



MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MOP CONSULTATION MEETING HELD AT DARTBROOK – 7 September 2017 .

PRESENT:

James Bailey	JB	Australian Pacific Coal (AQC) Dartbrook Mine – Environmental Consultant
Scott Brooks	SB	Muswellbrook Shire Council Staff Representative
Greg Kukla	GK	AQC Dartbrook Mine – General Manager – Project Development
Jennifer Lecky	JL	Muswellbrook Shire Community Representative
Tony Lonergan	TL	Muswellbrook Shire Community Representative
Doug Stewart	DS	AQC Dartbrook Mine – Safety, Health, Environment and Community (SHEC) Coordinator
Cnr Kiwa Fisher	KF	Upper Hunter Shire Council – Acting Chairperson
Arthur Mitchell	AM	Upper Hunter Community Representative
Annette Rahn	AR	Upper Hunter Community Representative
Paul Smith	PS	Upper Hunter Shire Council Staff Representative
APOLOGY:		
Noel Downs	ND	Muswellbrook Shire Community Representative
Cnr Martin Rush	MR	Muswellbrook Shire Council Representative
VISITORS:		
Chris Knight	CK	Department of Environment and Planning (DP&E)
Annemieke Grosser	AG	Environmental Consultant (Hansen Bailey)

1. APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The meeting was opened at 10.05 am.
- 1.2 Apologies from Martin Rush and Noel Downs with attendance as per the list above. Two invited guests in attendance (Annemieke Grosser and Chris Knight).
- 1.3 Introduced Annemieke Grosser from Hansen Bailey (writing new MOP/former Dartbrook employee)

2. PURPOSE OF MEETING

- 2.1 DS outlined the purpose of the meeting as per the Agenda distributed to DCCC members.
- 2.2 Dartbrook is revising and updating its Mining Operations Plan for continued Care and Maintenance of the mine for a further three year period (2018 – 2020).
- 2.3 Dartbrook is required to consult with the community, and other stakeholders, in accordance with the Development Consent Conditions and Mining Operations Plan Guidelines (DRG, 2013).
- 2.4 DS outlined the three proposed stages of consultation with this meeting being Stage 2.
- 2.5 The MOP is due for submission on 20 October 2017.

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3. MINING OPERATIONS PLAN – PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

- 3.1 DS and JB provided an overview of the scope for the new Mining Operations Plan, the guidelines used in the development of the plan and the requirement to review the rehabilitation cost estimate for lodging the security bond which would be using the recently released guidelines and tool. TL raised the question of costs of closure. JB explained that many of the rates for rehabilitation activities have increased in the recently revised Government Guideline, but for an operation like Dartbrook (which is in care and maintenance) where there has been some progress on decommissioning since the last review, the changes to the cost allowances for closure will not be as significant as it may be for some large active open cut mines.
- 3.2 DS presented the “Domains” for the Mining Operations Plan. AG explained that the domains represent operational units with unique operational and functional purposes. The post mining domains have a similar post mining land use such as rehabilitation area or conservation and biodiversity values for example.
- 3.3 DS summarised the proposed post mining land use/rehabilitation objectives. Native grasses and tree/shrub species would be sown in the infrastructure areas as has been previously accepted by the DRG. This is mainly on Class IV land (not on the alluvial plains). Although it is not the intention to graze it, a landholder in the future may choose to do so once it has established. Species selection would be consistent with surrounding landscape and sourced locally where possible.
- 3.4 AR asked how areas of contamination and dam sediments would be handled. DS explained that a detailed contamination study will occur prior to final rehabilitation as it is easier to access areas once infrastructure is removed. Other preliminary work will confirm likely risk and management measures. DS also discussed desilting and disposal options for dam sediments.
- 3.5 TL highlighted the importance of the topsoil resource and asked where it is stored/would they have enough. DS discussed sourcing material for rehabilitation including locations of existing stockpiles of material and options to import material suitable for growth medium. Bank walls of the evaporation ponds were discussed and TL questioned if there was suitable material within these bunds for capping and topsoil. DG said the material was placed within bunds during construction and suitability would be confirmed and growth medium could be imported if necessary.
- 3.6 AG provided examples of Trigger Action Response Plans (TARPs). The MOP must identify the key threats to rehabilitation success and how these will be monitored/responded to (if triggered) in the form of a TARP. AG discussed some examples (e.g. erosion, weeds, groundcover establishment etc.)
- 3.7 KF enquired about the cost and methodology for decommissioning and sealing of infrastructure areas such as the ventilation fan and Hunter River Tunnel. DS and GK explained that the openings would be sealed to the satisfaction of the DRG and some of the common methods for achieving this. There was discussion on whether the Hunter Tunnel would remain open or be sealed at the closure of the mine and the possible implications for the groundwater regime. It was confirmed that the Hunter Tunnel will most likely remain open for at least the duration of the MOP term. GK stated Dartbrook has engaged an Engineering company to investigate the most appropriate method for the eventual sealing of the portals at Dartbrook. Flyash has previously been used to seal portals to underground workings. The engineering company is investigating the design for a bulkhead backfilled with flyash. A similar methodology may be used for the Western Drift.

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- 3.8 TL questioned the 2020 end of this MOP and the relationship with the end of the DA. JB explained the expiry of the MOP, Development Consent and Mining Leases and what this means for decision making regarding the Dartbrook. A detailed Mine Closure Plan will be required to be prepared in Year 2 (2019) of the new MOP period. By 2022, either a new application would have needed to be lodged/approved or Dartbrook would need to start the mine closure process. Closure and rehabilitation work can continue post 2022 as the Mining Lease cannot be relinquished until this has been completed/meets requirements.
- 3.9 JB and GK explained that this MOP will be for continued Care and Maintenance and minimal activities such as exploration drilling and further tidy up of surplus scrap metal and “housekeeping” for example.
- 3.10 DS explained the future of Dartbrook would continue to be investigated and, if feasible, progressed during this time however the revised MOP currently being prepared is only for care and maintenance activities.
- 3.11 DS and JB explained that while the MOP will assume all infrastructure (such as the rail loop, admin building etc.) would be dismantled or demolished, other suggestions for post mining use of such infrastructure could be considered. ARTC may be interested in acquisition of the rail loop to park up trains/allow trains to pass. The Administration building is also an asset the community may be interested in keeping. DS encouraged feedback, especially regarding post mining land use/management of the administration building, cemetery which is on public land, Access Road and Rail Loop. Alternative suggestions will be documented for further consultation and consideration in the Mine Closure Plan as well as a summary discussed in the MOP.
- 3.12 SB reminded the group that comment on the draft Local Environment Plan are due back soon and Dartbrook would need to check the zoning and make sure any suggested changes are either consistent with the zoning or seek to amend the zoning otherwise an alternative cannot be considered if it conflicts with what the LEP zoning allows. GK described the rail loop ownership issues.
- 3.13 AM asked when we will know more about the Mine Plan, either open cut or underground. GK explained that the pre-feasibility studies are continuing and both options are still being investigated. Prefeasibility is expected to be completed at the end of this year. JB further explained that once a path forward is determined, there will be further work required for the approvals process. KF also requested confirmation on if there are any limitations on the underground mining method defined in the current Mining Lease (e.g. longwall only). Updates will be provided at CCC meetings.
- 3.14 CK asked that the specific activities scheduled for the MOP period be presented at the next meeting. These activities should be defined in the revised MOP. *(Note: This comment was made after the meeting was closed/at the end but has been captured in the actions for next meeting).*



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4. COMMENTS/FEEDBACK

- 4.1 DS encouraged CCC members to contact himself and AG with any other suggestions. The MOP submission date is 20th October, but the earlier responses can come back the better so they may be considered during MOP preparation.

(NOTE: Emails included below for your convenience. Please include Doug AND Annemieke:

- dstewart@aqcltd.com
- AGrosser@hansenbailey.com.au)

5. ACTION SUMMARY

ACTION	DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
Review LEP in regard to any alternative post mining land uses and if changes to zoning would be required.	22/9/2017	AQC
Present MOP Activities at Stage 3 Meeting	8/11/2017	AG
Confirm if there are limitations in ML re: underground mining method	8/11/2017	CK
Provide any feedback or suggestions regarding post mining land use, rehabilitation or completion criteria to DS and AG	Ideally by 30/9/17 but before 20/10/17.	All (if applicable)

6. NEXT MEETING

- 6.1 Date: 8 November 2017
Time: 10am start
Venue: Dartbrook's Administration Office
Meeting: Normal CCC Meeting + Stage 3 MOP Consultation

7. MEETING CLOSED

- 7.1 Meeting closed at 11:20am