Wilpinjong Coal Mine

Wilpinjong Continuation Project

Gateway Application Technical Overview

Peabody

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OVERVIEW

Wilpinjong Coal Pty Ltd (WCPL) was granted Exploration Licence (EL) 9399 in May 2022, which lies to the east of the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine operations within Mining Lease (ML) 1573 and ML 1779.

EL 9399 and the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine are located approximately 40 kilometres north-east of Mudgee within the Mid-Western Regional Local Government Area, in central New South Wales (NSW).

WCPL, a wholly owned subsidiary of Peabody Energy Australia Pty Ltd, is seeking to extend open cut mining operations at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine further east into EL 9399 to facilitate mining activities in Pits 9 and 10 (the Project).

WCPL is lodging an application for a Gateway Certificate (Gateway Application) for the Project, as the area includes land mapped as potential biophysical strategic agricultural land (BSAL).

Freehold land within the Gateway Application Area is owned by WCPL.

The landscape within and surrounding the Gateway Application Area is largely characterised by cleared open grasslands with scattered trees on gently to moderately sloping land. Some areas of steeper slopes associated with an elevated sandstone ridgeline are present, however, the ridgeline is excluded from the Gateway Application Area.

Contemporary land uses within and proximal to the Gateway Application area includes coal mining, agriculture and environmental conservation.

No equine or viticulture enterprises are located within the Gateway Application Area.

Assessment of Criteria related to Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land

The supporting documentation to the Gateway Application considers the potential impacts of the Project on BSAL. The key conclusions of these assessments are:

- The Project can be designed to meet the minimal impact considerations defined in the *NSW Aquifer Interference Policy*.
- There are no predicted impacts to private bores as a result of the Project.
- The Project would result in the permanent removal of approximately 90 hectares of potential BSAL in the Gateway Application Area.
- The loss of agricultural land use within the Gateway Application Area as a result of the Project would have a minimal impact on agricultural production at a local, regional and State level.

Plate ES-1 – Land in EL 9399 – Pit 10 Adjacent Ulan-Wollar Road Looking south-west (2rog Consulting Pty Ltd, 2026)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Wilpinjong Coal Pty Limited (WCPL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Peabody Energy Australia Pty Ltd (Peabody), is seeking consent to extend existing open cut mining activities at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine. The proposal is herein referred to as the Wilpinjong Continuation Project (the Project).

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine is owned and operated by WCPL and located approximately 40 kilometres (km) north-east of Mudgee, within the Mid-Western Regional Local Government Area (LGA) in central New South Wales (NSW) (Figure 1).

The Gateway Application Area includes land verified as potential Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) in accordance with the *Strategic Regional Land Use Policy – Interim Protocol for Site Verification and Mapping of Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land* (Interim Protocol) (NSW Government, 2013).

No land mapped as equine critical industry cluster or viticulture critical industry cluster in the NSW *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resources and Energy) 2021* (Resources and Energy SEPP) is located in the Gateway Application Area.

This document is a Gateway Certificate Application Technical Overview in support of an application for a Gateway Certificate (Gateway Application), pursuant to Division 4 of the Resources and Energy SEPP.

1.2 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The Gateway Application will be assessed by the Mining and Petroleum Gateway Panel (the Gateway Panel) for potential impacts of the Project on strategic agricultural land and associated water resources. The Gateway Panel undertakes its assessment in accordance with the relevant criteria (that apply specifically to BSAL), outlined in clause 2.31(4) of the Resources and Energy SEPP.

The Gateway process applies to State Significant mining developments that require a new mining lease (ML). The Gateway Application Area, as described in this document, is defined as the extent of open cut mining and associated infrastructure areas[1] (incorporating a suitable buffer).

Components of the Project that are outside of the Gateway Application Area and the definition under the Resources and Energy SEPP are not subject to the Gateway Application (e.g. existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine components and public infrastructure realignments).

The Gateway Panel considers projects at a very early stage before a development application and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is lodged.

WCPL will undertake further consultation, mine planning, detailed design and environmental assessment on aspects that are not relevant to the Gateway Application. The outcomes of additional work and consideration of any Gateway Certificate will be documented in the EIS.

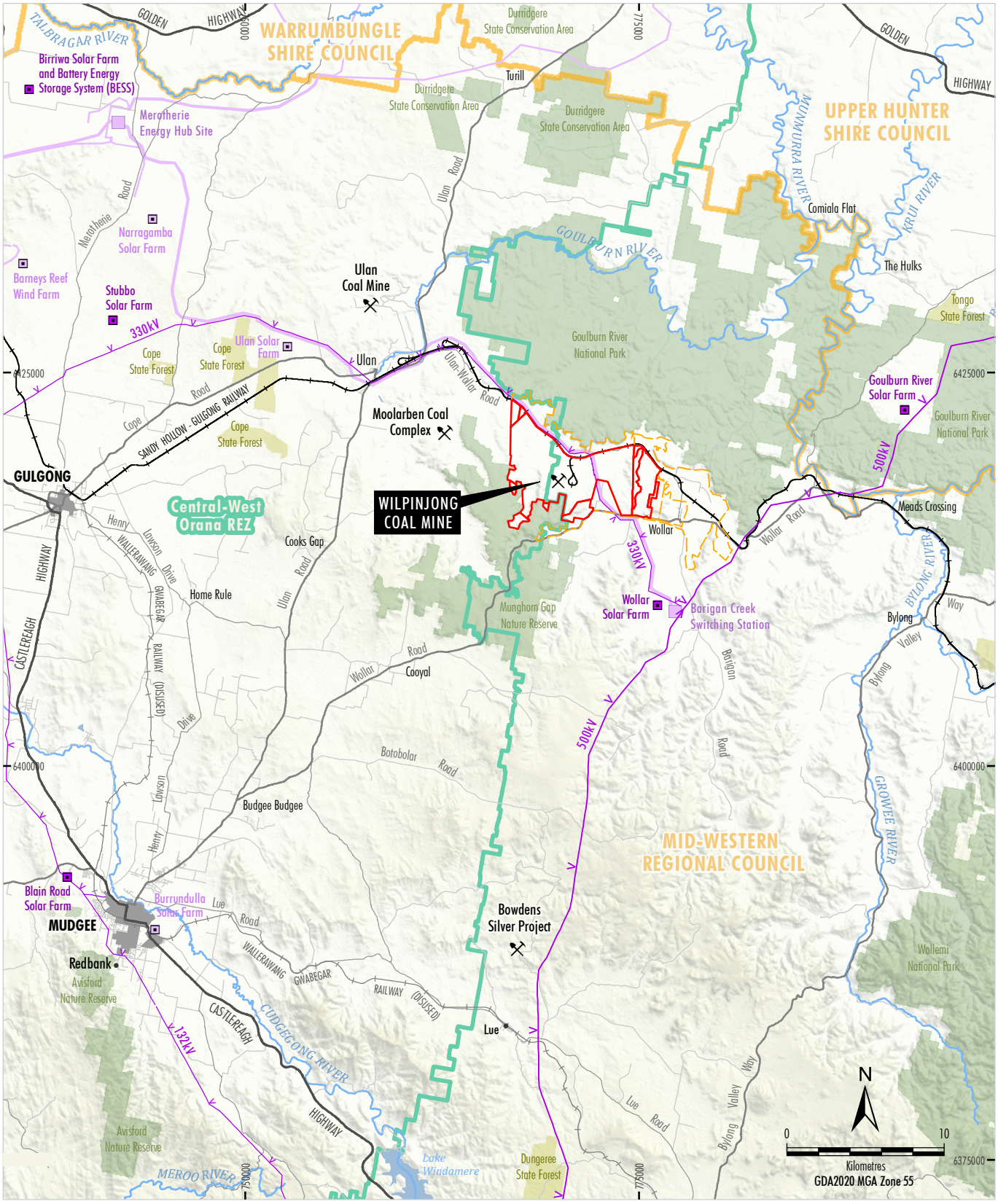
1.3 BACKGROUND

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine is situated in a recognised coal extraction precinct in the Western Coalfield, which also includes the Moolarben Coal Complex and the Ulan Coal Mine (Figure 1).

Wilpinjong Coal Mine has been operating in the Mid-Western Regional LGA since 2006 (Plate 1) and has contributed more than $950 million in royalty payments to the NSW Government since commencement (as at 31 March 2026).

Plate 1 Wilpinjong Coal Mine Operations

[1] Limited to surface infrastructure that falls within the definition of 'mining and petroleum development' under clause 2.24 of the Resources and Energy SEPP.



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Source: NSW Spatial Services (2026); EnergyCo (2026)

LEGEND

- National Park, Nature Reserve or State Conservation Area
- State Forest
- Local Government Area
- Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)
- Central-West Orana REZ Transmission Project Preferred Corridor
- Central-West Orana REZ Transmission Project Energy Hub
- Proposed Energy Generation Site
- Existing/Approved Energy Generation Site
- High Voltage Electricity Transmission Line
- Mining Lease Boundary
- Exploration Licence Boundary
- Mining Operation

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WILPINJONG COAL MINE

Project Location

Figure 1

The current (Quarter 1 2026) operational workforce of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine is approximately 705 people (Plate 2).

Plate 2 Wilpinjong Coal Mine Employees

Exploration Licence (EL) 9399, adjacent to the currently approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine, was granted by the NSW Government to WCPL in May 2022 under an operational allocation. Exploration activities, engineering studies and environmental baseline studies have been ongoing since this time to support an extension to the life of the operation.

Results from exploration within EL 9399 have identified the Gateway Application Area as an area with potential for future coal resource development. The Gateway Certificate Application Area is thus a subset of EL 9399 (Figure 2).

The Project involves an open cut pit extension of the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine to the east within EL 9399.

This extension would avoid an impending ramp down of production and associated workforce and extend the life of mining activities from 2033 to 2038.

As well as this Gateway Application, WCPL will lodge a separate Scoping Report that will provide a description of the Project to key State regulatory agencies, to initiate the preparation of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) in accordance with clause 173 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (EP&A Regulation). The SEARs will identify any further matters that will need to be addressed in the EIS for the Project.

The Project will also be referred to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water for consideration as to whether the Project meets the criteria of a 'Controlled Action' and requires approval under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

It is anticipated that the Gateway Panel will issue a Gateway Certificate for the Project in accordance with the Resources and Energy SEPP. On this basis, the SEARs will be prepared by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) in consideration of:

- the Scoping Report;
- aspects raised by the relevant regulatory agencies;
- the decision of the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water regarding the referral of the relevant 'Action' under the EPBC Act;
- any recommendations of the Gateway Panel for any Gateway Certificate issued in relation to the Project; and
- applicable guidelines and statutory considerations.

1.4 PROPONENT

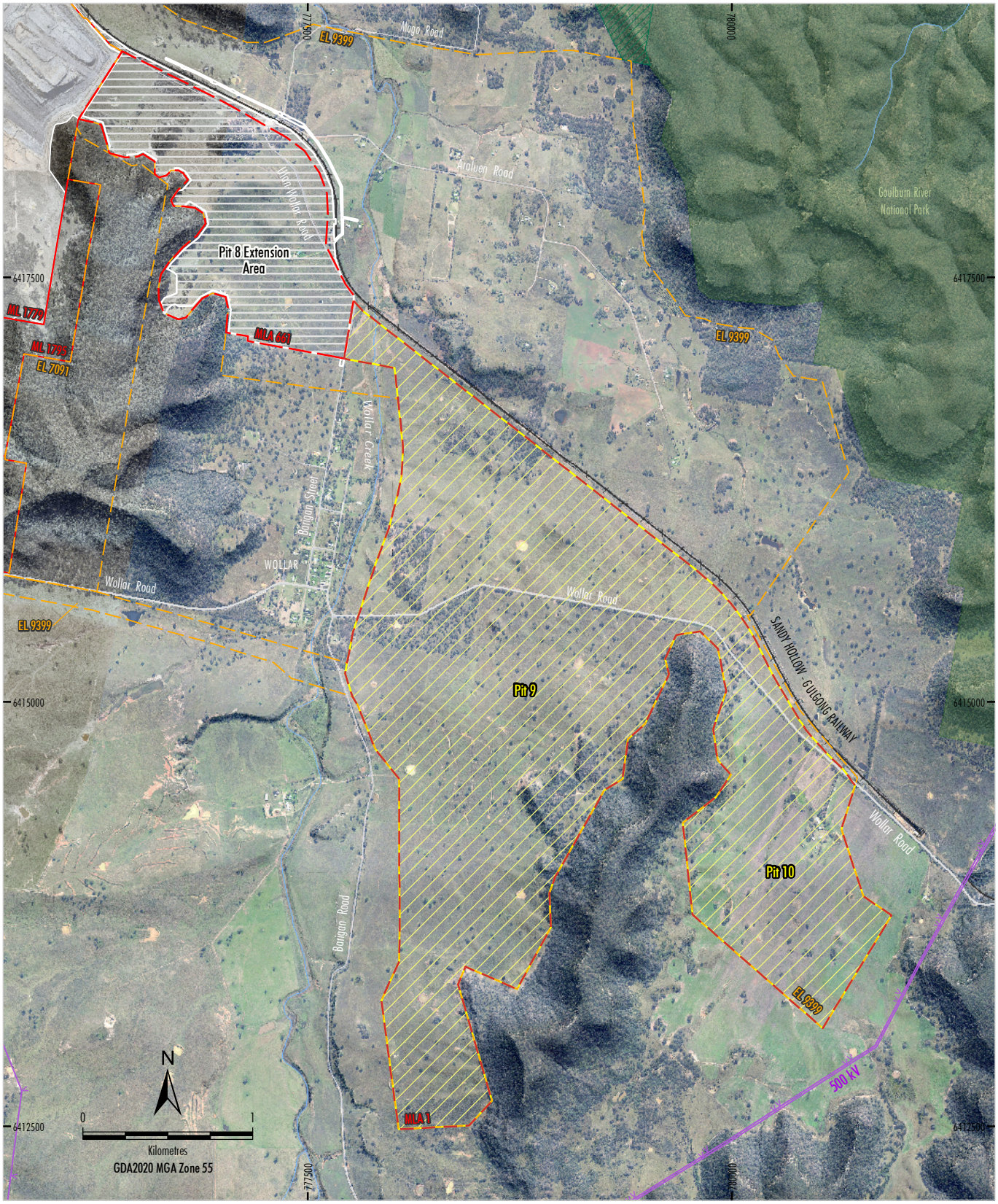
The Applicant for the Project is:

Wilpinjong Coal Pty Ltd
ABN 87 104 594 694
Locked Bag 2005
Mudgee NSW 2850

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine site webpage can be found on the Peabody website:

https://www.peabodyenergy.com/Operations/Australia-Mining/New-South-Wales-Mining/Wilpinjong-Mine

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine is located at 1434 Ulan-Wollar Road, Wilpinjong NSW 2850.



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LEGEND

- Existing TransGrid Electricty Transmission Line
- National Park
- Existing Biodiversity Offset Transferred to the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Estate
- Exploration Licence Boundary (EL)
- Mining Lease Boundary (ML)
- Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Proposed Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Approved/Existing Surface Development Area
- Proposed Pit 8 Extension (MOD3) *
- Pit 8 Extension Development Footprint
- Proposed Pits 9 and 10 (Wilpinjong Continuation Project) #
- Gateway Application Area

* Currently under assessment by DPHI.

\# Inclusive of associated surface infrastructure that falls within the definition of 'mining and petroleum development' under cl 2.24 of the Resources and Energy SEPP.

Source: WCPL (2026); NSW Spatial Services (2026)
Orthophoto Mosaic: WCPL (July 2024 - Oct 2022)

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WILPINJONG COAL MINE

Gateway Application Area

Figure 2

1.5 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The main components of the Project include:

- extension of open cut operations within EL 9399 and proposed ML application areas to allow mining of additional coal reserves;
- approximately 550 hectares (ha) of open cut extensions and associated infrastructure development;
- extension of the approved mine life to 31 December 2038[2];
- conventional open cut mining activities extracting approximately 70 million tonnes (Mt) of ROM coal over the life of the Project at rates of up to 12 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa);
- extension of employment of the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine operational workforce until 2038;
- use of the existing mobile fleet where practical, with replacement of major equipment and haul trucks where necessary;
- construction of a heavy vehicle haul road and bridge crossing over Wollar Creek to connect Pits 9 and 10 to the Pit 8 Extension area;
- construction of a new mine infrastructure area, including maintenance workshop, re-fuelling facilities, crib facilities, administration building and other supporting infrastructure adjacent to Pit 9;
- realignment and upgrades of some public infrastructure to facilitate the construction of Pits 9 and 10 (e.g. sections of public roads, local low voltage powerlines and telecommunication services);
- continued use of the approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine Coal Handling and Preparation Plant (CHPP), coal handling and rail loading infrastructure;
- continued disposal of CHPP coal reject materials on-site via a combination of in-pit co-disposal with waste rock and disposal in existing on-site tailings storage facilities (that may be augmented to increase capacity);
- rail transport of thermal coal to domestic and export customers (within existing maximum daily rail limits);
- augmentation and extension of water management infrastructure including additional water storages/dams, pumps, pipelines, drains, irrigation systems and controlled release infrastructure as required; and
- other associated infrastructure, plant, equipment and activities.

Additional details of each of the main Project components are provided in Section 4.

1.6 PROJECT TEAM

This Gateway Application Technical Overview was prepared by Resource Strategies Pty Ltd with specialist input provided by the following organisations:

- WCPL project team (project design, project rationale, consultation);
- 2rog Consulting Pty Ltd (2rog) (Agricultural Impact Statement [Appendix A]);
- Minesoils Pty Ltd (Minesoils) (BSAL Site Assessment Report [Appendix D of Appendix A] and Land and Soil Capability [LSC] Assessment [Appendix B of Appendix A]); and
- SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd (SLR) (Preliminary Groundwater Assessment [Appendix B]).
- HydroAlgorithmics Pty Ltd (HydroAlgorithmics) (Peer Review of the Preliminary Groundwater Assessment [Appendix C]).

[2] Extraction of run-of-mine (ROM) coal would only occur until 31 December 2037, and completion of associated void backfilling operations would occur until 31 December 2038 (with no extraction of coal planned during this last year).

1.7 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This Gateway Application Technical Overview is structured as follows:

Section 1 Introduction – provides a background of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine and an overview of the Project.

Section 2 Consultation – provides a description of the consultation undertaken in support of the Gateway Application.

Section 3 Agricultural Context – describes the local and regional agricultural context.

Section 4 Project Description and Project Rationale – provides a clear and concise description of the Project, indicates the types of activities that will be undertaken and summarises the Project rationale.

Section 5 Consideration of Gateway Criteria – provides an assessment of BSAL in the Gateway Application Area.

Section 6 Strategies to Minimise Potential Impacts on BSAL – describes strategies that would be implemented to minimise the potential impacts.

Section 7 Conclusion – provides the key conclusions of the Gateway Application.

Section 8 References – lists the documented cited in Sections 1 to 7.

2 CONSULTATION

2.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WCPL maintains open lines of communication with the community through a number of community initiatives and local involvement, including, but not limited to:

- engagement with the Wilpinjong Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee (CCC) operated in accordance with *Community consultative committee guideline* (Department of Planning and Environment, 2023);
- meetings with the existing Registered Aboriginal Parties Consultation Committee (RAPCC) and the combined Cultural Heritage Liaison Sub Committee and Native Title Implementation Committee;
- maintenance of a website within the Peabody web domain (https://www.peabodyenergy.com/) and a Facebook page for the general public to keep up to date with the operations of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine;
- established points of contact for the community to ask specific questions or provide feedback, including a Community Hotline, a Community Blasting Hotline and an email address;
- regular contact with local community groups through WCPL's active support of groups through sponsorships and donations;
- monthly 'Have A Chat' sessions where local residents are encouraged to use the sessions to voice any questions or concerns they have in relation to the Wilpinjong Coal Mine; and
- involvement and partnerships with local and regional contractors and suppliers.

2.2 PROJECT CONSULTATION TO DATE

WCPL has been transparent and open in its communication with the community regarding the Project. This has included consultation undertaken during public exhibition of the proposed Modification 3 and the publication of WCPL's future plans on the Wilpinjong Coal Mine website.

WCPL remains committed to continue constructive and open dialogue with the local community and key stakeholders for the duration of the Project.

Specific engagement completed to date in relation to the Project has included:

- Presentation to the CCC on 25 March 2026 which included an update on the Project.
- Presentations to the Mid-Western Regional Council on 3 and 30 March 2026.

A notice of intention to lodge the Gateway Application was published in the Mudgee Guardian on 28 March 2026.

Further, 2rog conducted interviews with land managers of WCPL-owned land that overlaps the Gateway Application Area as part of the Agricultural Impact Statement. These interviews informed an understanding of the potential agricultural production impact of the Project on these properties.

2.2.1 Modification 3

WCPL submitted a proposed modification to Development Consent (SSD-6764) in September 2025 (Modification 3) which sought an extension of mining activities in Pit 8 (Pit 8 Extension) and a modest mine life extension by approximately 6 months.

Modification 3 represents the most recent and substantive proposal to extend the approved life and operational footprint of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine.

The Modification Report for Modification 3 was placed on public exhibition by DPHI from 2 October 2025 to 30 October 2025.

A total of 930 submissions on the Modification Report were received from NSW Government agencies and the local council, organisations and members of the public. Of these submissions, 610 (66 percent [%]) submissions expressed support for the Modification.

The key environmental and social issues raised in objections to the Modification included biodiversity (80%), greenhouse gas emissions (79%), depopulation of Wollar (61%), Aboriginal cultural heritage (58%) and groundwater (56%).

Less than 11% of objecting submissions on the Modification from members of the public and organisations raised issues regarding agriculture and loss of farmland.

2.3 ONGOING CONSULTATION

A stakeholder engagement program has been developed for the Project. Key objectives of this program include:

- constructive engagement with key government and public stakeholders regarding the Project;
- seeking feedback from key stakeholders on various elements of the Project; and
- continue the ongoing dialogue between WCPL and key stakeholders regarding the Wilpinjong Coal Mine, incorporating the Project.

A dedicated stakeholder engagement program has also been developed for the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) that will be prepared for the Project EIS. Consultation has commenced for the SIA Scoping Report (including consultation with Mid-Western Regional Council and CCC), and consultation with the community will continue over the next 12 months to inform the SIA for the Project.

Further, WCPL has commenced and will continue consultation with the Aboriginal community during preparation of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment for the Project EIS. Registered Aboriginal Parties will be consulted in accordance with the *Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010* (NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, 2010), and the NSW *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.*

Consultation will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following government agencies and authorities:

- NSW DPHI;
- Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water;
- Mid-Western Regional Council;
- NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) – Water;
- NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development) (including DPI Agriculture and DPI Fisheries);
- NSW Local Land Services;
- NSW Environment Protection Authority;
- NSW Conservation Planning and Offsets Division;
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services;
- NSW Crown Lands;
- NSW Resources (within the Department of Regional NSW);
- NSW Resources Regulator;
- Heritage NSW;
- Transport for NSW;
- NSW Health;
- NSW Rural Fire Service;
- NSW Ambulance; and
- NSW Police.

3 AGRICULTURAL CONTEXT

3.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Project is located in the Mid-Western Regional LGA, and within the Central Tablelands Local Land Services (LLS) region of central NSW (2rog, 2026). The LLS region spans an area of approximately 31,000 square kilometres (km^2), and includes major towns of Bathurst, Blayney, Cowra, Lithgow, Molong, Oberon and Orange (2rog, 2026).

3.1.1 Central Tablelands

The Central Tablelands LLS region generates approximately 4.2% of NSW's annual value of agricultural production (2rog, 2026). Approximately 7% of the Central Tablelands LLS regional employment is employed in the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry sector (Department of Primary Industries [DPI], 2020).

The main agricultural activities in this region include beef livestock production, and wool and sheep meat production (DPI, 2020). Other agricultural activities include cropping, grazing, irrigated farming and broad acre crop and horticulture enterprises (NSW LLS, n.d).

3.1.2 Mid-Western Regional Local Government Area

The Mid-Western Regional LGA covers an area of approximately 8,750 km^2, representing around 27% of the total land area of the Central Tablelands LLS region.

The Mid-Western Regional LGA supports a range of industry sectors, with coal mining the dominant industry and a key driver of the local economy. Coal mining operations contribute approximately 73% of the LGA's gross revenue (approximately $4,490 million annually) (REMPLAN, 2025). Agriculture, forestry and fisheries, contribute approximately 3.5% of the LGA's gross revenue ($214 million) (REMPLAN, 2025).

According to 2015/2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data, the Mid-Western Regional LGA contributed to 3.4% (i.e. approximately $90.5 million) of the Central Tablelands regional agricultural Gross Value Production, the largest contributors being from beef cattle ($45.68 million), wool production ($17.9 million) and sheep farming ($12.46 million) (DPI, 2020).

3.2 LOCAL CONTEXT

3.2.1 Topography

The landscape within and surrounding the Gateway Application Area is largely characterised by cleared open grasslands with scattered trees on gently to moderately sloping land. Some areas of steeper slopes associated with an elevated sandstone ridgeline are present, however, the ridgeline is excluded from the Gateway Application Area (Plate 3).

Plate 3 Land to the west outside of the Gateway Application Area looking towards the ridgeline between the Gateway Application Area (2rog, 2026)

Elevations range from approximately 501 metres Australian Height Datum (m AHD) on slopes rising to the ridgeline in the central area between Pits 9 and 10, falling in a general north-west direction to approximately 350 m AHD on lower sections of drainage flats (Minesoils, 2026a).

The Gateway Application Area is dominated by soils with low and moderately low fertility, including but not limited to Eutrophic Red Dermosols, Eutrophic Red Chromosols, Eutrophic Red/Yellow/Grey/ Brown Kandosols and Subnatric Yellow Sodosols (Minesoils, 2026a).

3.2.2 Water Resources

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine is located in the Wollar Creek catchment, which forms part of the Hunter River Basin.

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine is located directly south of Wilpinjong Creek, a headwater tributary of Wollar Creek which joins the Goulburn River north-east of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine.

The main drainage feature relevant to the Gateway Application Area is Wollar Creek, which flows northwards to the west of the Gateway Application Area.

Wollar Creek drains a catchment area of about 280 km^2 (to its confluence with Wilpinjong Creek) that extends about 30 km to the south of the Sandy Hollow-Gulgong Railway. Wollar Creek joins the Goulburn River approximately 13 km downstream of the Wilpinjong Creek confluence (Water and Environment Pty Ltd [WRM], 2025).

There are no known private surface water users of Wilpinjong Creek or Wollar Creek downstream of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine (WRM, 2025).

The Wollar Creek Water Source, associated with the *Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022*, is the main mapped 'highly productive' groundwater source in the vicinity of the Project (SLR, 2026). The 'highly productive' alluvium of the Wollar Creek Water Source as defined by the NSW DCCEEW is mapped along Wollar Creek and Wilpinjong Creek (SLR, 2026).

No private groundwater bores have been identified in the vicinity of the Gateway Application Area (SLR, 2026).

Groundwater use on non-WCPL owned land in the vicinity of the Gateway Application area is limited to one bore at Wollar Public School (understood not to be registered) that was used for watering recreational areas and gardens (SLR, 2026).

3.2.3 Land Use

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine has been operating since 2006. Land associated with the proposed Project is largely freehold land owned by WCPL. Relevant land tenure in the Gateway Application Area is shown on Figure 3[3].

Contemporary land uses within and proximal to the Gateway Application area include coal mining, agriculture and environmental conservation.

The majority of the Gateway Application Area has been previously cleared and used historically for light grazing on native pastures (Plate 4), whilst select paddocks and areas of steeper slope remain moderately to heavily timbered.

Plate 4 Property Leased within the Gateway Application Area (2rog, 2026)

WCPL owned land within the Gateway Application Area is currently leased to two land managers for agricultural production, primarily beef cattle grazing on native pastures (2rog, 2026).

Each property is subject to rotational grazing practices based on pasture conditions and cattle needs (2rog, 2026).

Water for these agricultural activities is primarily sourced from WCPL bores located on the north-eastern and western portions of the Gateway Application Area, Wollar Creek, and shallow dams (2rog, 2026).

[3] It is noted that the Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council is progressively being granted freehold title to some Crown Land parcels in the region. WCPL notes some parcels that are currently Crown Land in the provisional Development Application area may be converted to freehold tenure prior to determination of the Project proposal.

Source: NSW Spatial Services (2026)

LEGEND

- Exploration Licence Boundary (EL)
- Mining Lease Boundary (ML)
- Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Proposed Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Proposed Pits 9 and 10 (Wilpinjong Continuation Project) #
- Gateway Application Area
- Peabody-controlled Land
- Crown Land (Peabody Leased)
- Crown Land ^
- Railway Land
- Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Private Landholder
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Estate
- Existing Biodiversity Offset Transferred to the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Estate
- Peabody-owned Dwelling
- Community Building
- Private Dwelling

Inclusive of associated surface infrastructure that falls within the definition of 'mining and petroleum development' under cl 2.24 of the Resources and Energy SEPP.

^ It is noted that the Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council is progressively being granted freehold title to some Crown Land parcels in the region. WCPL notes some parcels that are currently Crown Land in the provisional Development Application area may be converted to freehold tenure prior to determination of the Project proposal.

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WILPINJONG COAL MINE

Relevant Land Ownership

Figure 3

4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PROJECT RATIONALE

4.1 EXISTING WILPINJONG MINE

4.1.1 Open Cut Mining Operations

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine has a current approved operational capacity of 16 Mtpa, until December 2033 under Development Consent (SSD-6764).

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine produces thermal coal products which are transported by rail to domestic customers for use in electricity generation and/or to port for export. Open cut mining operations are undertaken 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

The approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine includes some eight named open cut pits (i.e. Pits 1-8), plus significant ancillary and supporting infrastructure.

This infrastructure includes ROM coal storage, coal handling and processing, rail spur, rail loading, internal roads, pipelines, electricity distribution, workshops and water management structures.

4.1.2 Water Management

The site water management strategy for the Wilpinjong Coal Mine is based on the containment and re-use of mine water as well as the control of sediment that may be potentially carried with runoff from disturbed areas such as waste rock emplacements or areas cleared in advance of mining.

Existing and/or approved water management infrastructure at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine includes:

- a water treatment facility including a reverse osmosis plant;
- water storages, including a raw water dam, dedicated recycled water dam and clean water dam;
- dedicated in-pit tailings storages;
- up to 19 water supply bores and associated pipelines; and
- pumps and pipelines for Environment Protection Licence (EPL) discharge, on-site transfers and irrigation.

4.2 PROJECT ACTIVITES

The Project would facilitate the extension of Wilpinjong Coal Mine open cut mining operations for an additional 4.5 years (to 2038), maintain ROM coal production at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine within existing approved limits and add new operating areas for the mobile fleet.

Extraction of ROM coal would occur until 31 December 2037, and completion of associated void backfilling operations would occur until 31 December 2038 (with no proposed extraction of coal during this period).

It has been assumed that Project mining activities would commence in 2030, therefore, the Project encompasses continued and altered production rates in Pits 1-8 to reflect parallel extraction from Pits 9 and 10.

A summary of the key characteristics of the Project is provided in Table 1.

4.2.1 Open Cut Mining Operations

There would be no increase to the currently approved maximum annual ROM coal production or annual waste rock production rates for the Project.

The Project would involve extraction of up to 12 Mtpa of ROM coal using conventional open cut mining methods (such as drilling and blasting, consistent with the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine operations [Plate 5]).

Plate 5 Open Cut Mining Activities at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine (Pit 6)

Open cut mining activities and associated mobile equipment movements at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine would continue to be undertaken 24 hours per day, seven days per week, subject to compliance with relevant environmental management criteria (e.g. real-time air quality and noise operational trigger levels).

Table 1
Summary of the Approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine, Modification 3, and the Project

Component	Approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine under Development Consent (SSD-6764)	Proposed Modification 3	The Project
Mining Method and Open Cut Extent	• Open cut mining operation with an indicative mine program for the extraction of approximately 349 Mt of total ROM coal over the life of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine[1]. • Eight open cut pits and associated contained infrastructure area comprising approximately 3,000 ha.	• Relinquishment of approved extraction of more than 7 Mt of ROM coal (Cumbo Creek corridor and Rocky Hill complex). • Extraction of approximately 14 Mt of additional ROM coal from the Pit 8 Extension area. • Extension of Pit 8 by approximately 115 ha, and a reduction in disturbance of approximately 50 ha associated with the Cumbo Creek corridor and Rocky Hill complex.	• Extraction of approximately 45 Mt of additional ROM coal from Pits 9 and 10 (approximately 70 Mt of ROM coal over the life of the Project). • Extension of open cut mining operations east of Pit 8 Extension area into Pits 9 and 10 (approximately 550 ha).
Maximum Annual ROM Coal Production	• Up to 16 Mtpa of ROM coal.	• No change.	• Extraction of up to 12 Mtpa of ROM coal.
Mine Life	• 28 years with mining authorised until 31 December 2033.	• No change to timeframe for ROM coal production (ceases in 31 December 2033). • Additional six months of mining operations to backfill voids and shape final landform.	• Extension of the approved mine life to 31 December 2038.
Waste Rock Management	• Waste rock is placed predominantly within mine voids and select waste rock used for construction of mine components.	• No change, however, in-pit crushing of select waste rock for beneficial use is also proposed.	• No change.
Annual Waste Rock Production	• Annual waste rock production of up to approximately 43 million bank cubic metres (Mbcm).	• No change.	• Production of up to approximately 40 Mbcm of waste rock per annum.
Coal Washing and Handling	• Beneficiation of ROM coal in the CHPP. • Facilities for the handling and stockpiling of both washed and unwashed (bypass coal).	• No change.	• No change.
Maximum Annual Product Coal Production	• Up to approximately 13 Mtpa of thermal product coal for domestic electricity generation and export.	• No change.	• Production of up to 10 Mtpa of product coal.
Coal Transport	• An average of six and a maximum of 10 laden trains per day leaving the mine. • Transport via the Sandy Hollow-Gulgong Railway.	• No change.	• No change to maximum daily laden trains or train routes.

Table 1 (Continued)
Summary of the Approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine, Modification 3, and the Project

Component	Approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine under Development Consent (SSD-6764)	Proposed Modification 3	The Project
Coal Rejects Management	• Coal rejects placed predominantly within mine voids. • Tailings filter press to allow co-disposal of tailings with coarse rejects.	• Continuation and extension of existing methodology.	• Continuation and extension of existing methodology, inclusive of additional or extended tailings storage facilities as required.
Water Supply	• Make-up water demand to be met from runoff recovered from mine operational areas, recovery from tailings, open cut dewatering, advanced dewatering of pit areas and supply from borefield. • Water recovery from tailings via tailings filter press.	• No change to key sources of water supply.	• No change to key sources of water supply.
Water Disposal	• Mine water treated in a reverse osmosis plant/water treatment facility and discharged to Wilpinjong Creek in accordance with EPL 12425.	• No change to key aspects of water disposal.	• Subject to additional water management studies, the existing system may be augmented, options include: – Additional water treatment facility. – New licenced water discharge points. – Irrigation to land approved to be disturbed by mining.
Hours of Operation	• Open cut mining, handling and processing of ROM coal at the CHPP and train loading at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine is undertaken 24 hours per day, seven days per week.	• No change.	• No change.
General Infrastructure	• Access roads, electricity supply and distribution, rail loop, CHPP, train loading infrastructure, ROM coal stockpiles, coal handling equipment, flood bunds, diesel storage, administration, workshop, ablution buildings, stores, heavy vehicle workshop, parking and washdown facilities.	• Continued use of existing approved infrastructure and progressive modifications to support the operations as required.	• Construction of a new mine infrastructure area, including maintenance workshop, re-fuelling facilities, crib facilities, administration building and other supporting infrastructure adjacent to Pit 9.

Table 1 (Continued)
Summary of the Approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine, Modification 3, and the Project

Component	Approved Wilpinjong Coal Mine under Development Consent (SSD-6764)	Proposed Modification 3	The Project
Infrastructure Relocations	• Realignment of a 330 kilovolts Electricity Transmission Line, Ulan-Wollar Road and associated rail level crossing and local powerlines and services.	• Realignment of sections of public roads, local powerlines and services.	• Continuation of realignment of sections of public roads, local powerlines and services.
Operational Workforce	• Approximately 625 at peak[2].	• No new workforce. The Modification would counteract natural workforce decline rates.	• Operational workforce peaking at approximately 705 people before slowly declining in the last 5 years.
Construction Workforce	• Approximately 100 people at peak.	• No change.	• Peak construction workforce of approximately 135 people.

1 Comprised 254 Mt from the *Wilpinjong Coal Project EIS* and 95 Mt from the *Wilpinjong Extension Project EIS*.

2 The current (Quarter 1 2026) operational workforce of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine is approximately 705 people.

4.2.2 Construction Activities

Construction activities would occur throughout the life of the Project. Key construction activities associated with the Project include:

- Construction of a heavy vehicle haul road and bridge crossing over Wollar Creek to connect Pits 9 and 10 to the Pit 8 Extension Area.
- Construction of a new mine infrastructure area, including maintenance workshop, re-fuelling facilities, crib facilities, administration building and other supporting infrastructure adjacent to Pit 9.
- Realignment and upgrade of Wollar Road to facilitate the construction of Pits 9 and 10.
- Relocation (and potential augmentation) of local low-voltage Electricity Transmission Lines.
- Relocation of telecommunication systems.
- Augmentation of existing on-site tailings storage facilities to accommodate disposal of additional pumped tailings when the existing tailings filter press is not operating at full capacity.
- Construction of a new reverse osmosis plant and EPL water discharge point, major water storages or operational water irrigation systems may be required (to be determined during detailed Project water management design).

While construction/development activities would occur at a number of stages over the life of the operation, the major construction period would be in the first 12 months of the Project.

4.2.3 Waste Rock Management

The Project would generate waste streams that would be similar in nature to the existing operations at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine. The key waste streams would continue to comprise:

- waste rock;
- CHPP rejects;
- sewage and wastewater;
- recyclable and non-recyclable wastes; and
- other wastes from mining and workshop activities (e.g. scrap metal, used tyres, waste hydrocarbons and oil filters).

Mine waste rock (including interburden and overburden) generated from the Project would be progressively placed within mine voids once the coal has been mined (or is transferred to temporary out-of-pit emplacement areas where necessary prior to rehandling later in the mining sequence).

4.2.4 Coal Processing, Handling and Transport

As the Project proposes to reduce the maximum annual ROM coal production rate, no CHPP upgrades are proposed in support of the Project. However, regular maintenance, and where necessary replacement, of equipment within the CHPP would continue over the life of the Project.

Product coal at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine is loaded onto trains 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

The existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine is approved to have an average of six laden trains and a maximum of 10 laden trains leaving the site on any day. Wilpinjong Coal Mine trains use the Australian Rail Track Corporation rail network to transport products east to domestic power generation customers and/or the Port of Newcastle for export.

The Project proposes no change to the existing train loading infrastructure, typical train routes or approved daily maximum train movements. Average train movements under the Project would reduce to reflect the lower rate of ROM coal production relative to the currently approved 16 Mtpa ROM rate.

4.2.5 Water Management

The existing water management system at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine would continue to support ongoing mining activities.

Wilpinjong Coal Mine has had a water excess and been forced to retain significant in-pit water storage volumes during some historical high rainfall climatic periods. WCPL is therefore evaluating a range of options to manage the addition of the proposed Pits 9 and 10 to the Wilpinjong Coal Mine operational water management area.

The existing surface water runoff controls to reduce up-catchment runoff water from entering open cut mining operations would be retained and augmented for the Project. Other augmentations may include additional water storages/dams, pumps, pipelines, drains, irrigation systems, water treatment and controlled release infrastructure, as required.

4.3 EMPLOYMENT

The Project would allow for the continued employment of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine workforce through to 2038, providing ongoing regional economic benefits and workforce stability.

Short-term increases in employment would be generated by Project construction activities. This additional employment would be quantified and assessed in the EIS.

4.4 REHABILITATION AND FINAL LANDFORM

Prior to 2016, the proposed final land use for the Wilpinjong Coal Mine included a combination of both agricultural (mixed woodland/pasture) and nature conservation (woodland) land uses.

As part of the assessment of the Wilpinjong Extension Project, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (now DPHI) considered that the Wilpinjong Extension Project presented an important opportunity to promote the recovery of local and regional biodiversity values through rehabilitation of land disturbed by mining back to self-sustaining woodland communities on a broad scale.

To this end, the Department requested WCPL to increase the area of rehabilitation to woodland for biodiversity outcomes, and in particular targeting *Anthochaera phrygia* (Regent Honeyeater) habitat. This was supported by the Planning Assessment Commission review and determination of the Wilpinjong Extension Project.

In consideration of this advice, the post-mining land use of the Project is proposed to largely comprise nature conservation (woodland) land uses. However, this would be a matter that would be resolved during the Project consultation and detailed design stages.

Progressive rehabilitation (i.e. reshaping, topsoil placement and revegetation) of the Project landforms within the Gateway Application Area would be undertaken over the life of the Project.

The Wilpinjong Coal Mine has two approved final voids, located in Pits 2 and 6. The Project would not change the total number, location, size or catchment areas of the approved final voids associated with the Wilpinjong Coal Mine.

4.5 SUMMARY OF PROJECT DISTURBANCE AREA

Surface development for the Project outside of existing MLs would be up to approximately 800 ha (including approximately 550 ha associated with open cut mining activities).

Direct surface disturbance to Interim Protocol Verified BSAL and Potential BSAL would occur as a result of the Project. Some of these areas would be used for the duration of the Project and would be subsequently rehabilitated. Other areas would be progressively rehabilitated as mining progresses.

4.6 PROJECT RATIONALE

Open cut mining at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine has been, or is currently, undertaken in Pit 1 through to Pit 8, with early mining areas under differing stages of mine rehabilitation.

WCPL is separately seeking a modification (Modification 3) to Development Consent (SSD-6764) to extend open cut mining within the Pit 8 Extension area and extend mining operations to 30 June 2034 (in addition to the development of other ancillary infrastructure and realignment of public infrastructure). Modification 3 was submitted in September 2025 and is currently under assessment by the DPHI.

WCPL has identified an opportunity to build upon the proposed Modification 3 and extend open cut mining operations east of the Pit 8 Extension area into Pits 9 and 10 (the Project). The extended open cut mining operations would provide an additional 4.5 years of mining (to 2038), maintain ROM coal production at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine and employment.

The Project seeks to enable the orderly and efficient continuation of open cut coal mining at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine by facilitating access to additional coal reserves within an existing EL area. It is intended to maximise the recovery of economically viable coal resources through conventional mining methods and efficient mine planning, while supporting the long-term viability of an established mining operation within a recognised mining precinct. In doing so, the Project aims to deliver ongoing economic benefits and maintain employment opportunities to the Central West Region of NSW.

The Project has been designed to optimise the use of existing approved infrastructure and services, thereby minimising additional land disturbance and supporting safe, reliable and efficient mining operations. It also seeks to promote environmental outcomes through progressive rehabilitation, biodiversity conservation and the establishment of appropriate offsets, with the objective of achieving a final landform and post-mining land use that is compatible with surrounding land uses and environmental values.

5 CONSIDERATION OF GATEWAY CRITERIA

5.1 VERIFICATION OF BIOPHYSICAL STRATEGIC AGRICULTURAL LAND

Minesoils (2026a) undertook a BSAL Assessment in support of the Gateway Application for the Project which is presented in Appendix D of Appendix A. For the purposes of the BSAL Assessment, Minesoils assessed a broader BSAL Assessment Area (approximately 850 ha) which included a 100 m buffer, in accordance with the Interim Protocol.

The Gateway Application Area is defined as the land associated with potential open cut mining activities for the Project (consistent with the definition under the Resources and Energy SEPP). The Gateway Application Area is approximately 667 ha and lies wholly within the BSAL Assessment Area.

The Interim Protocol outlines 12 steps that must be satisfied to meet BSAL characteristics (Figure 4).

Minesoils refined the BSAL Assessment Area using the desktop slope analysis criteria as outlined in the Interim Protocol. Following this, approximately 126 ha of land that is greater than a 10% slope or less than 20 ha of contiguous area was excluded from further assessment.

A total of 106 detailed sites relevant to the BSAL Assessment Area were inspected in accordance with the Interim Protocol.

Based on the site inspection and soil surveys, Minesoils (2026a) has mapped the presence of potential BSAL within the BSAL Assessment Area in accordance with the Interim Protocol, which is presented on Figure 5.

Approximately 109 ha of potential BSAL (Plate 6) has been identified within the BSAL Assessment Area, representing approximately 13% of the BSAL Assessment Area (Minesoils, 2026a). Approximately 90 ha of potential BSAL lies within the Gateway Application Area (approximately 10%).

The remaining 741 ha (87%) of land within the BSAL Assessment Area was identified as non-BSAL (Plate 7) (Minesoils, 2026a).

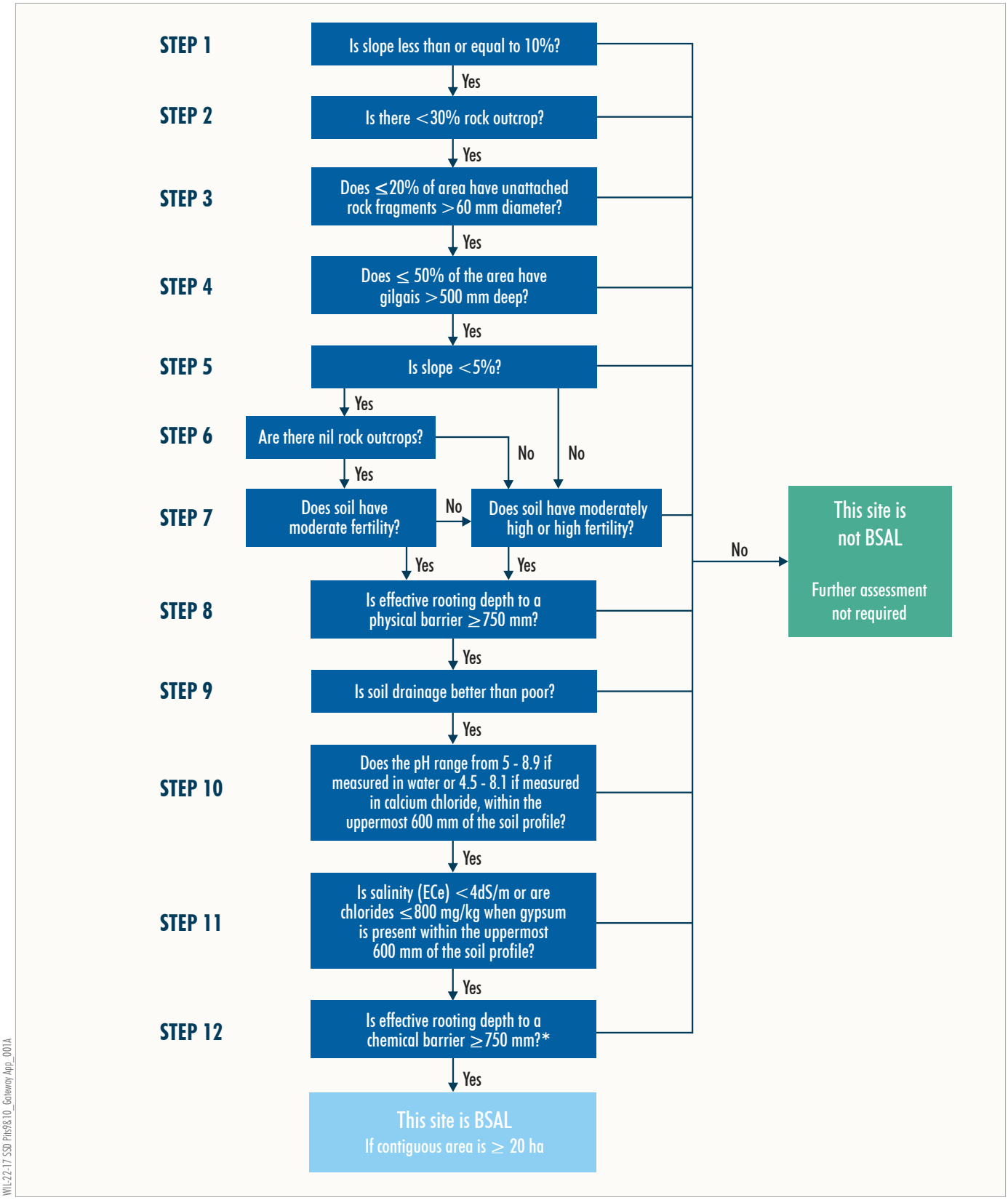
Plate 6 Potential BSAL at Site B37 (Minesoils, 2026a)

Plate 7 Landscape mapped as BSAL (Site B37) (Minesoils, 2026a)

5.1.1 Land and Soil Capability

Minesoils also completed a LSC Assessment (Minesoils, 2026b) to inform the Agricultural Impact Statement (2rog, 2026) which provides detail on the verified LSC classification of land within the Gateway Application Area (Appendix B of Appendix A).

Land capability, as detailed in *The Land and soil capability assessment scheme – Second approximation* (Office of Environment and Heritage [OEH], 2013) (LSC Scheme), is the inherent physical capacity of the land to sustain a range of land uses and management practices in the long-term without degradation to soil, land, air and water resources.



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* In accordance with Section 6.10 of the Interim Protocol

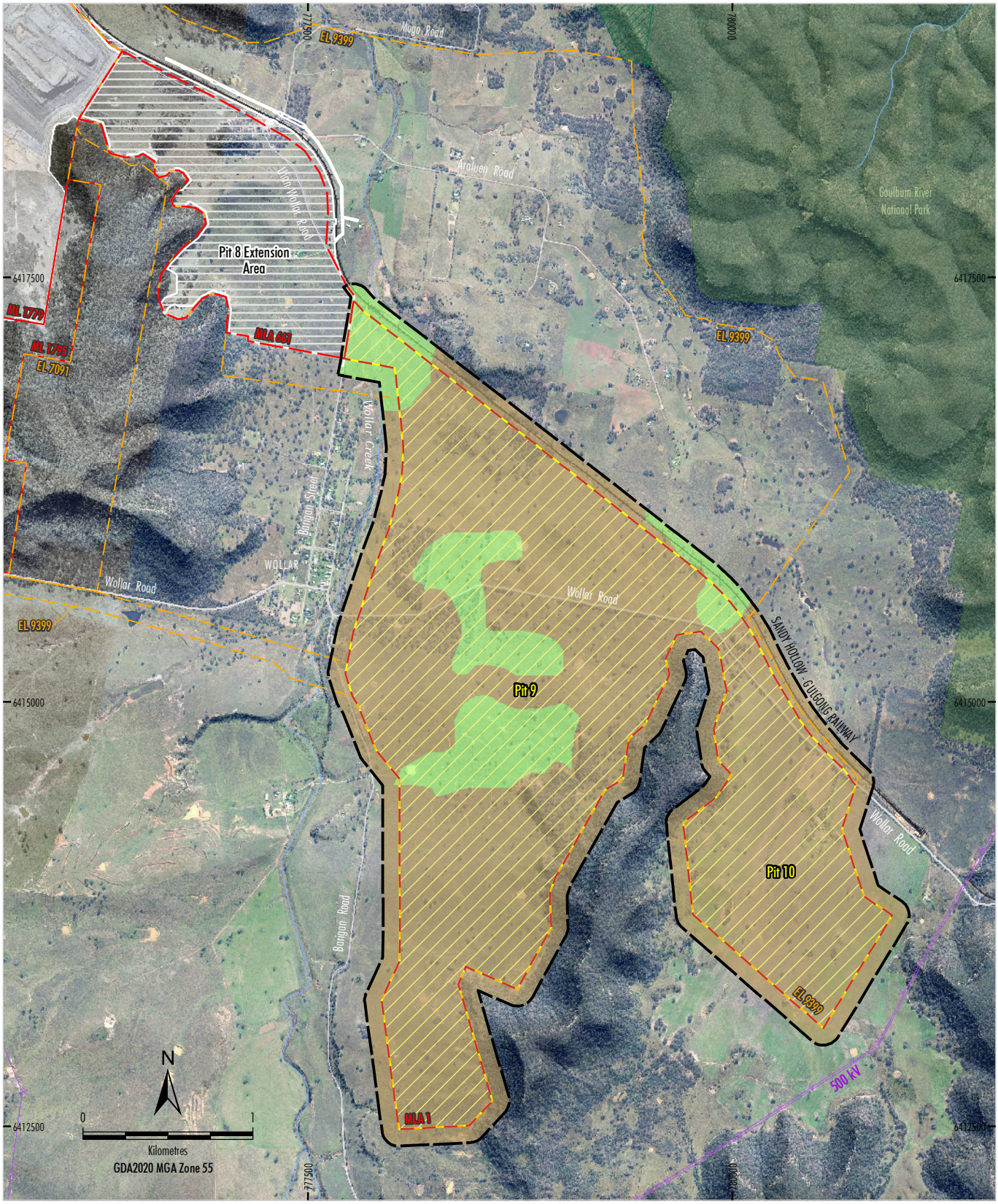
Source: After NSW Government (2013)

Peabody

WILPINJONG COAL MINE

Flowchart for Site Verification of BSAL

Figure 4



LEGEND

- Existing TransGrid Electricty Transmission Line
- National Park
- Existing Biodiversity Offset Transferred to the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Estate
- Exploration Licence Boundary (EL)
- Mining Lease Boundary (ML)
- Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Proposed Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Approved/Existing Surface Development Area
- Proposed Pit 8 Extension (MOD3) *
- Pit 8 Extension Development Footprint
- Proposed Pits 9 and 10 (Wilpinjong Continuation Project) #
- Gateway Application Area
- BSAL Assessment Area

BSAL Mapping

- Potential BSAL
- Potential Non-BSAL

* Currently under assessment by DPHI.

\# Inclusive of associated surface infrastructure that falls within the definition of 'mining and petroleum development' under cl 2.24 of the Resources and Energy SEPP.

Source: WCPL (2026); Minesoils (2026); NSW Spatial Services (2026)
Orthophoto Mosaic: WCPL (July 2024 - Oct 2022)

Peabody

WILPINJONG COAL MINE

BSAL within the Gateway Application Area

Figure 5

Verification of LSC under the LSC Scheme, concluded that the Gateway Application Area contains five LSC classes (Minesoils, 2026b) (Figure 6):

- Class 3: high capability land – 107 ha.
- Class 4: moderate capability land – 212 ha.
- Class 5: moderately low capability land – 71 ha.
- Class 6: low capability land – 212 ha.
- Class 7: very low capability land – 65 ha.

The majority of land within the Gateway Application Area is classified as Class 4 (moderate capability) (32%), Class 6 (low capability) (32%) and Class 3 (high capability) (16%).

Class 3 land has moderate limitations and is capable of sustaining high-impact agricultural land uses, including cropping with cultivation and intensive grazing, using readily available and widely accepted management practices. However, careful management is required to avoid land and environmental degradation. Key limitations within the Gateway Application Area include water erosion, soil acidity, soil structure decline, waterlogging and limited soil depth (Minesoils, 2026b).

Class 4 land within the Gateway Application Area is subject to moderate to high limitations for high-impact agricultural uses, such as cropping, high-intensity grazing and horticulture, primarily due to soil structure decline and limited soil depth. These constraints require specialised management practices and significant inputs to sustain productivity (Minesoils, 2026b).

Class 6 land exhibits very high limitations and is generally suitable only for low-impact uses such as grazing, forestry or conservation, with key constraints including soil structure decline, waterlogging and shallow soils (Minesoils, 2026b).

Whilst a portion of the Gateway Application Area consists of high capability land, the majority of the Gateway Application Area has limited capacity to support intensive agricultural production, and existing soil constraints generally restrict its agricultural productivity potential.

5.2 ASSESSMENT AGAINST GATEWAY CRITERIA

The relevant criteria that must be considered by the Gateway Panel in relation to BSAL are considered in the subsections below.

5.2.1 Potential Direct Impacts on Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land

The Project would result in the permanent removal of approximately 90 ha of potential BSAL in the Gateway Application Area from agricultural production due to surface disturbance activities associated with open cut mining operations.

Disturbance of these areas would last for the duration of the Project up until 2038.

The waste rock emplacement landform would be progressively shaped, topsoiled and is expected to be rehabilitated to woodland. The use of the area for agricultural production would cease from commencement of the Project.

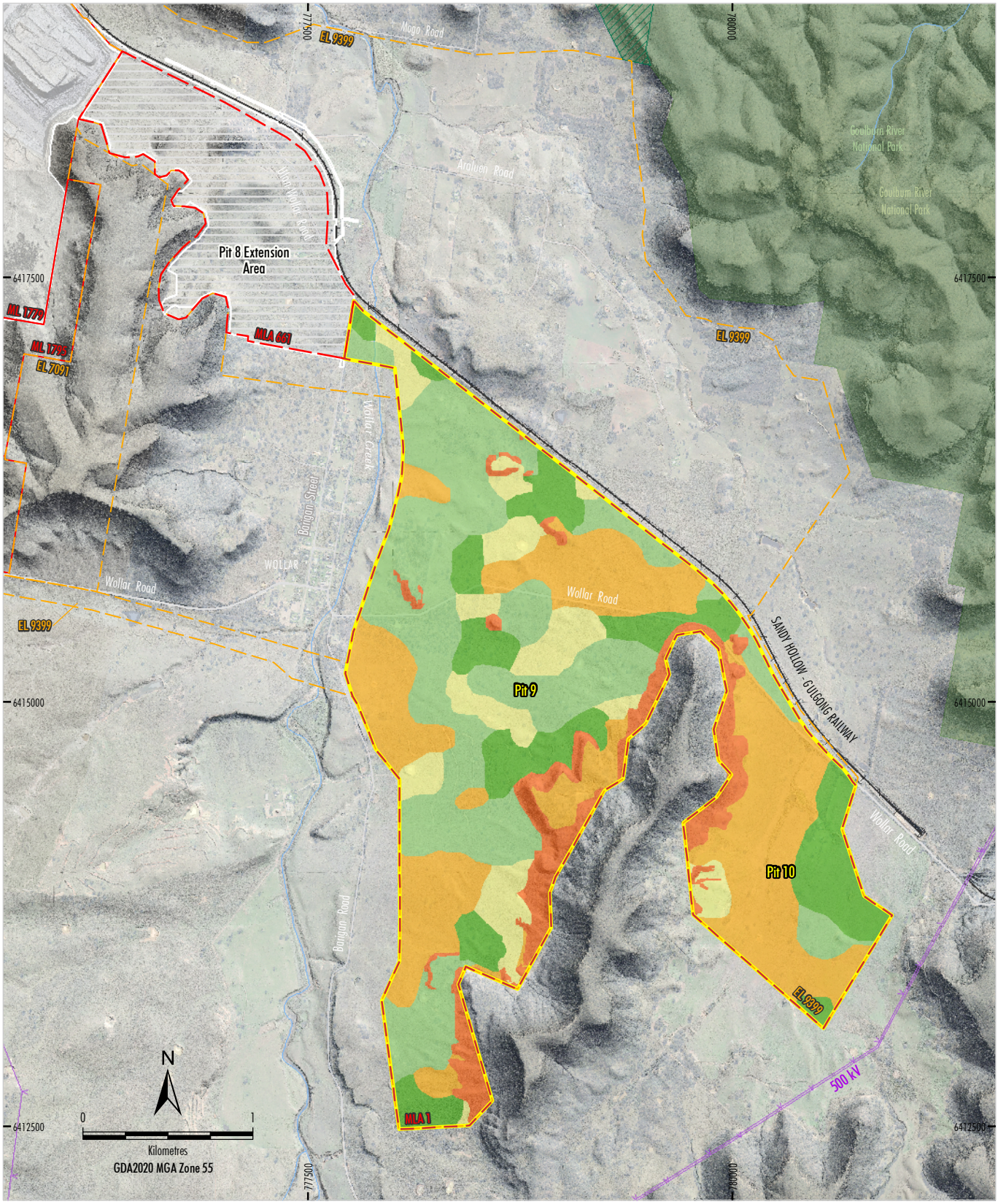
5.2.2 Potential Impacts on Agricultural Production and Supporting Industries

The Gateway Application Area would be removed from its current use for agricultural production for coal mining activities and post-mining woodland revegetation, resulting in the permanent removal of agricultural practice in these areas (2rog, 2026).

2rog (2026) estimates the potential carrying capacity for the land within the Gateway Application Area to be approximately 2,502 dry sheep equivalent (DSE).

The average total annual agricultural loss resulting from the Project would be $213,035, which is estimated to represent approximately 0.55% of gross value in the Mid-Western Regional LGA, 0.11% of gross value generated by the Central Tablelands Region and 0.006% for NSW total gross value of cattle production (ABS, 2023; 2rog, 2026).

Accordingly, 2rog (2026) concludes that the Project would have a permanent yet minimal impact on agricultural production at a local, regional and State level.



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LEGEND

- Existing TransGrid Electricty Transmission Line
- National Park
- Existing Biodiversity Offset Transferred to the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Estate
- Exploration Licence Boundary (EL)
- Mining Lease Boundary (ML)
- Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Proposed Mining Lease Application Boundary (MLA)
- Approved/Existing Surface Development Area
- Proposed Pit 8 Extension (MOD3) *
- Pit 8 Extension Development Footprint
- Proposed Pits 9 and 10 (Wilpinjong Continuation Project) #
- Gateway Application Area

Verified Land and Soil Capability

- LSC 3
- LSC 4
- LSC 5
- LSC 6
- LSC 7

* Currently under assessment by DPHI.

\# Inclusive of associated surface infrastructure that falls within the definition of 'mining and petroleum development' under cl 2.24 of the Resources and Energy SEPP.

Source: WCPL (2026); Minesoils (2026); NSW Spatial Services (2026)
Orthophoto Mosaic: WCPL (July 2024 - Oct 2022)

Peabody

WILPINJONG COAL MINE

Verified LSC Mapping within the Gateway Application Area

Figure 6

5.2.3 Potential Impacts on Highly Productive Groundwater

A Preliminary Groundwater Assessment has been prepared by SLR (2026) for the Gateway Application, and is based on predictions from a numerical groundwater model developed in consideration of the *Australian Groundwater Modelling Guidelines* (Barnett et.al, 2012).

A peer review of the Preliminary Groundwater Assessment was undertaken by HydroAlgorithmics and is presented in Appendix C.

SLR (2026) concluded that the Project would meet the Level 1 minimal impact considerations defined under the *NSW Aquifer Interference Policy 2012* (AIP) (NSW Government, 2012), except for the water quality minimal impact consideration where further work is required to inform the assessment due to the proximity of Pit 9 to the State-mapped 'highly productive' alluvium.

In summary, the Preliminary Groundwater Assessment (SLR, 2026) indicates:

- There are no known privately-owned bores within the alluvial aquifers that lie within the predicted extent of the Project related incremental groundwater level drawdown greater than 2 metres (m). Therefore, there are no predicted impacts to private bores as a result of the Project.
- The predicted take from the Wollar Creek Water Source, both during the Project and post-mining, is within the licence volume held for the Wilpinjong Coal Mine.
- The approved Groundwater Management Plan would continue to be implemented at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine, and would be reviewed and updated, where necessary, to include the Project.

Following determination of the Gateway Application, the results of the Preliminary Groundwater Assessment and its supporting numerical model would be refined for the EIS (including further studies to define the top of high bank and extent of alluvium along Wollar Creek near Pit 9). The Project would be designed to meet the Level 1 or Level 2 minimal impact considerations for water quality.

Impacts to water resources currently being utilised for water supply by land managers (i.e. WCPL bores and dams) within the Gateway Application Area would be assessed during preparation of the EIS for the Project.

Water supply for the Project is expected to be sourced from within the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine water management system and external sources, including licensed extractions from WCPL bores.

Recycled water within the water management system would be used as first priority on site where water quality is suitable. External water sources would only be used to meet any shortfall in water supply from onsite water recycling.

5.2.4 Summary

The Agricultural Impact Statement prepared by 2rog (2026) includes the detailed assessment of the potential impacts of the Project on BSAL, including consideration of the relevant criteria in the Resources and Energy SEPP. A summary of this assessment is provided in Table 2.

Overall, the Project would permanently remove approximately 90 ha of BSAL within the Gateway Application Area from agricultural production due to open cut mining. This represents a minimal contribution to agricultural output at a local, regional and State level (2rog, 2026), particularly compared to the local, regional and State benefits of the Project.

Table 2
Consideration of Relevant Criteria for Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land

Criteria in Clause 2.31(4)(a) of the Resources and Energy SEPP	Summary Assessment
(i) any impacts on the land through surface area disturbance and subsidence	The Gateway Application Area would be used for an extension of existing open cut mining to access additional coal reserves, which would involve standard open cut mining methods, including drilling, blasting, loading, hauling and the development and use of associated plant and infrastructure. There is approximately 90 ha of BSAL within the Gateway Application Area that would be subject to Project-related surface disturbance activities.
(ii) any impacts on soil fertility, effective rooting depth or soil drainage	Standard open cut mining processes and development and use of associated plant and infrastructure would involve the removal of soil material, and therefore, exposure of underlying bedrock thereby reducing soil fertility and the ability for plant growth. Progressive rehabilitation as mining is completed would effectively mitigate the expected effects and return soils for the establishment of native woodland.
(iii) increases in land surface micro-relief, soil salinity, rock outcrop, slope and surface rockiness or significant changes to soil pH	Standard open cut mining processes, together with the development and operation of associated plant and infrastructure, would involve the removal of soil material, affecting landform relief, soil condition (including salinity and pH), the presence of rocky outcrops, slope and surface rockiness. Post-mining rehabilitation is designed to result in a final landform generally consistent with the pre-mining landform.
(iv) any impacts on highly productive groundwater (within the meaning of the AIP)	No predicted impacts to private bores within the main highly productive groundwater source (i.e. the Wollar Creek Water Source) within the vicinity of the Gateway Application Area.
(v) any fragmentation of agricultural land uses	The Project would result in fragmentation of agricultural land within and adjacent to the Gateway Application Area through the physical separation of land parcels and the introduction of operational infrastructure, buffers, and exclusion zones. The loss of land connectivity and functional integration would represent a permanent change to agricultural land use, particularly in the case of this Project where land is not proposed to be returned to agricultural production following mining.
(vi) any reduction in the area of BSAL	The Project would result in the permanent removal of approximately 90 ha of potential BSAL from agricultural production due to surface disturbance associated with open cut mining. This represents a high-certainty impact, as the affected land is expected to be rehabilitated to woodland for conservation purposes, resulting in a permanent change in land use within the Gateway Application Area and a reduction in the regional BSAL resource.

Source: 2rog (2026).

6 STRATEGIES TO MINIMISE POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON BIOPHYSICAL STRATEGIC AGRICULTURAL LAND

6.1 GENERAL LAND MANAGEMENT

WCPL implements a Ground Disturbance Permit process, which is completed prior to the commencement of new projects or activities requiring ground disturbance. Where required, a site-specific erosion and sediment control plan would be prepared as part of this process. Pre-clearance surveys would be undertaken as required, in accordance with a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP).

Weed management would be integrated into routine property maintenance. WCPL's weed control procedures focus on preventing the establishment and spread of invasive species in disturbed areas, with regular monitoring and prompt eradication measures as part of day-to-day land management practices.

Targeted feral animal control programmes are implemented for the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine to minimise land degradation and biosecurity risks. Controls for invasive fauna such as feral pigs and rabbits, as outlined in the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine BMP, would be implemented to manage the occurrence of feral pests. Annual fauna monitoring would be conducted by qualified personnel to evaluate the effectiveness of these pest control measures and determine if adjustments are needed.

6.2 WATER MANAGEMENT

6.2.1 Groundwater

Groundwater management and monitoring at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine is undertaken in accordance with the Groundwater Management Plan, which is a sub-plan of the Wilpinjong Coal Mine Water Management Plan.

The Groundwater Management Plan outlines:

- the existing groundwater conditions and baseline data relevant to the Wilpinjong Coal Mine;
- groundwater impact assessment criteria and triggers;
- a program for accurately delineating the boundary of the Wilpinjong Creek alluvial aquifer in any areas intersected by mining;
- management measures for drilling and water supply bores;
- groundwater monitoring;
- the process for validation of previous groundwater predictions; and
- a plan to respond to any exceedances of trigger levels and/or performance criteria.

Appropriate contingency measures for impact on a groundwater supply user may include:

- deepening the affected groundwater supply;
- construction of a new groundwater supply; or
- provision of a new alternative water supply.

The Water Management Plan includes water management performance measures, data management, review, responsibility and reporting requirements.

Groundwater inflows into the open cut pits would be managed using the Wilpinjong Coal Mine's existing water management strategy. Where passive evaporation of pit water is insufficient, any groundwater inflow would be collected in in-pit sumps and pumped out to the mine water storage system in order to maintain safe working conditions in the pits.

The approved Groundwater Management Plan would continue to be implemented at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine, and would be reviewed and updated, where necessary, to include the Project.

Furthermore, a detailed Groundwater Impact Assessment will be prepared for the Project in support of the EIS. This assessment will predict the Project's effects on groundwater levels, flows and quality, and will define any additional mitigation or management measures required. This will also confirm the groundwater licencing requirements during and post-mining.

6.2.2 Surface Water

Surface water management and monitoring at the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine is undertaken in accordance with the Site Water Balance and the Surface Water Management Plan, both of which are components of the Water Management Plan.

The existing water management system at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine would continue to support ongoing mining activities under the Project.

The Project is designed to avoid open cut mining within the immediate vicinity of Wollar Creek.

Consistent with existing Development Consent (SSD-6764) conditions, the proposed Project open cut pits would also be bunded as necessary to exclude a 1:100 average recurrence interval flood event from entering the active pit during mining.

Wilpinjong Coal Mine has had a water excess and been forced to retain significant in-pit water storage volumes during some historical high rainfall climatic periods. WCPL is therefore evaluating a range of options to manage the addition of the proposed Pits 9 and 10 to the Wilpinjong Coal Mine operational water management area.

The existing surface water runoff controls to reduce up-catchment runoff water from entering open cut mining operations would be retained and augmented for the Project. Other augmentations may include additional water storages/dams, pumps, pipelines, drains, irrigation systems, water treatment, and controlled release infrastructure, as required.

As a component of water management studies conducted for the Project EIS, WCPL would resolve any necessary additions to the existing water management and controlled release systems to meet WCPL's water management objectives.

WCPL would comply with relevant water licencing requirements over the life of the Project.

A Surface Water Assessment will be prepared for the EIS to evaluate the Project's effects on local hydrology and water quality. This assessment will determine potential changes to flow regimes in Wollar Creek, assess the capacity of the existing water management system and required augmentations, and identify mitigation measures to prevent downstream impacts.

The EIS will also consider the availability or quality of water for surrounding agricultural operations.

6.3 REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation of disturbed BSAL areas would be undertaken progressively throughout the life of the Project.

Consistent with WCPL's Rehabilitation Management Plan (WCPL, 2025), topsoil and subsoil would be managed during stripping to preserve soil quality. Soils would be selectively stripped and stockpiled as close as practicable to scheduled rehabilitation areas, minimising handling and degradation before reuse.

Stockpiles would be segregated based on soil type and quality (for example, keeping higher-fertility topsoils separate from subsoils) and managed to maintain viability, through measures such as controlling weeds on stockpiles and limiting storage duration, to support productive vegetation growth (WCPL, 2025).

The Rehabilitation Management Plan for the Wilpinjong Coal Mine would be reviewed and updated, where necessary, to include the Project.

The final land use for the Project is expected to largely comprise nature conservation (woodland), consistent with contemporary rehabilitation objectives for the site. This aligns with regulatory expectations set during the previous Wilpinjong Extension Project, which emphasised returning mined lands to self-sustaining native woodland communities to improve regional ecological outcomes. However, this would be a matter that would be resolved during the Project consultation and detailed design stages.

7 CONCLUSION

The Gateway Application Area consists of moderately low to low inherent agricultural capability due to combined limitations of soil, topography and climate. This is demonstrated by the current land use, which is primarily cattle grazing.

The Project would result in an estimated annual agricultural productivity loss of approximately $213,035 (2rog, 2026). 2rog (2026) concludes that whilst the loss in agricultural production would be permanent, it would not result in a significant impact on productivity at a local, regional or State level.

The Project would extend open cut mining operations at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine to 31 December 2038 and would:

- increase working areas for the existing mobile fleet and mine workforce to operate as the existing Pits 1-8 are progressively completed;
- help to maintain a target ROM coal production range of 8 Mtpa to 12Mtpa from the mine during the completion of approved Pits 1-8;
- maximise use of the existing Wilpinjong Coal Mine infrastructure and facilities, including substantial capital savings associated with continued use of the existing CHPP;
- provide for an additional 4.5 years of employment for the existing workforce; and
- facilitate continued local and regional employment and community contributions.

The Project aligns with the strategic direction outlined in the *NSW Coal Industry 2026–50* (NSW Government, 2026), which recognises coal mining as a continuing strategic industry and supports extensions to existing operations through the NSW planning system.

Consistent with this framework, the Project builds on an established mining precinct and approved infrastructure. The Project would contribute to ongoing employment, support regional economic continuity, and facilitate continued access to NSW coal resources and associated royalty generation.

The Project would also enable the continuation of existing supply relationships with domestic and international customers, supporting energy and industrial supply chains during the energy transition.

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