# Appin Mine Ventilation and Access Project

SOUTH32
Illawarra Metallurgical Coal

**PROJECT UPDATE FOUR** **JULY 2021**

## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

**South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal operates in the Illawarra and Wollondilly regions of NSW, producing metallurgical coal for steelmaking.**

In the Wollondilly region we operate the Appin Mine, which is currently in the Douglas Park and Menangle area. We are a proud local company, directly employing more than 1,800 people and have been operating in the region for more than 85 years.

Our metallurgical coal is used by the Port Kembla steelworks right here is NSW and is part of countless products – from seat belt buckles that provide safer car journeys to the Colourbond® roofs that keep us warm and dry.

## THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND APPROVALS

**An integral requirement of underground mining is adequate ventilation and mine access, to ensure a safe and efficient working environment for our people.**

We are proposing to construct mine ventilation and access facilities at 345 Menangle Road, Menangle. The proposed ventilation shafts are known as Ventilation Shaft No. 7 (a downcast shaft that draws air into the mine) and Ventilation No. 8 (an upcast shaft that draws air out of the mine).

The proposed mine access infrastructure will support access to the mine for some of our workforce and supplies. No coal handling infrastructure is proposed.

We are following a comprehensive NSW Government approvals process, seeking a modification to our existing Bulli Seam Operations Project Approval (08-0150).

Earlier this month we submitted the Modification Application the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

**The application will be placed on public exhibition on the NSW Government Major Projects website in July. We encourage you to review the application and provide feedback through this process.**

**Please visit https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects to sign up to notifications, view the application and provide feedback.**

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION

**Community information sessions planned for late June were postponed due to the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions.**

The information sessions have been rescheduled to July and will take place online.

- Thursday, 15 July 2021. 4.00pm – 7.00pm.
- Friday, 16 July 2021. 2.00pm – 5.00pm.
- Saturday, 17 July 2021. 10.00am – 2.00pm.

Individual appointments will be scheduled on the half hour to provide an opportunity for you to speak directly with the Project Team.

To register, please call 1800 102 210 or email illawarracommunity@south32.net.

If you would like to discuss the Project with us outside these times, please contact us on the above details to make an appointment.



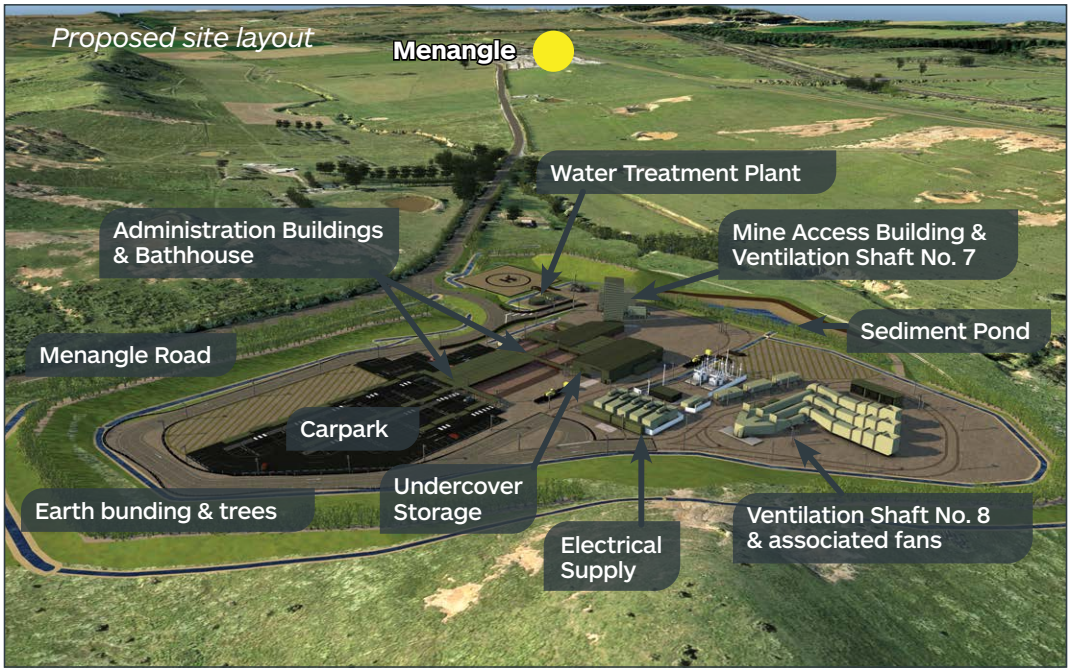

1. Illawarra Metallurgical Coal consults with the Department on proposed modification
2. The Department issues assessment requirements
3. Illawarra Metallurgical Coal prepares and submits Modification Report to the Department
4. **The Department places the Modification Application on exhibition and seeks submissions**
5. Illawarra Metallurgical Coal responds to submissions
6. The Department completes its assessment

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

**The engineering and environmental assessments conducted by technical experts were completed in June 2021. The assessments will inform the construction and operation of the proposed facilities. These assessments included:**

- Biodiversity surveys;
- Air quality studies;
- Traffic studies;
- Noise studies; and
- Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment and European heritage studies.

The assessment reports were included in the Modification Application submitted to DPIE this month. In July, the reports will be available for viewing and feedback during the public exhibition period on the NSW Government Major Projects website.




# NOISE

**The Appin Mine Ventilation and Access Project will have operational and construction phases.**

The majority of activity at the proposed site is expected during the construction phase – as earthworks are completed, ventilation shafts are sunk, and the ventilation and mine access infrastructure is constructed.

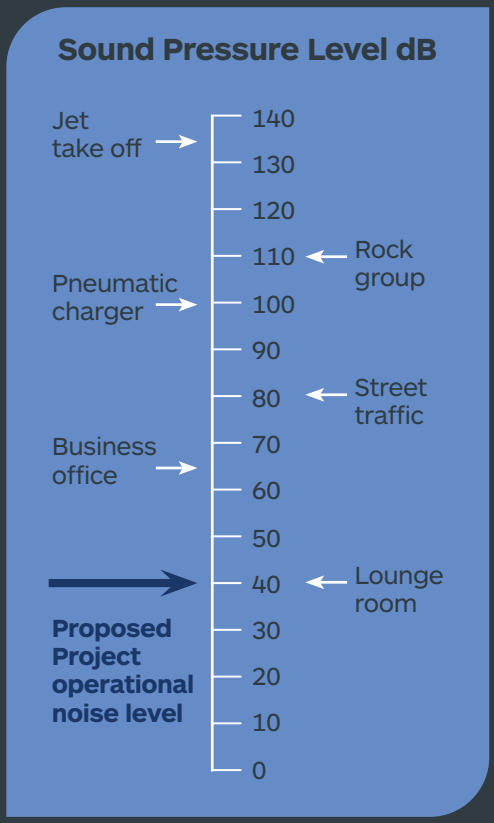
The recommended construction hours in the Interim Construction Noise Guideline (DECC, 2009) are proposed to be followed for most surface construction activities. This includes the installation of infrastructure such as ventilation fans and buildings.

The sinking of the ventilation shafts is proposed to be undertaken as a 24-hour operation to reduce the construction timeframe and longevity of impact to the community.

To achieve this, an acoustic shed (or noise shed) is proposed to be placed over the top of each shaft to contain noise generated during the night time. Once the shaft sinking is complete, the shed will be removed. The acoustic shed is recommended to facilitate 24-hour construction only to minimise disturbance at night time.

During the operational phase, this time employees will access the site as part of their regular work day and deliveries of material will be received.

The predicted noise levels during the operational phase have been assessed to be within the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Noise Policy for Industry. The predicted noise levels will be less than 39 decibels at the nearest receiver, which is roughly equivalent to the noise levels in an average lounge room.




# ACOUSTIC SHED

**Acoustic sheds, or noise sheds, are effective in minimising noise, light and dust spill. They are commonly used in the construction of tunnels in locations of high housing density.**

# AIR QUALITY

**As part of our commitment to be environmentally responsible, a complete assessment of air quality and greenhouse gas emissions was completed by expert consultants.**

The Air Quality Assessment was prepared in accordance with the NSW Environment Protection Authorities (EPA) comprehensive regulatory criterion for assessing ambient air quality.

During the construction phase of the Project, potential air quality impacts will be relatively short-lived and are expected to be easily controlled through commonly applied dust management measures. These include the use of dust suppression sprays, stabilising and revegetating exposed areas as soon as practicable, ensuring vehicle loads are covered and conducting regular inspections and monitoring.

During operation the Project would operate in accordance with the existing Appin Mine Air Quality Management Plan.

At Appin Mine, our gas drainage and capture network enables the reuse of waste coal mine gas to generate power. The gas captured is used to generate equivalent electricity for around 52,000 homes annually – or roughly 45 per cent of all homes in Wollongong.

We are investigating industry leading research partnerships to change how we capture future fugitive emissions and further reduce our impact. This includes the continuation of mitigation methods implemented underground to reduce air quality impacts from the Appin Mine.



# BIODIVERSITY

**The Appin Mine Ventilation and Access Project has been positioned and designed to minimise environmental impacts to vegetation, fauna and aquatic life where possible.**

Vegetation on the property is comprised of exotic pasture and native vegetation.

The threatened ecological community known as Cumberland Plain Woodland in the Sydney Basin Bioregion (CPW) was identified in limited areas in a highly modified form. The proposed Project has been situated to avoid higher quality stands of CPW.

Where impacts are unavoidable, actions aimed at mitigating and managing potential indirect impacts of the Project will be implemented. These include:

- Reviewing and implementing the Appin Mine Biodiversity Management Plan;
- Managing pest and weeds;
- Water quality monitoring; and
- Fencing of adjacent woodland areas.

Appropriate offsets for unavoidable impacts will be sought as part of the proposed Project, in accordance with relevant NSW biodiversity conservation legislation.

Suitable habitat for fauna and aquatic life was not identified at the property.

# HERITAGE

**We are conscious of the Aboriginal and local farming heritage in the Menangle area, and engaged expert consultants to conduct heritage assessments relevant to 345 Menangle Road.**

The property is situated in an area which is traditional country of the Tharawal people. An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment was conducted in consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties, including a site survey and archaeological test pitting program.

Past Aboriginal land use in the area suggested creek banks were used for the manufacture of artefacts. This is supported by the number of artefacts found on the banks of the Foot Onslow Creek. Detailed avoidance, mitigation and management measures have been developed to reduce potential impacts on Aboriginal heritage.

The historic heritage of the property is linked to the 19th Century settlement regional landscape. The property has remained largely unchanged from first European settlement and has a very low potential to contain archaeological resources.

# TREE SCREENING

**Tree screening along the property boundary to Menangle Road has commenced.**

The Australian native trees are being planted to assist in screening the proposed Project from the community and road users. A watering campaign is planned to provide the trees with the best start.

# NEXT STEPS

**Activity on the property will continue for the second half of the year as we work to clean up the property, establish tree screening along the Menangle Road boundary and complete geotechnical assessments.**

The geotechnical studies are expected to recommence at 345 Menangle Road in late July or early August. The studies are expected to take approximately two months to complete.

Tree screening along the property boundary to Menangle Road will continue over the coming months.

The Modification Application was submitted earlier this month to DPIE and will be available for your feedback on the NSW Government Major Projects website shortly. Please visit https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects to sign up to notifications, view the application and provide feedback.

Once feedback is received, DPIE will share it with us for a response to assist in its assessment of the Project.

# MORE INFORMATION

**Information about the Appin Mine Ventilation and Access Project is available at:**

https://www.south32.net/our-business/australia/illawarra-metallurgical-coal/appin-mine-ventilation-and-access-project.

Information on the website includes:

- a video with clear imagery of the proposed Project;
- fact sheets;
- previous Project Updates; and
- Menangle Advisory Panel meeting minutes.

If you would like to speak with us, please call our free Community Call Line 1800 102 210 or email illawarracommunity@south32.net.

# MENANGLE ADVISORY PANEL

**The Menangle Advisory Panel (MAP) is continuing to meet monthly, most recently discussing the environmental and engineering assessments completed. This included air quality, noise, biodiversity, heritage, traffic and geotechnical studies.**

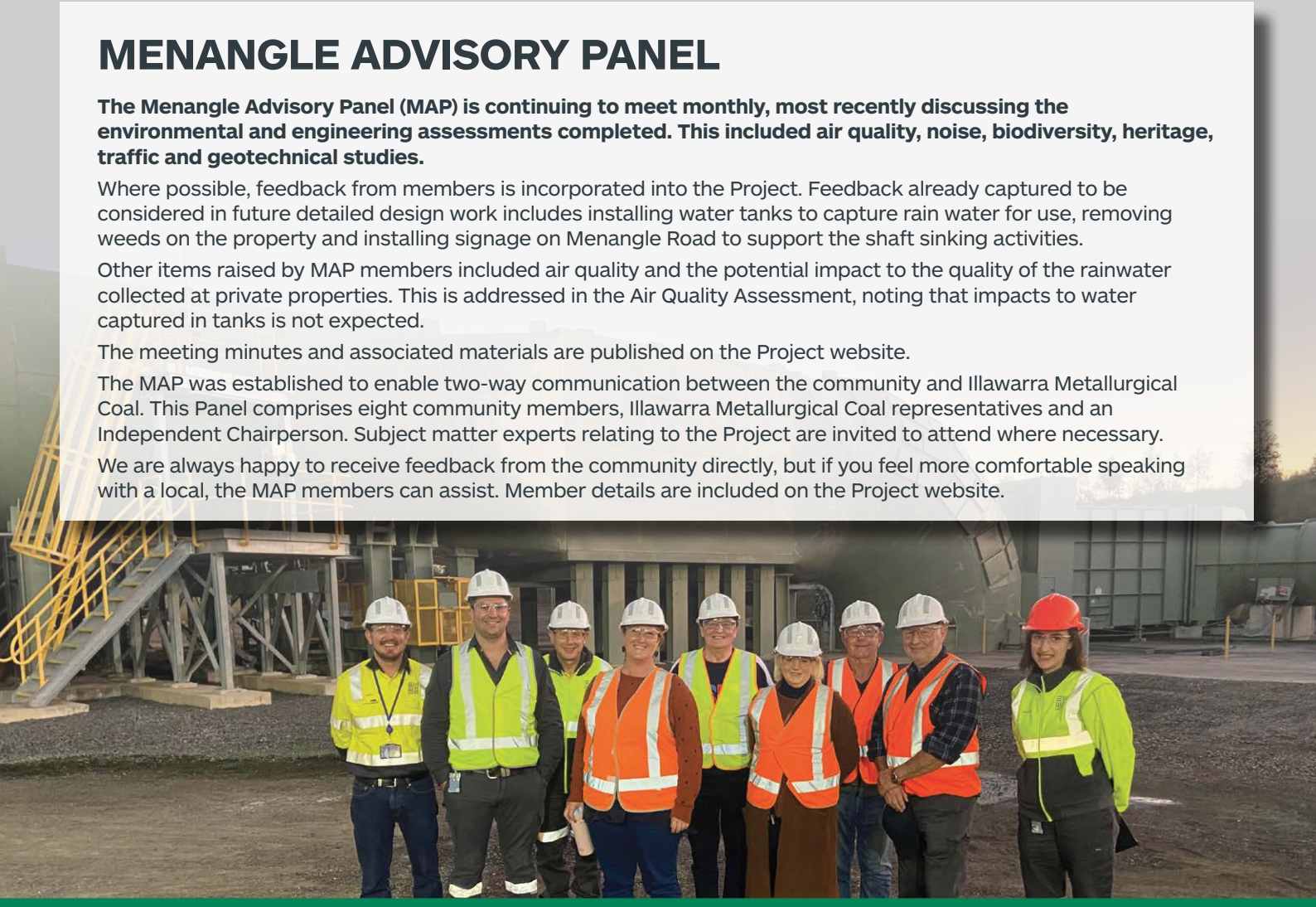
Where possible, feedback from members is incorporated into the Project. Feedback already captured to be considered in future detailed design work includes installing water tanks to capture rain water for use, removing weeds on the property and installing signage on Menangle Road to support the shaft sinking activities.

Other items raised by MAP members included air quality and the potential impact to the quality of the rainwater collected at private properties. This is addressed in the Air Quality Assessment, noting that impacts to water captured in tanks is not expected.

The meeting minutes and associated materials are published on the Project website.

The MAP was established to enable two-way communication between the community and Illawarra Metallurgical Coal. This Panel comprises eight community members, Illawarra Metallurgical Coal representatives and an Independent Chairperson. Subject matter experts relating to the Project are invited to attend where necessary.

We are always happy to receive feedback from the community directly, but if you feel more comfortable speaking with a local, the MAP members can assist. Member details are included on the Project website.



# PROJECT WEBSITE

**More information about the Project is available at https://www.south32.net/our-business/australia/illawarra-metallurgical-coal/appin-mine-ventilation-and-access-project**