

# Muswellbrook Coal

## MP 37

# Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape Management Plan

|             |                              |           |   |       |            |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------|---|-------|------------|
| Prepared by | Environmental Superintendent | Signature | <br><small>6C399D3BE6A94E0D49D0EA10F39F0930 readyesign</small> | Date: | 08/09/2025 |
| Approved by | Head of Muswellbrook Site    | Signature | <br><small>E4A746C0EDF8CD4C6A7180407A7BBC90 readyesign</small> | Date: | 08/09/2025 |



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION ..... 1**

    1.1 SCOPE ..... 1

    1.2 OBJECTIVES..... 1

**2.0 LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS..... 2**

**3.0 REFERENCES ..... 2**

**4.0 DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS ..... 2**

**5.0 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ..... 2**

**6.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT ..... 3**

**7.0 VISUAL AMENITY LIGHTING AND LANDSCAPING STRATEGIES..... 3**

**8.0 POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS ON PRIVATELY OWNED  
PROPERTY ..... 4**

**9.0 COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT..... 4**

**10.0 EXTERNAL REPORTING ..... 4**

**11.0 REVIEW OF THE VALLMP ..... 4**

**12.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES ..... 4**

**13.0 LIST OF APPENDICIES..... 5**

**14.0 REVISION DETAILS ..... 5**

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Statutory Requirements ..... 2

Table 2: Organisational Responsibilities ..... 4

| Document Owner               | Version No. | Review Date | Next Review | Approved Date    | Page |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------|
| Environmental Superintendent | 8           | August 2025 | August 2025 | 3 September 2025 | i    |



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Muswellbrook Coal Company (MCC) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Idemitsu Kosan Company Ltd. Group. MCC has a long association with coal mining at Muswellbrook, with underground coal mining commencing in 1907 and open cut operations in 1944. The mine is located on Muscle Creek Road, approximately 3 kilometres to the north-east of Muswellbrook.

On September 1, 2003, Development Consent for DA 205/2002 was granted by Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) to extend the former MCC No.1 Open Cut. The No.1 Open Cut Extension commenced operations in March 2005 and has a capacity to produce up to 2,000,000 tonnes coal per annum. This approval has subsequently been modified on several occasions with the latest modification granted in 2016 to allow mining in an area known as the “Continuation Project” and to extend the life of the mining operations to 2022. Rehabilitation activities will continue past this date. A modification to the approval was granted on 20 December 2022 to allow the storage, handling and transport of coal to continue until the end of March 2023. An additional modification to the consent was granted on 27 February 2024 to align rehabilitation requirements with updated mining lease conditions and other administrative changes.

Mining activities ceased at MCC in December 2022 with the last coal hauled from site in March 2023. Most of the site has been rehabilitated with minor areas still to be completed.

### 1.1 SCOPE


The Development Consent requires the preparation, approval and implementation of an Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) and subordinate Environmental Management Plans (EMP). One of these EMPs is the Visual Amenity Lighting and Landscaping Management Plan (VALLMP). Whilst this plan specifically addresses issues related to visual amenity lighting and landscaping, it should be read in conjunction with other EMP's.

This VALLMP has been prepared to the satisfaction of MSC (see **Appendix 1** for copies of correspondence).

### 1.2 OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the VALLMP are to implement visual reduction strategies in order to minimise the visual, lighting and landscape impact on the community and meet the development consent requirements.

| Document Owner               | Version No. | Review Date | Next Review | Approved Date    | Page |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------|
| Environmental Superintendent | 8           | August 2025 | August 2025 | 3 September 2025 | 1    |

|   |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
|  <p>ESTABLISHED 1907<br/>MUSWELLBROOK<br/>COAL COMPANY</p> | <p>Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape<br/>Management Plan</p> | <p>MP 37</p> |
|---|---|--------------|

## 2.0 LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The relevant approval and licence conditions are shown in **Table 1** along with information on where they are addressed in this plan.

**Table 1: Statutory Requirements**

| Approval/<br>Licence<br>Condition<br>No. | Condition  | Section   |
|--|--|-----------|
| <b>Development Consent Requirement</b>   |  |           |
| 22                                       | The Applicant must prepare a Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscaping Management Plan for the development to the satisfaction of Council, and carry out the development in accordance with this plan. The Plan must: | This plan |
| 22                                       | Identify the privately - owned residences that are likely to experience significant visual impact during the remainder of the project, and   | 8.0       |
| 22                                       | Describe (in general terms) any additional mitigation measures that are planned to be implemented to reduce the visibility of the mine from these properties.  | 7.0       |

## 3.0 REFERENCES

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*
- Development Consent DA 205/2002.
- Continuation Project Statement of Environmental Effects (EMM) 2016.


## 4.0 DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

|     |                               |
|-----|-------------------------------|
| DA  | Development Application       |
| MCC | Muswellbrook Coal Company Ltd |
| MSC | Muswellbrook Shire Council    |
| NSW | New South Wales               |

## 5.0 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Development Consent DA 205/2002.
- MP 30 Environmental Management Strategy.
- MOP 15-01 Complaint Handling Procedure.
- F1553 Community Complaint Record Form.

| Document Owner               | Version No. | Review Date | Next Review | Approved Date    | Page |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------|
| Environmental Superintendent | 8           | August 2025 | August 2025 | 3 September 2025 | 2    |

|   |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
|  <p>ESTABLISHED 1907<br/>MUSWELLBROOK<br/>COAL COMPANY</p> | <p>Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape<br/>Management Plan</p> | <p>MP 37</p> |
|---|---|--------------|

## 6.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

MCC is located 3km north-east of the township of Muswellbrook, with access via Muscle Creek Road off the New England Highway. The development consent boundary associated with MCC covers around 680ha and the site is currently undergoing rehabilitation activities.

Land use zoning around MCC under the provisions of the Muswellbrook Local Environmental Plan (LEP) is a combination of RU1 Primary Production, E3 Environmental Management and SP2 Infrastructure. Surrounding land uses include agricultural activities, light industrial and special land uses.

The land immediately surrounding the mine is predominately agricultural land which is primarily used for grazing of beef cattle. Light industrial and special land uses include Muswellbrook Quarry to the north-west (not in operation), St Heliers correctional centre also to the north-west and Muswellbrook waste management facility adjacent to the south-west section of the MCC development consent boundary. The proposed Muswellbrook bypass runs from the south of the site onto the south-western side of the site. Muswellbrook township is to the south-west, with other notable rural-residential areas along Sandy Creek Road to the north, Woodland Ridge Estate approximately 3.5km to the south, and along Muscle Creek Road around 4km to the south-east.

Other significant features surrounding MCC include the Main Northern Rail Line and the New England Highway, which both run to the west of MCC through Muswellbrook township and to the south towards Singleton. Numerous other mining operations and power-generating facilities exist in the Muswellbrook LGA, notably Bengalla mine and Mount Pleasant to the west of Muswellbrook and Mt Arthur Coal and Maxwell Underground Mine (formerly Drayton Coal) to the south.

The natural topography shields the majority of views to MCC. However, the mine can be seen from a number of locations:

- Woodland Ridge Estate, to the south,
- the corner of Castlerock Road and Kayuga Road, to the west of Muswellbrook, and
- the New England Highway on approach to Muswellbrook, approximately 4km north of the centre of Muswellbrook.

MCC can also be seen in the distant background from Woodland Ridge Estate and from the Castlerock Road/Kayuga Road/Wybong Road area west of Muswellbrook. Open Cut 1 and the eastern emplacement are distantly visible from all of these locations.

MCC can also be seen in the distant background from the New England Highway, travelling south towards Muswellbrook. However, when travelling at speed on the highway the landform associated with MCC can be difficult to distinguish from the surrounding landscape.

## 7.0 VISUAL AMENITY LIGHTING AND LANDSCAPING STRATEGIES

Bulk shaping rehabilitation activities have been completed at the site, which has reduced the visual amenity impacts from the site. As activities are no longer occurring during the night, the need to set up lighting plants has been removed. Measures to minimise the potential for visual related impacts on the nearest receptors are no longer required.

| Document Owner               | Version No. | Review Date | Next Review | Approved Date    | Page |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------|
| Environmental Superintendent | 8           | August 2025 | August 2025 | 3 September 2025 | 3    |

## 8.0 POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS ON PRIVATELY OWNED PROPERTY

A review of any potential significant impacts on privately owned property has been undertaken and identified that there will be no significant changes in the visual impacts on properties surrounding the operation.

## 9.0 COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

Complaints by the community regarding visual amenity can be directed to the 24-hour toll-free telephone Environmental Contact Line 1800 600 205. More details on the complaints management at MCC are found in the Environmental Management Strategy.

## 10.0 EXTERNAL REPORTING

Within 2 weeks of approval of this VALLMP, a copy will be made available for public viewing via the MCC website.

The performance of MCC's VALLMP will be reported through the Annual Environmental Management Report (AEMR). The last AEMR for MCC will be the 2027 AEMR.

## 11.0 REVIEW OF THE VALLMP

The VALLMP will be reviewed:


- Within 6 months of changes to Development Consent conditions relating to visual amenity, lighting or landscaping, and
- Following an independent environmental audit which recommends changes to the VALLMP.

## 12.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES

**Table 2** outlines the responsibilities relating to the VALLMP.

**Table 2: Organisational Responsibilities**

| Role                                     | Accountability   |
|--|--|
| Suitably Qualified or Experienced Person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide adequate resources to implement the requirements of the VALLMP</li> <li>• Coordinate reviews of the VALLMP</li> <li>• Coordinate reporting as required in VALLMP</li> </ul> |

|   |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
|  <p>ESTABLISHED 1907<br/>MUSWELLBROOK<br/>COAL COMPANY</p> | <p>Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape<br/>Management Plan</p> | <p>MP 37</p> |
|---|---|--------------|

### 13.0 LIST OF APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Regarding Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape Management Plan

### 14.0 REVISION DETAILS

| Revision No. | Date          | Reviewed By   | Details/Reason for Revision                            |
|--------------|---------------|---|--|
| 1            | February 2005 | MCC Technical Services Department, Carbon Based Environmental         | Original Management Plan                               |
| 2            | December 2010 | MCC Technical Services Department, Carbon Based Environmental         | 5 Yearly Review  |
| 3            | December 2015 | MCC Environmental, Technical Services and Production Departments      | 5 Yearly Review  |
| 4            | March 2017    | MCC Environmental, Technical Services and Production Departments      | Update following modification for Continuation Project |
| 5            | October 2020  | MCC Environmental Department  | 3 Yearly Review  |
| 6            | April 2023    | Environmental, Production, Administration and Maintenance Departments | End of mining operations                               |
| 7            | May 2024      | Environmental and Production Departments                              | Consent Modification 9                                 |
| 8            | August 2025   | Environmental Department  | Completion of bulk rehabilitation activities           |

| Document Owner               | Version No. | Review Date | Next Review | Approved Date    | Page |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------|
| Environmental Superintendent | 8           | August 2025 | August 2025 | 3 September 2025 | 5    |

## Appendix 1: Correspondence Regarding Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape Management Plan



Enquiries  
Please ask for Tracy Ward  
Direct 02 6549 3778  
Our reference 25/60075

03 September 2025

**Julie Thomas**  
Environmental Superintendent  
Muswellbrook Coal

Dear Ms Thomas,

**Muswellbrook Coal Mine Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape Management Plan (MP37) – Approval Letter**

Reference is made to the ‘Muswellbrook Coal Mine Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape Management Plan v8.’

Staff have carefully reviewed this document and are satisfied with all aspects proposed.

Accordingly, Council Staff approve the ‘Muswellbrook Coal Mine Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape Management Plan v8.’

Please ensure that the approved plan is placed on the project website at the earliest opportunity.

Should you need to discuss the above, please contact Tracy Ward (Sustainability Officer) on 02 6549 3778 or email [tracy.ward@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tracy.ward@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au).

Yours faithfully



Theresa Folpp  
Environmental Planning Officer

| Document Owner               | Version No. | Review Date | Next Review | Approved Date    | Page |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------|
| Environmental Superintendent | 8           | August 2025 | August 2025 | 3 September 2025 | 6    |