



# Rix's Creek North Continuation Project

Community Newsletter – May 2023

## INTRODUCTION

Bloomfield Collieries Pty Limited (Bloomfield) owns and operates Rix's Creek Mine (RCM) located in the Hunter Valley of NSW. RCM is a coal mining operation located approximately 5 km north of Singleton at its closest point. It straddles the New England Highway. RCM is made up of Rix's Creek North (RCN) (formerly Integra Open Cut) and Rix's Creek South (RCS) (the original Rix's Creek Mine).

Bloomfield is in the planning stage of extending the mine life of RCN. This is being referred to as the Rix's Creek North Continuation Project (the Project).

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Bloomfield is seeking a new approval for RCN to include the following:

- The relocation and upgrade of an approximate 4 km section of the New England Highway (NEH);
- The westerly advancement of the operations within the Camberwell Mining Area through the current NEH alignment;
- Continuation to the north and west of the existing Falbrook Mining Area out to Middle Falbrook and Stony Creek Roads;
- Maintain the overall combined peak raw coal extraction rate of 6 Million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) at Falbrook and Camberwell mining areas, but with increased flexibility;
- A revised final landform, including changes to the number, location and volumes of the final voids;
- As a result of advances in equipment noise mitigation and increased distance to near neighbours, ability to mine 24/7 in all areas, including the Falbrook Mining Area (currently approved between 7 am and 10 pm);
- Extension of mine life from that currently approved for RCN (i.e. end 2035) by approximately 14 years up until the end of 2049; and

- Ability to take overburden from RCN to RCS to improve rehabilitation outcomes.

### Project Benefits

The Project is expected to generate:

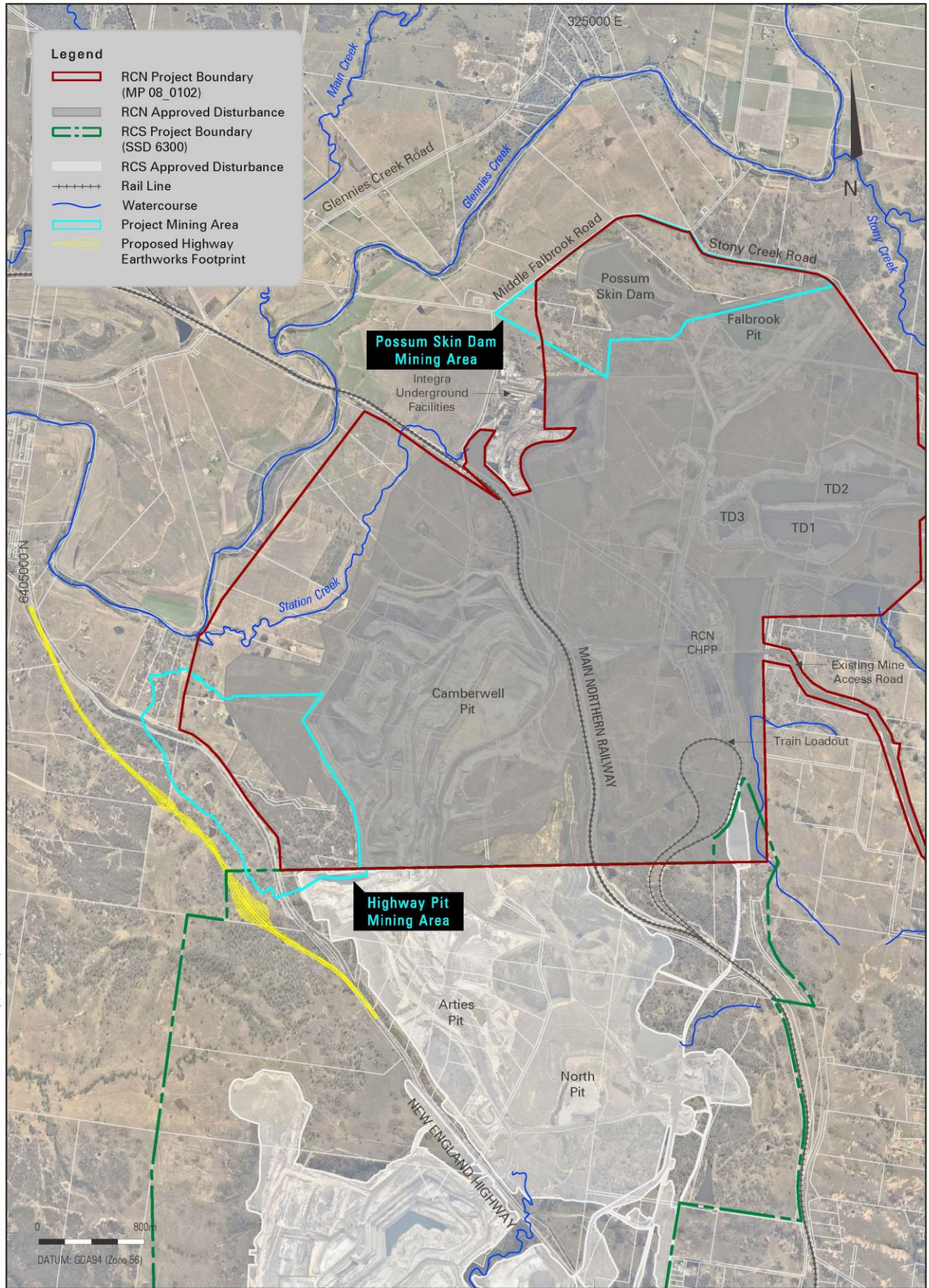
- Continued employment for the mining workforce until 2049 with associated taxation payable to both State (Payroll tax) and Commonwealth (Group tax);
- Approximately 60 direct jobs during the construction of the NEH realignment;
- Royalties from another 63.5 Mt of ROM coal being mined;
- Corporate income tax payments from the additional years of mining;
- A final landform with no high walls; and
- An upgraded, improved and more efficient NEH alignment.

Figure 1 depicts the key components of the Project layout.

## PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Project is classified as State Significant Development and will require approval under *the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. This means an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared, and the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces or the Independent Planning Commission will determine the development application.

The Project has commenced a Scoping Phase, involving early planning of the specialist environmental, social and economic studies to be undertaken, including a Social Impact Assessment, as part of preparing an EIS. A Scoping Report will be prepared and submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), requesting the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the project.



JBA 2156 011 - RCN - CONCEPTUAL PROJECT LAYOUT (14/05/2023)

RIXS CREEK NORTH CONTINUATION PROJECT



Conceptual Project Layout

**FIGURE 1**

The SEARs will identify the type and detail of technical and environmental assessments, and the level of consultation required to be undertaken.

The Project will also require an approval under the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The project will be referred to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). DCCEEW will issue guidance on the scope of the assessment, which will be detailed in the EIS produced for State approval under a bilateral agreement. James Bailey & Associates, a specialist environmental consultancy firm, has been engaged to prepare the Scoping Report, the EIS (including a Social Impact Assessment (SIA)) and the EPBC Act Referral required for the Project.

A flowchart showing the key approvals and consultation stages in relation to the Project is shown in Figure 2.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Specialist technical studies being undertaken for the EIS to identify impacts resulting from the Project include:

- Water Resources (surface water & groundwater);
- Ecology;
- Aboriginal Cultural and Historic Heritage;
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas;
- Acoustics (noise and blasting);
- Soils, Rehabilitation and Final Landform;
- Geochemistry;
- Traffic and Transport;
- Visual; and
- Socio-economics.

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Community engagement is an important component of the Project's planning and assessment process. Community engagement is proposed to take the form of regular Newsletter updates to neighbours, personal discussions with affected stakeholders who request a briefing, regular presentations to the RCM Community Consultative Committee (CCC) and a community survey.

The main purpose of the stakeholder engagement is to identify any community concerns in relation to the Project, so that they can be carefully considered in the planning and approvals process.

As part of the SIA scoping phase, a survey has been designed to obtain community input into the

identification of potential social impacts and benefits related to the Project for further investigation during the EIS phase. The results of this survey will be presented within the Scoping Report submitted to the DPE.

The survey can be completed online by scanning the QR code below or going to (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YMSB8RD>). Hard copies of the community survey can be made available if requested. We ask that interested parties please complete the survey by 31 May 2023. Please note that your responses will remain confidential.



## COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The RCM Community Consultative Committee (CCC) has an independent Chairperson and generally meets bi-annually. A meeting was held in May 2023 and included a briefing in relation to the Project. The CCC members are listed on the Bloomfield website should you wish to independently discuss any aspects of the RCM operation or this project. ([www.bloomcoll.com.au](http://www.bloomcoll.com.au)).

## WHERE TO FROM HERE

The preparation of the EIS has commenced in parallel with exploration works, monitoring and various environmental and community assessment activities. The specialist EIS technical studies are anticipated to continue throughout the later part of 2023 and into early 2024.

If you would like to be kept informed over the progress of the Project or receive a more detailed briefing, please provide your preferred contact details via one of the contact methods below.

## CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions in regard to the Project and EIS activities please contact:

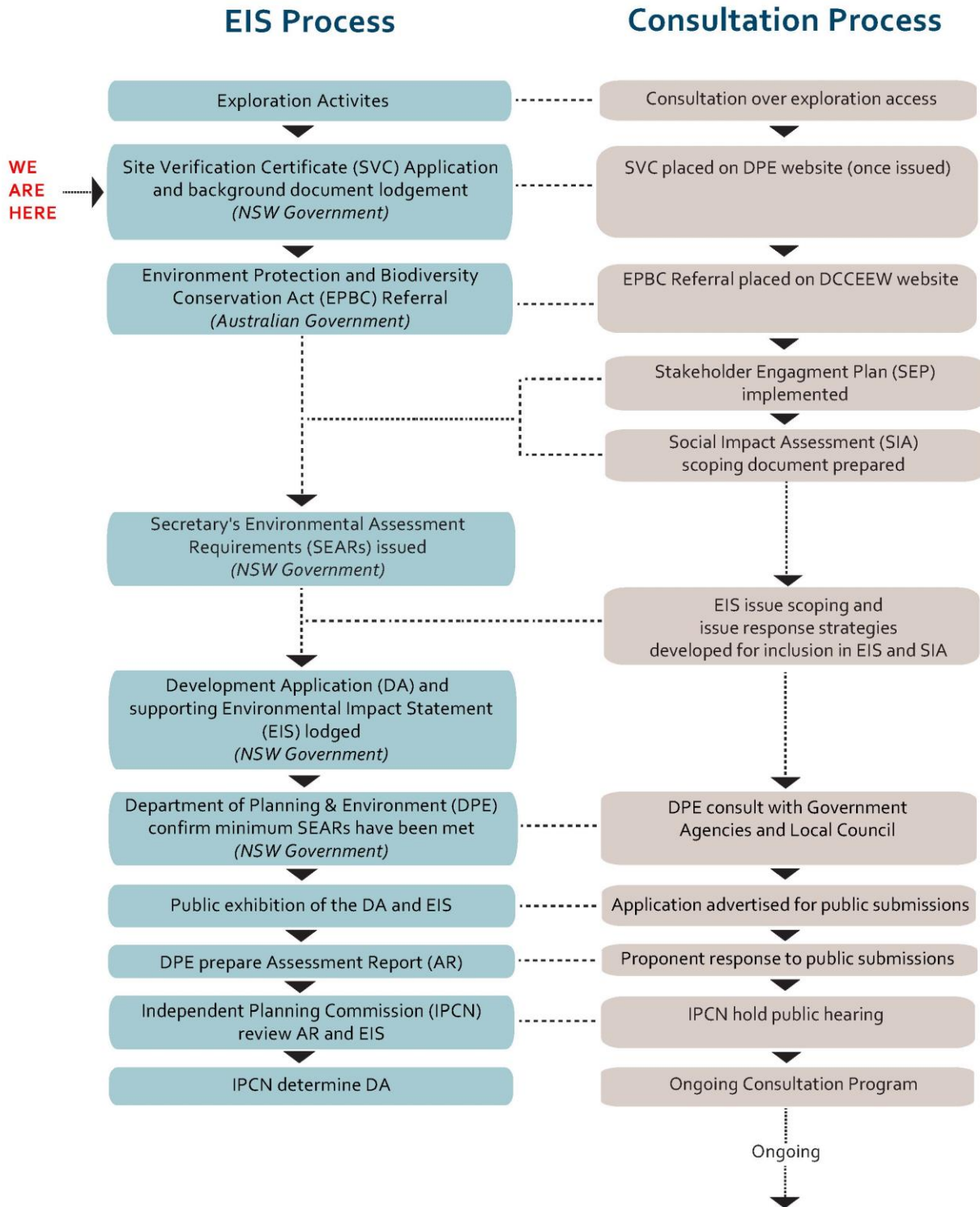
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# NSW Approval Process



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NSW SSD Approvals Process