



# **Submission: Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands**

27 February 2026



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[www.hunterjo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hunterjo.nsw.gov.au)

The Hon. Paul Scully MP  
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

27 February 2026

Dear Minister Scully

**Re: Submission to Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands**

The ten Member Councils of the Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) welcome the opportunity provided by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to provide feedback to inform the draft Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands.

The Hunter JO is the statutory Local Government entity established by the NSW Government, through the *NSW Local Government Act 1993*, to support the ten member Councils of the Hunter Region to work together for better rural and regional outcomes, and to enhance the way Local and State Governments work together to plan and deliver important regional infrastructure and investment.

Member Councils of the Hunter JO include:

- Cessnock City Council
- Dungog Shire Council
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Maitland City Council
- MidCoast Council
- Muswellbrook Shire Council
- City of Newcastle
- Port Stephens Council
- Singleton Council
- Upper Hunter Shire Council

The core statutory functions established by the NSW Government for the Hunter JO and joint organisations more broadly across NSW include:

1. Strategic planning and priority setting
2. Intergovernmental collaboration
3. Shared leadership and advocacy

Through the [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2035](#), our Member Councils have identified the following shared priorities for the Hunter Region that relate directly to the recommendations included in our submission:



Strategic Theme	Focus
Economic Transformation and Jobs	The evolution of our region toward renewable and future focused industries, maximising our mining related and industrial lands and leveraging our regional strengths to drive innovation and economic growth, create jobs and protect our natural assets and environment.

Hunter JO has developed the following submission in direct consultation with our Member Councils and drawing on our regional advocacy and capacity building work in this area.

Key focus areas and/or recommendations included in the submission include:

Recommendation 1

1. Urgent land audits that map infrastructure assets and assess employment-generating potential on mining industrial lands to meet Recommendation 2 of the NSW Inquiry into *Beneficial and Productive Post-Mining Land Use*.

Recommendation 2

2. Councils across NSW be formally invited to nominate additional land for inclusion within the Policy, particularly land zoned SP2 Infrastructure, RU1 Primary Production and C3 Environmental Management where owned or controlled by mining companies, energy generation operators or other significant industrial activities, and that such land be incorporated where appropriate.

I encourage you to consider our recommendations and would welcome the opportunity to further discuss with you.

Should you have any further queries please don't hesitate to contact Kim Carland, Advocacy and Government Relations Lead on 0460 034 614 or [kimc@hunterjo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kimc@hunterjo.nsw.gov.au).

Yours Sincerely,

Cr Sue Moore  
Mayor Singleton Council  
Chair Hunter Joint Organisation



## SUBMISSION

### Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands

The Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands. The Hunter JO Board, made up of the Mayors and General Managers of our ten Member Councils has identified Post-Mining Land Use as a core priority, recognising that repurposing mine sites and infrastructure is essential to supporting new industries and employment as the region transitions.

The Hunter region represents a population over 800,000, 11 State Electorates, and is navigating a period of significant economic transformation. As global energy and industry markets shift coordinated leadership and strategic planning are essential to securing long-term economic resilience.

According to NSW Government, the Hunter region coal mining industry supports 15,000 jobs and 37,000 indirect jobs (FIJA Issues Paper, 2023). With both Federal and NSW Governments forecasting an estimated 50% decline in global coal demand by 2033, we need increased support from NSW Government to help our region transform its economy.

There are 20 further coal mines in the Hunter region with no mining approvals currently granted beyond 2048. Confirmed closures and direct job losses:

- Mt Arthur (1700 direct jobs) due to close by 2030.
- Mangoola (900 direct jobs) mines due to close by 2030.
- Bayswater power station (750 jobs direct) is due to close by 2032
- Myuna Coal Mine in Lake Macquarie (300 direct and 1200 indirect jobs) – current negotiations with imminent closure scheduled March 2026.

Singleton and Muswellbrook, two of our Member Councils, sit at the frontline of NSW's energy transition, with over 92,000ha of mining industrial lands in Singleton Local Government Area (LGAs) alone. The future use of mining-related lands in these LGAs will directly influence employment outcomes, infrastructure planning, financial sustainability and long-term community wellbeing.

Hunter JO supports the intent of the Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands and Industrial Lands Action Plan. However, to be effective in regions like the Hunter undergoing economic transition, the Policy should incorporate mining land within its audit, strategic planning processes and ensure timely identification of these strategically significant landholdings.

Mining has historically underpinned industrial employment, investment and community stability in the Hunter region, with over 50,000 direct and indirect jobs according to NSW Future Jobs Investment Authority. As coal production declines, significant mining land and associated infrastructure will progressively transition out of extraction. These sites represent some of the largest strategic employment landholdings in regional NSW and will be central to securing replacement industries and jobs.

## NSW Inquiry into Beneficial and Productive Post Mining Land Use - Recommendation 2

Hunter JO strongly supports Recommendation 2 of the NSW Inquiry into *Beneficial and Productive Post-Mining Land Use*, and the Government Response:

*That the Government conduct a comprehensive program of reform of current land uses and opportunities for future uses across regions experiencing mining and energy transition. Among other areas, this review should:*

- *identify regions across the State to which a Post-Mining Regulatory Framework may apply*
- *conduct a land audit of industrial sites, surplus and industrial lands*
- *map infrastructure assets in place*
- *conduct a land audit of sites for potential repurposing for housing, environmental, educational tourism, sport, infrastructure, advanced manufacturing and renewable energy purposes*
- *assess potential for these sites to take on alternative future beneficial use*
- *establish regional architecture across government to guide the next stages of this work*
- *facilitate community engagement in identifying priority land uses and local aspirations*
- *identify priority regions and communities in need of economic diversification*

### **Government Response**

*The Future Jobs and Investment Authority will encourage economic growth and development in coal-producing regions. The Authority will work closely with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to deliver:*

- *next generation regional plans that can reinforce the Framework for strategic and site specific merit for post-mining land use opportunity sites, building on work to be prioritised and driven through the Authority;*
- *an annual land audit of specific industrial sites as committed to in the Industrial Lands Action Plan;*
- *an issues paper will be produced that will outline key strategic environmental constraints across the regions laying the basis for future land transformation and targeted assessment opportunities. The Authority will review the potential of mine sites and existing infrastructure for new, employment-generating land use.*

While the Government response includes an annual land audit of specific industrial sites - mining land does not currently appear to be explicitly included in the Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands. For example, under current Policy settings, land zoned SP2 Infrastructure for major power generation activities eg Liddell/Bayswater power stations or land zoned RU1 Primary Production eg the BHP-owned Mt Arthur Coal Mine site currently employing 1700 people, would not fall under the remit of the Policy.

This represents a significant gap in identifying potential NSW industrial and employment lands in transition regions where mining land constitutes major future employment land opportunities.

Further to this, Singleton and Muswellbrook will be included within the proposed regional framework of 84 NSW councils in the next iteration of the Regional Plans. While important, reliance on this process alone raises concern given the urgency of mapping mining and industrial lands in transition communities. Early identification and auditing of mining land is critical to aligning regional planning, infrastructure coordination and economic diversification.

The Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands and Industrial Lands Action Plan must play a deliberate role in supporting diversification in transition regions. If mining land is not explicitly included within industrial land audits and supply assessments, the State risks underestimating future employment land capacity in NSW and delaying coordinated investment and workforce transition planning.

However, should mining lands be incorporated into the Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands, there needs to be consideration for the urgency to meet Recommendation 2 of the NSW Inquiry into *Beneficial and Productive Post-Mining Land Use*. Mining land in transition regions should be audited separately and urgently. Comprehensive land audits that map infrastructure assets and assess employment-generating potential on mining lands are critical, given two major coal mines are due to close in 2030 in the Hunter, and the NSW Government have estimated a 50% drop on global coal demand by 2033.

#### Recommendation 1

1. Urgent land audits that map infrastructure assets and assess employment-generating potential on mining industrial lands to meet Recommendation 2 of the NSW Inquiry into *Beneficial and Productive Post-Mining Land Use*.

#### Recommendation 2

2. Councils across NSW be formally invited to nominate additional land for inclusion within the Policy, particularly land zoned SP2 Infrastructure, RU1 Primary Production and C3 Environmental Management where owned or controlled by mining companies, energy generation operators or other significant industrial activities, and that such land be incorporated where appropriate.

## Conclusion

Hunter JO remains committed to working collaboratively with NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and NSW Future Jobs Investment Authority to ensure alignment between industrial employment land planning and post-mining land transformation.

By explicitly incorporating mining and energy related land within the Framework, undertaking a dedicated audit process consistent with the recommendations of the NSW Inquiry into Beneficial and Productive Post-Mining Land Use, and enabling councils to nominate additional strategically



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significant land, the NSW Government can strengthen economic transformation and deliver coordinated, place-based planning outcomes.

Hunter JO looks forward to a continued partnership to ensure the new Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands delivers sustainable economic diversification for the Hunter Region.