

Muswellbrook Coal

MP 37

Visual Amenity, Lighting and Landscape Management Plan

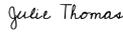
Prepared by	Environmental Superintendent	Signature	 <small>6C398D3BE6A94E0D49D0EA10F39F0930 ready2sign</small>	Date:	03/04/2025
Reviewed by	Rehabilitation Operations Manager	Signature	 <small>3D497C7CCCBFEF3C7B30470E9B00083C ready2sign</small>	Date:	03/04/2025
Approved by	Head of Muswellbrook Site	Signature	 <small>E4A746C0EDF8CD4C6A7180407A7BBC90 ready2sign</small>	Date:	04/04/2025



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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. Rehabilitation of the site and completion of mine closure activities are ongoing.

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.

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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/ Licence Condition No.	Condition	Section
Development Consent Requirement		
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	9.0
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.	8.0

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.

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6.0 INFORMATION AND TRAINING

All workers required to work at the site must undertake the relevant site Induction. This includes information on visual amenity, lighting and landscape management at the site.

The requirements of MOP 15-01 Complaint Handling Procedure will be communicated to workers involved in responding to complaints.

Training records will be maintained for each worker at the site.

7.0 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, and residential areas as shown in Error! Reference source not found..

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/Wybung 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

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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.

8.0 VISUAL AMENITY LIGHTING AND LANDSCAPING STRATEGIES

Mining operations have ceased at MCC, and final rehabilitation of the site has commenced. As rehabilitation progresses the visual amenity impacts of the operation will decrease as overburden dumps are reshaped and rehabilitated. The CHPP has been demolished removing the visual amenity and lighting impacts from this area.

MCC will continue to employ measures to minimise the potential for visual related impacts on the nearest receptors by:

- undertaking rehabilitation progressively, and
- orientating lights away from sensitive receptors where practical.

Any new external lighting will be installed in accordance with the requirements of AS 4282 – *Control of the Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting*. Care will be exercised in the location of lighting plant, especially if located on the edge of highwalls, so that direction of illumination is away from residences and public roads. Any mobile lighting towers positioned on or near the skyline will be fitted with shields to minimise the potential for accidental spillage of light.

9.0 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.

10.0 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.

11.0 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).

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12.0 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.

13.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES

Table 2 outlines the responsibilities relating to the BFMP.

Table 2: Organisational Responsibilities

Role	Accountability
MCC Head of Muswellbrook Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate resources to implement the requirements of the VALLMP
Thiess OCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up mobile lighting plants so that so that direction of illumination is away from residences and public roads
MCC Maintenance Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install new lighting in accordance with AS4282
Thiess Environment and Community Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate response to all visual amenity or lighting related complaints
Environmental Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate reviews of the VALLMP • Coordinate reporting as required in VALLMP

14.0 LIST OF APPENDICIES

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

15.0 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

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Revision No.	Date	Reviewed By	Details/Reason for Revision
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

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



Enquiries
Please ask for Tracy Ward
Direct 02 6549 3700
Our reference CM 25/13329

26 March 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 v7'.

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 v7'.

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

Should you need to discuss the above, please contact Tracy Ward (Sustainability Officer)
on 02 6549 3700 or email council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au.

Yours faithfully



Sharon Pope
Director Environment and Planning

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