

FAQS

HAZELWOOD MINE

ENGIE

MINE REHABILITATION

ENGIE's preferred option for the end use of the Mine is a full lake - will other options be considered?

ENGIE has reviewed three final landforms - an empty void, a partial lake and a full lake. The empty void option was discounted early as there are significant ongoing costs and high levels risks that would need to be managed into perpetuity. Being exposed to ongoing costs and risks does not address our requirement to deliver a safe, stable and sustainable landform. From our initial technical studies, we believe a full lake rather than a partial lake provides a better option.

How much of the Mine has already been rehabilitated and what remains to be done?

Approximately 693 hectares of the Mine and surrounding areas, including the Eastern Overburden and Dump and spoil mounds, have been rehabilitated since privatisation in 1996.

We are presently actively rehabilitating areas above a final lake level which is RL+45, or in short, the full Mine lake. This involves profiling the coal batters, covering them with a metre of clay and then topsoil. This work is what we call 'no regrets' work which is common to the two different final landforms (ie, full and partial pit lake).

It has been said your rehabilitated slopes are too steep - that the soil will just wash away. Why don't you put matting underneath to hold the grass and soil?

There has been a lot of work done and there is a lot still to do. Issues such as shore protection, wave action, erosion and flatter grades are all taken into consideration as part of the final rehabilitation and closure plan. It should be noted that coal doesn't erode and coal is the major component of the batter. We are only proposing to rehabilitate the area above the final lake level, which has coal underneath then a metre of compacted overburden on top of it.

You are still pumping water out of the bottom of the Mine - why don't you place overburden on the floor of the Mine to avoid this?

When the Mine was operating, 10 metres of overburden was removed and then 100 metres of coal was mined. When it comes to the final rehabilitation, there is not enough sufficient volume of overburden to fill the Mine void. A rehabilitated Mine void in the form of a full lake or partial lake is not a new concept as all mines become a natural water sink. It is worth noting the SECV originally sold Hazelwood (and other Latrobe Valley mines) with a full lake concept, common in Europe, particularly Germany.





Are you working with the Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy and the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner on your rehabilitation plan?

Yes. We have completed and are still planning a comprehensive body of work, including hydrological and geotechnical studies. We are feeding this information into the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Advisory Committee and the Latrobe Valley Mine Regional Rehabilitation Strategy (LVMRRS).

Is it correct the regulators have already decided on the future land form of the Mine?

No. This is not correct, although they have accepted that the full and partial mine lakes are the two most favourable rehabilitated landforms. Like us, the regulators have a process to undertake as part of the Latrobe Valley Mine Regional Rehabilitation Strategy and have said they will continue to engage with the community. The regulators will be holding their own consultation and information sessions this year as will Hazelwood.

Will ENGIE be responsible for the design and establishment of the facilities around the Mine perimeter?

ENGIE is responsible for the landform only; any subsequent land use, once surrounding private land is sold and the lake transferred to a new entity, is a decision for the new owners and regulators in consultation with the community. We have developed modelling of what it could look like to assist this process. ENGIE has always made it very clear it has the funds to complete the rehabilitation required under the Mine Work Plan Variation. We will deliver a safe, stable and sustainable landform for the community. We are not responsible for decisions on future land use.

If someone else wants to access the Hazelwood Mine coal, how difficult is it to reverse the remediation work?

We are not sterilising the coal by filling the Mine with water; we are eliminating risks. If you were to fill the Mine with overburden, which is impractical, this would be sterilising the coal. What we are proposing will add a future incremental cost to access it. Coal can be submerged and then reaccessed; this was evidenced in the Latrobe River and Morwell River Diversion failures. Any future plans would be subject to regulator approval. However there is coal available away from the Hazelwood Mine.

What happens in the future when there is a lake and parkland, and a deep slip happens. Whose responsibility will it be to fix it?

We estimate it will be another 15 or 16 years from now before the landform is completed, assuming that water is available. ENGIE will continue to have an “after care” responsibility for the Mine for a considerable time after that. However the studies being done now are to help ensure problems don’t occur in the future.

