

Appin Colliery Area 7 Longwalls 705 to 710

SUBSIDENCE MANAGEMENT PLAN APPLICATION

WRITTEN REPORT

June 2008

Volume 1/3

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Prepared for:



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume 1 - Written Report and Reduced Plans (A4 size)

Volume 2 - Subsidence Management Plan (SMP)

Volume 3 - Plans (A0 Size)

VOLUME 1 - WRITTEN REPORT

<u>1.</u>	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>1</u>
1.1.	OVERVIEW	1
1.2.	THE APPLICANT	2
1.3.	APPROVALS SOUGHT	2
1.4.	LAND OWNERSHIP	4
1.5.	FIRST WORKINGS APPROVAL	4
1.6.	PRIOR APPROVALS	4
<u>2.</u>	<u>APPLICATION AREA</u>	<u>5</u>
2.1.	APPROVED PLAN	5
2.2.	SMP AREA	5
2.3.	EXTENT OF WORKINGS	6
<u>3.</u>	<u>MINING SYSTEM AND RESOURCE RECOVERY</u>	<u>7</u>
3.1.	MINING METHOD	7
3.2.	MINING GEOMETRY	8
3.3.	SEAM TO BE MINED	8
3.4.	SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED MINING	9
3.5.	BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	10
3.6.	IMPACT ON RESOURCE RECOVERY	10
3.7.	ESTIMATED RECOVERY	11
3.8.	POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON OTHER SEAMS	11
3.9.	FURTHER PLANS FOR MINING OTHER SEAMS	11
<u>4.</u>	<u>SITE CONDITIONS</u>	<u>12</u>
4.1.	GEOMORPHOLOGY AND SOILS	12
4.2.	COVER DEPTHS	12
4.3.	OVERBURDEN STRATIGRAPHY	12
4.4.	LOCATION OF EXISTING AND FUTURE WORKINGS	15
4.5.	LITHOLOGICAL AND GEOTECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROOF AND FLOOR	17
4.6.	UNCONTROLLED COLLAPSE OF ROOF (FOR SHALLOW WORKINGS)	17
<u>5.</u>	<u>STABILITY OF UNDERGROUND WORKINGS</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>6.</u>	<u>CHARACTERISATION OF SURFACE AND SUB-SURFACE FEATURES</u>	<u>19</u>
6.1.	MINE SUBSIDENCE DISTRICT	19
6.2.	LAND USE AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION	19

6.3.	IDENTIFICATION OF SURFACE AND SUB-SURFACE FEATURES	19
6.4.	AREAS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY	21
6.5.	SIGNIFICANT NATURAL FEATURES	22
6.6.	FLORA AND FAUNA	30
6.7.	SURFACE HYDROLOGY OF THE NEPEAN RIVER	31
6.8.	WATER CHEMISTRY OF THE NEPEAN RIVER AND CREEKS	32
6.9.	PUBLIC UTILITIES	33
6.10.	FARM LAND AND FACILITIES	43
6.11.	INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS	45
6.12.	AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE	46
6.13.	PERMANENT SURVEY CONTROL MARKS	49
6.14.	RESIDENTIAL ESTABLISHMENTS	49
<u>7.</u>	<u>SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACTS</u>	<u>50</u>
7.1.	BACKGROUND	50
7.2.	PREDICTION METHOD AND RELIABILITY	50
7.3.	METHODS EMPLOYED	50
7.4.	PREDICTED REGIONAL HORIZONTAL MOVEMENTS	52
7.5.	THE LIKELIHOOD OF IRREGULAR PROFILES	52
7.6.	SUMMARY RESULTS OF SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS	53
<u>8.</u>	<u>SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACTS ON NATURAL FEATURES</u>	<u>58</u>
8.1.	THE NEPEAN RIVER	58
8.2.	CREEKS	63
8.3.	CLIFFS	68
8.4.	STEEP SLOPES	70
<u>9.</u>	<u>SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACTS ON HYDROLOGY</u>	<u>72</u>
9.1.	POTENTIAL SUBSIDENCE IMPACTS ON SURFACE WATER	73
9.2.	POTENTIAL SUBSIDENCE IMPACTS ON GROUNDWATER	75
<u>10.</u>	<u>SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACTS ON ECOLOGY</u>	<u>78</u>
10.1.	PREDICTED IMPACTS OF MINING INDUCED SUBSIDENCE ON TERRESTRIAL FLORA AND FAUNA	78
10.2.	PREDICTED IMPACTS OF MINING INDUCED SUBSIDENCE ON AQUATIC ECOLOGY	82
<u>11.</u>	<u>SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACTS ON MAN MADE FEATURES</u>	<u>87</u>
11.1.	ROADS	87
11.2.	RAILWAYS	95
11.3.	SYDNEY CATCHMENT AUTHORITY INFRASTRUCTURE	101
11.4.	WATER AND GAS PIPELINES	104
11.5.	ELECTRICAL SERVICES	105
11.6.	OPTICAL FIBRE CABLES	108
11.7.	TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	111
11.8.	GILBULLA CONFERENCE CENTRE	114
11.9.	FARM LAND AND FACILITIES	115
11.10.	GROUNDWATER BORES	120
11.11.	QUARRY SITES	121
11.12.	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES	122

11.13.	SURVEY CONTROL MARKS	124
11.14.	RESIDENTIAL ESTABLISHMENTS	126
11.15.	THE LIKELIHOOD OF IRREGULAR PROFILES	129
11.16.	PREDICTED REGIONAL HORIZONTAL MOVEMENTS	130
11.17.	OTHER POTENTIAL IMPACTS	130
<u>12.</u>	<u>STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS</u>	<u>133</u>
12.1.	STATUTORY PROCESS FOR APPROVALS	133
12.2.	SMP	134
12.3.	OTHER RELEVANT LEGISLATION	136
12.4.	OTHER APPROVALS AND PROVISIONS	138
<u>13.</u>	<u>RISK ASSESSMENT</u>	<u>140</u>
<u>14.</u>	<u>COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION</u>	<u>141</u>
14.1.	IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS	141
14.2.	CONSULTATION PROCESS	141
14.3.	ADVERTISING THE SMP	142
14.4.	INFRASTRUCTURE OWNERS CONSULTATION	142
14.5.	COMMUNITY CONSULTATION	143
14.6.	LAND OWNER CONSULTATION	143
14.7.	ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES CONSULTATION	143
14.8.	AGENCY CONSULTATION	144
14.9.	SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION RESULTS	144
<u>15.</u>	<u>SUMMARY AND ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS</u>	<u>146</u>
15.1.	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS ON NATURAL FEATURES	146
15.2.	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS ON ECOLOGY	150
15.3.	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS ON SURFACE WATER	153
15.4.	ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS ON GROUNDWATER	154
15.5.	ASSESSMENT OF OTHER POTENTIAL IMPACTS	156
15.6.	EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE	157
	<u>REFERENCES</u>	<u>158</u>

List of Plans (A3 size)

Approved Plan	Approved Plan
Plan 1	Existing and Proposed Workings and SMP Area
Plan 2	Surface Features
Plan 2A	Mine Subsidence Districts
Plan 3A	Depth of Cover and Boreholes
Plan 3B	Geology and Seam Floor Contours
Plan 3C	Seam Thickness Contours
Plan 5	Mining Titles and Land Ownership
Plan 6	Geological Section
Plan 7	Orthophoto Plan

LIST OF APPENDICES

REDUCED PLANS

- A. SUBSIDENCE PREDICTIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS ON NATURAL FEATURES AND SURFACE INFRASTRUCTURE (MSEC)**
- B. WATER QUALITY SUBSIDENCE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (ECOENGINEERS)**
- C. AQUATIC ECOLOGY SUBSIDENCE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (THE ECOLOGY LAB)**
- D. FLORA AND FAUNA SUBSIDENCE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (BIOSIS RESEARCH)**
- E. CULTURAL HERITAGE SUBSIDENCE IMPACT STATEMENT (BIOSIS RESEARCH)**
- F. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION DOCUMENTATION**
- G. RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION (AXYS CONSULTING)**
- H. HYDROGEOLOGICAL SUBSIDENCE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (GEOTERRA)**

LIST OF TABLES

	<i>Page</i>
TABLE 3.1 - PROPOSED DIMENSIONS OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	8
TABLE 3.2 - MINING SCHEDULE	9
TABLE 6.1 - NATURAL FEATURES AND SURFACE IMPROVEMENTS	20
TABLE 6.2 - SUMMARY OF AREAS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY WITHIN THE SMP AREA	21
TABLE 6.3 - DETAILS OF CLIFFS WITHIN THE SMP AREA	24
TABLE 6.6 - REGISTERED GROUNDWATER BORES WITHIN THE SMP AREA	45
TABLE 6.7 - ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES WITHIN THE SMP AREA	46
TABLE 6.8 - LOCATIONS OF THE SURVEY CONTROL MARKS WITHIN THE GENERAL SMP AREA	49
TABLE 7.1 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED INCREMENTAL SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE PARAMETERS DUE TO THE EXTRACTION OF EACH PROPOSED LONGWALL 705 TO 710	53
TABLE 7.2 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE PARAMETERS AFTER THE EXTRACTION OF EACH PROPOSED LONGWALL 705 TO 710	54
TABLE 7.3 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TRAVELLING SUBSIDENCE PARAMETERS DURING THE EXTRACTION OF EACH PROPOSED LONGWALL 705 TO 710	54
TABLE 7.4 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE PARAMETERS ALONG PREDICTION LINE 1 RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	56
TABLE 8.1 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SUBSIDENCE, UPSIDENCE AND CLOSURE AT THE NEPEAN RIVER RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	58
TABLE 8.2 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE NET VERTICAL MOVEMENTS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	58
TABLE 8.3 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SUBSIDENCE, UPSIDENCE, NET VERTICAL MOVEMENT AND CLOSURE ALONG FOOT ONSLOW CREEK RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	63
TABLE 8.4 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE CHANGES IN GRADIENT AND SYSTEMATIC STRAINS ALONG THE ALIGNMENT OF FOOT ONSLOW CREEK RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	64
TABLE 8.5 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TRAVELLING TILTS AND STRAINS AT FOOT ONSLOW CREEK DURING THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	64
TABLE 8.6 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SUBSIDENCE, UPSIDENCE, NET VERTICAL MOVEMENT AND CLOSURE ALONG HARRIS CREEK RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	65
TABLE 8.7 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE CHANGES IN GRADIENT AND SYSTEMATIC STRAINS ALONG THE ALIGNMENT OF HARRIS CREEK RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	66

TABLE 8.8 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE CLIFFS WITHIN THE SMP AREA RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	68
TABLE 8.9 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE STEEP SLOPES RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	70
TABLE 11.1 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN ALONG THE ALIGNMENT OF SOUTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAY RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	87
TABLE 11.2 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TRAVELLING TILTS AND STRAINS AT HW2 HUME HIGHWAY DURING THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	88
TABLE 11.3 - PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE HIGHWAY CULVERTS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	90
TABLE 11.4 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED UPSIDENCE AND CLOSURE MOVEMENTS AT THE HIGHWAY CULVERTS	90
TABLE 11.5 - PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE HIGHWAY CUTTINGS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	91
TABLE 11.6 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN FOR THE REST AREA BUILDING STRUCTURES RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	93
TABLE 11.7 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN ALONG THE ALIGNMENTS OF THE LOCAL ROADS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	94
TABLE 11.8 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TRAVELLING TILTS AND STRAINS AT THE LOCAL ROADS DURING THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	94
TABLE 11.9 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, CHANGE IN GRADE AND GROUND STRAIN ALONG THE RAILWAY RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	96
TABLE 11.10 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE HORIZONTAL MOVEMENT ACROSS THE RAILWAY, CHANGE IN CANT AND LONG TWIST RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	96
TABLE 11.11 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED LOSS IN RAIL SFT RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	97
TABLE 11.12 - PREDICTED MAXIMUM CHANGES IN TRACK GEOMETRY DUE TO SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE	98
TABLE 11.13 - PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE RAILWAY CULVERTS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	99
TABLE 11.14 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED UPSIDENCE AND CLOSURE MOVEMENTS AT THE RAILWAY CULVERTS	100
TABLE 11.15 - PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE RAILWAY CUTTINGS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	101

TABLE 11.16 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TOTAL SUBSIDENCE UPSIDENCE AND CLOSURE MOVEMENTS AT THE WROUGHT IRON AQUEDUCTS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	102
TABLE 11.17 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TOTAL SUBSIDENCE UPSIDENCE AND CLOSURE MOVEMENTS AT THE CONCRETE AQUEDUCTS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	103
TABLE 11.18 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TOTAL SUBSIDENCE, UPSIDENCE AND CLOSURE MOVEMENTS AT THE BRIDGES RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	104
TABLE 11.19 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT ALONG AND TILT ACROSS THE ALIGNMENTS OF THE POWERLINES RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	106
TABLE 11.20 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TRAVELLING TILTS AT THE POWERLINES DURING THE EXTRACTION OF THE PROPOSED LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	107
TABLE 11.21 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN ALONG THE OPTICAL FIBRE CABLE RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	108
TABLE 11.22 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TRAVELLING TILTS AND STRAINS AT THE OPTICAL FIBRE CABLES DURING THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	109
TABLE 11.23 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED UPSIDENCE AND CLOSURE MOVEMENTS AT THE DRAINAGE LINE CROSSINGS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	110
TABLE 11.24 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN ALONG THE COPPER TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLES RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	111
TABLE 11.25 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED TRAVELLING TILTS AND STRAINS AT THE COPPER TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLES DURING THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	112
TABLE 11.26 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE MOBILE PHONE TOWER SITES WITHIN THE SMP AREA RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF THE PROPOSED LONGWALLS	113
TABLE 11.27 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN FOR THE MAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE BUILDING STRUCTURES RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	114
TABLE 11.28 - SUMMARY OF THE MAXIMUM PREDICTED SUBSIDENCE AND TILTS FOR THE RURAL BUILDING STRUCTURES WITHIN THE SMP AREA AFTER THE EXTRACTION OF EACH PROPOSED LONGWALL	116
TABLE 11.29 - SUMMARY OF THE MAXIMUM PREDICTED CURVATURES AND SYSTEMATIC STRAINS FOR THE RURAL BUILDING STRUCTURES WITHIN THE SMP AREA AFTER THE EXTRACTION OF EACH PROPOSED LONGWALL	116
TABLE 11.30 - SUMMARY OF TILT AND STRAIN IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR THE RURAL BUILDING STRUCTURES WITHIN THE SMP AREA BASED ON INCREASED PREDICTIONS	117
TABLE 11.31 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE GROUNDWATER BORES WITHIN THE SMP AREA RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF THE PROPOSED LONGWALLS	121

TABLE 11.32 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE, TILT AND STRAIN AT THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES WITHIN THE SMP AREA RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF THE PROPOSED LONGWALLS	122
TABLE 11.33 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE AND HORIZONTAL MOVEMENT AT THE SURVEY CONTROL MARKS WITHIN THE GENERAL SMP AREA RESULTING FROM THE PROPOSED LONGWALLS	125
TABLE 11.34 - SUMMARY OF THE MAXIMUM PREDICTED SUBSIDENCE AND TILTS FOR THE HOUSES WITHIN THE SMP AREA AFTER THE EXTRACTION OF EACH PROPOSED LONGWALL	126
TABLE 11.35 - SUMMARY OF THE MAXIMUM PREDICTED CURVATURES AND SYSTEMATIC STRAINS FOR THE HOUSES WITHIN THE SMP AREA AFTER THE EXTRACTION OF EACH PROPOSED LONGWALL	126
TABLE 11.36 - SUMMARY OF TILT AND STRAIN IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR THE HOUSES WITHIN THE SMP AREA BASED ON INCREASED PREDICTIONS	127
TABLE 11.37 - MAXIMUM PREDICTED SYSTEMATIC SUBSIDENCE PARAMETERS AT THE ON-SITE WASTE WATER SYSTEMS RESULTING FROM THE EXTRACTION OF THE LONGWALLS 702 TO 710	128

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
FIGURE 1.1 – GENERAL SMP AREA	3
FIGURE 2.1 – AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING LONGWALLS 705 TO 710 AND THE SMP AREA	6
FIGURE 4.1 – SURFACE LEVEL CONTOURS	13
FIGURE 4.2 – TYPICAL STRATIGRAPHIC SECTION – SOUTHERN COALFIELD	15
FIGURE 4.3 – GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURES	16
FIGURE 6.1 – WATERCOURSES	26
FIGURE 6.2 – GROUNDWATER BORES AND SURVEY CONTROL MARKS	27
FIGURE 6.3 – CLIFFS AND STEEP SLOPES	28
FIGURE 6.4 – RAILWAY AND HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE	35
FIGURE 6.5 – LOCAL ROADS AND BRIDGES	36
FIGURE 6.6 – WATER AND GAS INFRASTRUCTURE	39
FIGURE 6.7 – ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE	41
FIGURE 6.8 – TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE	42
FIGURE 6.9 – BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES	44
FIGURE 6.10 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HERITAGE SITES	48
FIGURE 7.1 – PREDICTION LINE 1	55
FIGURE 7.2 – PREDICTED CUMULATIVE SUBSIDENCE CONTOURS DUE TO LONGWALLS 705 TO 710	57
FIGURE 8.1 – INITIAL AND FINAL SURFACE LEVELS ALONG THE ALIGNMENT OF FOOT ONSLOW CREEK	67
FIGURE 8.2 – INITIAL AND FINAL SURFACE LEVELS ALONG THE ALIGNMENT OF HARRIS CREEK	67

Document Compliance with Subsidence Management Plan (SMP) Guidelines

SMP Guideline Section	SMP Application Section Number Reference
6.2 The SMP Area	Volume 1- Section 2
6.3 Mining System and Resource Recovery	Volume 1- Section 3
6.4 Site Conditions of the SMP Area	Volume 1- Section 4
6.5 Stability of Underground Workings	Volume 1- Section 5
6.6 Characterisation of Surface and Sub-Surface Features within the SMP Area	Volume 1- Section 6
6.7 Subsidence Prediction	Volume 1- Section 7
6.8 Community Consultation	Volume 1- Section 14
6.9 Statutory Requirements	Volume 1- Section 12
6.10 Subsidence Impacts	Volume 1- Sections 8, 9, 10 and 11
6.10.2 Risk Assessment	Volume 1- Section 13
7. Proposed Subsidence Management Plan	Volume 2
9. Plans	Volume 3 (A0 size) and Volume 1 (reduced)
10. SMP Approved Plan	Volume 3 (A0 size) and Volume 1 (reduced)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OVERVIEW

BHP Billiton Illawarra Coal (Illawarra Coal) proposes to continue its underground mining operations within Appin Colliery Area 7, located in the Southern Coalfield of New South Wales, by extracting coal from the Bulli Seam using longwall mining techniques. Appin Colliery is one of three operating underground mines managed by Illawarra Coal south of Sydney.

A number of natural features and items of surface infrastructure have been identified in the vicinity of the proposed longwalls, including the Nepean River, creeks, cliffs, steep slopes, roads, the HW2 Hume Highway, the Main Southern Railway, the Upper Canal system, electrical services, telecommunications services, groundwater bores, survey control marks and building structures.

This report supports an application for approval of a Subsidence Management Plan (SMP) for the development of longwall roadways by first workings and the secondary extraction of coal from Longwalls 705 to 710, **see Approved Plan**.

The proposed mining method uses continuous miner and longwall equipment to develop and extract the coal from the longwall panel. Illawarra Coal has recently mined longwalls (Longwall LW701) in the vicinity of the proposed workings in accordance with the approved SMP for Longwalls 701 to 704.

A condition of the mining lease (which is granted under the *Mining Act 1992*) is that the leaseholder shall prepare and have approved a Subsidence Management Plan prior to commencing any underground mining operations which will potentially lead to subsidence of the land surface. This process is administered by the Department of Primary Industries Minerals (DPIM). The specific requirements for gaining approval of an SMP are set out in the *Guideline for Applications for Subsidence Management Approvals (Department of Mineral Resources, 2003)*.

Approval is sought for the SMP for Longwalls 705 to 710 as per the subsidence management approval process. In accordance with the relevant DPIM guidelines, this report provides details on the:

- SMP Area
- Proposed mining system and resource recovery
- Site conditions within the SMP Area
- Surface and sub-surface features within the SMP Area
- Subsidence predictions
- Government and community consultation
- Statutory requirements
- Subsidence impacts associated with the proposed mining.

This assessment (**Volume 1 – Written Report**) and the SMP for the extraction of Longwalls 705 to 710 has been developed using the principals of risk management and the *New Approval*

Process for Management of Coal Mining Subsidence (NSW Mineral Resources, 2003). The SMP itself is presented as **Volume 2** of the submission.

Mine Subsidence Engineering Consultants (MSEC) were commissioned by Illawarra Coal to study the mining proposal, to identify natural features and all surface infrastructure, and to prepare subsidence predictions and impact assessments for these features. The MSEC report is included in **Appendix A** and key conclusions are presented in this Written Report. Further impact assessments for terrestrial and aquatic ecology, surface water quality and flow, groundwater and Aboriginal and European heritage were undertaken by Biosis Research, The Ecology Lab, Ecoengineers and Geoterra. These reports are provided in **Appendices B to H**.

1.2. THE APPLICANT

The owner and operator of the underground operation at Appin Colliery Area 7 is Illawarra Coal, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of BHP Billiton. Illawarra Coal's three operating mines in the Illawarra region produce hard coking coal, approximately 65% of which is consumed at steelworks in Port Kembla and Whyalla, while the remainder is exported.

1.3. APPROVALS SOUGHT

1.3.1. SMP Approval

This SMP application seeks approval for the activity of developing the longwall roadways associated with Longwall panels 705 to 710 and the mining of coal via the longwall method within Appin Colliery Area 7 (the Activity) (refer **Figure 1.1**). The Activity includes the monitoring, mitigation and remediation measures proposed in this report and the SMP to minimise the impacts from the proposed mining. An aerial photograph of the area to be mined is provided in **Figure 2.1**.

1.3.2. Part 5 Approval under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

The DPIM aims to promote the responsible development of the State's resources for the community's benefit and in doing this must administer a range of environmental legislation that is applicable to mining in NSW. The Department is concerned to ensure that any adverse effects of mining are minimised, and that a consistent high standard of environmental protection and rehabilitation is practiced throughout NSW.

Longwalls 705 to 710 are within an existing mining lease, where there is an existing mine. Appin Colliery is subject to the Wollondilly Local Environment Plan, which adopts Clauses 35 and Schedule 1(7) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Model Provisions. Under these provisions a Development Consent is therefore not required for the project. However, the *EP&A Act* requires that DPIM comply with Part 5 when determining the SMP application for Longwalls 705 to 710. This report provides information on the environmental impacts of the Activity (the activity being the proposed mining of Longwalls 705 to 710 and the mitigation and rehabilitation measures that will be implemented to minimise impacts from this mining).

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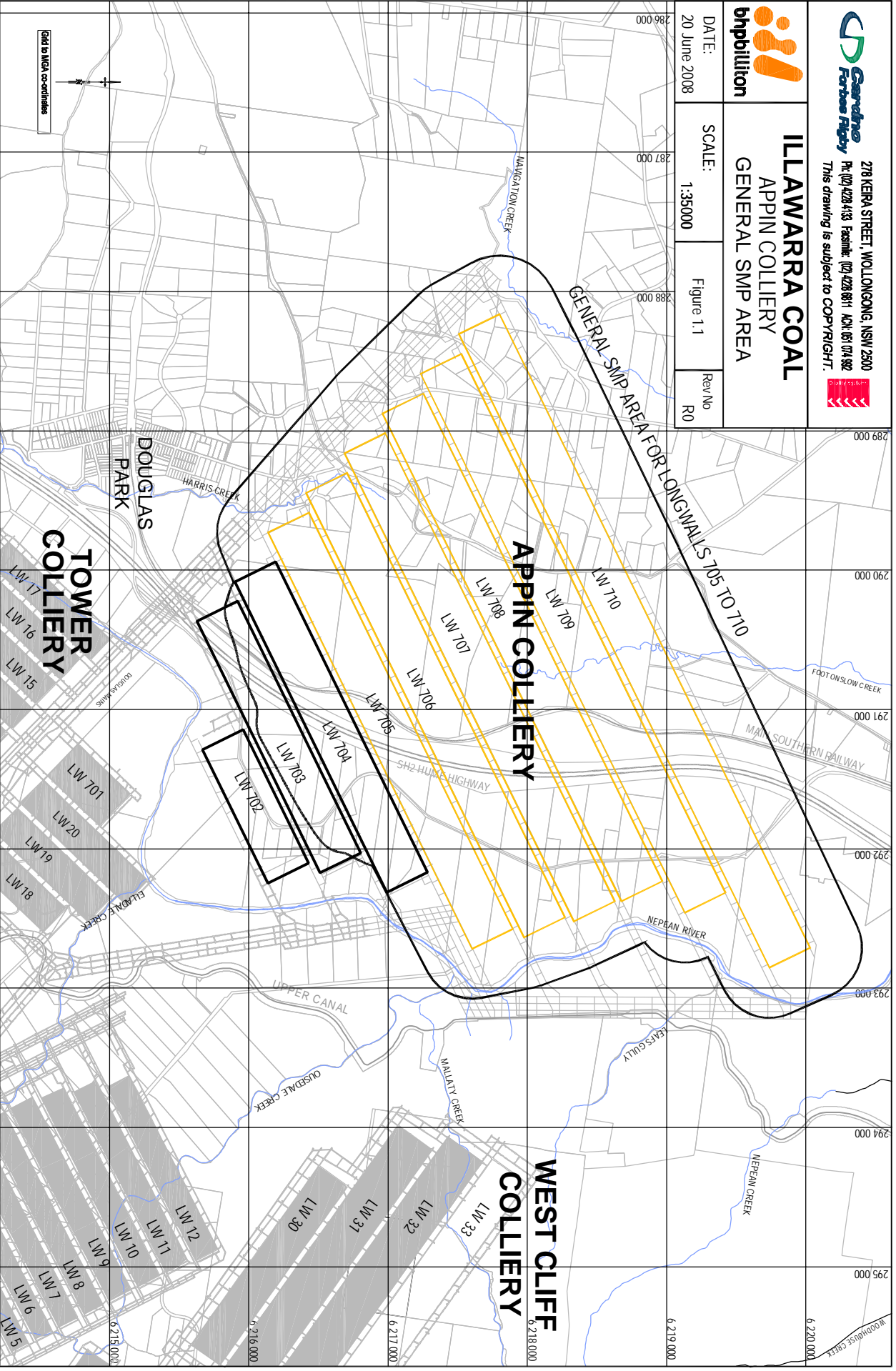
- Provides the DPIM with the information required by the *EP&A Act* for DPIM to be able to comply with the requirements imposed on DPIM by Part 5 of the *EP&A Act* in assessing the SMP application for the Activity

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ILLAWARRA COAL
APPIN COLLIERY
GENERAL SMP AREA

DATE: 20 June 2008	SCALE: 1:35000	Figure 1.1	RevNo R0
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- Has also been prepared in accordance with the *Guideline for Applications for Subsidence Management Approvals* (Department of Mineral Resources, 2003) to seek approval for the SMP for Longwalls 705 to 710.

This report demonstrates that for the purposes of Part 5 of the *EP&A Act* the proposed Activity does not significantly affect the environment and accordingly an EIS is not required for this Activity.

1.4. LAND OWNERSHIP

The SMP Area encompasses land owned by private landowners, commercial landowners and state government (refer **Plan 5**).

1.5. FIRST WORKINGS APPROVAL

1.5.1. First working application

As stated above this SMP application is for approval of both the mining of Longwalls 705 to 710 by longwall mining methods and the development of the roadways, by way of first workings, which delineate Longwalls 705 to 710.

1.6. PRIOR APPROVALS

SMP approval for mining of Longwalls 701 to 704 to the south of Longwalls 705 to 710 was granted on 1 November 2006.

1.6.1. SMP Study Team

The specialist studies undertaken for the Longwalls 705 to 710 SMP include:

- Subsidence (Mine Subsidence Engineering Consultants) – **Appendix A**
- Water Quality Subsidence Impact Assessment (Ecoengineers) – **Appendix B**
- Aquatic Ecology Subsidence Impact Assessment (The Ecology Lab) – **Appendix C**
- Flora and fauna Subsidence Impact Assessment (Biosis Research) – **Appendix D**
- Cultural Heritage Subsidence Impact Assessment (Biosis Research) – **Appendix E**
- Stakeholder Consultation – **Appendix F**
- Subsidence Risk Assessment (AXYS Consulting) – **Appendix G**
- Hydrogeological Subsidence Impact Assessment (Geoterra) – **Appendix H**.

This report refers to a number of different areas relevant to the mining proposal. These are the SMP Area and the Extent of Workings, as shown in the **Approved Plan**. These are further explained below.