

Coal firm given go-ahead for testing at new site

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AN AUSTRALIAN mining company has been granted a second exploration licence to conduct tests on another part of the Canobie coalfield.

New Age Exploration Ltd, who commenced drilling works last January, have also obtained a conditional underground mining licence to explore the coal seams within the Solway Basin, which extends across Eastriggs and Gretna.

The application, which was lodged in November, was approved by the Coal Authority last Friday and covers a 35 square mile area to the south west of the existing site.

NAE managing director Gary Fietz said: "The Lochinvar South Licence granted by the Coal Authority significantly extends the size and resource potential of the Lochinvar project.

"Successful exploration within Lochinvar South has the potential to provide a sig-

nificant increase in the utilisation of the outstanding infrastructure located in the region."

An exploration target of 10 to 34 million tonnes has been estimated on the new site and the initial exploration will focus on existing seismic and other historic data.

Meanwhile, the first hole of the phase 1b drilling programme also commenced this week, with a further three holes to follow.

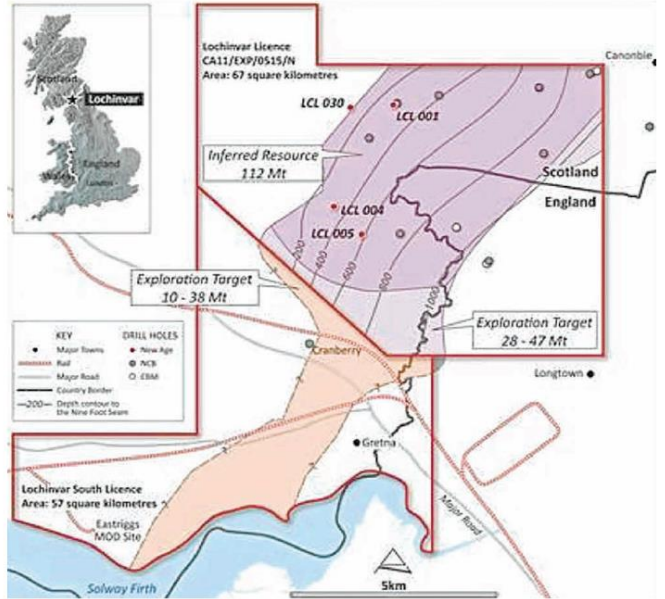
The programme follows the completion of the first phase of drilling at the end of last year, where an inferred resource of 112 million tonnes were identified, and will pro-

vide further information on raw and clean coal quality, geotechnical testing and structural information.

Mr Fietz added: "It is with great pleasure that we announce the commencement of the second phase of drilling at our key project Lochinvar.

"The results from this drilling programme will form a critical component of the scoping study already well underway."

The company state that all land access, licences and approvals are also in place and 'well advanced' for future exploration programmes in the area.



COAL MAP . . . a second licence for coal exploration has been granted south of the existing site, covering Eastriggs and Gretna

It significantly extends the size and resource potential of the project Gary Fietz