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1 Purpose

Hunter Valley Energy Coal Pty Ltd (HVEC), a wholly owned subsidiary of BHP, operates the Mt Arthur Coal Complex (MAC), which consists of approved open cut and underground mining operations, a rail loop and associated rail loading facilities. MAC is located approximately 5 kilometres southwest of Muswellbrook within the Muswellbrook Shire Local Government Area (LGA) in the Upper Hunter Valley of NSW. ***Figure 1*** shows the site, Project Approval boundary, and mining lease boundaries.

MAC has approval to extract up to 25 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of Run of Mine (ROM) coal from open cut mining operations up until 30 June 2030, in accordance with the modification of Project Approval MP 09_0062 (MP 09_0062).

The Rehabilitation Strategy (RS) is the strategic framework for rehabilitation at the Mt Arthur Coal mine complex. The RS has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of MP 09_0062, and to guide development of a safe, stable and non-polluting post-mining landform that supports approved final land uses.

The RS should be read in conjunction with the Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP MAC-ENC-MTP-055), the Biodiversity Management Plan (BioMP MAC-ENC-MTP-050) and the Closure Social Impact Management Plan (CSIMP MAC-ENC-MTP-032 – draft).

2 Scope

This RS applies to all activities within MP 09_0062 including planning and implementation of progressive and final rehabilitation at MAC. It is complemented by and implemented through supporting management plans and procedures as outlined in ***Section 3.4.3***, with particular reference to the following plans:

- Rehabilitation Management Plan (MAC-ENC-MTP-055) for detailed rehabilitation methods, completion criteria, performance indicators and rehabilitation monitoring/maintenance.
- Biodiversity Management Plan (MAC-ENC-MTP-050) for biodiversity-related vegetation management, weed/pest management, and biodiversity enhancement and connectivity between remnant vegetation, offsets, revegetation areas and rehabilitation (including details of target vegetation communities and species).
- Closure Social Impact Management Plan (MAC-ENC-MTP-032 – draft) for assessment of social impacts and proposed socio-economic management measures, including a community fund; workforce transition programs; future land use action plan; and ongoing engagement with local suppliers and businesses.

The RS applies to all MAC employees, and contractors working for, or on behalf of, MAC within the MP 09_0062 boundary. It considers recommendations and requests of stakeholders external to MAC who are or will be influenced by the rehabilitation program.

Figure 1 Site locality and boundaries

2.1 Definitions

MP 09_0062 outlines keys terms which relate to MAC. Those that are applicable to this RS are outlined in ***Table 1***.

Table 1 Definitions as outlined in MP 09_0062

Term	Definition
CPHR	Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation Group – within the New South Wales Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.
Environment	Includes all aspects of the surrounding of humans, whether affecting any human as an individual or in his or her social groupings.
Mine Closure	Decommissioning and final rehabilitation of the site following the cessation of mining operations
Mining Operations	Includes the removal of overburden and all coal extraction, processing, handling, storage and transportation activities carried out on site
Rehabilitation	The restoration of land disturbed by the development to a condition which is safe, stable and non-polluting having regard to approved post mining land uses and the rehabilitation objectives and outcomes referenced within this consent

3 Planning and Preparation

3.1 Legislation, Standards, Regulations, Approvals

3.1.1 Statutory

3.1.1.1 MP 09_0062

MAC received MP 09_0062 on the 24 September 2010. In September 2014, MAC received approval of MP 09_0062 Modification 1 (MOD1), and in April 2025, MAC received approval of MP 09_0062 Modification 2 (MOD2). The outcomes of MOD2 were:

- Extension of mining operations to 30 June 2030.
- Improvements to the final landform by reducing the size of the emplacement areas and number of residual voids to be retained post closure.
- Process and transport residual stockpiled coal from the site between 30 June 2030 and 31 December 2030 as part of rehabilitation activities.
- Reduction in approved open cut and cumulative mining rate of run of mine coal.
- Variation to the approved disturbance extent.

The revision of the final landform specifically relates to the outcomes of this RS, and as such influenced the final conditions of consent.

In September 2025 MAC received approval of MP 09_0062 Modification 3 (MOD3). This modification allows the transfer of tailings from MAC to Maxwell Underground for storage within the Maxwell East void. This modification resulted in no change to the conditions relating to the preparation of the RS.

Appendix 3, Table 13 outlines the conditions of MP 09_0062 and where they have been addressed in the RS.

3.1.1.2 EPBC Approvals

Commonwealth approval EPBC 2011/5866 condition 3 requires the rehabilitation of 1,915 ha of woodland corridors, including at least 500 ha of Box-Gum Woodland. The 500 ha Woodland requirement under EPBC 2011/5866 includes 299.2 ha to be improved to State 1 condition under the State and Transition Model (Rawlings. et al, 2010) and meet the listing advice for EPBC listed White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland Ecological Community.

This requirement aligns with the rehabilitation objectives as outlines in ***Section 3.3.1***. ***Section 4.2.5*** outlines post mining land use domains for MAC, including the establishment of native ecosystems (woodland areas and specific Box Gum Woodland).

MAC also holds Commonwealth approval EPBC 2014/7377. Further detail of both approvals is outlined in the BioMP.

3.1.2 Legislation

This RS has been prepared in consideration of:

- Mining Act 1992: facilitates the discovery and development of mineral resources in NSW, it is the legislation which sits behind mining and coal leases/licences, which in turn outline commitments regarding Rehabilitation Management Plans.
- NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act): governs the requirements for Project Approvals, including the conditions of this strategy.
- NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016: provides the approach to be followed for management and assessment of threatened species and ecological communities.
- Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act 1999): provides for the protection of environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are matters of national environmental significance.

3.1.3 Standards/Guidelines/Reports

This RS has been prepared with reference to relevant corporate standards and industry guidelines as outlined below.

3.1.3.1 BHP Closure and Legacy Management Global Standard

MAC applies BHP's Closure and Legacy Management Global Standard to ensure closure and rehabilitation considerations are integrated across planning, operations, progressive rehabilitation and closure execution. An internal Closure Management Plan has been prepared and will be continually updated in accordance with the Global Standard. In the context of this Strategy, the Standard supports:

- Early and ongoing consideration of closure outcomes during mine planning and operational decision-making.
- Establishment and maintenance of a site knowledge base to inform landform design, material management and revegetation planning.
- Regular engagement with stakeholders on rehabilitation outcomes and post-mining land use.
- Implementation of rehabilitation activities in accordance with assessed risk, operational constraints and planned timeframes.
- Review and feedback loops to improve performance and update planning assumptions over time.

3.1.3.2 International Council on Mining and Metals – Integrated Mine Closure

MAC aligns with the approach outlined with the ICMM integrated mine closure guidance, which promotes a consistent, risk-based approach from early planning through to post-closure management and relinquishment. In applying these principles, MAC focuses on:

- Defining a closure vision and outcomes that are aligned with approval requirements and stakeholder expectations.
- Identifying closure and rehabilitation risks and opportunities and integrating these into design and implementation decisions.
- Establishing measurable success criteria and monitoring programs to demonstrate progress toward agreed outcomes.
- Ensuring that rehabilitation and other closure activities are planned, resourced and implemented in a manner that supports safe, stable and sustainable post-mining land uses.

3.1.3.3 Resources Regulator Guidelines

MAC complies with the following Resources Regulator Guidelines for the design and planning of rehabilitation.

Form and way for annual rehabilitation report and forward program for large mines: provides additional information for the preparation of forward plan and annual rehabilitation report.

Form and way for objectives and rehabilitation completion criteria: provides additional information for the preparation of objectives statement, the rehabilitation completion criteria statement and final landform and rehabilitation plan.

Form and way Rehabilitation management plan for large mines: sets the structure and content required for mining rehabilitation management plans so they are in accordance with Clause 9 of Schedule 8A to the Mining Regulation 2016.

3.2 Baseline Information

3.2.1 Landscape and Land Use/Ownership

MAC is located in the Upper Hunter Valley within a landscape characterised by a mix of agricultural land uses (grazing and cropping), viticulture (wineries), other industries (equine, machinery, production) and established mining and energy infrastructure. The regional context includes other large mining operations and power generation infrastructure, and the area is influenced by both rural and industrial land uses.

At a sub-regional scale (approximately 1–5 km), land uses include mixed agriculture on floodplain and undulating landforms, rural residences and town expansion areas (including South Muswellbrook), as well as existing mining precinct land uses. At a local scale (less than 1 km), land uses comprise rural agricultural land, industrial areas (including the Muswellbrook Industrial Estate to the east) and mining-related land uses within and adjacent to the project area.

The landscape includes broad floodplain areas and undulating slopes with localised elevated topographic features (including Mount Arthur). These characteristics influence visibility and potential sensitive viewpoints, particularly from Muswellbrook and key transport corridors. Rehabilitation and final landform design therefore considers not only stability and drainage integration but also progressive reduction of visual impacts over time through landform shaping and establishment of vegetation consistent with approved final land uses.

Figures 2 to ***4*** provide contextual illustration to the immediate and surrounding land of MAC. ***Figure 2*** shows the land ownership and proximity to community and industry centres. In October 2025, MAC announced the pending transfer of approximately 3,700 hectares of land to neighbouring company Malabar Resources. Stage 1 of this transfer is occurring in 2026. ***Figure 3*** shows the pre-mining environment and includes BHP mapped vegetation communities mapped within the extent of asset areas. ***Figure 4*** shows the pre-mining water drainage and catchment systems which MAC consider as part of landform establishment.

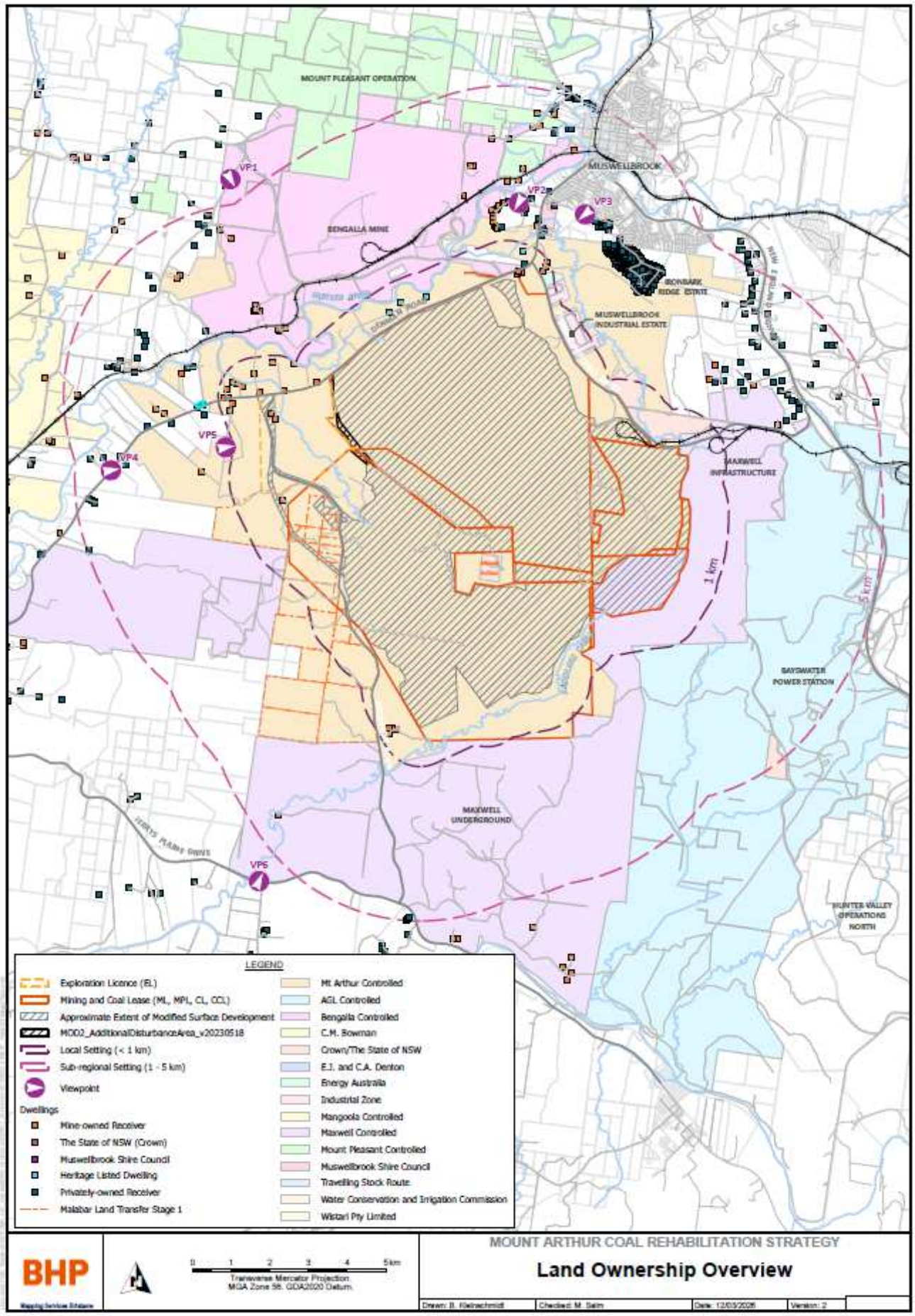

Figure 2 MAC landownership and infrastructure

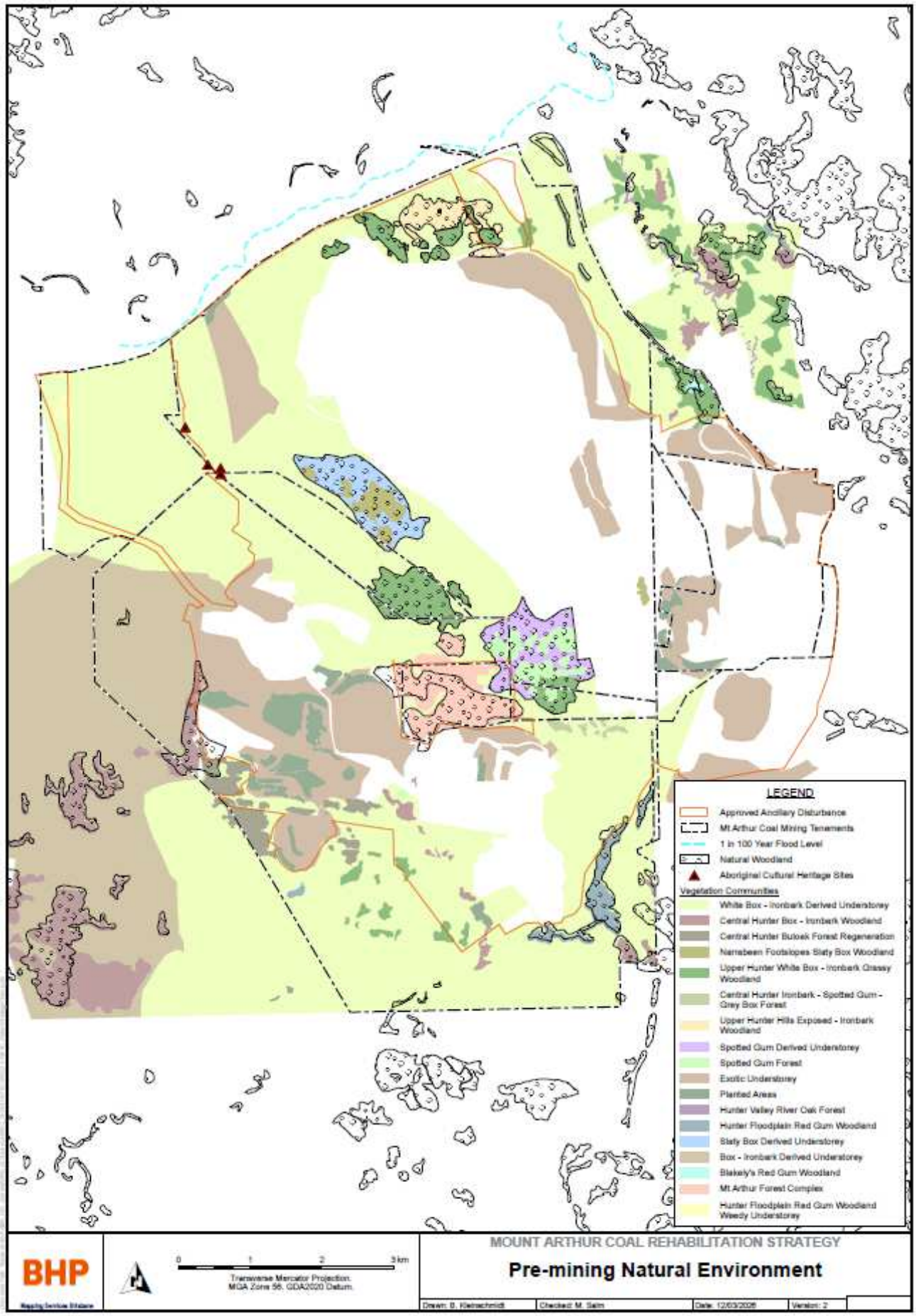

Figure 3 Pre-mining natural environment

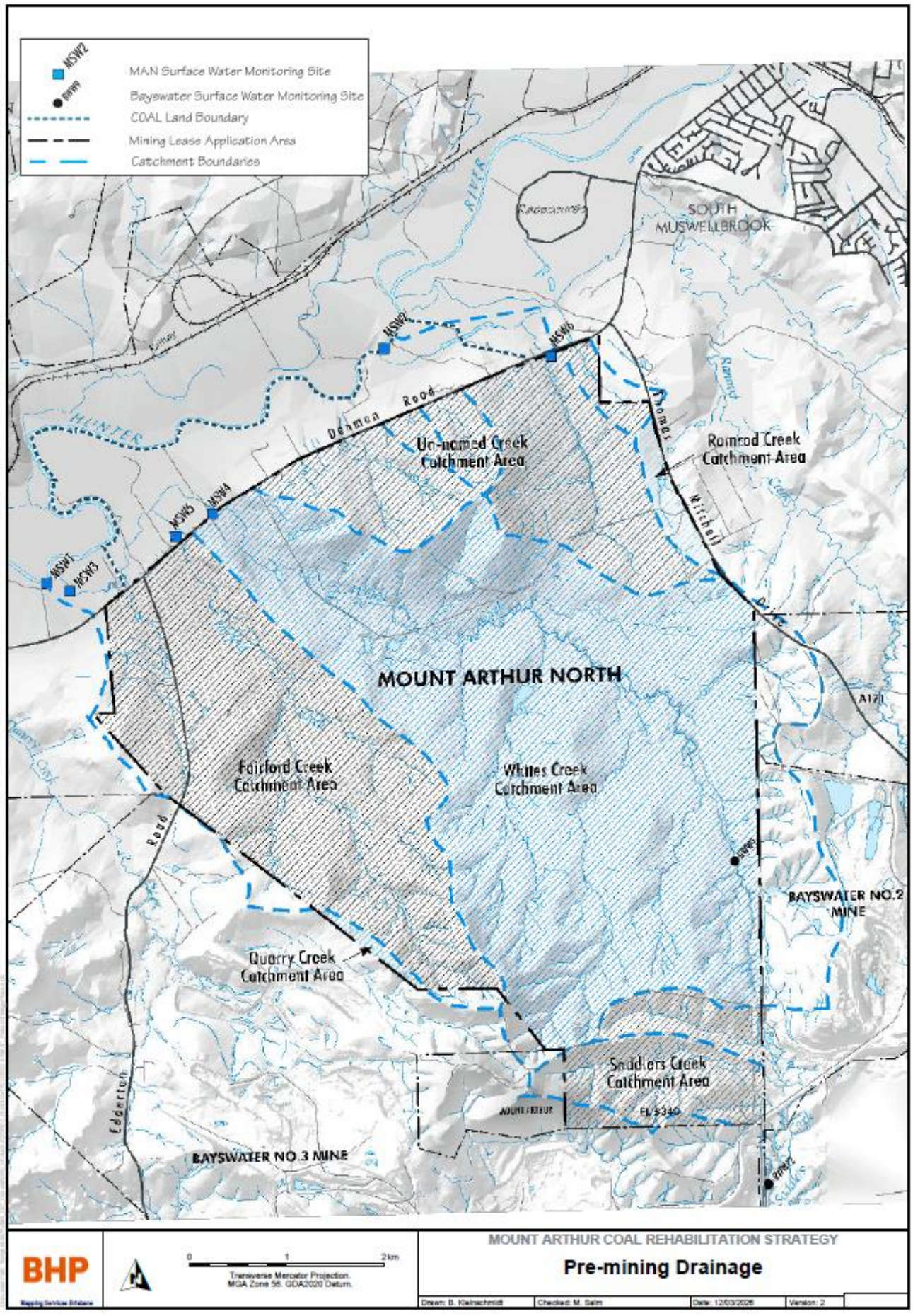

Figure 4 Pre-mining drainage and catchments

3.2.2 Evolution of Rehabilitation Requirements in NSW

Rehabilitation methods, expectations and regulatory frameworks in New South Wales have evolved significantly over the past five decades, driven by advances in science, regulation, and stakeholder expectations.

Communities and regulators now seek landscapes that not only meet environmental criteria but also provide multi-use outcomes such as biodiversity corridors, agricultural productivity, and opportunities for alternate land uses including renewable energy or recreation. These changing expectations have influenced rehabilitation design at Mt Arthur and continue to inform post-mining land-use planning.

Table 3 outlines the changes which have occurred prior to and during BHP's ownership and management of MAC. The importance and requirements have steadily increased over time, and MAC has continued to evolve and adopt new requirements as required for each period.

Table 2 Evolution of mining in NSW

Period / Era	Regulatory / guidance signal	Typical rehabilitation focus in NSW	What changed (key shift)
Pre-1980s	Limited formal regulation and completion criteria	Stabilisation and erosion control; uniform slopes; pasture mixes	Rehabilitation largely "activity-based" (shape and seed)
1980s–early 2000s	Increasing use of development consents and statutory requirements (incl. Mining Act era)	Revegetation using pasture plus some native species; often not locally endemic, drainage via batters/contour banks	Rehabilitation increasingly linked to consent obligations, strategic planning considerations and basic drainage/stability controls
2000s–2010s	Stronger focus on biodiversity and land-use outcomes through consent conditions and policy settings	Native vegetation communities and agricultural capability aligned to approved final land uses	Shift toward ecological function, connectivity and land-use suitability (not just cover)
2010s–present	Outcome-based regulation and reporting (e.g. ARR/FP) and contemporary regulator guidance (e.g. Resources Regulator "Form and Way" guidance for large mines)	Measurable objectives, completion criteria and monitoring; geomorphic landform design; adaptive management	Shift to "criteria-based" rehabilitation with stronger evidence requirements
Emerging direction	Increasing emphasis on closure readiness, beneficial reuse and community outcomes	Integration of closure, landform optimisation, and post-mining land-use options	Broader focus on long-term land stewardship and beneficial outcomes

3.3 Objectives/Outcomes

All the objectives listed in this section outline similar themes, that the design and execution of rehabilitation are not activities which are completed individually. The objectives encourage collaboration between all stakeholders, consideration of what the best design and location is for rehabilitation, and the methods and sequence which rehabilitation is completed to have the most success and reduce impact to communities and the environment.

Section 4 of the RS outlines how MAC achieves these objectives.

1. Rehabilitation planning is completed throughout the life of the asset to where, when and how rehabilitation can be completed.
2. Execution of rehabilitation activities ensures success and enables relinquishment of land post mining.
3. Ongoing review of final landforms and land uses enables opportunities for alternate land use options, which may further reduce identified impacts.

3.3.1 Rehabilitation Objectives

MP 09_0062 objectives state the overarching rehabilitation requirements to be met at MAC. Schedule 3, Condition 41A of MP 09_0062 includes Table 14 which describes the required rehabilitation objectives of current rehabilitation (outlined in ***Table 4***).

These objectives are achieved through the implementation of management measures as outlined in ***Sections 4.1*** (planning of rehabilitation to meet internal constraints or to reduce external impacts) and ***4.2*** (rehabilitation design outcomes that ensure successful relinquishment). ***Section 4.3*** outlines the current and planned rehabilitation at MAC to achieve these objectives.

Detailed rehabilitation objectives, rehabilitation completion criteria and performance indicators are included in the RMP. These are prepared in accordance with the *Form and way: Rehabilitation objectives, rehabilitation completion criteria and final landform and rehabilitation plan for large mines* (RR, 2024). The rehabilitation objectives, rehabilitation completion criteria and performance indicators are prepared to comply with and build on the objectives in Schedule 3 Condition 41A of MP 09_0062, except where rehabilitation pre-dates the MP 09_0062. Pre-2009 rehabilitation completion criteria differ to current criteria mainly for vegetation establishment (composition, required areas, etc), and these rehabilitation areas will have completion criteria which align with objectives at the time.

Table 3 MP 09_0062, Schedule 3, Condition 41A, Table 14

Feature	Current Objectives
All areas of the site affected by the development	• Safe, stable and non-polluting • Final landforms designed to incorporate natural micro-relief and natural drainage lines to integrate with surrounding landforms • Fit for the intended post-mining land use/s • Establish the final landform and post-mining land use/s as soon as practicable after cessation of mining operations • Minimise post-mining environmental impacts
Final voids	• Designed as long-term groundwater sinks and to maximise groundwater flows across backfilled pits to the final void • Minimise to the greatest extent practicable: - the size and depth of final voids - the drainage catchment of voids - any highwall instability risk • risk of flood interaction
Agricultural land	• Rehabilitate at least 33 hectares of Class II agricultural capability land in the area identified in the rehabilitation plan (see Appendix 7) • Rehabilitate other areas identified for agricultural use in the rehabilitation plan to sufficient agricultural capability to support grazing
Revegetation areas	• Restore at least 2,665 hectares of self-sustaining woodland ecosystems in accordance with the rehabilitation plan, including at least 523 hectares of White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland
Creek diversions and realignments	• Flows mimic pre-development flows for all flood events up to and including the 1 in 100-year ARI • Incorporate erosion control measures based on vegetation and engineering revetments • Incorporate structures for aquatic habitat, and replace any habitat removed • Revegetate with suitable native species
Surface Infrastructure	• Surface infrastructure not required for the final land use to be decommissioned and removed
Community	• Ensure public safety • Minimise the adverse socio-economic effects associated with mine closure
Water Quality	• Water retained on the site is fit for the intended post-mining land use/s • Water discharged from the site is suitable for receiving waters and fit for aquatic ecology and riparian vegetation
Final Landform	• Stable for the intended post-mining land use/s • Integrated with surrounding natural landforms and other mine rehabilitated landforms, to the greatest extent practicable • Incorporate micro-relief and drainage features that mimic natural topography and mitigate erosion, to the greatest extent practicable • Maximise surface water drainage to the natural environment i.e. free draining (excluding final void catchment) • Minimise visual impacts, where practicable

3.3.2 Strategic Framework for Mine Closure

The Strategic Framework for Mine Closure (ANZMEC and MCA, 2000) outlines the key concepts associated with mine closure planning. There are six key objectives discussed in the framework and how MAC meet these objectives are outlined in ***Table 5***.

Table 4 Strategic Framework for Mine Closure objectives

Objective	Relevant Section
Stakeholder involvement: to enable all stakeholders to have their interests considered during mine closure.	*Section 4.2.1*
Planning: to ensure the process of closure occurs in an orderly, cost-effective and timely manner.	*Section 4.1 to 4.3*
Financial provision: to ensure the cost of closure is adequately represented in company accounts and that the community is not left with a liability.	*RCE process*
Implementation: to ensure there is clear accountability, and adequate resources, for the implementation of the closure plan.	*Section 4.1* *RMP*
Standards: to establish a set of indicators which will demonstrate the successful completion of the closure process.	*RMP*
Relinquishment: to reach a point where the company has met agreed completion criteria to the satisfaction of the responsible authority	*Section 4.2.7*

3.3.3 Strategic Planning Objectives

The following strategic planning documents have been considered in the preparation of the RS. Each identifies objectives which are addressed through the implementation of the RS.

3.3.3.1 The Synoptic Plan Integrated Landscapes for Coal Mine Rehabilitation in the Hunter Valley of NSW

The Synoptic Plan - Integrated Landscapes for Coal Mine Rehabilitation in the Hunter Valley of NSW (Synoptic Plan) was published in 1999 and highlighted how rehabilitation could be an integrated approach rather than each operation having an individual plan. The plan provides examples of good practice rehabilitation, including design considerations for final landforms and land uses, giving recommendations for high value biodiversity corridors. MAC adopted principles of the Synoptic Plan early in rehabilitation design, with a specific example being the native woodland corridor which runs east-west being a suggested biodiversity corridor path.

The are four key principles of the plan:

- Environmental Corridors: establishment of strategic corridors has the potential to provide multiple benefits of increased ecological sustainability, selective commercial opportunities and enhanced visual amenity.
- Planting design and species selection: species used in rehabilitation should be representative of local flora and where possible, woodland plantings should be prioritised to reduce visual impacts and promote species richness.
- Design of created landforms: landforms should be shaped in undulating informal profiles, in keeping with surrounding environment. It also provides greater opportunity for species diversity.
- Interim and after mining use and treatment of final voids: void and highwall design to consider how slopes can be reduced for safety; will the void be free draining or collect water (then what while the water quality be); consideration of alternate uses of the voids.

3.3.3.2 Hunter Regional Plan 2041

The Hunter Regional Plan 2041 is a continuation of previous regional plans. The plan was published in December 2022, and "sets the strategic land use framework for continued economic growth and diversification". This plan draws from each council within the region to reduce duplication and develop a strategy for wholistic success.

There are nine key objectives discussed in this plan. Of those nine, the following two relate to this Strategy:

- *Objective 1: Diversify the Hunters mining, energy and industrial capacity.*

Relates to the alternate land use options discussed in ***Section 4.4*.**

- *Objective 9: Sustain and balance productive rural landscapes.*

This aligns with the successful completion of agricultural rehabilitation (***Section 4.2.5.1***). MACs alternate land use investigations (**Section 4.4**) also provide additional opportunities for productive activities other than grazing.

MAC continues to work with different levels of government and communities to align closure outcomes with strategic outcomes.

3.3.3.3 Muswellbrook Local Environmental Plan (LEP) (2009)

There are two main land zoning types within MP 09_0062 area. RU1 – Primary Production should remain viable for production activities, mainly agricultural. The following are approved for RU1: Extensive agriculture, home occupations, intensive plant agriculture. Other land uses are permitted with consent (e.g. MP 09_0062). C3 – Environmental Management relates to sensitive areas which may join or have the potential to join with other areas of environmental value. MACs landform and final land uses have been aligned where possible (e.g. required Box Gum Woodland located over C3 zoning). The objectives of these zoning types are outlined below. Refer to ***Section 4.2*** for further information on the design and execution of these rehabilitation areas.

RU1 – Primary Production

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones
- To protect the agricultural potential of rural land not identified for alternative land use, and to minimise the cost to the community of providing, extending and maintaining public amenities and services
- To maintain the rural landscape character of the land in the long term
- To ensure that development for the purpose of extractive industries, underground mines (other than surface works associated with underground mines) or open cut mines (other than open cut mines from the surface of the flood plain) will not:
    - Destroy or impair the agricultural production potential of the land or, in the case of underground mining, unreasonably restrict or otherwise affect any other development on the surface, or
    - Detrimentally affect in any way the quantity, flow and quality of water in either subterranean or surface water systems, or
    - Visually intrude into its surrounding, except by way of suitable screening
- To protect or conserve (or both):
    - Soil stability by controlling development in accordance with land capability, and
    - Trees and other vegetation, and
    - Water resources, water quality and wetland areas, and their catchments and buffer areas, and
    - Valuable deposits of minerals and extractive materials by restricting development that would compromise the efficient extraction of those deposits.

C3 – Environmental Management

- To protect, manage and restore areas with special ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values.
- To provide for a limited range of development that does not have an adverse effect on those values.
- To maintain, or improve in the long term, the ecological values of existing remnant vegetation of significance including wooded hilltops, river valley systems, major scenic corridors and other local features of scenic attraction.
- To limit development that is visually intrusive and ensure compatibility with the existing landscape character.
- To allow agricultural activities that will not have an adverse impact on the environmental and scenic quality of the existing landscape.
- To promote ecologically sustainable development.
- To ensure that development in this zone on land that adjoins land in the land zoned C1 National Parks and Nature Reserves is compatible with the objectives for that zone.

3.4 Preparation and Implementation

3.4.1 Suitably Qualified Person

Following MOD2, this RS has been revised by IEMA, who were endorsed as suitably qualified by DPHI on the 19 August 2025.

This revised RS has been prepared to satisfy Schedule 3 Condition 42(b) and has been developed by suitably qualified and experienced person(s). Evidence of suitably qualified person endorsement/approval and supporting credentials are provided in ***Appendix 1***.

Previous versions of the RS were prepared in accordance with earlier approval requirements and were approved by the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure (approval dated 14 November 2012).

3.4.2 Consultation

As required by Condition 42(a) of MP 09_0062, previous versions of this RS have been prepared in consultation with the Resources Regulator, Muswellbrook Shire Council and DPHI. CPHR (Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation Group) will also be consulted with following the inclusion in MP 09_0062 MOD2.

Consultation is summarised in ***Table 6***. Further feedback and correspondence in relation to the RS is provided in ***Appendix 2***.

Table 5 Required consultation

Consultation Authority	Consultation
CPHR **RAPs - 26 Feb 2026 via a face-to-face meeting.**	CPHR reviewed the Rehabilitation Strategy and raised no specific comments on the proposed amendments. Both the RMP and BMP will be updated to incorporate the design changes approved under Modification 2.
	Meeting held with RAPs on the 26 Feb 2026. The draft RS was discussed, with the intention of receiving feedback from those in attendance. The RS was well received, with positive feedback. General comments raised regarding potential involvement with works and ongoing engagement. There were no specific actions from this meeting.
Muswellbrook Shire Council	Council reviewed the Rehabilitation Strategy and provided comments, see Appendix 2. Council stated that comments can be addressed in future revisions of the Rehabilitation Strategy.
Resources Regulator	Resources Regulator reviewed the Rehabilitation Strategy and raised no specific comments on the proposed amendments. Rehabilitation outcome documents approved under Schedule 8A of the Mining Regulation will need to be consistent with the revised Rehabilitation Strategy
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure approved the Rehabilitation Strategy on 5 June 2026, see Appendix 4.

MAC will continue to engage with Resources Regulator, Muswellbrook Shire Council, CPHR and local indigenous groups (RAPs) through the ongoing implementation of this plan as outlined in ***Section 4.2.1.***

3.4.3 Supporting Strategies, Plans, Procedures

The RS is implemented through a range of strategies, plans, agreements and procedures. The RS should be read in conjunction with the documents outlined in ***Table 7***, which are available on the Mt Arthur Coal's website.

Table 6 Related documents

Management Plan	Relationship
Rehabilitation Management Plan	The RMP includes information on rehabilitation of MAC such as: • Rehabilitation objectives, rehabilitation criteria and relevant performance indicators. • Phases of rehabilitation and general methodologies. • Rehabilitation management measures and monitoring programs. • Project -specific Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP) which outlines the key identified risks to rehabilitation, their trigger and proposed mitigation measures.
Biodiversity Management Plan	Complements the RS by explaining how biodiversity is managed, including the details on clearing/disturbance activities, weed and pest management, and biodiversity enhancement and connectivity. The BioMP specifically outlines all revegetation programs which are implemented to ensure that disturbance of vegetation communities as identifies in MP 09_0062 and EPBC approvals are mitigated. Also refer to the BioMP for vegetation communities and species lists.
Closure Social Impact Management Plan (draft)	Outlines the detailed assessment of social impacts and proposed socio-economic management measures, addressing Table 14 Rehabilitation Objectives – Community and Condition 42i. Specific measures include a community fund; workforce transition programs; future land use action plan; and ongoing engagement with local suppliers and businesses.
Internal Closure Management Plan	Prepared in accordance with the BHP's Closure and Legacy Management Global Standard and includes: • Legal requirements and requirements • Baseline information • Risk Assessment • Optimised closure outcomes including ALU • Closure Activities by Domain • Cost Estimate • Scheduling
Water Management Plan (and sub plans)	Water management plans outline the key detail regarding management of water through operational and closure stages of the asset. These plans capture risks such as: • Water balances • Flooding potential • Erosion and sediment • Water discharges
Aboriginal Heritage Management Plan	Outlines the processes which were followed during the salvage and management of heritage items at MAC. Artefact repatriation as part of closure is in the scope of this plan and yet to be confirmed.

4 Implementation

Implementation at MAC is the translation of the rehabilitation objectives and approved final land use into practical works on the ground. The RS provides the “why and how” of rehabilitation implementation at MAC, while detailed methods, specifications, completion criteria, performance indicators, monitoring programs and Trigger Action Response Plans are provided in the RMP and other related management plans.

This section of the RS explains rehabilitation planning and execution at MAC.

4.1 Rehabilitation Planning Considerations Through Operations and Closure

MAC adopts an adaptive approach to rehabilitation implementation, whereby rehabilitation opportunities are regularly reviewed during planning processes. The BHP Life of Asset (LOA) planning process particularly relates to the RS, because it assesses long-term plans (strategy level). The LOA is normally completed every three years, however, MAC have opted to complete this annually to ensure that closure outcomes are captured to 2030 and beyond. This allows rehabilitation sequencing and methods to be refined over time in response to updated information, monitoring outcomes and site conditions. It also ensures resources are available to meet the approved rehabilitation objectives and final land use.

The progression of rehabilitation across the site is influenced by a combination of interrelated factors, such as:

- Mine planning and operational sequencing: Rehabilitation is constrained by the need to maintain access for mining, materials handling, water management and infrastructure. Areas cannot be fully rehabilitated where re-disturbance is likely (unless it is planned temporary rehabilitation) or where final landform has not been achieved.
- Landform shaping and material availability: Rehabilitation sequencing is influenced by material balance and the availability of suitable material for final shaping. Landform design and rehabilitation timing must remain achievable with available material volumes.
- Access, safety and constructability constraints: Safe access for equipment and personnel is required to undertake rehabilitation. Steep landforms, proximity to active operations and geotechnical considerations may delay rehabilitation in some areas.
- Weather and seasonal conditions: Rehabilitation success is sensitive to weather and seasonal conditions, particularly for soil placement and vegetation establishment. As a result, rehabilitation schedules are indicative and may be adjusted to maximise long-term success.
- Integration with environmental performance requirements: Rehabilitation is coordinated to assist management of other environmental impacts, including biodiversity, water, visual/amenity and lighting, noise and air quality management.
- Evolving information and site constraints: Additional considerations, such as cultural heritage requirements, further investigation of post-mining land uses or site-specific rehabilitation learning may influence the timing or sequencing of rehabilitation in specific areas as information becomes available.

4.2 Successful Rehabilitation – Key Activities for Completion

Rehabilitation does not occur at a single point in time. It is planned and delivered progressively across the asset lifecycle, with the scale and type of works changing as outlined in ***Section 4.1***. Rehabilitation implementation is influenced by the asset lifecycle stages (from early studies through to post-closure monitoring, as shown in ***Figure 5***) and the rehabilitation phases (as outlined in the NSW Resources Regulator “Form and Way”). The largest rehabilitation “step change” typically occurs later in the operational cycle when land becomes available for landform establishment, growth medium development and ecosystem and land use establishment (refer to ***Table 8***).

Figure 5 BHP Asset Lifecycle (BHP, 2025)

Table 7 Rehabilitation Phases and applicability to BHP Asset Lifecyle

Rehabilitation phase	What it includes at MAC (high level)	Typical timing in the asset lifecycle
Active mining / disturbance	In the context of rehabilitation, land associated with mining domains is considered 'active' for the period following disturbance until the commencement of rehabilitation.	Construction/commissioning & operations and progressive closure (early)
Decommissioning	The removal of infrastructure associated with mining activities including preparation plants, hard stand areas, buildings, contaminated materials, hazardous materials. This phase of rehabilitation may also include studies and assessments associated with decommissioning and demolition of infrastructure or works carried out to make safe or 'fit for purpose' built infrastructure to be retained for future use(s) following lease relinquishment.	Late operations and progressive closure through to closure readiness
Landform establishment	This phase of rehabilitation consists of the processes and activities required to construct the approved final landform (as per the development consent and, for large mines, the approved Final Landform and Rehabilitation Plan). In addition to profiling the surface of rehabilitation areas to the approved final landform profile this phase may include works to construct surface water drainage features, encapsulate problematic materials such as tailings, and prepare a substrate with the desired physical and chemical characteristics (that is, rock raking or ameliorating sodic materials). The landform design and construction part of this phase incorporates gradient, slope, aspect, drainage, substrate material characterisation and morphology.	Operations and progressive closure through to closure execution

Rehabilitation phase	What it includes at MAC (high level)	Typical timing in the asset lifecycle
Growing media development	This phase of rehabilitation consists of activities required to establish the physical, chemical and biological components of the substrate required to establish the desired vegetation community (including short-lived pioneer species). This phase may include spreading the prepared landform with topsoil and/or subsoil and/or soil substitutes, applying soil ameliorants to enhance the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the growth media, and actions to minimise loss of growth media due to erosion. Additional characterisation of materials e.g. subsoils, topsoils, organic additives and overburden surface is usually required in this phase to cross check data from the earlier phases.	Operations and progressive closure through to closure execution
Ecosystem / land use establishment	This phase of rehabilitation consists of the processes to establish the approved final land use following construction of the final landform. For vegetated land uses this rehabilitation phase includes establishing the desired vegetation community (e.g. Seeding or tube stocking) and implementing land management activities such as weed control. This phase of rehabilitation may also include habitat augmentation such as installation of nest boxes.	Operations and progressive closure through to closure execution
Ecosystem / land use development	This phase of rehabilitation consists of the activities to manage maturing rehabilitation areas on a trajectory to achieving rehabilitation objectives, completion criteria and the Final Landform and Rehabilitation Plan. Completion criteria for this phase will include components of floristic structure, nutrient cycling recruitment and recovery, community structure and function which are the key elements of a sustainable landscape.	Late operations and progressive closure through to post-closure monitoring and maintenance
Rehabilitation completion	This final phase of rehabilitation occurs where a rehabilitation area has achieved the final land use for the mining area as stated in the approved rehabilitation objectives and the approved rehabilitation completion criteria and spatially depicted in the approved Final Landform and Rehabilitation Plan. Rehabilitation areas may be classified as complete when the NSW Resources Regulator has determined in writing that rehabilitation has achieved the final land use following submission of the relevant application by the lease holder	End-state / relinquishment pathway

4.2.1 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is implemented throughout the life of asset to support rehabilitation, and stakeholders actively want to be involved. MAC engages with community, RAPs, agencies, neighbouring operations and relevant groups to optimise landform and land use outcomes through implementation of this RS. Rehabilitation stakeholder engagement may include:

- Community planting days
- Community Consultative Committees
- Planned field days
- Face-to-face meetings
- Letter/information drops
- Surveys

Stakeholder engagement during implementation is used to:

- Inform expectations for final land use and beneficial post-mining outcomes.
- Communicate timing realities (e.g. why some outcomes occur later in the lifecycle).
- Support identification and evaluation of alternate land uses (***Section 4.4***).
- Reduce adverse socio-economic impacts of closure through transition planning linkages (***Section 4.2.6***)

Engagement activities as part of announced closure in 2030, such as the Closure Legacy Expectations Assessment (CLEA, 2024) and the MOD2 assessments, have provided insights such as:

- Anxiety regarding future economic diversity and new job opportunities.
- Concerns for the appearance and health of the environment post closure.
- Desire for cultural preservation during closure for the future.
- Desire for planning for future economic use of the site – where feasible – and ensuring planning for this was undertaken in a collaborative way.
- Emergency services commented that the proposed land use must be appropriate, and not increase the risk of adverse events.
- Opportunities for ongoing involvement with rehabilitation execution.
- Desire for clear communication, so the community can make informed decisions.

Where rehabilitation decisions may influence visual, biodiversity or other consent outcomes, outcomes will be coordinated with the relevant supporting plans (e.g. BMP and visual requirements) to ensure alignment across MAC's environmental management system.

4.2.2 Active Mining – Pre-rehabilitation Activities

Pre-rehabilitation activities focus on reducing disturbance of remnant vegetation and previously rehabilitated areas, and maximising the reuse of suitable resources where disturbance is required. These activities are further outlined in the BioMP and RMP. MOD 2 included an additional 25ha area of disturbance, however there was an overall reduction of 387ha of the previously approved disturbance area.

As part of the disturbance process, surveys and inspections identify habitat features and opportunities for salvage. Where practicable, biological resources are salvaged and reused to support rehabilitation outcomes, including:

- Collection of local provenance seed from native species.
- Salvage of vegetative material for propagation.
- Recovery of coarse woody debris, hollow logs and habitat features.
- Reuse of structural habitat elements within rehabilitation areas.

The salvage and reuse of biological resources supports establishment of vegetation and ecological function in rehabilitated areas and assists in achieving approved biodiversity outcomes and target vegetation communities.

4.2.3 Landform Establishment

Landform establishment sets the physical foundation for impact mitigation during operations (such as reducing visual and noise impacts) and achieving the approved post-mining land use (including gradients, slope transitions and drainage patterns). The MAC final landform has been designed to blend in with surrounding landscapes, with elevations between 135m and 400m. It consists of a ridge/plateau which runs north-south through the centre of the operation, before curving to the west to connect with other natural features.

In addition, MOD3 also allows MAC to use Malabar's void for tailings. MOD3 avoids the need to expand the existing West Cut tailings storage facility (TSF) and capping and shaping can be prioritised.

As part of ongoing detailed design of the final landform, landform features may be added, changed or removed based on the considerations outlined in ***Section 4.1***. Refer to the RMP for additional information regarding landform establishment.

4.2.3.1 Shaping approach at MAC (contour and geomorphic) and integrated drainage

MAC has areas of rehabilitation constructed using historical contour-based shaping methods, reflecting practices from earlier periods of mining operations. Since 2017 rehabilitation landforms at MAC has incorporated geomorphic design principles, which aim to create landforms and drainage networks that better reflect stable natural analogues and support long-term stability. MAC will apply geomorphic design principles on selected external facing dumps wherever it has been assessed as feasible. MAC continually assesses the feasibility of geomorphic design for future rehabilitation. The extent of application of geomorphic design is updated via the RMP.

Both shaping approaches are designed to achieve a landform that is safe, stable and non-polluting, and to support the intended post-mining land uses; however, the design logic differs:

- Contour-based shaping: typically involves uniform slope segments and contour-aligned drainage/erosion controls. These areas form part of the current rehabilitated footprint and are managed for stability and performance. MAC will continue to use this design when geomorphic design is not practical. Where legacy contour areas are stable and functioning, they won't be retrospectively re-shaped.
- Geomorphic design: focuses on integrating slope transitions, surface roughness/microrelief, and stable drainage networks to reduce long-term erosion risk, improve landscape integration, and support establishment of vegetation communities and agricultural capability consistent with approved land uses. MAC will apply geomorphic design principles on selected external facing dumps wherever it has been assessed as feasible (RS 2024)

MAC will continue to review the landform shaping methodologies available to achieve rehabilitation objectives. Changes or new methods will be included in revisions of the RS and RMP.

At MAC, shaping and drainage are designed and delivered as an integrated system. Drainage arrangements are selected and staged based on the rehabilitation phase and landform readiness, including interim controls during establishment and longer-term drainage features that reflect the final landform intent. This integrated approach is critical to managing erosion risk during establishment, ensuring a free draining landform and supporting long-term landform stability.

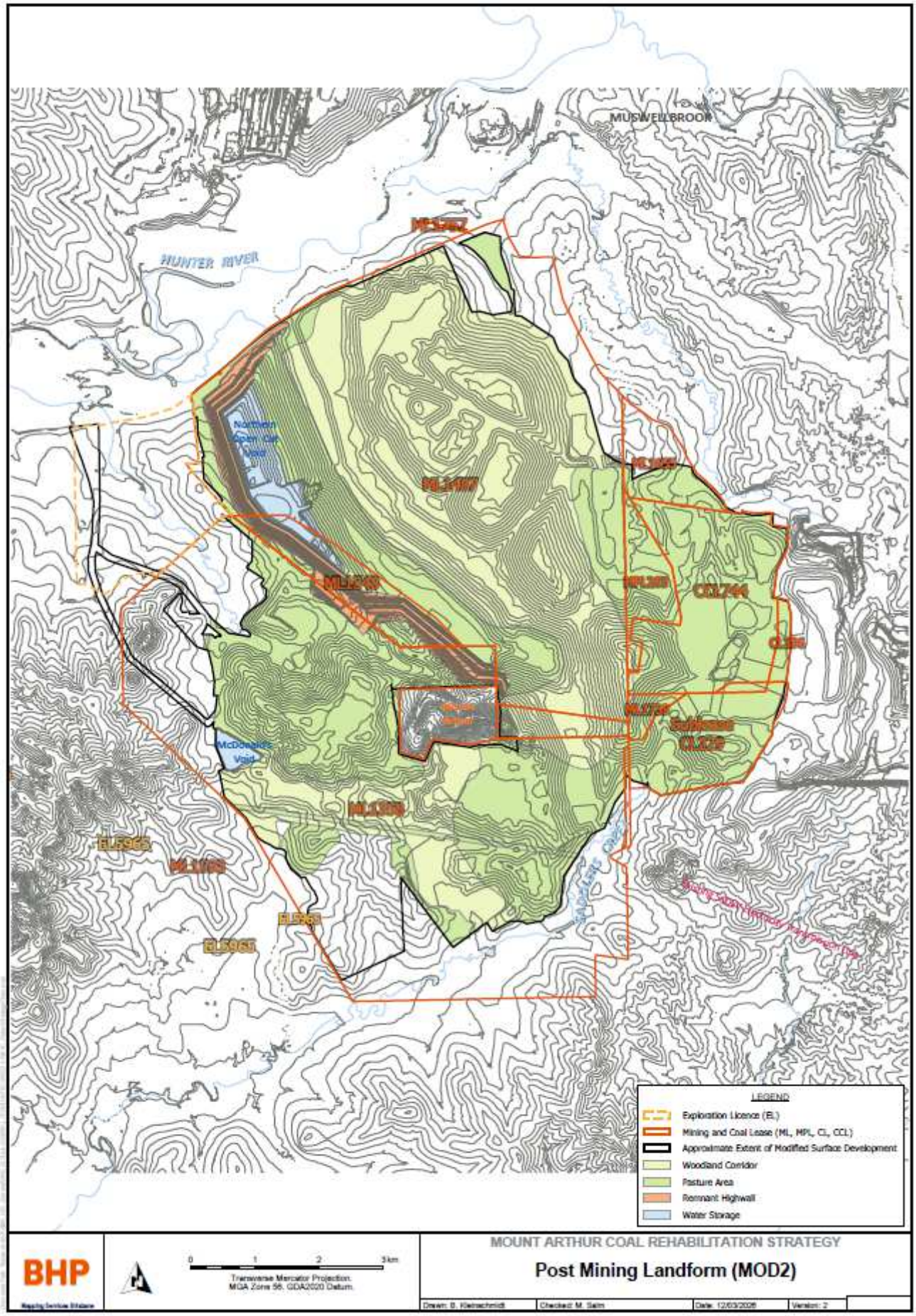

Figure 6 MAC final landform as approved with MOD2

4.2.3.2 Flood Modelling and Flood Risk

As outlined in the Mt Arthur Coal Modification 2 Report and supporting appendix (Appendix G), an alluvial cut-off wall and flood levee has been constructed adjacent to the Windmill open cut pit, parallel to Denman Road, as shown on Figure 3-3. A flood study of the Hunter River, undertaken by Golder Associates (2018), predicted a Probable Maximum Precipitation flood level of approximately 135m AHD in the vicinity of the cut-off wall and flood levee. ATC Williams (2023) concluded that the minimum crest elevation of the alluvial cut-off wall and flood levee is 136m AHD. Accordingly, the risk of flood ingress to the open cut operations is extremely low.

MAC will continue to review this landform consideration. Site Flood modelling will also be undertaken to assess potential risks associated with potential changes to flooding downstream as a result of the final landform. Refer to the WMP or ESCP for additional detail.

4.2.4 Growth Media Development

MAC approach recognises that soil resources are crucial for landform stability, vegetation establishment, and land capability objectives and are finite and variable across the site. MAC implements the following management measures to maintain or supplement growth media:

- Where direct return of topsoil is not practicable, growth media is stockpiled and managed to preserve its rehabilitation value. MAC maintains a topsoil stockpile database and spatial tracking to support scheduling, placement and efficient reuse.
- MAC regularly reviews growth media balance.
- Higher quality topsoil is reserved for high production grazing areas.
- Topsoil with exotic grasses is not used on native ecosystems where possible, without prior management.
- Investigation and use of alternate growth medium.
- Completion of trials to develop standard alternatives to topsoil.

There have been no changes to growth media management with recent approvals. Refer to the RMP for further information.

4.2.5 Ecosystem/Land Use Establishment

The current approved land use configuration has changed over time, while remaining consistent with the approved rehabilitation objectives and overall closure intent. The approved final land uses at MAC comprise of:

- agricultural land (grazing/pasture);
- native ecosystem / woodland;
- water management;
- voids; and
- infrastructure (access road to Mount Arthur)

Previously completed rehabilitated areas are reviewed for consistency with current approved land uses. MAC also continues to investigate opportunities to optimise the final landform and post-mining land use outcomes over time. This includes consideration of alternative or complementary post-mining land uses where they are consistent with approval requirements. All alternatives are subject to any necessary further assessment and approvals. Refer to ***Section 4.4*** for the current suite of alternative land uses being investigated.

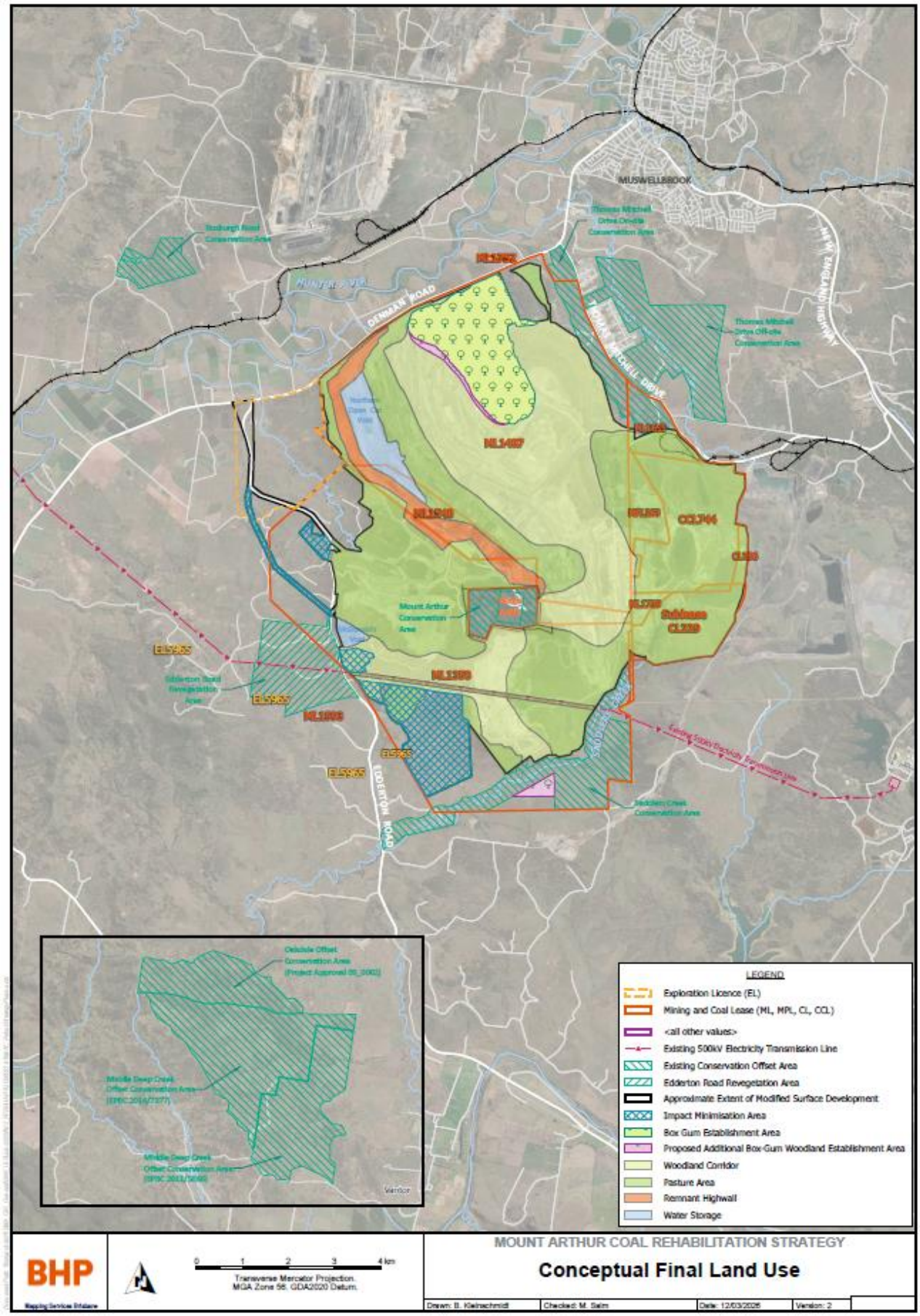

Figure 7 Approved final land use

4.2.5.1 Agriculture/Pasture Rehabilitation

The approved rehabilitation objectives include the requirement to rehabilitate at least 33ha of Class II agricultural capability land – as referred to in Systems used to classify rural lands in NSW (Cunningham et al, 1988) – with additional agricultural areas rehabilitated to a capability sufficient to support grazing. Delivery of these outcomes is assessed against the completion criteria defined in the RMP. Agricultural rehabilitation areas have been chosen within the final land use for the following reasons:

- Generally located on flat to gently sloping landforms, where gradients, drainage characteristics and soil profiles are most conducive to grazing and ongoing land management. This also aligns with areas to be completed later in the LOA schedule.
- Adjacent to existing agricultural areas to enable continuity of productive land.
- Proposed Class II agricultural land capability areas are shown in Figure 5 of the Modification 2 Submission Report (RS 2024)

Where agricultural areas interface with other land uses (such as woodland or water management domains), landform design and establishment methods are selected to minimise erosion risk, support stock safety and enable practical land management. Other features will be considered for grazing areas, including water storages and shading.

4.2.5.2 Native Ecosystem Rehabilitation

Native ecosystem rehabilitation is a major component of the approved post-mining land use at MAC and is intended to result in the establishment of connected, self-sustaining woodland ecosystems that are resilient and integrated with the surrounding landscape. A range of biodiversity enhancement measures – such as habitat augmentation through woody debris placement, creation of structural diversity within rehabilitated areas, and establishment of woodland communities consistent with the approved target vegetation types – are implemented to improve habitat quality and ecological function. The approved rehabilitation objectives require the rehabilitation of 2665ha of native ecosystem (an overall increase compared to previous MP 09_0062), including approximately 523ha of White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland (WBYBBRG), along with other woodland communities and species consistent with the approved conceptual rehabilitation plan, biodiversity commitments (Schedule 3, Condition 38) and EPBC 2011/5866 approval. Approvals which pre-date the communities listed in Schedule 3, Condition 38 of MP 09_0062 (pre-2009) did not identify plant communities to be targeted.

Native woodland rehabilitation has been positioned along the elevated slopes of the final landform. The revised woodland position enables:

- Completion of native rehabilitation earlier in the schedule.
- Maintenance of successfully established native woodland areas.
- High productivity areas to remain available for agricultural rehabilitation.

Species selection and establishment approach

Species selection for native ecosystem rehabilitation at MAC is based on creating vegetation communities that can progress toward self-sustainability. This is achieved through:

- Selection of species representative of the target woodland communities (refer to ***Table 9***).
- Inclusion of a mix of functional groups (e.g. early colonisers, nitrogen-fixing species, mid- and long-lived canopy species, and understorey species).
- Flexibility in establishment methods (direct seeding and/or tubestock planting) to account for slope, aspect, soil depth and seasonal conditions.

This approach supports structural diversity, resilience and the ability of rehabilitated areas to respond to natural variability over time.

SLR have reviewed the classification of all vegetation communities into Plant Community Types (PCTs) and identified the most appropriate or 'best-fit' PCTs for the vegetation communities included in MP 09_0062, as listed in ***Table 9***. Mt Arthur Coal will not re-create the PCTs. These PCT's will be used to inform the rehabilitation objectives to guide how to target the communities listed in MP 09_0062. Further description of vegetation communities and PCT is available in the BioMP. Detailed species lists are reviewed routinely to ensure alignment with target communities is maintained and effective for desired rehabilitation areas.

Table 8 Approved vegetation communities and PCT of best fit

Community name	Approval reference	Best-fit PCT
Upper Hunter White Box - Ironbark Grassy Woodland	09_0062; and EPBC (2014/7377) Preliminary Documentation	3314
Central Hunter Ironbark – Spotted Gum - Grey Box Forest	09_0062	3315
Spotted Woodland Gum forest	EPBC (2014/7377) Preliminary Documentation	3315
White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland	09_0062	3396
Central Hunter Box – Ironbark Woodland	09_0062	3431
Central hunter Bull Oak Forest	EPBC (2014/7377) Preliminary Documentation	3431
Narrabeen Footslopes Slaty Box Woodland	09_0062; and EPBC (2014/7377) Preliminary Documentation	3485
Upper Hunter Hills Exposed - Ironbark Woodland	EPBC (2014/7377) Preliminary Documentation	3431
Hunter Floodplain Red Gum Woodland Complex	09_0062	4015

Ecological connectivity and landscape context

Native ecosystem rehabilitation areas have been located to maximise ecological connectivity across MAC and the surrounding landscape. The approved conceptual rehabilitation plan (Appendix 7 of MP 09_0062) positions woodland rehabilitation to:

- Connect with retained remnant woodland on and adjacent to the site.
- Complement biodiversity offset areas and revegetation corridors established under the BioMP.
- Support broader landscape-scale connectivity rather than creating isolated rehabilitation patches.

In determining the location of native ecosystem areas, consideration has also been given to the final land uses of neighbouring operations, regional vegetation patterns, strategic planning objectives as outlined in the Synoptic Plan (1999) and Hunter Regional Plan 2041, and buffer effects of vegetation patches and corridors.

Detailed biodiversity performance measures, weed and pest controls, and offset management requirements are addressed in the BioMP.

4.2.5.3 Water Management Areas

Water management areas at MAC include the reinstatement of Fairford Creek, Whites Creek diversion, drainage structures, drainage lines from the landforms and water storages. The final landform drainage pattern will be designed and revegetated to achieve long-term stability and erosion control and integrate with surrounding catchments.

The MAC water management system requires water to be sourced, captured, diverted, stored, monitored, utilised and reticulated across the site. This system is based on adherence to well established, best water management practices in the Australian mining industry. These principles are:

- Efficient use of water based on the concepts of 'reduce, re-use and recycle.
- Avoiding or minimising contamination of clean water streams and catchments.
- Protecting downstream water quality for other beneficial uses such as agriculture and industry.

Creek Diversions

Whites Creek diversion will be largely retained in its current state and integrated into post-mine landscape, and the redundant section reinstated and rehabilitated.

The natural Fairford Creek was an ephemeral creek. Engeny (2016) undertook a baseline assessment of the main reach of Fairford Creek. The assessment contained a desktop study including geological setting, hydrological condition, channel geometry, stream gradients, sinuosity and a field investigation to describe the bank condition, vegetation and bed sediments. The study found that the reach of the natural Fairford Creek is likely where the reinstated Fairford Creek is to be located had:

- Channel Geometry with an average base width of 4m, an average low flow depth of 1m, a bank profile of 1V:6H and a bankfull area of 16m^2;

- Stream Gradients including a Floodplain gradient of 0.012m/m with a low flow gradient of 0.008m/m; and
- Sinuosity Ratio 1.22.

The field investigation found that the Fairford Creek Main Reach varies in channel characteristics and channel planform in the downstream direction towards the Hunter River. Where the channel begins to encroach on the Hunter River floodplain the gradient decreases and sinuosity increases significantly compared to the headwaters. The riparian vegetation along the main reach is highly modified lacking continuity and is mainly a mix of grasses with occasional trees. Bed sediments are dominated by clay and silt particles. The final rehabilitation and post-mining land use surrounding the reinstated Fairford Creek channel is pasture with a native woodland corridor bisecting the realigned creek.

4.2.5.4 Voids

Final voids (Northern Open Cut Void and MacDonalds Void) are managed to meet the approved objectives for safety, stability and non-polluting, including the approved intent that final voids operate as long-term groundwater sinks.

A final void is demarcated by the extent of an area that does not free drain to the surrounding surface environment. In other words the void's planar extent is defined by the lowest point of the voids crest, often referred to as the spill point level (or spill level). The spill level is the elevation in the void, which if filled with water, water would spill into the surrounding landscape. A final void typically comprises the following:

- an area whereby material was extracted because of mining and a void remains after mining is complete; and / or
- highwalls; and / or
- low walls; and / or
- ramps.

To manage landform stability and meet with the objectives in MP 09_0062, the final voids are either:

- Backfilled and rehabilitated to native ecosystem which is integrated into the landscape, providing connected habitat for native flora and fauna species.
- Backfilled and rehabilitated to agricultural (grazing) land use which is aligned with the predominant land use in the hunter valley.
- Not backfilled and use as water storage and groundwater sink to minimise risk of pollution off site.

Relevant aspects of the final void design and management in relation to the rehabilitation objectives and closure criteria for a safe, stable, non-polluting landform are described in the following sub-sections.

The proposed final land use for the final voids is defined in MP 09_0062 as “long term groundwater sinks”. Final voids need to be considered safe for humans, stock and wildlife. Where a plausible safety hazard is identified the mitigation strategies that Mt Arthur Coal will implement include:

- Erection of fencing, potentially including a trench and/or berm;
- Placement of warning signs;
- Cutting off access infrastructure such as tracks and roads, where compatible with final land use;
- Elimination of features that could promote recreational attraction, where compatible with final land use; and
- Maintenance agreements for the above mitigation measures.

Table 10 details the voids that have been developed during the life of asset, and the proposed management and final status of each void. Evaluation of alternate final void post mining land uses are provided in ***Section 4.4***.

Table 9 Final Void Outcomes for Each Mt Arthur Coal Void

Former Active Pit/ Final Void	Final Status
Northern Open Cut	Water Storage at closure – The Windmill, Calool and Roxborough pits have been incorporated to the (final) Northern Open Cut Void. This void will be a groundwater sink. This final void provides optionality for future access to resource or a water storage related use.
McDonalds	Water Storage at closure – Future water storage resource.
Ayredale	Backfilled, no final void,
Macleans	Backfilled, no final void, Native Ecosystem.
Belmont	Backfilled, no final void, rehabilitated to Agriculture (Grazing).
Saddlers South	Backfilled, no final void, Agriculture (Grazing).
Saddlers Central	Backfilled, no final void, Native Ecosystem and Agriculture (Grazing).
Saddlers North	Backfilled, no final void, Native Ecosystem and Agriculture (Grazing).
West Cut	Backfilled, no final void, rehabilitated to Agriculture (Grazing).
East Pit	
North Cut	
Drayton Void	Backfilled at closure, no final void, rehabilitated to Agriculture (Grazing). The Drayton Void will be retained during mining operations for the purpose of de-watering the Tailings Storage Facility.

4.2.5.5 Infrastructure Areas

At closure, most mining-related infrastructure at Mt Arthur Coal will be decommissioned and removed in accordance with MP 09_0062 and the RMP. This includes plant, processing facilities, stockpile pads, conveyors, buildings, services and associated infrastructure that are not required to support approved post-mining land uses. Decommissioning will be undertaken in consultation with relevant regulators and in accordance with applicable demolition, waste management and contaminated land procedures.

MAC will retain the Mt Arthur Access Road at mine closure, to provide stakeholder access to Mt Arthur (area of cultural significance). All other infrastructure areas are proposed to be rehabilitated to their approved final land use unless an alternate land use is progressed and separately approved (refer to ***Section 4.4***. for potential alternate land uses).

4.2.6 Socio-economic Transition

Rehabilitation and closure at MAC have been planned with consideration of socio-economic outcomes associated with post-mining land use. Rehabilitation design and implementation influence the availability, productivity and long-term usability of land following closure, which in turn affects opportunities for ongoing economic activity and land stewardship within the region.

Approved post-mining land uses, including agricultural land, are intended to support productive use of the site beyond mining and contribute to regional land-based economic outcomes. Rehabilitation is therefore implemented to ensure landforms, soils and access arrangements are suitable for these uses. Similarly, native ecosystem rehabilitation contributes to broader environmental and land stewardship outcomes that support regional amenity and long-term land value, while water storage and managed void areas may support future land management or infrastructure-related opportunities, subject to approvals.

In addition to the approved final land uses, MAC is investigating alternate post-mining land uses that may provide further socio-economic benefit, as described in ***Section 4.4***. Potential negative social impacts resulting from mine closure, and management and mitigation measures are detailed in the CSIMP (draft).

4.2.7 Rehabilitation Completion – Relinquishment and Post-mining Tenure

Rehabilitation and closure planning at MAC is undertaken considering relinquishment of land and transition to post-mining tenure. The approved rehabilitation objectives and final land uses are intended to support a post-mining landform that is safe, stable and non-polluting and able to be managed without ongoing mining-related intervention.

Relinquishment pathways will vary across the site depending on the final land use, land tenure arrangements and any approved alternate land uses. In some areas, land may transition to private or public ownership for ongoing productive or stewardship-based use, while in other areas long-term management arrangements may be required (e.g. for residual voids or water management features).

The timing and mechanism for relinquishment will be informed by:

- Achievement of rehabilitation completion criteria.
- Confirmation of final landform and land use outcomes.

- Monitoring outcomes demonstrating stability and sustainability.
- Agreement with relevant regulators and landholders.

Further detail regarding relinquishment processes and post-mining tenure will be refined as closure planning progresses and landform outcomes are finalised.

4.3 Rehabilitation Schedule

Rehabilitation at MAC has been undertaken progressively over the life of the operation; however, the timing, scale and form of rehabilitation has varied over time in response to mine planning, approval conditions, landform availability and evolving rehabilitation practices.

Table 11 provides a high-level snapshot of rehabilitation progression through key periods of the operation, explaining how rehabilitation approaches have evolved and why rehabilitation outcomes appear as they do today. Completed rehabilitation, indicative progressive rehabilitation up until mine closure and conceptual staging of rehabilitation post closure are displayed on ***Figure 8***.

Table 10 MAC Rehabilitation Schedule - completed and planned

Period	Operational context (where mining was occurring)	Rehabilitation intent and progression (what was done and why)
Pre 2010	BHP took ownership of Mt Arthur in 2001 which consisted of Bayswater No 2 and 3. The Mt Arthur North Pit was developed which allowed mining to the south of Denman Rd, east to west. South Pit Extension project was approved in 2007. Infrastructure areas had been established to the east.	Rehabilitation occurred to the south-west and north-east of the operation. Outer pit emplacement areas were established, predominantly to a woodland land use. This creation of these emplacement areas enabled continued pit progression while also reducing impact to users of Edderton Rd and Thomas Mitchell Drive. Rehabilitation to the north-east also provided initial connectivity with remnant box woodland community along the northern boundary. Consideration given to establishing rehabilitation woodland areas which aligned with the Synoptic Plan (1999).
2010–2014 (Consolidation of Consents)	Mining continued in the north and south pits. Rehabilitation was limited during this period due to the establishment of consolidated consent area.	Rehabilitation activities continued to be completed on north-east outer facing emplacement areas to reduce visual impacts. Additional layers of overburden were shaped into contour banks for revegetation to mainly woodland.
2014–2025 (MOD1)	Mining of south and north pits continued during this period. With the approval of MOD1, the Northern Pit was extended to the west and north. The approval allowed mining to 2026.	Rehabilitation approaches evolved during this period, including the shift to geomorphic design, with increasing emphasis on landform stability, land use suitability and integration with biodiversity objectives. In 2021/2022, the NSW Government introduced rehabilitation reforms which required the preparation of a Rehabilitation Management Plan and Forward Work Program. Prior to this, the Mining Operations Plan (MOP) required completion criteria which MAC worked to for the relevant areas. Rehabilitation continued to follow completed mining areas, predominantly in north to north-east and south to southwest areas of the operation.
2025–2030 (MOD 2 and 3)	Mining in this period to 2030, will primarily continue in the north pit, which will include further progression to the west. Active mining will cease in all locations leaving the two planned voids.	Rehabilitation will continue across the old Bayswater sites and emplacement areas (Saddlers North Pit). The Northern Open Cut highwall will be rehabilitated. A combination of native ecosystems and agricultural rehabilitation will be completed. A combination of landform establishment methods will be used due to area constraints.
2030+ (Post Closure)	Other closure aspects will be addressed to allow ongoing rehabilitation (e.g. decommissioning, contamination and waste management, etc).	Rehabilitation activities in 2030+ are still conceptual and will require further refinement during closure planning processes over subsequent reviews of this plan. Current planning would see previously mined areas shaped and rehabilitated initially. In this period the tailing facilities will be capped and stabilised. Due to the complexity in this activity, it is envisaged that this area and the administration area will be the final areas to be rehabilitated. That is one reason why these areas will be rehabilitated to agriculture.

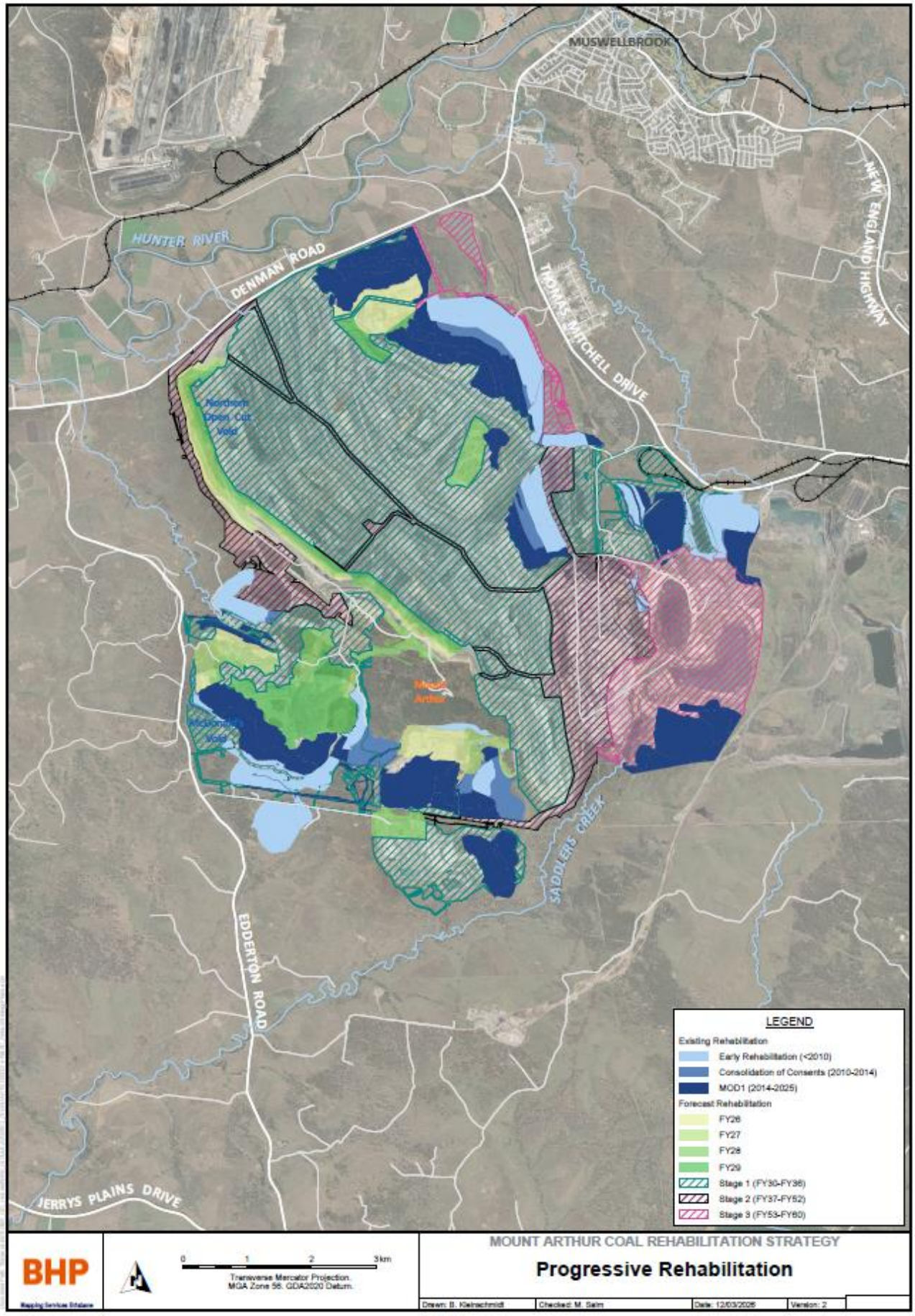

Figure 8 MAC rehabilitation progression across the asset lifecycle

4.4 Alternate Land-use Options

In addition to the approved final land uses described in ***Section 4.2.5***, MAC is progressing a structured strategy to investigate and if possible, facilitate alternate or complementary post-mining land uses that may deliver broader community, economic or social benefits following mine closure. This section describes how alternate land uses are identified, assessed and considered in parallel with closure planning. It does not commit to specific outcomes and does not replace the requirement for separate assessment and approvals.

Schedule 3 Condition 42(h) of MP 09_0062 requires a post-mining land use strategy that investigates and facilitates beneficial land uses for the site (including final voids) that:

- consider regional and local strategic land use planning objectives,
- support a sustainable future for the local community,
- utilise existing mining infrastructure where practicable,
- support regional vegetation connectivity opportunities, and
- avoid disturbance of self-sustaining ecosystems where practicable.

This approach has been developed in the context of regional planning tools and contemporary NSW policy on beneficial and productive post-mining land use, which emphasise early, integrated and adaptive planning to support regional transition, economic diversification and place-based outcomes during mine closures.

Alternate land use investigations are undertaken in a manner that seeks to complement, but not override, the approved rehabilitation objectives. Rehabilitation implementation therefore remains focused on delivery of safe, stable and non-polluting landforms and approved post-mining land uses, while maintaining flexibility to enable future opportunities where practicable.

4.4.1 Investigation and Integration with Rehabilitation and closure planning

MAC investigates alternate land uses through a staged and adaptive process that is integrated with rehabilitation and closure planning and informed by stakeholder engagement, site constraints and evolving knowledge of final landform outcomes.

Investigations commence with identification of potential opportunities based on:

- Site attributes, including landform, access, disturbance extent and existing infrastructure.
- Regional and local planning objectives and future land use direction.
- Stakeholder inputs and community expectations (refer to ***Section 4.2.1***).
- Previous studies and strategic documents.

Identified opportunities are then screened and evaluated having regard to:

- Compatibility with the approved final landform and rehabilitation outcomes (unless a separate approvals pathway is pursued).
- Safety, stability and non-polluting requirements.
- Avoidance of disturbance to self-sustaining ecosystems where practicable.
- Opportunities to reuse existing disturbed land or infrastructure.
- The complexity and timing of further assessment and approvals.

Consistent with Condition 42(g), ongoing investigation of final landform outcomes and void configuration informs the identification of potential alternate land uses, particularly in relation to residual voids and landform interfaces. Consideration of alternate land uses therefore evolves alongside closure design refinement rather than occurring only after mining has ceased.

As outlined in ***Section 4.2.1***, MAC have completed a number of engagement campaigns, including the CLEA (2024), common insights indicate that there is uncertainty regarding economic diversity, social impacts and liveability post closure. Consideration of alternate land uses recognises these concerns, and the intent of Condition 42(i), by acknowledging that rehabilitation and closure outcomes influence the long-term socio-economic future of the site and surrounding region.

Where an alternate land use is identified as potentially viable, further detailed assessment, consultation and approvals planning is required prior to implementation.

4.4.2 Potential Alternate Land-use Options

This section summarises a range of potential alternate land-use options that MAC have identified through preliminary strategic investigation (***Table 12***). These options are indicative only and reflect how different parts of the site could potentially support alternative uses in the future, subject to further assessment, feasibility evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and separate approvals. Refer to ***Figure 9*** for corresponding locations.

Table 11 MAC investigated potential alternate land uses

Alternate Use	Description	Suitability/Likelihood
Woodland establishment and recreation areas	Woodland habitat also has the potential to offer the ability to comply with rehabilitation obligations, while also supporting new economic opportunities (without inhibiting or degrading woodland vegetation). Examples could potentially include tourism and/or recreational-type opportunities including: • Mountain biking • Eco- or adventure- tourism Walking/running trails	• MAC potentially offers terrain suitable for eco- and/or adventure-tourism and this land-use would largely align with closure outcomes.
Agriculture	Various types of agriculture and equine industries are practiced across the Hunter Valley, including cropping, grazing and horticulture uses. Potential agricultural enterprises would ultimately reflect the rehabilitated landscapes and soils.	• Likely to have limited employment benefit, however, would align with surrounding agricultural land uses. • Aligns with current land zoning within the Muswellbrook LEP and current rehabilitation outcomes.
Renewable energy generation	Areas within the boundary have been assessed as potentially suitable for renewable energy projects, required for future for energy security within NSW. Potential opportunities include: • Solar farms • Pumped hydro (Northern Open Cut Void)	• MAC lies within the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone, designed to support renewable energy generation and storage. • Additional assessment would be required to confirm suitability., however, likely to have an economic benefit to the community. • This land-use would require additional approvals to be viable.
Industry and infrastructure	Utilisation of existing mining infrastructure areas and repurposing for alternative industrial uses is under assessment. Potential opportunities may include: • Heavy and light industrial • manufacturing • Logistics	As a response to the Beneficial and Productive Post Mining Land Use Inquiry (NSW Parliament, 2025), BHP is working closely with local, state and federal government to evaluate the required planning and regulatory pathways to enable repurposing of mining-infrastructure areas. • Additional assessment is required to confirm suitability., however, these types of land uses are anticipated to have a direct economic benefit to the local community. • This land-use would require additional approvals to be viable.

Note: This table represents a strategic snapshot only. Inclusion of a potential use does not represent a commitment to implementation. All options remain subject to further investigation, feasibility assessment and separate approvals.

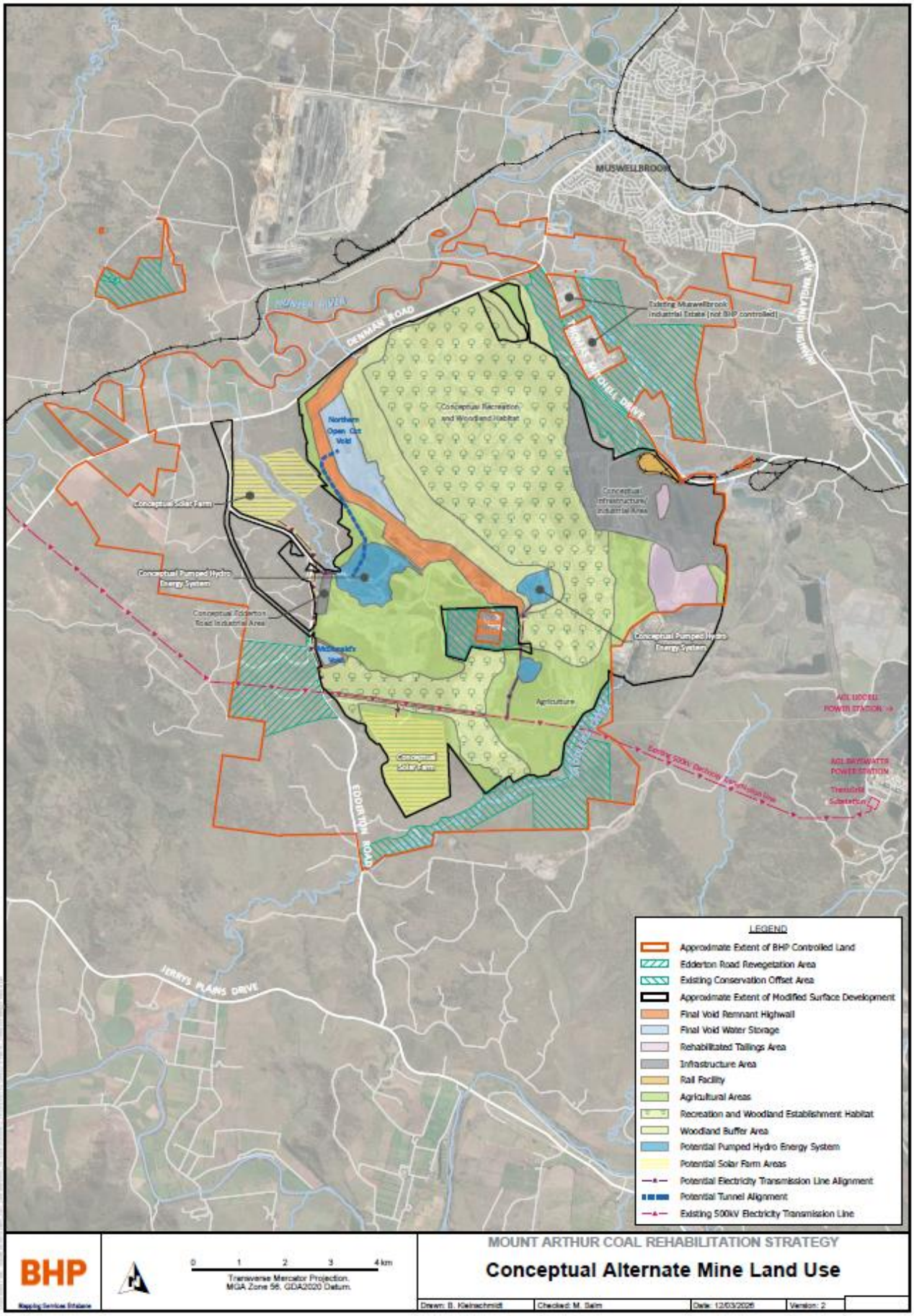

Figure 9 MAC potential alternate land use options

5 Rehabilitation Monitoring

Mt Arthur Coal rehabilitation monitoring programs consider statutory obligations targeted post mining land uses. Rehabilitation objectives and nominated completion criteria, as well as the scale of the rehabilitation areas to be monitored. Rehabilitation monitoring objectives and programs are described in the RMP and reviewed so that sufficient parameters are collected to determine the success of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation maintenance and improvement works are undertaken based on recommendations of monitoring to continually improve the standard of rehabilitation.

6 Revision

In accordance with Schedule 3 Condition 42(j) and Schedule 5 Condition 4 of MP 09_0062, this RS will be reviewed, and if necessary revised, at least every two years or within 3-months of the following:

- submission of an annual review under condition 3;
- submission of an incident under condition 7;
- submission of and audit under condition 9; or
- any modification to relevant conditions of MP 09_0062.

Key considerations as part of the RS review include:

- final landforms, including voids;
- final land use areas; and
- alternate land use options.

Where this review leads to revisions the RS, the revised document must be submitted to the Secretary for approval within four weeks of the review.

In accordance with Schedule 2 Condition 13A of the MP 09_0062, if the Planning Secretary agrees, the RS may be staged or updated without consultation being undertaken with all parties required to be consulted in the relevant condition in this consent.

7 References

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Resource Strategies. September 2023 (RS, 2023b). Attachment 1 – Proposed Changes to Project Approval MP 09_0062. Prepared on behalf of Mt Arthur Coal.

Resource Strategies. September 2023 (RS, 2023c). Attachment 2 – Alternate Mine Land Re-Use Prospectus. Prepared on behalf of Mt Arthur Coal.

Resource Strategies. September 2023 (RS, 2023d). Appendix D – Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). Prepared on behalf of Mt Arthur Coal.

Resource Strategies. September 2023 (RS, 2023e). Appendix F – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

Resource Strategies. April 2024 (RS,2024). Modification 2 Submission Report. Prepared on behalf of Mt Arthur Coal

8 Version Management

This section summarises the changes made to the RS (***Table 13***).

Table 12 Change table

Date			Page(s)	Details
	Major	***Minor***		
30/9/11	1.0			Final draft – submitted for approval to DP&I.
20/9/12	2.0			Minor amendments following DP&I comment
14/11/12	Final			Approved by the Department of Planning & Infrastructure on 14/11/12.
30/06/2016	3.0			Amendments following Modification Project Approval for submission to DP&E
26/05/2017	4.0 Final			Amendments following regulator engagement and consultation, including update from the FLDP
29/06/2018		4.1	Whole doc	Amendments to the emplacement design and addition of Final Void Management Plan. Submitted June 2018 to DPE.
20/07/2020		4.2	Whole doc	Updates at the request of DPE.
02/02/2023	5.0		Whole doc	Draft – Submitted for Consultation
07/07/2023		5.1	Minor edits	TO respond to consultation feedback.
14/04/2026	6.0		Whole doc	Update document following the approval of MOD2. Restructure of document and removal of content which no longer aligned with rehabilitation strategy. Inclusion of changes to final landform, approved land uses and investigation of alternate land use options. Record consultation with CPHR, Resources Regulator and Council.
1/06/2026		6.1	Minor Edits	Update Table 5 with details of consultation with Council, CPHR and Resources Regulator as requested by DPHI.

Appendix 1 – Endorsement of Suitably Qualified Persons

Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure

NSW GOVERNMENT

Our ref: MP09_0062-PA-246

James Nixon
Superintendent Environment
Hunter Valley Energy Coal Pty Ltd
Thomas Mitchell Drive
Muswellbrook NSW 2333

19 August 2025

Subject: Appointment of suitably qualified and experienced persons

Dear Mr Nixon

I refer to your request dated 25 July 2025 seeking the Planning Secretary's endorsement of the following persons as suitably qualified and experienced under Schedule 3 Condition 42 (b) of the Mt Arthur Coal Mine Project Approval (MP09_0062):

- Chris Jones – Principal Consultant;
- Laura Sharp – Associate Consultant; and
- Jake Hawkins – Associate Consultant.

The Department has reviewed the nominations and information you have provided and is satisfied that the above persons are suitably qualified and experienced. Accordingly, I can advise that the Planning Secretary endorses the appointment of these persons to prepare the Rehabilitation Strategy for the Mt Arthur Coal Mine.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Jacob Jones on (02) 4904 2715 or via email at jacob.jones@dpie.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Jack Turner
Team Leader
Resource Assessments

As nominee of the Planning Secretary

4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 www.dphi.nsw.gov.au 1
Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124

Appendix 2 – Consultation

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Your ref: PAE-109399747
Our ref: DOC26/153303

Dear Martin,

Mt Arthur Coal - Open Cut Extension – Rehabilitation Strategy

Thank you for your Major Projects Portal request dated 16 March 2026 seeking advice from the Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (CPHR) of the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) on the updated Rehabilitation Strategy for the Mt Arthur Coal - Open Cut Extension.

CPHR understands that the proposed amendments to the Rehabilitation Strategy have been made to reflect approved changes to the mine's final landform and disturbance extent resulting from Modification 2 (approved April 2025).

CPHR has reviewed the Rehabilitation Strategy and has no specific comments to raise on the proposed amendments. However, we note that the Rehabilitation Strategy defers key matters including rehabilitation methods, objectives, monitoring, performance indicators and success criteria to the Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP) and Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP). It is our expectation that both the RMP and BMP will be updated to incorporate the design changes approved under Modification 2. We welcome further consultation on the revised BMP and RMP, once these documents have been updated to address the detailed matters not captured in the Rehabilitation Strategy.

CPHR considers that the proposal can proceed to the next stage of assessment, provided the comments in this letter are addressed.

If you have any further questions about this issue, please contact our Planning Team at hcc.planning@environment.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely,

Stacy Warren
Senior Manager, Planning Co-ordination and Advice
Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (CPHR)
NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)

30 March 2026

6 Stewart Ave, Newcastle West NSW 2302 | Locked Bag 1002 Dangar NSW 2309 | dcceew.nsw.gov.au

NSW Resources
Resources Regulator

Thursday, 26 March 2026

Martin Salm
Mt Arthur Coal
martin.salm@bhp.com

Via: Major Projects Portal

Dear Martin,

I refer to the Mt Arthur Coal – Open Cut Extension - Rehab Strategy (Version: 5.6| Released: 16/03/2026) submitted to the Resources Regulator on 19/03/2026 (MP09_0062-PA-276). Based on the review of the document, the Resources Regulator advises that it has no specific comments. However, the proponent is reminded that rehabilitation outcome documents approved under Schedule 8A of the Mining Regulation will need to be consistent with the revised Rehabilitation Strategy.

Should you require any further information or clarification, please contact the Regulator on 1300 814 609 (Press Option 2 then Option 5) or email nswresourcesregulator@service-now.com.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Newton
Principal Inspector Environment and Rehabilitation Operations
Resources Regulator

Ref. *MAAG0018440*
516 High Street
Maitland NSW 2320

D26/38472

resourcesregulator.nsw.gov.au

1

muswellbrook shire council

For Enquiries
Please ask for Tracy Ward
Direct 02 6549 3778
Our reference CM 26/35179

13 April 2026

Martin Salm
Principal Rehabilitation
Mount Arthur Coal

Dear Mr Salm,

RE: Mount Arthur Coal – Muswellbrook Shire Council (Staff) comments on the Rehabilitation Strategy (v 5.6)

Reference is made to the following:

- *'Mount Arthur Coal Rehabilitation Strategy'* (v5.6) (Rehabilitation Strategy); and
- Request to provide advice via the Major Projects Portal.

The Mount Arthur Coal Complex (MAC) consists of approved open cut and underground mining operations, a rail loop and associated rail loading facilities. The Rehabilitation Strategy has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of MP 09_0062 and to guide development of a safe, stable and non-polluting post mining landform that supports approved final land uses.

Council Staff have reviewed the Rehabilitation Strategy and provide comments below. It should be noted that Staff are satisfied that comments can be addressed in future revisions of the Rehabilitation Strategy.

Denman Road Bund

Previously, Staff requested that the bund along Denman Road be removed during rehabilitation. The Rehabilitation Strategy refers to the bund as a flood levee and in correspondence from BHP the bund 'will remain for flood mitigation and to assist with visual impacts'.

01. Staff prefer that the bund remains only in those sections where modelling demonstrates that the bund limits the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) event. Council's flood mapping indicates that the bund is only required within Section A, as shown Figure 1.

Muswellbrook Shire Council (02) 6549 3700 council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au
Campbell's Corner 60-82 Bridge Street Muswellbrook NSW 2333 PO Box 122 Muswellbrook 2333
muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au muswellbrook shire council ABN 86 864 180 944

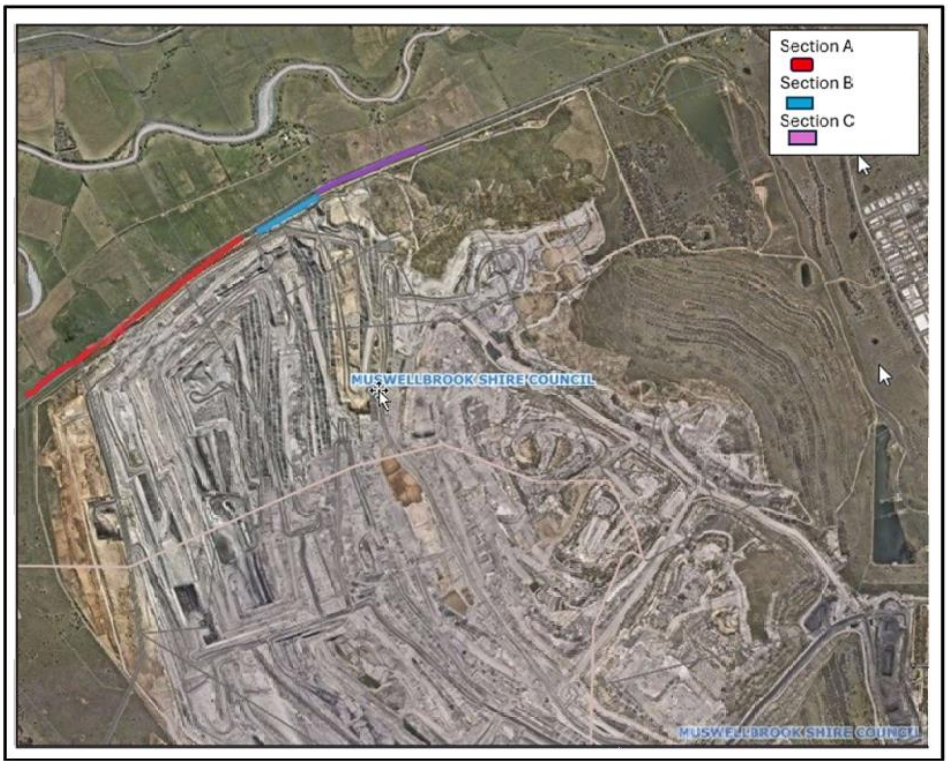

Figure 1 – General extent of bund adjacent Denman Road

02. Section A is largely devoid of vegetation, with only isolated trees present. As this area of the bund will likely remain as a permanent flood protection structure, plantings should be undertaken to establish a more robust vegetation complex. This should include infill planting to provide understory and mid-storey layers, as well as appropriate groundcover species. Improved vegetation cover will assist in stabilising the bund, reducing the risk of erosion during flood events, and enhance the long-term visual integration of the landform within the surrounding landscape. Adequate vegetation coverage would also provide additional protection for the bund against degradation during a PMF event and therefore afford better protection to both groundwater and local waterways.

03. Section B features trees sparsely planted on top of the bund. This area of the bund is not visually appealing. According to Council's flood data the bund is not required in this location, Staff request this section of the bund be removed and replanted with appropriate species to create a woodland section featuring a canopy, mid-storey and ground covers (similar to Section C).

04. Section C appears to be more mature in terms of vegetation and landform. Trees, shrubs and groundcovers planted in this area have become well established, and the bund has softened over time to look more natural. The area appears to be forming a good ecosystem. However, there are still areas with soil exposed. Staff are satisfied this area of the bund can remain, but request groundcovers and mid story shrubs be planted in the areas with exposed soil to reduce the risk of erosion in the future.

Infill Plantings

05. Staff note that rehabilitation has been progressively occurring at Mount Arthur for several years. Staff have recently completed a visual inspection from vantage points in Muswellbrook and request that additional infill planting be undertaken in areas where vegetation establishment appears uneven or lacks continuity. This would reduce areas of bare soil and would assist in erosion protection during periods of heavy rain. Infill plantings in these areas would also improve visual amenity for residents in the line of sight of the Project.

The locations requiring consideration of infill plantings are indicatively shown in Figure 2.

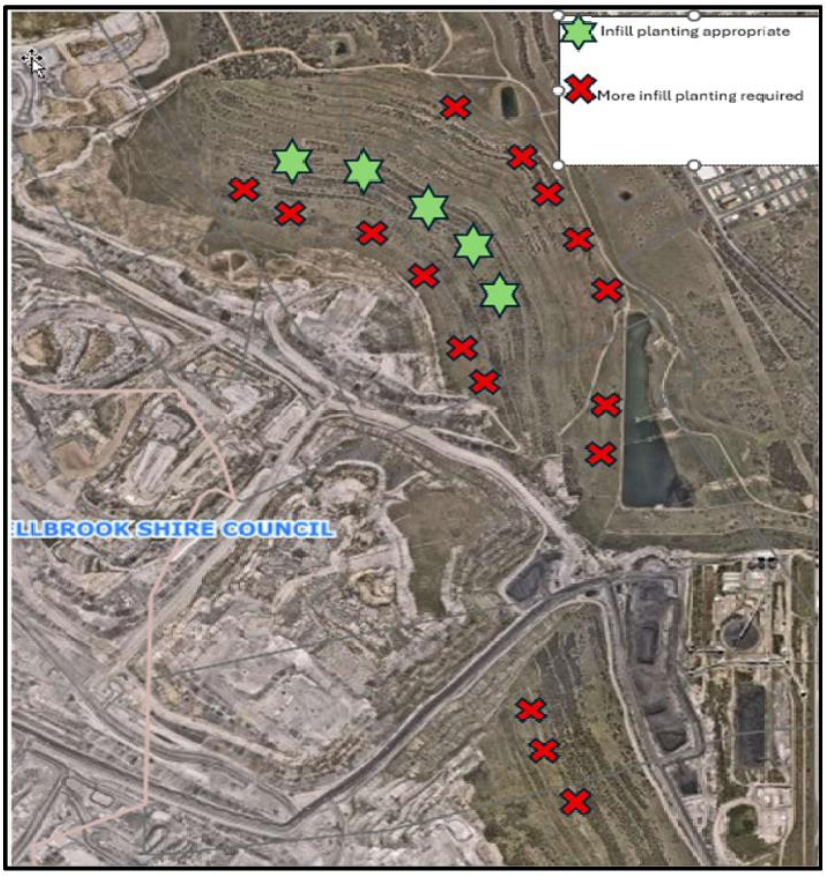

Figure 2 – Indicative areas showing where in infill plantings should be considered

06. Staff request continuing the use of species already included in the Rehabilitation Strategy but increasing the density of plantings in the areas shown in Figure 2.

Progressive Rehabilitation

07. Figure 8 shows Stage 1 rehabilitation commencing in the Overburden Emplacement Area in FY30. Staff would prefer that rehabilitation commences in the overburden emplacement area sooner than 2030, if possible.

08. Staff note several areas are not expected to be rehabilitated until 2060 and recognise that these areas include tailings dams where a longer rehabilitation period is to be expected, however further explanation is required about why areas near Thomas Mitchell Drive and the old Edderton Road are not proposed to be rehabilitated until Stage 3 (FY53-FY60).

09. While Staff recognise that rehabilitation planning will be refined over the life of the project, the current plan would benefit from greater clarity regarding the staging of rehabilitation works and the associated timeframes.

10. Staff expect that subsequent revisions of the rehabilitation strategy provide more detailed staging, performance measures and implementation timeframes, particularly as the project approaches closure. Council is committed to working with the proponent to ensure rehabilitation outcomes are robust, achievable and deliver positive long-term outcomes and improved visual amenity for the community.

Final Void Management Plan

In Section 8 of the 'MAC Consolidation Project Environmental Assessment' (Hansen Bailey, 2009, p 141), it states that 'A final void management plan will be prepared as part of the closure planning process at Mt Arthur Coal to ensure all management strategies for the voids are documented and known'.

11. A Final Void Management Plan is required and should cover the following issues include:

    a) The need for ongoing monitoring of potential seepage and any interaction with surrounding groundwater systems, erosion management, and the risk and management of any potential large-scale subsidence.
    b) Management of public access and safety, as well as identifying the entity responsible for long-term management and the mechanism for securing adequate funding for ongoing monitoring and maintenance.
    c) Protocols for catchment management, including the selection and application of fertilisers associated with rehabilitation activities, to ensure that the risk of nutrient runoff to the surrounding catchment and remaining void area is minimised.
    d) Protocols for ongoing engagement with local communities and stakeholders to address concerns, provide information, and gather feedback on void management practices.
    e) Incorporation of adaptive management principles to respond to changing conditions, emerging technologies, and new scientific understanding over time; and
    f) Long-term responsibilities, such as ongoing monitoring and maintenance, that may extend beyond the life of the mine.

Final Land Use (Alternate land use)

12. Section 4.4.2 of the Rehabilitation Strategy identifies a range of potential alternate land-use options that have been developed through preliminary strategic investigation and are expressly described as indicative only, subject to further assessment, feasibility evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and separate approvals. Staff supports this approach, as it

appropriately recognises that post-mining land-use outcomes will continue to evolve over time.

13. Section 6 provides for consideration of alternate land-use options as part of future Rehabilitation Strategy review processes. This adaptive framework is supported, as it ensures the Strategy can respond to emerging regional strategic planning outcomes, infrastructure opportunities, and community priorities over the life of the project and closure planning process.

14. Staff note that this plan will continue to be revised and recommends that ongoing refinement of post-mining land-use options continue to occur in consultation with Council to ensure alignment with evolving regional economic transition opportunities and strategic land-use planning objectives.

15. Stock fences, dams and access tracks should be established as part of rehabilitation in areas accommodating a final use of pasture / cattle grazing.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment, and staff would be pleased to provide additional information if requested. Should you need to discuss the above, please contact Tracy Ward, Environmental Planning Officer on 02 6549 3700 or email council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

Yours faithfully

Sharon Pope
Director Environment and Planning

Appendix 3 – Approval Conditions Compliance Table

Table 13 MP 09_0062 relevant conditions

Condition #	Environment Performance Condition	Addressed within
Schedule 3 Condition 42.	Schedule 3 Condition 42. The Applicant must prepare a revised Rehabilitation Strategy for the Mt Arthur mine complex to the satisfaction of the Secretary. This strategy must:	
	a) be prepared in consultation with the CPHR, the Resources Regulator and Council, and be submitted to the Secretary for approval within 12 months of the approval of Mod 2, unless otherwise agreed with the Secretary.	***Section 3.4.2***
	b) be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced person/s whose appointment has been endorsed by the Secretary.	***Section 3.4.1***
	c) align with strategic rehabilitation and mine closure objectives and address the principles of the Strategic Framework for Mine Closure (ANZMEC and MCA, 2000).	***Section 3.3***
	d) build upon the Rehabilitation Objectives in Table 14 and conceptual rehabilitation plan in Appendix 7, describe the overall rehabilitation outcomes for the site, and address all aspects of rehabilitation including mine closure, final landform (including final voids), post-mining land use/s and water management.	***Section 3.3*** ***Note, detail is built upon in RMP***
	e) describe how the rehabilitation measures would be integrated with the measures in the Biodiversity Management Plan referred to in condition 40 of Schedule 3 and the Visual Amenity and Lighting requirements referred to in condition 52 of Schedule 3	***Section 3.3 (objectives) and Section 4.1 (implementation)***
	f) include details of target vegetation communities and species to be established within the proposed revegetation areas	***Section 3.3 (objectives) and Section 4.2.5.2 (implementation)***
	g) investigate opportunities to refine and improve final landform and void outcomes over time.	***Section 4.2.3, 4.2.5.3, 4.4, 6***
	h) include a post-mining land use strategy to investigate and facilitate post-mining beneficial land uses for the site (including the final voids), that: - Considers regional and local strategic land use planning objectives and outcomes; - Supports a sustainable future for the local community; - Utilise existing mining infrastructure, where practicable; - Opportunities for regional vegetation connectivity with adjoining developments; and - Avoid disturbing self-sustaining ecosystems, where practicable	***Section 4.4***
	i) investigate ways to minimise adverse socio-economic effects with rehabilitation and mine closure; and	***Section 4.2.6 and 4.4***
	j) include a program to periodically review, and if necessary revise, this strategy at least every two years.	***Section 6***
Schedule 3 Condition 42A.	Schedule 3 Condition 42A. The Rehabilitation Strategy, as approved by the Secretary, must be implemented for the development.	***Section 4***
Schedule 5 Condition 4	Schedule 5 Condition 4 Revision of Strategies, Plans and Programs Within 3 months of: (a) the submission of an annual review under condition 3 above; (b) the submission of an incident report under condition 7 below; (c) the submission of an audit under condition 9 below; or (d) any modification to the conditions of this consent, the Applicant must review, and if necessary revise, the strategies, plans, and programs required under this consent to the satisfaction of the Secretary. Where this review leads to revisions in any such document, then within four weeks of the review the revised document must be submitted to the Secretary for approval. Note: This is to ensure the strategies, plans and programs are updated on a regular basis, and incorporate any recommended measures to improve the environmental performance of the development.	***Section 6***

Appendix 4 – Approval letter

To be included once received.

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

NSW GOVERNMENT

Our ref: MP09_0062-PA-276

Chloe McLennan
Principal Environmental
Hunter Valley Energy Coal Pty Limited
Thomas Mitchell Drive
Muswellbrook, NSW, 2333

05/06/2026

Subject: Rehabilitation Strategy

Dear Mrs McLennan

I refer to the Rehabilitation Strategy submitted in accordance with Condition 42, Schedule 3 of the consent for the Mt Arthur Coal Open Cut Extension (MP09_0062). I also acknowledge your response to the Department's review comments and request for additional information.

I note the Rehabilitation Strategy:

- has been prepared in consultation with the NSW Resources Regulator, Muswellbrook Shire Council and the Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation Group within the New South Wales Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; and
- contains the information required by the conditions of consent.

Accordingly, as nominee of the Planning Secretary, I approve the Rehabilitation Strategy (Version 6.1, 1 June 2026).

You are reminded that if there are any inconsistencies between the Strategy and the conditions of consent, the conditions prevail. Please ensure you make the document publicly available on the project website at the earliest convenience.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Jack Turner on 9995 5387.

Yours sincerely

Stephen O'Donoghue
Director
Resource Assessments
As nominee of the Planning Secretary