

Narrabri Mine Exploration Licence Applications

The Narrabri Mine is an existing underground coal mine located 17km south east of Narrabri. It has been operating since 2012 and employs around 500 people, most of whom live in the region.

The Mine has made two exploration licence applications (ELAs), ELA 6442 and ELA 6443, under the NSW Government's Operational Allocation framework. The framework allows for existing tenement holders to apply for an area of up to 33% of their existing tenement size for the purposes of developing a better mine design, recovering coal resources that would otherwise be likely to be sterilized, or extending the life of a mine.

The applications cover a combined area of around 3721 hectares south of the town of Narrabri:

- ELA6442: 1,746Ha located about 23 kilometres south of Narrabri
- ELA6443: 1,975Ha located about 12 kilometres south of Narrabri.

The Department of Regional NSW is assessing the applications in accordance with relevant Government guidelines.

Find out more about the existing mine at whitehavencoal.com.au/narrabri

Gorman North

The [Strategic Statement on Coal Exploration and Mining in NSW](#) identifies areas where potential future coal exploration could take place. The area to the North West of the existing Narrabri Mine known as Gorman North is included as an area for potential exploration.

Gorman North is covered by a government authority AUTH216, which overlaps with areas covered by the Narrabri Mine's exploration licence applications.

As of March 2022, the process to release the area for exploration has not formally commenced.

Find out about the Strategic Release process at the [Regional NSW website](#).

Obtaining a coal exploration licence in NSW

The *Mining Act 1992* places controls on the release of areas in NSW for coal exploration. Coal prospecting titles can only be allocated to industry through one of three release pathways:

- [Operational Allocation](#) – an existing coal titleholder applies to access coal resources adjacent to, above or beneath their existing title for a designated operational allocation purpose, subject to meeting certain size requirements. An application may be refused under section 13C(3)(b) of the *Mining Act 1992* if there is sufficient market interest to justify a competitive selection process. Note: the process for applying for an exploration licence for operational allocation purposes is the subject of ongoing reform.
- [The Strategic Release Framework](#) – the NSW Government identifies an area for potential release and carries out a Resource Assessment and Preliminary Regional Issues Assessment to determine if an area should be released for competitive selection (public tender) under Schedule 1A of the *Mining Act 1992*. The Strategic Release Framework is principally aimed at areas with coal resources that would be economically viable as new stand-alone mining operations.
- [Competitive Allocation](#) – the NSW Government may allocate a coal resource in certain circumstances where the other two pathways are not appropriate. This process involves a Resource Assessment and an Initial Suitability Assessment before going to public tender under Schedule 1A of the *Mining Act 1992*. It is a faster process than the Strategic Release Framework.

Source: [Department of Regional NSW](#)



Legend

- State forest
- Mining Lease
- Exploration Licence/Authority
- Exploration Lease Application
- ⚒ Coal Operation

ML1609 – mining lease covering existing Narrabri Mine

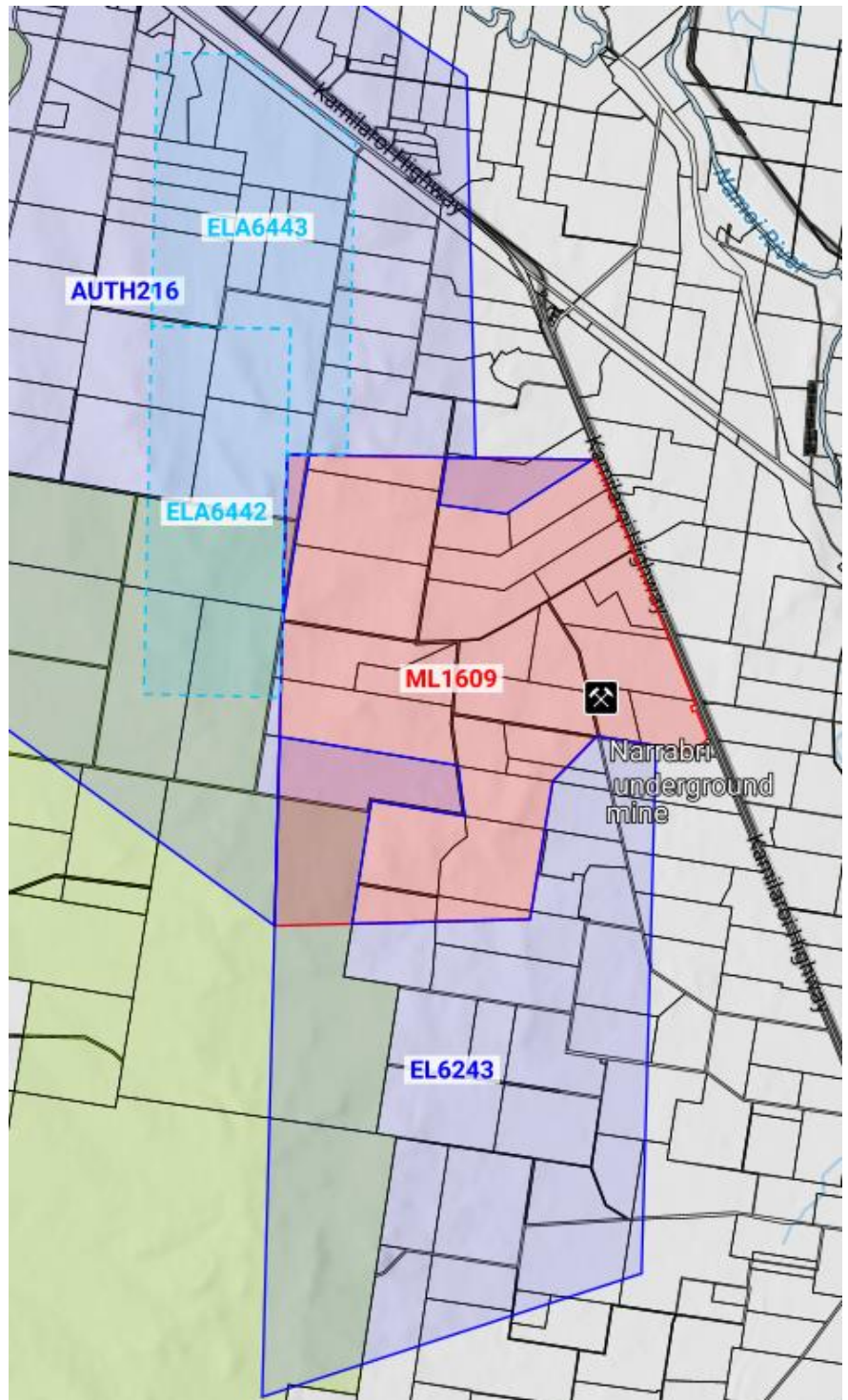
EL6243 – Narrabri Stage 3 exploration licence area

ELA6443 – exploration licence application area

ELA6442 - exploration licence application area

AUTH216 – Gorman North area for potential strategic release

Source: [MinView](#)



Find out more

- Find out about the public comment process at regional.nsw.gov.au/meg/community/landholder-rights/public-comment-on-coal-and-petroleum-titles or call the Department of Regional NSW on (02) 4063 6600.
- Information about landholder's rights is available at regional.nsw.gov.au/meg/community/landholder-rights
- Find out more about exploration at nswmining.com.au/exploration