

Rix's Creek Continuation of Mining Project

Project Newsletter November 2015

Rix's Creek Mine

The Rix's Creek Mine is an open cut coal mine 5km north-west of Singleton which been in continuous operation since 1990. It currently produces 2.8 million Run of Mine tonnes per annum and employs 130 people from the local area. The mine is part of the Bloomfield Group which is a 100% Australian family-owned company based in the Hunter Valley.

Continuation of Mining Project – Update

We're seeking approvals to continue operations for the next 21 years, which would see the mine gradually move in a westward direction away from Singleton. Since our last newsletter our Environment Impact Statement (EIS) has been completed along with the range of supporting technical reports. We have been working hard to make sure we have undertaken a thorough set of investigations to provide a robust assessment that fully assesses the Project impacts. Key findings of the EIS are summarised below.

Key EIS Outcomes

Air Quality

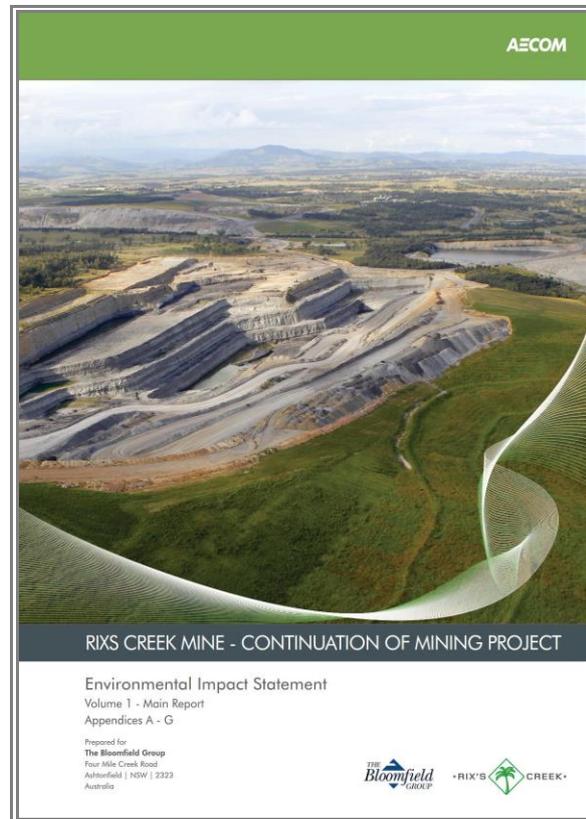
The Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) involved extensive modelling and remodelling to arrive at a mine plan which limited air quality impacts whilst ensuring the viability of the ongoing operation. The assessment concluded that the majority of sensitive receivers would be unlikely to experience changes in air quality impact beyond current levels. Whilst several receivers may experience elevated impacts, these receivers are already within existing mine impact areas. Through the application of best practise mitigation and management measures, including the implementation of a predictive modelling tool to predict and limit dust generation before it occurs, impacts can be appropriately managed or where possible, avoided.

Noise Impact

Similar to the AQIA, the Noise Impact Assessment included the use of detailed computer models to determine potential noise impacts of the Mine on residents. The ongoing use of a noise monitoring system and a predictive modelling program to allow mine activities to be modified if high noise levels are predicted ensures best practise noise management at the Mine. These measures coupled with the introduction of mining equipment noise attenuation, including for the coal wash plant, will enable the Project to operate having similar or lower noise impacts compared to historical operations.

Ecological Impacts

A detailed ecological and biodiversity assessment of the Project was undertaken to determine the ecological characteristic of the Project area and potential impacts of the Project. Given the history of disturbance across the Project area owing to mining and agricultural activities, the vegetation within the project area is highly fragmented. Areas of vegetation which represent remnant or regrowth vegetation are relatively small, isolated and offer limited habitat opportunity for fauna, including threatened fauna. Appropriate measures have been incorporated to mitigate and where possible offset ecological impacts.



EIS Cover

Social and Economic

Current operations have a negligible impact on social infrastructure. Continued operations would be managed to minimise impacts to the social fabric of the local community and The Bloomfield Group would maintain an ongoing dialogue with local residents throughout the operation of the Project. Current funding from The Bloomfield Group's community contributions would continue into the future providing a net benefit to the community. Importantly the Project would provide security of employment to the Mine's workforce,

as well as for local contractors for the life of the Project.

Mine Rehabilitation

During the preparation of the EIS, The Bloomfield Group prepared a detailed Rehabilitation Strategy to build on the success of past rehabilitation practises and incorporate these into the Project. The Rehabilitation Strategy includes a range of details regarding post mining land management aimed at returning mined areas to an appropriate stable and safe and post mining land use.

Other Environmental Considerations

The EIS also assessed potential impacts to amongst other matters, ground and surface water, Aboriginal and historic heritage, transport routes and the visual landscape. These assessments concluded that all impacts can be appropriately managed in accordance with all relevant guidelines and regulations.

Opportunity to Comment

The Rix's Creek Continuation of Mining Project EIS is on exhibition from 3 November to 3 December. The community will be able to review the EIS and make submissions to the Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E) The EIS can be viewed on the DP&E website Project page (www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au) and at the following locations:

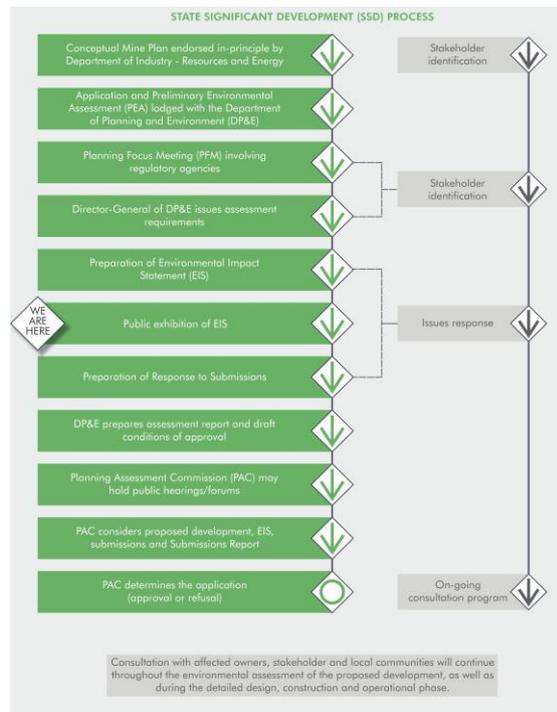
- Singleton Council, Cnr Queen St and Civic Ave, Singleton; and
- Singleton Public Library, 8-10 Queen St, Singleton.

During the exhibition period, The Bloomfield Group will also be making staff available to answer questions. More information on these Q&A opportunities will be published in the local media as dates are confirmed.

What Happens Next?

In unison with the public exhibition of the EIS, DP&E will begin its assessment of the Project. As part of this assessment DP&E will call on other relevant government agencies and stakeholders to provide technical advice and feedback on the EIS.

Following the completion of the public exhibition period, DP&E will provide The Bloomfield Group with the details of the content of the submission received during the exhibition period. This will provide The Bloomfield Group with the opportunity to consider submissions received and provide feedback. This may include providing additional information in regards to specific aspects of the Project or providing clarification with regard to how technical assessment where undertaken.



During this time, The Bloomfield Group will work closely with DP&E to ensure it has the information required to undertake a robust assessment of the Project and subsequently make informed decisions regarding Project recommendations.

As the Project progresses beyond the public exhibition stage, The Bloomfield Group will continue to provide community updates of key Project milestones, as well as provide details regarding further opportunities for community engagement.

Key Project Contacts

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Communication and Information

We welcome your questions and comments about the Rix's Creek Continuation of Mining Project, as part of the ongoing stakeholder and community consultation.

You can access further information via the Bloomfield group website, or by using the details below.

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