

METROPOLITAN COAL MINE  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION STRATEGY  
FOR EXPLORATION



PREPARED BY  
METROPOLITAN COAL PTY LTD

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Version 1

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## 1.0 Introduction

Metropolitan Coal Pty Limited (MCPL) (the Licence Holder) was granted Exploration Licence No. 9364 (EL9364) under Section 22 of the *Mining Act 1992* on the 24 February 2022 (**Figure 1**).

The Metropolitan Collieries Pty Ltd (MCPL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Peabody Australia Pty Ltd (Peabody), operates the Metropolitan Coal Mine (Metropolitan Mine). Metropolitan Mine is an underground coal mine located adjacent to the township of Helensburgh and approximately 30 km north of Wollongong.

As a requirement of the Licence EL9364, MCPL must identify and consult with the local community regarding proposed exploration activities carried out under EL9364 in accordance with the *Exploration Code of Practice – Community Consultation*<sup>1</sup>.

### 1.1 Scope

MCPL have been granted approval under the *Mining Act 1992* to undertake exploration activities within EL9364 (**Figure 1**). As the exploration title holder, MCPL is required to engage with the community in relation to the planning and conduct of prospecting operations authorised under General Conditions of EL9364 and in accordance with *Exploration Code of Practice – Community Consultation* (the Guidelines).

This Community Consultation Strategy (the Strategy) defines the process and requirements for community consultation and applies to exploration activities (**Section 1.3**) undertaken within EL9364 (**Figure 1**).

### 1.2 Objective

The objective of this Strategy is to address the requirements of the Guideline and outline the process that MCPL will use to identify and consult with the local community in regard to proposed exploration activities within EL9364.

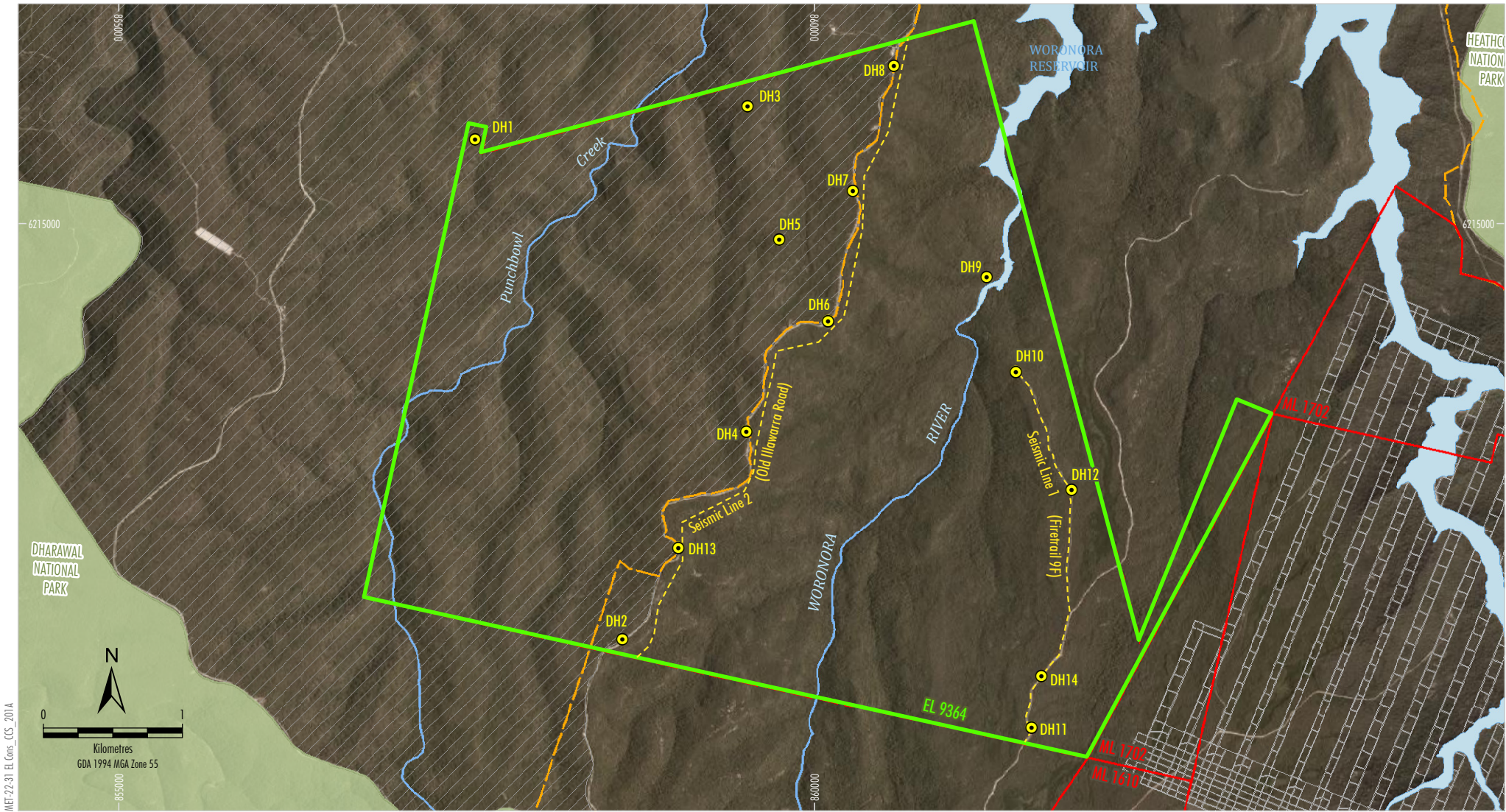
### 1.3 Exploration Program

The exploration program within EL9364 proposes 14 drill sites and associated seismic lines (**Figure 1**) to be undertaken wholly on lands administered by WaterNSW and the Department of Defence (**Figure 2**). These lands are wholly restricted to members of the public serve as a buffer from mining activities and the nearest private receivers. There are no privately owned properties impacted therefore minimal impact on community stakeholders.

Historically, reporting and consultation regarding exploration activities undertaken by MCPL with the local community has included newsletters, Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meetings and other direct community consultation forums. Exploration activities are also covered in the Annual Review (AR).

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<sup>1</sup> NSW Department of Regional NSW, *Exploration code of practice: Community Consultation* (2022).



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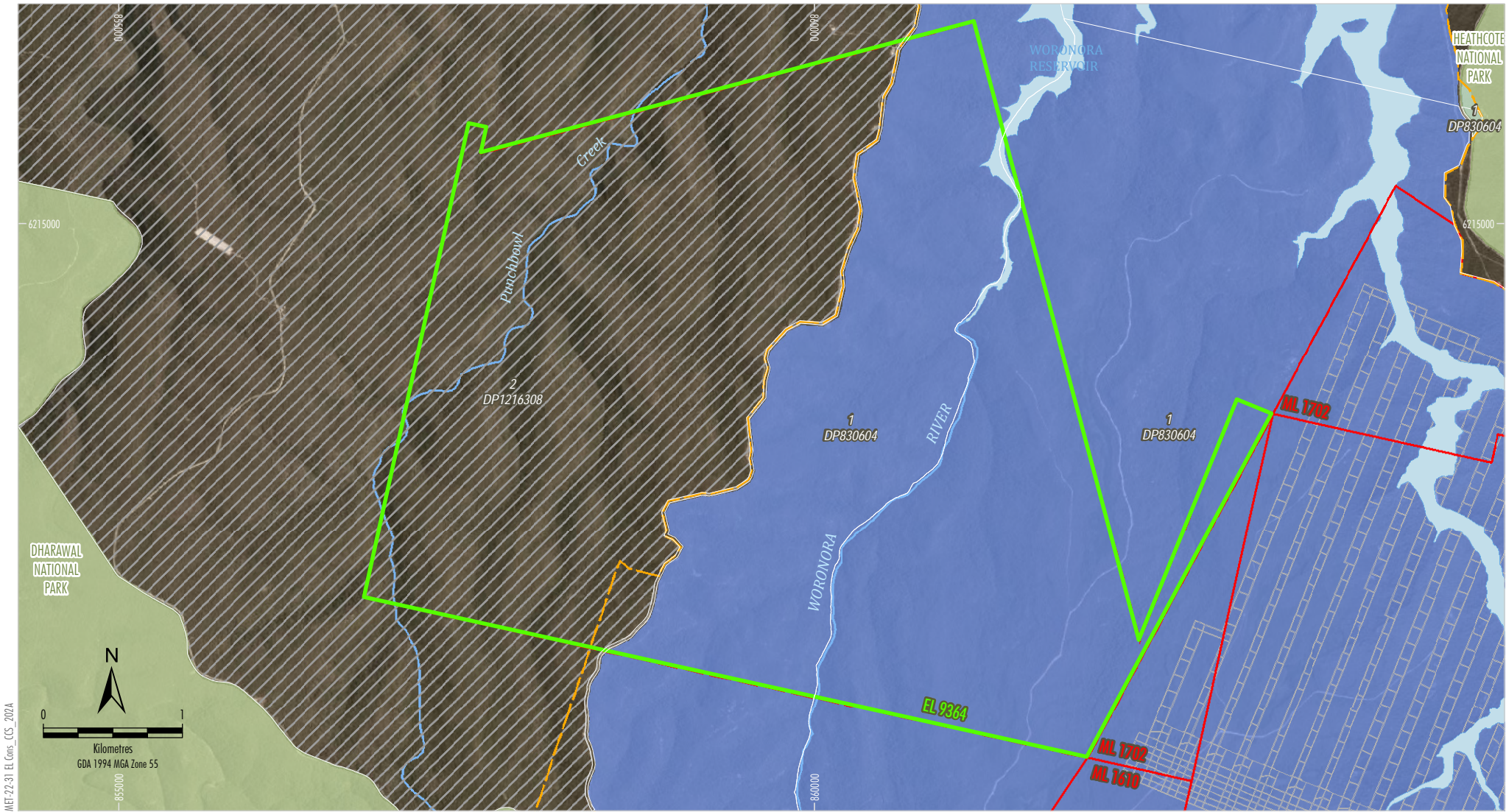
- LEGEND**
- Mining/Coal Lease Boundary
  - Exploration Licence (EL 9364)
  - Woronora Special Area
  - NPWS Estate
  - Holsworthy Military Area (Commonwealth Military Reserve)
  - Proposed Exploration Activities
  - Drill Hole
  - Seismic Line

Source: State of New South Wales (2022); Metropolitan Coal (2018)  
 Orthophoto: NSW Spatial Services (2020)

**Peabody**  
 METROPOLITAN COAL  
 Indicative Location of  
 Exploration Activities

Figure 1





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- LEGEND**
- Mining/Coal Lease Boundary
  - Exploration Licence (EL 9364)
  - Woronora Special Area
  - NPWS Estate
  - Landholder
  - Holsworthy Military Area (Commonwealth Military Reserve)
  - WaterNSW

Source: State of New South Wales (2022); Metropolitan Coal (2018)  
 Orthophoto: NSW Spatial Services (2020)

**Peabody**  
 METROPOLITAN COAL  
 Relevant Land Ownership

Figure 2

## 1.4 Mandatory Requirements

Part B of the Guidelines sets out mandatory requirements regarding the expected performance for engagement in adequate, inclusive and appropriate community consultation in relation to the planning for, and conduct of, exploration activities under a prospecting title. **Table 1** provides the mandatory requirements from Part B of the Guidelines and where they are addressed in the Strategy.

**Table 1 Mandatory Requirements**

Mandatory Requirements	Sections Addressed
1. Before commencing any activity authorised by a prospecting title, the title holder must conduct a risk assessment to identify and consider the range of opportunities and potential threats associated with community consultation and engagement.	<b>Section 2</b>
2. The title holder must prepare a community consultation strategy to manage the risks identified in mandatory requirement 1 (above).	<b>Section 3</b>
<p>3. The community consultation strategy must:</p> <p>(a) Establish the objectives of the strategy.</p> <p>(b) Include a detailed description and analysis of potential community stakeholders which identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the stakeholders likely to be impacted by the proposed activity</li> <li>(ii) the likely impact that each proposed exploration activity will have on the potential community stakeholders, and</li> <li>(iii) the likely areas of concern of each potential community stakeholder group.</li> </ul> <p>(c) Describe how community consultation will be undertaken to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) individuals, communities and stakeholder groups are provided with reasonable information to understand the nature of the activities, and the likely impacts and benefits that may be derived from the exploration</li> <li>(ii) title holders are able to recognise and address community concerns early</li> <li>(iii) identified community stakeholders are informed of the proposed schedule for implementing the work program for the prospecting title and notified prior to the commencement of relevant activities, and</li> <li>(iv) community consultation feedback will be monitored and responded to.</li> </ul> <p>(d) Set out mechanisms for revising the community consultation strategy to ensure it continues to meet the requirements of this code. This must include ensuring that the strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) continues to meet the objectives of this code</li> <li>(ii) includes any additional stakeholders identified during the process of consultation</li> <li>(iii) maintains a process of consultation that is adequate, inclusive and appropriate, and</li> <li>(iv) responds to issues raised through the development and submission of the annual community consultation report</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sections 1.2 &amp; 3.6</b></p> <p><b>Section 3.3</b></p> <p><b>Section 3.6</b></p> <p><b>Section 4.4</b></p>
4. The title holder must implement, monitor, and report annually on the community consultation strategy as revised from time to time in accordance with this code.	<b>Section 4</b>
5. The title holder must keep and maintain the records set out in Table 1: Records as updated from time to time.	<b>Section 4.3</b>

## 2.0 Risk Assessment

The Guidelines require a risk assessment to be completed to establish the community consultation strategy, that is, how MCPL will undertake consultation and ensure that it is appropriate, adequate and inclusive. The key community consultation risk identified was the potential for a lack of information and communication of MCPL's approved exploration activities provided to local residents and interested stakeholders (**Table 2**).

As described in **Section 1.3**, the Exploration Program in EL9364 proposes 14 drill sites and seismic lines (**Figure 1**) to be undertaken on lands administered by WaterNSW and the Department of Defence (**Figure 2**). These lands are publicly restricted and this serves as a buffer to the nearest private receivers.

As provided in the Activity Impact Assessment (**Table 3**), the potential impact level for exploration has been considered **Low Impact** i.e. a cumulative score below 9.

Environmental risks and controls for rehabilitated drill sites within EL9364 have been identified and assessed in accordance with MCPL's risk management processes which follow the general principles outlined in *ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines* and are provided in MCPL's Exploration Rehabilitation Program (ERP).

**Table 2 Key Risks to Community Consultation for EL9364**

Risk	Existing Risk Controls
Lack of communication to local community and interested stakeholders regarding MCPL's approved exploration activities.	<p>The following mechanisms for continued implementation by MCPL so local residents and interested stakeholders remain informed about Project timeframes, impacts and opportunities for involvement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an established Community Hotline (ph <b>1800 115 003</b>);</li> <li>• an established CCC operating in accordance with the CCC guidelines which will respond to community concerns as they arise, and be advised of registered complaints and resolutions (where appropriate);</li> <li>• Annual review process; and</li> <li>• continued provision of a MCPL website and the information provided (<a href="https://www.peabodyenergy.com/Operations/Australia-Mining/New-South-Wales-Mining/Metropolitan-Mine">https://www.peabodyenergy.com/Operations/Australia-Mining/New-South-Wales-Mining/Metropolitan-Mine</a>).</li> </ul>
New Risk Controls	
	<p>The following controls are developed for implementation by MCPL so local residents and interested stakeholders remain informed about Project timeframes, impacts and opportunities for involvement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a strategy on vehicle access arrangements to minimise traffic on local roads; and</li> <li>• a strategy on consultation with residents of Darkes Forrest.</li> </ul>



### 3.0 Community Consultation Strategy

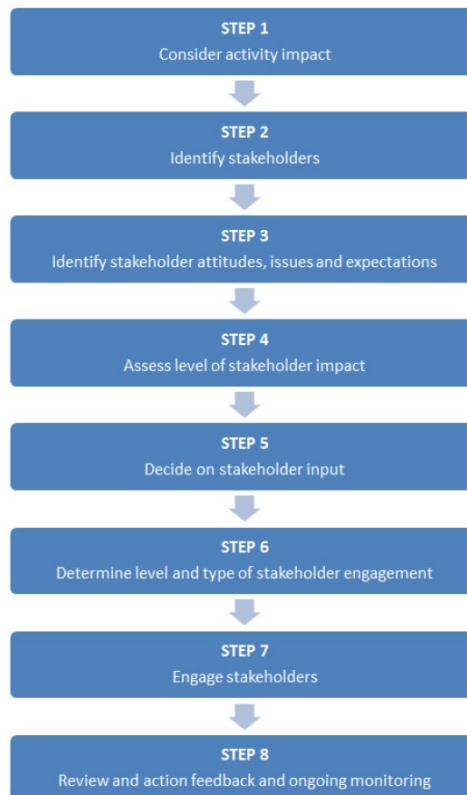
MCPL have developed a methodology for stakeholder engagement as part of the existing operations. This Strategy outlines the mechanisms for continued implementation by MCPL so local residents and interested stakeholders remain informed about Project timeframes, impacts and opportunities for involvement. A summary of those mechanisms is provided in **Table 2**.

As described in **Section 1.3**, the Exploration Program in EL9364 proposes 14 drill sites and associated seismic lines (**Figure 1**) to be undertaken on WaterNSW and Department of Defence administer lands (**Figure 2**), currently utilised for water supply and military training. These lands are excluded from public activities and serve as a buffer from the nearest private receivers. This Strategy has been developed in consideration of all exploration activities planned to occur.

#### 3.1 Strategy Development

As required by the Guidelines, MCPL have considered the steps to develop a community consultation strategy (**Figure 3**) in this Strategy.

**Figure 3 Steps to Develop a Community Consultation Strategy**



#### 3.2 Activity Impact Level

In accordance with the Guidelines, the different levels of potential impact are:

- High impact is a cumulative score of 20 or more;
- Medium impact is a cumulative score between 10 and 19 (inclusive); and
- Low impact is a cumulative score of 9 or below.

The potential impact level of the proposed exploration activity for EL9364 has been identified in accordance with *Table 2: Activity Impact Assessment* from the Guidelines as **Low Impact (Table 3)**.



**Table 3 Activity Impact Assessment**

Criteria	Low	Medium	High	Score	
<b>1</b>	<b>What is the level of community interest in the activity or broader project?</b>	Low level of community concern with no relevant, local community interest groups identified	Intermediate level of community concern with locally known, relevant community interest groups	Significant community and public concern about project and involvement of regional/national community interest groups.	0
	Score	0	8	16	
<b>2</b>	<b>What is the activity type?</b>	Exempt prospecting operation (means any prospecting operation to which clause 10(2) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007 applies).	Coal and mineral common exploration activities, being activities that meet the Common Exploration Activity (CEA) criteria and are considered unlikely to significantly affect the environment (as set out in ESG5: Assessment requirements for exploration activities).	Petroleum exploration, coal and mineral non-common exploration activities that do not meet the CEA criteria (as set out in ESG5: Assessment requirements for exploration activities)	4
	Score	0	4	8	
<b>3</b>	<b>What is the population density of the statistical local area?</b>	Sparsely populated area (activity within a statistical local area with <10,000 population)	Intermediately populated area (activity within a statistical local area with 10,000 – 40,000 population)	Largely populated area (activity within a statistical local area >40,000 population)*	0
	Score	0	1	2	
<b>4</b>	<b>How far is the activity from inhabited dwellings?</b>	Activity within 2km of cluster <100 dwellings	Activity within 2km of cluster 100-1000 dwellings	Activity within 2km of cluster >1000 dwellings	0
	Score	0	1	2	
<b>5</b>	<b>How far is the activity from known sensitive receivers (excluding dwellings)?</b>	Activity within 2km of a sensitive receiver (excluding dwellings)	Activity between 1 and 2km of a sensitive receiver (excluding dwellings)	Activity within 1km of a sensitive receiver (excluding dwellings)	0
	Score	0	1	2	
<b>6</b>	<b>Are there any other extractive industries, mining or petroleum production projects nearby?</b>	Activity further than 5km from other extractive industries, mining or petroleum production	Activity between 2km and 5km from other extractive industries, mining or petroleum production	Activity closer than 2km from other extractive industries, mining or petroleum production	0
	Score	0	1	2	
<b>7</b>	<b>How long will the activity last?</b>	Less than 6 months	6 to 12 months	More than 12 months	2
	Score	0	1	2	
	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>				<b>6</b>

### 3.3 Stakeholder Identification

MCPL has identified the relevant stakeholders likely to be impacted as a result of the proposed exploration activity for EL9364 in accordance with *Table 4: Identified Community Stakeholders for Activity Impact Levels* from the Guidelines as **Low Impact (Table 4)**.

**Table 4 Identified Community Stakeholders for Activity Impact Levels**

Community Stakeholder	Applicable	Low Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact
Landholders and residents/tenants of the site of the activity	Yes	✓		
Native title holders or claimants	Yes	✓		
Local government	Yes	✓		
Relevant local community and environment groups	Yes	✓		
Landholders, residents and businesses within 5km of the operational area	Yes	✓		
Local Aboriginal Land Council	No			
NSW Government local Member of Parliament	No			
Landholders, residents and businesses within 10km of the operational area	No			
Relevant regional public interest groups	No			
Cultural bodies (historic or indigenous)	No			
Local chamber of commerce	No			

### 3.4 Consultation Methods

MCPL has considered the community consultation methods in accordance with *Table 4: Identified Community Stakeholders for Activity Impact Levels* from the Guidelines as **Low Impact (Table 5)**.

**Table 5 Identified Community Consultation for Activity Impact Levels**

Community Stakeholder	Applicable	Low Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact
Respond to correspondence/submissions	Yes	✓		
Publish notice in community/council newsletter advising of the undertaking of the activity	No			
Letter to key stakeholders and community groups inviting comment	No			
Publish notice in local newspaper advising of the undertaking of the activity	No			
Distribution of relevant information including advising of the undertaking of the activity (e.g. pamphlets, email, letter box drop)	No			
Information provided on website/page	Yes	✓		
Dedicated project email address/phone number	No			
Displays i.e. in local library, shopfronts (optional)	No			
Public exhibition of information associated with the activity and timing of works (optional)	No			
Social media (optional)	No			
Hold meetings/Interview with key individuals or group representatives	Yes	✓		
Hold meeting with local committees/organisations and local government representatives	Yes	✓		
Hold open community forum/ public meeting (optional)	No			

### 3.5 Community Liaison Officer

The Environment and Community Superintendent (ECS) is responsible to ensure the mechanisms for the continued implementation of the Strategy so local residents and interested stakeholders remain informed about Project timeframes, impacts and opportunities for involvement. It is the ECS's responsibility to:

- Implement the communication strategy actions and monitor implementation;
- Undertake stakeholder consultation;
- Ensure that all related complaints are responded to in accordance with the Complaints Response Protocol;
- Ensure that all auditing and regulatory reporting is undertaken;
- Coordinate relevant reviews of the Strategy;
- Ensure that all employees and contractors are given adequate training in social and environmental awareness and statutory responsibilities;
- Liaise with the environmental management teams at WaterNSW and Department of Defence - Holsworthy to plan for mitigation of cumulative impacts on the surrounding area;
- Prepare all statutory environmental reports relating to the EL9364; and
- Update the MCPL website.

### 3.6 Stakeholder Engagement

Overall objectives for community consultation and engagement relating to exploration activities are to:

- Provide information in a timely and accessible manner to individuals, communities and stakeholder groups to understand the nature of the activities, and the likely impacts and benefits that may be derived from the exploration;
- Enable MCPL to recognise and address community concerns early;
- Provide a process for community stakeholders to be informed of the proposed schedule for implementing exploration activities, and notified prior to the commencement of relevant activities; and
- Establish channels of communication to allow community feedback and identification of potential issues and include processes for the provision of feedback to participants on the results of their contribution.

To achieve these objectives, MCPL's existing and historical methods for consultation to communicate to individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups the various activities undertaken by MCPL, as well as exploration activities, include:

- Regular meetings and consultation with relevant Local, State and Federal Government agencies;
- Local communities (including Newsletters and 'Have a Chat' meetings);
- Providing information on the Peabody website:  
<https://www.peabodyenergy.com/Operations/Australia-Mining/New-South-Wales-Mining/Metropolitan-Mine/Approvals,-Plans-Reports;>
- The Community Consultative Committee (CCC)<sup>2</sup>; and
- Community complaints protocol.

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<sup>2</sup> As required by Condition 7, Schedule 5 of Project Approval (08\_0149) MCPL has established a Community Consultative Committee (CCC). This CCC is operated in accordance with the *Guidelines for Establishing and Operating Community Consultative Committees for Mining Projects* (Department of Planning, 2007, or its latest version).



These existing methods of stakeholder engagement will be used as part of the consultation strategy for proposed exploration activities. Further details are provided in **Sections 3.6.1 to 3.6.6**.

### **3.6.1 Community Consultative Committee**

MCPL operates a Community Consultative Committee (CCC). The CCC is an effective forum for the early engagement and exchange of information between MCPL and the neighbouring community.

The CCC meeting is held a minimum three times per annum. It provides an opportunity for MCPL to present information in respect to the existing operations and exploration programs to the community representatives and for the community representatives to have input into MCPL operations, including raising any issues that they or other community members may have.

The committee includes representation from; local residents of Helensburgh and surrounds, the Helensburgh Land Care group, Wollongong City Council, environmental interest groups and Peabody staff

CCC meeting minutes are distributed to all members and published on the Peabody website.

### **3.6.2 Newsletters, Factsheets and Letters**

As required, MCPL develops and distributes community newsletters and/or factsheets to relevant community members through either a letterbox drop and/or electronically by publishing on MCPL website. The newsletter provides information about the mine's operational progress, performance and other areas of interest.

Letters and emails are also used as a direct method of consultation or to provide information to a specific stakeholder or group.

### **3.6.3 Peabody Website**

On behalf of MCPL, Peabody operates a website (<https://www.peabodyenergy.com/Operations/Australia-Mining/New-South-Wales-Mining/Metropolitan-Mine>) which contains details on MCPL approvals, management plans, compliance monitoring, complaints register, CCC meeting minutes, newsletters and AR reports.

### **3.6.4 Annual Review**

At the end of March each year, MCPL reviews the environmental and community performance of the mine and associated activities, including exploration in the Annual Review (AR) in accordance with Condition 4, Schedule 5 of Project Approval 08\_0149. The AR reports on the prior calendar year and is submitted to all relevant government agencies and the CCC. The AR must include:

- Description of the development (including any rehabilitation) that was carried out in the past year, and the development that is proposed to be carried out over the next year;
- Include a comprehensive review of the monitoring results and complaints records of the project over the past year, which includes a comparison of these results against the relevant statutory requirements, limits or performance measures/criteria;
- Monitoring results of previous years;
- Identifying any exceedance over the last year, and describe what was the extrinsic cause(s);
- Identify any non-compliance over the last year, and describe what actions were (or are being) taken to ensure compliance;
- Identify any trends in the monitoring data over the life of the project;

- Identify any discrepancies between the predicted and actual impacts of the project, and analyse the potential cause of any significant discrepancies; and
- Describe what measures will be implemented over the next year to improve the environmental performance of the project.

A copy of the AR is made publicly available on the Peabody website.

### **3.6.5 Native Title Consultation**

Through the operation of the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993, a Native Title Agreement (NTA) is maintained between MCPL and:

- North Eastern Wiradjuri Native Title Claimants over Mining Lease 1573 (ML1573); and
- Warrabinga Wiradjuri #6 Native Title Claim over ML 1795.

The Native Title agreement with North Eastern Wiradjuri Native Title Claimants includes a commitment to implement quarterly consultation meetings. The consultation meeting is known as the Cultural Heritage Liaison Sub Committee (CHLSC). The CHLSC convenes quarterly to discuss operational cultural heritage management and issues for all mining/exploration activities, and any proposed works that will have cultural heritage implications for the upcoming year.

### **3.6.6 Community Complaints Protocol**

MCPL have implemented a Complaint Response Protocol to respond to all community concerns.

MCPL will continue to operate a Community Information and Complaints Hotline (**ph:1800 115 003**) for the purpose of receiving complaints from members of the public in relation to MCPL's operational activities.

Records of all complaints will be kept for at least four years. Records will be provided to any authorised officer upon request.

## 4.0 Review, Monitoring and Reporting

### 4.1 Annual Activity Report

Unless otherwise approved by the Secretary, MCPL must submit an annual activity report prepared in accordance with the *Exploration Guideline: Annual Activity Reporting for Prospecting Titles* (December 2020) at the following times:

- Annually, within one calendar month following the grant anniversary date of EL9364;
- On any other date or dates directed by the Secretary in writing; and
- Within one calendar month following the cancellation or expiry of this licence.

### 4.2 Annual Community Consultation Report

As required under the Guideline, an annual community consultation report must be submitted to the Secretary within one calendar month of the anniversary of the grant of tenure for respective exploration licences, in conjunction with other annual reports. The annual community consultation report will include:

- Consideration of compliance with the community consultation strategy and community consultation plan (if applicable);
- An executive summary outlining the objectives, consultation undertaken and outcomes achieved during the reporting period;
- Descriptions and analysis of the identified community stakeholders;
- The objectives, details, date and time of any community consultation events, including issues raised and responses given;
- Records of consultation with relevant government agencies including local councils, the names of representatives, and the dates of the meetings;
- What was discussed and issues raised at any consultation events;
- How feedback was collected;
- Responses to issues raised;
- Summary of comments received in relation to the exploration activity, and actions taken to address any complaints;
- Outcomes of the consultation and an assessment of how well the objectives were met;
- How the community consultation strategy or activity has been amended in response to the consultation; and
- Proposed future consultation.

The report will consider the privacy and confidentiality of stakeholders and the level of detail will be modified if necessary to protect this.

However, given that the Exploration Program in EL9364 proposes all 14 sites are drilled wholly on lands administered by WaterNSW and the Department of Defence, MCPL will alternatively provide a summary of explorations activities for the calendar year in the Annual Review, as described in **Section 3.6.4**.

### 4.3 Records and Monitoring

Stakeholder details and records of communication are recorded in MCPL's consultation database. This system also ensures that actions are developed and tracked in a timely manner. Additionally, it allows for the preferred methods of contact between separate individuals to be noted for Stakeholders.



A detailed GIS system is maintained by MCPL and encompasses land ownership and stakeholder information that can assist in identifying potential impacts in relation to neighbouring landholders.

#### **4.4 Review**

MCPL will review, and if necessary, revise, this Strategy if any changes arise in relation to the Exploration Program. Examples of changes prompting a revision of this document include (but are not limited to):

- Carrying out exploration activities on privately owned land;
- In response to relevant changes in technology, legislation, or operations; and
- In response to stakeholder feedback/complaints relatable to the exploration program.

## 5.0 Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities in relation to this Strategy are outlined in **Table 6**.

**Table 6 Roles and Responsibilities**

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Exploration Geologist</b>	Ensure inclusion of MCPL's Environment and Community staff in all aspects of the exploration program Provide all necessary information regarding exploration program for the preparation of stakeholder engagement methods
<b>Environment and Community Superintendent (ECS)</b>	Implement this Strategy Act in the role as Community Liaison Officer for exploration activities
<b>Environment and Community Coordinator (ECC)</b>	Provide support to the ECS to implement this Strategy

## 6.0 References

NSW Department of Industry, *Exploration code of practice: Community Consultation (2022)*.