Report
Barrick Cowal Gold Mine Social Impact Assessment
2013

Prepared for
Barrick (Cowal) LTD
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## Glossary and abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term/Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barrick</td>
<td>Barrick (Cowal) LTD (typically referring to the corporate entity)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCGM</td>
<td>Barrick Cowal Gold Mine (typically referring to the operational facility)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSC</td>
<td>Bland Shire Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CALD</td>
<td>Culturally and linguistically diverse</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEMCC</td>
<td>Community Environmental Monitoring and Consultative Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHESS</td>
<td>Community, Health, Environmental, Safety and Security Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>Cowal Partnering Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRMS</td>
<td>Community Relations Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMR</td>
<td>Department of Mineral Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUAP</td>
<td>Department of Urban Affairs and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIS</td>
<td>Environmental impact statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP&amp;A Act</td>
<td>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERP</td>
<td>Estimated resident population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETBC</td>
<td>Education, Training and Business Development Committee (ETBC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSC</td>
<td>Forbes Shire Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICMC</td>
<td>International Cyanide Management Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICMM</td>
<td>International Council on Mining and Metals</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICSEA</td>
<td>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Area/Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSC</td>
<td>Lachlan Shire Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Mining Lease</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Mining Lease Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNTT</td>
<td>National Native Title Tribunal</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Native Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>NT Act</td>
<td>Native Title (New South Wales) Act, 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDEMC</td>
<td>Riverina District Emergency Management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFP</td>
<td>Request for proposal</td>
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<td>SEIFA</td>
<td>Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas</td>
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<td>SEP</td>
<td>Stakeholder engagement plan</td>
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<td>SIA</td>
<td>Social impact assessment</td>
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<td>SMP</td>
<td>Social Management Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>URS</td>
<td>URS Australia (author)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWLALC</td>
<td>West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council</td>
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Acknowledgements

Barrick (Cowal) Ltd would like to express gratitude to all stakeholders for their contributions to the Barrick Cowal Social Impact Assessment 2013. These contributions will assist Barrick to build on its existing positive relationships with the communities of Bland, Forbes and Lachlan Shires, and support the long-term sustainability of the region. In particular, Barrick would like acknowledge the support of Mayor Neil Pokoney and the Bland Shire Council, the landholders of Lake Cowal, and Wiradjuri participants.

URS Australia would like to thank all SIA participants for their personal and professional contributions to the project, and for their warm welcome to West Wyalong and Lake Cowal.
Executive summary

Introduction

Barrick Cowal Gold Mine (BCGM) is an open-cut gold mine in the Bland Shire, New South Wales (NSW). BCGM is located at Lake Cowal, approximately 32 km north-east of West Wyalong, NSW.

Barrick (Cowal) Ltd commissioned URS Australia (URS) to conduct the Barrick Cowal Gold Mine Social Impact Assessment 2013 between January and August 2013.

URS assessed the social impacts of the Barrick Cowal Gold Mine to date, and identified potential mine closure impacts together with strategic options for Barrick to plan for the management of these impacts. The SIA also contributed to Barrick’s compliance with the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) Sustainable Development Framework.

Method

The SIA was conducted as a qualitative research study based on standard social impact assessment methodology. Primary data inputs were social and demographic statistical data, relevant literature, local community plans and strategies, and opinions gained through community consultation. Data analysis was by a standard risk assessment technique and generated a list of impacts categorised by significance and direction (positive or negative). Recommendations emphasise developing strategic responses to the eventual closure of the mine in compliance with the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework.

The primary study area included the Lake Cowal vicinity (surrounding the BCGM site) and the town of West Wyalong (Bland Shire). A wider study area extended to the Bland, Forbes and Lachlan Shires.

Community consultation focused on key community stakeholders including:

- Landholders
- Community organisation representatives
- Indigenous community representatives
- Businesses
- Local and state government agencies

In total, 36 stakeholder groups were consulted across the study area, including 47 individual respondents. Consultations were primarily by face-to-face interviews with some telephone interviews where necessary.

Social environment

The wider study area accommodates 22,361 residents (30 June 2012 data) of which around 60% reside in the urban centres of West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin. A small number occupy and operate farms in the Lake Cowal vicinity. The study area population has fallen steadily in recent decades due to “rural decline” associated mainly with a long-term contraction of the agricultural industry workforce. Population retention (particularly of young people) and economic diversification remain the primary challenges for study area communities.

In this context, the mining industry provides a key opportunity in terms of employment and economic stimulus. Mining industry employment has increased steadily in recent years due to the presence of BCGM and other mines nearby.
Executive summary

Study area communities are highly cohesive and retain strong small-town, agricultural identities. They tend to be well-serviced in terms of local-level health, education and emergency services infrastructure though some specialist health services are in short supply.

Social impacts

Amenity and quality of life

- BCGM generates continual noise and vibration primarily through the operation of blasting, vehicles, conveyor belts and processing equipment on site, and vehicle traffic accessing the site.
- BCGM operations routinely generate vehicular traffic on the local road network. This includes heavy freight and equipment vehicles, light mining operational vehicles, buses and private vehicles.
- Barrick upgraded some sections of local road to facilitate access to the mine site, and funds their ongoing maintenance.
- BCGM (including infrastructure and earthworks) represents a significant visual modification to the natural landscape.
- The development of BCGM has reduced the privacy and serenity of the Lake Cowal area, which was seen as a valuable aspect of local amenity.

Community identity and cohesion

- Employment and business opportunities brought about by BCGM have slowed (but not completely arrested) prevailing population loss.
- The demand for skills and labour at BCGM has brought new diversity to the cultural and linguistic profile of West Wyalong.
- The Barrick workforce is highly visible, highly cohesive and has a very strong sense of shared purpose. This represents the emergence of a discrete community identity within West Wyalong.
- A perceived “mini baby boom” in West Wyalong is commonly attributed to the attraction and retention of mining families.

Economic

- BCGM (via local contracts and purchasing) has provided valuable economic stimulus to the study area in the context of rural decline.
- BCGM employment has brought a critical benefit to the sustainability of local communities in the context of rural decline.
- The influx of BCGM workers to West Wyalong, along with Barrick’s accommodation strategy, has had a perceived effect of reducing housing affordability.

Education and training

- Barrick supports entry to tertiary education for young people through the Endeavour Scholarships Program and the Wiradjuri Scholarships Program and provides direct financial and other support to local education and training services.
- Barrick’s financial and other support has contributed to improved education outcomes for children and young people. Employment and socioeconomic benefits further enable mining families to engage better with education systems and achieve improved education outcomes.
Executive summary

Social infrastructure, social capital and governance
- Barrick's support for community groups and organisations is viewed by study area communities as one of BCGM's most significant and beneficial impacts.
- The BCGM operation supports local social infrastructure through community investment and rates payments and by assisting to maintain local populations.
- BCGM workers and their families contribute to their communities in professional activities, sports teams, school activities and community initiatives.
- Management and tenure of BCGM land represents a significant, though localised, change to land management and governance.
- BCGM engages closely with, and contributes direct service capacity to, local and district health and emergency services (primarily through the BCGM Emergency Response Unit).

Indigenous community impacts
- Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation has successfully leveraged BCGM funding to provide a range of services to Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.
- Non-Native Title Indigenous parties have been less engaged in BCGM cultural heritage management and community development programs.
- The development of BCGM has been central to a reinvigorated awareness of traditional Wiradjuri connections to Lake Cowal and surrounds.

Closure impacts

Withdrawal of economic and community benefits
Closure of BCGM would result in the withdrawal of the economic stimulus and community benefits identified above. Specific impacts would include:
- Reduced economic activity and business opportunities
- Reduced employment opportunities
- Potential population loss
- Potential decline in local community groups and organisations
- Residential property market adjustments

Land tenure and management
In the lead-up to closure, diverse community attitudes about optimal BCGM land divestment strategies will become more prominent. Divestment from mine-owned and -leased land, and long-term land use and management, were identified as high priority issues for most Lake Cowal landholders and Indigenous respondents.

Decommissioning
Decommissioning impacts were not assessed as a high risk to the social environment of the study area. Barrick maintains an extensive closure plan which is designed to manage physical decommissioning impacts and site rehabilitation (compliant with approval consent conditions and International Council on Mining and Metals principles).
Executive summary

Planning and preparation
The social impacts of closure identified above indicate a need for adjustments to local business, social infrastructure and public governance arrangements. Bland Shire Council is centrally placed, with the support of Barrick, to assume responsibility for leadership and coordination through this change. Little formal planning, or engagement with Barrick, on BCGM closure has occurred to date in government, business or community sectors.

Social performance

Community relations and engagement
Barrick engages closely with community stakeholders. Through the Social Management Plan and the Community Environmental Monitoring and Consultative Committee, Barrick actively monitors and manages social impacts to ensure compliance with development consent conditions. Further, Barrick maintains close relationships with local governments and community organisations to ensure that the benefits of community development programs are maximised. Some opportunities to engage more closely with local businesses and non-Native Title Traditional Owner groups remain.

Community investment
Barrick’s community investment activities are a key mechanism by which study area residents are made aware of, and engage with, BCGM. Virtually all respondents, across all stakeholder categories, reported a strong awareness of Barrick’s various community investment programs. There is strong agreement that these programs deliver benefit to local communities, and provide some degree of personal benefit within the stakeholder’s family or social networks.

Beneficiaries of BCGM community development programs generally believe they are administered effectively and equitably.

Trust and certainty
This SIA reveals a generally positive regard for the presence of BCGM across study area communities. The clear economic and employment benefits are the overriding factor to the balance of community perceptions about the mine, and Barrick community engagement and investment programs provide a sense to most that Barrick is a good neighbour.

Various alternative viewpoints suggest that for all these benefits, a lack of trust for Barrick remains within a small portion of the community. This relates primarily to noise and blasting impacts and uncertainty about Barrick’s long-term plans.

Social impact management
Barrick manages social impacts through the Social Management Plan. This plan is governed under the BCGM Community, Health, Environmental, Safety and Security Committee (chaired by the General Manager). Barrick’s commitments to social impact mitigation under all SMP programs are detailed in the Social Obligations Register, and are subject to monitoring and reporting procedures. The physical and environmental impacts of BCGM operations are controlled under NSW Government development consent conditions.
Executive summary

Most Lake Cowal landholders consulted for this study accepted that BCGM generally operates in compliance with consent condition limits relating to noise, vibration and visual impacts, but nonetheless suggested that their quality of life had been reduced. This had come about due in part to a lack of input to, or understanding of, regulatory processes by which the conditions were set.

Recommendations

URS recommends that Barrick:

1. Initiate a strategic communication forum with local, NSW and Australian government elected representatives to support an ongoing dialogue on the potential social impacts of BCGM closure as outlined in this report
2. Investigate, develop and incorporate social closure goals and impact management strategies into the Cowal Gold Mine Closure Plan.
Introduction

1.1 Purpose
Barrick (Cowal) Ltd commissioned URS Australia to conduct the Barrick Cowal Gold Mine Social Impact Assessment 2013 (“the SIA” or “the study”) between January and August 2013.

URS assessed the social impacts of the Barrick Cowal Gold Mine to date, and identified potential mine closure impacts together with strategic options for Barrick to plan for the management of these impacts. The SIA also contributed to Barrick’s compliance with the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) Sustainable Development Framework.

This report was prepared by URS Australia (URS) to document the findings of the SIA.

1.2 Background
Barrick Cowal Gold Mine (BCGM or “the mine”) is an open-cut gold mine in the Bland Shire, New South Wales (NSW). Barrick acquired the undeveloped Cowal Gold Mine project as part of a merger with Homestake Mining in 2001. New South Wales Government development consent and environmental management plans were in force at that time.¹

As per its corporate policies on community relations and stakeholder engagement, Barrick undertook community engagement and environmental planning during construction of the project from early 2004, and has maintained a community development program throughout mining and processing operations since then (outlined in Section 7). BCGM community development activities are administered by the Community Relations Manager.

This SIA was commissioned in 2013 to progress BCGM’s community relations program. It progresses Barrick’s commitment to ICMM and other relevant international standards on mining and corporate social responsibility and provides an evidence basis for Barrick’s ongoing planning and approval activities. Further, it aims to ensure that Barrick’s community development programs remain responsive to community needs.

The SIA will support Barrick and its host communities to maintain a strong awareness of impact management and closure planning issues throughout the life-cycle of the mine.

1.3 Social Impact Assessment
Social impact assessment is concisely defined by Ziller (2012, p. xiv) as “a process to estimate in advance the likely social consequences of a decision or action ... The aim of social impact assessment is to achieve better outcomes and avoid adverse outcomes”.

In the context of the current SIA, the “decision or action” refers to the construction, operation and eventual closure of the BCGM. The “likely social consequences” are those changes in the surrounding community that are attributable in whole or part to the existence of the mine. The assessment enables the identification of mitigation measures and community development activities (social impact management planning) that ensure those changes are acceptable to, and benefit where possible, the community.

¹ A more detailed project history is provided in Section 2.
1 Introduction

According to Ziller’s definition, SIA is typically conducted in advance of a project or policy change, in order to inform ongoing planning and design. The data and knowledge gathered via SIA can also then be used as a framework by which the social performance of the project might be evaluated during operation or after closure. The current SIA contains elements of both of these activities. Conclusions generated as part of an initial Environmental Impact Statement (“the EIS”, see below) at the approvals stage provides a framework by which the social impacts of the mine to date can be measured, and new research enables further assessment of social impacts (and management thereof) across the mine’s remaining operational and closure phases. These dual objectives are consistent with accepted social assessment practice and provide Barrick with a valuable opportunity to invest in its corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Socioeconomics and Multicriteria Analysis
As part of the initial Cowal Gold Project EIS (1997), the Centre for International Economics (CIE) was commissioned to undertake a socio-economic study of Bland Shire. Through the Socioeconomics and Multicriteria Analysis (Appendix K to the EIS report) CIE examined socio-economic trends in West Wyalong and the broader Bland Shire area in light of “with mine” and “without mine” scenarios.

The Socioeconomics and Multicriteria Analysis provides a useful benchmark of social conditions prior to the development of the mine. A summary of findings as they related to the current study is adapted from this work and provided at Appendix D.

1.4 Recommendations
In accordance with Barrick’s request for proposal (RFP), URS has supplied recommendations (Section 8) addressing key conclusions throughout this report. Recommendations are focused on:

- Strategic closure management in partnership with key stakeholders
- Formalisation and communication of Barrick’s social closure planning.

Recommendations are designed to promote Barrick’s compliance with the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework.
Project description: Barrick Cowal Gold Mine

2.1 Project history

BCGM is owned and operated by Barrick (Cowal) Limited (Barrick). Development consent for the mine was issued by the NSW Government in March 1999.

In 1981 North Limited (North) commenced exploration along the western side of Lake Cowal and sought the first development approval for a mine in 1995. During this process, Northparkes Mine (also owned by North) was involved in a highly publicised cyanide related incident. A significant number of water birds were killed in that project’s tailings impoundment. Following this incident, North, and in particular the Cowal Gold project, were subjected to global scrutiny by protestors and conservation groups opposed to the proposed development. The event led to the initial refusal of development consent for the Cowal Gold Project by the Director General of the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP) early in 1996.

North submitted a revised EIS and new development application in November 1998. After two sittings of the Commission of Inquiry, the Director General of DUAP granted the development consent on 18 March 1999.

North was acquired by Rio Tinto in 2000, which subsequently sold the project to Homestake Australia Limited (Homestake). In December 2001, Barrick Gold of Australia Limited acquired Homestake and its operating subsidiaries, including the Cowal Gold Project.

Following community engagement and environmental planning processes, Barrick commenced construction of BCGM on 12 January 2004. Mining operations commenced in April 2005. First gold was poured in April 2006 and the mine had its official opening in September 2006. BCGM is approved to mine approximately 99 Mt of ore and produce a total of approximately 3.1 million ounces of gold over a 15 year period.

Under current approvals, BCGM mining operations will cease in 2017 and processing operations will cease in approximately 2021.

2.2 Physical infrastructure

BCGM is located at Lake Cowal, approximately 32 km north-east of West Wyalong, NSW. The mine site is illustrated at Plate 2-1. Major components of BCGM include:

- An open pit approximately 100 ha on the surface and 325 m deep
- A perimeter waste rock emplacement and northern and southern waste rock emplacements
- Northern and southern tailings storage facilities
- A lake protection bund
- A low grade ore stockpile
- A run-of-mine pad (ROM)
- A process plant
- Soil stockpiles
- An Internal Catchment Drainage System (including contained water storages)
- An up-catchment diversion system
- Buried mine borefield pipeline and associated pump stations
- An electricity transmission line.
2 Project description: Barrick Cowal Gold Mine

The total BCGM area and Barrick’s other rural land holdings total approximately 10,600 ha. Within that area, the mining lease (ML) encompasses approximately 2,650 ha. Approximately 4,600 ha (43%) of Barrick-owned land is situated within Lake Cowal, an ephemeral lake fed by its major tributary, Bland Creek, and by the south-westerly flood flows from the Lachlan River. The eastern boundary of Barrick-owned land is located along the approximate north/south centreline of Lake Cowal. The western boundary primarily follows the West Wyalong Burche Railway with the boundary in the south-west crossing over the railway.

Barrick maintains a stock of around 100 residential properties in Bland Shire (owned or leased) for the accommodation of workers and contractors.

Plate 2-1 Aerial view of Barrick Cowal Gold Mine (from the north-east, March 2012)

Source: Barrick

2.3 Mining operations

The mining method utilised at BCGM is typical of open pit mining operations throughout Australia and the world. Waste rock (i.e. rock containing no commercial gold) and ore (i.e. rock containing commercially viable quantities of gold) is broken through a routine sequence of in-pit drilling and blasting. Broken rock is loaded into large rear dump trucks using hydraulic excavators and is then hauled from the pit to be placed within the dedicated waste rock emplacements or, in the case of ore, direct to the primary crusher (adjacent to the process plant), ROM pad, or to the low grade ore stockpile. Mining in the open pit occurs in stages as the pit is widened and progressively deepened.
Project description: Barrick Cowal Gold Mine

Dewatering of the open pit is undertaken via a series of bores, with the resulting water used in ore processing.

The mobile equipment fleet used for ore extraction, waste rock handling and tailings storage facility lift construction includes hydraulic excavators, haul trucks, dozers, loaders, water trucks, dump trucks, scrapers, compactor, graders and drill rigs.

Gold is extracted from the ore using a conventional carbon-in-leach cyanide leaching circuit in the process plant. Tailings are delivered from the process plant via a pipeline for storage in two tailings storage facilities located approximately 3.5 km west of the Lake Cowal shoreline, and tailings water is reclaimed for use within the process plant. Figure 2-1 indicates the BCGM Mining Lease boundary in relation to Lake Cowal and the surrounding social environment.

2.4 Environmental and social management

Lake Cowal forms part of a large ephemeral inland wetland system in the Lachlan Catchment. The lake is approximately 14 km long and 8 km wide with average depths of up to 2 meters when full. When the lake is full, significant concentrations of water birds visit and the Australian Heritage Commission listed Lake Cowal on the Register of the National Estate in 1992. The BCGM open-cut pit extends into the south-western portion of the lake behind protective earth bunds.

The majority of Barrick-owned land is cleared grazing and cropping land, currently leased in part to local landholders engaged in agricultural production. This land includes a majority of the lake area which consists of freehold land and has been used for intensive cropping and stock grazing (when dry) for over 100 years.

Prior to the grant of the development consent in 1999, two State Government Commissions of Inquiry sought public comment and conducted rigorous examinations of the potential environmental impacts of mine construction and operation. The Commissions of Inquiry concluded that the project could be developed and operated in a manner that was compatible with the environmental values of Lake Cowal.

Development consent conditions

Development consent for the Cowal Gold project includes a number of conditions designed to protect the environment and amenity of the community, and to provide for environmental monitoring and reporting of the mine’s performance. Development consent conditions govern environmental impact management including noise, vibration, traffic and land acquisition.

Influential aspects of government approval include:

- The Native Title Agreement
- The establishment of an Environmental Trust supported by a number of NSW conservation groups, as requested by the NSW Government
- The development consent conditions
2 Project description: Barrick Cowal Gold Mine

Figure 2-1  Barrick Cowal Gold Mine Mining Lease boundary
2 Project description: Barrick Cowal Gold Mine

Barrick reports on compliance with development consent conditions annually to a range of NSW Government agencies.

Barrick manages social impacts (as well as associated environmental impacts) through the Social Management Plan (SMP). This plan is governed under the BCGM Community, Health, Environmental, Safety and Security Committee (CHESS, chaired by the General Manager). Barrick’s commitments to social impact mitigation under all SMP programs are detailed in the Social Obligations Register, and are subject to monitoring and reporting procedures.

2.5 Native Title

Lake Cowal is situated in Wiradjuri country. In 2002 three Wiradjuri groups lodged Native Title Claims for the area on which the mine is located. The claims were made in response to Section 29 Notices issued by Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) as required by the Native Title (New South Wales) Act 1994 (the NT Act).

Two claims submitted by the Mooka family on behalf of their family unit were declined by the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT). A claim by the Wiradjuri Council of Elders on behalf of the Condobolin community was registered by the NNTT. This entitled the Registered Claimants to negotiate with Barrick to agree on a position where they might give their consent to the development of BCGM. After negotiations were completed, a Native Title Agreement (the Cowal Gold Project Ancillary Deed (MLA 45), “the Native Title Agreement”) was finalised on 15 April 2003. This allowed the NSW Government, through DMR, to grant Barrick a Mining Lease (ML) to enable construction and mining to commence.

2.6 Workforce management

BCGM operates seven days per week, 24 hours per day. Personnel work on a shift basis with two twelve hour shifts worked in each 24 hour period (shifts starting at 6.00 am and 6.00 pm). The total workforce comprising both Barrick personnel and contractors is approximately 385 on average and approximately 435 personnel during peak periods. Personnel commuting from or through West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin are encouraged to make use of Barrick-provided bus services at each shift. Site-specific BCGM workforce management practices, including in relation to conduct, accommodation and transport, are administered under various management plans.
Method

3.1 Approach

Broad direction for the current study was set by Barrick prior to the appointment of URS. Barrick’s RFP provided direction on stakeholder selection, stakeholder engagement, lines of enquiry, practice standards and analytical approaches. These parameters were designed to progress Barrick’s corporate Community Relations Policy and subordinate local strategies. The SIA was designed to comply with Barrick’s own policies for conducting SIAs.

In response to Barrick’s RFP, URS drew on relevant national and international standards, as well as conventional social assessment practice, to refine an appropriate research design.

Community consultation constituted the primary data source and was supported with relevant secondary research and intelligence drawn from local government and community planning documents. The assessment of social impacts drew on conventional risk management methodologies. Conclusions include details of each social impact deemed to be “significant” and an account of Barrick’s social performance. All phases of the study are documented appropriately within this report.

The key elements and logic of this methodological approach are outlined at Figure 3-1 and are explained further below.

Figure 3-1 SIA approach

3.2 Study area

3.2.1 Primary impact area

The primary SIA impact area incorporates the Lake Cowal area immediately surrounding BCGM, and the town of West Wyalong. These non-contiguous areas are almost entirely contained within Bland...
3 Method

Shire, NSW, with the exception of some landholdings on the eastern side of Lake Cowal that are within Forbes Shire.

The vicinity of Lake Cowal (excluding the BCGM MLA) consists exclusively of farms and agricultural production areas. It contains those farms which are immediately adjacent to BCGM and nearby mine access routes, including farms which are physically exposed to the mine’s noise, vibration, blast and light emissions. The Lake Cowal portion of the primary study area includes working farms inhabited by resident landholders, within an approximate radius of 12 km from the mine pit. There are numerous other landholdings in the Lake Cowal area outside this radius.

The town of West Wyalong is included in the primary impact area because its close proximity means it is the dominant workforce and economic centre servicing BCGM. West Wyalong is approximately 40 km to the south of the mine and is well outside the mine’s immediate physical impact area (i.e. noise, vibration and visual impacts). Approximately 68% of BCGM employees reside within and around West Wyalong and it provides the closest accommodation for BCGM visitors and contractors.

3.2.2 Wider impact area

The wider impact area is defined by the external boundaries of the (adjacent) Bland, Lachlan and Forbes Shires, NSW. This area includes a large majority of Barrick Cowal’s key community stakeholders (identified in the BCGM Stakeholder Engagement Plan) and is home to 88.6% of BCGM employees.

In addition to West Wyalong, the wider impact area includes the towns of Condobolin and Forbes. Both towns also maintain significant employment and economic relationships with the mine. The Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC, operating on behalf of the Native Title Claimants, and BCGM’s primary Indigenous stakeholder) is based in Condobolin. Smaller rural villages are scattered through the wider impact area. The landscape is otherwise dominated by grain and sheep farms, bushland, wetlands and open space.

Both primary and wider impact areas are indicated at Figure 3-2. Together, these areas are referred to as the “study area” throughout this report.
3 Method

Figure 3-2 BCGM SIA 2013 primary and wider impact areas
3 Method

3.3 Desktop research

Desktop research informed all elements of the SIA including the stakeholder engagement program, impact assessment, evaluative elements and recommendations.

Section 4 (Social environment) summarises relevant background research and is based primarily on socio-demographic data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and other Australian Government and NSW Government agencies. All data is current to the report release date. The report draws further on planning studies, research, media reports and other material relevant to the study area. All sources are attributed appropriately.

Local Government Area ERP revisions

Annual population analysis in Bland Shire is somewhat complicated by pending revisions to historical ABS estimated resident populations (ERP) following the 2011 census. ERP figures for 2011 and 2012 show high variability in relation to earlier years, suggesting some risk that trend analysis could be confounded for these years. New LGA data will be released in 2013.2

For the purposes of this report, the potential effects of ERP revisions (and associated 2011–12 ERP data) are disregarded in order to enable a coherent focus on broad, medium-term trends. While the absolute annual population figures quoted herein will be revised, the wider picture of change is likely to remain accurate.

3.4 Stakeholder engagement

3.4.1 Key stakeholders

Following Barrick’s brief, the SIA stakeholder engagement program centred on consultation with key stakeholders such as local services providers, community and business networks and local and state government representatives. They were identified early in the study through two channels:

- Barrick Cowal Social Management Plan (SMP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
- Broad analysis of relevant community and social infrastructure networks.

While key stakeholders were approached in their professional capacities, consultation content was managed flexibly in recognition of the dual professional and resident roles most respondents play in the target community.

In recognition of their unique relationship with the mine, neighbouring landholders were identified from the outset as a key stakeholder group. Landholders were consulted through a representative group selected informally by Barrick for their broad spread of viewpoints and willingness to participate (two other current and former landholders participated voluntarily in response to SIA promotional material).

The primary benefits of consulting via key stakeholders were:

- Access to strong intelligence about local communities and the impacts of BCGM upon them, drawn from their professional roles and experience

2For further information about Local Government Area ERP revisions, refer to http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/3101.0Feature%20Article3Jun%202012?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=3101.0&issue=Jun%202012&num=&view=
3 Method

- Representative understandings of wider community attitudes and behaviours via their central involvement in formal and informal community networks.

Key stakeholders provided a significant majority of the community consultation data set and established strong lines of enquiry for wider community consultations and research. They are summarised at Table 3-1.

Table 3-1  Key stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder type</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Date/s of contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landholder</td>
<td>(Private resident)</td>
<td>15/04/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landholder</td>
<td>(Private resident)</td>
<td>17/04/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landholder</td>
<td>(Private resident)</td>
<td>5/03/2013, 16/04/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>CEMCC</td>
<td>5/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Business West Wyalong</td>
<td>16/04/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous (Native Title)</td>
<td>Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation</td>
<td>4/03/2013, 20/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous (Non-NT)</td>
<td>West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council</td>
<td>6/03/2013, 15/04/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Riverina TAFE</td>
<td>6/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Forbes Shire High School</td>
<td>19/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Forbes Shire Council</td>
<td>19/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Condobolin High School</td>
<td>20/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Lachlan Shire Council</td>
<td>20/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Condobolin Hospital and Community Health</td>
<td>20/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>West Wyalong High School</td>
<td>16/04/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Murrumbidgee Local Health District</td>
<td>17/04/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>NSW Police, West Wyalong</td>
<td>23/05/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Bland Shire Council</td>
<td>6/03/2013, 15/04/2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.2 Other stakeholders

URS consulted more widely with other business operators and service providers across the study area. Wider community input to the study was invited through advertisement in local newspapers through May and June 2013 including the West Wyalong Advocate, the Forbes Advocate and the Condobolin Argus. The print ad is reproduced at Appendix B. Unplanned coverage of the study in the ABC Local News (Central West radio) and online\(^3\) provided further beneficial exposure and elicited a small number of responses. Aside from landholders, no consultation was actively initiated with private residents and community members. Limitations inherent to this approach are outlined at Section 3.6.

3.4.3 Stakeholder engagement summary

In total, URS consulted with 36 discrete stakeholder groups, incorporating the participation of approximately 47 individuals. Of these, 17 were identified as key stakeholders and the remainder were approached in the course of the study or responded to the newspaper ad or media coverage. Key stakeholder metrics are summarised at Table 3-2.

3 Method

### Table 3-2 Stakeholder engagement summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total stakeholder groups</th>
<th>Key stakeholders</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder category</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community organisations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landholder</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Cowal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes (town)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other study area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual respondents</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.4.4 Engagement approach and formats

URS initially engaged with the target community via discussion with the Cowal Gold Mine Community Environmental Monitoring and Consultative Committee (CEMCC, sponsored by BCGM) on 5 March 2013. The CEMCC is the primary community consultative mechanism employed by BCGM and includes landholders, government representatives, residents and relevant BCGM staff. This forum provided access to other key stakeholders including local landholders, Bland, Lachlan and Forbes Shire Councils, the Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation and the West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council. URS sought initial advice from the CEMCC in order to confirm and expand the key stakeholder list and identify key lines of enquiry for further consultations.

Stakeholder consultation generally took the form of semi-structured interviews (the interview question sheet is reproduced at Appendix F), supported by a written SIA project summary. Interviews were principally conducted face to face with respondents according to the schedule of field work identified at Table 3-3. Further interviews were conducted where necessary by telephone throughout the stakeholder engagement phase.

To the extent possible, interviews were scheduled at times convenient to respondents, including outside business hours if required. Stakeholder participation was supported with sensitive and competent consultation formats and locations. URS informed all participating stakeholders of further opportunities to communicate with Barrick Cowal and the SIA project, how personal community consultation data records would be used and could be accessed later, and how feedback and follow-up information could be obtained.
3 Method

Table 3-3  Schedule of field work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Stakeholder engagement activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03–06/03/2013</td>
<td>West Wyalong Condobolin</td>
<td>Face to face interviews with representatives of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• CEMCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Bland Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19–21/03/2013</td>
<td>Forbes Condobolin</td>
<td>Face to face interviews with:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Other government, community and business stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14–17/04/2013</td>
<td>West Wyalong</td>
<td>Face to face interviews with:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Landholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Other key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Other government and business stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04–06/06/2013</td>
<td>West Wyalong</td>
<td>Preliminary results/feedback sessions with:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Bland Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• CEMCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Face to face meetings with:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Other government, community and business stakeholders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.5  Community consultation data

The resulting body of community consultation data constituted the primary data source by which the social impacts of the BCGM and Barrick’s social performance were assessed. While some poorly-evidenced or otherwise problematic statements were disregarded, URS has attempted to faithfully address or represent all relevant community consultation data in this report in the interests of transparency and good practice. A confidentialised summary of consultation data was submitted to Barrick alongside this report and is not considered a public document. All respondents were offered a written record of their contributions at their option (this option had been taken up by one respondent at publication).

3.5  Impact assessment framework

URS considered all collated quantitative and qualitative data to make an assessment of social impacts of the BCGM to date. Consideration of the historical context in which the change has occurred, together with a sound understanding of the impact causality were central factors in assessing which observed impacts can be attributed directly or in part to the BCGM operations. The assessment was largely deliberative and qualitative in nature, with all analytical frameworks, evidence, reasoning and judgements structured to:

- Allow for comprehension and replication of the analytical approach
- Maximise the reliability and validity of any conclusions drawn
- Maintain objectivity, transparency and accountability.

An inclusive list of social impacts was developed under broad themes derived from coded baseline and community consultation data (these themes also define the reporting structure at Section 5). This
3 Method

follows conventional qualitative research principles. Impacts were assessed qualitatively under the factors outlined at Table 3-4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3-4 Social impact assessment factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Direction | • Positive  
• Neutral  
• Negative | • Respondent attitudes and values  
• Distribution of benefits across stakeholder groups  
• Literature review |
| Significance | • Low  
• Medium  
• High  
• Very high  
• Extreme | • Risk assessment methodology as per conventional SIA practice (Appendix E)  
• Matrix assessment by “likelihood” and “consequence”  
• Assessed according to:  
  — Respondent attitudes and values  
  — Consistency of respondents’ reports  
  — Size/vulnerability of receptor group  
  — Quantitative/other evidence  
  — Analogous examples  
  — Normative standards  
  — Literature review |
| Project phase | • Construction (CO)  
• Operation (OP)  
• Closure (CL)  
• Life of mine (LOM) | • Respondent reports  
• BCGM operational data and information |
| Impact duration | • Temporary  
• Permanent | • Respondent reports  
• BCGM operational data and information  
• Literature review |
| Primary receptors | • Lake Cowal Landholders  
• West Wyalong (individuals, families, community)  
• Wider study area (individuals, families, community)  
• (Specified further where necessary) | • Respondent reports  
• Distribution of benefits across stakeholder groups  
• Sociological theory |
| Controls | Formal Barrick procedures, plans, strategies and policies specific to assessed impact | Limited to Barrick’s formal Social Management Plan actions summarised and broadly assessed at Section 7 |

**Significance**

All identified social impacts were assessed for significance by ascertaining the likelihood and consequence of each. This assessment follows broad risk assessment principles according to accepted SIA practice and was informed primarily by qualitative analysis of community consultation data. Other evidence (quantitative data, government statistics and secondary research) and sociological theory were used to triangulate the assessment where possible. The risk-based significance assessment matrix is reproduced at Appendix E.

**Reporting**

Section 5 summarises all identified social impacts assessed according to the factors outlined above (in summary tables), with relevant community consultation findings, analytical commentary and other evidence supplied. Transparent rationales for impact assessments are provided throughout.
3 Method

3.6 Methodological limitations

This study draws primarily on key stakeholder consultations (identified by Barrick Cowal and URS at the project scoping stage) and did not include public consultation techniques such as public meetings, focus groups, or a random sample community survey.

The limited number of stakeholders means certain points of data, analysis and conclusion may potentially be traced to individuals within the Lake Cowal area. URS controlled this risk by confidentialising published data and quotes, and keeping analysis and conclusions at a general or generic level (this reduces the sensitivity of analysis to some degree). Special care was taken where comments and opinions are particularly or uniquely characteristic of any individual. Study participants were informed of this risk and the mitigation approach.

As the study does not constitute scientifically controlled research, conclusions around causality and correlation are modest and appropriate to the stated objectives of the study. Recommendations are conservative. Research outcomes may contribute to further theorising and research in related fields, but are not intended for application as empirical evidence beyond the stated objectives.
Social environment

This section outlines relevant socioeconomic data about the study area. Its main purposes are:

- To provide a broad understanding of the study area socioeconomic environment prior to the development of BCGM and how this has changed over time
- To provide context to the social impact analysis at Section 5.

A further purpose of Section 4 is to comment on relevant findings of Appendix K: Socioeconomics and Multicriteria Analysis to the Cowal Gold Project EIS (Centre for International Economics, 1997). As most quantitative analysis within that work is not replicable under the current project scope, concise adaptations of key conclusions are assessed qualitatively where possible (these are summarised at Appendix D). EIS conclusions were limited to Bland Shire as per the terms of reference for that work.

4.1 Population

At 30 June 2012, the total study area population was 22,361 persons. Table 4-1 shows study area populations for LGAs and urban centres.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Centre/Locality</th>
<th>ERP 2011</th>
<th>% Study area total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong/Wyalong</td>
<td>3,183</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>6,806</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin</td>
<td>2,755</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire</td>
<td>6,049</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Shire</td>
<td>9,523</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan Shire</td>
<td>6,789</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study area total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22,361</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS, 2012c; 2011a

As noted in the initial 1997 EIS, population decline has been evident across the wider study area since the 1960s (CIE, 1997). ABS statistics (Figure 4-1) show the total population of the three study area LGAs was 22,361 persons at 2012, after declining from 24,660 at 1996 (ABS, 2012c). In the years prior to mine construction and after the initial EIS (1997 to 2001) the average annual rate of population decline was 0.25 per cent. From mine construction to present, the rate of decline has increased to 0.76 per cent, with an average population decline over the entire period of 0.61 per cent.

While this trend counters the sustained population growth for New South Wales over the period, it is consistent with rural Australian trends noted by Hugo (2012). This prevailing population decline is closely associated with a long background of rural “decline” or “hardship” across the study area, attributable to both the effects of a long-term drought through the early 2000’s and a less conspicuous effect of industry restructure (whereby the purchase of local farmland by large-scale agricultural firms is seen to result in the loss of local jobs and supply contracts). The effect is henceforth referred to as “rural decline” in deference to the terminology employed by many community consultation respondents.

4 Please see Section 3.3 for a discussion of recent study area ERP changes.
4 Social environment

Figure 4-1  Study area population

![Graph showing Study area population over time with Design-construction and Operation phases highlighted.]

* p = preliminary  r = revised
Source: ABS, 2012c

Figure 4-2 demonstrates annual rates of population change across the study area, and provides comparisons with NSW. While the most rapid study area population decline appears to coincide with the design and construction phase of BCGM, it also occurs in a period of wider downturn in population growth across NSW through the same period.

Figure 4-2  Average annual population change 1997–2011

![Graph showing average annual population change with Design-construction and Operation phases highlighted.]

* p = preliminary  r = revised
Source: ABS, 2012c

ERPs for most LGA and urban centre/localities (UCLs) in the study area have continually declined (Table 4-2). The most rapid decline is shown in West Wyalong, while in Forbes the decline has been slower.
4 Social environment

Table 4-2  Average annual population change, small areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong</td>
<td>-0.86%</td>
<td>-3.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin</td>
<td>-1.38%</td>
<td>-0.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>-0.42%</td>
<td>-0.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>-0.14%</td>
<td>-0.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>-0.44%</td>
<td>-0.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan</td>
<td>-0.07%</td>
<td>-1.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study area</td>
<td>-0.25%</td>
<td>-1.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NSW</strong></td>
<td>1.17%</td>
<td>0.72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS, 2012c; 2011a

Components of population change

The components of population change for the study area since 2001 are shown in Figure 4-3. From these data it is clear that population loss in the study area is attributable to net migration losses. While finer migration data are not routinely available for LGAs, it is highly likely that a large portion of this migration is in young and working age people. With a sustained high Total Fertility Rate (TFR) well in excess of the replacement level (about 2.1) and the NSW average, (Figure 4-4), the study area has shown consistent natural increases since 2001 and this effect has offset net migration losses to some degree. A TFR upswing since 2006 is likely to signify an effect of changing workforce patterns related to BCGM (i.e. family retention), but should be read with caution due to the low study area population. Births data are discussed further in relation to BCGM impacts at Section 5.2.4.

Figure 4-3  Components of population change

Source: ABS, 2012a; 2012b; 2012c
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Figure 4.4  Total fertility rates

![Graph showing total fertility rates](image)

Source: ABS, 2012a

Age and sex
The study area age and sex profile indicates a considerable deficit in young working age groups in relation to the NSW average (Figure 4.5). In 2001, this deficit was most visible in the 20–24 years and 25–34 years age groups. The 2011 age profile suggests that:

- The youth flight effect is continuing (with a deficit visible in the new 20–24 years cohort)
- The earlier “deficit” population had not returned (with the 2001 cohort effect now visible in the 35–44 years age group)
- While the study area maintains a relatively high proportion of children (aged 0–14 years), in absolute terms the population in this age group fell by 880 persons or 16% between 2001 and 2011.

Figure 4.5  Age in years by sex, 2001 and 2011

![Bar chart showing age distribution by sex](image)

Source: ABS, 2011a
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The loss of young working age people was common to all study area LGAs between 2001 and 2011 and totalled 481 young people (or 12.9 per cent) over the period (Table 4-3).

Table 4-3  Population aged 20–34 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% total popn.</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% total popn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Shire</td>
<td>1,561</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1,325</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan Shire</td>
<td>1,227</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study area</td>
<td>3,735</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3,254</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>1,348,010</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>1,411,896</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS, 2011a

The EIS (CIE, 1997) concluded that construction of BCMG would have the effect of slowing population decline in Bland Shire, particularly in the younger working age group. It is reasonable to assume that this conclusion might have applied across the current study area. Population data suggest that while this effect is evident, it is largely constrained to the years since 2009 and that population decline actually accelerated to some degree prior to that.

Populations in the young working age group have not increased as projected in the EIS. As is typical of most nearby central-western NSW LGAs, they have in fact declined across the study area.

4.2 Economy

4.2.1 Median individual income

All LGAs within the study region show lower median incomes than NSW. In 2011, study area LGA median weekly incomes (not adjusted for inflation) averaged around 82 per cent of the NSW median (Table 4-4). While this comparison had improved for both Bland and Forbes Shires between 2001 and 2011, it fell for Lachlan. Bland Shire’s median individual weekly income rose the greatest in nominal terms ($65/week, compared to $32 in Lachlan and $58 in Forbes Shire).

Table 4-4  Nominal median individual weekly income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2001 ($)</th>
<th>% NSW</th>
<th>2011 ($)</th>
<th>% NSW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan Shire</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>79.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Shire</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS, 2011a; 2001

Unemployment rates in all LGAs within the study region have typically remained below equivalent NSW rates in the last decade. Bland Shire’s unemployment rate has remained particularly low in that

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5 According to time series data for Carrathool, Cowra, Parkes and Temora (ABS, 2011d)
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period (as noted by CIE, 1997). Unemployment rates in the other study area LGAs have remained closer to the state average, although variability over time seems closely aligned within the study area. Unemployment rates in Bland Shire remain below those predicted in the EIS.

Figure 4-6 Unemployment rate, quarterly

Source: ABS, 2013c

4.2.2 Industry

Agriculture has historically been a base industry across the study area LGAs and remains the largest source of employment (Figure 4-7). Consistent with the rural decline effects noted above, agricultural employment has continued to contract throughout the study area. This is consistent with nationwide trends, and was clearly noted in the EIS (CIE, 1997). Since 2001, Bland Shire has seen a large proportional decline in agricultural employment and an almost identical increase in mining employment (Table 4-5). Forbes and Lachlan have experienced smaller declines in agricultural employment.

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6 CIE cautioned against the validity of the official unemployment rate in the EIS, noting an effect of "exported" unemployment related to net migration losses in young people.
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Figure 4-7  Industries of employment, study area

Table 4-5  Industry of employment, key changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Shire</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan Shire</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS, 2011d

4.2.3 Agricultural business

The population decline and reduction in the agricultural sector as an employer is closely related to an ongoing trend in study area farm amalgamations identified in the EIS. This effect is by no means particular to the study area. It is a nationwide rural trend by which changes in farming technology and practices and international economic conditions have led to increased farm sizes and reduced employment per hectare (Australian Government, 2011). As a consequence, the number of agricultural businesses has declined across the study area while the acreage per business has increased, as shown in Figure 4-8.
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Figure 4-8  Agriculture businesses, counts and average size

![Graph showing the number of businesses and average acres per business over time in Bland, Forbes, and Lachlan areas.](image)

Note: Data for 2006 is unavailable.
Source: ABS, 2013a; 2013d

4.2.4 Housing tenure

Between 2001 and 2011, a substantial reduction in outright home ownership across the study area and NSW (as a proportion of total private dwellings) was offset by an increase in mortgages such that total home ownership rates increased slightly. The study area housing tenure profile was generally similar to that of NSW in 2011, though the proportion of privately owned dwellings under mortgage was lower (Figure 4-9).

Figure 4-9  Tenure and landlord types (occupied private dwellings)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owned</th>
<th>Mortgaged</th>
<th>Rented: private</th>
<th>Public and social housing</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS, 2011a
4 Social environment

4.3 Human services

4.3.1 Health services
West Wyalong is provided with public medical care by the Murrumbidgee Local Health District. The primary provider of acute and sub-acute care in West Wyalong is the West Wyalong Hospital, a 22 bed health facility. The hospital primarily deals with emergency care; for example, all patients between July 2010 and June 2011 were emergency admissions (National Health Performance Authority, 2013).

The availability of local medical services in Bland has declined somewhat since the initial Cowal Gold Project EIS was conducted in 1997. As was noted in the EIS, the hospital struggles to attract necessary medical staff to operate the services, and population declines have put pressure on the availability of (population-benchmarked) local medical services.

Doctors and dentists
West Wyalong is serviced by four doctors via the West Wyalong Medical Centre and Bland Medical Centre. This equates to approximately 66 GPs per 100,000 persons which is slightly more than half the national average of 112 (Primary Health Care Research & Information Service, 2011). The doctors, although working in private practices are also on call for emergencies at West Wyalong Hospital. The waiting period for general appointments is reported as one to two days.

West Wyalong has historically struggled to attract and retain medical staff. To support the established medical centres, Bland Council has provided $50,000 annually since 2008.

Condobolin’s sole private medical provider is the Melrose Street Medical Centre, a facility which is serviced by one full-time doctor and a locum practitioner. The Centre has struggled to maintain full-time opening hours in recent times, due to difficulties in retaining a full time doctor (Geiger, 2011).

Forbes, with its larger population base, has a considerable private medical presence, with two medical centres operating. The Forbes Medical Centre has 12 doctors and the Inland Medical Centre has two. Both report low waiting times of around one to two days.

West Wyalong has a single dental surgery and includes a (part-time) dentist and hygienist as staff. According to discussions with the dental practice, all emergencies are able to be seen on the day they occur. However, the waiting period for general appointments can extend to up to three weeks. Forbes has one dental surgery, which is only open part time and has waiting periods of up to three weeks aside from emergencies.

4.3.2 Education
West Wyalong High School is the sole high school in Bland Shire. At the time of the EIS, the school was experiencing a decline in enrolment numbers. This was particularly noticeable between the periods of 1992 and 1996, where there was a reduction in student numbers of around 9 per cent. This decline broadly matched population decline in school aged children (CIE, 1997), and continued until 2006. Since 2007, the enrolments at West Wyalong High School have levelled out and even increased marginally in some years (Figure 4-10).
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Figure 4-10 Enrolments, West Wyalong High School

In response to declining student numbers, the number of full time equivalent (FTE) teachers at the school declined in the 2003–2007 period before levelling out (Figure 4-11). The student to teacher ratio remained lower than the state average of 12.2 (ABS, 2011c) between 2003 and 2013 as is typical of rural education services. The 2007 decline in student population and teaching staff aligns almost perfectly with the decline in student population that was projected in the EIS under a “no mine” scenario, suggesting that EIS projections were somewhat optimistic.

Figure 4-11 Teaching staff and student to teacher ratio, West Wyalong High School

Six public primary schools and one private primary school currently operate in Bland Shire. Three of these are in the urban centre of West Wyalong (including West Wyalong Public School, Wyalong...
Public School and St Mary’s War Memorial). In 2012, total enrolments across these schools was 618 with student to teacher ratios typically approximate to or lower than the NSW state average of 15.9 at 2011 (ABS, 2011c).

Table 4-6  Bland Shire primary schools enrolments, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary School</th>
<th>Enrolments</th>
<th>FTE teaching staff</th>
<th>Student-teacher ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barmedman Public School</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallimba Public School</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungarie Central School</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weethalle Public School</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Public School</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyalong Public School</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s War Memorial (private)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>618</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ACARA, 2013
Social impacts

5.1 Impacts on amenity and quality of life

5.1.1 Local noise and vibration

BCGM generates continual noise and vibration primarily through the operation of blasting, vehicles, conveyor belts and processing equipment on site, and vehicle traffic accessing the site. Blasting is frequently cited by local landholders as the most significant source (by a wide margin) of noise and vibration and is intermittent (average frequency once per day, generally predictable at around 12.30pm). Other operational noise emissions are continual but vary widely by operational activities and in their impact. While one respondent to the west of the mine reported that noise emissions were worse during the construction phase at his property (due mainly to earthworks), others on the eastern side of the lake believe blasting noise has increased in the last 2 years.

Noise and vibration impacts vary according to climatic conditions. Landholders report that noise in particular is noticeably worse:

- During the night and early morning
- In Winter
- When Lake Cowal is full
- During temperature inversion conditions.

Noise impacts are reported only by landholders on properties directly adjacent to the ML area and Lake Cowal. Landholders on the east side of Lake Cowal are affected by blasting and operational noise, vibration and blast. Those to the west of the ML area are shielded from blasting in the pit by the layout of the mine, and therefore report more concern about noise from traffic (including truck exhaust and hydraulic brakes) and nearby earthworks (particularly upon the tailings dams). No noise or vibration impacts occur in any towns or villages in the study area.

In personal terms, landholders report that noise and vibration impacts are significant when they occur and contribute to:

- Sleeplessness
- Stress
- Loss of temper, annoyance, distractibility.

Two landholders believe that vibration and blast has damaged some houses and farm structures (including roofing/ceilings, concrete flooring and farm machinery), though they acknowledge that causality is difficult to establish formally.

Noise impacts of BCGM operations are rated as highly significant. This is due to the considerable change in noise conditions from previously quiet rural amenity conditions, and the unanimous landholder reports about their experiences of the impacts. Barrick is highly accountable for this impact according to development consent conditions. Barrick monitors and controls noise emissions closely in accordance with these conditions.

Noise and vibration monitoring instruments are maintained permanently in close proximity to the mine and the lake, and are deployed intermittently to receptor sites (affected farm houses). Noise limits at each receptor site are established within development conditions and Barrick reports compliance through the CEMCC and NSW Government agencies. Barrick plans mining operations (including blast
5 Social impacts

yields) to stay within noise and vibration limits at all times. Noise and vibration impacts identified above are residual to these controls.

Barrick manages close relationships with affected landholders. Barrick community relations and environmental management staff are well known to local landholders and are available to discuss noise impacts. Where direct communication does not address landholders’ concerns, the Barrick grievance mechanism applies.

5.1.2 Traffic on local roads

BCGM operations routinely generate a wide range of vehicular traffic on the local road network. This includes heavy freight and equipment vehicles, light mining operational and environmental monitoring vehicles, and the private vehicles of commuting staff and contractors to the mine. Staff members are encouraged to use Barrick-supplied bus transport from nearby centres rather than private vehicles. On average, BCGM generates approximately 460 vehicle movements each weekday, and 185 per day on weekends. Approximately 75% of these trips occur in the peak periods two hours either side of shift changes (6 am and 6 pm).

According to Barrick’s development consent conditions, heavy vehicles, staff buses and most other supply vehicles are restricted to sealed primary access roads (via Bonehams Lane, Blowclear–Lake Cowal Road and West Wyalong–Wamboyne Road) while lighter commuter and contractor vehicles may use the wider network of local unsealed roads. According to one landholder report, commuters from the directions of the townships of Forbes and Condobolin travel by unsealed local roads north of the mine.

Concerns raised in consultations with landholders related to traffic impacts include:

- Generation of dust
- Generation of noise
- Safety hazards related to speed, tight corners and poor visibility (dust)
- Reduced safety when using roads for recreational activities (cycling, walking) and stock movement due to safety issues noted above.

Section 5.5.6 contains a brief discussion of traffic offences related to BCGM.

Traffic impacts are limited to a small number of landholders to the west and north of the ML area. Minor impacts associated with general mine traffic are likely to occur along roads used more widely by suppliers to the mine but this was not raised as a particular concern by any stakeholder to the study. Some recreational and passing users of local roads may be affected by mine traffic to a minor degree.

Traffic impacts were more significant during construction and are likely to become more significant temporarily during decommissioning at closure. Otherwise traffic impacts will remain consistent across the life of the mine.

Traffic impacts are rated as highly significant due to the high volume of traffic generated by the mine in relation to baseline conditions and the consistency of stakeholder reports. Barrick is highly accountable for traffic impacts as strict traffic management forms a part of development consent conditions.

BCGM controls traffic impacts on local and district roads through compliance with development consent conditions. These confine traffic use to the limitations described above and establish a code
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of behaviour to which all staff and visitors to the mine are subject while using local and district access roads. Barrick further cooperates with West Wyalong Police to invite monitoring of the speed and safety of mine traffic.

5.1.3 Investment in local roads

At construction, Barrick provided for the following sections of road to be upgraded:

- The section of Blowclear–Lake Cowal Road between West Wyalong–Wamboyne Road and Bonehams Lane
- Bonehams Lane between Blowclear–Lake Cowal Road and the main entry to the ML area.

Both sections of road were upgraded from unsealed gravel roads to high capacity bitumen highway. Local landholders acknowledge this as a highly positive change to the local road network in terms of convenience, safety and comfort.

Other improvements to roads in the study area have been made through Barrick’s community investment program (local government funding). This benefit is addressed at Section 5.5.2. Local landholders to the north, west and south of the mine are the primary beneficiaries of local road upgrades.

Local road upgrades are rated as highly significant due to their self-evident benefit to local road users. Barrick is accountable for maintaining the safety of the road surface under conditions of frequent heavy vehicle movement. Maintenance of access roads is managed via Barrick’s contribution to local government revenues and will remain the responsibility of local governments post-closure.

5.1.4 Visual landscape value

At its current level of development, BCGM represents a significant visual modification to the natural landscape. Previously, the land adjacent to Lake Cowal was characterised by gently undulating cleared pastureland and broken scrub and bush, with a shallow shoreline at the lake’s edge.

This natural and rural landscape has been heavily modified by mine infrastructure and earthworks, appearing from a distance primarily as long earth piles and bunds up to 56 m from natural ground level and extending approximately 10 km around the mine site. From the eastern side of Lake Cowal these are clearly visible as a disruption to the continuity of the natural horizon and the otherwise uniform vegetated shoreline (Plate 5-1). From the east and from distant higher ground to the west, the operational infrastructure central to the mine is visible above the earth piles and is characteristic of a small heavy industry site in appearance. Other drilling and operational equipment is occasionally visible but is less significant.

By night, site lighting is directly visible from some surrounding perspectives. Lights are more directly visible atop earth piles and infrastructure at night from the eastern side of Lake Cowal. At times, more powerful site light sources have been temporarily visible from farms at the eastern side of the lake.

From the air, the mine is visible as a significant industrial modification to the surrounding rural landscape, with extensive exposed earth, road infrastructure and processing equipment (Plate 2-1). The mine pit extends noticeably behind thick earth bunds into the natural form of Lake Cowal when it is full. This effect is less noticeable when the lake is dry.
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Landholders report that visual impacts, including light emissions and modifications to natural landscapes, represent a loss of local amenity. This loss is mostly permanent as most earth piles will remain intact post-closure, though visible lighting and other operational equipment will be removed.

Plate 5-1 Barrick Cowal Gold Mine from the eastern side of Lake Cowal (Lake Road, April 2013)

Source: URS

Direct visual impacts are limited to a small number of landholders adjacent to Lake Cowal and the ML area. Other receptors are likely to include fishers and recreational users of the Lake and surrounds. The visual impact from the air, though significant, is not of concern to most local stakeholders. In the past, Wiradjuri Nation representatives have highlighted the symbolic effect of this visual impact (including from the air) upon a significant cultural site.

The significance of visual impacts is rated as medium. While the likelihood that the reported impacts have occurred is almost certain, the consequences of identified visual impacts are relatively minor and apply to a small number of people.

"The hill that the mine is on, I would like to see re-timbered after the mine ... what’s there at the moment isn’t very pretty." (Lake Cowal landholder)

Barrick is accountable for visual impacts through development consent conditions. These outline principles for minimising the visual impacts of built infrastructure as well as sensitive rehabilitation (including revegetation and shaping of earth piles) post-closure to retain as much natural scenic value on the site as possible.
5 Social impacts

Barrick community relations and environmental management staff are able to receive and respond to landholder's concerns about light emissions through ongoing community engagement under the SMP. Where direct communication does not address landholders’ concerns, the BCGM grievance mechanism applies.

5.1.5 Local serenity and seclusion

Most landholders reported that the privacy and serenity of the area was a particularly valuable aspect of local amenity prior to the development of the mine. This has changed since the development of the mine. Throughout its life cycle BCGM has continually generated a flow of workers and visitors to the area. At various stages these have included:

- Explorers and surveyors
- Construction workers
- Environmental scientists
- Cultural heritage advisors
- Other consultants and technicians
- Onlookers
- Recreational users
- Security
- Protestors and police officers
- Mine staff
- Mine contractors and suppliers.

Aside from the physical impacts of traffic, noise and safety hazards, this flow of people has compromised the serene and secluded nature of the area. An example of this effect was the annual environmentalist protest activity that occurred on and around the mine site throughout construction until approximately 2009. While West Wyalong Police report that the protestors did not create a significant civil disturbance, the action brought the area to the attention of national and international media and involved the locality in a global environmental discourse with which landholders had little desire to engage. In local parlance this heralded the interference of the “greenies” in the area. Protest activity has ceased in recent years.

The loss of local serenity and seclusion immediately adjacent to the mine affects the small number of landholders who live in the Lake Cowal area. It is likely to be an enduring effect as site rehabilitation, land disposal, recreational uses, environmental scrutiny and cultural heritage activities (for example) will persist after mine closure.

Decreased local serenity and seclusion is rated as a medium impact. It does not impact significantly on local livelihoods or quality of life, but represents some loss of local amenity. Barrick is not considered to be highly accountable for this impact as part of the effect is outside of Barrick’s control, and there are no specifically relevant development consent conditions. Even so, Barrick’s SMP seeks to minimise the presence of staff and visitors to the mine by limiting intrusive field work and closely managing traffic and transport. The SEP provides for close relationships between key staff and landholders which is likely to moderate perceptions of intrusion to some degree.
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5.2 Impacts on community identity and cohesion

5.2.1 Sustaining local populations

One of the most visible and wide-reaching impacts of BCGM on local communities has been a contribution to the maintenance of local populations. Stakeholders to the study from all categories and localities attested to the central role BCGM has played in slowing (though not completely arresting) the prevailing trend of population decline through the offer of employment and business opportunities.

The effect appears to be strongest in West Wyalong, which has few alternative economic base industries (and is therefore unusually exposed to rural decline) and accommodates the largest share of BCGM employees. Respondents to the study reported various specific factors associated with this maintenance of population including:

- Providing supplemental income to farmers who might otherwise be forced to leave the land
- Providing employment options for young people who might otherwise seek opportunities outside of the area
- Creating new opportunities to keep local business people in the area
- Attracting many workers with spouses and families.

Figure 5-1  Population trend, Bland Shire

\* ERP figures for 2011 and 2012 are subject to potentially significant revision as described at Section 3.3 and therefore excluded from analysis here.

Source: ABS, 2012c

Some West Wyalong respondents reported personal experiences of family members, friends and associates who have remained in the area through the benefit of mine employment or related business opportunities.

Figure 5-1 provides a comparison of population decline outcomes from 2005–2012 with a simplified “no mine” scenario through 2004–2010 (extrapolated from actual 1996–2004 compound annual...
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change). The distinction is self-evident and shows that, all else remaining equal, BCGM was likely to have maintained (approximately) an additional 220 people in Bland Shire alone by 2010.

While this population impact is highly significant, it is almost certainly a temporary effect. With the eventual closure of BCGM, a sharp acceleration of population loss is likely as BCGM staff leave to seek other employment opportunities (multiple social factors indicating this prospect are identified in following impact summaries). In the longer term this will most likely give way to a return to previous population decline patterns across the study area.

“I believe that mining families will leave as a result of closure. I hope that if Barrick Cowal [Gold Mine] closes, Barrick will open another mine.” (West Wyalong resident and local employee)

Population maintenance impacts are most apparent in Bland Shire, and West Wyalong in particular. While similar effects are reported by respondents to have occurred in Condobolin and Forbes, they are obscured by the smaller number of BCGM employees in those towns and their access to other mining industry employment.

Population maintenance is a strongly demonstrable demographic effect with profound consequences for the sustainability of West Wyalong as a rural community. It is therefore rated as a very significant impact. Further benefits of population maintenance (and their respective beneficiaries) are discussed variously in most “positive” impact summaries that follow.

Barrick’s workforce management practices encourage local residence and thereby reinforce the population maintenance impact. Procurement procedures are also focused on sustaining local businesses and as such have an indirect economic effect on population maintenance. In all cases these effects are indirect benefits rather than explicit objectives.

5.2.2 Cultural diversity

The township of West Wyalong has historically accommodated a largely homogenous Anglo-Saxon population with a small Indigenous representation and few noticeable indications of other cultural diversity. It had a very low proportion (one quarter of the national average) of residents who spoke a language other than English at home in 2001 (ABS, 2011b).

The demand for skills and labour at BCGM has brought a significant change to this cultural and linguistic profile. While 2001–2011 ABS Census comparisons do not show any increase in the proportion of non-English speakers (at home) in West Wyalong (ABS 2011b), near-universal reports of SIA respondents suggest that cultural diversity has increased with the arrival of many BCGM workers. CALD communities in Bland Shire population were previously dominated by relatively inconspicuous northern European backgrounds. In 2001, the top countries of birth in Bland Shire after Australia, England and New Zealand were Scotland, Germany and the Netherlands. By 2011 these had shifted to Papua New Guinea, Philippines and China.

The cultural diversification effect is strongly evident in the experiences of West Wyalong SIA respondents. Respondents report a visibly growing CALD population including residents from South America, Africa, Europe, North America, Asia and across Oceania.

All respondents saw growing cultural and linguistic diversity as a strongly positive change. The respondents report that participation of CALD residents in community groups and networks is
welcomed and increasingly visible. For example, parents from non-English speaking backgrounds (including Barrick employees and their families) regularly attend the “baby bounce” sessions at the local library. These parents tend to provide mutual support as they adapt to the Central New South Wales lifestyle.

"... we had a wonderful time during the construction phase ... [we made] new friends from Germany, France, Chile and everywhere else. They were fascinated to be on a farm out here." (West Wyalong resident)

Schools play a significant part in this emerging dynamic. Academic achievements and sporting contributions of young people from non-English speaking backgrounds were widely acknowledged during community consultations. Sport and schooling appear to have operated as bridging influences on the relationship between new CALD residents and the existing West Wyalong population.

The new CALD population appears to be accessing adequate personal support through social infrastructure networks. Local health sector professionals reported that their CALD client group has faced some language barriers to service delivery, but these have been overcome procedurally with competent translation services and support from informal social networks. Child care and education services also report successful integration and participation by CALD families.

Little evidence of overt disharmony or discrimination was reported. Some respondents referred to the emergence of a new tolerance and global outlook in local residents. On this point, it is possible that wider consultation with residents (beyond the scope of this study) might reveal a more complex reality.

"We are a small, conservative country town. People can be doubtful [about change]." (West Wyalong resident and human services professional)

Cultural diversity is likely to persist to some extent in West Wyalong after the closure of BCGM and therefore represents a somewhat permanent change. All the same, it must be assumed that due to their less-established social networks, international workers will demonstrate a higher propensity to leave West Wyalong when BCGM employment opportunities are lost.

Increases in cultural diversity were only reported by West Wyalong respondents. While it is highly likely that Barrick labour demand has increased CALD populations across the study area to some degree, this effect is probably less evident due to smaller workforce contributions and higher historical rates of cultural diversity in other centres.

The emergence of a new CALD population in West Wyalong is rated as highly significant as it represents a pervasive and widely observed change. Barrick has a moderate degree of responsibility to support the successful integration of its workforce into the host community. While Barrick’s employee assistance program provides a supporting influence to the CALD worker population, Barrick does not directly manage cultural integration issues.

5.2.3 Divergent community identities

Respondents universally report that prior to the development of BCGM, the social networks of West Wyalong were broadly homogenous and inclusive. Numerous comments to this effect were provided across a breadth of stakeholder types referring to such qualities as:
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- Almost all local residents knew each other
- Spontaneous and casual communications within and across social networks/neighbourhoods
- It was rare to encounter a stranger who lives in town
- Quick introduction and assimilation of new residents.

As reported by almost all West Wyalong respondents, the introduction of the Barrick workforce has brought significant change to this social order. The Barrick workforce is highly visible, highly cohesive and has a very strong sense of shared purpose. Broadly speaking this workforce represents the emergence of a discrete community identity within West Wyalong. This is significant both because of the magnitude of the effect (around 10% of West Wyalong’s resident population work at the mine), and the novelty of this change in West Wyalong’s modern history.

The emergence in West Wyalong of the ubiquitous term “miners” demonstrates the pervasiveness of this identity shift. The term somewhat insensitively applies to all BCGM staff whether they are miners, administrators, drivers or emergency services workers, and is used by “miners” and non-miners alike. The significance of high visibility mining uniforms in this context should not be underestimated and is anecdotally recognised in resource communities across Australia. From some respondents comes a general sense of preoccupation with the arrival of the mine and its workforce.

"[The mine] becomes a topic of conversation fairly regularly. It doesn’t matter who you’re talking to—it’s not hard to find anyone who the mine directly affects." (Study area resident)

Community identity divergences are unlikely to persist beyond the life of the mine, but this may be complicated by changes to socioeconomic expectations (explained further in Section 5.3.2 below).

Challenges

"[Miners] don’t mix at all now [with non-miners]. They really don’t. They tend to stick together." (West Wyalong resident)

The immediate effect of introduction of the Barrick workforce is that West Wyalong residents are less likely to know and associate with some neighbours. Often the effect is simply due to separate routines, but it is important to recognise that some respondents expressed perceptions that the segregation of miners is at least partially deliberate. Many non-mining respondents report that they are less likely to approach people in social situations if they are (visibly or otherwise) associated with the mine, and some respondents from mining families mentioned that they are more likely to associate socially with other mining families due to exposure through routine events and activities.

"We really [don’t] go anywhere that you would get the chance to meet them [mining families]. If you did, they usually stick together." (West Wyalong resident)

"... I recently met a Cowal Gold employee who said he had been living in town for three years, but it was the first time I had ever seen him or met him or his family." (West Wyalong resident)

It is acknowledged that health and safety reforms have also led to increased use of high-visibility uniforms in many non-mining occupations.
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Community consultations revealed some particular challenges within this divergence of cultural identities. BCGM working rosters were identified as a uniquely challenging cultural divide between miners and non-miners. While some reported that Barrick is sensitive to workers’ community participation in managing rosters, roster-based lifestyles are seen to be difficult to integrate with “9–5” routines. Furthermore, four-day “off periods” allow mining families to spend recreational time away from town and thus opportunities for out-of-work integration are reduced.

“Shift work definitely brings a burden to the wives of men who undertake this work. It is hard work and 4 days on 4 days off can affect your social life; maybe that is one reason why the wives of miners don’t integrate so well into the community, as they are not nine to five like the rest of us. However, not everyone is nine to five and we can’t all choose our hours.” (West Wyalong resident)

The transience of the miner population is also seen as a barrier to integration—while short-term workers find it easy to relate to their colleagues, they have less opportunity to build meaningful relationships with other residents. The large, male-dominated construction workforce was also seen by many as a singular, though temporary, challenge to local courtesy.

“Before the mine, everyone [living in West Wyalong] knew each other. It took pretty much the whole construction phase to understand that we had a new transient population now. Now you make new friends and [then they] move along, which we’d never really been exposed to.” (West Wyalong resident)

Opportunities

In spite of the above challenges, a strong sense of empathy and shared identity remains between miners and non-miners in West Wyalong. To a large degree, West Wyalong respondents have accepted the challenges posed and are able to integrate the change into their understanding of West Wyalong’s history and cultural identity. One non-mining respondent empathised with the practicalities of a shift-based mining lifestyle and another pointed to the relationship between new community identities and a growing sense of tolerance, cultural awareness and open-mindedness in town. Simply put, these benefits and opportunities are the flip-side to the challenges posed above, and represent a resilient approach by individuals, families and communities to maintain a positive social environment in the face of new challenges.

“At first it was a big shock to see all the orange. The fluoro, the flags on the cars. We are used to it now.” (West Wyalong resident)

A common observation was that miners in West Wyalong are no more exclusive than any other professional or social group. Illustrative of this point is that while Barrick maintains worker accommodation in West Wyalong and residential land was released by Bland Shire Council specifically to accommodate new workforce arrivals, BCGM workers have since dispersed geographically across West Wyalong and there appears to be no real sense that a symbolic “miners’ suburb” has emerged.

Moreover, respondents universally acknowledged that on balance, the presence of the miners brings great benefit to the community. Added to this is the fact that, as respondents consistently reported,
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everyone in town either is, or knows, a miner. Miners participate in community groups and sports teams, and their partners fill key roles in local government, human services and health care. This highlights the role and potential of personal relationships to bridge social groups, and gives promise that above and beyond the impact of diverging community identities, a greater purpose of growth and sustainability in West Wyalong will prevail through the life of the mine.

[BCGM staff are] pretty obvious in their orange [high-visibility] clothing”. They are easily identified. This brings home how important they are [to the community]. There are an enormous number of locals that wouldn't be here at all otherwise because there [would be] no other opportunities to stay”. (West Wyalong resident)

Community identity impacts were reported very frequently by West Wyalong and Bland Shire respondents, and rarely by others. This suggests that the predominance of West Wyalong as a workforce source for the mine has exposed it uniquely to such impacts.

Barrick maintains clear codes of conduct for staff on and offsite and will be invoked routinely where behaviour of mine staff is identified as antisocial. Barrick’s complaints and grievances system is the primary channel of communication with West Wyalong residents to this end. As indicated above many Barrick staff members are strong participants in their local community (human capital effects are described at Section 5.5.3). This participation is actively supported by Barrick through various community investment and development programs (described through Section 7). The universal acknowledgement by West Wyalong respondents of these factors suggests that they have contributed a powerful mitigating force against cultural segregation and have contained the extent of this impact to a large degree.

5.2.4 Proportion of families and children in West Wyalong

There is a perception common to some stakeholders that a “mini baby-boom” has occurred in West Wyalong in recent years. While in line with national fertility trends, this is attributed to the population maintenance effect of BCGM and is commonly associated with a perception that most miners are married and have children. Sustained demand for child care services from mining families is also cited as an indicator. The value of children and families to the social fabric of West Wyalong is highly regarded and this perceived impact is seen as strongly positive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-1</th>
<th>Population aged 0-14, Bland Shire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% total population</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: ABS, 2011d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-2</th>
<th>Population attending school, Bland Shire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool/primary</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: ABS, 2011d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Social impacts

As Table 5-1 and Table 5-2 indicate, this perception is not born out in the most recent population statistics. ABS data shows that the number of children aged 0–14 years in Bland Shire fell in both absolute and proportional terms between 2001 and 2011, while the number of children and young people enrolled in school fell by a similar number (this may include adults attending high school). Furthermore, despite a recent increase in 2011, ABS births data for Bland Shire do not show a sustained upswing in the period of mine operation. If the upswing in births in 2011 has continued through 2012 and 2013, the baby boom tag might prove to be appropriate. The perception that miners tend to bring families to town is also unsupported in current demographic statistics. Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of adults in Bland Shire who are married (including de facto relationships) fell in absolute and proportional terms (from 67.6% of adults to 65.3%) (ABS, 2011b).

Figure 5-2  Registered births, Bland Shire

Source: ABS, 2012a

One key Murrumbidgee Local Health District staff member reported a high number of births in West Wyalong recently, and attributed this to the attraction and retention of young families in the BCGM workforce. It was also reported that elevated recent demand on West Wyalong maternity services has been managed safely within existing staffing and resourcing levels.

While the effect of retaining children and families in Bland Shire does not bear out strongly in current population statistics, it would be considered a welcome, though temporary, benefit to Bland Shire. If births have increased in West Wyalong since 2011, it is clearly attributable in large part to the population maintenance effect of BCGM. The impact on family and children is reported solely in Bland Shire.

5.3 Impacts on local economies

5.3.1 Economic activity and business opportunities

In the context of drought and rural decline as described at Section 4.1, respondents across the study area report that BCGM has represented a welcome turning point for local businesses after an
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extended period of hardship. Many respondents spoke of local small businesses being kept viable solely through BCGM purchasing/contracts while others went so far as to suggest that BCGM has represented the single economic force sustaining West Wyalong, and that without it the previous economic and population decline would have accelerated. By this account BCGM represents a profoundly supportive factor in the ongoing sustainability of study area communities.

"All the motels were for sale [prior to Barrick’s arrival] ... It was all very doom and gloom." (West Wyalong business owner)

Respondents across the study area reported a diverse range of businesses as having benefited directly from BCGM purchasing including:

- Transport and freight operators
- Engineering and technical services
- Mechanical and automotive services
- Accommodation providers
- Pubs, clubs, restaurants and cafes
- Legal services
- Real estate services
- Retail providers
- Earthmoving services
- Fencers
- Labour hire services
- Business facilities and services.

Figure 5-3 Annual operational procurement expenditure, study area

Some businesses, particularly in mining industry-oriented fields, reported that BCGM contracts represented a significant proportion of their revenue and that their level of staffing and investment was geared to meet that demand. Some, particularly in accommodation and hospitality, reported that the
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regular maintenance shutdowns at BCGM (which attract many suppliers and visitors from outside the district) represented a welcome source of income. Due to these opportunities, local business people tend to be strongly supportive of Barrick as a member of the community.

“Absolutely, [the mine has arrested economic decline in Condobolin]. The mining sector has provided a new industry into a traditionally agricultural economy.”

(Lachlan Shire Council staff member)

BCGM brings significant indirect economic benefit to the study area beyond direct purchasing and contracts. Mine contractors have become a valuable source of business as they seek the support of local supply chains. The broader effect of purchasing and employment multipliers originating with these key suppliers is widely acknowledged. Figure 5-3 demonstrates Barrick’s total operational procurement expenditure of around $45 million annually to the wider study area.

Barrick’s investment in local community services and organisations is highlighted as a smaller but no less significant economic resource for those who depend on them. Barrick further contributes to state and local government revenues through annual rates payments, mining royalties and other taxation. Table 5-3 shows recent annual contributions to study area local governments and the New South Wales Government. Bland Shire rates payments over 2011 and 2012 amounted to $1,592,510, or 92.5% of Barrick’s total local government payments.

Table 5-3  BCGM rates, mining royalties, and other taxation payments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Local government</th>
<th>NSW Government</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$576,190</td>
<td>$6,891,833</td>
<td>$7,468,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$824,580</td>
<td>$11,751,962</td>
<td>$12,576,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$847,070</td>
<td>$12,050,668</td>
<td>$12,897,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$875,020</td>
<td>$12,829,350</td>
<td>$13,704,374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCGM operational data

Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation has leveraged seed funding from Barrick into other social enterprise interests, and this benefit has been passed along to Condobolin through local purchasing, and through local annual salary payments.

The significance of economic benefits to the study area communities is rated as a “very high” based on the universal and wide-reaching reports of business people and other respondents. Through local purchasing practices, Barrick is highly accountable for ensuring this benefit is maximised and it forms a key tenet of Barrick’s corporate citizenship. Barrick’s Social Management Plan seeks to maximise local procurement and operational expenditure. Personal relationships between mine staff and local suppliers further enable local purchasing. Purchasing procedure manuals support local businesses to meet Barrick’s strict safety and security requirements. Local economic benefits yielded by BCGM are universally understood to be temporary and limited to the life of the mine. The loss of these benefits at closure is explored in detail at Section 0.

Potential risks

While resource industries commonly bring labour market and other inflationary impacts to regional economies, in the prevailing context of rural decline, the study area does not appear to have been particularly afflicted. For example, no business operators reported difficulty in competing with Barrick.
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in the labour market for human resources. It was reported that the housing market has been affected (housing affordability is addressed separately at 5.3.3). Another economic risk relates to a belief that the personal economic (wage) expectations of residents have been raised as a result of Barrick employment. If this heightened expectation is maintained it would represent a significant structural shift and has implications for the analysis of closure impacts.

**Local purchasing**
Barrick’s annual procurement expenditure in the study area amounts to around $45 million or approximately 18% of total expenditure. The general understanding across the study area is that if Barrick can buy locally, they will. This translates to a general perception of commercial support and loyalty from Barrick. Most of those consulted acknowledge that many of Barrick’s needs cannot be supplied by local businesses so they accept the need for wider regional and national purchasing.

Some businesses in West Wyalong feel that there are further opportunities to capture more of Barrick’s expenditure locally. With some purchasing decisions controlled through Barrick’s corporate services in Perth there may be limits on the extent to which local suppliers can compete.

**Leakage**
Multiple respondents reported that mining staff tend to make large proportions of their discretionary expenditure outside of the district seeking specialty stores and products not generally available locally. This perception was associated with a view that miners tend to incorporate shopping into short trips away during their rostered four-day “off period”.

**Impacts on agricultural and primary industries**
It should be stated upfront that all landholder respondents were satisfied that the productivity of nearby wheat fields and livestock is not directly affected by the presence of the mine.

The mine lease area (2,650 ha) is recognised as a high-value agricultural asset and a large portion of its productive capacity has been disrupted permanently. The productive capacity of wider lease areas will remain constrained by Barrick environmental management systems for the life of the mine according to development consent conditions. Some mention was made of the minor nuisance to farms that these environmental “reserves” generate as breeding grounds for emus and kangaroos, but this was characterised more as an inconvenience than a direct economic impact.

It should be mentioned that where possible, Barrick periodically opens some properties to agistment and other agricultural uses (including in the dry lake bed), thereby avoiding some agricultural economic impact. Some BCGM land is leased back to landholders, and one respondent suggested there is an opportunity to make more land available in this way (this would be subject to development consent conditions).

Barrick has previously terminated some problematic bore water use in response to landholder concerns about water supply and quality. Landholders east of Lake Cowal retain some concern that the impacts of water extraction on aquifers and bores (on the Bland Creek paleochannel) may be permanent to some degree. It is understood that affected bores have substantially recovered and farmers are generally satisfied with Barrick’s current practice of drawing water from deeper aquifers to the east.
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Other disruptive impacts to farming practices mentioned include insensitive local road re-design (sharp corners), dust generation (from traffic on unsealed roads) and inappropriate fence design (poor flood resistance). A related issue emerges in some evidence (as reported to CEMCC 5 June 2013) that commercial yabby fishers are dissatisfied by their restricted access to some parts of the lake (this issues was not identified through SIA community consultation).

5.3.2 Employment opportunities

Direct employment

Throughout SIA community consultations, all types of respondents in all parts of the study area unanimously identified employment opportunities as amongst the most significant impact of BCGM on local communities. Stakeholders invariably reported having friends, family or acquaintances that work (or have worked) at the mine and most have some insight into the workforce profile and practices at the mine. Multiple respondents highlighted the local significance of BCGM employment opportunities, and one community-based employment services advisor in Condobolin mentioned regular contact with jobseekers enquiring directly on that point.

Equally unanimous was the sense that this employment effect has been of critical benefit to the sustainability of local communities in the broader context of rural decline. The principal theme is that BCGM has provided employment opportunities and livelihoods for farmers who were suffering from the impacts of drought and low commodity prices. The employment opportunities at Barrick have also, to some extent, counteracted other downturns in the study area including:

- Closure of an abattoir at Forbes (2003)
- Rationalisation of government services in Condobolin
- Associated withdrawal of finance and service industries
- Empty shopfronts and vacant motels particularly in Condobolin and West Wyalong.

Barrick records 68 per cent of its workforce reside in Bland Shire, 14 per cent in Forbes and 6 per cent in Lachlan (Table 5-4). This indicates the spatial distribution of employment and economic benefits across the study area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BCGM workforce origin, 2012</th>
<th>Resident Barrick staff</th>
<th>% total Barrick staff</th>
<th>% total labour force</th>
<th>Total labour force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>2,792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan Shire</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Shire</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCGM operational data; ABS, 2011b

According to ABS data, mining industry employment has risen from 1% to 10% in Bland Shire since the development of the mine and according to community consultation data, relatively few Bland Shire residents work at mines other than BCGM. The corresponding effect on Forbes and Lachlan Shire workforces is lower but still significant in the local context.
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"[Yes I know] farmers who work at the mine. One young [former] apprentice is driving graders now and a younger farmer is driving dump trucks." (Bland Shire landholder)

Figure 5-4 shows an approximate distribution of direct salary payments to the study area by local government area.

**Figure 5-4 Operational wages and salaries (real values, 2012)**

![Chart showing operational wages and salaries by year and location](image)

Note: Total (CPI-adjusted) wage and salary data for each year distributed by LGAs according to the 2012 workforce profile indicated at Table 5-4

Source: BCGM operational data

The universal and consistent nomination of employment as a primary social impact and benefit of BCGM in community consultation data is well supported by ABS workforce statistics and evidence of contextual decline in agricultural livelihoods. Barrick takes a high level of responsibility for ensuring local populations benefit from employment opportunities at BCGM, and is highly accountable through various corporate policies and strategies such as the Social Management Plan and workforce management practices. These commitments are conditional to Barrick’s development consent.

**Age and gender**

A comparison of the age and gender profiles of BCGM and Bland Shire workforces suggests Barrick primarily employs young, male workers. Figure 5-5 shows that Barrick’s workforce is heavily skewed towards the younger working ages. Operational data indicate that 84.7% of these are male, compared with 50.0% for the Bland Shire labour force (ABS, 2011e).

Of mining industry workers in Bland Shire, 81.5% reported working over 40 hours per week at the 2011 census (ABS, 2011e). This was significantly higher than those in agriculture, forestry and fishing (55.3%) and the Bland Shire average (41.0%). Wives and girlfriends of shift-working miners in Australia have been shown to be at elevated risk of stress and alienation due to their economic dependence and elevated responsibility for household and social organisation (Murray and Peetz, 2008). While traces of this phenomenon are evidenced in community consultation, West Wyalong’s strong social infrastructure (children and family services) and social capital (functional social networks amongst mining families) have likely mitigated the effect.
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**Figure 5-5  BCGM workforce age profile**

![BCGM workforce age profile graph](image)

Source: BCGM operational data; ABS, 2011d

**Indigenous employment**

Statistics on Indigenous employment are not available from Barrick but respondents reported that Indigenous people across the region currently work at the mine. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondents, particularly in Condobolin and West Wyalong, reported the benefits of BCGM employment opportunities to Indigenous communities. WCC reports that extending employment outcomes to young Indigenous people without qualifications has been more challenging. WCC education programs have grown in response to that challenge and have yielded some positive results to date.

**Recruitment**

Most direct reports of Barrick’s recruitment system elicited through community consultation were negative. Some respondents mentioned difficulties engaging with recruitment systems or attaining employment. One respondent reported that it was difficult to get good information about Barrick’s recruitment program in West Wyalong. Others suggested that attaining employment at the mine was far more dependent on personal relationships than qualifications or experience, and that the profile of successful applicants (typically young and well-connected with the BCGM workforce) suggested that recruitment decisions were less than objective.

"Unless you know someone you have no chance of getting a start out there".

*Bland Shire resident*

This effect was related by a small number of respondents and its significance should not be overstated. Even so, it is highly consistent with the analysis of divergent community identities at Section 5.2.3, and is representative of the risks that can accrue to marginalised individuals and groups under these conditions.

**Employment pathways**

Distinct from the raw employment impact is a sense among some respondents, particularly in the training and education sector, that BCGM represents a valuable new pathway for young people to
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enter the local workforce. This has significance in the context of rural decline, where young job seekers are particularly exposed to labour market risks and are commonly compelled to leave rural communities after high school. BCGM is seen as a viable employment option for some school leavers to remain in the study area (particularly West Wyalong).

One key challenge is that employment pathways for young people at BCGM tend to be into unskilled positions with little prospect of formal training or qualification. Apprenticeships are available to young people in West Wyalong, including in companies that supply to the mine, and this offers an indirect pathway for young people to seek skilled positions in the mine once they have earned a qualification. The BCGM community relations team has established a relationship with local high schools to encourage school leavers to consider BCGM as an option for remaining in the area after leaving school.

**Indirect employment**

Aside from direct employment at the mine, many respondents noted the indirect employment benefits resulting from Barrick’s wider economic impact. Multiple suppliers to the mine (particularly in the transport and technical sectors) reported hiring new staff as a direct consequence of contracts to BCGM. One local business reported that around half of their current employees (3 or 4 staff members) have been hired for this reason.

The strength of current investment in children’s services in Bland Shire is also partly attributable to demand by mining families, and some children’s services workers have been employed to meet this demand. Most are on temporary contracts as funding remains uncertain. Employment has likewise been generated or sustained in other population-benchmarked public services (such as schools and health services).

The wider multiplier effects of direct and indirect employment were widely acknowledged by respondents to the study. Most feel that the effects on main streets across the study area are readily visible.

While skills development effects are durable, direct employment benefits of BCGM are universally understood to be strictly temporary and dependant on the continued operation of the mine. Many respondents went on to acknowledge that the loss of these jobs will bring a critical challenge to the sustainability of local communities, in particular West Wyalong and Bland Shire. Social effects at closure are discussed further at Section 6.

5.3.3 Housing affordability

Closely associated with the population maintenance (Section 5.2.1) and economic stimulus (Section 5.3.1) that BCGM has brought to West Wyalong is an increase in property values. This is typical of most significant regional employment generators, and is often considered highly desirable by private beneficiaries (for example, the real estate industry and existing home and land owners and property investors). Most study area respondents referred to a reduction in accommodation options for local residents as a result of increased property values. Hence this study identifies the social impact as generally negative.

Housing market impacts are considered temporary and limited to the operation of the mine. The withdrawal of Barrick from the housing market, involving the return of up to 100 dwellings to the rental and property markets, would significantly reduce competition for accommodation. The further
withdrawal of Barrick employees from the private property market will add to the effect over time. While this means housing affordability impacts will be reversed, it will also create a risk of depression in the West Wyalong housing market if not managed effectively.

Housing affordability impacts are confined to West Wyalong. The primary receptors are those families and individuals who rent or have bought property since 2004. Those housing market participants who do not benefit directly by mining salaries are impacted disproportionately.

Reduced housing affordability is rated as a highly significant impact as respondent perceptions are supported by available dwelling approvals and property market data, and the risk of housing displacement (with its associated socioeconomic consequences) is clear. While causality is at least partly traceable to the presence of the mine and its workforce, Barrick could not effectively take responsibility for the range of externalities impacting on local housing markets and settlement patterns.

Barrick’s operation in local property markets as an accommodation provider is managed under site-specific workforce management practices.

**Residential development**

Bland Shire Council zoned and released new land for residential development prior to construction of the mine in anticipation of a population influx. A period of residential development on the new Crest residential estate (on the south side of West Wyalong) peaked in 2005–06. New housing stock was marketed by private developers specifically as a Barrick workforce leasing opportunity and a portion of it was eventually leased to Barrick.

*Figure 5-6  Private residential dwelling unit approvals, Bland Shire (financial years) and BCGM housing market activity (calendar years)*

*Includes new purchases and rentals
Source: ABS, 2013b; BCGM operational data

Figure 5-6 demonstrates the association between residential development approvals and Barrick’s housing market activity (owned and rented, total study area) throughout this period and indicates BCGM’s level of influence over the Bland Shire housing market. Figure 5-7 shows Barrick has maintained a total housing stock (owned and rented) of around 100 properties between 2004 and 2013.
5 Social impacts

2013. Rationalisation has led to a small reduction in rented stock in 2013, thereby returning some rental stock to the market.

**Figure 5-7** BCGM total study area housing stock

Source: BCGM operational data

*Housing market conditions*

Bland Shire Council characterises the current West Wyalong residential property market as being at a tight equilibrium and while there is currently ample residential land available for development, property investment has slowed in recent years. Small area data on house prices are notoriously unreliable but a simple indication of BCGM-era house prices in West Wyalong provided by RP Data (2013) suggests that median sale prices generally increased until around 2005–06 and have stabilised since then. This is generally consistent with the trend indicated by the ABS development approval data reproduced above.

In relative terms, housing costs and property values in West Wyalong are currently regarded as being substantially higher than elsewhere in the district. While there is some suggestion that this has been a feature of West Wyalong for some time prior to the development of the mine, numerous respondents (including Bland Shire Council staff) highlighted the effect of BCGM specifically. The rental market is seen as particularly tight since the mining workforce was employed.

Some local business operators and community service providers reported staff being displaced to the rural villages (for example, Ungarie, Burcher, Tallimba and Barmedman, where accommodation is significantly more affordable) after finding it difficult to access accommodation in West Wyalong.

“We have definitely seen a big increase in house prices and a lack of housing availability.” (West Wyalong resident)

Some concern was evident in West Wyalong that while the rental market remains tight, a number of Barrick-owned and -leased properties are vacant. Respondents did not report a strong understanding of Barrick’s workforce accommodation practices and this may indicate some degree of negative perception. This risk is offset to some degree by a strongly positive understanding that Barrick has used vacant accommodation to accommodate visiting professionals at times.
5 Social impacts

5.4 Impacts on education and training

5.4.1 Access to higher education and training

**Tertiary education**

Barrick supports tertiary education for young people through the Endeavour Scholarships Program, through which funds are provided directly to local high schools which are then free to nominate and award students independently. Until recently the application and award process was managed directly by Barrick. The new approach is broadly appreciated by study area high schools who feel they have better information about their students and can make better award decisions.

The Endeavour Scholarships Program was widely recognised in community consultations across all stakeholder categories. Endeavour Scholarships Program outcomes are summarised at Table 5-5, and show a distinctly wide distribution across study area LGAs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
<th>% total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire</td>
<td>240,500</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Shire</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan Shire</td>
<td>192,500</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>583,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCGM operational data

A parallel program specific to Indigenous young people operates through the Education, Training and Business Development Committee (ETBC) with the Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation, alongside an Indigenous Traineeships program. WCC directors report that access to tertiary education scholarships and vocational training is a primary benefit of BCGM to local Indigenous communities.

WCC reports that engagement in higher education has enabled strong human capital development in the Wiradjuri community and succession planning for WCC itself. WCC has also commenced planning with Charles Sturt University (CSU) for the delivery of tertiary programs through the Wiradjuri Study Centre. The program will initially provide bridging and preparatory courses for Indigenous students, with a view towards accommodating mainstream CSU courses under a "campus" model. This is highly likely to expose young Indigenous people in the area to higher education pathways.

**Vocational education**

BCGM has brought less direct benefit in terms of mainstream vocational education and training. Riverina TAFE reports a high degree of interest in working with Barrick and the NSW government to develop a pre-vocational training program, with a focus on trades and engineering, targeting employment opportunities at the mine. This has not happened as yet and may be related to the lack of skilled employment pathways into the mine identified at Section 5.4.1.

While scholarships are unlikely to be sustained significantly beyond the life of the mine, improved education outcomes will have an enduring impact on social and human capital in the study area. Primary receptors of higher education opportunities are Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people across the study area.
5 Social impacts

Higher education impacts are rated as highly significant due to their tangible and long-term benefits for young people seeking higher education under otherwise challenging circumstances, and the widespread recognition and acknowledgement of Barrick’s programs in the study area community.

5.4.2 Education outcomes

Beyond investment in scholarships and training for individuals, Barrick is widely acknowledged to contribute financial and other support directly to education and training services across the study area.

The most visible example is through the award-winning Lake Cowal Foundation, through which Barrick supports West Wyalong High School to deliver the Lake Cowal Foundation Education Program. This program employs a full-time education officer (a qualified high school teacher), to deliver the Environmental Education course for grades K–12. The program incorporates curriculum elements of high school biology, geography, science and agriculture, and primary school science and technology. It has a focus on field work in and around the lake and regularly receives visiting academics and university students and researchers. While the program is administered by West Wyalong High School, it is open to all schools and approximately 3,000 students attend from across the region annually. The West Wyalong High School Principal reports that some young people have entered education pathways and careers in environmental management through the Environmental Education course.

Barrick also regularly contributes to school events such as speech nights and awards events, through both financial contributions and direct participation. High school students are also given the opportunity to raise funds and gain work experience by catering for the annual Barrick employees’ Christmas party and a range of community events sponsored by Barrick are routinely opened to volunteering opportunities for young people.

Beyond direct support, the socioeconomic improvements Barrick has brought to the study area, particularly in West Wyalong and to Indigenous communities, are likely to have enabled families and students to engage better with education systems and achieve improved education outcomes. The number of families seeking financial support or concessions for school programs at West Wyalong High School has declined by approximately 50% since the mine began operating. This effect is evidenced in the Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA, attached to ACARA “My School” reporting). ICSEA shows that socio-educational disadvantage within the West Wyalong High School student community has fallen significantly in relation to other Australian schools since the mine opened. While West Wyalong High School is still below the national ICSEA median in aggregate terms, the proportion of West Wyalong students in the two bottom quartiles (most disadvantaged) fell from 84% to 59% between 2008 and 2012.

Education outcome impacts are rated as highly significant due to the tangible and long-term benefits for children and young people.
5 Social impacts

5.5 Impacts on social infrastructure, social capital and governance

5.5.1 Sustaining community groups and organisations

All respondents recognised Barrick’s support for community groups and organisations as one of the mine’s primary social impacts and it is largely through this activity that Barrick is best known to non-mining residents. Support for community groups and organisations has far-reaching effects in terms of social capital by providing new and creative ways for community members to relate to each other and thereby build multi-dimensional relationships. The sense is evident among all stakeholders that Barrick is a ubiquitous presence in community functions and activities (particularly in West Wyalong), and all respondents were highly aware of funding opportunities provided through Barrick’s Cowal Partnering Program (CPP). Some respondents suggested that many local community organisations and events rely on Barrick funding and would not otherwise be viable, suggesting that Barrick has a broad developmental presence in the community.

“It’s not often that you hear of an event in town that hasn’t been supported in some way by the mine”. (Business West Wyalong)

One characteristic example was raised by a West Wyalong resident and member of Events West Wyalong. Events West Wyalong applied for small grants for two recent art exhibitions, receiving $200 for lighting at the first and $1500 for printing and stationery at the second. Events West Wyalong has also received more significant seed funding for the “In the West” program. Paris in the West (2012) was supported with $26,000, and Sweden in the West (2013) has received $10,000. This has already brought a public relations dividend for West Wyalong in attracting an acceptance of invitation from the Swedish ambassador to Oceania. Funding for “In the West” will decline annually thereafter. Respondents in Forbes and Condobolin shared similar assessments of the benefits of the CPP but did not report any specific examples.

A group of Murrumbidgee Local Health District respondents highlighted the broad benefits that Barrick’s community investment brings to families in West Wyalong. They reported that social groups and networks (e.g. Barrick Ladies’ Luncheon, sporting clubs and mothers’ support groups) are strongly supported by the mine, which in turn increases the engagement and participation of mothers and young families in the community. Support provided by Barrick included funding, workforce participation and physical facilities such as marquees.

Total CPP funding approved in 2012 is shown for study area LGAs at Table 5-6, and a full list of recipients is provided at Appendix C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>68,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>14,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lachlan</td>
<td>12,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All areas</td>
<td>69,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>165,720</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCGM operational data
5 Social impacts

In addition to the CPP, Barrick operates the Barrick Buddies Program through which Barrick makes annual donations of $250 to all eligible community groups at which a Barrick employee volunteers at least 25 hours of his or her time per year. This funding can be a significant revenue stream for small organisations and groups, particularly those who are otherwise unfunded. The Buddies program has a powerful social capital effect by encouraging volunteering and community participation. A representative sample of Buddies program grants is provided at Table 5-7.

Direct investment support for local community groups and organisations will be limited to the life of the mine and is therefore temporary in nature. Some permanent benefit will accrue where those groups are able to remain sustainable in the long term, for example by leveraging Barrick funding to access other revenue streams.

Table 5-7 Barrick Buddies Program (selected grants), 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedgerebong Public School</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burcher Golf Club</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burcher Progress Association</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Hope</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Amateur Swimming Club Inc</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Junior Rugby Club</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungarie Sport and Rec</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong and Girral Football &amp; Netball Club</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Auskick</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Horse &amp; Pony Club</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Junior Basketball Association</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Junior Cricket Association</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Junior Rugby League</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Men's Golf</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Scouts Association</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Volleyball</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyalong Public School P&amp;C</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,750</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCGM operational data

While participants of community organisations are the primary beneficiaries of this impact, the indirect effects of building social capital through public participation accrue across study area residents and communities.

Sustaining local community groups and organisations is rated as very highly significant due to the social capital effects it produces. The relationships and trust generated through community participation are fundamental assets by which community and economic development is enabled. These relationships also reduce social isolation by providing social networks and communication channels for families and individuals. Accountability is rated as high due to Barrick’s public commitment and practical financial contribution to its community investment programs.
5 Social impacts

5.5.2 Sustaining social infrastructure

Barrick actively supports social infrastructure through community investment and direct payments to local and state government service providers. Key stakeholders consistently reported that Barrick contributes significantly to the sustainability of local social and community infrastructure. The largest direct benefit is through Barrick’s rates and other payments to local governments. Rates revenue paid by BCGM has been quarantined by Bland Shire Council to provide a means to plan and sustain a future for the West Wyalong community beyond the life of the mine. This is addressed in further detail at Section 5.3.1.

Local and state government respondents reported that other Barrick investment has contributed to public service delivery such as:

- Youth mental health worker in West Wyalong
- Child care and family services
- Parks and gardens
- Local sports facilities
- Roads improvements
- Heritage walking trail
- Emergency management.

Barrick has signed two multi-lateral Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with Bland, Lachlan and Forbes Shire Councils. They manage:

- Unexpended CPP funds, in trust for transfer to the three Shires at mine closure, and
- An annual contribution of $150,000 for road maintenance and improvement in the study area.

A sample of other direct social infrastructure investments is provided at Table 5-8.

Table 5-8 Barrick community investments: social infrastructure (selected grants), 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient organisation</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire Men's Shed - Bland Shire Council</td>
<td>Financial support for building costs</td>
<td>10,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes PA&amp;H Association Inc - Forbes Showground round works</td>
<td>Funding for Groundworks to improve Forbes Showground</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Region Youth Mental Health Program</td>
<td>Mental Health Youth Worker - Promotions</td>
<td>27,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Education!</td>
<td>3-year partnership</td>
<td>16,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural CONNECT Contact Inc Skilling Children's Services</td>
<td>General funding</td>
<td>19,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES West Wyalong Trailer Purchase</td>
<td>Purchase of trailer for SES use</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyalong &amp; District Community Transport</td>
<td>Fundraising match, dollar for dollar ($3,000 max)</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCGM operational data

Given that many public services are funded according to population benchmarks, Barrick’s positive impact on population maintenance can be seen as providing flow-on effects to the maintenance of a
range of social infrastructure. Key stakeholders expressed strong confidence that through supporting local populations, BCGM has indirectly helped to sustain services and resourcing in:

- Children services (primarily those delivered through Bland Shire Children’s Services Unit)
- Health services (in particular West Wyalong Hospital)
- Education services (all study area high schools)

Child care in Bland Shire is also supported by the demand generated by mining families. Mining families are more likely to be able to afford child care, and more likely to have a home-based parent. Mining families new to town are also likely to seek opportunities such as play groups and parents’ groups as a means of developing social networks. As such, mining families are likely to be highly visible in the community. The high profile of Bland Shire’s innovative early childhood education programs and promotion through its existing clientele are also likely to have encouraged other parents to become involved.

Target communities of local and state government public service providers and the community sector are the key beneficiaries of social infrastructure impacts. Study area communities generally benefit from sustainable social infrastructure through retention of services, improved service delivery and wider social capital effects.

Sustaining social infrastructure is rated as a highly significant impact in the study area context of rural decline and population loss. Barrick is highly accountable through its community investment programs. Indirect influences of population maintenance are largely beyond Barrick’s responsibility, though Barrick is committed to retaining a local workforce through the Workforce Management Program.

5.5.3 Human capital

Human capital refers to the aggregate value of skills, knowledge, capabilities and qualifications that Barrick workers and their families add to their local communities. It is a fundamental element of a community’s social and economic capacity, and the retention and development of human capital is of significance to the sustainability of small towns under conditions of rural decline and population loss (McIntosh et al, 2008).

Barrick workers themselves contribute skills and experience in their communities beyond their productive capacity at work. Respondents reported the value of contributions by Barrick workers to sports teams, school activities and community event committees. This recognition extended to Barrick workers who do not reside in local communities, but who are seen by some to contribute strongly to the community while they are in town.

As described at Section 5.2.2, the cultural diversification of West Wyalong also brings beneficial impacts to human capital. One respondent reported a plan to initiate a Spanish-language group offering a new educational opportunity to the English-speaking community while supporting the assimilation of new Spanish speakers to town. Other respondents suggested that cultural diversification has had the effect of making the local population more globally aware and tolerant.

Another reported element of the human capital effect is in the partners of Barrick employees. The contributions of mining partners to local communities were widely recognised in professional roles such as teachers, local government, community service providers and health workers. Partners are also recognised to contribute heavily to local community organisations, parenting groups, playgroups and sports clubs.
5 Social impacts

This community participation provides a strong counterbalancing effect against the divergent community identities between “miners” and “non-miners” identified at Section 5.2.3.

“Barrick Cowal has been a wonderful asset to our town and district and we all agree that if it was not for them our town would not be in the same position as we now stand.” (West Wyalong resident)

According to the broader population effects identified at Section 5.2.1, human capital impacts will be limited largely to the life of the mine. Some benefit will endure post-closure due to the legacy of established community initiatives and where permanent residents are able to capitalise on the skills and knowledge they have accrued.

The West Wyalong community is considered the primary receptor of human capital benefits due to the majority of Barrick’s workforce residing there. The significance of sustaining human capital is rated as very high. Respondents consistently reported the high degree of human capital benefit generated by BCGM and this effect directly mitigates prevailing conditions of rural decline and population loss.

5.5.4 Land management

Throughout community consultations, there was no consensus position on optimal land management in the Lake Cowal area. Landholders (including one ex-landholder) and Indigenous respondents expressed differing attitudes, were aware of the others’ viewpoints and stated an understanding of the associated challenges to management of:

- Land tenure and ownership
- Land use
- Environmental management
- Agricultural production
- Access rights
- Traditional custodianship.

Central to this issue is a recognition among all stakeholders that the development of BCGM has directly increased the involvement of traditional owners (Wiradjuri communities) in land management issues in the area. Additionally, the mine’s approval and early operation brought attention and interest from national environmental/conservation organisations.

Specifically, the approval and development of the mine has invoked or elicited complicating factors such as:

- Interruptions to long-term land use and ownership patterns
- The influence of non-local environmental advocacy organisations
- Renewed awareness of Indigenous traditional ownership
- The influence of non-local consultants, designers and environmental scientists in land management and water use decisions
- The introduction of new governance structures (i.e. Lake Cowal Foundation, CEMCC)
- Reduced access to significant cultural and recreational sites.

While few of these factors necessarily represent problems in themselves, as a whole they represent a significant change to local land management and governance. The direction of this impact as
5 Social impacts

“positive” or “negative” is purely dependent on the point of view of stakeholders and as such is rated as neutral for the purpose of this study.

Strong interest in Lake Cowal land tenure was expressed by landholders, Indigenous respondents and some West Wyalong residents, and was related primarily to the consequences of Barrick’s decisions about land divestment at closure. Various viewpoints emerged that some or all recoverable mine lease land should ultimately be made available for agriculture, Wiradjuri custodianship, heritage preservation and environmental preservation at closure. This discussion prompts complex ethical, economic, cultural and ecological considerations which are well beyond the scope of this study. With long-term consequences for local land management and with the presence of divergent views on land management, such decisions will best be made under a strong framework of negotiation, community engagement, and strategic planning.

Lake Cowal landholders and Wiradjuri communities are the primary receptors of land management impacts. Some other West Wyalong residents also expressed interest in heritage and environmental matters and are likely to experience the impacts of long-term decision making around land tenure.

The significance of impacts on land management relationships is rated as very high due to the strong consistency of reports from various stakeholders and the history of protest action. Barrick is highly accountable as, while it cannot take responsibility for the actions of interested parties, it has a clear role in facilitating good land tenure outcomes at closure.

Barrick manages its local land management relationships through the application of its Community Relations Policy, particularly through stakeholder engagement. The CEMCC is the primary vehicle through which Barrick identifies and manages community attitudes and preferences on land management and the Closure Plan provides direction for land disposal.

5.5.5 Support for health and emergency services

Operational health and safety risks

With open cut mining, processing and high volumes of cyanide on-site, BCGM is highly accountable for managing risks to local safety and health. Under Barrick’s development consent conditions, these risks are controlled closely through:

- Detailed operational health and safety programming
- An onsite Emergency Response Unit (ERU)
- Engagement with district and state emergency services systems
- Compliance with the International Cyanide Management Code (ICMC).

Under the ICMC, Barrick supplies and maintains four cyanide emergency response kits (two onsite and two at West Wyalong Hospital). Barrick also provides orientation and training on cyanide incident response to West Wyalong Hospital staff. Transport routes for cyanide haulage are strictly controlled and communicated to emergency services at all times. The ERU is viewed by relevant respondents as an exemplary emergency management team.

These controls are considered highly effective by respondents to this study and the risk of emergency at the mine, including cyanide release, was not considered significant.
5 Social impacts

**Emergency services**
A greater positive effect was acknowledged in Barrick’s contribution to local emergency and disaster planning and response capacity. This includes both the availability of the Emergency Response Unit for deployment across the district, and the availability of the mine’s workforce and other resources to wider disaster response activities.

ERU representatives attend the Riverina District Emergency Management Committee (RDEMC, based in Wagga Wagga) to communicate on-site operations, emergency preparedness and high-risk activities. Through this forum Barrick is party to a “Mutual Aid Agreement” with the NSW Fire and Rescue Service and the Rural Fire Service. This allows the ERU to respond to offsite emergencies such as fires (grass fires, house fires, and bushfires) and motor vehicle accidents with human resources, paramedical equipment and fire fighting equipment. Barrick maintains a similar MOU with the Northparkes Mine’s emergency response team.

ERU staff maintain direct relationships with district emergency services and engage in joint training operations with ambulance and fire services (these are reported through RDEMC). Barrick also maintains close engagement with the New South Wales Police Force (West Wyalong) and encourages traffic monitoring on access routes and routine site visits.

Murrumbidgee Local Health District staff unanimously agreed that Barrick “would be the first to put their hands up” to assist in any emergency situation. For example, Barrick recently donated a large amount of bottled drinking water to a rural fire service on operations near Burcher at very short notice.

**Health services**
Murrumbidgee Local Health District reports that BCGM’s contribution to population maintenance in West Wyalong has had the indirect effect of maintaining public health services, which are population benchmarked (that is, funding allocations are based in part on the Local Health District population). Mining families are generally regarded as exhibiting very strong health behaviours see and tend to maintain private health insurance so they create a relatively low level of demand for health services. Overall this leads to a net benefit for West Wyalong in health services capacity and resourcing.

New demand for health services related to mining families has come from the higher number of childbirths and presentations of childhood and family-related illnesses and injuries. West Wyalong Hospital representatives report that this demand is being met adequately within current service capacity. West Wyalong Hospital also occasionally treats causalities from the mine. They tend to present to the Emergency Department with minor injuries seeking low-intervention treatments and WorkCover/WH&S compliance. Typical presenting conditions are electric shock, snake bite and superficial wounds. Treatment is usually precautionary, while a recent head injury causality was transferred immediately from ambulance care to a Canberra hospital. Barrick is reported to support the health of their workers very closely both in work-related incidents and general health care.

Barrick supports health services directly through financial investment and support. A $5,000 grant for individual lifestyle and health support equipment through West Wyalong Community Health is a recent example. Barrick funds a 0.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) Social Worker position (Youth Engagement Officer) through West Wyalong Community Health. This position provides personal mental health support, counselling and health promotion services for 12-25 year olds. Barrick partially funds the West Wyalong Headspace Youth Facility outreach program and the Healthy Harold life education/health promotion program for children.
5 Social impacts

No formal planning or communication systems have been developed between BCGM and NSW Health to manage mine health impacts, but informal communication appears very strong.

Barrick’s support for health and emergency services directly benefits:

- State and local emergency services (including Ambulance, NSW Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Services)
- West Wyalong Hospital
- West Wyalong Community Health

Wider benefits accrue to the community who rely on these services.

Based on the confidence of respondents and the consistency of their reports, Barrick’s support for health and emergency services has highly significant benefits for local service systems and communities.

5.5.6 Crime and offending behaviours

As a significant economic and cultural influence over West Wyalong and the study area, it is inevitable that Barrick and its workforce will influence crime patterns commensurately. Community consultation data reveals that most (both perceived and verifiable) crime behaviour impacts are positive, but that some adverse traffic effects are visible. Key respondents were satisfied that adverse crime impacts are well-managed under existing controls. Crime impacts are therefore deemed to be neutral overall.

Broadly speaking, it is plausible that the increase in employment opportunities brought by BCGM has inhibited offending behaviour. Particularly in young people, for whom relatively few other economic opportunities are available, employment at BCGM has provided a channel of participation in the local community. Under such conditions, young people are less likely to engage in criminal behaviour (Giddens and Sutton, 2013). A NSW Police Force (NSWPF, West Wyalong) representative suggested that BCGM employment has had a visible impact of increasing some young people’s sense of responsibility and decreased their opportunities to get into trouble.

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research data show a spike in criminal incidents across Bland Shire between 2006 and 2009 (Figure 5-8). While some West Wyalong respondents mentioned a visible increase in antisocial behaviour and crime during the construction period, particularly in relation to young males residing in the West Wyalong construction camp, the timing of these effects is difficult to reconcile and there is probably little relationship.

Some increased traffic offending was raised by respondents in association with mine traffic. NSWPF reported that while BCGM staff members tend to be very mindful of speed limits and road safety, contractors from outside the study area have committed speeding offenses more frequently. Barrick maintains a close procedural relationship with NSWPF around alcohol breath testing and speed monitoring programs on mine access roads to control driving behaviour. Barrick also sponsors “Road Safe September”, a month-long annual campaign focused on road safety messages to employees, school students and the broader community.

West Wyalong residents and businesses are considered the primary receptor of crime impacts due to the majority of workers residing in that area. Road users at Lake Cowal and across the study area will be impacted by speeding behaviours where their safety or amenity is compromised, but NSWPF reports do not suggest that this is likely to be a major concern.
5 Social impacts

Figure 5-8 Criminal incidents

Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2013

Otherwise, NSWPF report that BCGM has had no specific crime impacts in the local community. NSWPF report no significant contact with drug behaviour in BCGM staff or contractors, and have confidence in Barrick’s drug testing programs. There is currently little or no alcohol- or violence-related crime attributable to the BCGM workforce in West Wyalong, either in public or domestic spheres.

The significance of crime impacts is rated as low based on reports from key respondents. The observed consequences of any such impact are very minor. Crime and traffic impacts are likely to be temporary and confined to the life of the mine.

5.6 Impacts on Indigenous communities

5.6.1 Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation

The unique significance of BCGM’s impacts upon, and engagement with, local Indigenous communities was identified consistently by respondents across the study area.

In broad terms, many respondents (both Indigenous community respondents and others) reported that BCGM has had a positive effect on improving the livelihoods of many Indigenous individuals and families, particularly through employment and training opportunities.

This perception is not universal and one countervailing response emerged that the BCGM represents an interruption to Indigenous custodianship that cannot be offset through local economic benefits. While this was a minority attitude, it is included here as a qualification to otherwise positive reports by Indigenous respondents.

The development of BCGM has also raised differences of opinion within Traditional Owner and Wiradjuri communities. Highly-publicised environmental protest action through the early years of the mine was closely associated with opposition from some Traditional Owners. Lingering divergences of
5 Social impacts

attitude with regards to Traditional Ownership, Native Title and cultural heritage management at Lake Cowal remain in Wiradjuri communities.9

Cowal Gold Project Native Title Agreement
Barrick’s relationship with Indigenous community stakeholders is formalised to a large degree through the Cowal Gold Project Native Title Ancillary Deed (the Native Title Agreement) and the mutual obligations contained within that agreement.

The Native Title Agreement was signed in 2003 by Barrick and a consortium of community leaders nominated by Elders of the Wiradjuri Nation. Indigenous stakeholders report this delegation represented a historically significant decision for the Wiradjuri Nation and included the participation of some hundreds of Wiradjuri Elders and others at a dedicated West Wyalong gathering. Barrick facilitated this gathering but did not participate in decision making on Native Title Custodianship.

The Native Title Agreement is seen as highly functional and has delivered benefits to the parties to the Agreement through community investment and cultural heritage management. The Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC) is the principal vehicle through which the Native Title Agreement operates. As the Native Title Agreement is confidential to Barrick and the Claimants, the operational outcomes of the WCC represent the primary dimension of impact assessment as it relates to Native Title.

Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation
The WCC was established by the Native Title Claimants in 2003 specifically for Cowal Gold Project Native Title purposes. Leveraging Barrick’s annual financial contribution, WCC has incrementally accessed other funding streams and developed social enterprise interests to generate an annual operating budget of approximately $3 million. WCC reports that while early negotiations with Barrick were tense, the working relationship has settled and improved over time to its current functional state.

“[Our relationship with Barrick] started out at 2/10, now it’s at 9/10. We have set a platform of trust.” (Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation)

A significant achievement of WCC was the construction of the Wiradjuri Study Centre in 2008–09, a facility designed and built to promote the study and understanding of Wiradjuri culture. The Wiradjuri Study Centre has received national acclaim as an example of Indigenous community and cultural development, and represents a valuable icon for the Wiradjuri Nation.

According to key stakeholders, WCC is a highly functional social enterprise. Community capacity and commercial development activities outlined below will provide a strong opportunity for WCC to remain sustainable beyond the life of BCGM.

Local Indigenous community capacity building
In partnership with Barrick, WCC delivers a range of education, training and cultural programs to local Indigenous communities. Employment and education outcomes are widely reported as the primary benefits that BCGM has brought to Indigenous communities.

9 It should be noted that one respondent (a recognised Elder of the Wiradjuri Nation) commented that the BCGM SIA 2013 key stakeholder group was not appropriately representative of Wiradjuri communities. This is acknowledged as an effect of resourcing constraints and study design. URS has attempted to address any potential deficit by representing the views of this respondent alongside those gathered by key stakeholders.
5 Social impacts

Vocational and education programs centre on the Employment, Training and Business Committee (ETBC) (attended by WCC and Barrick) which is established under the Native Title Agreement to manage workforce and training opportunities for Wiradjuri people. Under the operation of this committee WCC and the Wiradjuri community are given preferential access to employment programs at BCGM. While the mine has generally required qualified staff that WCC was not able to broker, the wider WCC education program has grown in response to that failure and WCC reports that overall the ETBC has a significant positive impact for local people. BCGM Indigenous employment records are not available either under ETBC or otherwise.

Community and cultural programs delivered through WCC include a Wiradjuri Indigenous language program and repository, a schools-based education program for children and young people and preparatory courses for tertiary study. WCC’s partnership with Charles Sturt University, aimed at delivering tertiary courses at the Wiradjuri Study Centre under an outreach campus model, is described at Section 5.4.1.

“We have kids in kindergarten speaking language from one end of [Wiradjuri] country to the other”. (Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation)

Through these educational and training programs, WCC further seeks to identify young leaders amongst WCC staff and client groups in order to enable succession planning and promote sustainability beyond the life of BCGM.

The WCC Wellness Centre delivers the following programs:

- Youth leadership program
- Life skills through sports program
- Alcohol liberation pathway
- Mentoring program
- Links to Learning program
- “Widening the Circle” social development program
- Elders program.

Through the Wiradjuri Study Centre, WCC also delivers environmental management and cultural awareness programs. The Wiradjuri Study Centre Yarn Up Space is available for people of all cultures to meet and aims to foster stronger social capital and encourage interest in learning and other WCC programs.

Business enterprise
WCC has actively pursued a diverse range of social enterprise opportunities and currently operates a number of commercial endeavours. These activities have increased the financial and organisational capacity of WCC and enabled the delivery of the range of programs identified above. Moreover, the skills and approaches WCC has developed to capitalise on business partnerships and opportunities will endure beyond life of mine and represent a permanent resource to the community.

The WCC operates a trucking business in partnership with Linfox, with a focus on BCGM operations, and also on-site delivers cleaning services. In the longer term WCC aim to access other BCGM commercial opportunities such as boring/drilling, bearings manufacture, road repairs and maintenance, but financial and expertise barriers to entry in these markets have proven to be
5 Social impacts

prohibitive to date. WCC intends to expand these operations into opportunities at other mines, earth moving, civil engineering and mine site rehabilitation.

Plate 5-2 Wiradjuri Study Centre, Condobolin

Other WCC commercial operations include a mainstream Australia Post delivery service (WCC reports that this is recognised as the first Indigenous Australia Post delivery service ever) and a retail furniture outlet in Condobolin.

5.6.2 Non-Native Title Indigenous communities

An alternative perspective on Indigenous community impacts is that the current application of the Native Title Agreement, including cultural heritage management, does not provide for or include engagement of all relevant Wiradjuri communities. This lack of inclusion is reported as an inhibiting influence over broader Indigenous community engagement.

Cultural heritage management

West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council (WWLALC, within whose boundaries Lake Cowal falls under the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983) reported no formal engagement in Indigenous cultural heritage management on the mine lease area. While WWLALC respondents acknowledged the limits to their cultural heritage role in the Native Title Agreement, they reported a strong desire to understand and fulfil the role that they do have. They accept some responsibility for
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the current circumstances in that, due to the ambiguities over their traditional custodian role, they have been somewhat passive in their approach to Barrick and WCC.

WWLALC respondents also expressed a concern about the recovery and management of aboriginal artefacts recovered on the mine lease. Due to the terms of the Native Title agreement, WWLALC is not party to information about the “keeping place” or how to access and view the artefact collection.

Community engagement

WWLALC reported an inhibition in non-Native Title Wiradjuri communities from engaging with Barrick’s community investment programs as a result of perceived exclusion from Traditional Ownership roles. This inhibition was related to an inability or unwillingness to distinguish Native Title protocols from broader cultural and community identities, expressed as a sense that for Indigenous communities, it is exceedingly difficult to “keep culture out of it”. WWLALC reports that they have often received invitations to Barrick-sponsored initiatives and events, and Barrick has been proactive and accommodating towards WWLALC.

The disengagement of Indigenous communities is rated as a highly significant impact. The Native Title Agreement is effectively a bilateral negotiation between Barrick and the Claimants and is not designed to support other expressions of Traditional Ownership. Barrick cannot be held highly responsible for this impact due to the operation of Native Title legislation, the role played by Wiradjuri Elders in establishing the Native Title Agreement and the WCC, and the pre-existing interruptions to Wiradjuri inhabitation. Assuming effective cultural heritage management at closure, Indigenous community disengagement is likely to be limited to the life of the mine.

5.6.3 Traditional Ownership

Many respondents, including both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, reported an understanding that Traditional Ownership of the Lake Cowal has been long interrupted by the displacement of Wiradjuri populations. While no single sense of Wiradjuri Traditional Ownership is universally representative, Indigenous respondents report that there has been continual preservation of Wiradjuri cultural identities throughout this history and, moreover, a strong modern desire to explore and re-establish traditional connections to the land. BCGM has played a central role in reinvigorating awareness of Wiradjuri Traditional ownership in Lake Cowal largely through the establishment of the Native Title Agreement.

Landholders also feel a strong sense of connection to land that many of their families have inhabited for more than 100 years. Some believe that the presence of the mine has created an artificial level of interest from people whose Traditional Ownership was interrupted generations ago. A small number of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondents reported some frustration at the thought of non-local Indigenous (and even non-Indigenous) people becoming involved in Traditional Ownership matters.

Traditional custodianship

While Indigenous inhabitation of the Lake Cowal area has been long interrupted by European colonisation and agricultural production, Indigenous respondents stressed the importance to Wiradjuri people of acknowledging and rebuilding traditional custodianship roles. In this context, the Native Title Agreement represents a new mode of governance that complicates and, to some degree, replaces traditional land custodianship protocols.
5 Social impacts

As reported by WWLALC, this has had a disempowering effect upon some non-Native Title Wiradjuri communities. This is associated with a sense of inhibition in visiting and using the lake that is incongruous with traditional custodianship responsibilities to land. WWLALC directly indicated a perception amongst non-Native Title Indigenous people that under the Native Title Agreement, they require WCC permission to enter the lake and surrounding land.

Another Indigenous respondent reported that the presence of BCGM is irreconcilable with any sense of Wiradjuri Traditional Ownership. While not representative of broader consultation responses, this attitude should be acknowledged as a valid perception and to some degree a representation of the cultural loss that the Native Title Agreement is designed to offset.

Assessing the personal and cultural significance of this dislocation from land is well beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged as a powerfully symbolic impact upon complex Indigenous identities in which land, culture, community and spirituality are deeply intertwined concepts. Given the historical role of Lake Cowal as a shared and sacred place, this potential impact is all the more significant.

For the purpose of this study, the reinvigoration of Traditional Ownership is regarded as a positive change, due to the cultural benefits this is likely to yield for Wiradjuri people. It is unlikely that current land management or agricultural production will be compromised by Traditional Ownership attitudes.

This impact is rated as highly significant due to the consistency of respondents’ reports and the cultural benefits it suggests for local Wiradjuri community identities. While Barrick takes a high level of responsibility for the outcomes of Native Title Agreement Management, this does not formally extend to wider impacts on Indigenous cultural identities. It is highly likely that the benefit of renewed Traditional Ownership will be sustained within local Wiradjuri communities long after closure.
### 5 Social impacts

#### 5.7 Summary of social impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact category</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Direction</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Project phase</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amenity and quality of life</strong></td>
<td>Local noise and vibration</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traffic on local roads</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traffic on local roads</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>CO; OP</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investment in local roads</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual landscape value</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>CO; OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local serenity and seclusion</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>CO; OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community identity and cohesion</strong></td>
<td>Sustaining local populations</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural diversity</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divergent community identities</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proportion of families and children in West Wyalong</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td>Economic activity and business opportunities</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment opportunities</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing affordability</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education and training</strong></td>
<td>Access to higher education and training</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education outcomes</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social infrastructure, social capital and governance</strong></td>
<td>Sustaining community groups and organisations</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustaining social infrastructure</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human capital</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land management</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for health and emergency services</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crime and offending behaviours</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indigenous community impacts</strong></td>
<td>Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Native Title Indigenous communities</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional ownership</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Closure impacts

This section outlines the impacts that closure of BCGM is expected to have upon the study area. It draws primarily on community consultation data and other evidence presented through Sections 4 and 5. This includes both the loss of beneficial impacts identified through Sections 5.1 to 5.6 as well as other impacts related to decommissioning and management of the mine lease area. Brief commentary is provided on the preparedness of study area communities to respond to these challenges.

6.1 Withdrawal of economic and community benefits

Amongst BCGM’s social impacts identified through the SIA are a range of highly significant benefits to West Wyalong and the wider study area community and economy. Some are by-products of Barrick’s commercial activity while others are deliberately provided or otherwise reinforced by Barrick in the interests of supporting local communities and maintaining a social license to operate (Barrick’s accountability for these is typically higher). Throughout community consultations, the loss of these benefits was universally identified as the primary impact that closure of BCGM would have upon study area communities.

These impacts are identified herein as “withdrawal” impacts. They can be interpreted as the loss of beneficial impacts identified thus far. This section summarises closure impacts related to the withdrawal of four key benefits BCGM has brought to the study area. All are rated as very highly significant, positive impacts, and all are strongly represented throughout community consultation data as such. These four key benefits and their counterpart withdrawal impacts are summarised at Table 6-1. Other withdrawal impacts are identified insofar as they relate to these four.

Table 6-1 Summary: key social and economic withdrawal impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficial impact</th>
<th>Withdrawal impact</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic activity and business opportunities</td>
<td>Reduced economic activity and business opportunities</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment opportunities</td>
<td>Reduced employment opportunities</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining local populations</td>
<td>Population loss</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining community groups and organisations</td>
<td>Decline in community participation</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Reproduced from Section 5.7

6.1.1 Reduced economic activity and business opportunities

Respondents in West Wyalong expressed very little doubt that closure of BCGM represents the loss of a principal economic base and would trigger a large and rapid economic decline in the town. This was related primarily to the direct and indirect loss of population and jobs described at Sections 6.1.2 and 6.1.3, as well as the loss of business opportunities arising from mine supply contracts and regular visits by mine contractors. The loss of indirect economic multiplier effects (i.e. the expenditure of mining-related salaries and incomes on consumer goods and services) was widely reported as a significant risk due to the complementary and interdependent nature of local service industries.
6 Closure impacts

“West Wyalong is going to fall off the edge once the mine closes.” (Lake Cowal Landholder)

Some business operators directly reported an assumption that their business will decline upon closure of BCGM, while others suggested that there were opportunities to diversify in regional and national markets and that closure would not dramatically alter their business prospects. All suggested that retail and accommodation providers would be badly affected by the loss of traffic generated by BCGM. One respondent suggested that many motels could be left unviable.

“[Closure] wouldn’t affect us so much. We can diversify into other businesses. We wouldn’t like to lose [Barrick’s] business because it’s a good income and we have done well out of it [but] we haven’t overcapitalised.” (West Wyalong business owner)

Respondents were concerned with the negative psychological impact that mine closure would bring to West Wyalong. It was thought that the psychological effect would exacerbate the economic impacts of mine closure by discouraging residents from spending and consuming. This effect is particularly difficult to measure under qualitative social impact analysis, and will be associated with rational responses to the loss of a principal base industry from the local economy.

With the loss of market support generated by Barrick’s workforce, residential property values in West Wyalong are likely to stagnate or decline upon mine closure. While this would increase housing affordability for some residents, others may be left with mortgages in excess of property values. This would be a significant concern where families have leveraged mining salaries to purchase a house and are unable to move into similar-paying employment. In the longer run, a depressed housing market would lead to rate and revenue declines for Bland Shire Council.

“When the mine closes, I worry about West Wyalong’s future. It is becoming where farms are not viable anymore.” (West Wyalong resident)

The withdrawal of other direct investment to study area local governments will further add to economic closure impacts. For example, financial support to Bland, Lachlan and Forbes Shires for roads maintenance and social infrastructure is unlikely be supplanted by other funding streams and adjustments in capital and operational expenditures will become necessary. This will reduce service delivery capacity and incur the loss of valuable public expenditure economic multipliers. The termination of direct BCGM rates payments will create a more significant challenge to local government administration and service delivery in Bland Shire. This challenge might include prioritising and rationalising current funding programs; and optimising the deployment of the Community Infrastructure Fund. While financial management is beyond the scope of this analysis, key stakeholder reports suggest that these challenges connotes fundamental changes to roles and expectations in local governance, and are highly likely to generate proportionate public interest and discussion.

Without recourse to alternative economic development strategies, economic impacts such as these will have far-reaching implications for the social environment of Bland Shire by way of reduced employment opportunities and population decline. Unemployment and falling socioeconomic status are likely to reduce outcomes in health, education and community participation. Neighbourhood
6 Closure impacts

effects, intergenerational disadvantage and social isolation may multiply these effects given Bland Shire’s relative remoteness and the current example of some nearby rural villages.

6.1.2 Reduced employment opportunities

The loss of employment opportunities was universally reported as a key closure impact across the study area and is the primary driver of population loss impacts identified below. In practical terms, West Wyalong is more vulnerable to employment impacts than Forbes and Condobolin. A far greater proportion of West Wyalong’s workforce depends on BCGM employment, and respondents reported a wider range of alternative employment opportunities in Forbes.

In quantitative terms, 10 per cent of Bland Shire’s current labour force would be left unemployed by the closure of BCGM. According to current closure planning and mining approvals, this impact would be protracted across approximately the four-year period from 2017 to 2021 (65 jobs per year on average). Smaller corresponding unemployment effects would be experienced in Forbes and Lachlan Shires proportional to BCGM workforce profiles in those areas.

"Where would the kids go after high school? In 10 years, what's left here for us?"
(West Wyalong resident)

Numerous West Wyalong respondents reported a strong sense that, in the context of a declining agricultural workforce, there is no viable alternative source of jobs in the local area that could take up the BCGM workforce.

On this basis, the BCGM workforce will be forced to seek opportunities more widely across the region, particularly if they wish to maintain their income levels. There are other mines across the area (including Mineral Hill, 50 km north of Condobolin, and Northparkes, 60 km north of Forbes) that could potentially absorb some BCGM workers over time. This may incur significant commuting time for West Wyalong residents, or require relocation to Forbes or Parkes.

"People would stay if they could, but there's got to be something to do … in a small town, we have nothing to fall back on.” (West Wyalong business owner)

While indirect employment effects were not modelled for the purposes of this SIA, business operators in West Wyalong strongly indicated that BCGM contracts supported a large number of jobs in West Wyalong (Section 5.3.2). Many of these jobs would likely be lost rapidly after closure of BCGM.

6.1.3 Population loss

Key stakeholders and other respondents across the study area reported that the closure of BCGM (and subsequent economic and employment impacts) would result in an immediate loss of population from the area. The effect is considered far more significant in West Wyalong and Bland Shire where the bulk of population maintenance benefits have accrued. Analysis reported at Section 5.2.1 suggests that by 2010, Barrick had maintained Bland Shire’s population at approximately 220 persons above an extrapolated “no mine” scenario. At mine closure, a combination of lost employment and business opportunities would reverse this effect and the Bland Shire population would quickly retreat.
6 Closure impacts

towards the long-term trend\(^{10}\). Corresponding population loss across Forbes and Lachlan Shires would be broadly proportional to the employment profile provided at Table 5-4.

Some respondents in West Wyalong perceive a significant change in the economic expectations of local residents brought by mining employment. These respondents suggest that some local BCGM employees will be unlikely to return to the lower pay rates of other local jobs. This is reinforced by further suggestions that many farmers still work at the mine despite the breaking of the drought, indicating a permanent shift in local employment patterns and preferences. Structural labour market changes such as this would further expose Bland Shire to population loss at the closure of BCGM.

“We know a lot of businesses in town [that supply the mine]. If the contractors all go, it's not just them but their families.” (West Wyalong business owner)

Population loss would trigger other related withdrawal impacts. Population benchmarked social and human services may come under funding pressure in the medium term. Children’s services in West Wyalong are reported to be highly vulnerable to the loss of mining families, and potential resourcing pressure on schools and hospitals was reported across the study area.

A loss of human capital will also follow mine closure. Families that are less attached to the local community (for example recent national and international migrants) are more likely to move elsewhere seeking work. Spouses and partners of miners who currently work in a range of private, government and community positions may also be lost from the study area.

6.1.4 Decline in community participation

As described at Section 5.5.1, Barrick has supported the operation of, and participation in, a wide range of local sporting clubs and community groups. This effect stems from both population maintenance and direct community investment through the Cowal Partnering and Barrick Buddies programs. Loss of this support would lead to a reduction in the resourcing and sustainability of these groups and inhibit broader community development activities. Numerous respondents reported that some groups would become unviable at mine closure.

As reported by Murrumbidgee Local Health District, the loss of mining livelihoods and a fall in socioeconomic status may exacerbate underlying risks to mental health and family cohesion in study area communities. If this risk eventuates, the loss of supportive social networks and relationships may further expose vulnerable families and individuals to social isolation.

While this closure impact was most widely projected by West Wyalong and Bland Shire respondents, key stakeholders felt it would occur to some degree across the wider study area. With few alternative prospects for participants and community grants, study area community organisations are highly vulnerable to mine closure.

\(^{10}\)Within the scope of this study, the relationship of this population impact to the significant fall in Bland Shire’s ERP to 2011 cannot be directly assessed. A brief discussion is provided at Section 3.3.
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6.2 Land tenure and management

At closure, the impacts of BCGM on local land management (described at Section 5.5.4) will take on a new significance as diverse community attitudes about optimal land divestment strategies come into focus.

Given the long-term legal and land-use implications, divestment from mine-owned and -leased land was identified as a high priority for most Lake Cowal landholders and Indigenous respondents. Respondents variously reported National Parks, Traditional Ownership, stock routes and agriculture as potential uses of recoverable portions of the mine site, with little consensus between, or even within, stakeholder categories about a preferred option. A general view emerged that this issue has garnered little attention in Barrick-sponsored communication forums despite its high priority for many stakeholders.

Lake Cowal landholders reported a desire to re-purchase or lease suitable Mine Lease land, and restore the previous land use and tenure profile. While this would appear to constitute a straightforward land disposal strategy, it would run strongly counter to the expectations of Indigenous stakeholders who have a renewed sense of Traditional Ownership over the land (in particular through the Native Title process). Some Indigenous stakeholders reported a hope to return the lake to its traditional status as a shared place for Wiradjuri people.

It should be noted clearly that all key stakeholders expressed an intention to commit faithfully to a discourse on this issue. Nevertheless, it shapes as a potentially significant closure impact due to:

- The clear divergence of stakeholder attitudes
- The existing level of rumour and conjecture indicated by key stakeholders
- The history of involvement by national-level Indigenous and environmentalist advocates
- The likely complications around legality and race relations.

6.3 Decommissioning

Decommissioning herein refers to BCGM closure-phase operations, including technical assessments, the dismantling and removal of plant, waste management, and site rehabilitation. The impacts of decommissioning are primarily concentrated on and around the mine lease but are distributed through the study area via the arrival of technical workforces and heavy transport activity.

Decommissioning impacts were not raised by SIA respondents as a potential risk to the social environment of the study area. This is consistent with prevailing reports that, at a distance of at least 40 km, study area townships are more or less immune from operational impacts. Some comment was made that the increased activity in contractors and suppliers would bring a temporary boost to the West Wyalong economy, similar in scale to regular mine shutdowns (though perhaps extended in duration), while landholders typically viewed decommissioning simply as a positive precursor to shutdown.

Moreover, Barrick maintains an extensive closure plan which is designed to mitigate decommissioning impacts (compliant with approval consent conditions and ICMM principles). By this plan (the best indicator available), Barrick anticipates that the physical impacts of decommissioning will be equivalent to, or less significant than, operational phase impacts. Given that blasting noise and vibration in the mine pit is the primary physical impact of the mine on local landholders and will cease prior to decommissioning, this assumption appears valid. Some employment opportunities, including some
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specific to Indigenous communities, will be available through the post-closure land rehabilitation program.

Accordingly, decommissioning impacts are considered to be of a low significance and are not a high priority for the purpose of this study.

6.4 Planning and preparation

The social impacts of closure identified above indicate a need for fundamental adjustments to business, social infrastructure and local governance arrangements. This applies predominantly to West Wyalong, where the bulk of demographic and economic impacts will accrue, but also relates to local governments and other key stakeholders in the wider study area. While BCGM plans to operate at least until current approvals expire at 2021, market forces (in particular with respect to international gold prices) leave some possibility of premature closure under rapid timeframes. This section addresses the preparation and capacity of key stakeholders to respond to this challenging reality.

Local governance

Bland Shire Council will incur some responsibility for leadership and coordination through this change. The significance of BCGM and its eventual closure to BSC’s revenue streams is widely acknowledged. Key stakeholders within BSC (including Councillors and operational staff) report a strong understanding of the challenge ahead. BSC has committed to a strategy of avoiding financial reliance on the mine by quarantining BCGM rates payments to the Community Infrastructure Fund, and intends to deploy this capital as a sustainable resource for capital expenditure post-closure (the balance of this fund is not specified in the BSC 2012 Annual Report). This is the primary means by which BSC is currently planning for closure and is largely confined to a financial strategy to date.

BSC is well aware of the economic and equity challenges in optimising the deployment of these funds and while BSC has not engaged in any detailed planning or risk management specifically, recent council conversations have raised the issue of how to maximise benefits to the local community. The BSC Long Term Financial Plan 2013–23 does not include any closure-scenario analysis, while the Community Strategic Plan identifies closure of the mine as a significant threat to the community but does not extend to concrete response strategies. Likewise, the BSC Community Engagement Strategy provides a strong framework by which local residents might be engaged in a conversation about post-closure local governance, but does not identify any activities specific to the purpose. In short, BSC has committed to a strong program of reserving some rates income for the purposes of future sustainability beyond mine closure, but has not yet engaged in any formal planning around directing those resources or ascertaining their adequacy.

Other responsible parties will include NSW Government, Barrick, and local residents and business operators. Other local governments in the study area have far lower degrees of financial and workforce exposure to the eventual closure of BCGM. While representatives of both Forbes and Lachlan Shires indicated that closure would have some impact, neither council has assessed or planned for that risk to date.

Other public service providers

Murrumbidgee Local Health District reports that BCGM closure impacts (particularly in population reduction) would likely be addressed in the long term through reconfiguration of West Wyalong
6 Closure impacts

Hospital to accommodate prevailing demographic trends (e.g. increased need for aged care places). Hospital staffing is already minimal and workforce planning is not expected to be required. Mine closure has not been on strategic or operational planning agenda (through the Murrumbidgee Local Health District Strategic Plan) to date.

"2020 is a long way out for the sort of strategic planning we do." [Study area high school principal]

Riverina TAFE (West Wyalong Campus) has not engaged in closure planning, but reported that it would be highly responsive to district education and training impacts in a mine closure situation. It could draw on regional resources to provide training (for those wishing to remain in the area) in almost any field or industry sector quickly, including retraining, and dedicated closure response programs.

While other public and human service providers were aware of BCGM closure plans and potential impacts to varying degrees, none reported having engaged in dedicated strategic planning or risk management activities. This included

- NSW Police Force
- Study area high schools
- Other hospitals
- Regional development groups

There was no suggestion that district-level human service forums and interagency groups had embraced these issues.

Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation

The social enterprise model of WCC described at Section 5.6.1 is predicated on a strong approach to post-closure sustainability. While WCC was developed in response to, and by the resourcing of, the Native Title Agreement, WCC management has quickly moved to develop other revenue streams that reduce reliance on recurrent Barrick funding. This preparation extends through human capital strategies, whereby WCC has fostered the succession capabilities of staff and local community members through its education and cultural programs.

"We intend to create enterprises that support us once the mine has closed. We also have a leadership succession plan in place". (Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation)

Local business and economic development

The strong awareness of, and exposure to, mine closure impacts reported amongst most West Wyalong business operators has not led to any real planning or preparation, either individually or through existing business networks. A need to diversify into other business opportunities was commonly reported, but few respondents provided concrete strategies by which this might be achieved. The far more prevalent attitude to the issue was one of reluctance or outright avoidance.

"It’s a bit like death - you know it’s going to happen, but you don’t think too much about it." (West Wyalong business operator)
6 Closure impacts

Respondents typically placed the onus of responsibility around mine closure upon individual business operators rather than community-wide economic development programs. Nevertheless, social dimensions to optimism and perseverance were raised in the context of West Wyalong’s history of responding to challenges as a close-knit rural community.

Some West Wyalong businesses reported a willingness to support local economic development responses. For example, the value of a mining tourism initiative involving participation in the NSW Government Modern Mining Trail Program and integration with existing local historical initiatives (primarily through the Bland District Historical Society) was commonly proposed. Further, the potential of other local heritage and environmental attractions (such as the Poppet Head and the West Wyalong wetlands) might be maximised by effective street scaping, signage and organised activities. These prospects are currently being examined as part of a BSC tourism initiative.

“I get involved with other business owners and talk to them about closure [of BCGM]. We tend to focus on the now, everything is going along nicely. A lot of other things can happen in the meantime.” (West Wyalong business operator)

Other respondents foresaw potential for the emergence of a local FIFO/DIDO employment hub in West Wyalong, as the strong family environment may encourage many mining families to stay in the area despite seeking jobs elsewhere. This would require the development of a dedicated transport services (for example, a bus service to other regional mines).

Many respondents raised the example of Temora (70 km to the south east) as a strongly analogous and encouraging mine-closure case study for West Wyalong. In recent years Temora has successfully reinvented itself as a tourist destination to overcome the economic impacts of the closure of a nearby mine. Key strengths displayed in the Temora example include:

- Community-wide economic development activities
- Strong marketing
- Significant investment in the aviation museum
- Appropriate local government resourcing.
Social performance

7.1 Community relations and engagement

Through its suite of community relations policies and strategies, in particular the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Native Title Agreement, Barrick has enacted a strong and continual community engagement program throughout its operations to date. Barrick communicates and maintains strong relationships with numerous stakeholders across the study area. This approach to community relations enables Barrick to monitor and respond to stakeholder and community attitudes, expectations and concerns regarding the mine. Following in this section is relevant community feedback on BCGM community engagement activities by key stakeholder group.

7.1.1 Residents and wider community

Barrick communicates formally with wider study area residents primarily through advertisements in local media and a telephone and email hotline (including complaints management, outlined separately below). Active communication through local media is typically centred on strategic and operational matters such as:

- Mining approvals and modifications
- Operational works and equipment transfers
- Community investment opportunities
- Barrick-sponsored community events and initiatives.

A biannual open day at the mine provides opportunities for local residents and other visitors to view the mine site and observe operations. BCGM is also open to causal tours by arrangement for residents, school groups and visitors. These opportunities were considered friendly and informative by respondents who had attended them.

A common perception is that Barrick has made a credible effort to become a local neighbour to the town of West Wyalong. In the context of West Wyalong’s close-knit community, this effort is highly regarded. All the same, some respondents related a somewhat impersonal impression of Barrick’s public communications and a lack of knowledge of or familiarity with mine management.

The large number of BCGM workers residing in West Wyalong means that many homes and virtually all social networks are exposed to a steady stream of unofficial information about the mine. Parallel formal and informal communication channels are at times contradictory and create a sense of uncertainty about BCGM plans and operations. Unofficial information fuels rumours across a range of subject matter that spread quickly through the tight social networks of West Wyalong and Bland Shire. At times these rumours tend towards a negative perception of Barrick and BCGM operations and in many cases contradict Barrick’s formal corporate communication. However, some respondents expressed deep frustration at the proliferation of rumours and all were aware of the distinction between rumour and formal information.

7.1.2 Lake Cowal landholders

Lake Cowal landholders reported a general impression that Barrick communicates frequently and closely. The two primary channels of communication reported were direct contact with community relations and environmental management staff, typically regarding specific environmental impacts or other land management issues; and the CEMCC, through which broader operational and
7 Social performance

Environmental monitoring information is available. All landholders consulted for this study reported knowledge of the local landholder representative on the CEMCC and a strong sense that their needs and attitudes are being communicated clearly through that channel. In addition, all landholders expressed a strong awareness of personal contact points (including staff names and phone numbers) within Barrick should they need to communicate on any point.

Landholders reported that the quality of Barrick’s community engagement over time has tended to be dependent on the personalities of community relations staff and operational mine managers, and that frequent staff and management turnover has inhibited the development of long-term relationships to some degree. Landholders value the opportunity to communicate directly with Barrick management, but few reported personal familiarity with the current General Manager (who commenced at BCGM in 2012).

All landholders expressed some limit to their satisfaction with this engagement approach and some expressed outright dissatisfaction on certain points. Some of the concerns noted in consultation were:

- The impersonal nature of Barrick’s safety and security systems
- Communication from Barrick is often procedural and lacking in any real detail or useful information
- Landholders’ input on local land management issues has often been ignored in favour of advice from regulatory agencies, environmentalists and consultants from outside the area.

“They would rather listen to a consultant from Sydney than listen to local advice.”

(Lake Cowal landholder)

7.1.3 Local government

All three shires are represented on the CEMCC and receive direct communication from Barrick on relevant operational matters and community investment programs. MOUs govern some community investment as described at Section 5.5.2. Barrick regularly attends council meetings with presentations on operational matters, environmental and social management, and community development programs. All local government respondents reported strong ongoing relationships with BCGM and access to clear communication channels.

7.1.4 Other public service providers

Barrick engages closely with study area high schools in support of the Endeavour Scholarships program. Principals acknowledged that this engagement is regular and sensitive to the needs of schools and students. Barrick further engages with West Wyalong High School through the Environmental Education course delivered at the Lake Cowal Conservation Centre (detailed at Section 5.4.2). West Wyalong High School reported that Barrick has communicated its presence very clearly and made good connections in the local community since its earliest involvement in the area. One recent example was a graduation ceremony speech by the Community Relations Manager, which facilitated rapport with school leavers and promoted local post-school employment options.

Barrick engages closely and continually with emergency services providers in the study area, including participation in the Riverina District Emergency Management Committee (RDEMC) and through ongoing training, capacity building and monitoring activities. This engagement is detailed at Section 5.5.5. Beyond the provision of cyanide response kits, no formal planning or communication systems
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have been developed between BCGM and Murrumbidgee Local Health District to manage mine health impacts. Nevertheless, informal communication is reported as very strong and appropriate to the purpose.

7.1.5 Community groups and organisations

Barrick’s primary contact with local community organisations is through its community investment programs. Recipients of Cowal Partnering grants reported that this program was promoted effectively through the study area and that prospective recipients were well aware of application processes and key contacts. Information sessions and leaflets about the Cowal Partnering Program were seen as highly effective. The value of personal contributions by BCGM staff was also appreciated (some specific examples of individuals’ contribution to local events and committees were reported), which demonstrates the human capital benefits of the BCGM workforce outlined at Section 5.5.3. Some respondents mentioned that operational mine management had previously attended local community events in a more formal capacity but that this has become less frequent over time. The diversity of recipient organisations (visible in the schedule reproduced at Table 5-6) demonstrates Barrick's success in communicating sensitively and accessibly.

Barrick Buddies provides a second conduit by which Barrick is able to communicate with local community organisations. BCGM staff members provide a direct link to Barrick's community investment program for the organisations in which they participate and volunteer. This provides valuable access to small groups for which formal engagement with the Cowal Partnering Program may be inaccessible or inhibitive.

7.1.6 Businesses and suppliers

Business operators in the study area tend to view and respect Barrick as “just another business” and do not report any expectation of special treatment in the way of information or engagement. They assume that Barrick is compelled to, and generally will, do whatever is right for their business as most businesses do. On this basis, most local businesses reported a general satisfaction with Barrick’s communication. Nevertheless, an underlying impression remained that Barrick does not communicate as actively in the business sphere as it does elsewhere. This applies particularly to the promotion of local purchasing opportunities and procedures, whereby business operators tend to view Barrick’s communication as somewhat passive.

Some small businesses are more proactive in identifying and pursuing opportunities from Barrick, but most are not highly aware of what the mine needs or how to deliver it. A related impression is that existing suppliers are far more engaged with Barrick than others. This is supported both by the reports of companies that do supply the mine and those that do not (who report little formal awareness of Barrick’s supply requirements or purchasing systems).

In this context, informal relationships have become an important strategy to receiving business opportunities from Barrick. A general attitude prevails that businesses need a “foot in the door” (i.e. some personal relationships or purchasing history) to access opportunities through the mine. One supplier noted that they received little or no work from Barrick through mine construction and early operation. This situation persisted even after the supplier approached the mine directly to offer their services. After responding at short notice to some small and sporadic emergency jobs the supplier was able to negotiate a more regular and significant business relationship.
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Outside the communication of direct business opportunities, Barrick has a strong reputation for communication and engagement. Barrick regularly communicates with accommodation providers and other sectors around shutdown coordination. A positive recent example is evident in Barrick’s decision to postpone a shutdown to avoid competing for accommodation during a golf tournament in West Wyalong. There has also been some positive, though modest, formal relationship between BCGM and Business West Wyalong, particularly through support for “buy local” campaigns. One local business gave an account of Barrick’s responsive management of workforce issues in relation to the behaviour of his clientele.

Purchasing procedures

According to local respondents, business opportunities from Barrick are generally in the form of short-term contracts directly to Barrick Cowal Gold Mine. They are delivered via selective competitive or direct tender processes.

“We are very aware of the contacts at the mine in [both] processing and mining. Barrick is very easy to deal with as a customer”. (West Wyalong business owner)

Procedures for supplying to BCGM are typically considered relatively extensive but reasonable. For example, some suppliers face strict safety and security procedures including safety accreditation and compliance with random security checks. These procedures are clearly articulated in a contractors’ handbook supplied by Barrick.

One West Wyalong supplier reported that procedural compliance “took a little bit of ironing out in the beginning” (that is, the procedures, policies and contracting processes were initially difficult to understand) but that it got easier with time and resulted in a very clear and productive business relationship. Close relationships with BCGM staff were a critical factor to facilitating this approach, and that respondent noted that purchasing procedure is more onerous when administered by Barrick’s corporate office in Perth.

A common perception was that Barrick’s purchasing procedures never negate the value of the business opportunities on offer.

7.1.7 Indigenous stakeholders

Indigenous stakeholder engagement falls largely into Native Title and non-Native title categories.

Barrick primarily engages with WCC (on behalf of the Native Title Claimants) via the Cowal Project Coordinating Committee (CPCC). The CPCC was established under the Native Title Agreement and operates to facilitate communication between Barrick and WCC and maximise the value of BCGM to the parties to the Agreement. The committee meets quarterly or as required at both the Wiradjuri Study Centre and at BCGM. Further communication protocols, including dispute resolution and the operation of Native Title, are established throughout the Agreement. WCC also maintains a seat on the CEMCC, and engages regularly with Barrick through the ETBC. WCC reports that Barrick engages effectively through these channels and provides accessible lines of communication through the Community Relations team.

Barrick has not typically engaged with Indigenous stakeholders outside of the CPCC. This is largely a result of the protocols established within the Native Title Agreement. The WWLALC reported a
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growing awareness of their formal, albeit limited, roles in cultural heritage assessment at the mine lease area and a greater willingness to explore and fulfil this role as part of their obligations as Traditional Owners. WWLALC reported that Barrick has been forthcoming and encouraging on this point recently, and that current community relations staff have made good progress in communicating more closely with non-Native Title Traditional Owners. This closer engagement has further encouraged WWLALC staff to participate in mainstream networks and events sponsored by Barrick, from which they had previously tended to self-exclude.

7.1.8 Grievance management

Grievance management at BCGM is closely prescribed in the Social Management Plan Feedback and Grievance Mechanism. It establishes a broad range of channels by which the complaints and feedback of community stakeholders will be received. A dedicated telephone hotline and an email address are established as primary communication mechanisms. Various respondents across most stakeholder groups reported an awareness of these options.

Grievance management activities are reported by the Community Relations Manager quarterly to the CEMCC. According to reports tabled and accepted at the CEMCC in early 2013, the grievance management system is functional and responsive, and complaints are addressed actively by mine management. Table 7-1 provides a financial year summary of complaints and grievances received by Barrick through 2011–13.

Grievances and disputes related to Native Title are confidential and addressed through specific protocols established in the Native Title Agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7-1 Complaints and grievances, 2011–13</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complaint issue</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road use and traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual/lighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Source: BCGM operational data

7.2 Community investment

Barrick’s community investment activities are a key mechanism by which study area residents are made aware of, and engage with, BCGM. Virtually all respondents, across all stakeholder categories, reported a strong awareness of Barrick’s various community investment programs. There is strong agreement that these programs deliver benefit to local communities, and provide some degree of personal benefit within the stakeholder’s family or social networks.

"It’s not often that you hear of an event in town that hasn’t been supported in some way by the mine." (West Wyalong business operator)
Community investment activities are distinct from impact management in that they are operated voluntarily under Barrick’s initiative with the intent of community development, relationship building and adherence to Barrick’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments.

“… has been a major benefit and they are very good at spreading their dollars around the community.” (Condobolin business operator)

Administration and accessibility
The administration of the Cowal Partnering Program (CPP) is typically viewed by SIA respondents as accessible and responsive. Small community groups appreciate the flexibility and informality of the application process, and most respondents reported that funding decisions are made well and equitably, with a minimum of waste.

As reported at the CEMCC in March 2013, Barrick is currently investigating opportunities to coordinate CPP grants with the intent of addressing local needs more strategically. When prompted to consider opportunities to improve the strategic coordination of CPP funding, most respondents emphatically stated that the outcomes of the program are very good and there would be little benefit in making changes. One respondent in a local government role suggested that stronger coordination might lead to onerous administrative practices and reduce the program’s accessibility to small groups. A conservative conclusion is that any restructuring of CPP grants should include a degree of accessible community consultation to ensure that any identified local priorities are representative and adaptive.

“It takes the pressure off Council”. (Forbes Shire Council)

A minor point of concern raised in terms of Barrick’s community investment programs was that the Barrick Buddies Program may be relatively inaccessible to seniors’ groups, as older people tend not to work at the mine and few young working people participate in their operation. WWLALC also reported a degree of inhibition from accessing CPP funding related to their perception of exclusion from Native Title processes, but that recent re-engagement with community relations staff has relieved this tension to some degree.

“… they ought to be spending $150k per week on roads in the district, not once in a while” (West Wyalong resident)

Another criticism that was raised by a small minority of respondents related to a perceived imbalance between Barrick’s corporate profits and the value of community investment. From this perspective, Barrick is seen as a highly profitable operation and a larger degree of mining profits should be redistributed to local communities. It is beyond the scope of this study to draw conclusions about such matters.

7.3 Trust and certainty

7.3.1 Trust
The general subtext of this analysis reveals a deep, if pragmatic, appreciation for the presence of BCGM across study area communities. The primary benefits to communities outlined through Section
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5 were universally reported by stakeholders as an overriding factor to the balance of community perceptions about the mine, and Barrick community engagement and investment programs have provided a sense to most that Barrick has taken on a strongly positive role as a “good neighbour”.

The various alternative viewpoints which emerge throughout the consultation data point to a conclusion that for all these benefits, a lack of trust for Barrick remains within a minority, but not insignificant, portion of the community.

Examples are available through all stakeholder groups. All noise- and vibration-affected landholders reported some degree of suspicion about the integrity of Barrick’s noise monitoring program. One landholder suggested that Barrick staff members have responded by driving a subtle discourse within which impacted land holders are characterised as un-objective and unreliable.

“The mine makes out that everyone is imagining things”. (Lake Cowal landholder)

Further concern was raised by some landholders and West Wyalong residents that the various modifications to approvals sought by Barrick have been used disingenuously to avoid accountability for incremental social and environmental impacts. For example, one landholder reported an understanding that earth piles surrounding the mine were originally limited to a height below the existing skyline in order to minimise visual impacts. Another suggested that noise limits have increased over time. Given the failure of previous assumptions, these landholders expressed little inclination to trust Barrick’s intentions for the future.

Other respondents were keenly aware of the increasing attention Barrick has recently drawn to closure (including through the scope of this SIA). One respondent suggested this might represent an attempt to encourage general support for mining operations.

This deficit of trust may have impacted on the quality of landholders’ relationships, particularly where those who have taken up employment with the mine are involved, and one landholder believed that the personal details of his complaints have been disclosed inappropriately amongst BCGM staff. Loss of trust amongst study area communities has probably contributed to the tendency for rumours to proliferate as reported at Section 7.1.1 and represents a potentially destabilising element in local relationships.

7.3.2 Certainty

With such significant benefits for local economics and livelihoods at stake, it is not surprising that some respondents reported a degree of uncertainty about the future of the mine. While most were aware of the potential for closure impacts to occur, respondents typically expressed an understanding that Barrick’s long-term plans were driven by market conditions and that a risk of closure was an inevitable, though unpredictable, fact of life.

“Barrick has always been very open with us about the mine—we know that it is only going to be there as long as it is economically viable. We check the gold prices regularly.” (West Wyalong business operator)

The generally low preparedness of study area communities for mine closure (as reported at Section 6.4) indicates a deep and pervasive assumption that the mine will remain open in the long term. This
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assumption was evidenced by some respondents with comments, for example, about extensive alternative ore deposits at Lake Cowal. Various comments directly conveyed a sense of disbelief in the closure scenario. Some respondents reported that talk of mine closure was little more than rumour, indicating that the interplay of rumours (Section 7.1.1) and trust deficits (Section 7.3.1) has interrupted closure awareness and preparation to some degree.

“There is talk of winding everything up. They keep changing the plans as far as I know.” (West Wyalong resident)

The degree of objective knowledge amongst respondents about closure scenarios was highly variable, and largely reflected the assumption that mining would be extended well beyond current approvals. The majority of respondents across the study area (across most stakeholder categories) reported very little specific knowledge of current mining approval timeframes. Most were vaguely aware that mining operations were limited by regulatory timeframes but few could identify them. More sophisticated understandings were demonstrated by key stakeholders with direct access to consultative mechanisms such as the CEMCC, and astute business operators who depended on BCGM contracts. Most respondents who were able to quote approximately accurate dates for closure planning were still confident that the mine would continue to operate under new conditions.

As reported by a Bland Shire Council staff member, uncertainty around BCGM’s future could potentially lead to indecision about significant economic and lifestyle decisions amongst Bland Shire residents, and prematurely suppress small business and residential market investment. This effect is unlikely to translate to other study area communities, where economic reliance on BCGM remains far lower.

7.4 Social impact management

The physical and environmental impacts of BCGM operations are controlled under NSW Government development consent conditions. These conditions were imposed by DMR under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 in response to issues and risks identified through the Cowal Gold project development application and EIS. The tangible social implications of these conditions are largely confined to the Lake Cowal area and relate to the management of localised physical impacts such as noise and vibration, traffic, and visual effects. At the most recent audit, BCGM was found to operate in full compliance with development consent conditions.

While most Lake Cowal landholders consulted for this study accepted that BCGM generally operated in compliance with consent condition limits relating to noise, vibration and visual impacts, most suggested that their quality of life had been reduced regardless.

Most landholders explained that this had come about due to a lack of input to, or understanding of, regulatory processes by which the conditions were set. One respondent reported lodging “pages and pages” of comments during the EIS and development application processes but didn’t receive any response from Barrick or the regulators despite being identified as a “primary stakeholder” to the process. Another Lake Cowal landholder reported that he was not consulted at all during the EIS process despite holding a property adjacent to the MLA.

Moreover, landholders were reportedly assured that noise, vibration and visual impacts would not diminish their living standards. In one case, a stakeholder reported the view that the EIS projected a
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decrease in noise emissions over time which has not eventuated. Another landholder (also a primary stakeholder) reported an adequate understanding of the approvals process at the time, but failed to appreciate the significance of the projected impacts. Had he better appreciated the significance and scale of the mine, as well as the potential for expansion and modification, he would have contributed more strongly.

“Talking decibels to us is meaningless. Nobody could tell you what 35 decibels really means”. (Lake Cowal Landholder)

A common suggestion was that early planning and approvals processes were difficult to interpret and navigate as they progressed at highly bureaucratic levels. This made it difficult for landholders to establish meaningful relationships with relevant decision makers from the start. One (yet another primary stakeholder) suggested that this lack of regulatory access was outside the responsibility of Barrick because NSW Government regulatory agencies, in response to international media scrutiny, controlled the process politically and with little appreciation of local attitudes and intelligence. The complicated relationships between BCGM, the NSW Government, Native Title Claimants and environmentalist agencies served to further crowd out landholders’ contributions.
Conclusion and recommendations

URS conducted a qualitative social impact assessment of the operations and eventual closure of the Barrick Cowal Gold Mine. The assessment was based on targeted community consultation supported with key socio-demographic statistics and other desktop research.

URS found that on balance, BCGM has had a positive impact on its social environment to date. This is largely through the provision of employment and business opportunities and community development funding. Barrick is generally seen by the residents of West Wyalong and the surrounding shires as a good neighbour, and in a wider context of rural decline, a key factor to the sustainability of the local communities.

Some negative impacts are also evident. These are largely related to the amenity of neighbouring landholders (through daily noise and vibration), perceived housing affordability in West Wyalong and the relationships between diverse Traditional Owner groups. Barrick has also had impacts on local community identities and land management relationships which, though they constitute significant changes to the social environment, are complex in nature and difficult to evaluate as “positive” or “negative”.

Barrick engages closely with community stakeholders. Through the Social Management Plan and the Cowal Gold Mine Community Environmental Monitoring and Consultative Committee, Barrick actively monitors and manages social impacts to ensure compliance with development consent conditions. Further, Barrick maintains close relationships with local governments and community organisations to ensure that the benefits of community development programs are maximised. Some opportunities to engage more closely with local businesses and non-Native Title Traditional Owner groups remain.

An important challenge for Barrick and its host communities lies in the management of closure impacts at the end of the life of the mine. The withdrawal of employment and economic stimulus will have particular impacts for West Wyalong, where few alternative economic drivers exist to sustain the local population and businesses. The West Wyalong community is aware of this risk, but as yet has had little engagement with Barrick to meet the challenge. While the mine is currently approved for operation to 2021, the reality of global commodity markets means that the closure scenario may eventuate suddenly.

In light of this assessment, and in order to fulfill the primary purpose of supporting BCGM’s compliance with the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework, URS recommends that Barrick:

Recommendation 1: Initiate a strategic communication forum with local, NSW and Australian government elected representatives to support an ongoing dialogue on the potential social impacts of BCGM closure as outlined in this report

While Barrick is responsible for ensuring that operational closure activities are sensitive to the social environment, responding to the long-term social and economic impacts of BCGM’s withdrawal from West Wyalong and surrounds is ultimately a public governance task. This SIA report provides Barrick with a strong evidence base to generate awareness, discussion and planning for this task in key government agencies. A presentation and discussion of SIA findings to relevant stakeholders would be of benefit to all parties.

The closure impacts identified at Section 6 offer a framework for this discussion and highlight the relationship between operational closure matters and broader social impacts. Key issues include:

- Strategic divestment of mining lease land, which will require some degree of negotiation across diverse stakeholder groups and establishing the future role of the Lake Cowal Foundation
8 Conclusion and recommendations

- Divestment from Barrick housing stock in West Wyalong, which should be responsive to local market conditions (i.e. avoiding the depressive effect of “dumping” a large amount of housing stock in a short period of time), housing needs, and local preferences.
- Workforce transitioning, by which BCGM employees might be supported to retrain, relocate and/or commute to access other opportunities within Barrick or the NSW Central West.
- Business adjustment, through which small businesses are provided with adequate information and support to identify new businesses models or opportunities well in advance of mine closure.
- Community engagement, whereby strong consensus is built on what, if any, public action should be taken in response to BCGM closure.

The effective management of the social impacts of BCGM’s eventual closure will require the active participation of the community and government agencies. A representative governance framework will need to be established to ensure that this occurs throughout the closure planning process. Clarifying Barrick’s responsibilities and constraints as established by corporate policy, Native Title and development consent conditions will be paramount to managing expectations and allocating responsibilities effectively.

**Recommendation 2: Investigate, develop and incorporate social closure goals and impact management strategies into the Cowal Gold Mine Closure Plan**

Barrick’s Mine Closure Plan provides extensive and current information about physical closure and decommissioning processes. The formal incorporation of social goals and strategies into the Closure Plan will provide a vehicle by which Barrick’s accountability in managing social closure impacts can be documented and communicated with key stakeholders. These should reflect the outcomes of the planning and engagement process proposed under Recommendation 1, and address the closure impacts identified in this SIA report at a minimum.

Formal social closure planning should include:

- Internal monitoring and review of social closure goals and strategies (at least annually or more frequently if the closure scenario changes).
- Regular external engagement and communication with responsible parties as identified through Recommendation 1.
- Clear and timely provision of information about Barrick’s closure scenario as it changes over time in order to maximise certainty for businesses and other community stakeholders.
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Any estimates of potential costs which have been provided are presented as estimates only as at the date of the Report. Any cost estimates that have been provided may therefore vary from actual costs at the time of expenditure.
Appendix A  International standards

This appendix outlines the national and international performance standards against which the BCGM SIA 2013 was developed. It is not within scope to formally evaluate this performance, however the following sections provide a general understanding of these principals and indicate Barrick’s intent to comply.

Barrick (Australia Pacific) Ltd is a member of the Minerals Council of Australia (MCA), and Barrick Gold Corporation is a member of the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM). Both of these memberships require a commitment to comply with the ICMM’s ten Sustainable Development Principles and to undergo regular assurance assessments to publicly verify compliance. The Barrick Cowal Gold Mine SIA 2013 (BCGM SIA 2013) was designed to support Barrick’s compliance with these principles.

International guidelines on SIA overlap to a large degree. In practice, compliance with the ICMM standards alone will bring URS’ approach to the SIA into accord with relevant requirements of the Equator Principles and the IFC Performance Standard 1 with regard to social assessment. As these guidelines defer to local regulations where appropriate, NSW and Australian Government regulations are also outlined below.

A.1 International Requirements

International Council on Mining and Metals
All ICMM members, including Barrick Gold Corporation, are required to implement the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework. This includes integrating a set of 10 principles and seven supporting position statements into corporate policy, as well as setting up transparent and accountable reporting practices. The ICMM Sustainable Development Framework is the primary international performance standard for the current SIA as it is directly applicable to the project and it subsumes and progresses the IFC and equator principle guidelines. As is applies to BCGM operations, this framework is general in nature and the BCGM SIA 2013 comfortably progresses all elements.

International Finance Corporation
The International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards are benchmark standards that must be met by projects in which the IFC takes an equity stake, or for which the IFC has provided project finance. The standards are also invoked by the Equator Principles when Equator Principle Financial Institutions are evaluating the environmental and social risks associated with project implementation. Project proponents aiming for sound social performance generally strive to meet these standards regardless of whether their project lenders have imposed compliance with the standards as a condition of funding. Barrick has a general commitment to develop and operate projects in accordance with these standards.

Equator Principles
Australia is classified as an OECD high income country, and as such compliance with local, state and federal legislation is considered an “acceptable substitute” for formal compliance with the requirements of the Equator Principles (Equator Principles, 2006). Furthermore, the Equator Principles are implicitly progressed by the ICMM Sustainable Development Framework. Under the Equator Principles, URS considers the Barrick Cowal Gold Mine a “Category A” project which is defined as one with “potential significant adverse social or environmental impacts which are diverse, irreversible or unprecedented".
Appendix A - International standards

A.2 New South Wales Government

In NSW, extractive projects and exploration activities require environmental assessment under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act). Specifically, mining projects are typically declared to be a state significant development, which under Part Four section 78A (8) (a) of the EP&A Act, requires an environmental assessment. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 provides detail on the required content of environmental impact statements (EIS) within Schedule 2, Part 3 Section 7, wherein the EIS must have regard to ‘economic and social considerations’.

EISs for state significant developments, such as mines, are guided by project-specific environmental assessment requirements (also referred to as Director-General’s requirements). The BCGM SIA 2013 proposal is outside statutory requirements so no such requirements have been issued. Typical requirements of an EIS as outlined within the ESG2: Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines (NSW Trade & Investment - Mineral Resources Branch, 2012), are shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Consultation</th>
<th>Social Impact Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The EIA must describe:</td>
<td>The EIA must assess whether the project is likely to have an impact on the community’s:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The details and results of completed consultation</td>
<td>• Services or infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How consultation has influenced the design and management of the proposed project</td>
<td>• Recreational and other values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Procedures for managing conflict with stakeholders</td>
<td>• Economic factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bushfire management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visual amenity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For identified impacts, mitigation strategies should be provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following stakeholder groups must be considered as part of the EIA process:

- Local councils
- Landholders
- Infrastructure authorities (electricity, water etc.)
- Government agencies
- Aboriginal communities
- The general community

While the BCGM SIA 2013 does not form part of an EIS for a new project or project modification, the assessment was comprehensive with respect to the relevant NSW legislation (in accordance with the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure EIS Guideline for Coal Mines and Associated Infrastructure (Sections 6-12 and 6-13), and the NSW Department of Trade and Investment’s Mineral Resources Branch ESG2: Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines (Section 4-3)).

A.3 Australian Government

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 (administered by the Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPAC)), manages environmental impact assessment and management at the Commonwealth level for applicable actions (i.e. infrastructure/development/commercial operations).
Appendix A - International standards

The Act includes social, economic and cultural factors within the definition of environment (Section 528) and incorporates social, economic and equity considerations within the principles of ecological sustainability (Section 3A). Environmental impact assessment under the *EPBC Act* may be conducted under either (Section 87):

a) assessment by an accredited (e.g. State Government) assessment process;
b) assessment on referral information;
c) assessment on preliminary documentation;
d) assessment by public environment report; or
e) assessment by environmental impact statement (EIS).

While the act does not apply specifically to the BCGM SIA 2013, point (e) (EIS) is most analogous in this case. EISs under the *EPBC Act* are generally guided by tailored guidelines developed by SEWPAC. The BCGM SIA 2013 is outside statutory requirements and such guidelines are not available. Schedule 4 of the *EPBC Act* details general matters to be addressed by an EIS and, in the absence of tailored guidelines, provide the best benchmark of methodological requirements for the current proposal. These requirements are of a general nature and were easily accommodated within the BCGM SIA 2013 practice framework.
Barrick Cowal Gold Mine Social Assessment 2013

West Wyalong, Lachlan and Forbes Shires: Barrick would like to hear from you!

Barrick Gold Corporation has commissioned URS Australia Pty Ltd to conduct an independent social impact assessment of the Cowal Gold Mine. This study will improve our understanding of the mine’s significance to our local communities and inform our planning, investment and community relations activities into the future.

Community input is an important part of the study. All residents, businesses and community groups have the opportunity to contribute their thoughts and experiences by phone, email or face to face by 30 May 2013.

Its easy to participate. Please contact the URS Study coordinator for more information.

Study coordinator: Jon Zemlicoff
URS Australia Pty Ltd
Phone: 07 3243 2111
Email: jon.zemlicoff@urs.com
Mail: GPO Box 302, QLD 4001
## Appendix C  Cowal Partnering Program grants, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ardlethan Junior Sporting Clubs</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ardlethan Show Society</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australasian Institute of Policing Journal</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bag Free in 3 Project</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barmedman Modified Tractor Pull</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawamarra Media Workshops</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bland Shire Men's Shed - Bland Shire Council</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>10,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin Boomerangs</td>
<td>Lachlan</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin Can Assist</td>
<td>Lachlan</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin High School</td>
<td>Lachlan</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin High School - Student Jamaica Training Camp</td>
<td>Lachlan</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condobolin Preschool</td>
<td>Lachlan</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events West Wyalong - Paris in the West</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>26,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes &amp; Parkes Community Drug Action Team</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes BBQ Society 2012 National Championships</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Community Men's Shed</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Croquet Club</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Diggers Harness Racing Club</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Eisteddfod Inc</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes Heritage Week Colonial Dinner</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbes PA&amp;H Association Inc - Forbes Showground Groundworks</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Region Youth Mental Health Program</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>27,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Anderson</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalari-Lachlan River Arts Festival</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurt Maier - World Skills Sponsorship</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Education !</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>16,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirool Silo Kick Challenge</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Angora Goat &amp; Mohair Youth Development Program</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Agricultural Field Day/LCCC</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkes United Emergency Services Ball</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkes/Forbes/Lachlan Mock Car Crash</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quandialla District Scholarship Committee</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotary Club of Forbes Mid Lachlan Science and Engineering Challenge</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural CONNECT Contact Inc Skilling Children's Services</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>19,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES West Wyalong Trailer Purchase</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Laurence's Parish School Fete P&amp;F Assc</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungarie Amateur Swimming Club</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungarie Bowls Club</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungarie Central School P&amp;C Matching Program</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungarie Sport and Rec Club</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weethalle Show Society</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Fest - Bland Shire Council</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong &amp; District Country Education Fund</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong High School</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Horse Sports &amp; Rodeo Assc Inc</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Lions Club</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix C - Cowal Partnering Program grants, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Public School</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Regional Music Inc</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Smallbore &amp; Air Rifle Club Inc</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong Yard Dog Club</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirrinya Progress Association Picnic</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyalong &amp; District Community Transport</td>
<td>Bland</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>192,450</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D  Summary review of Cowal Gold Project EIS socioeconomic projections

The table below summarises key findings from the SIA as they relate to the initial EIS socioeconomic assessment conducted by Centre for International Economics in 1997 (Socioeconomics and Multicriteria Analysis, Appendix K to the Cowal Gold Project EIS). References to relevant report sections are provided.

Much of the analysis in Appendix K is not replicable within the scope of the current study. As such, “Key EIS projections” in the table below are briefly adapted and assessed qualitatively against relevant SIA findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key EIS projection (1997)</th>
<th>SIA finding (2013)</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>SIA ref. (Section)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 180 operational jobs, $5 million salary payments per year</td>
<td>372 operational jobs at 2013, salary payments increasing from $8,505,000 at 2005 to $35,440,000 at 2012.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reduced population decline</td>
<td>Initial acceleration in population decline (2001–2008) followed by slowing after 2009. Community consultation data suggests this slowed population loss is closely related to BCGM employment opportunities.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>4.1 5.2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Increased population aged 20–40</td>
<td>Declining population in young working age groups. While some unskilled employment opportunities have been created at BCGM for young people, this has not completely offset ongoing population loss in these age groups.</td>
<td>Not realised</td>
<td>4.1 5.3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Increase in population of children</td>
<td>The study area population of children (ages 0–19) has declined by approximately 17 per cent since 2001.</td>
<td>Not realised</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Improved prospects for health and education outcomes</td>
<td>Key stakeholders strongly support the proposition that the BCGM workforce brings health and education benefits to the study area through indirect socioeconomic effects, neighbourhood effects and direct investment.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.4.2 5.5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Improvements in human services funding and staffing</td>
<td>Key stakeholders supported the proposition that BCGM's population impacts have sustained population-benchmarked services and staffing in health services and schools.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gains to local government revenues</td>
<td>Annual rates payments increasing to $875,000 at 2012.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Increased non-BCGM employment and economic activity</td>
<td>Widespread acknowledgement across the study area that economic impacts related to salary expenditures, supply contracts and transient contractor activity have supported local economies and provided indirect job opportunities, particularly in West Wyalong.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Non-labour operational expenditure</td>
<td>Annual study area expenditure increasing to $47,060,000 at 2012.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sustained viability of West Wyalong airline services</td>
<td>West Wyalong airline services were discontinued in 2007.</td>
<td>Not realised</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Increased activity in the residential property market</td>
<td>Substantial housing market activity stimulated at construction phase, not sustained through operational phase. Some associated housing affordability issues as the housing market has settled at a tight equilibrium.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Increases in business confidence</td>
<td>Strong community consultation evidence that mining operations are currently helping to sustain business confidence across the study area, particularly in West Wyalong. Less evidence that significant new businesses have been generated.</td>
<td>Realised</td>
<td>5.3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix E  Social impact assessment matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Severe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost certain</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F  Semi-structured interview questions

3. (Relevant demographic details)
4. What are the good things about (your local area)? Why do you choose to live/work here?
5. What changes have you observed in the community during your period of residence/work in the area?
6. How does the Lake Cowal Gold Mine fit in with that process of change? Can you be specific and pinpoint changes/times?
7. Is Barrick directly or indirectly involved in your:
   a. social
   b. community
   c. work activities?
8. What is the significance of BCGM to:
   a. your organisation/s
   b. the wider community?
9. Are you aware that the mine is planned for closure at 2017 (mining) 2021 (processing) under current approvals?
10. Is closure of LCGM part of your strategic/operational planning/future plans? Have you taken any specific steps to prepare for the closure of LCGM?
11. What impact will the closure of the mine have on:
    a. your organisation/stakeholder
    b. the wider community?
12. Do you receive regular information from BCGM about mine operation/community relations/closure?
13. Where do you get your information about BCGM? Can you prioritise these channels in terms of how important they are to you?
    a. Formal meetings with mine staff
    b. Other face to face contact
    c. Media (radio, local newspapers)
    d. Social networks and family
14. Issues that may be relevant to specific stakeholder groups (provide details):
    a. Water
    b. Traffic
    c. Visual amenity
    d. Noise
    e. Community investment/support
    f. Commerce/contracts
    g. Health
    h. Education and training