



Jellinbah Group



LAKE VERMONT RESOURCES
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
CHAPTER 17 CULTURAL HERITAGE



Table of Contents

17	Cultural Heritage	17-1
17.1	Environmental objective and outcomes	17-1
17.2	Description of existing values	17-1
17.2.1	Indigenous cultural heritage	17-1
17.2.2	Non-Indigenous cultural heritage	17-3
17.3	Potential impacts	17-6
17.3.1	Indigenous cultural heritage	17-6
17.3.2	Non-Indigenous cultural heritage	17-6
17.4	Mitigation and management measures	17-7
17.4.1	Indigenous cultural heritage	17-7
17.4.2	Non-Indigenous cultural heritage	17-7

List of Figures

Figure 17.1:	Identified scar tree locations	17-2
Figure 17.2:	Non-Indigenous cultural heritage sites	17-5

List of Tables

Table 17.1:	Identified non-Indigenous cultural heritage sites	17-4
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17 Cultural Heritage

17.1 Environmental objective and outcomes

This chapter has been prepared to assist the DES in carrying out the environmental objective assessment in respect of the following environmental objective and outcomes stated in the Project ToR:

The construction and operation of the proposed Project should achieve the purposes of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld) (ACH Act) and the Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003 with respect to the proposed Project site and ensure that the nature and scale of the proposed Project does not compromise the cultural heritage significance of a heritage place or heritage area.

This cultural heritage assessment was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages–EIS Information Guideline' (DES 2020n) and the 'Non-Indigenous cultural heritage–EIS Information Guideline' (DES 2020o).

17.2 Description of existing values

17.2.1 Indigenous cultural heritage

Under section 23 of the ACH Act, every person or entity who carries out a development activity has a duty of care to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure the activity does not harm Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The recognised Traditional Owners of the area encompassed by the Project site are the Barada Barna People (formerly known as the Barada Barna Kabalbara and Yetimarla People), as represented by the Barada Barna Aboriginal Corporation. The Project area is located within the Barada Barna People's Native Title application area, per determination reference (QCD2016/007), which was registered with the 'National Native Title Tribunal' on 31 August 2016. Native title has been extinguished over all land within the Project area and does not form part of the 'Barada Barna People's Native Title Determination Area'.

Relevant to section 86 and 87 of the ACH Act, it is acknowledged that Bowen Basin Coal entered into a CHMP with the Barada Barna Kabalbara and Yetimarla People on 5 March 2007. The CHMP establishes how land use activities will be managed by Bowen Basin Coal, to avoid or minimise harm to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage. The CHMP was created for the "life of the Vermont Coal Project" and remains valid with the Barada Barna People entity (updated circa 2016). The CHMP extends across all Bowen Basin Coal tenements relevant to the Lake Vermont Mine (inclusive of the Project site).

Consistent with the operations of the CHMP, Bowen Basin Coal has undertaken cultural heritage survey work across the entirety of the Project area. Survey work was undertaken by 'Winnaa Pty Ltd', as the nominated Cultural Heritage Body for the Barada Barna People. As a result of completed survey works, unconditional cultural heritage clearance has been provided for the entirety of the Project site.

As part of Bowen Basin Coal obtaining Indigenous cultural heritage clearance, several scar trees were identified within the Project area (refer to Figure 17.1).

Bowen Basin Coal has a commitment (within the CHMP) to engage the Barada Barna People on the salvage of any potentially impacted scar trees, and other artefacts that may be identified, prior to commencing any planned ground disturbance activities. It is noted that Bowen Basin Coal has commenced discussions with Barada Barna People representatives in respect to the salvage of the potentially impacted scar trees. Further, Bowen Basin Coal is committed to engaging Barada Barna as required should any further artefacts be identified during future proposed construction activities.

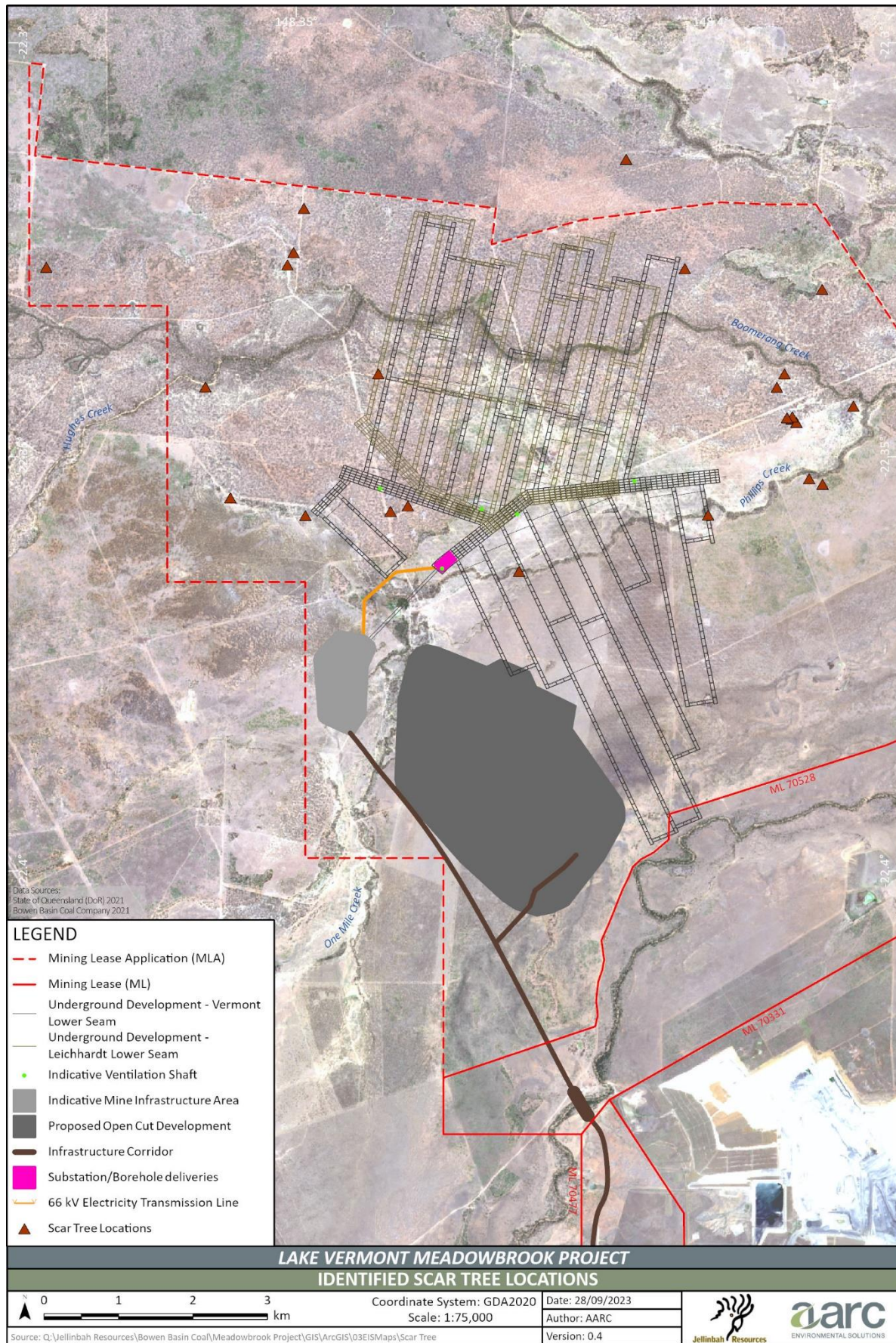


Figure 17.1: Identified scar tree locations



17.2.2 Non-Indigenous cultural heritage

A Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment has been undertaken for the Project by Converge Heritage + Community, an appropriately qualified cultural heritage practitioner with extensive experience in cultural heritage assessment and reporting (Appendix O, Non Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment).

17.2.2.1 Historical overview of the Project area

Land use of the Project area following European occupation was primarily focused on pastoral pursuits, which provides an important historical theme in understanding heritage significance. As referred to in Appendix O, Non Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment, Section 2.3. historical themes identified as relevant to the Project area are:

- exploiting, utilising and transforming the land (e.g. exploring, surveying and mapping the land, pastoral activity and agricultural activities);
- exploiting natural resources;
- pastoral activities;
- building settlements, towns, cities and dwellings; and
- establishing settlements.

The first non-Indigenous exploration in the region was undertaken by Prussian botanist Ludwig Leichardt in 1844 (Leichardt cited in Appendix O, Section 2.4). Leichardt's positive reports of the area led to the uptake of land in the broader region by pastoralists, including Scottish immigrant William Landsborough. Landsborough established a pastoral holding north of Bundaberg in 1854 and used the area as a base to explore the region (National Library of Australia, cited in Appendix O, Non Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment, Section 2.4). Survey maps indicate that settlement of Lake Vermont and other pastoral 'runs' in the Project area were established between 1866 and 1884. The Project area appears to have been used largely for pastoral purposes since this time, with cattle grazing the dominant land use activity.

Mining first commenced in the region with the discovery of gold and copper at Clermont circa 1861 (O'Donnell, cited in Appendix O, Non Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment, Section 2.4). Although the existence of coal in the region had been known since the time of Leichardt's exploration, there was no demand for coal until the late 1800s. Following the exhaustion of the gold fields, coal mining commenced at Blair Athol, approximately 100 km south-west of the Project. However, due to the absence of a local market, mining efforts were initially uncompetitive. It was not until the extension of the railway line into Clermont in 1884 that the coal mining industry began to evolve.

Dysart is the main town located near the Project, approximately 30 km to the south-west. Dysart was established in the 1970s as a dormitory town to the nearby Saraji mine. As mining became a predominant land use in the area, the town quickly grew and experienced even greater growth in 1979 with the opening of the Norwich Park Mine.

Mining and pastoral pursuits have continued to be dominant land uses in the Project region.

17.2.2.2 Non-Indigenous heritage values relevant to the Project

Historical and archival research, as well as a review of heritage registers, have been undertaken to determine the likely existence, extent and probable levels of significance of any places within the Project area. Field survey of the Project area was also conducted by Converge Heritage + Community.

The results of database and register searches indicate that no places of non-Indigenous cultural heritage were identified on the World Heritage List, National Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List, Queensland Heritage Register, Local Heritage Register, former Register of the National Estate or the present Queensland National Trust Register (refer to Appendix O, Non Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment, Section 2.1).



The field survey undertaken identified eight sites/places of potential non-Indigenous cultural heritage significance in the Project area or the immediate surrounds. These sites are identified in Table 17.1, with locations shown in Figure 17.2.

Table 17.1: Identified non-Indigenous cultural heritage sites

Site #	Site name	Brief description
1	Cattle trough	The remains of a cattle trough comprising wooden posts and a metal framework which was wired to the posts are located as shown in Figure 17.2. The concrete trough has been removed. A poly ball float was lying next to the structural remnants. The location is overgrown with grass, and a small tree is growing through the metal framework. Estimated to be 20 to 30 years old
2	Bore	A bore surrounded by a wooden fence with a power pole and galvanised circuit breaker/fuse box is located as shown in Figure 17.2. The pump is still in the bore; however, the power has been disconnected. The bore originally supplied the trough at Site 1. The area is overgrown with grass.
3	Fence strainer/corner	This is typical of many of the fences observed, comprising rosewood (<i>Acacia rhodoxylon</i>) strainer posts and two stays with 4 or 5 strands of barbed wire. The location of this item is shown in Figure 17.2. Rosewood is a hardwood that is available locally and remains a favoured timber for fences given its durability and below ground life expectancy. This and similar fences in the Project area may date back to the 1980s.
4	Concrete water tank	A concrete tank is located in a paddock, as shown in Figure 17.2. The tanks continues to be used and is enclosed in a barbed wire fence. The tank is estimated to date back to the 1980s or earlier.
5	Spear trap yard	A cattle yard/holding paddock around a dam is located as shown in Figure 17.2. The yard has two one-way gates, or spear traps—one for the cattle to enter by and the other for them to exit. Spear traps provide an alternative to mustering, and the underlying principle is that the cattle are drawn to the water and enter through the entrance gate while the exit gate is blocked off. Once the required work (e.g. drafting) has been completed, the exit gate would be opened and the cattle would return to the pasture.
6	Molasses lick	Remnants of a home-made molasses lick measuring some 85 cm square and 70 cm high is located as shown in Figure 17.2. The remnants comprise a 44-gallon drum cut in half, four star pickets driven into the ground and two 90 x 40 mm pieces of timber wired to the star pickets. The lick originally comprised a 44-gallon drum cut in half into which the molasses was placed. A 22-gallon drum was placed inside the 44 gallon drum, it is assumed on an axle or spindle, and the cattle would lick the smaller drum, which would cause it to turn through the molasses and replenish the molasses on the drum.
7	Blazed tree	A tree with a blaze cut by a chainsaw is located as shown in Figure 17.2 on the northern boundary of the Project Area. While it may be a reference mark for the nearby corner, it does not contain the usual bearing distance or arrow associated with such trees.
8	Cattle yards	Remnants of cattle yards and a loading ramp with a combined size of approximately 70 m north–south and approximately 20 m east–west are located as shown in Figure 17.2. The ramp is 1 m high and approximately 10 m long. The ramp and yards comprise a mix of materials, including unwound drag line cable, wire mesh gates, coal wash plant screens, bulldozer blade cutting edges and galvanised turnbuckles to strain the fence wires and cable. It is possible the pastoralists who built these yards worked at a local mine or had access to discarded mine materials. The concrete tank is located south of the yards.

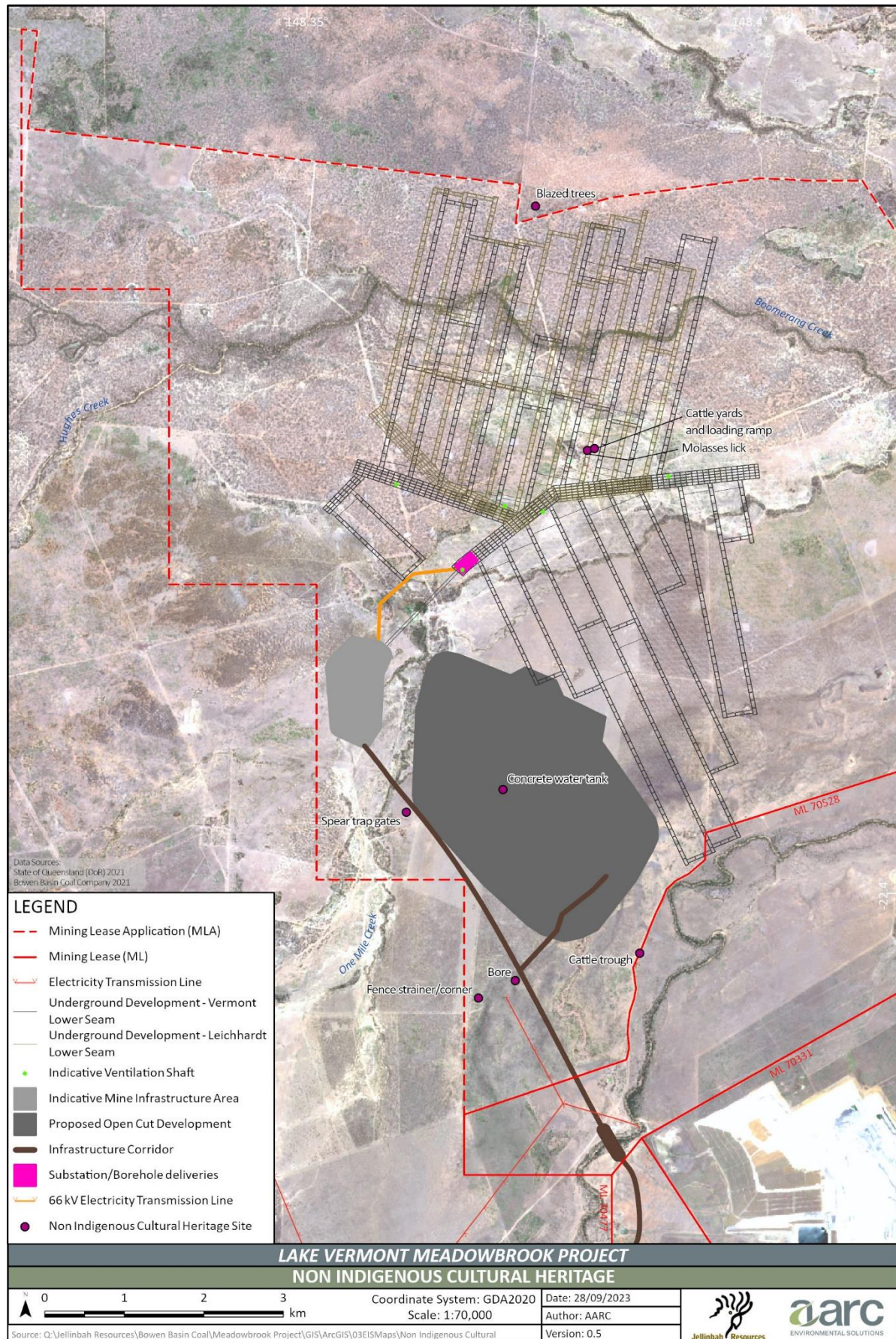


Figure 17.2: Non-Indigenous cultural heritage sites



17.2.2.3 Significance of non-Indigenous heritage values identified

The assessment of non-Indigenous cultural heritage significance was undertaken in accordance with 'The Burra Charter of Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites' (The Burra Charter) (Australia ICOMOS, 2013) and the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* (Heritage Act). Cultural heritage significance relates to people's perspective of place and sense of value within the context of history, environment, aesthetics and social organisation.

The cultural landscape of the Project area reflects the history of the pastoral activities in the area. However, the eight sites identified as potentially having non-Indigenous cultural heritage significance do not meet the threshold criteria for local heritage significance. These eight sites are considered common for this area and appear to have been constructed relatively recently.

17.3 Potential impacts

17.3.1 Indigenous cultural heritage

Project activities involving surface disturbance may present a risk of harm to Indigenous cultural heritage items, including potential residual items not identified by completed survey works. Potential impacts of the Project on residual Indigenous cultural heritage will be managed during the construction and operational phases of the Project, pursuant to the existing CHMP and Bowen Basin Coal's statutory duty of care.

In addition to direct disturbance related to clearing activities, mine subsidence (resultant of underground longwall mining) also has the potential to impact on identified Indigenous cultural heritage items (e.g. scar trees). Indigenous cultural heritage survey work has identified that seven scar trees exist above or in close proximity to the proposed underground mine workings. The locations of these scar trees are shown in Figure 17.1. While subsidence impacts are not anticipated to damage or destroy mature trees, consistent with the obligations of the existing CHMP, Bowen Basin Coal has engaged with the Barada Barna People in respect of the potential impacts to scar trees resultant of the Project. Should it be considered appropriate, salvage of scar trees would occur in conjunction with the processes established within the CHMP.

17.3.2 Non-Indigenous cultural heritage

Of the eight places of potential non-Indigenous cultural heritage significance identified in the vicinity of the Project:

- The blaze tree, cattle yard and loading ramp and molasses lick are located within the underground mining footprint. However, they are considered unlikely to be impacted by subsidence.
- The concrete water tank is located in the pit and will require removal.
- The fence strainer/corner, bore and cattle trough are located in the vicinity of the infrastructure corridor; however, they will not be impacted by the Project.
- The spear trap gates are located outside the Project footprint and will not be impacted by the Project.

There is low potential for additional historic places/items to exist within the Project area. Any unidentified sites would likely consist of sites relating to pastoral activities, dams, historic survey trees and remnant boundary fence lines.



17.4 Mitigation and management measures

17.4.1 Indigenous cultural heritage

Bowen Basin Coal respects the traditions and cultures of the Barada Barna People and recognises their custodial rights over Indigenous cultural heritage. As part of this recognition, Bowen Basin Coal has entered into, and operated under, a CHMP since 2007. This CHMP provides a practicable means by which Bowen Basin Coal seeks to protect and manage the impacts of the Project on Indigenous cultural heritage. Bowen Basin Coal also acknowledges and accepts their statutory duty of care under the ACH Act to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure the Project does not harm Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The CHMP applies to the entire Project area for the life of the Project. In regard to the potential identification of Indigenous cultural heritage items within the Project area (that have not been recorded by completed surveys) Bowen Basin Coal commits to ceasing works upon such discovery, pending further advice from the Barada Barna People and/or the DES. Depending on the cultural heritage significance of any potential find, further management/mitigation options may then be considered and implemented, as agreed with the Barada Barna People.

While subsidence impacts are not anticipated to damage or destroy identified scar trees, consistent with the operation of the existing CHMP, Bowen Basin Coal commits to ongoing engagement with the Barada Barna People to determine appropriate mitigation/management measures. Should it be considered necessary or appropriate to salvage scar trees, this would occur in conjunction with the processes established under the CHMP.

To support an understanding of Indigenous cultural heritage and the values and commitments of the CHMP, Bowen Basin Coal will provide suitable induction material for all Project personnel. This will include information on the potential occurrence of Indigenous cultural heritage items and the actions that are to be taken if a potential site / item is found. All personnel and contractors of Bowen Basin Coal will be informed of these obligations through induction processes.

17.4.2 Non-Indigenous cultural heritage

The eight sites/items identified within the Project area provide evidence of historical pastoral activity within the Project area. However, none of the sites meet the threshold criteria for local heritage significance, and of these, only one site is likely to be disturbed by the Project. The recording of these sites that was undertaken for the Non Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment (Appendix O, Section 3.5) is considered appropriate archival of these sites.

There is low potential for further historic and archaeological items/places to exist within the Project area. Notwithstanding this, due diligence will be provided during construction and operational activities to ensure any new finds can be adequately considered. An 'Incidental Finds Procedure', such as that outlined in Appendix O, Non Indigenous Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (Section 5.3), will be implemented if a previously unrecorded potential site of non-Indigenous cultural heritage significance is identified within the Project area.

In addition, site induction material prepared for Project personnel will include information on the potential occurrence of non-Indigenous cultural heritage sites and the actions that are to be taken if a potential site is found. Personnel or contractors of Bowen Basin Coal will be informed of their obligations under section 89 of the *Heritage Act 1992* (Qld) to report to the DES any archaeological artefacts (as defined under that Act) that may constitute an important source of information about an aspect of the history of Queensland.

Implementation of the above strategies will assist to mitigate and manage any adverse impacts of the Project on non-Indigenous cultural heritage values and enhance any positive impacts that arise.