

## Austar Coal Mine

### Community Consultative Committee Meeting Minutes

Location: Daily Meeting Room – Austar Coal Mine Pit Top, Middle Road, Paxton  
 Time: 10:05am – 11:07am  
 Date: 20 September 2023

Name	Representative
Margaret MacDonald-Hill (MMH)	Independent Chairperson
Craig Reiss (CR)	Austar Coal Mine
Carly McCormack (CM)	Austar Coal Mine
Julie McNaughton (JM)	Austar Coal Mine
William Farnworth (WF)	Austar Coal Mine
Damien Ryba (DR)	Austar Coal Mine
Alan Smith (AS)	Community Representative
Peter Sturrock (PS) (by videoconference)	Community Representative
Apologies	
John Rayner (JR)	Community Representative
Ashlee Baker (AB)	Community Representative

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome</b>
	MMH – Opened the meeting 10:05am and welcomed the CCC. Apologies are noted above.
<b>2</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests</b>
	MMH asked for any changes to previous declarations of interest. Declarations of interests remain current for all members. CM introduced DR to the committee
<b>3</b>	<b>Confirmation of Previous Minutes</b>
	The minutes of the previous meeting were considered representative of that meeting. AS moved, PS seconded.
<b>4</b>	<b>Business Arising from Previous Minutes</b>
	Nil
<b>5</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>
	MMH noted correspondence as per agenda: 29/9/22 – JM email to CCC on Community Support Program 6/10/22 – MMH email to CCC on Draft CCC Guidelines Review. MMH noted that Michael Gorman has now left Cessnock Police and has been replaced by Inspector/Officer in Charge Justin Cornes. Justin has indicated that he would be pleased to attend meetings given suitable notice.
<b>6</b>	<b>Mine Closure Update</b>
<b>a.</b>	<b>Closure Project Status</b>

	<p>Detail in Presentation – presented by CR.</p> <p>AS asked what is classed as heritage. CM and CR clarified infrastructure of CHPP that will be classed as heritage. CR stated that most infrastructure items at Austar Pit Top would be removed.</p>
<b>b.</b>	<b>Early Works</b>
	<p>Detail in Presentation – presented by WF.</p> <p>MMH asked about sealing historic mine entries and sealing requirements. AS asked where the historic entries were located. WF explained that we are still investigating the scope of the works and that there are very few records for the historic areas. Generally, all sealed areas will need to be brought up to modern safety standards. WF also stated that the locations were spread across the Mining Lease areas.</p> <p>MMH asked what the interest by others in the washery is – scrap value or for reuse of equipment. WF stated that we have been told that there are buyers interested in relocating and reusing the whole CHPP.</p> <p>AS asked whether Kalingo Dam will be removed. WF confirmed yes, after approximately 9-12 months of sediment removal the plan is to remove the classification of the dam.</p> <p>AS asked whether the Kitchener site will be handed to the National Park and Wildlife Service (NPWS) after closure. CM answered that that was not the plan, and that there had been a land swap deal with NPWS to acquire the Kitchener site.</p> <p>PS asked about fire protection of the area and responsibilities once rehabilitated. CM answered that we are responsible for managing the area until relinquishment. DR added that one of our rehabilitation objectives that must be met is that the rehabilitation does not present a risk of bushfire any higher than the surrounding area.</p>
<b>7</b>	<b>Environmental Monitoring Update, Incidents and Complaints</b>
	<p>Detail in Presentation – presented by JM.</p> <p>AS asked about community support programs funded last year. JM advised that eight different programs were supported, with a strong focus on education.</p>
<b>8</b>	<b>General Business</b>
	<p>Details in Presentation – presented by JM and DR</p> <p>AS asked if the No. 2 shaft potable water pipeline will be removed. JM responded that the pipe will likely remain in the ground once disconnected as it will cause too much damage to established vegetation to remove now.</p> <p>PS asked how many residents will be affected by the disconnection of the pipeline – JM responded that six homes will be impacted, and there had been notification over an extended period.</p> <p>AS asked about timing of relinquishing ML/ELs – JM explained that the size of the EL has been reduced and that we are developing a Mining Lease relinquishment strategy.</p> <p>MMH advised of the revised departmental guidelines and documents to be completed by CCC members, including agreement of a new Terms of Reference. Those present agreed to the draft document issued previously by MMH. CCC meeting agenda also needs to be placed on the Austar website, ahead of scheduled meetings. MMH will contact committee members not present to seek their acceptance of the required documents.</p> <p>MMH asked that an email copy of the presentation be circulated – JM agreed.</p>

<b>9</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>
	Next proposed meeting dates 20 March 2024 and 18 September 2024. Venue and time to be confirmed.
<b>10</b>	<b>Meeting Closed</b>
	MMH – Thanked the CCC and declared the meeting closed at 11:07am.

Recorded: Damien Ryba 20 September 2023

# AUSTAR COAL MINE

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

20 September 2023

Carly McCormack  
ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SUPERINTENDENT

# Agenda

1. Welcome / Apologies
2. Declaration of interests
3. Confirmation of previous minutes
4. Business arising from previous minutes
5. Correspondence
6. Mine Closure Planning Update
7. Environmental monitoring update
8. Environmental Incidents / Community Complaints
9. General Business
10. Next meeting / Meeting close





# Mine Closure Planning Update

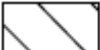
## Closure Project Status

# Closure Management Areas

## LEGEND


 Colliery Holding Boundary


 Relevant Mining Titles


 Disturbance Footprint


### CMA Boundaries


 CMA 1 - Austar Pit Top Facilities


 CMA 2 - Pelton CHPP


 CMA 3 - No.1 Shaft


 CMA 4 - No.2 Shaft

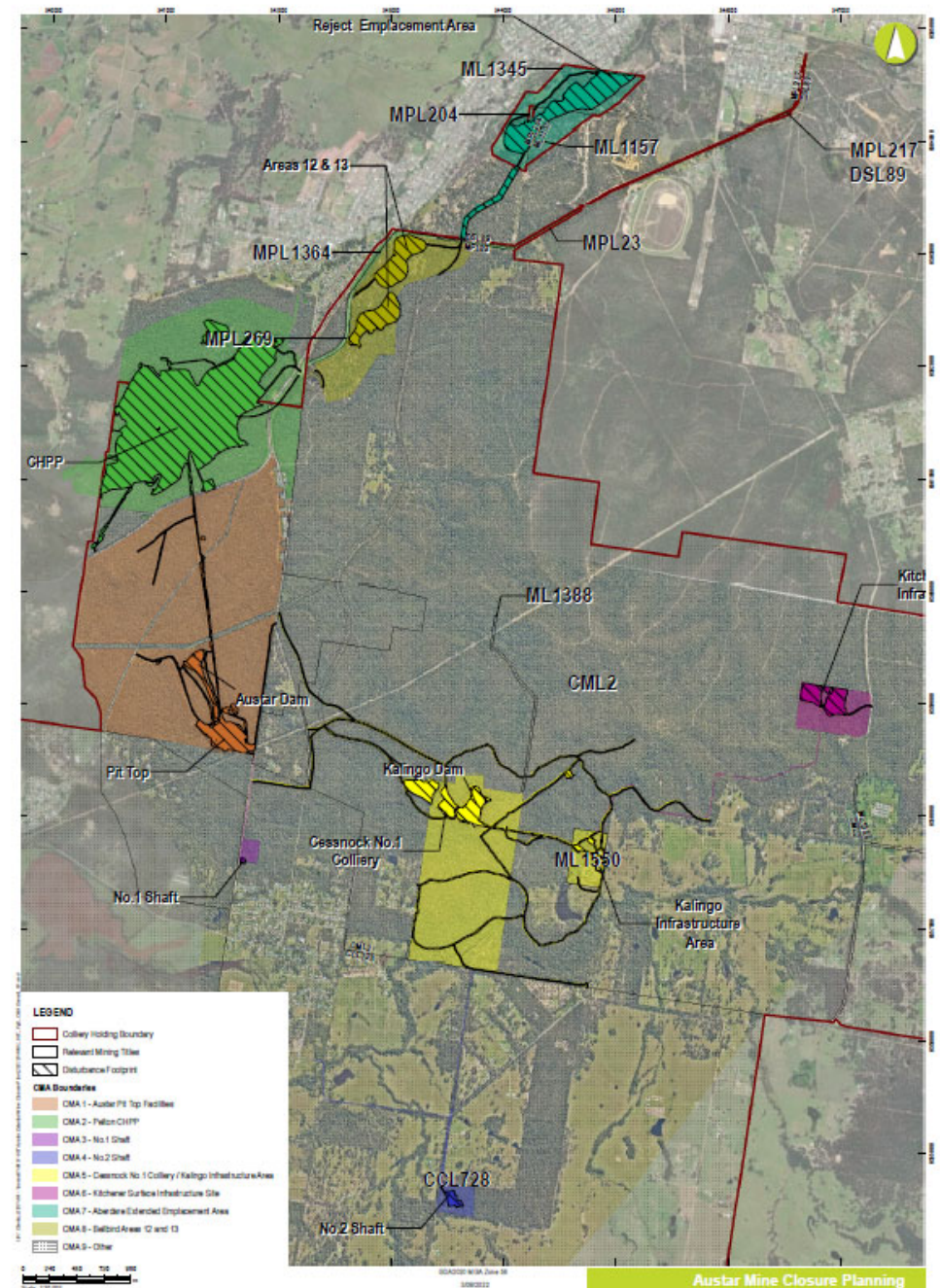
 CMA 5 - Cessnock No.1 Colliery / Kalingo Infrastructure Area

 CMA 6 - Kitchener Surface Infrastructure Site

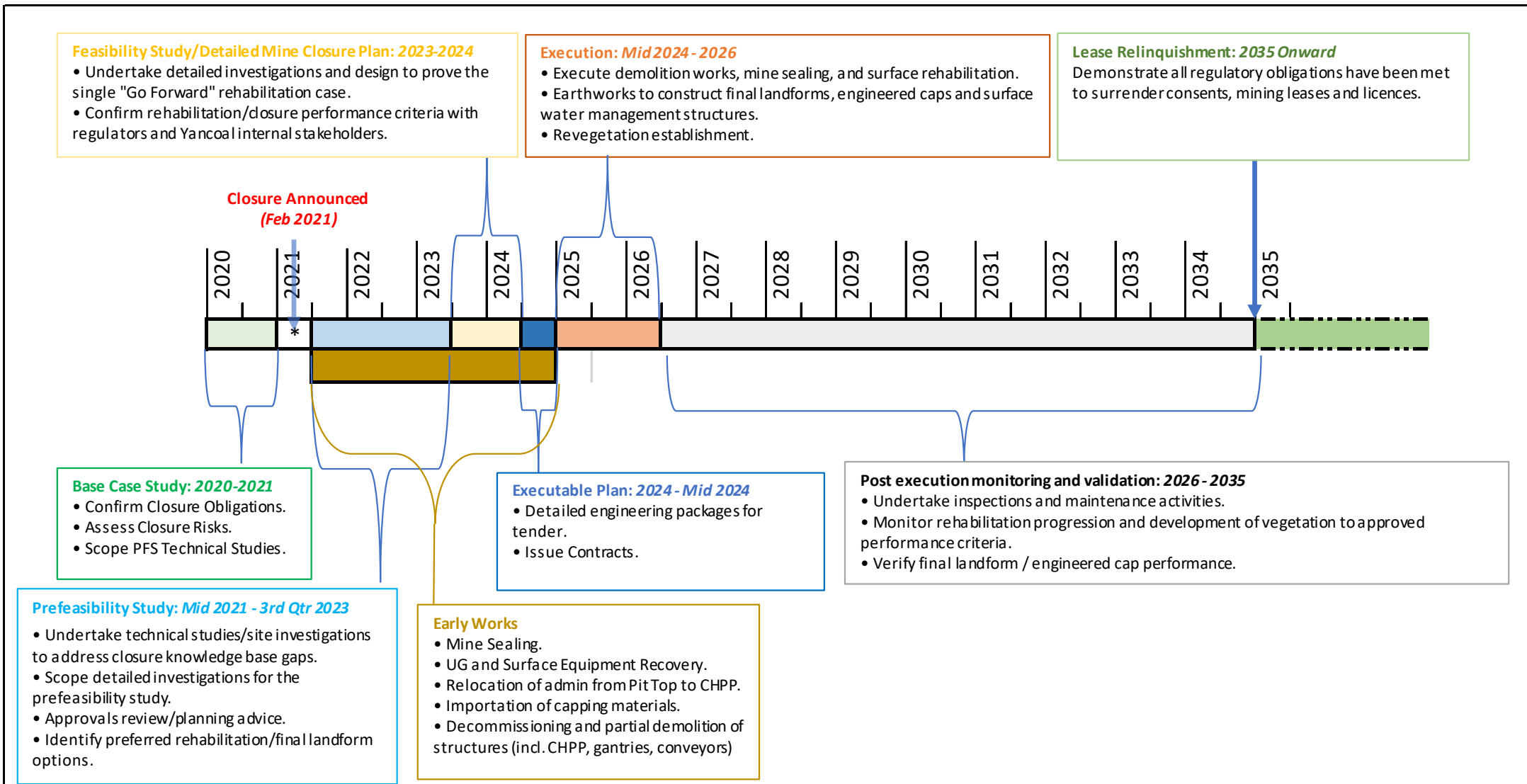
 CMA 7 - Aberdare Extended Emplacement Area

 CMA 8 - Bellbird Areas 12 and 13

 CMA 9 - Other



# Indicative Timeline & Current Status





# Go-Forward Post-Mining Land Use

## PFS Study Objectives:

- To identify the most appropriate rehabilitation outcomes that consider optimising beneficial land use(s) post-closure

## Go-Forward Case

- The go-forward rehabilitation case is proposed to be bushland and grassland in accordance with existing approvals as presented in the RMP and approved FLRP

## Next Steps

- Austar will continue to develop the revegetation strategy for the site, including confirmation of target final revegetation communities
- Austar propose to commence seed collection this year to stockpile resources for rehabilitation

# Go-Forward Demolition Strategy

## PFS Study Objectives:

- To develop an appropriate strategy (retention / demolition) for all mining related infrastructure at the site including all built structures with consideration to heritage values

## Go-Forward Case

- Preferred option for closure involves the demolition and removal of all surface infrastructure and buildings that are not of heritage significance
- Items of heritage significance may be retained where a beneficial and self-funding post mining land use is identified
- Early works demolition proposed for all non-heritage significant infrastructure

## Next Steps

- Austar to communicate demolition strategy within the heritage listings with Cessnock City Council and Department of Planning and Environment
- Austar to proceed with early works demolition of non-heritage significant infrastructure where approved to do so

# Go-Forward Final Landform

## PFS Study Objectives:

- To develop concept landform designs that are achievable, cost effective and satisfy regulatory obligations

## Go-Forward Case

- Conceptual landform designs have been developed for each Closure Management Area based on the findings and recommendations of detailed technical studies
- Conceptual tailings and rejects management strategies and capping designs have been developed for the rejects and tailings storages in CMAs 2, 7 and 8 and incorporated into the conceptual final landform designs

## Next Steps

- Austar will undertake additional investigations to prove and refine the preferred go-forward conceptual landform designs

# Go-Forward Approvals Strategy

## PFS Study Objectives


- To understand the regulatory requirements regarding mine closure at Austar Coal Mine, and where relevant, to determine approval pathways to execute closure

## Go-Forward Case

- The preferred approval pathway for 'Early Works' is to carry out those activities which are assessed to be in accordance with current consents and/or meet the preconditions for 'Exempt Development'
- Activities not currently consented will require additional approvals prior to execution

## Next Steps

- Proposed early works demolition within heritage listings to be communicated with Cessnock City Council and Department of Planning and Environment
- Austar to progress demolition in areas which are assessed to be in accordance with current consents and/or meet the preconditions for 'Exempt Development'
- Austar to scope and progress work to prepare additional approvals application(s)



# Mine Closure Planning Update

## Early Works

# Mine Sealing

## Study Status:

- All modern shafts (except No.2) partially sealed - completed 11 October 2022
- No.2 shaft partially filled with water, to remain open until groundwater assessment completed
- Drift permanently sealed
- Plans developed for investigations work, filling and capping

## Next Steps:

- Detailed investigations into the sealing status of historic mine entries
- Backfilling and capping modern mine entries

# Exploration and Services Boreholes

## Study Status:

- A borehole status audit is well underway
- Approximately 373 boreholes have been identified from Austar and Resources Regulator records
- Approximately 270 holes have been inspected, with around 150 holes ready for rehabilitation signoff or already approved (pending the lodgement rehabilitation applications)
- Around 120 inspected boreholes require work prior to lodging rehabilitation reports

## Next Steps:

- Progress lodgement of ESF2 forms
- Develop action plan for rehabilitation and signoff of holes requiring further works
- Commence borehole sealing works

# Early Works - Decommissioning Activities

## Surface Decommissioning:

- Decommissioning activities are complete on the Drift Winder and feeders
- Equipment at the CHPP is being progressively disconnected in preparation for the recovery of the equipment from the Plant. Plans to sell CHPP rather than demolish
- Decommissioning Kalingo Dam has commenced



# Demolition & HAZMAT

## Study Status:

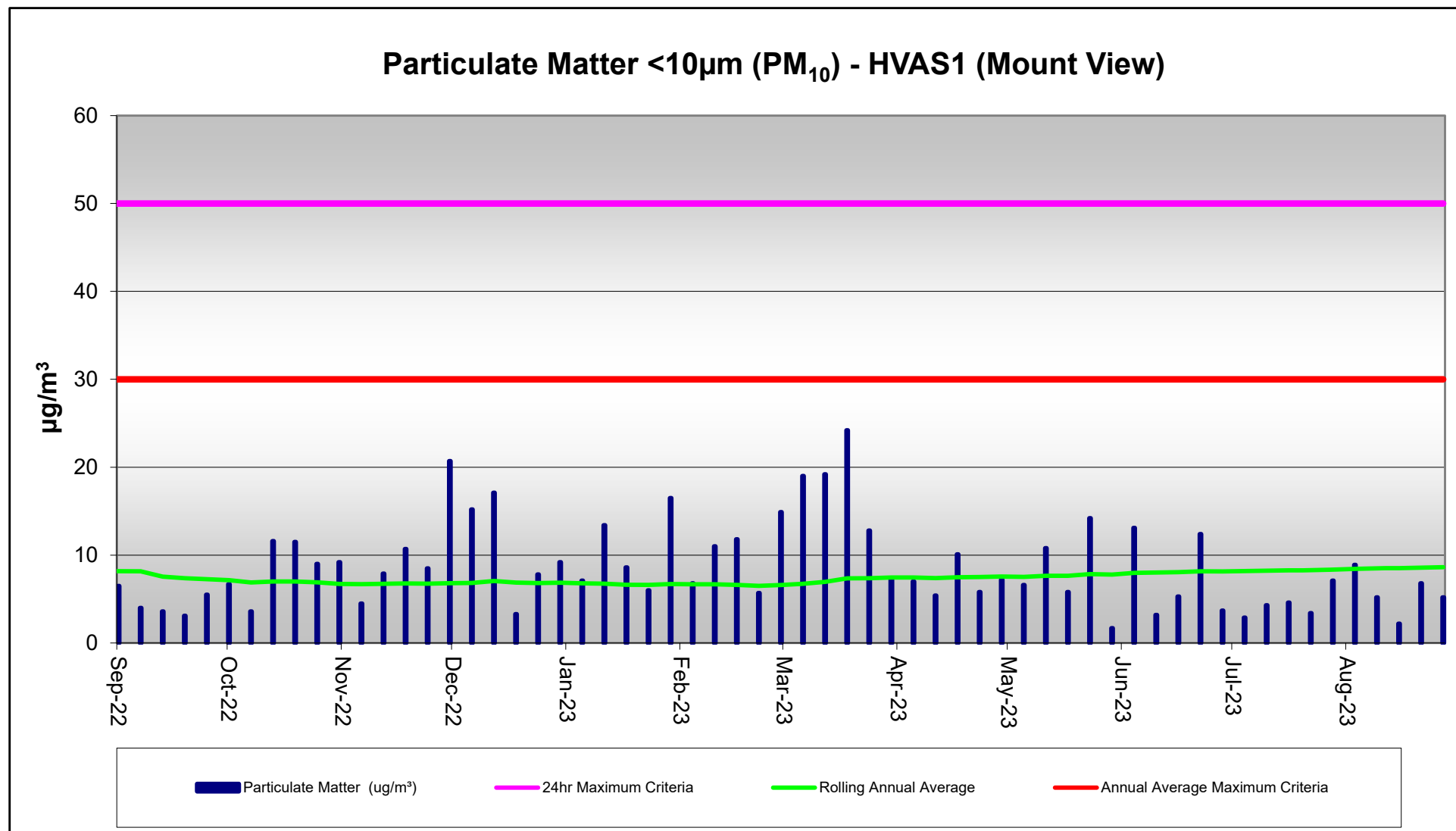
- Intrusive HAZMAT survey completed
- Demolition Scope of Works prepared including quantities, waste streams, proposed EMP and procedures

## Next Steps:

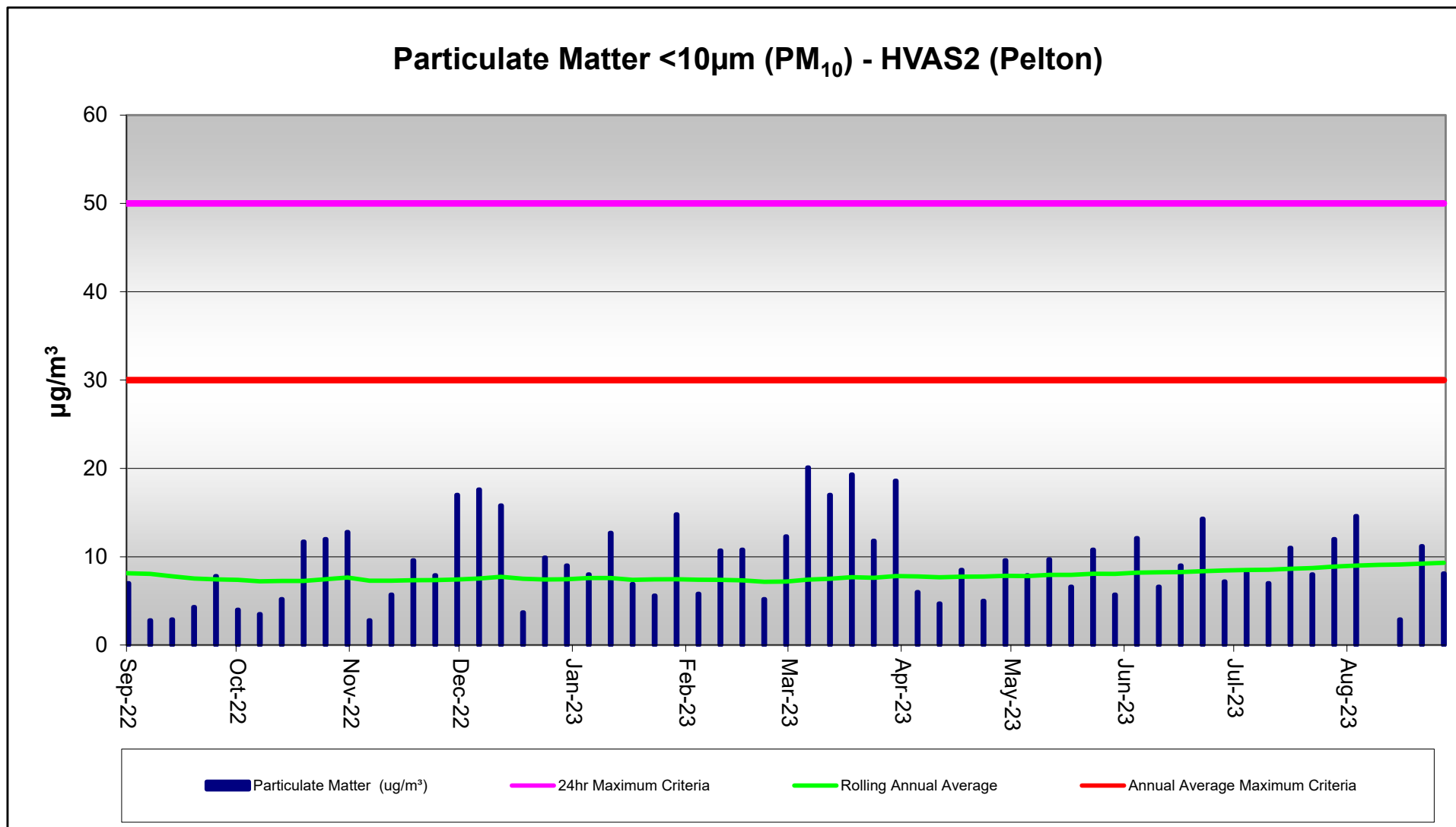
- Complete demolition scopes of work for tender
- Complete required risk assessments and activity permits
- Commence early works demolition of non-heritage infrastructure
- Desilt Kalingo Dam and remove dam wall

# Environmental Monitoring Update

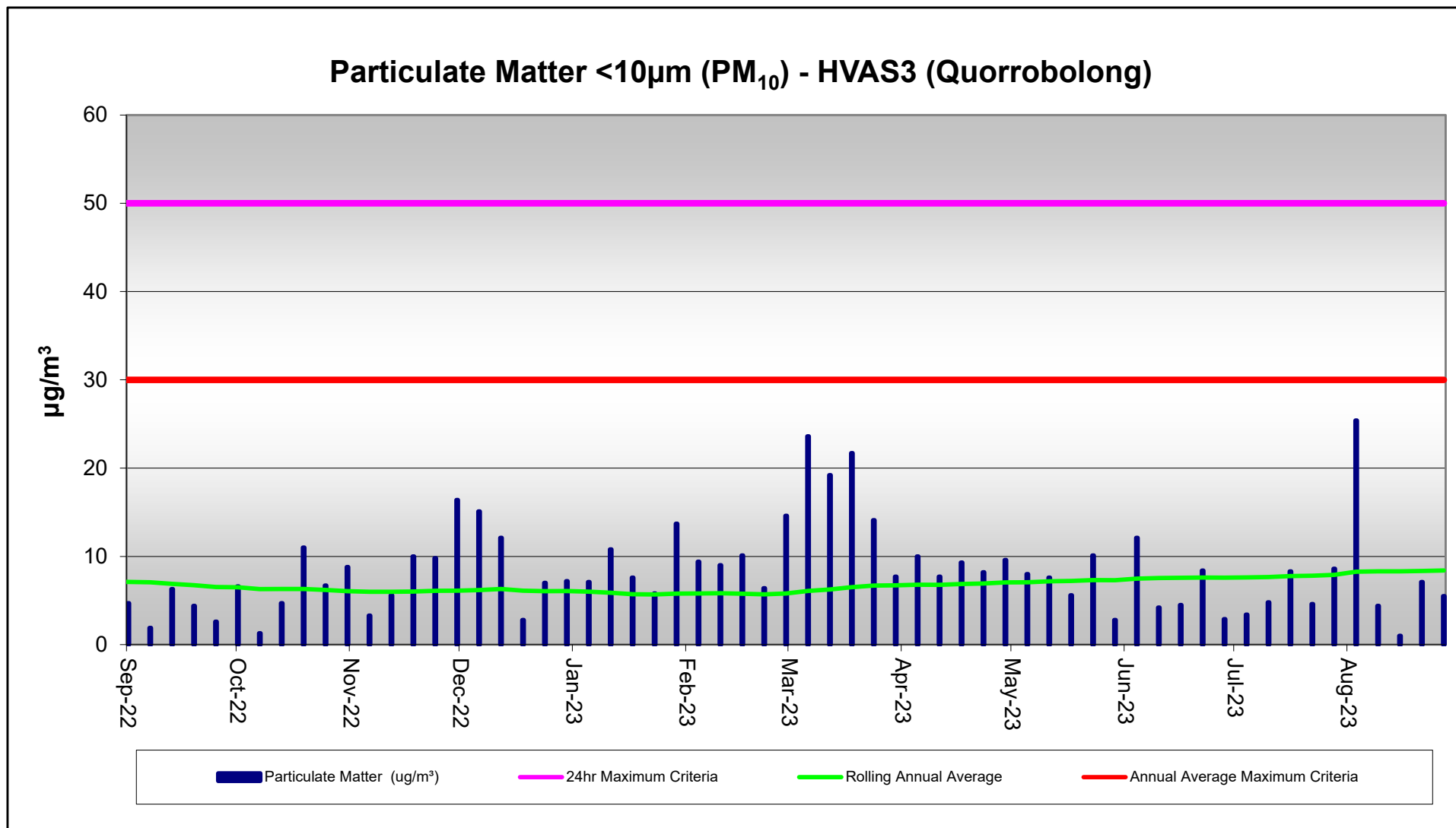
# Air Quality



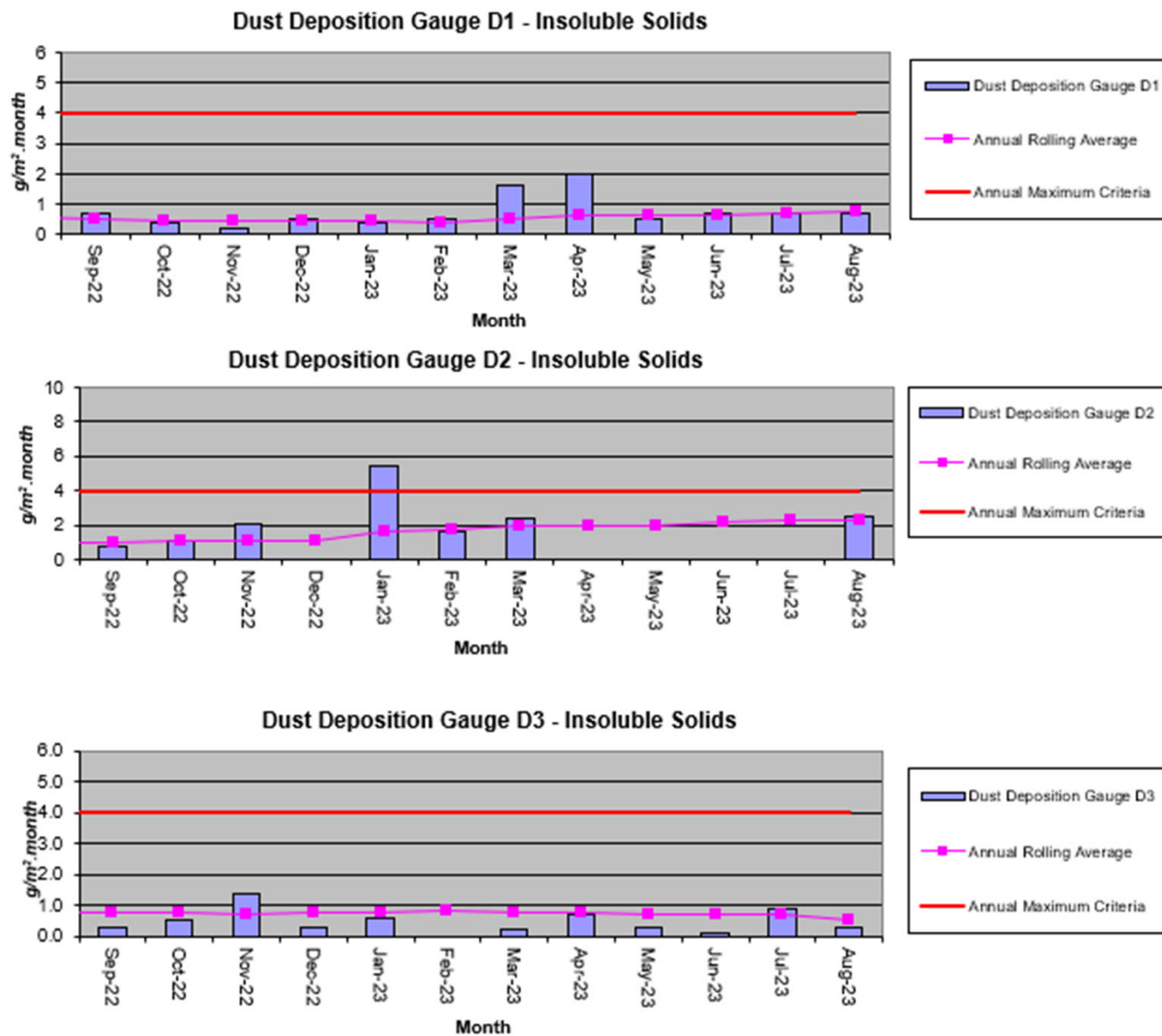
# Air Quality



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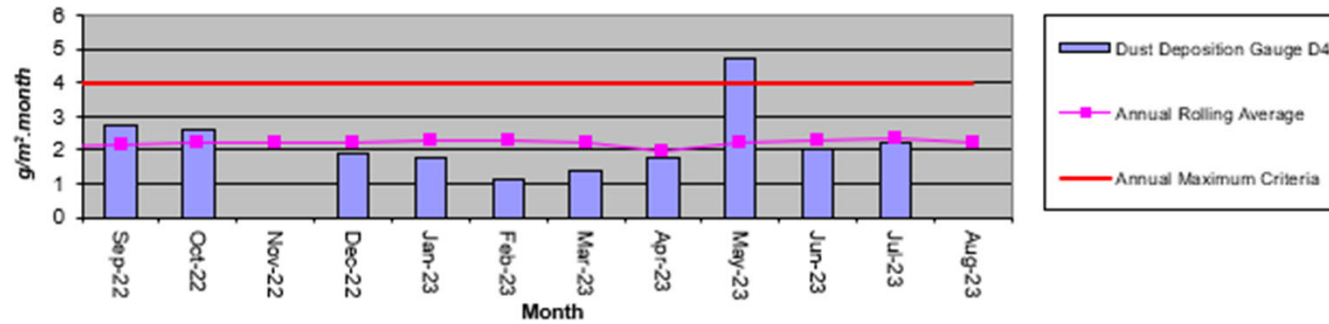


# Air Quality

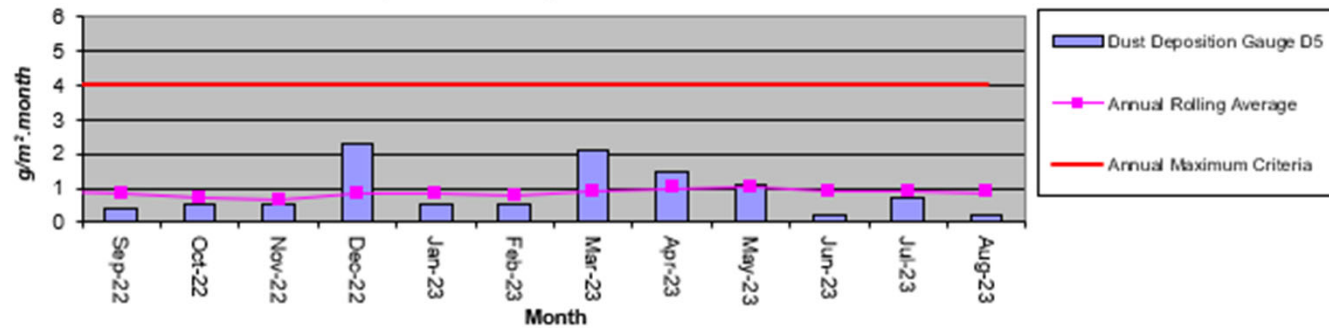


# Air Quality

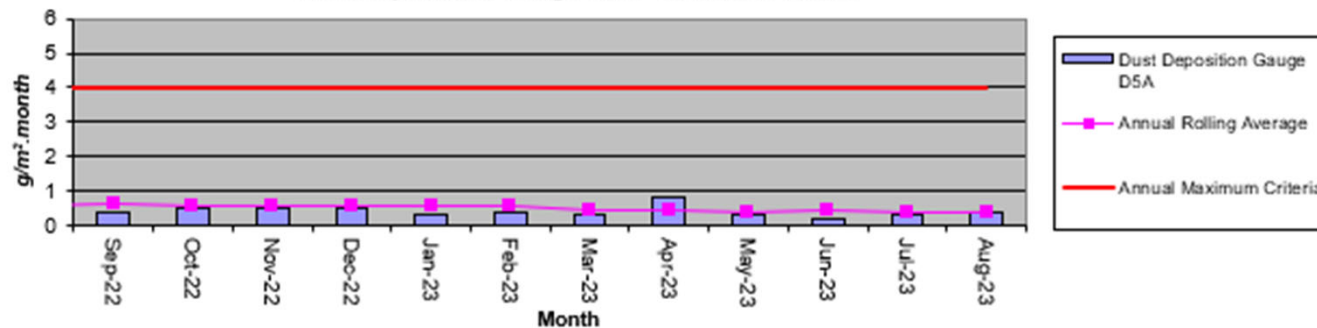
Dust Deposition Gauge D4 - Insoluble Solids



Dust Deposition Gauge D5 - Insoluble Solids

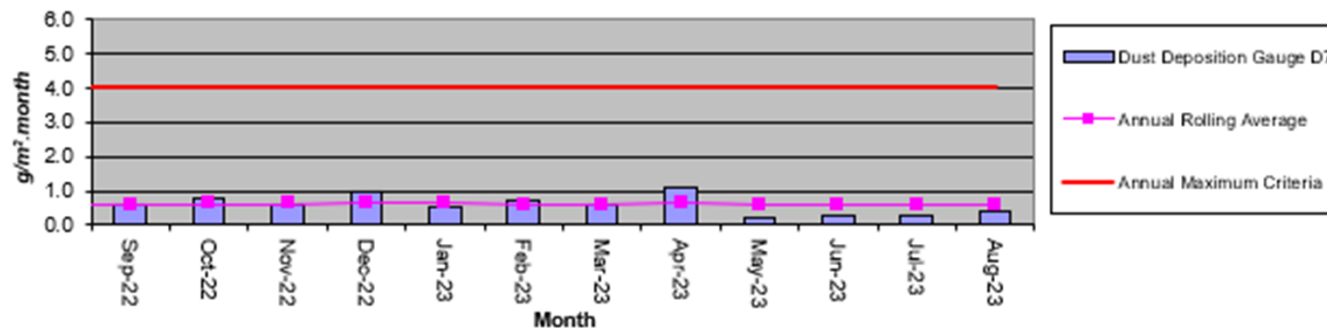


Dust Deposition Gauge D5A - Insoluble Solids

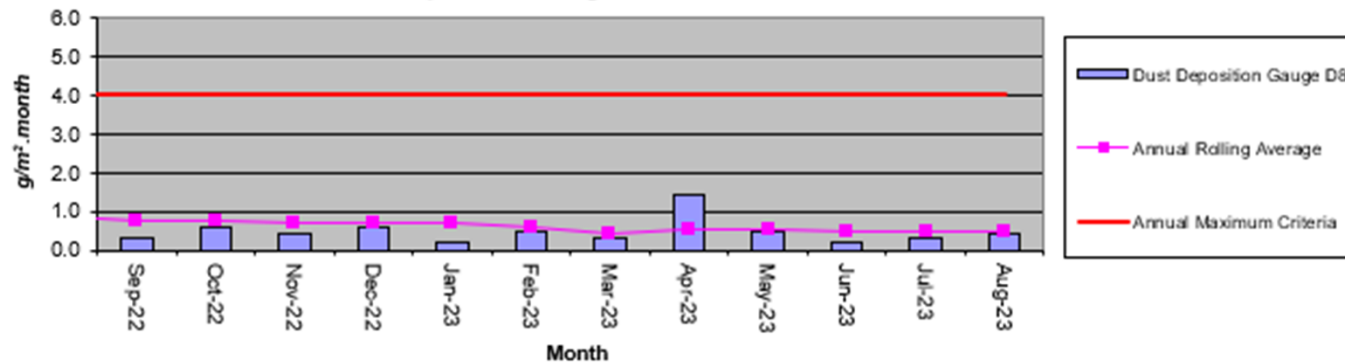


# Air Quality

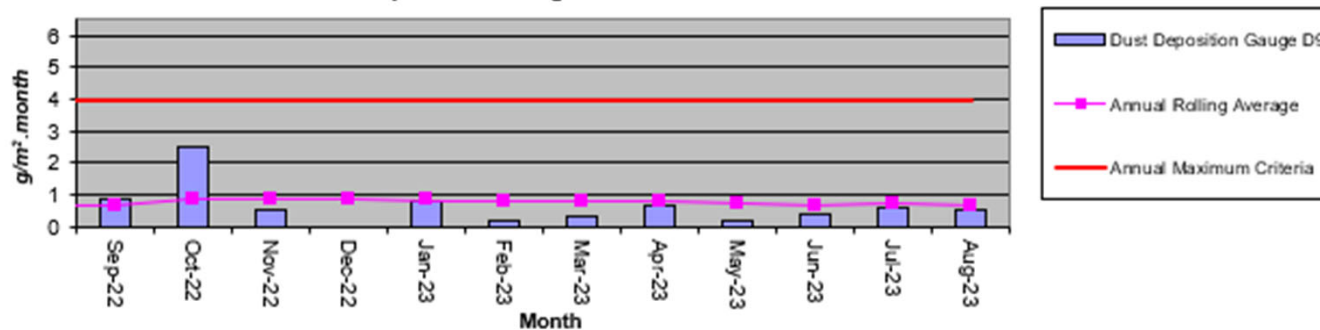
Dust Deposition Gauge D7 - Insoluble Solids



Dust Deposition Gauge D8 - Insoluble Solids

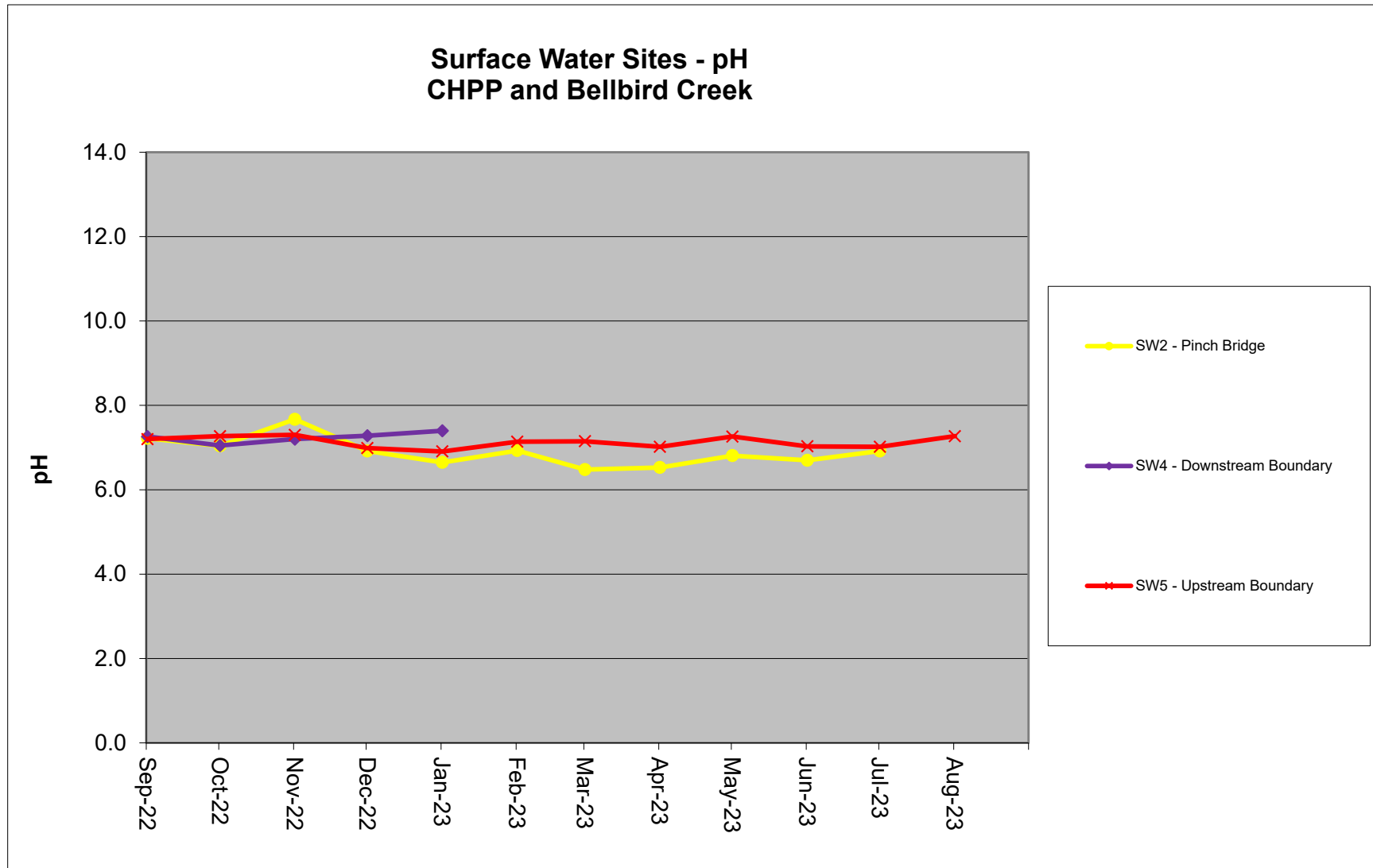


Dust Deposition Gauge D9 - Insoluble Solids



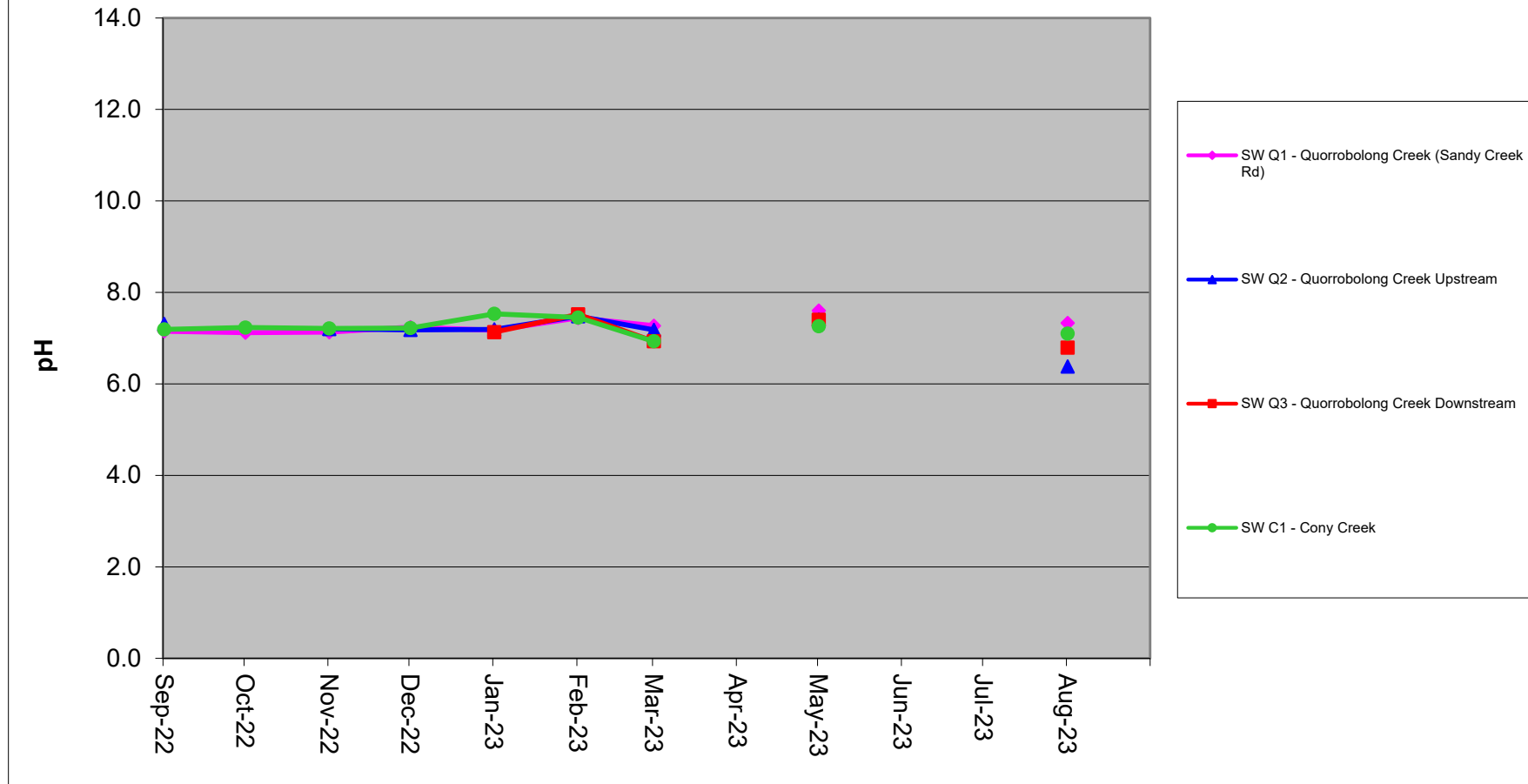


# Water Monitoring

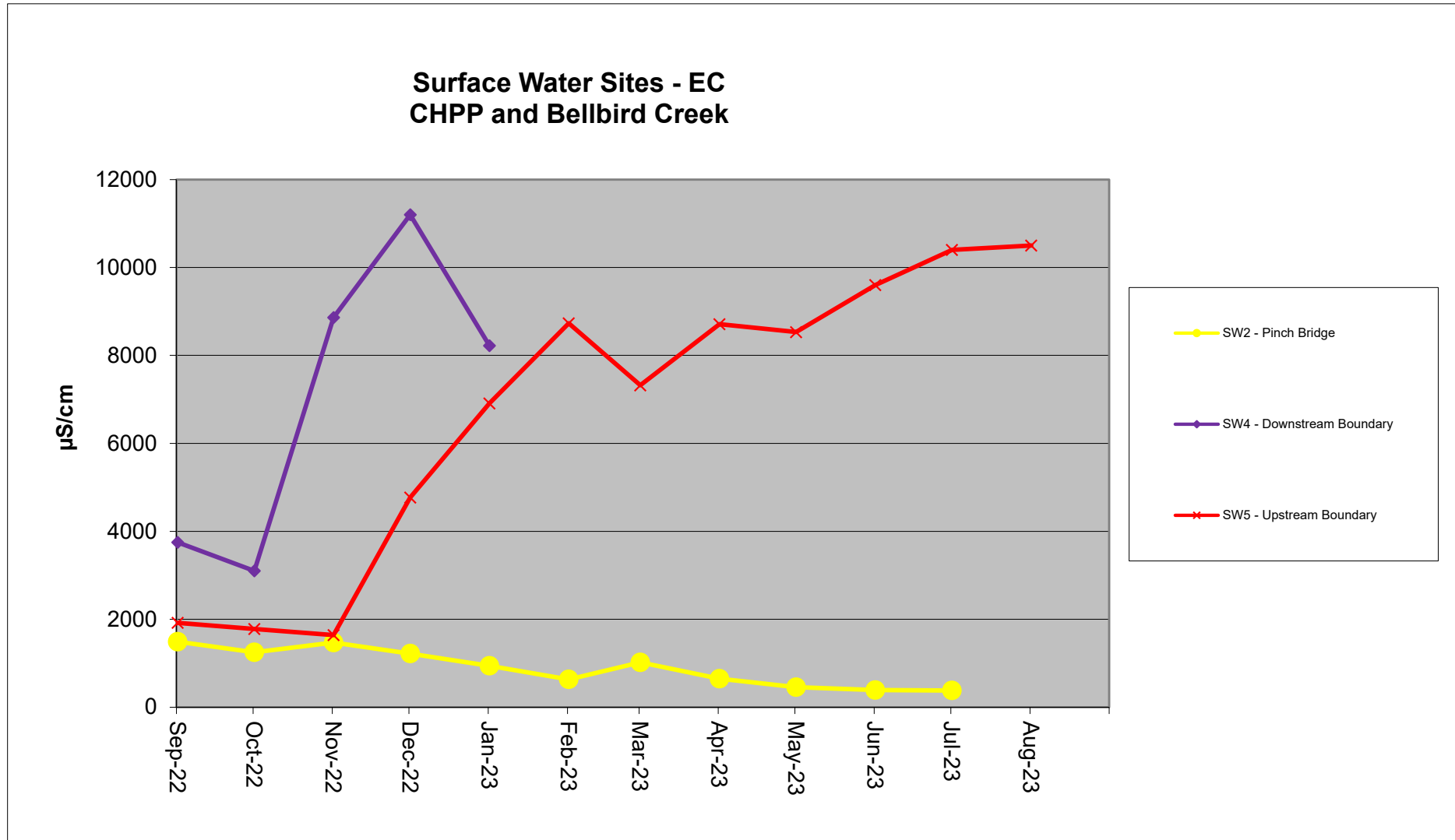


# Water Monitoring

Surface Water Sites - pH  
Quorrobolong Creek and Coney Creek **QUARTERLY**

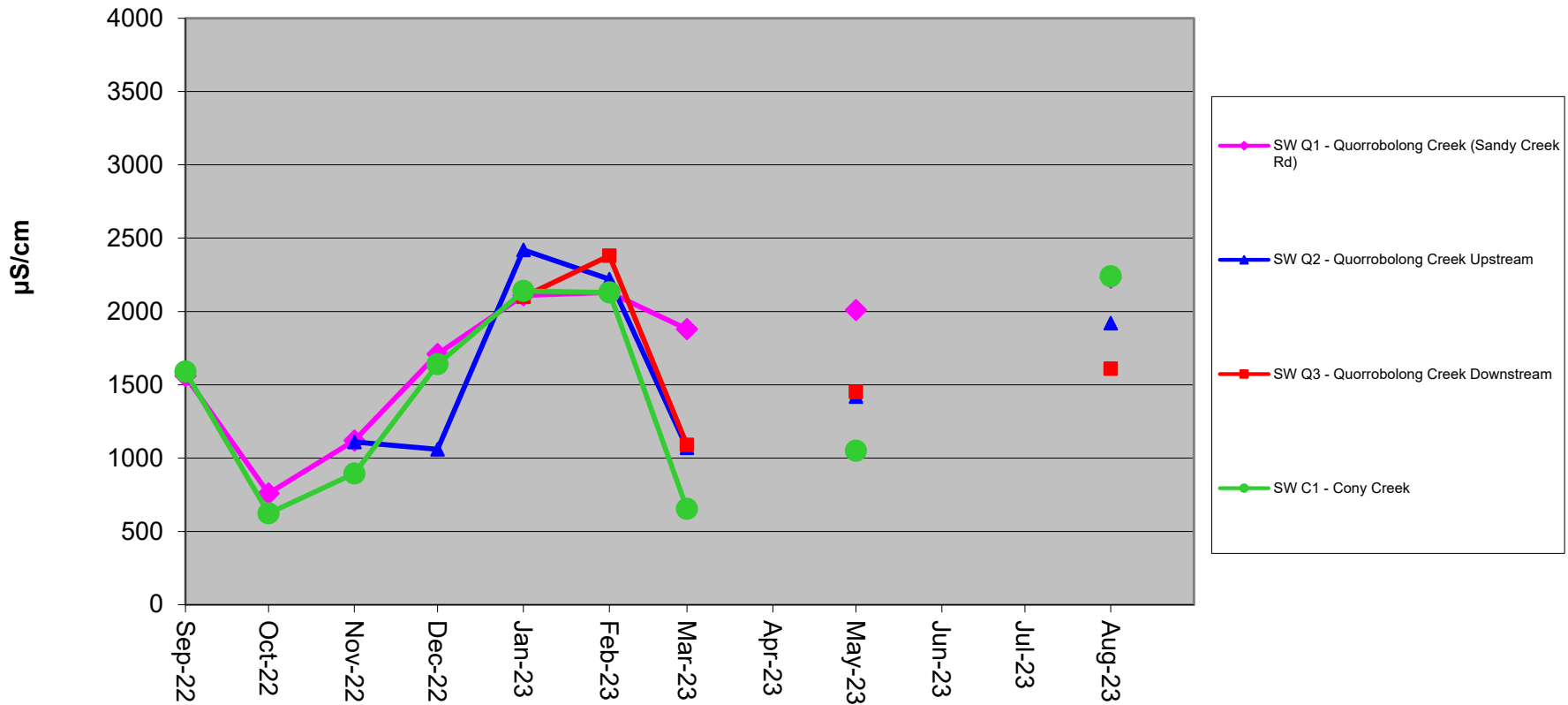


# Water Monitoring

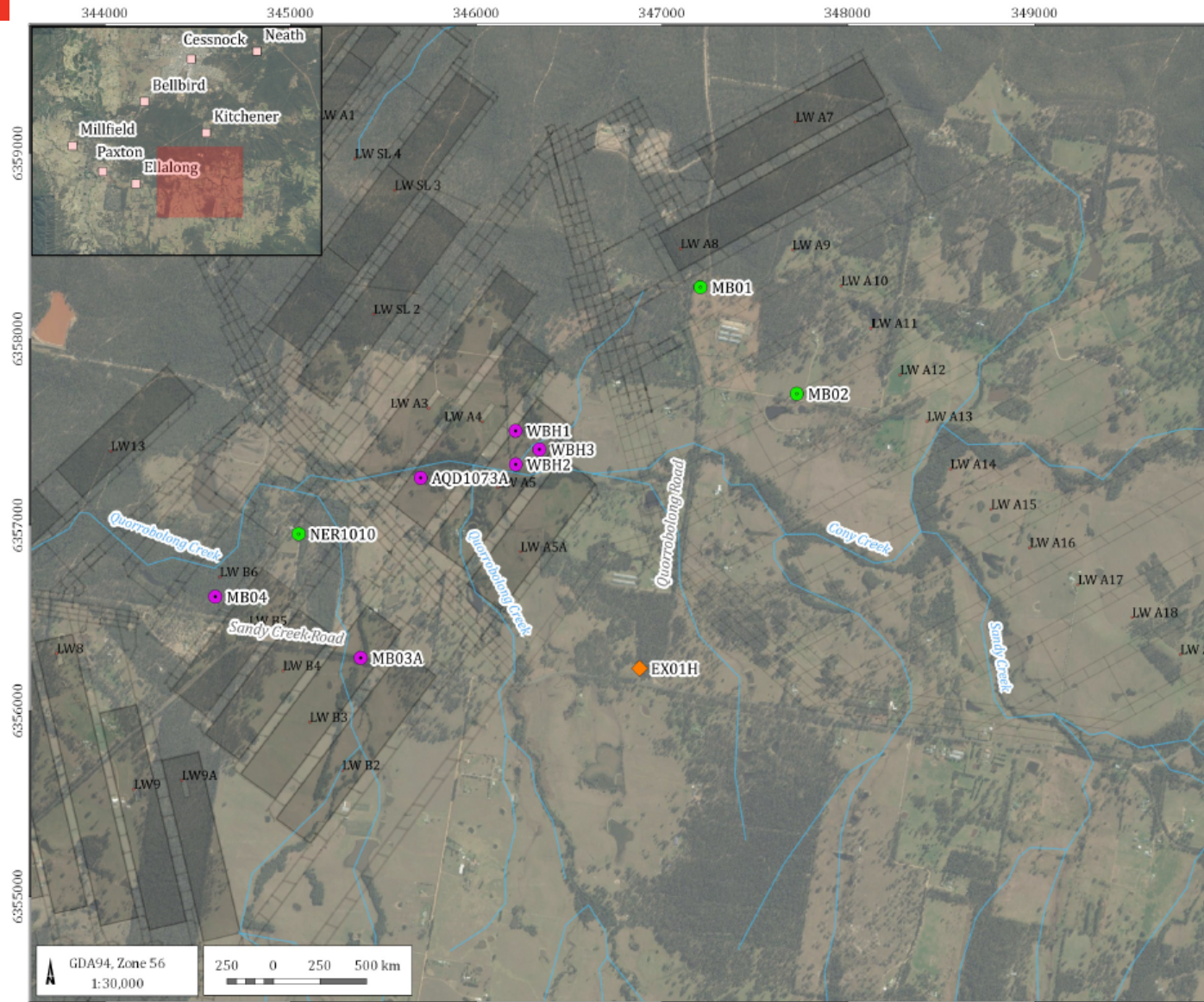


# Water Monitoring

Surface Water Sites - EC  
Quorrobolong Creek and Coney Creek **QUARTERLY**



# Groundwater Monitoring



**LEGEND**

- Populated place
- Monitoring locations**
- Alluvium
- Branxton Formation
- ◆ VWP, Branxton Formation and Greta Coal Measures
- Mine plan
- Longwall panels
- Watercourse

Yancoal - Austar Coal Mine  
Groundwater Monitoring (G18281)

**Austar monitoring bore and VWP locations**

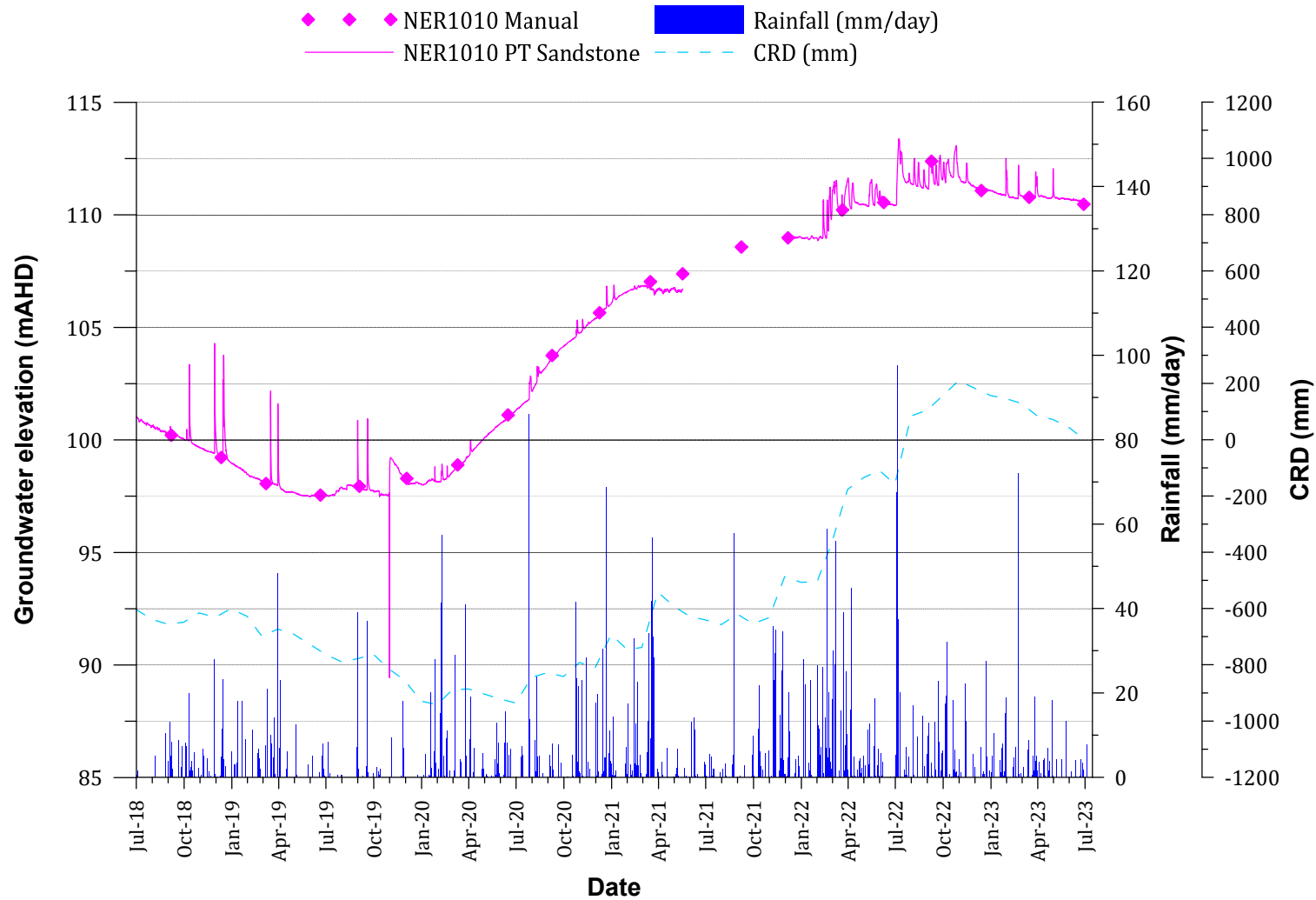
DATE  
24/09/2019

FIGURE No.  
**2.1**



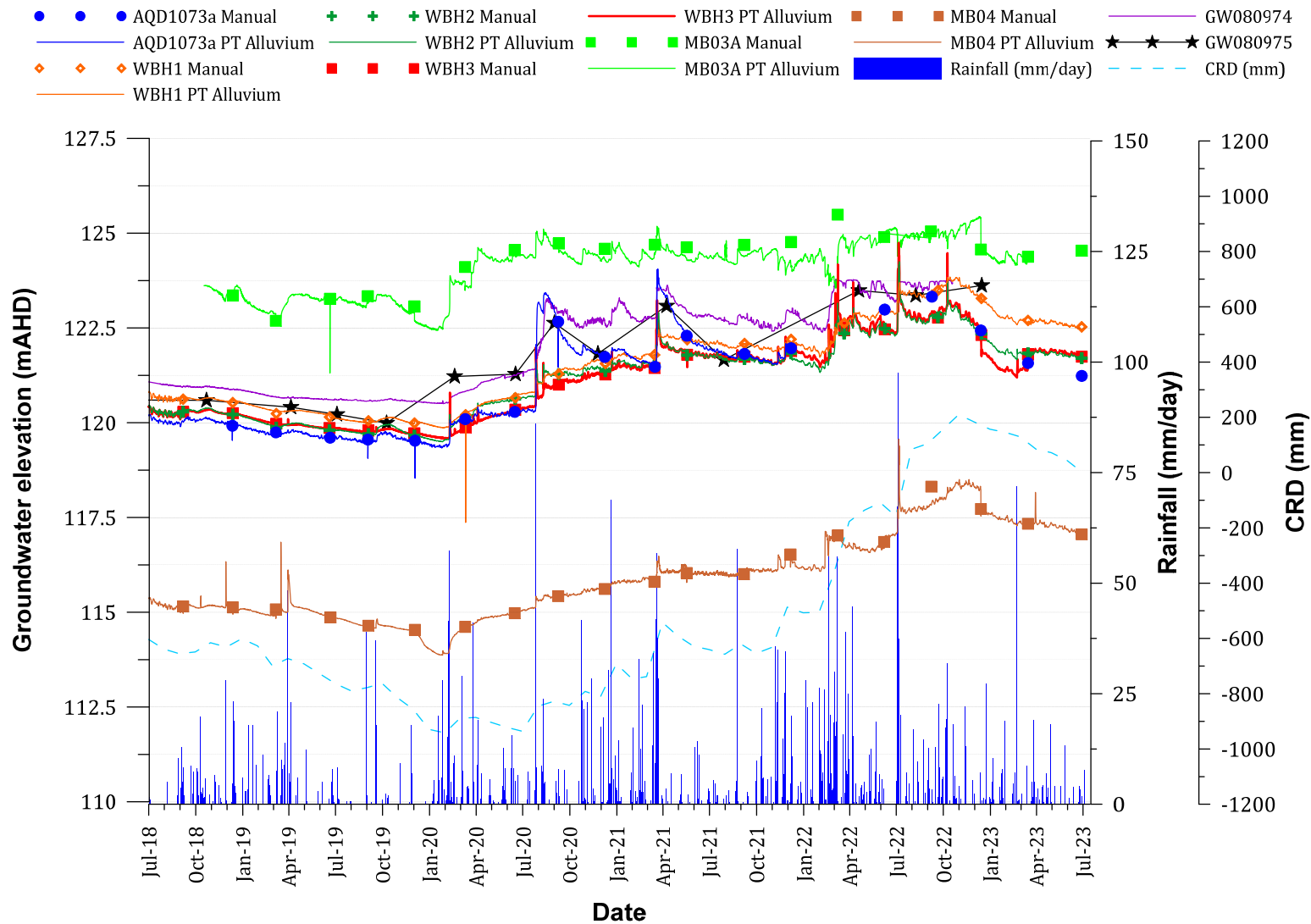
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N:\Groundwater Jobs\G18281\Yancoal Austar GW monitoring and compliance 2019\3\_GIS\Workspaces\20190924\_G18281\_Austar monitoring bore and VWP locations\_updatedSept2019.ags  
Note: longwall panel background georeferenced accuracy ~ 10 m.

# Groundwater Monitoring



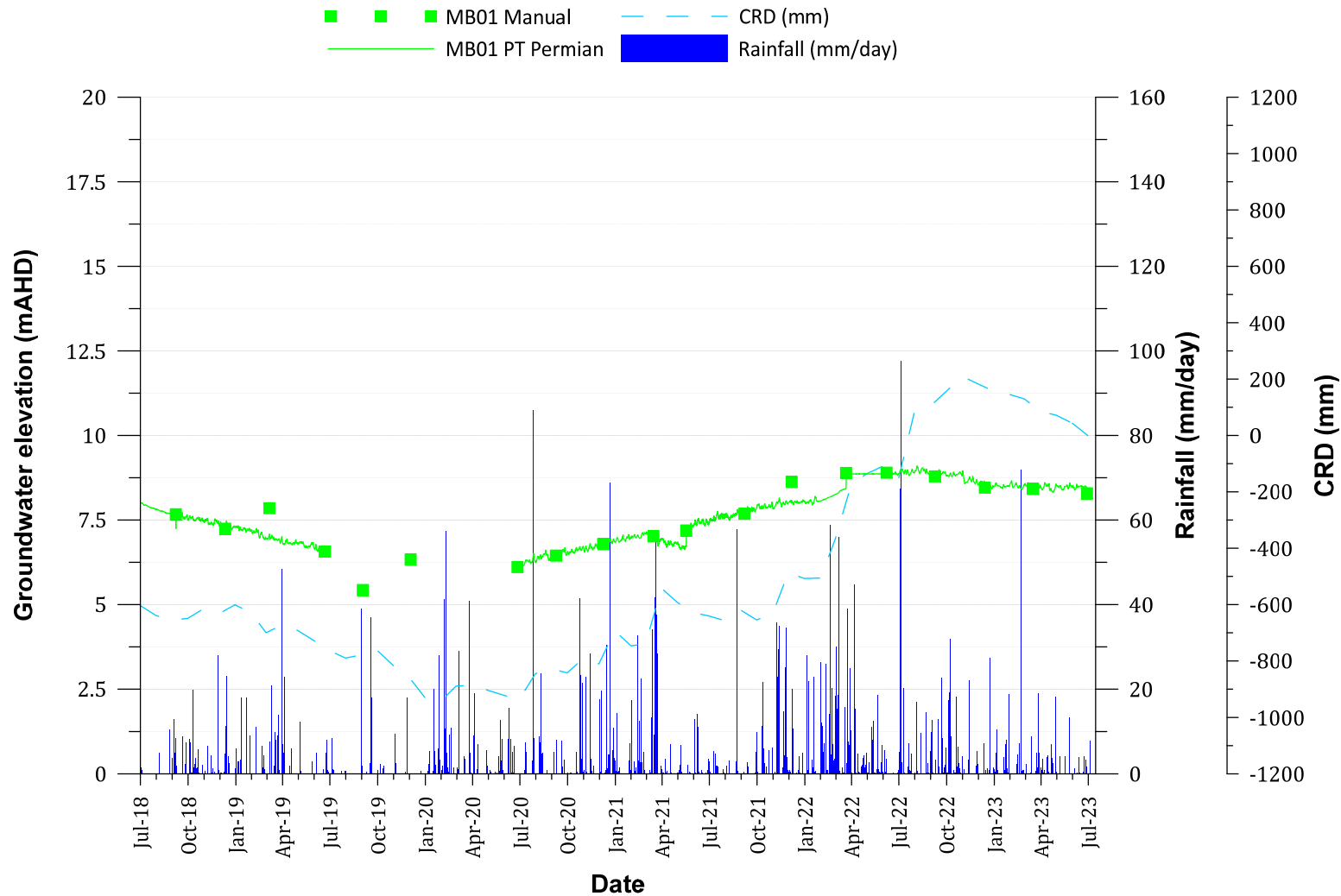
5-year NER1010 groundwater level hydrograph

# Groundwater Monitoring



5-year stage 2 and Bellbird South alluvium and WaterNSW groundwater level hydrographs

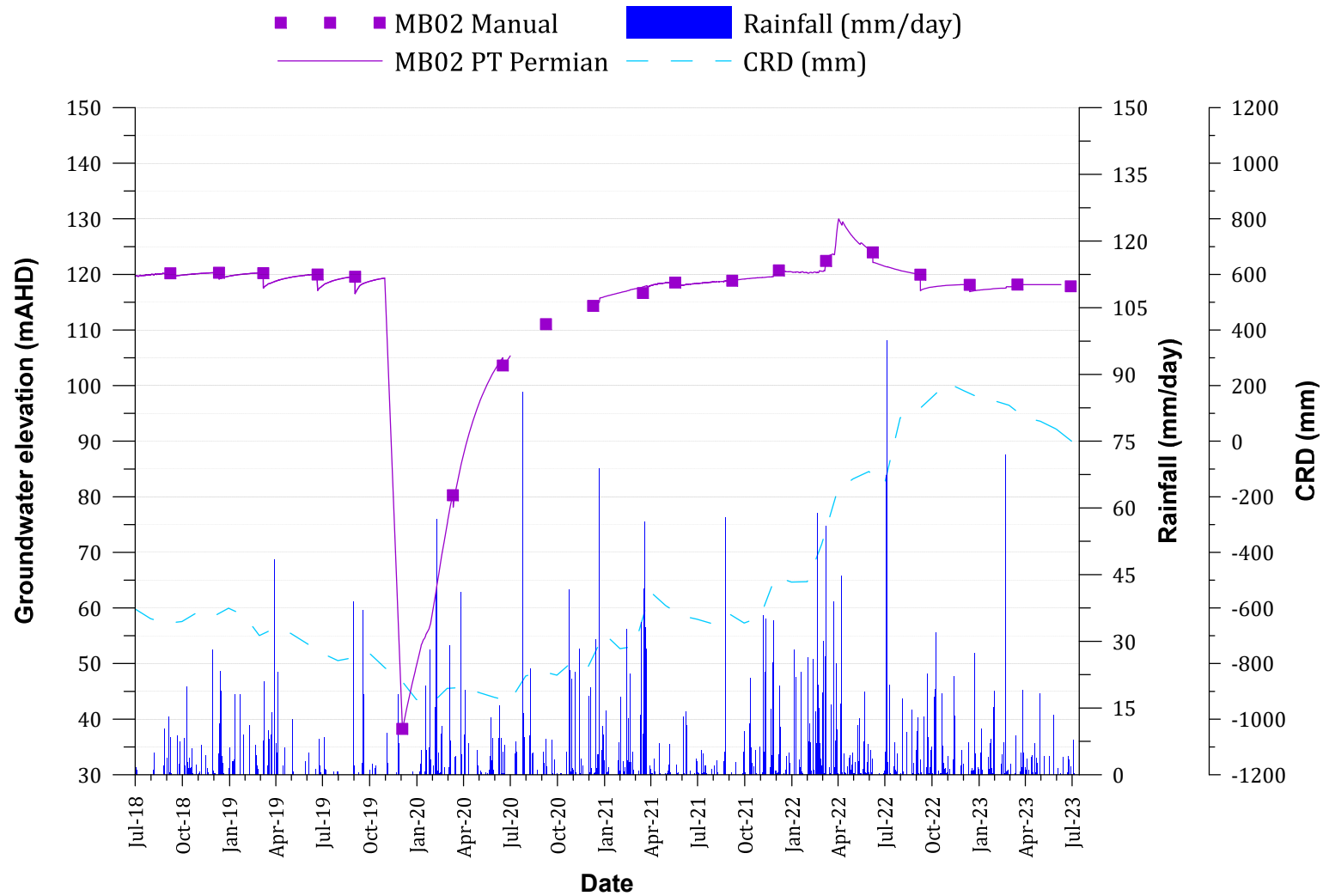
# Groundwater Monitoring



5-year stage 3 MB01 sandstone aquifer groundwater level hydrograph



# Groundwater Monitoring



5-year Stage 3 MB02 sandstone aquifer groundwater level hydrograph

**Since last CCC meeting (21 March 2023 – 20 September 2023)**

## **Noise Monitoring**

- No noise exceedances recorded during attended noise monitoring, no noise complaints

## **Operations**

- CHPP and associated infrastructure remain non-operational
- Decommissioning of underground mine infrastructure at Kalingo Infrastructure Area, partial sealing at 1, 3 and 4 shafts and the portal at Pit Top.
- Longwall Maintenance at Pit Top



# Environmental Incidents and Community Complaints

# Environmental Incidents and Complaints

- There have been no reportable incidents or complaints since the last CCC meeting on 21 March 2023
- Aberdare Extended Emplacement Area clean water diversion drain embankment repairs have been undertaken following July 2022 incident



# Environmental Incidents

## On-going Drainage Line Investigation – CHPP (since 6 June 2017)

- Reported to NSW EPA in monthly status reports required by EPL
- Orange staining observed during all monitoring events since previous meeting
- Drainage line is drying out and groundwater level has dropped
- Notable actions completed to manage the issue:
  - Additional pumping to prevent ponding and seepage in open drains
  - Desilting of the Precipitate Dam, July 2021 (potential contamination source)
  - Inclusion of acid mine drainage analysis during the Site Investigations program, June 2022
  - Desilting mine water drains close to the drainage line under investigation, construction of drains on Product stockpile to relocate mine water flows
  - Geochemical assessments as part of closure planning

# General Business



# General Business – Rehabilitation Management Plan

- Rehabilitation objectives (ROBJs) and Final Landform Rehabilitation Plans (FLRPs) were approved by the Resources Regulator during August 2023
- Austar will publish an updated Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP) with the approved ROBJs and FLRPs to their website by 21 September 2023
- The Annual Rehabilitation Report (ARR) and Forward Program (FP) are in preparation and will be lodged with the Resources Regulator before 30 September 2023

# General Business – Bushfire Management

- Management of fire breaks with slashing conducted over the winter period. Very little grass regrowth since due to the dry conditions. Track maintenance works scheduled in September 2023
- Draft 2023 Bushfire Management Plan update has been received from consultant. Austar now undertaking final review then Plan will be forwarded to RFS
- Austar have contacted RFS several times to facilitate a Bushfire Hazard Reduction burn on Austar land at Pelton. Conditions have not been suitable for burns and/or RFS resources have been engaged in other hazard reduction burns. Austar continuing to engage with RFS





## Weed management

- Currently on-boarding an additional weed management contractor to increase targeted weed management across site
- Strong focus on lantana, tobacco bush, green cestrum and invasive perennial grasses across all Austar landholdings
- During the last Annual Review reporting period (Jun 22 – Jul 23), 73 hectares of weeds were treated.

# General Business – Community Support Program

*em*POWERING  
COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT



#### Yancoal Community Support Program call for applications

Austar Coal Mine is a proud and active member of the local community. Yancoal's 2024 Community Support Program offers community groups the opportunity to apply for funding to support projects, events and initiatives that help make a genuine positive difference to the Cessnock area.

If you have a project or idea with the potential to benefit others across the areas of health, community, environment, arts, culture, education or training, please visit: [www.austarcoalmine.com.au](http://www.austarcoalmine.com.au)

#### NEED FUNDING TO HELP IMPROVE OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Yancoal Community Support Program

Applications close on 30th September 2023



**L MINE**  
ALIA GROUP

# General Business – No.2 Shaft Potable Water Line

- Austar own potable water line from Church Street Ellalong to No.2 Shaft site on Dry Creek Road
- Notification provided to private residents connected to line in March 2023 that it will be decommissioned and supply terminated in October 2023
- Line not constructed to standard and therefore Hunter Water will not take ownership
- Most residents are now ready to transition to tank water only, with a few residents still needing to do minor works prior to decommissioning next month

# General Business – Reporting

## Published on Austar website:

- Rehabilitation and Mine Closure Fact sheet, and updates reflecting closure throughout the website
- ML 1851 approved (old MLA 521 at CHPP)

Documents available: [www.austarcoalmine.com.au](http://www.austarcoalmine.com.au)

## Additional reporting:

- National Pollutant Inventory (NPI) Reporting – Austar under reporting threshold 2023

## Upcoming reporting

- Annual Review due for lodgement by 30 September
- Annual Rehabilitation Report and Forward Program due in September
- NGERs reporting due at end of October

# General Business – Independent Environmental Audit

- The three yearly Independent Environmental Audit (IEA) will be held on 31 October and 1 November, and is due for submission to DPE on 13 December 2023
- DPE has approved the audit team, the lead auditor is Dianne Munro from RPS. Specialist auditors are included for water, rehabilitation, subsidence, noise and air quality
- The audit looks at Project Approvals, the Environmental Protection Licence, Mining Leases and associated management plans
- The auditors may consult with the CCC

## Other Business –

Next Meeting /  
Close