

**Submission
No 8**

INQUIRY INTO BENEFICIAL AND PRODUCTIVE POST- MINING LAND USE

Organisation: MidCoast Council

Date Received: 24 June 2024

24 June 2024

The Director
Standing Committee on State Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street,
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Madam,

Submission to Inquiry into Beneficial and Productive Post Mining Land Use

The MidCoast Council region has recently experienced the closure of two coal mines. The Stratford mine site, situated 12 kms south of Gloucester, closed in early 2024 and the Duralie mine site, situated near Stroud, closed in December 2021. These sites are now in the process of rehabilitation.

MidCoast Council supports the beneficial re-use of these sites, especially where long term economic, employment and social benefit can be achieved, in conjunction with enhancing the local environment and regionally significant biodiversity corridors.

Within the original consents for these sites, rehabilitation plans were approved for the revegetation and remediation of the impacted land and vegetation.

Vegetation Corridors

The Hunter Regional Plan 2036 (HRP) recognises the importance of biodiversity corridors and linkages, for supporting ecological processes, plant and wildlife movement, provision of habitat and improving adaption to changes in habitat and climate. Corridors also have significant scenic and recreation values. Council's Biodiversity Strategy identifies the Barrington Tops to Myall Lakes link, which is mostly vegetated other than the land between the Duralie and Stratford mine sites.

The Duralie mine is within the Upper Karuah catchment, while the Stratford mine is within the Manning River Catchment. The corridor in which the two mines are located are bordered by National Parks (NP) and State Forests (SF); including Chinchester SF, Avon River SF, Myall River SF, Black Bulga NP, Monkerai NP, Gin-doo-ee NP, Myall Lakes NP, The Glen NP, Berrico NP and other privately owned naturally forested areas to the eastern and western flanks of the region.

Revegetation Works, Environmental Offsets and Nature Positive Outcomes

If the revegetation works that were originally conditioned in the closure plans for these sites do not proceed, due to the re-use for renewable energy or other industrial endeavours, then the equivalent investment and effort should be made to revegetate and establish habitat connections between the east and the west of the region. Additionally, any biodiversity offset requirements for

the new projects should be invested up-front, within the local area to achieve a nature-positive outcome.

Employment and Training

The mine sites have played an important role in the local economies of the towns and villages in the area. Future uses of these sites should consider local skills to maximise local employment opportunities. Where skill shortages occur, training should be provided in the local area to encourage and empower residents to gain the benefits of employment in the new industries.

Future use of these sites should be in keeping with the local character of the area. Visual, acoustic and biodiversity impacts of future development should be minimised.

Community Consultation

The local community should be consulted regarding any changes in land use. Genuine and meaningful community consultation on major developments and economic decisions impacting the region is vital for the success of any project.

Indigenous Community

The local Indigenous community should be empowered by and involved with the future use of these sites. Ensuring that local knowledge is incorporated into the future use and vision for the region is critical.

Land Zoning and Infrastructure

Land zoning, including the Heavy Industrial zoning at the Stratford mine site, should be considered so the land and rail access can be best utilised to attract industry. The Stratford Heavy Industrial Park Structure Plan should be considered when investigating potential future land use.

Yours Sincerely

Adrian Panuccio
GENERAL MANAGER