan.</p> <p>Rail noise modelling follows EPA guidelines and shows levels of noise at receptors within permissible limits for a network rail line (which is lower than for a main line).</p>	
7.2	<p>GM asked whether the studies were for the current approval or the extension. BC confirmed these are for the extension.</p>	
7.3	<p>GM sought confirmation that studies show he and his neighbours won't be affected by noise or the rail line.</p> <p>BC replied that noise level contours show impacts within negligible levels.</p>	
7.4	<p>KB asked whether less would be affected by the third rail spur option. He noted this option still crosses the river.</p> <p>BC replied less would be affected in terms of landholdings.</p> <p>GM sought confirmation that only Milchengowrie and Whitehaven Vickery land would be affected.</p> <p>BC confirmed that the proposed spur only crosses these properties.</p>	
7.5	<p>RC thought the third option would be good news for those who had voiced issues with the rail option through Boggabri.</p> <p>KB said the northern spur would have affected only two families.</p> <p>BC replied there were more people near the northern spur as well as people in Boggabri affected by this option. Whitehaven had also heard strong sentiments expressed regarding the northern option.</p>	
7.6	<p>GM named three other landholders who are only hundreds of metres away. He said he and his neighbours are worried about flooding as 1998</p>	

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	<p>photos show the floodplain wherever the land is flat. There are already irrigation banks diverting water onto other people's properties.</p> <p>RC noted people in Boggabri would have issues with the northern option.</p> <p>GM replied that the existing line has been there for 130 or 140 years whereas this is a brand new line. People moved out of town for a quieter life.</p>	
7.7	<p>KB asked whether overland conveyor belts are a viable option.</p> <p>RF asked whether conveyor belts had been costed. With support columns six feet apart this would have the least footprint.</p> <p>BC replied a means of loading trains would have to be built. A rail loop connected to the mainline would need to be located somewhere and there was no land available</p>	
7.8	<p>GM asked what ARTC plans are.</p> <p>BC that the latest ARTC plans indicate that it intends to build three new rail loops for parking trains depending on rail traffic.</p>	
7.9	<p>BT asked what height the railway lines would be from the ground.</p> <p>BC replied all of it would be elevated above flood level and much of it would contain openings to enable flood flows to be passed without buildup. The section between the Namoi and the main rail line is defined as a floodplain and heavily regulated. Any structure across this has to meet specific conditions for approval.</p> <p>Whitehaven as done flood modelling and the concept design is consistent with the Floodplain Management Plan.</p>	
7.10	<p>RC asked what the distance of the rail spur would be.</p> <p>BC replied it would be approximately 20kms.</p> <p>GM asked why then it heads west and then south.</p> <p>BC replied this is the preferred location due to their infrastructure on the property.</p> <p>GM asked whether Whitehaven wouldn't be buying that farm.</p> <p>BC said they weren't but were in discussions about an arrangement with owners.</p>	
7.11	<p>KB asked why coal couldn't be transported down to Blue Vale Road with trucks.</p> <p>RF asked how much building the railway line over the river and floodplain would cost compared to using trucks down Blue Vale Road.</p> <p>BC replied road transport of coal for the extension project would be a significant and costly exercise which would be expected to incur community issues. For those reasons Whitehaven is proposing a railing option.</p> <p>KB said this would cost 60 or 70 drivers' jobs.</p> <p>BC noted there would be 500 jobs on the mine. Many truck drivers could have the opportunity to step over into the mining industry.</p>	
7.12	<p>GM asked where Vickery south would be in final stages in relation to Kurembede House.</p> <p>BC replied about 2.5kms (Note: as scaled off drawings it is approximately 1.6km to the edge of the mine). It won't take in Kurembede House.</p>	
7.13	<p>GM asked whether there would be another CCC meeting prior to lodgement of the EIS.</p> <p>BC expects this meeting to be the pre lodgement meeting.</p> <p>RC asked what the likely timing would be for the EIS to be processed by Department of Planning.</p> <p>BC said this depends on a number of factors but it may be about 12 months.</p>	
7.14	<p>GM asked if the he could get documentation on Maules Creek mine in order to compare impacts as it is a similar sized mine to Vickery. He noted people at the southern end of Vickery come as close as those at</p>	

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	Mirrabinda by the final stages. He disputes Whitehaven's claim that these won't be affected. He suggested it was all very well to say Vickery has been mined before but this 10 million tonnes compared to 400,000. BC replied the Maules Creek affected zone is on the Whitehaven website. The EPA recently undertook a noise audit on Maules Creek which confirmed the veracity of noise modelling.	
7.15	GM asked whether Whitehaven has to go through the whole process again if Planning isn't happy with the rail aspect of the EIS but accepts the rest. BC replied it depends what changes Planning asks for. RC noted after Planning the EIS is reviewed by the other government agencies. He noted delays with Santos due to a government department asking for MSDS sheets on all chemicals through the life of the project. BC said Whitehaven is talking to all the government agencies to try and facilitate the approval process.	
7.16	RC asked how much of the rail line will be on stilts. It will have to be above flood levels. Will it be stilts rather than mounds with pipes? BC noted that all will be elevated above flood level. Where there are openings model results show no build-up of water on upstream properties but OEH will review this. RC and CF reported Narrabri and Gunnedah Councils have just completed flood studies. RF asked if there was a reason for 10m high elevations on the Maules Creek rail spur. BC replied the line has to get over the highway but would not be as high as the seven or eight metres for Maules Creek.	
7.17	GM asked why the Department of Planning is proposing to hold a public meeting for this EIS and not for the previous approved mine. BC said Department of Planning approach has changed. The Chair asked GM his reasons for asking for another CCC meeting prior to lodgement. GM replied this is to give residents and neighbours a chance to think about Whitehaven's preferred option for the rail line now there is a firmer view on this. TMac noted there would be a newsletter out before lodgement. BC said the next phase is to get the documentation out there and Planning will put this on exhibition for people to review. RR asked whether the Planning Assessment Committee (PAC) will be the consent authority. GM noted if 25 submissions are received it goes to PAC.	
7.18	BT asked whether the proposed rail route is shorter or longer than the previous proposal. BC replied it is a little longer. It could potentially have been more direct but would impact on infrastructure. Given constraints it is the best option. RF asked whether this is the option contained in the EIS. BC confirmed that it was intended to be.	
8	Site Tour	
8.1	The tour included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Canyon mine waste rock emplacement at 10 year rehabilitation • The rail loop • The coal wash facility site 	
8.2	GM asked whether Whitehaven will still run trucks. TMac replied they may truck some coal to Gunnedah before the rail spur is complete, depending on timing.	
8.3	GM asked whether 13 million tonnes would be washed here. TMac confirmed this is the case.	

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8.4	<p>GM asked for confirmation that neighbouring properties (named at the meeting) wouldn't be affected.</p> <p>TMac confirmed that any affected properties are in the acquisition zone and have been bought out or in the Mirrabinda case the subject of ongoing discussions.</p> <p>CF noted other sources of dust exist.</p> <p>TMac noted that high dust levels from Mirrabinda have been recorded so this has been excluded from the data set.</p>	
8.5	<p>KB noted embankments in the Shire have changed just since previous floods.</p>	
8.6	<p>CF thought the rehabilitation of previous mining here has been done well.</p> <p>GM asked how much higher than the existing hill to the south east of the viewing point would the western placement be. He suggested he and neighbours would no longer be able to see Kelvin Hills.</p> <p>TMac said it would rise in the order of 100 metres above the flats. He noted regulators no longer accept a flat top landscape after rehabilitation. Surface relief has to be demonstrated.</p>	
8.7	<p>GM disputed the noise contours shown on the contour map. He doesn't see how contours can curve to just miss residences.</p> <p>BC replied the noise contours were done by an outside consultant and peer reviewed. GM claimed that they miss residences by 150 metres. People won't be affected by the open cut at Vickery but some will by Blue Vale.</p> <p>KB noted guidelines have changed since the last mining operation.</p>	
8.8	<p>BC said that if Whitehaven proposes infrastructure it would comply with regulations. There is no sense proposing something that will cause flooding on neighbouring property. It would not be approved.</p> <p>GM suggested the old Vickery bridge complied with the regulations of the time but caused damage later on.</p> <p>BT noted irrigation channels have changed water flows.</p>	
9	<p>Date and agenda for next meeting</p> <p>TBC. Potentially late May.</p> <p>Council representatives asked that meetings not be held on the first or third Tuesdays or Wednesdays.</p>	
<p>These minutes have been endorsed by the meeting Chair</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p>		

Whitehaven Coal Limited

VICKERY EXTENSION PROJECT – CCC MEETING
1 MARCH, 2017



WHITEHAVEN COAL

Agenda



Topic
Vickery Extension Project
Vickery Extension Project - Update
Flooding
Noise, Air Quality and Blasting

Vickery Extension Project

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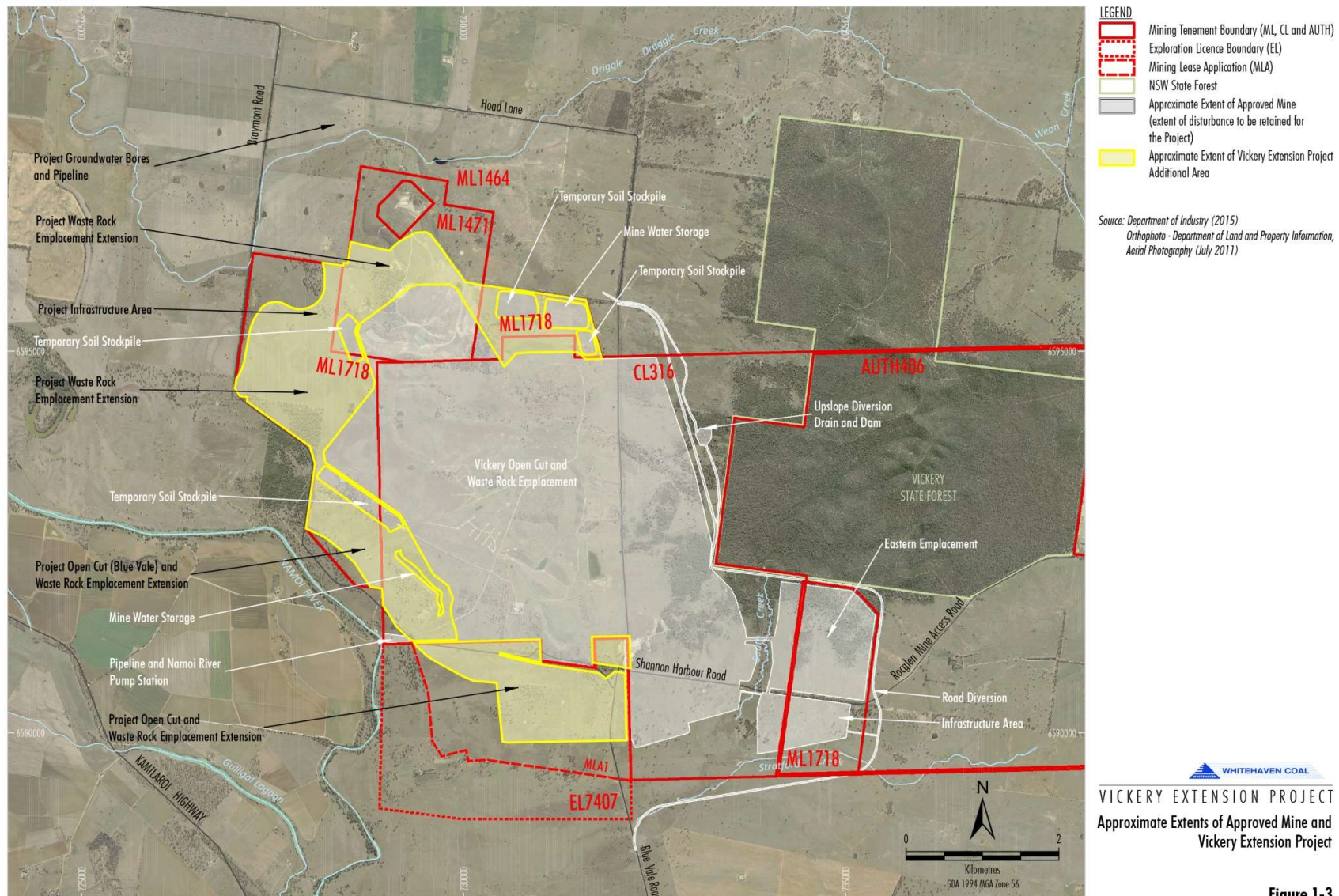
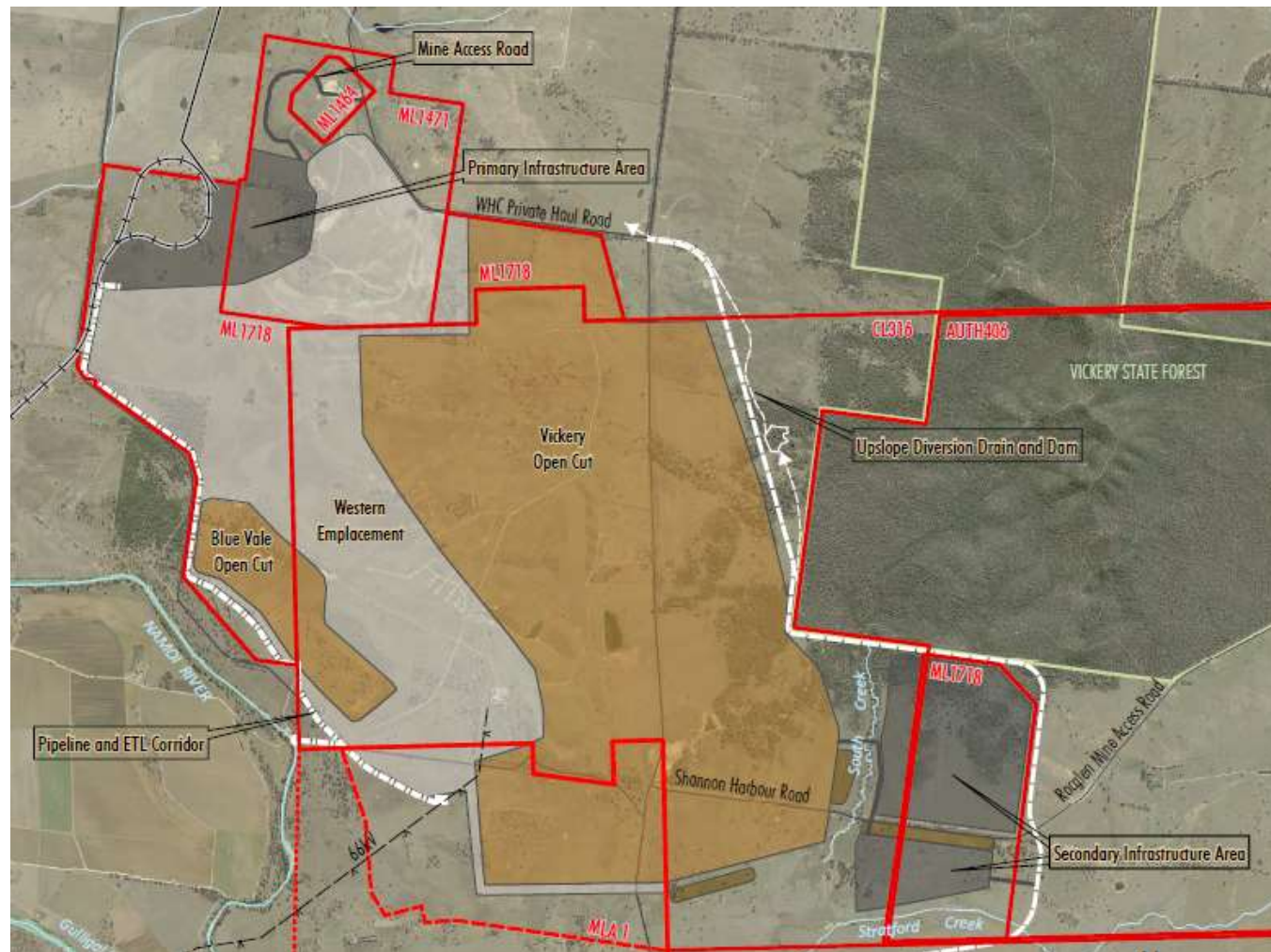


Figure 1-3

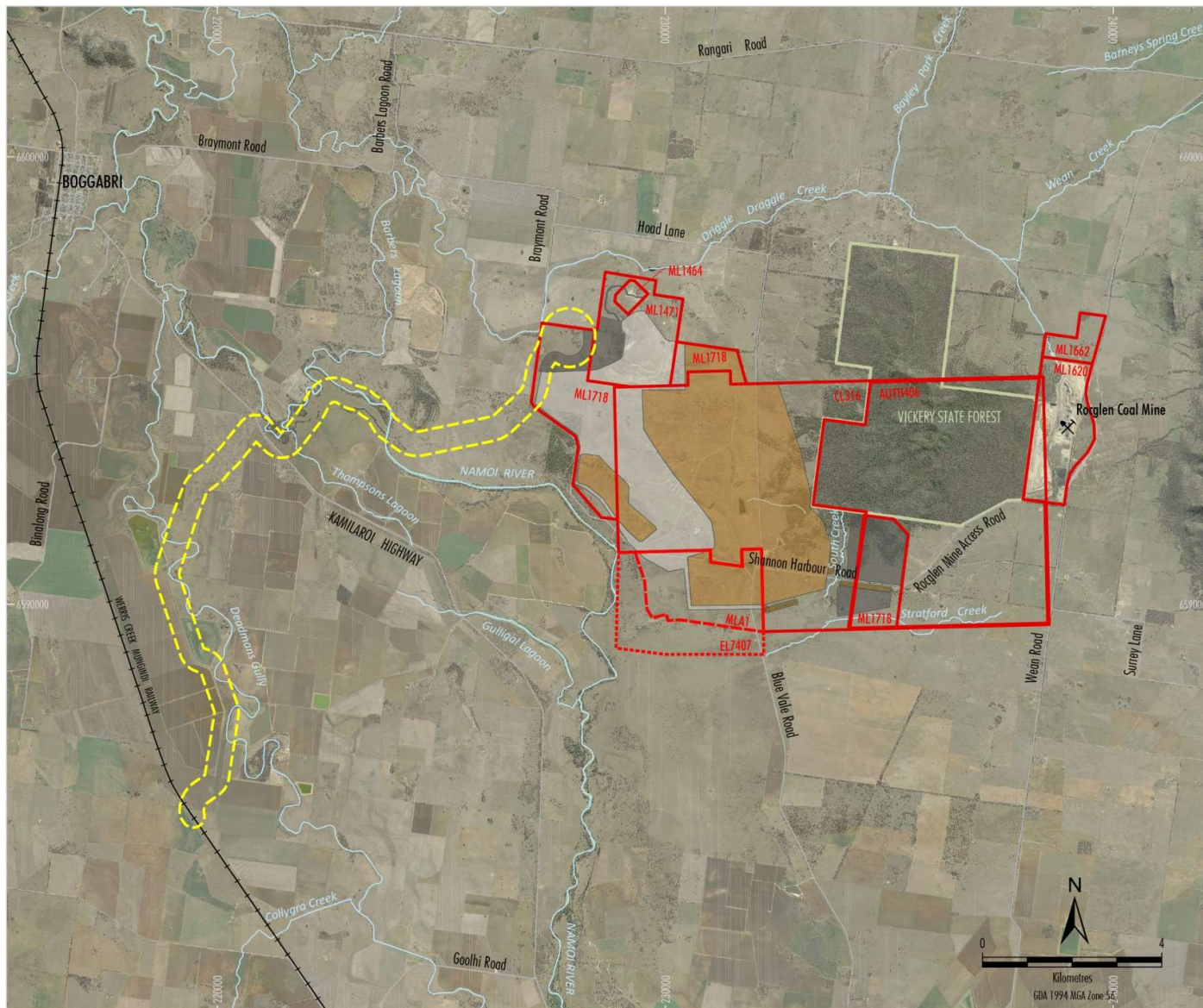
Vickery Extension Project – Update

- Assessment reports being progressed
- Additional noise modelling scenarios
- Peer reviews
- Internal reviews
- Consultations with agencies e.g., EPA, DPI, OEH, DP&E
- Further discussions regarding rail alignments.
- Additional assessments on rail spur



Vickery Extension Project – Update

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- LEGEND**
- Mining Tenement Boundary (ML, CL and AUTH)
 - Exploration Licence Boundary (EL)
 - Mining Lease Application (MLA)
 - State Forest
 - Railway
- Project Components**
- Indicative Extent of Open Cut
 - Indicative Extent of Out of Pit Waste Rock Emplacement
 - Indicative Extent of Infrastructure Area
 - Indicative Extent of Topsoil Stockpile
 - Rail Spur Investigation Corridor

Source: Orthophoto - Department of Land and Property Information, Aerial Photography (July 2011); Department of Industry (2015)

VICKERY EXTENSION PROJECT
 Rail Spur Investigation Corridor

Figure 1

Vickery Extension Project – Year 2

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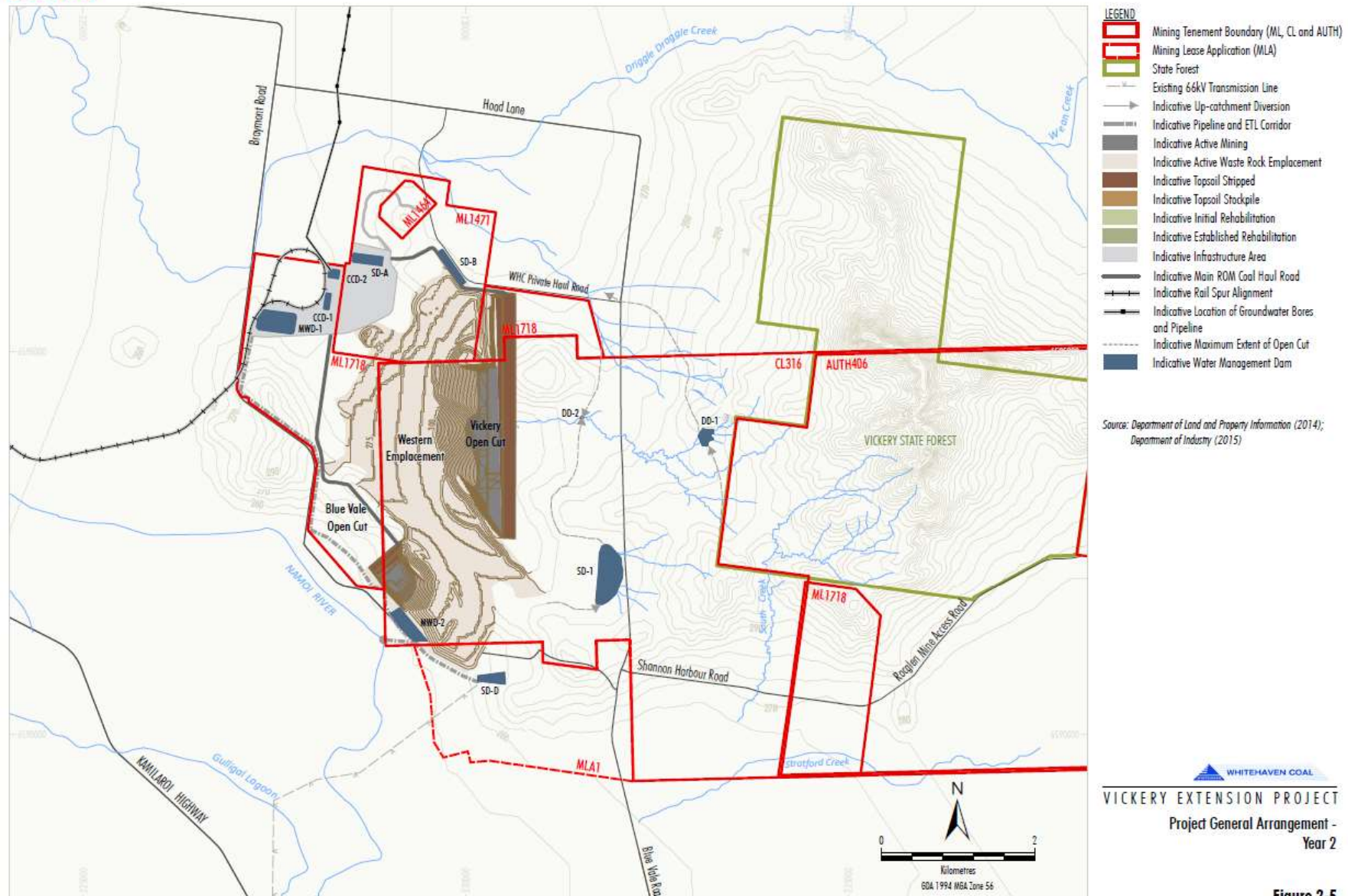


Figure 2-5

Vickery Extension Project – Year 3

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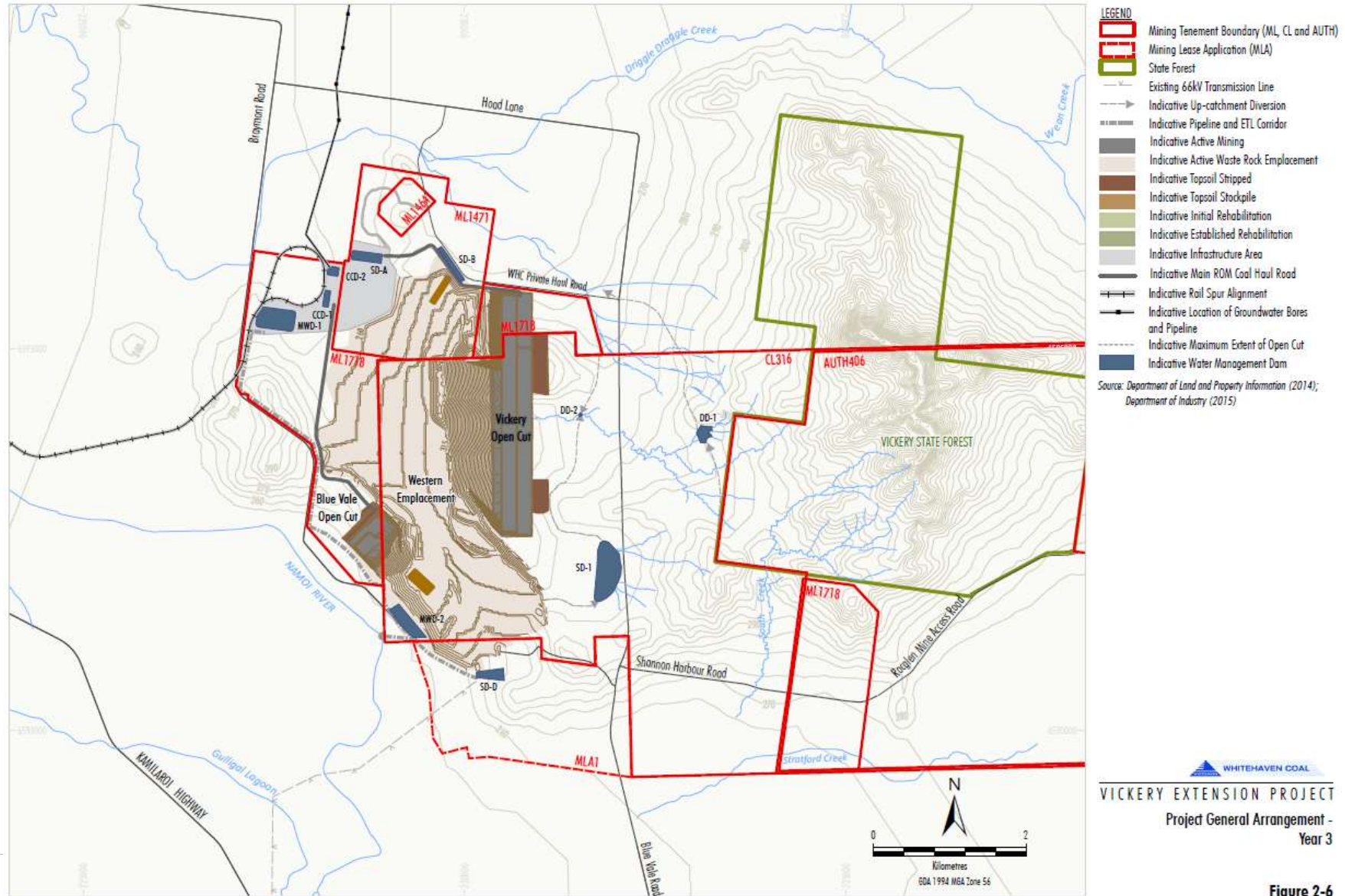


Figure 2-6

Vickery Extension Project – Year 9

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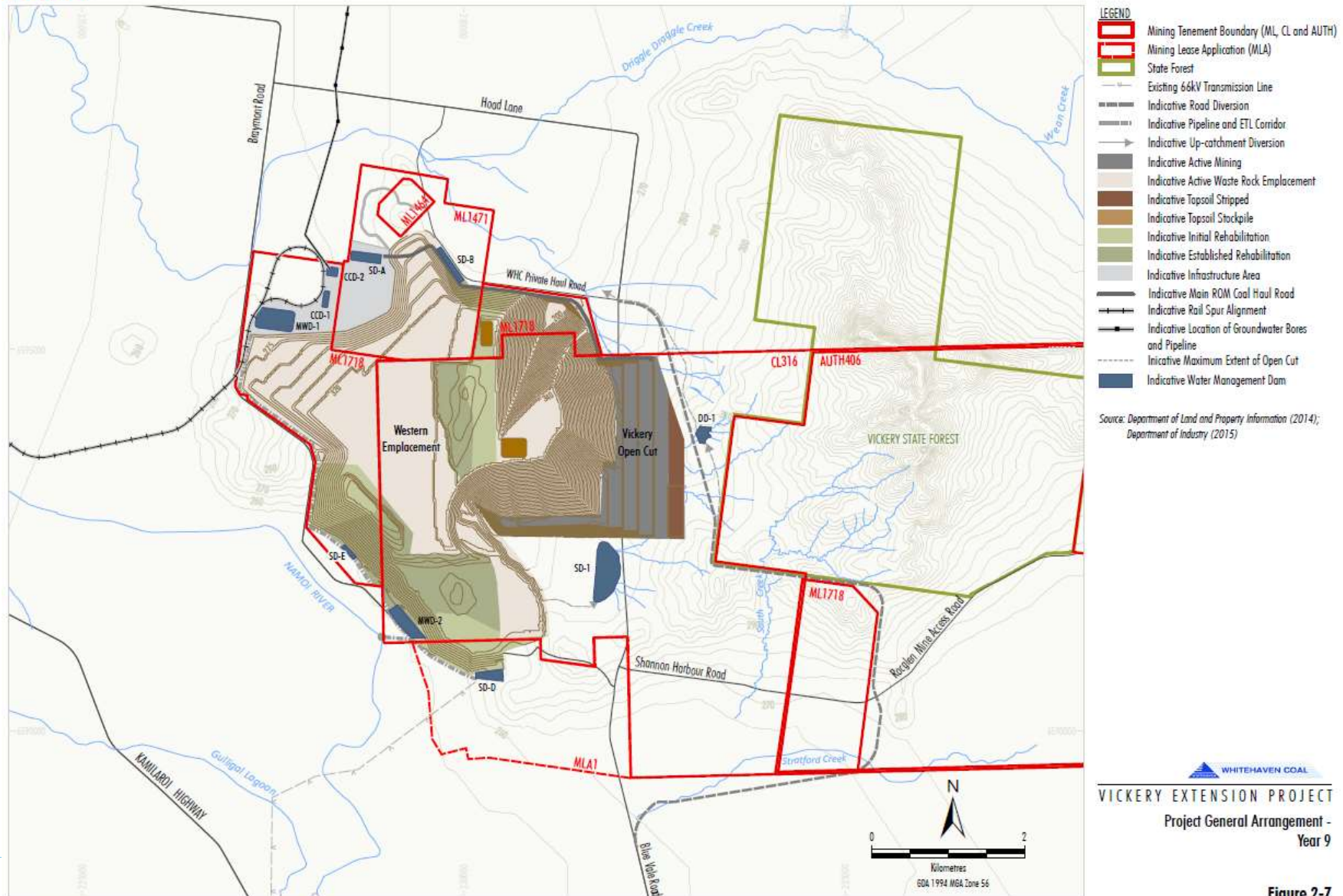


Figure 2-7

Vickery Extension Project – Year 15

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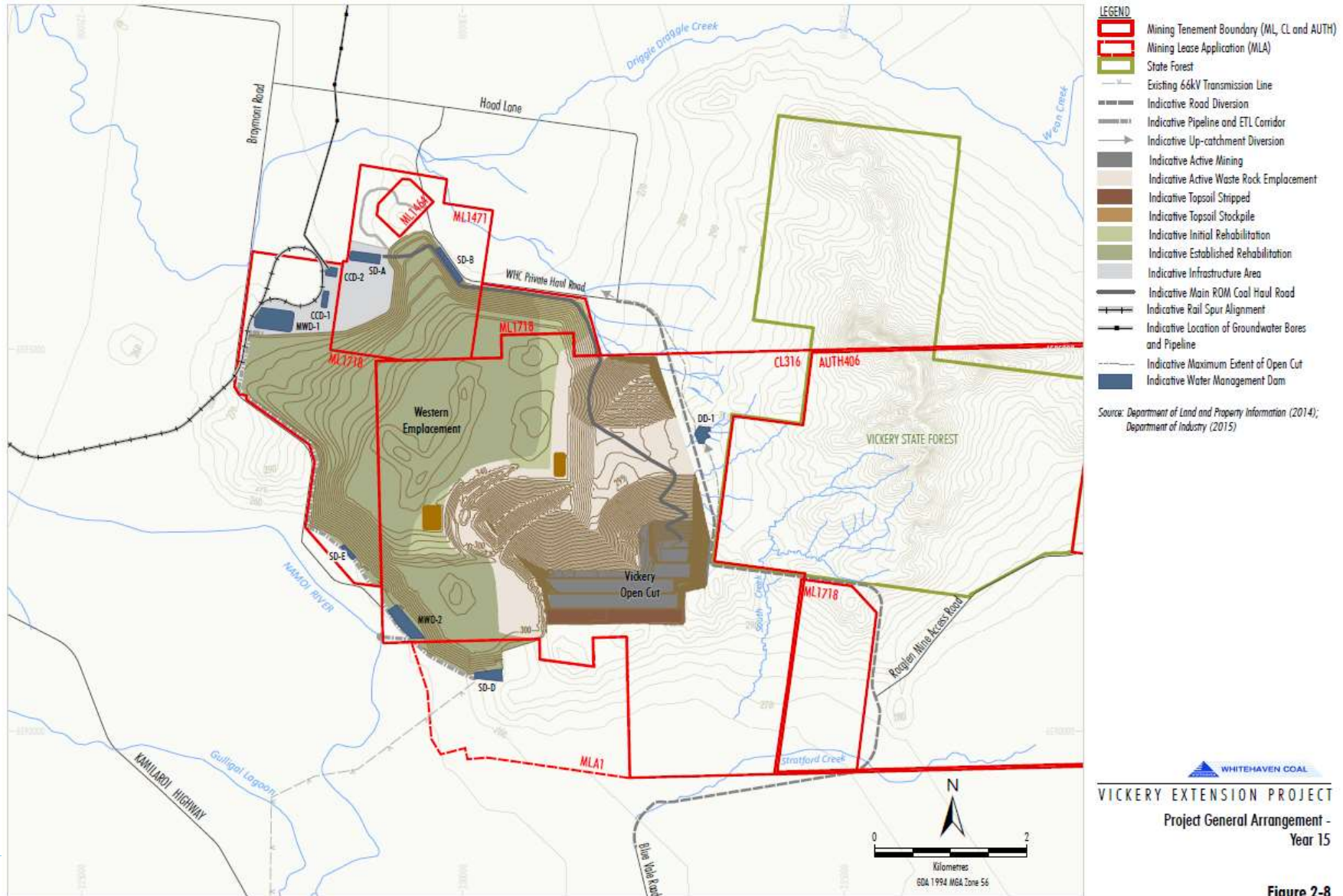


Figure 2-8

Vickery Extension Project Update

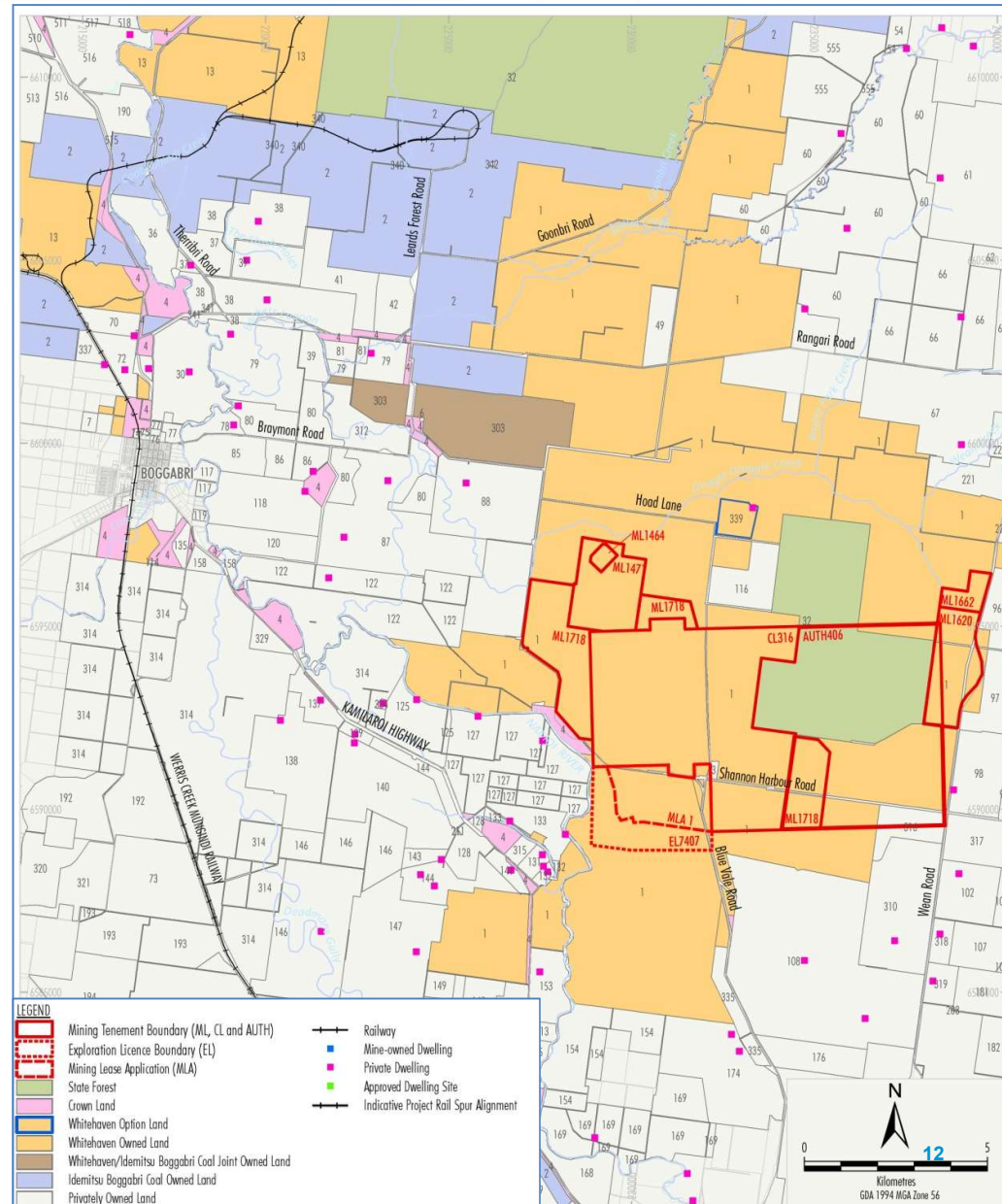


- EIS currently being prepared.
- Anticipated EIS lodgement in H1 2017.

Specialist Assessments	
Groundwater Assessment	Road Transport Assessment
Surface Water Assessment	Socio-economic Assessment
Flooding Assessment	Historic Heritage Assessment
Noise and Blasting Assessment	Visual Assessment
Air Quality and GHG Assessment	Geochemistry Assessment
Biodiversity Assessment	Environmental Risk Assessment
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment	Preliminary Hazard Analysis
Agricultural Impact Statement	Land Contamination Assessment

Noise, Blasting and Air Quality

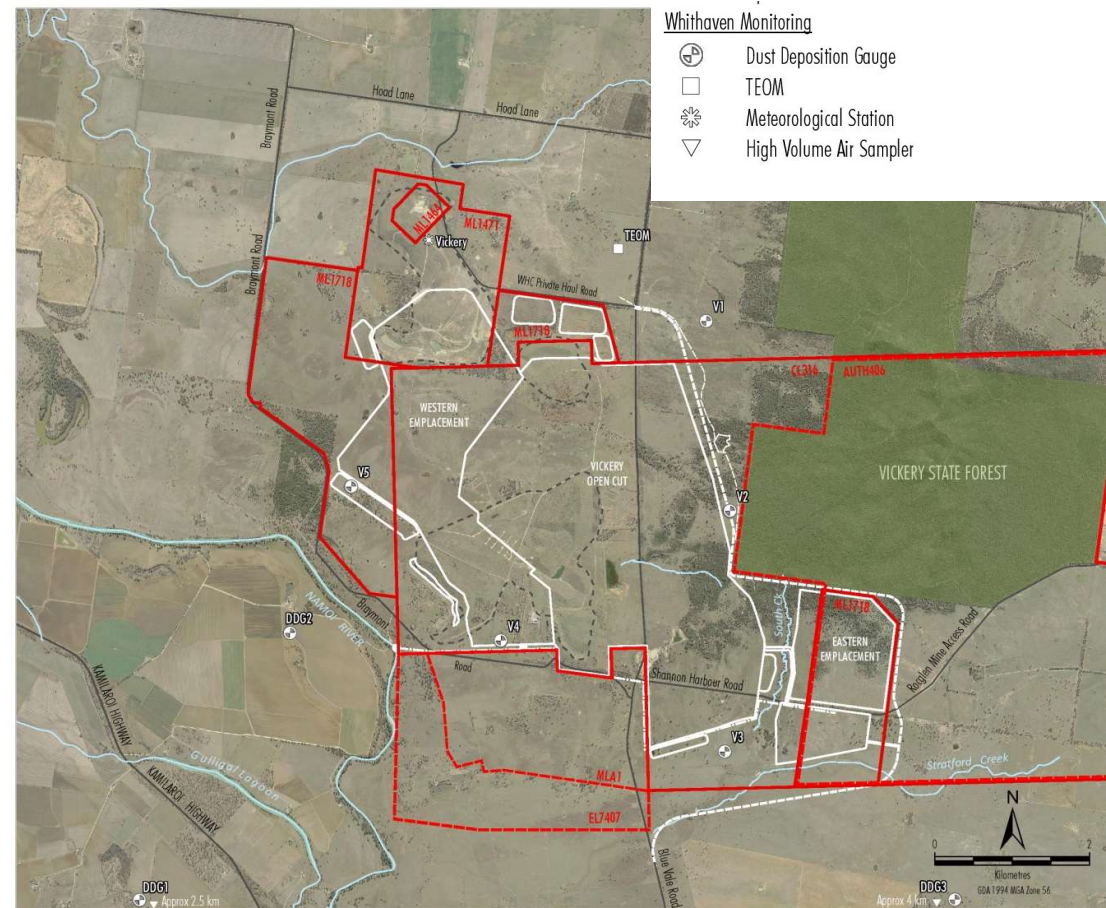
- Air quality and noise models developed based on the proposed operations, surrounding topography and existing meteorology.
- Blasting calculations based on blast size and distance to receivers.
- No additional residences in the noise acquisition zone.
- Additional modelling conducted to refine predicted impacts.
- No exceedance of dust impact assessment criteria predicted due to Project-only dust emissions.



Noise, Blasting and Air Quality

- Mitigation measures:
 - Meteorological conditions identified to divert Blue Vale operations to the Vickery open cut during adverse conditions.
 - Noise attenuated fleet and selective use of quieter equipment in exposed locations.
 - Dust controls (e.g. haul road watering).
 - Real time noise and air quality monitoring and meteorological forecasting system to manage noise and dust emissions.
 - Vibration monitoring.

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Flooding – Floodplain Management Plan

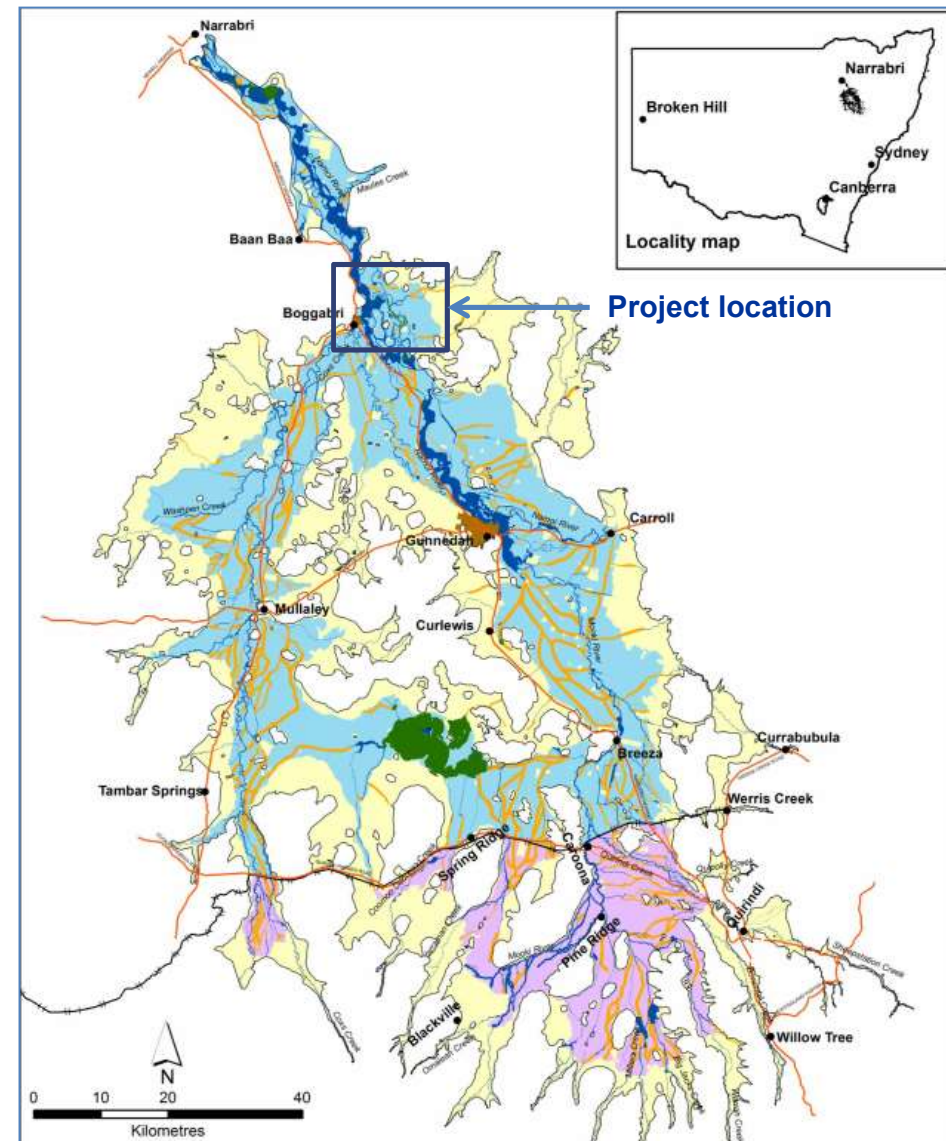


Department of
Primary Industries
Water

Draft Floodplain Management Plan for the Upper Namoi Valley Floodplain 2016:

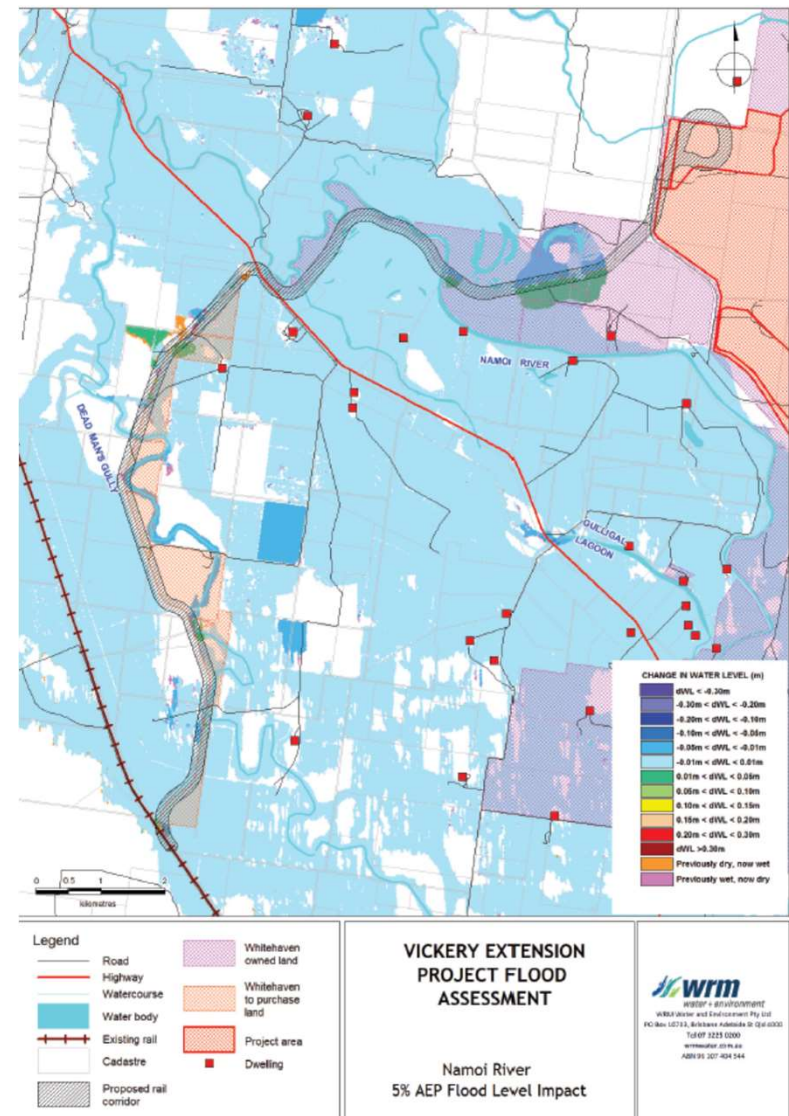
Management Zones

- Carroll to Boggabri Floodplain Management Plan currently in force.
- Draft *Floodplain Management Plan for the Upper Namoi Floodplain* under development:
 - Prescribes criteria for development within floodplain for various management zones.
 - Mine site and rail design to be in consideration of the Floodplain Management criteria.



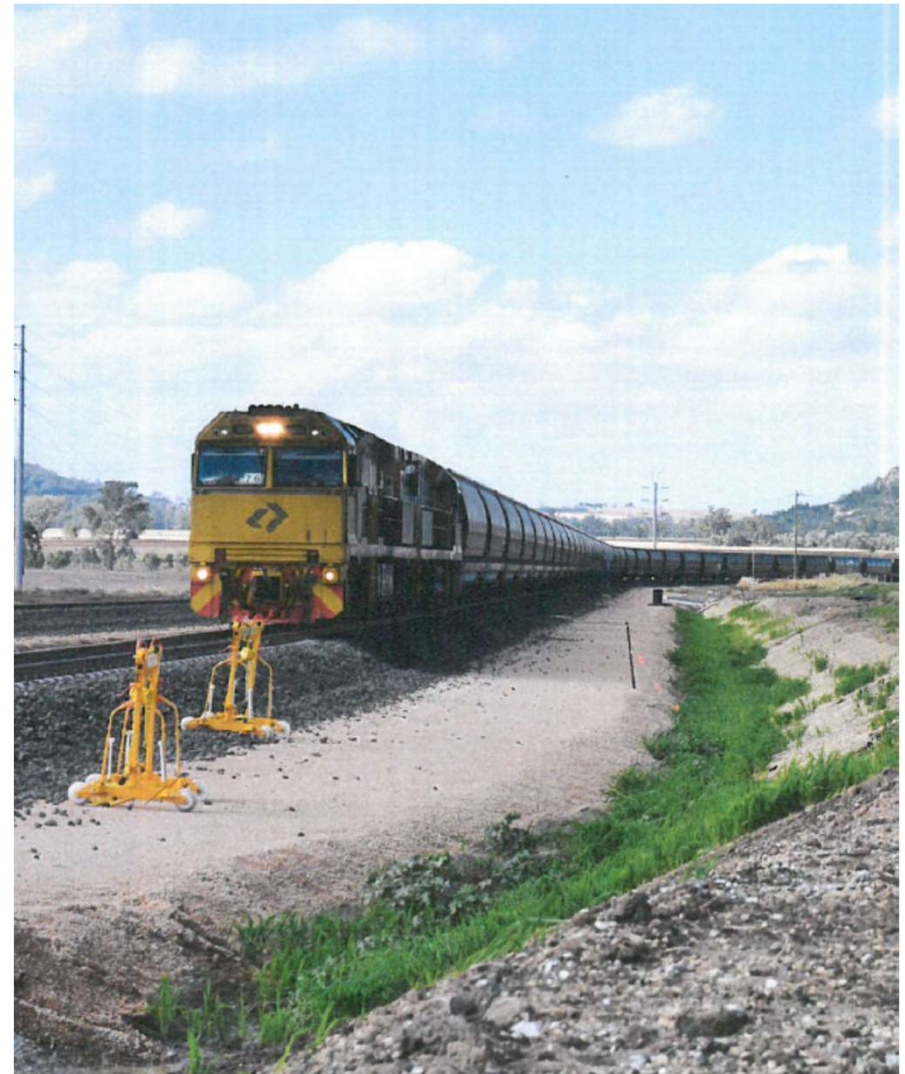
Flooding – Project Rail Spur

- Flood modelling conducted on western spur.
- Considered 20 year return period in accordance with the Flood Plain Management Plan.
- Conceptual design devised to provide for openings to allow flood flows to pass by rail spur.
- Negligible change in flow parameters on adjacent private properties.
- Modelling to be reviewed by OEH.



Noise Impacts – Project Rail Spur

- Rail noise impacts modelled utilising sophisticated noise model.
- Results compared with guidelines in the NSW EPA Rail Infrastructure Noise Guidelines.
- Forecast noise levels at nearby residences are well below trigger levels for network rail lines.
- Non network rail lines such as the Vickery rail spur have much lower trigger levels and forecast noise levels are below these.
- Consultations with local landholders underway.



Thankyou for your attendance