



We're looking to conserve around 1,250 hectares of high biodiversity land.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



The Mountain Devil, *Lambertia Formosa*



The Pobblebonk (or Banjo) Frog *Limnodynastes dumerilii*

The Hydro Kurri Kurri smelter site and buffer zone land covers around 1,950 hectares and is predominantly zoned as rural land. Hydro believes one of the key opportunities for the site is the conservation of large amounts of land with high biodiversity value. We have applied to rezone around 215 hectares for employment activities, around 180 hectares for residential development, and around 1,250 hectares for conservation purposes. The remaining 235 hectares would remain as rural land.

The smelter's buffer zone has long been home to a range of native flora and fauna, including threatened ecological communities such as Lowland Redgum Forest, Kurri Sand Swamp Woodland,

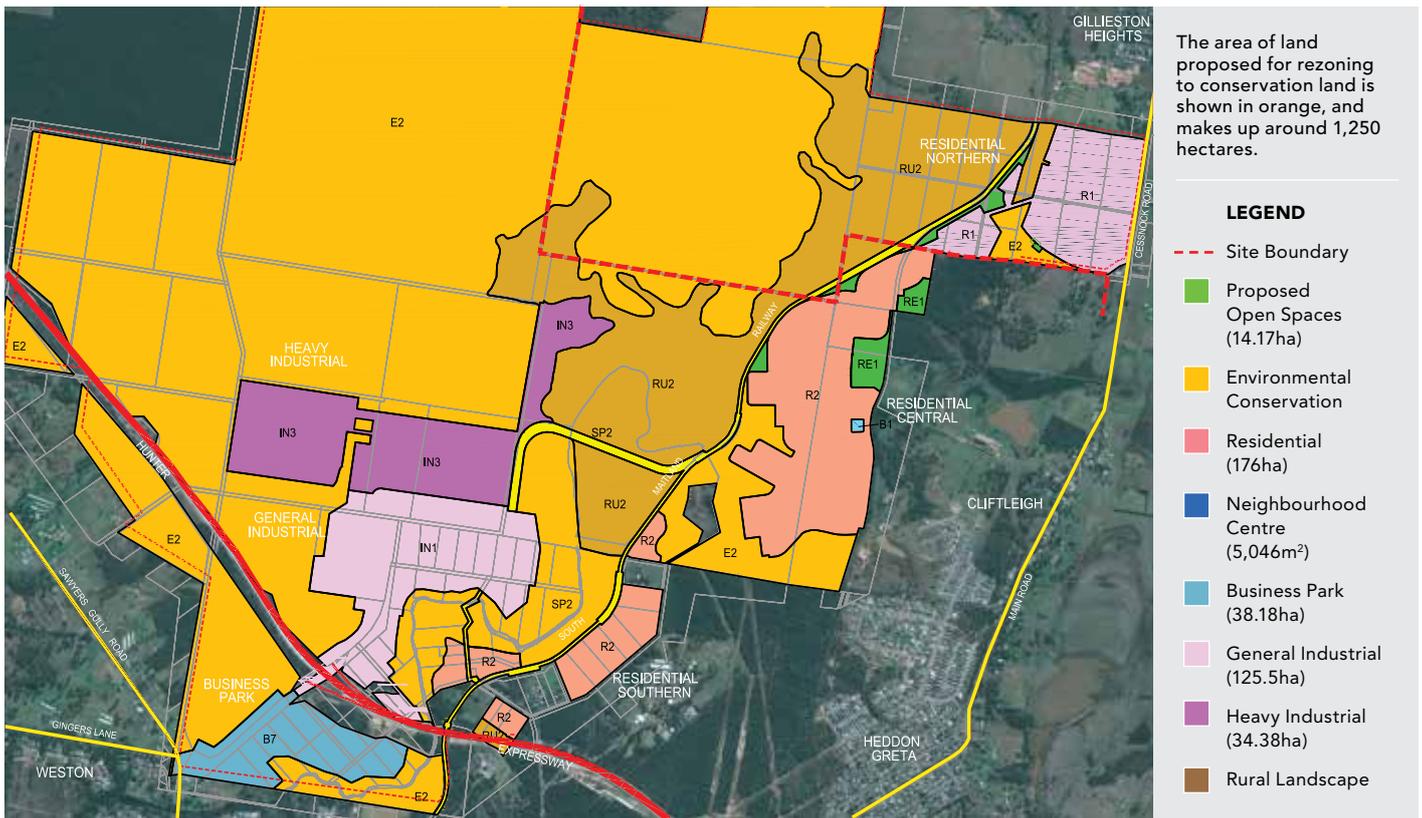
and Spotted Gum – Red Ironbark Forest. Hydro has undertaken native revegetation throughout the operation of the smelter and has restored areas of native habitat, which assisted in maintaining the biodiversity of the area. The proposed development footprint has been designed to maximise the use of already cleared or degraded land, thereby reducing the impact on land of high conservation value.

It is required that certain levels of native vegetation be conserved to balance potential biodiversity loss when land is developed. This is in line with the goals of the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, which seeks to protect the region's strong environmental and biodiversity assets.

CURRENT STATUS

Hydro has been in consultation with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and Cessnock City Council regarding the biodiversity certification of the proposed rezoning. The biodiversity certification is the framework by which any vegetation clearing is offset and how that offset land will be conserved and maintained. Cessnock City Council endorsed the concept and is currently making an application with OEH.

The rezoning proposals were endorsed by both Cessnock City Council and Maitland City Council in 2015. In March 2016 the Minister for Planning determined via the Department of



Planning and Environment Gateway under Section 56 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, that the planning proposal should proceed subject to conditions. One of the conditions was that the application for biodiversity certification related to the rezoning proposals must be resolved prior to a final decision.

The area of land proposed for rezoning to conservation land (shown above in orange) makes up around 65% of the site, with the majority of this land to form the biodiversity offset area.

Most of the site is currently zoned rural land despite being largely covered in native vegetation.

NEXT STEPS

Cessnock City Council is working with OEH through the assessment for the site and process of biodiversity certification.

The biodiversity certification is the framework by which any vegetation clearing is offset and how that offset

land will be conserved and maintained. This process will run concurrently with the rezoning, which is likely to take up to 36 months. Community feedback and input will be sought during this process.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What will happen to the site in the future?

If the land is conserved as part of a biodiversity certification agreement, it will be maintained in its current state or have its biodiversity values improved. The land will be maintained in perpetuity (forever) as a conserved area.

What are biodiversity offsets?

Biodiversity offsets benefit biodiversity by compensating for the impacts of an action elsewhere, such as clearing for development. Biodiversity offsets help achieve long-term conservation outcomes where development and infrastructure projects are likely to impact biodiversity.

What will the key outcomes of biodiversity certification be?

- Impacts of the future development are known and assessed prior to the land being rezoned.
- Provides best practice long term management of conservation land.
- Provides certainty for development.

Are there any endangered ecological communities on the land? How are they being protected?

The biodiversity certification agreement will protect four endangered ecological communities (EECs) and various threatened species within the site through long-term biodiversity management of the conservation land.

The EECs are Kurri Sand Swamp Woodland, Lower Hunter Spotted Gum-Ironbark Forest, Hunter Lowland Redgum Forest, and River Flat Eucalypt Forest.

PLEASE LET US KNOW

Hydro welcomes all feedback on these proposed plans. Please provide feedback or ask questions through these channels:

Email: community.kurri@hydro.com
 Phone: 1800 066 243

Write to: Hydro Aluminium Kurri Kurri, PO Box 1, Kurri Kurri NSW 2327.