

End of an era at Muswellbrook Coal Mine

With underground coal mining commencing in 1907 and open-cut operations in 1944 – Muswellbrook Coal Mine has reached the end of an era, with all operational mining activities now complete.

The last coal was mined and processed from the open cut area late last year, and the final coal was transported from the site on 13 March 2023. Congratulations to the entire Muswellbrook Coal Company (MCC) team for reaching this significant milestone, as MCC enters a new era in its 116-year-old journey.



Final site rehabilitation and mine closure activities

While mining may have finished at Muswellbrook Mine, there is still plenty of activity happening on site.

Demolition and removal of the Coal Handling and Preparation Plant has commenced and is scheduled for completion in Q2 2023. Rehabilitation of Open Cut 2 is continuing, and planning is well underway to complete the rehabilitation of Open Cut 1, with final rehabilitation expected to take up to four years.

The rehabilitation work will require the continued use of heavy equipment until the final landform is achieved; truck movements and delivery of rehabilitation materials and transporting of heavy equipment will continue to and from site as required. A small amount of blasting will occur during the rehabilitation phase to achieve the final landform and required rehabilitation outcomes for the site.

All work will continue to be undertaken as per development consent and mining lease requirements, in accordance with associated Environmental Management Plans.

Spontaneous Combustion Management Update

Muswellbrook Coal Company (MCC) continues to undertake spontaneous combustion management in accordance with the approved Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan (SCMP). The SCMP was updated in 2020 and approved by Muswellbrook Shire Council in December 2020. The approved SCMP is available on the MCC website.

MCC continues to monitor Hydrogen Sulphide (H₂S) and Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) in the community. The monitors are located in the predominant wind directions, upwind and downwind of the site. During the last 12 months there have been no exceedances of the criteria listed in the development consent. A summary of the data is placed on MCC's website on a monthly basis.

This data can be found under the Monitoring Results – Spontaneous Combustion section of the website at: www.idemitsu.com.au/mining/operations/muswellbrook-coal/approvals-plans-reports/.

While the mining and processing of hot coal has been completed at MCC, there are still small areas of spontaneous combustion that are being managed on site. The final rehabilitation of the site will remove these spontaneous combustion areas.

Modification Application

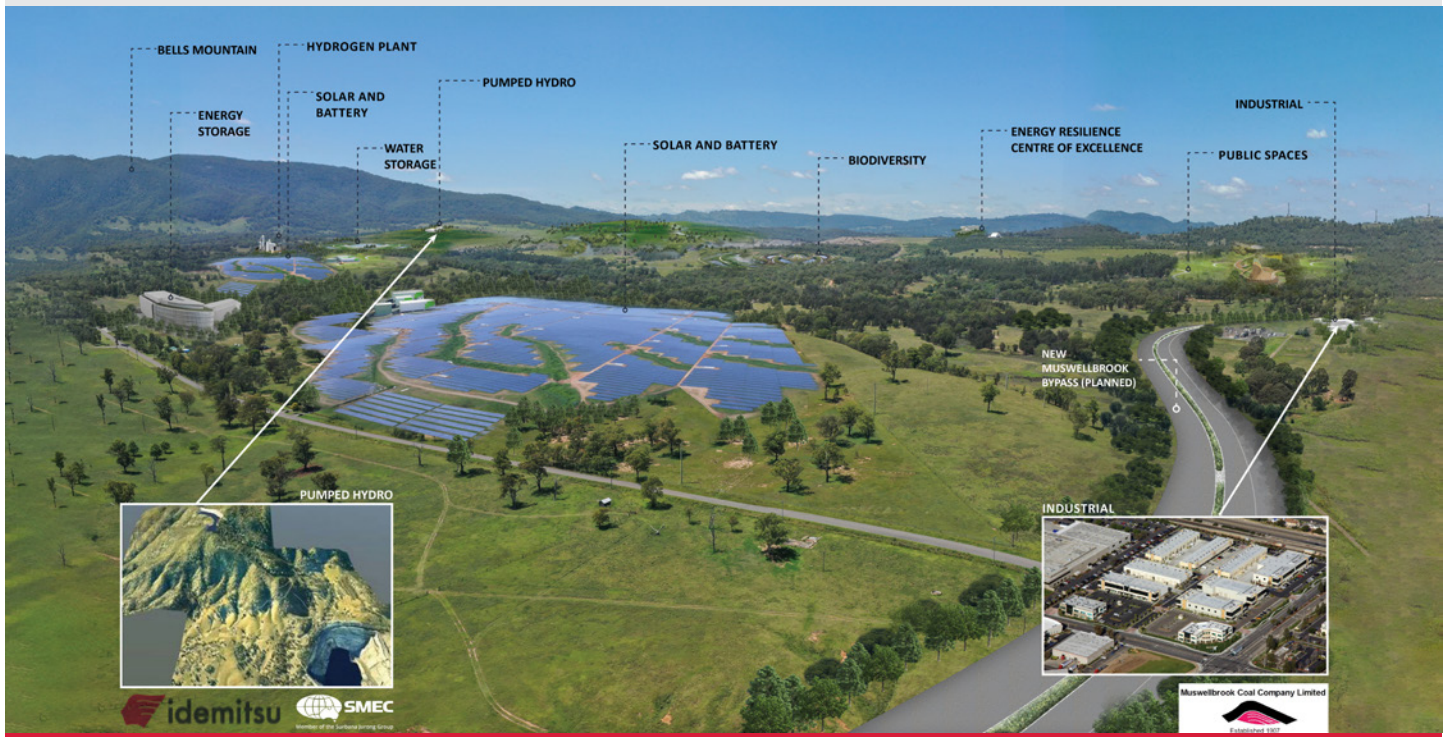
MCC submitted a modification application to Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) for minor amendments to the development consent in 2022. The amendments are required to assist in the transition from mining into the closure execution phase, rehabilitation phase and ultimately lease relinquishment.

The modification was placed on public exhibition and no responses were received from the public. Responses were provided by some government agencies and MCC has responded in kind. Council is now assessing this information and a determination on the modification is expected in Q2 2023.

Post Mining Land Use Options

Idemitsu has developed a range of options for the site collectively referred to as the Muswellbrook Clean Industries Precinct (MCIP). A collaboration is underway with several industry partners to investigate the viability of, and plan for, a wide range of renewable energy and other projects on and around the MCC site.

Projects include the Muswellbrook Pumped Hydro Energy Storage and Muswellbrook Solar Farm. MCIP also includes plans for battery storage and green hydrogen projects.



Pumped Hydro Electric Scheme

AGL and Idemitsu Australia have established a Joint Venture, Muswellbrook Pumped Hydro Pty Ltd, to progress the project for a Pumped Hydro Energy Storage (PHES) facility at Bells Mountain.

The first phase of the feasibility study has been completed and so far the technical feasibility supports a promising pumped-hydro scheme. The project will have a 250MW, 8-hour supply capacity.

The project would utilise the MCC Open Cut 2 Void as the lower reservoir, with an upper reservoir to be constructed on Bells Mountain to the northeast of the mine.

In 2022 the Joint Venture was awarded \$9.45 million funding under the NSW Government's Pumped Hydro Recoverable Grants Program, that will enable the project to advance development studies to a stage that means the project is ready for investment.

The next stage for the project is to enter the detailed design phase and begin the environmental approvals process.

Muswellbrook Solar Farm

ESCO Pacific in partnership with Idemitsu Australia proposes to develop a large-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) generation facility and associated infrastructure to be known as the Muswellbrook Solar Farm.

The solar farm is expected to have a generating capacity of up to 135MWac and enough renewable energy to power approximately 79,000 homes. It will be located predominantly on MCC buffer land adjacent to the mine.

The Muswellbrook Solar Farm would require the installation of solar PV panels, associated infrastructure (i.e., substation, inverters, power cabling, site offices, car parking, and new access tracks) and a transmission line extension to connect the solar farm into the grid.

Further details including a project information sheet and location map are available on the project website www.escopacific.com.au/projects/muswellbrook-solar-farm.

ESCO Pacific is currently preparing a Development Application (DA) and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment towards the end of 2023.

ESCO Pacific and Idemitsu are committed to engaging with neighbours, local communities, and stakeholders throughout the development of the project. A successful community drop-in session was held at Muswellbrook RSL recently. The event was well attended and provided an opportunity for community members to learn more about the project and approvals process and raise any queries or concerns.

Further sessions will be held as the project progresses and interested parties will have the opportunity to make written submissions regarding the application. Further information on the process will be provided on the project website in the coming months.

To register your interest, ask a question or provide feedback on the project please contact ESCO Pacific at info@escopacific.com.au, 03 8595 2406 or via the Contact Us page on the **ESCO Pacific** website www.escopacific.com.au.

Local suppliers and contractors are also encouraged to register their interest and capabilities.



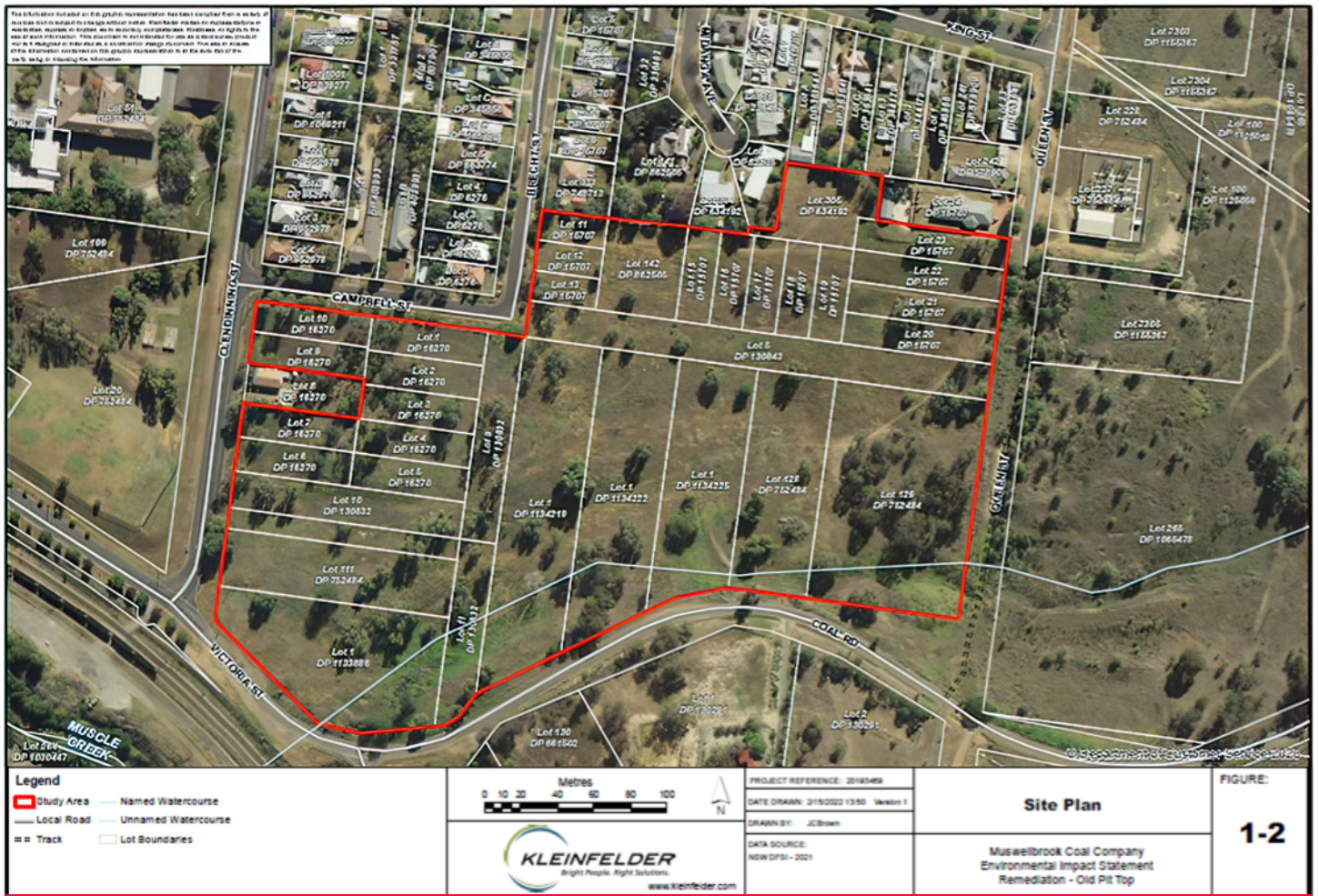
**The project will have a
135MWac generating
capacity; enough
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power 79,000 homes.**

Old Pit Top Remediation

Muswellbrook Coal Company is continuing to undertake planning works required for the remediation of the Old Pit Top.

MCC has lodged a development application with Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) for approval to undertake this remediation work; discussions continue with MSC to finalise this approval.

For the safety of residents, MCC has installed a security fence around the Old Pit Top to prevent public access to the site while the remediation assessment and planning work is being undertaken.



Further Information

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTACT LINE
1800 600 205

Please do not hesitate to call the Environmental Contact Line if you wish to raise an environmental concern or have an enquiry about the mining operation.

DIRECT CALL
02 6542 2300

MCC WEBSITE

For more information on MCC's approvals, environmental management plans, activities and monitoring results please visit our website at:
www.idemitsu.com.au/operations/muswellbrook-coal/

