

[REDACTED]
Director , Northern NSW Assessments
Environment Assessments (NSW and ACT)
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
GPO Box 3090
CANBERRA ACT 2601



By email: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Re: Response to letter about Queensland Hunter Gas Pipeline Reconsideration Request (2008-4260)

I would like to provide the following information in response to the letter received from DCCEEW on 7th October asking for additional information on the reconsideration request that I made on behalf of Lock the Gate Alliance and a number of other groups on 15th February this year.

1. The letter requested zoomed in maps of native woody vegetation along the pipeline route.
2. Attachment 1 to this letter provides a set of maps showing the pipeline route cutting through native vegetation at 10 locations along the length of the pipeline in NSW. There are additional areas where vegetation is likely to be affected – but I have chosen these as 10 examples which demonstrate the fact that it is impossible for the chosen route to avoid all native vegetation.
3. These maps have been derived from [Santos' public website](#) which provides the pipeline route in a map system. In each of the examples below I have provided two maps for each – one which shows the 'Approved route – Rev L' (in green in the maps) as mapped by Santos and then a second which shows the associated 'Corridor' (in blue).
4. As you will see, in the majority of the locations for which I have provided maps, there is no pathway for the route that does not require the clearing of native vegetation.
5. There is also considerable evidence to indicate that these locations represent habitat for nationally threatened species or ecosystems that were listed at the time of the HGP referral decision.
6. The areas in Map 1, Map 6 and Map 8 are in the vicinity of known records of the Spotted-tailed Quoll and Regent Honeyeater (see original reconsideration request for species maps).
7. The area in Map 10 is in the vicinity of known records of Corben's Long-eared Bat (see original reconsideration request for species maps).
8. The area in Map 1 cuts across a patch of native vegetation mapped as White Box,-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland and Derived Native Grasslands CEEC by the [Hunter Valley Remnant Vegetation Surveys](#).

9. The letter also requested additional evidence. Therefore, in addition to the attached maps, I commissioned a biodiversity assessor to undertake a survey of publicly accessible areas of the pipeline route between Scone and Murrurundi to determine whether the White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland and Derived Native Grasslands CEEC was present.
10. The report provided as Attachment 2 indicates that the assessor recorded the CEEC in four locations on the pipeline route. The location of the sites is provided on a map and the details of the vegetation at each site is included in the report along with photos. Additional photos and specific waypoints are available for each site – which can be provided on request.
11. All of these locations were within the Scone to Murrurundi section of the pipeline, which is known to contain important patches of the CEEC.
12. This provides additional evidence to show that the proposed pipeline will have a significant impact on MNES that were listed at the time of the referral decision.
13. There are also likely to be many more areas of the CEEC that were not publicly accessible in this part of the pipeline, given widespread knowledge of its distribution in this area.
14. In relation to your question about other EECs that are likely to be located in the route, I have not been able to find additional high-quality datasets that provide the evidence you are seeking. As you will be aware, the quality of vegetation mapping along the route is generally poor, and fine scale vegetation mapping is largely absent for most of it.
15. The Hunter Valley Remnant Vegetation Mapping is notable as it provides detailed, finescale mapping and identifies a number of areas along the route as containing the White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum CEEC, including areas shown in Map 1 (see original reconsideration request for HVRVM CEEC mapping overlaying the pipeline route).
16. I would also like to draw to your attention to some ongoing uncertainty with regard to the final route of the pipeline. As you will see on [Santos' HGP website](#), they are encouraging landholders to submit alternative route proposals. The Santos website map shows extensive alternative route proposals that have been submitted that are far outside the approved corridor of the project. This may be something that is also relevant to your decision making.
17. I believe this response, along with the original reconsideration request, provides evidence that the QHGP will have a significant impact on MNES with a high degree of certainty, in the form of expert field survey plus existing vegetation mapping and threatened species location data, and I request that you consider it a valid request and seek public submissions on it.

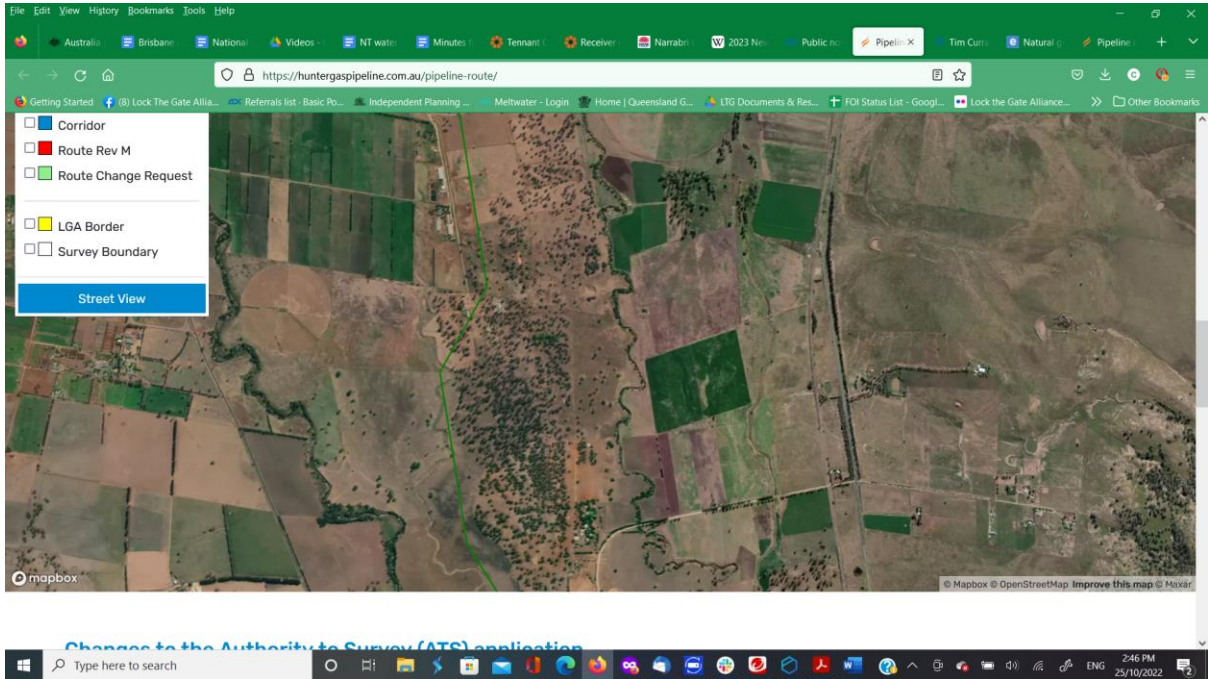
Many thanks,



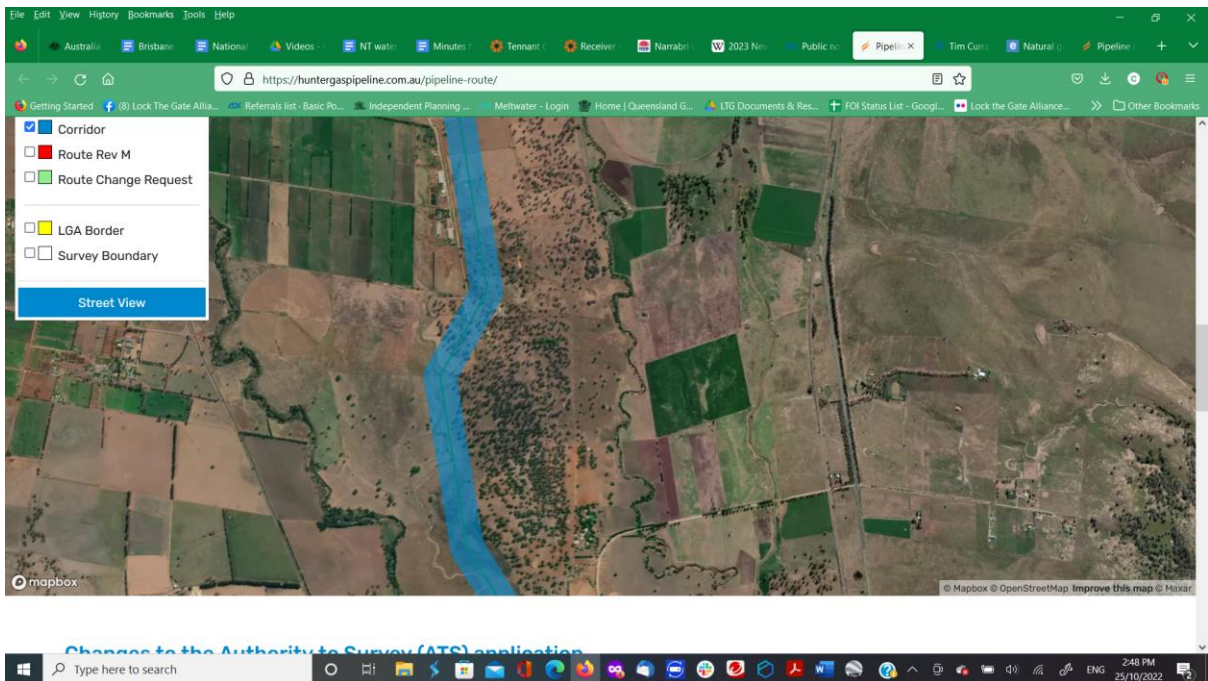
Carmel Flint
National Coordinator
Lock the Gate Alliance
0400 521474

Attachment 1

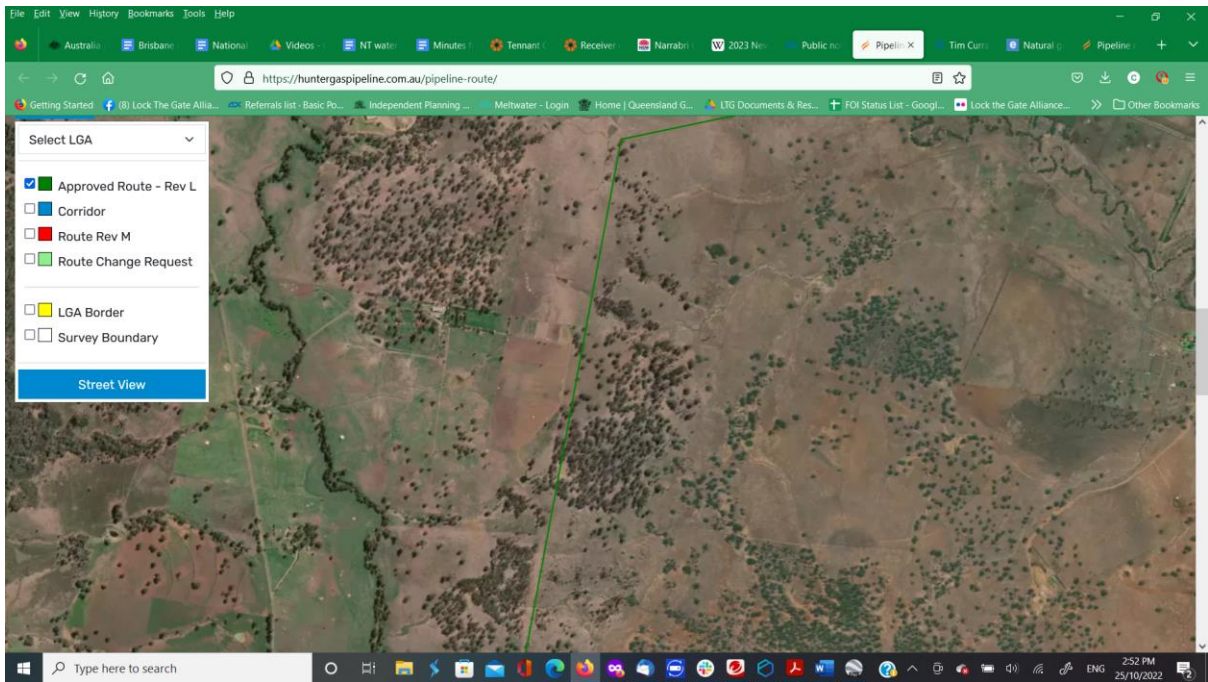
Map 1a: South of Scone – (in an area of vegetation mapped as White Box CEEC by Peake et al)



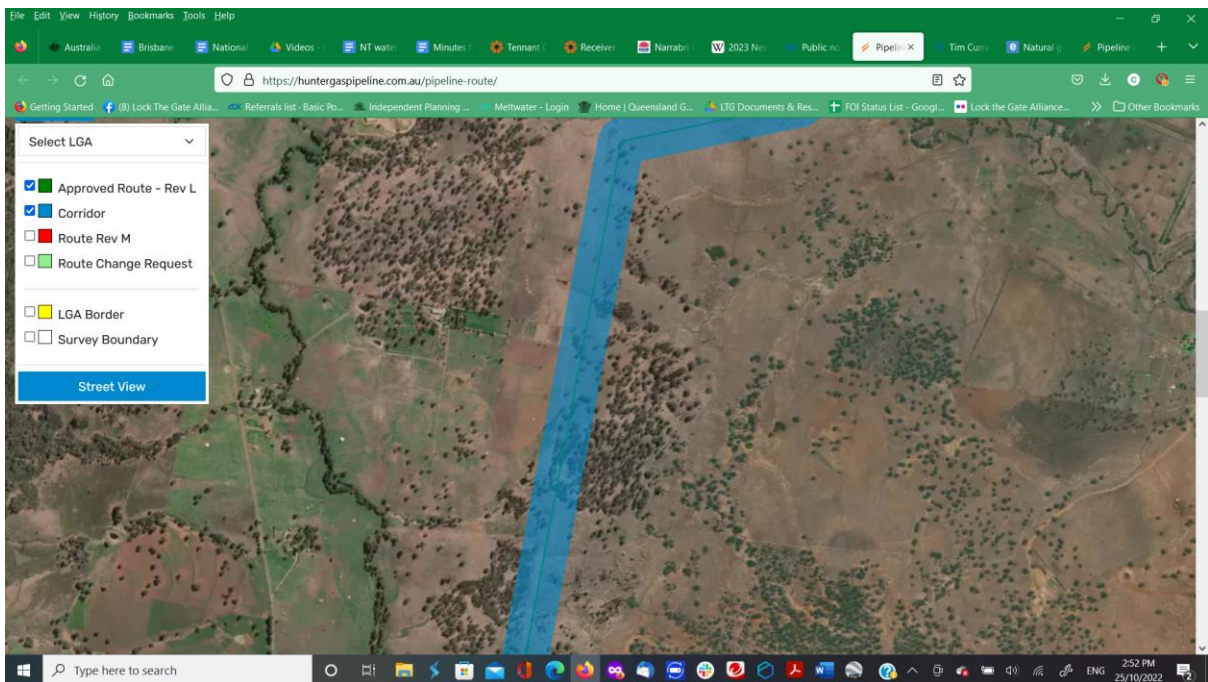
Map 1b) South of Scone – showing entire corridor



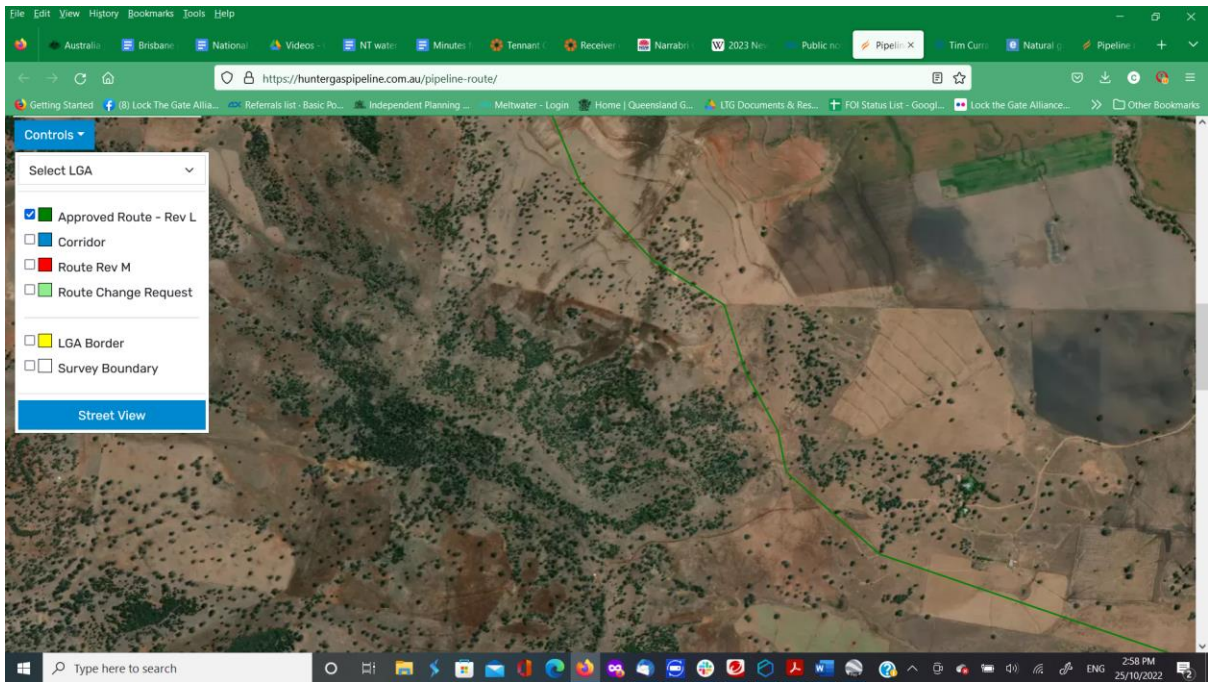
Map 2a: North of Scone



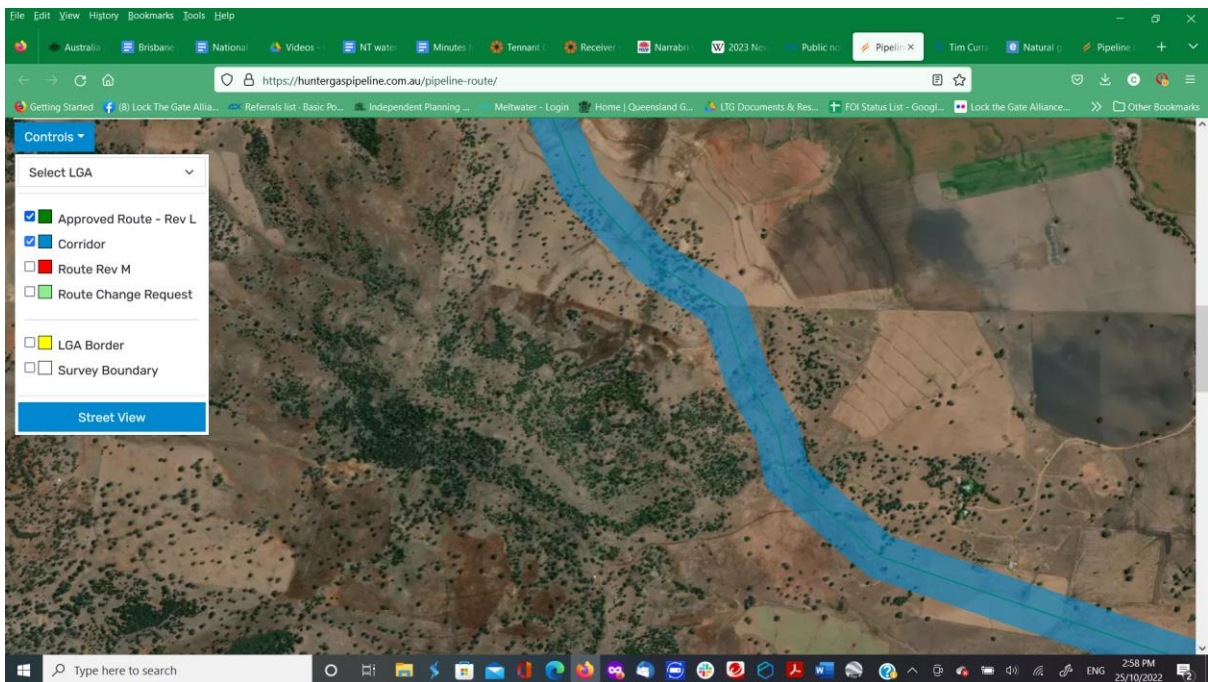
Map 2b: North of Scone showing whole corridor



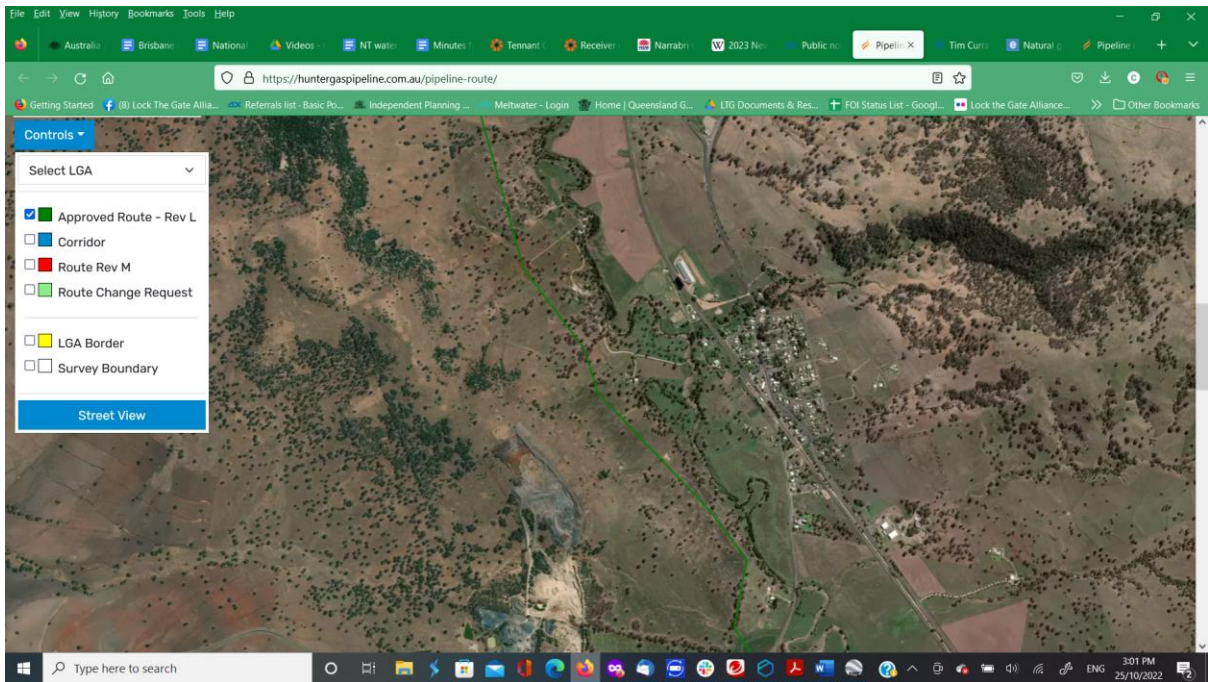
Map 3a: North of Willow Tree



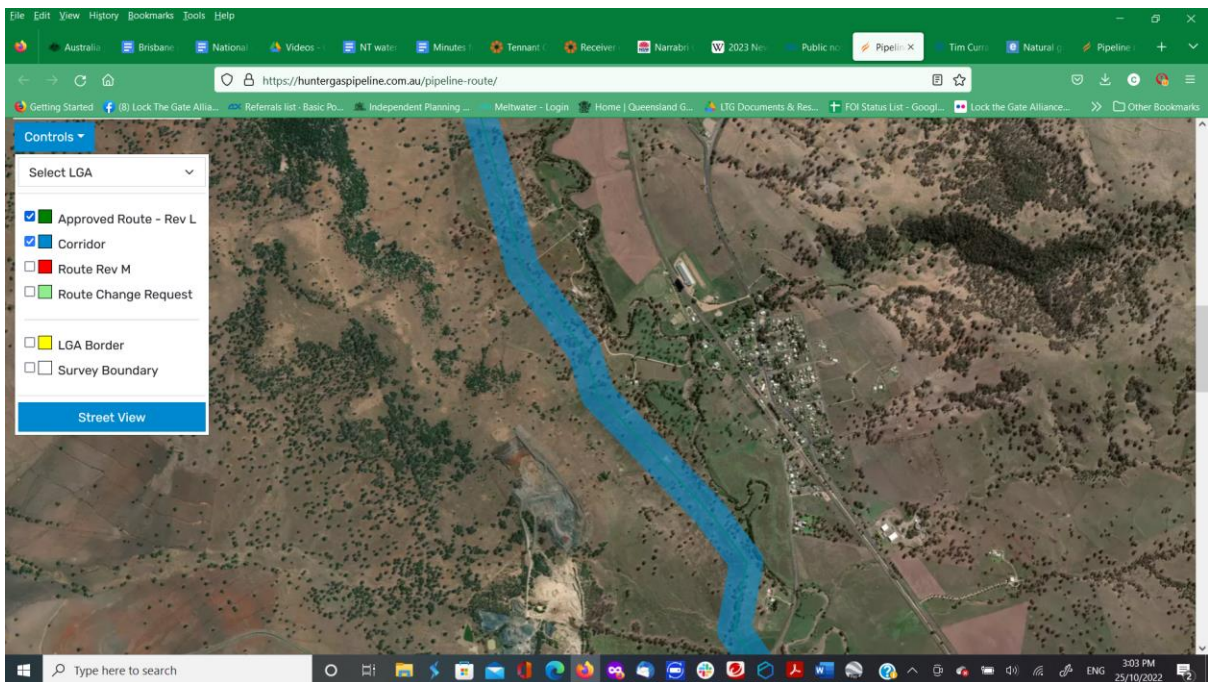
Map 3b: Corridor north of Willow Tree



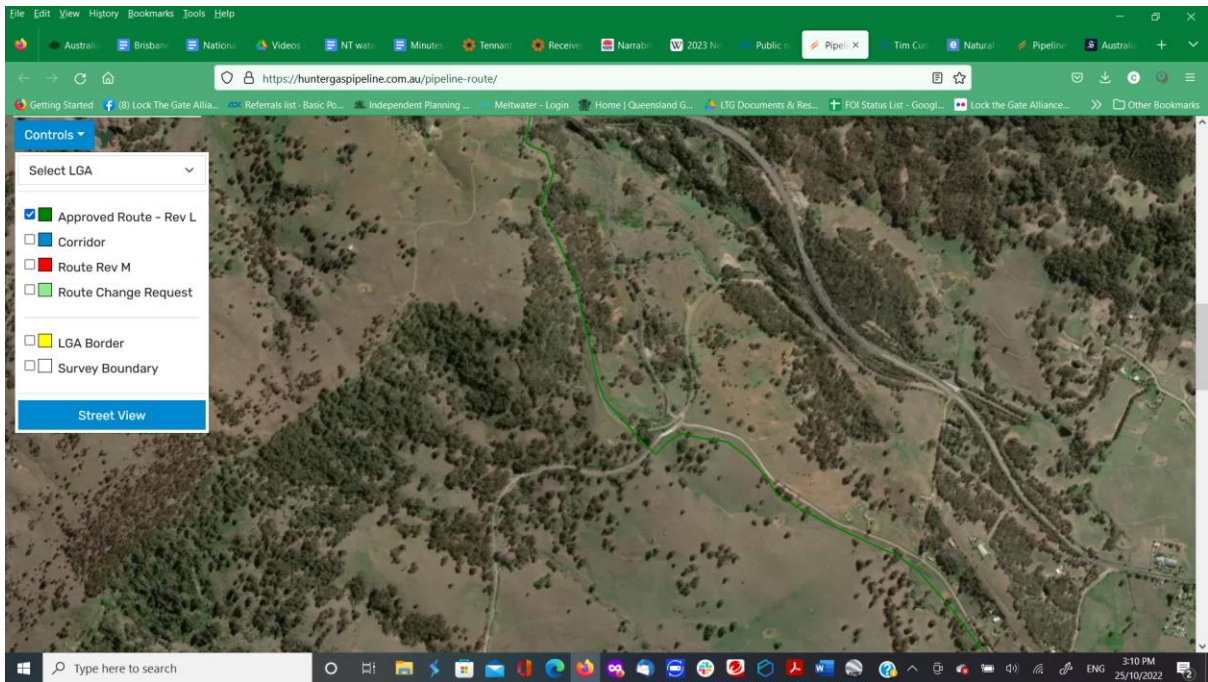
Map 4a: Just west of Willow Tree



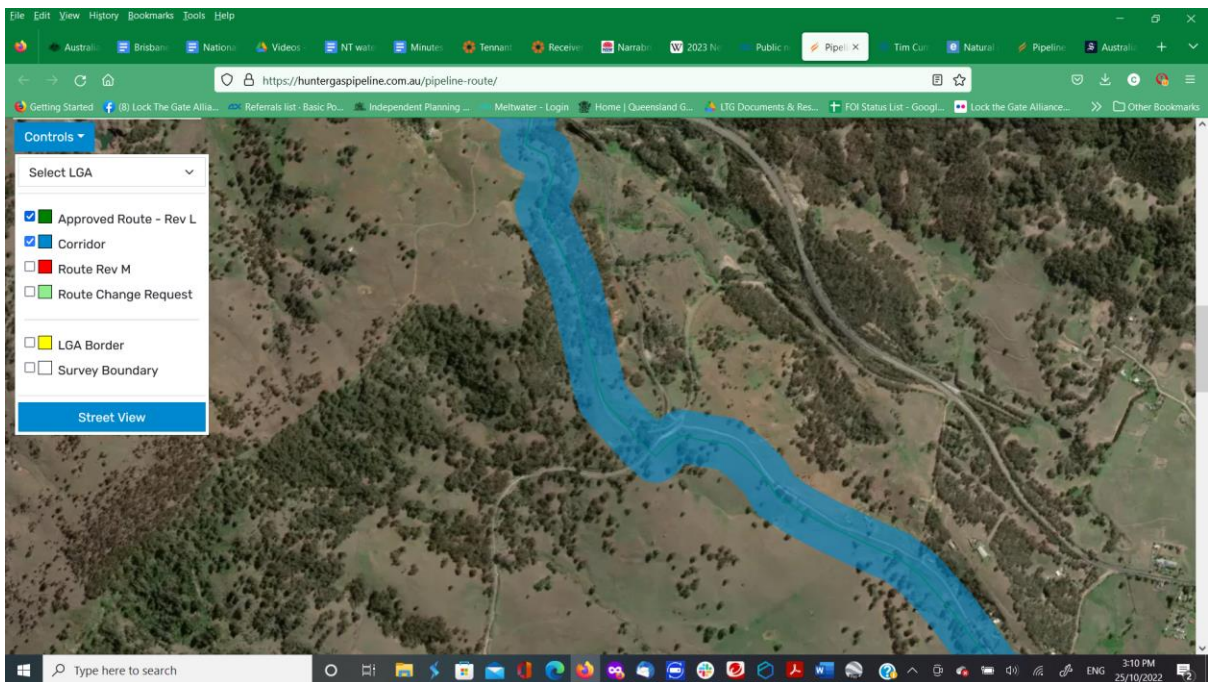
Map 4b: Corridor just west of Willow Tree



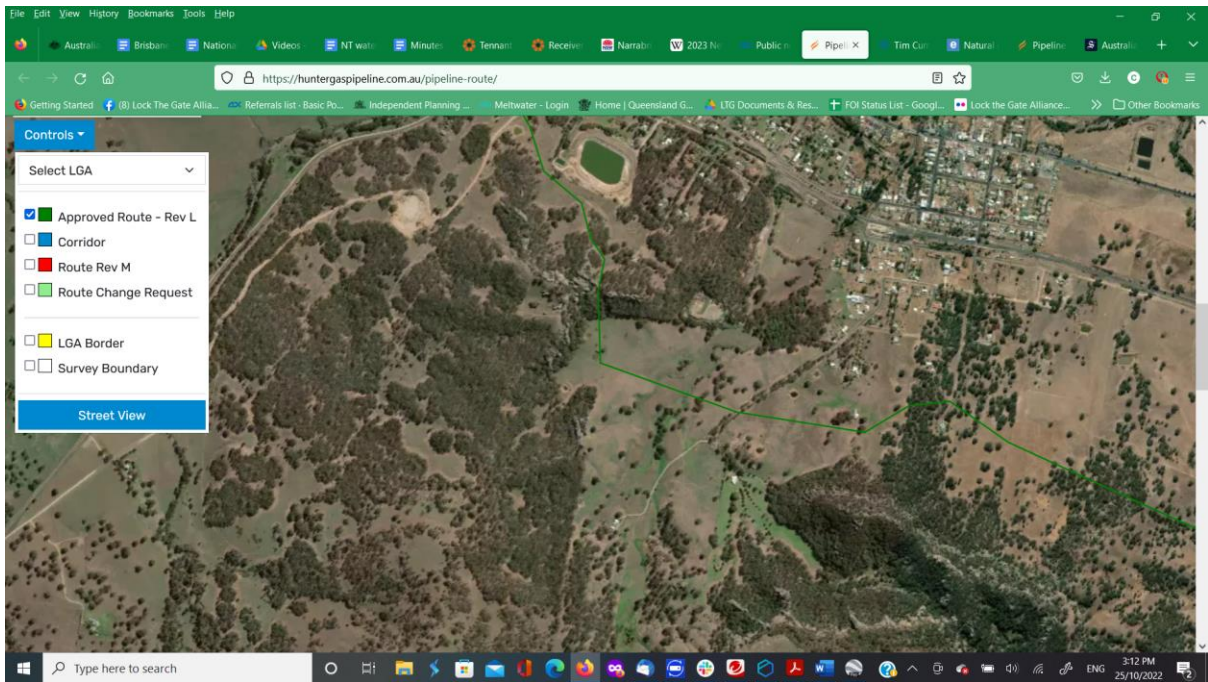
Map 5a: South of Willow Tree



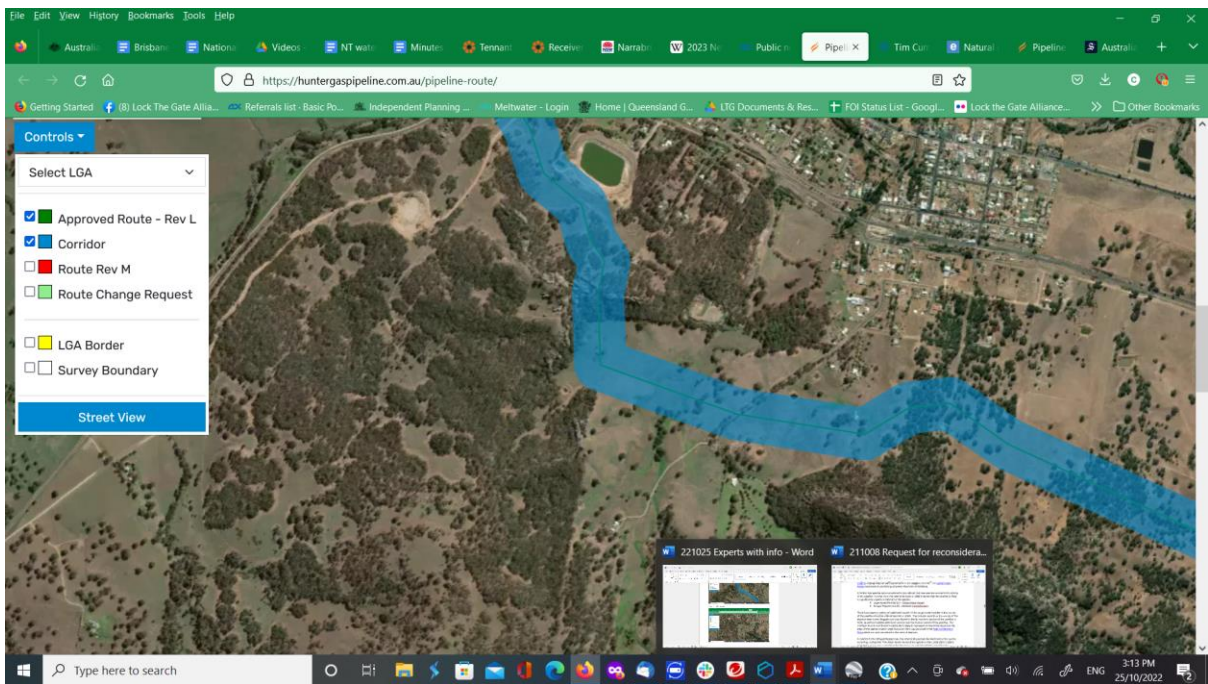
Map 5b: Corridor South of Willow Tree



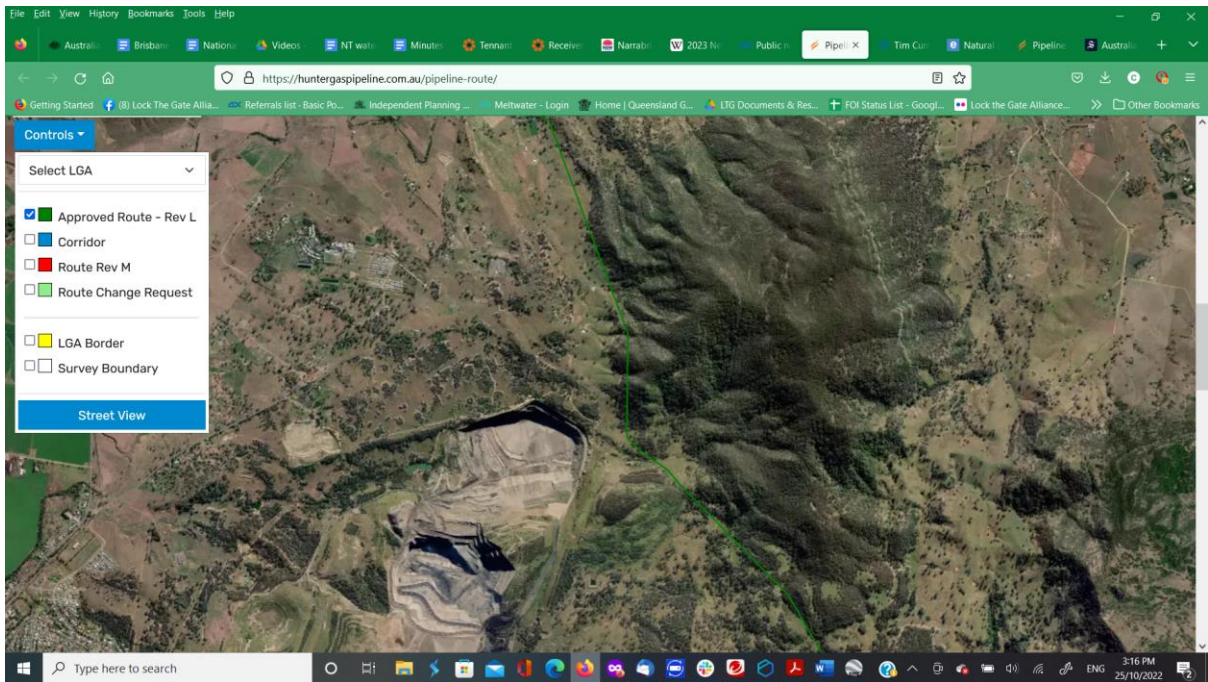
Map 6a: South-west of Murrurundi



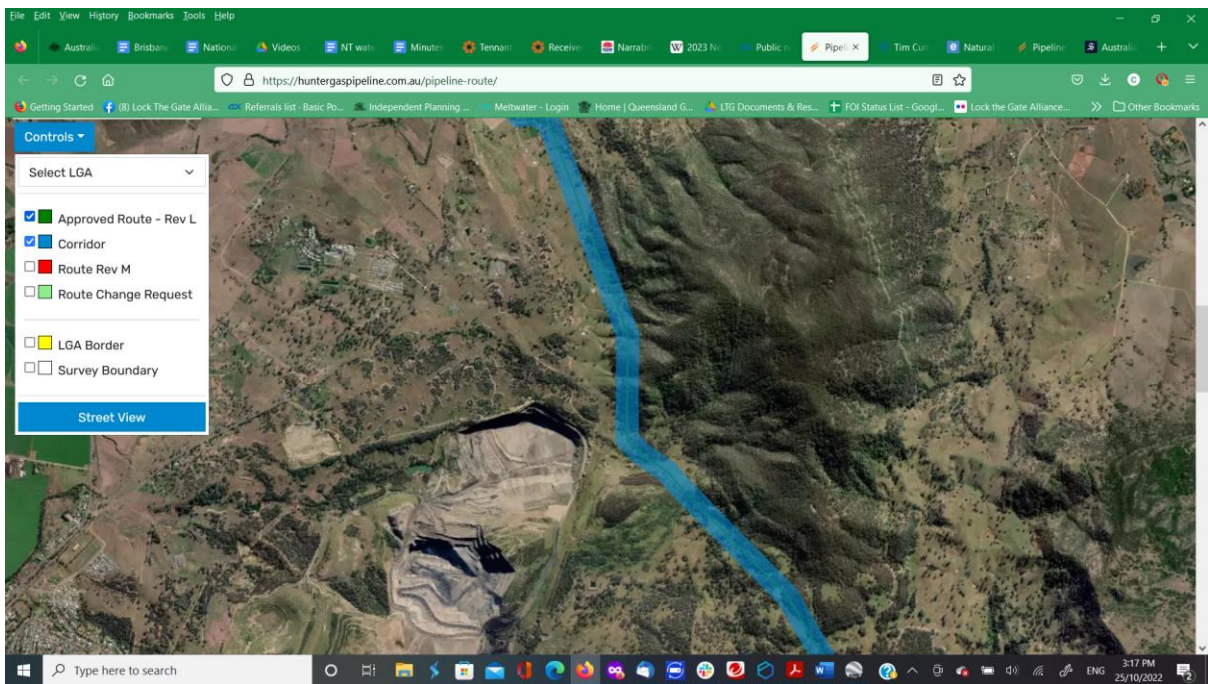
Map 6b: Corridor south-west of Murrurundi



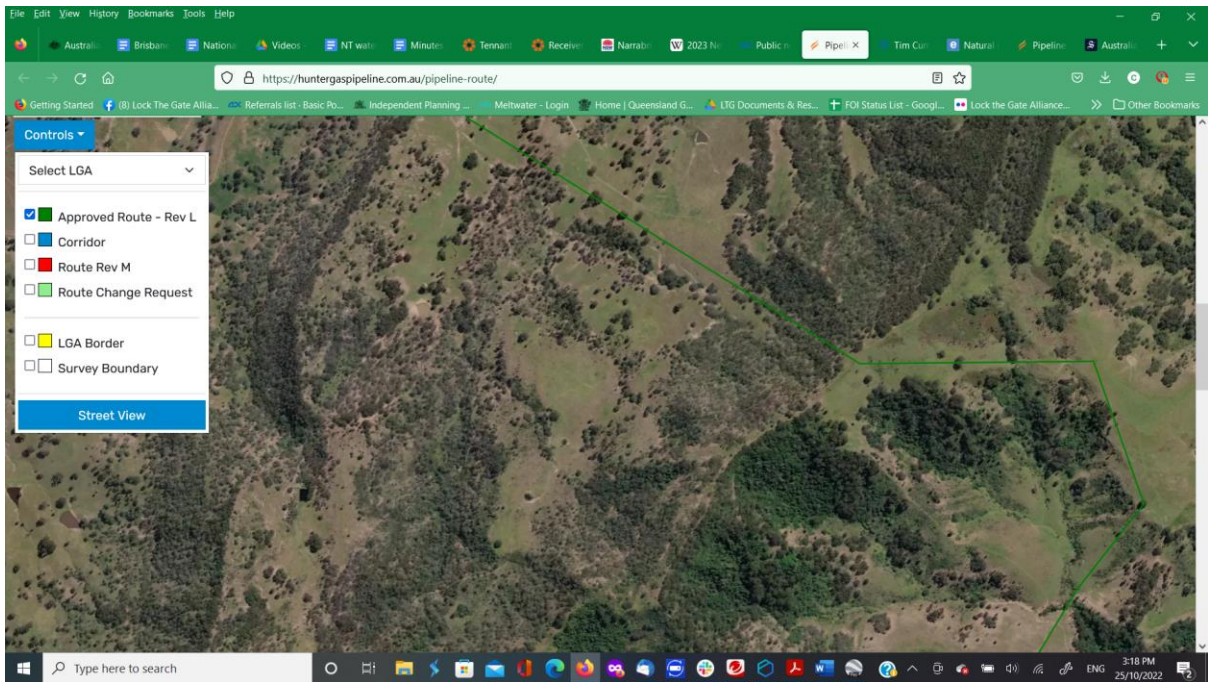
Map 7a: North-east of Muswellbrook



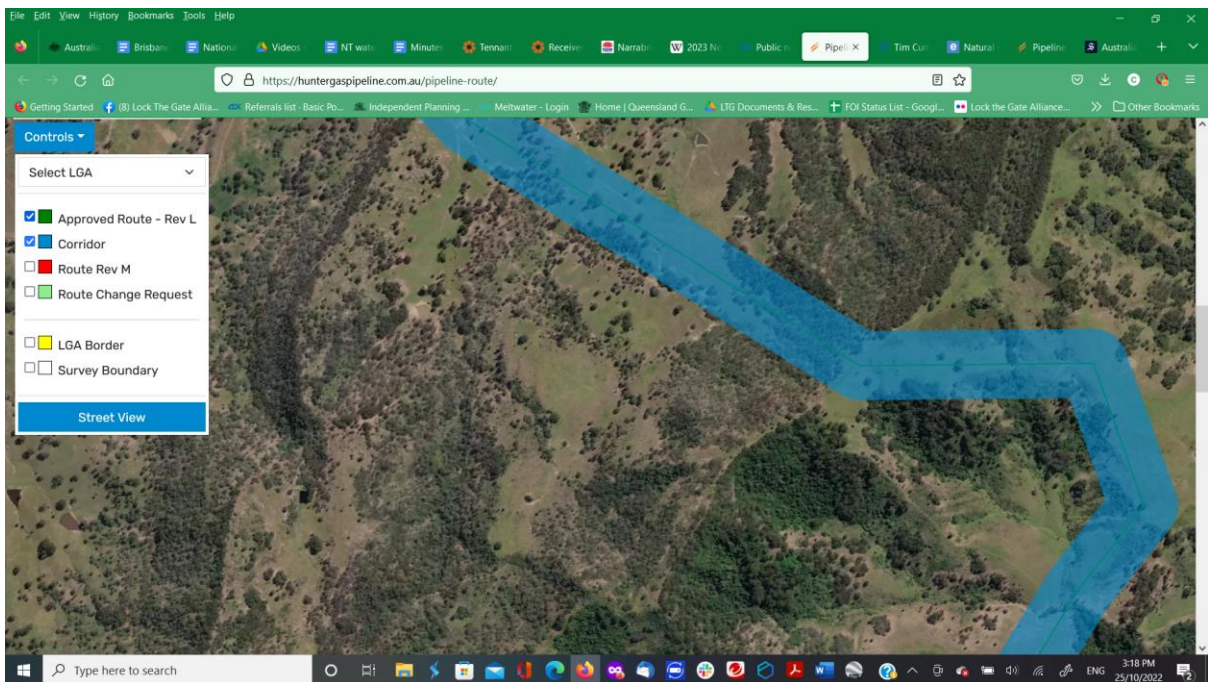
Map 7b: Corridor north-east of Muswellbrook



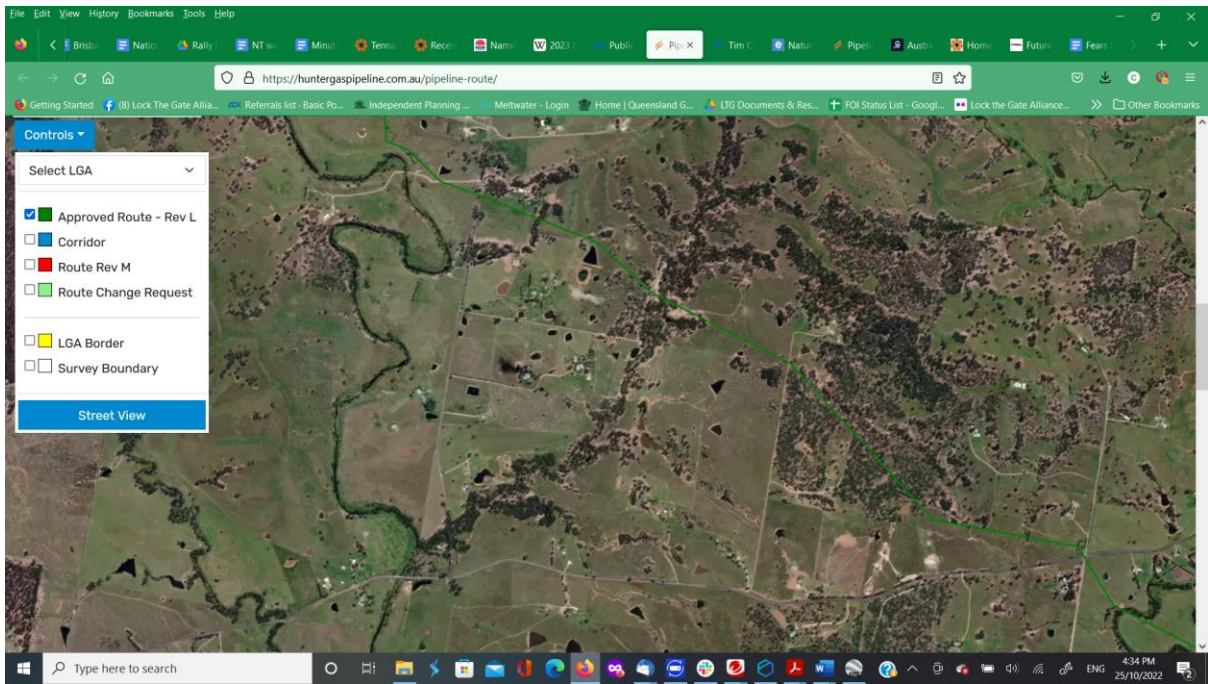
Map 8a: South-east of Muswellbrook



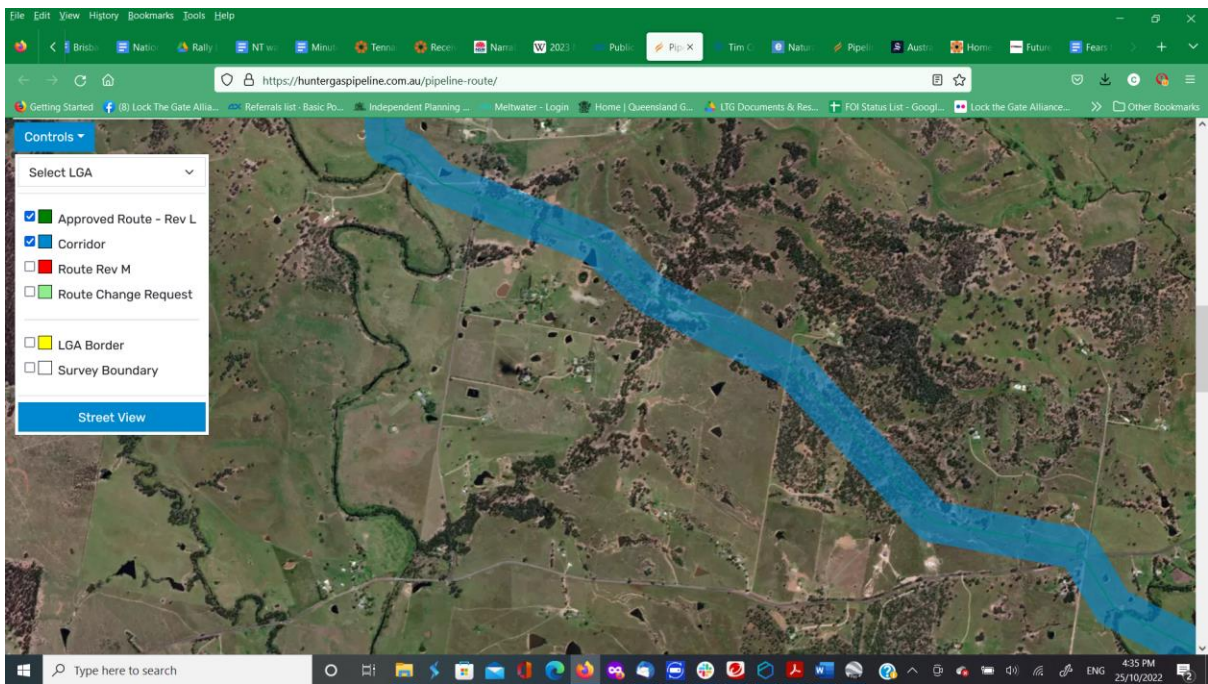
Map 8b: Corridor south-east of Muswellbrook



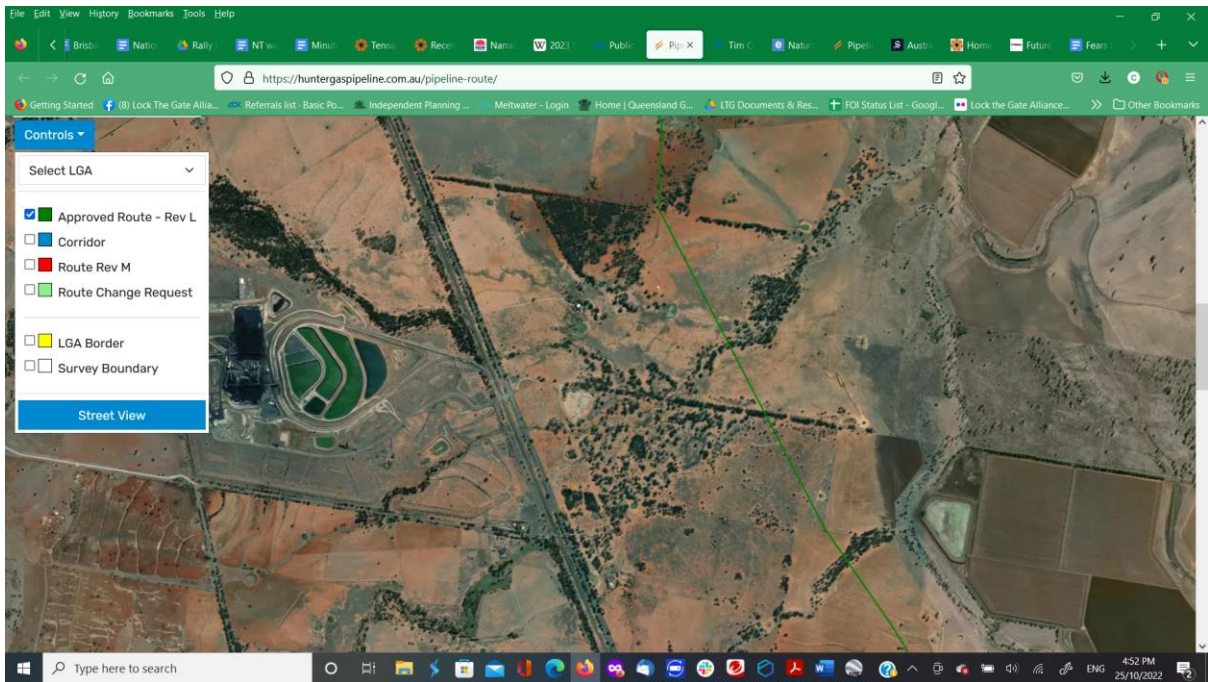
Map 9a: North-east of Singleton



Map 9b: Corridor north-east of Singleton



Map 10a: North of Baan Baa



Map 10b: Corridor north of Baan Baa

