

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2025

Demolition update

In the past few months there have been significant changes with the demolition of the Coal Handling and Processing Plant (CHPP) and Pit Top Infrastructure.

The CHPP was constructed in 1960 for the Pelton Colliery, and has been gradually removed over the past few months. The Pit Top infrastructure was constructed in the 1970s and is currently being removed as part of the demolition process.

After the completion of the demolition works, the land will be graded and stabilised prior to final landform works, which will take place during the closure execution phase.

The images show before and during the demolition of the Pit Top Infrastructure.



Before demolition



During demolition

Thanks to our neighbours

We would like to thank our neighbours for their patience as we carry out necessary work to decommission and rehabilitate the site for future land use. While there will still be personnel on site, the demolition works will cease in mid-late December and recommence in early January.

Modification being prepared to enable mine closure

Austar is preparing for the next phase of mine closure and rehabilitation. As part of this phase, Austar will be seeking to update its existing approvals (via a modification application) to ensure they cover all remaining work required for closure in line with today's regulatory requirements. Austar remains committed to keeping the community and key stakeholders informed throughout this process and we will provide updates as the modification progresses.

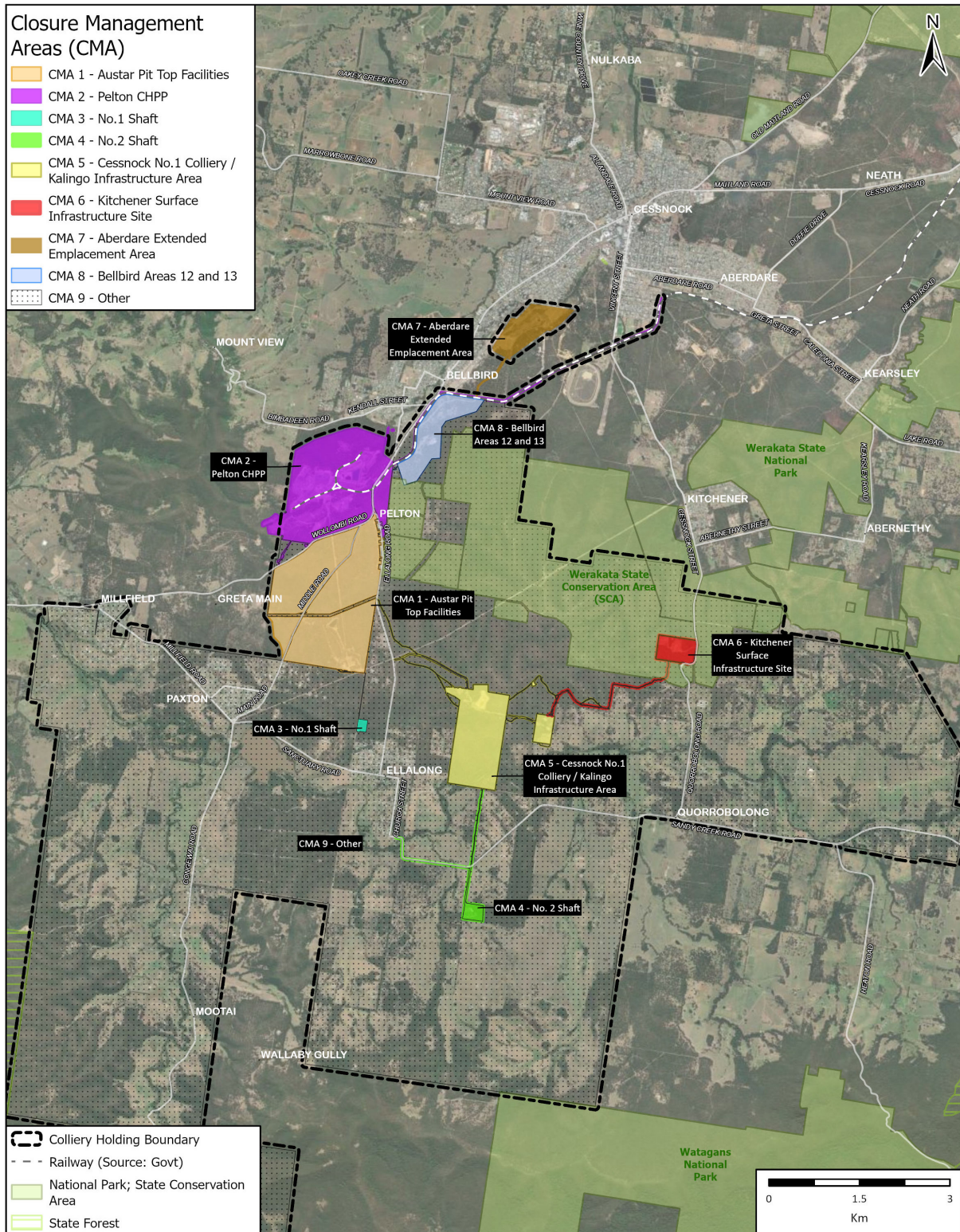
Bushfire management a priority as weather heats up

Austar is busy preparing for the summer, with maintenance of our fire trails, Asset Protection Zones and Strategic Fire Advantage Zones.

Austar maintains a Bushfire Management Plan, and aims to provide fuel-reduced zones and access for emergency services in strategic areas to minimise the risk of bushfire damage to mine and landholder assets.

These areas are regularly inspected and maintained as required. Fire danger ratings are checked daily throughout the bushfire season, with works limited on extreme and catastrophic days.

Austar Coal Mine Closure Management Areas (CMAs)



(Figure. 1)

Yancoal makes every effort to ensure the quality of the information available on this map. Before relying on the information on this plan, users should carefully evaluate its accuracy, currency, completeness and relevance for their purpose and should obtain any appropriate professional advice relevant to their particular circumstances. Yancoal cannot guarantee and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy, currency or completeness of the information and by using this map you accept that Yancoal has no liability for any loss or damage in any form whatsoever caused directly or indirectly from the use of this map. All datasets subject to survey.

Mining and the Mitchell family: generations of mutual support

The Mitchell family has had links to Austar for more than 50 years, and the third generation of the family is set to carry the tradition forward.

Kevin and Rodney Mitchell, current owners of Mitchell Bros Earthmoving, have lived in Cessnock their entire lives, surrounded by the family's machinery and work. Their father, Ray and his brother, started the family business decades ago working on the Austar site. This was back when Austar was known as the Newcastle Wallsend Coal Company. Kevin and Rod grew up alongside the mine and naturally stepped into the family trade, with their first jobs after school being contractors at Austar.

"We have worked at the site since the family business started over 50 years ago," Kevin said.

Mitchell Bros Earthmoving has provided a wide range of earthmoving services over the years, such as road maintenance, capping reject emplacement areas, dam works or just basic sediment and erosion control, building a reputation of versatility and good work ethic.

Today the brothers employ eight people, including the third generation: Kevin's son Harry, daughter Claire and their nephew Ryan. Claire also works one day a

week with Austar's environmental team while studying Environmental Engineering and a Bachelor of Science at the University of Newcastle.

"It's a great opportunity for her to gain hands-on experience with the Austar team and see what they do, and what would be involved in the field she's striving for," Kevin said.

He added that the mine has long supported many local businesses. "There is of course not as much work now since the announcement of closure, but back in the day, it supported a lot of businesses in the Cessnock region."

Kevin noted that many people were unaware that the mine is still completing work whilst in closure, work that may require local businesses to be contracted in for.

"There is still a reasonable amount of work for certain contractors as Austar works towards rehabilitation. There are 100 years of mining there and finishing that off is a big job. While local people can still get work there, it is a big win for the Cessnock Community."


He said he's pleased Austar is taking closure and rehabilitation seriously.


"In the past some mining companies have just walked away from rehabilitation, but it won't be like that with Austar."





(L-R) Claire Mitchell, Kevin Mitchell, Harry Mitchell, Tahn Forster, Brian Rourke, Brett Craft, Ryan Green

Year In Review

 Our team continued work on the Feasibility Study to define the “go forward” mine closure plan for site. Work has included detailed investigations and technical studies, including geotechnical, geochemical, contamination and hydrological studies which will inform the development of detailed final landform designs. The studies are expected to take another year to complete.

 Continued demolition of mining infrastructure, including the removal of concrete slabs and some asphalt hard stands like car parks and access roads.

 Stakeholder consultation was conducted regularly throughout the year and included quarterly updates to the Resource Regulator and meetings with multiple government agencies. We continued our productive working relationship with Cessnock City Council regarding synergies between Austar closure and Council projects.

 Weed management continued to be a focus around the site, and the prevention of unauthorised access required the installation of concrete blocks at some access points.

Did you know

Austar has two tailings facilities, the North West Tailings Dam and No. 9 Tailings Dam. No tailings have been placed in either dam since Yancoal acquired Austar in 2004. Austar is undertaking site investigations to confirm the historic construction of these dams to refine conceptual capping and closure designs.

Thank you

To all of our neighbours, nearby community, suppliers, contractors and staff, thanks for another great year at Austar. Our business is changing and evolving but our commitment to working together continues. Wishing you all a safe and happy festive season.



Stay up to date

Austar's Community Support Program offers grants to fund projects, events and initiatives that make a genuine, positive difference to the Cessnock area. Stay tuned to our newsletter or website for updates www.yancoal.com.au/our-sites/austar/



To stay up to date with what's happening on the Austar site, scan the QR code to sign up for relevant updates.