

Media Holding Statement:

**Update on the progress of the Russell Vale Colliery Underground Expansion Project and upcoming community engagement**

Wollongong Coal will be holding a community information session on a revised mine plan for the Russell Vale Colliery Underground Expansion Project. The Russell Vale Colliery has a long history in the region and is well located close to coal export facilities at Port Kembla to provide quality coking coal to meet global demand for use in steel making. The Colliery has been in care and maintenance since 2015 and is seeking approval to recommence underground mining at the site.

The information session will be held at the Thirroul Community Centre on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May between 11am and 4pm.

The session will be run as a 'drop in session' to allow attendees to wander around the display and view information about the project in their own time.

The community will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the proposed changes with the Project team working on the updated environmental and social assessment studies for the revised mine plan, and provide feedback for consideration in the assessment process.

Environmental and social studies for the revised mine plan commenced in 2017, with a detailed round of engagement undertaken with key stakeholders and local residents. These studies are now nearing completion and all community feedback will be considered as part of the assessment process.

The revised mine plan has been developed in response to government and community concerns regarding the potential environmental and social impacts of the project. In particular, concerns regarding potential subsidence related impacts of mining on groundwater, surface water and biodiversity, as well as noise impacts on the local community.

Key project changes that will be presented at the community information session include: use of non-caving first workings mining methods with negligible subsidence and environmental impacts - longwall mining is no longer proposed; a reduced production rate and substantial redesign of the Russell Vale Pit Top to reduce noise impacts on the local community as well as improve surface water management.

The environmental and social assessment studies being prepared for the revised mine plan will be submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment along with a response to the Planning Assessment Commission Review of the previous project design. These documents will be made publicly available on the Department's website.

An invitation to the session has been distributed to over 1,500 households in the local area and an advertisement placed in the Illawarra Mercury on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Revised Project is welcome to attend on the day or contact Mitch Jakeman, CEO Wollongong Coal on (02) 4223 6830.