

**MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD AT DARTBROOK – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**PRESENT:**

Cnr Kiwa Fisher	KF	CCC Chair and Upper Hunter Shire Council Representative
Paul Smith	PS	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Scott Brooks	SB	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Jennifer Lecky	JL	Local Community Representative
Tony Lonergan	TL	Local Community Representative
Annette Rahn	AR	Local Community Representative
Andrew Roach	AR2	Australian Pacific Coal (AQC) Representative
James Bailey	JB	AQC Environmental Consultant
Dorian Walsh	DW	AQC Acting Dartbrook Environmental Officer
<b>APOLOGY:</b>		
Cnr Martin Rush	MR	Muswellbrook Shire Council Representative
Arthur Mitchell	AM	Local Community Representative
Noel Downs	ND	Local Community Representative
<b>VISITORS:</b>		
Nil		

**1. INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES:**

- 1.1 The meeting was opened by KF (Chair) at 10:00am.
- 1.2 Apologies as per above list.

**2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

- 2.1 Nil

**3. CORRESPONDENCE**

- 3.1 Nil

**4. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 4.1 Confirmation of previous minutes dated 8 November 2017 and 21 March 2018 as true and correct.

**MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD AT DARTBROOK – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 5.1 SB confirmed that Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) had asked that KF continue in the role of CCC Chair. SB was attending the meeting on behalf of Martin Rush.
- 5.2 DW will continue to provide relevant background information to CCC members in advance of meetings to allow matters to be discussed as a group.
- 5.3 DW noted that a proposed program of additional background water quality monitoring had been developed, as requested at the November 2017 CCC meeting. This program was discussed later in the meeting (see below).
- 5.4 DW provided an update on the property management issues raised at the November 2017 meeting. Contact had been made with the landholders regarding stock rates and management, although the rain received since the last meeting had alleviated the issue somewhat.
- 5.5 MSC had previously indicated that they did not require a Dartbrook roof support monument for public display. JB noted that a support had been placed adjacent the Dartbrook site offices.
- 5.6 DW had issued a calendar planner invitation to the CCC prior to the meeting, as requested.

**6. COMPLAINTS SUMMARY**

- 6.1 DW confirmed no complaints had been received and no environmental incidents had occurred since the previous meeting in November 2017.

**7. BUSINESS ARISING**

- 7.1 DW gave an update on the regulatory documents submitted since the previous meeting:
  - The revised Dartbrook Mining Operations Plan document was approved by the Department of Industry – Division of Resources and Energy (DRG) in December 2017; and
  - The Dartbrook 2017 Annual Review document was submitted to regulatory agencies before the end of March 2018, as required by the development consent. DW confirmed that all CCC members present had received an electronic version and that hard copies had been provided to Scone Library, Aberdeen Library and Muswellbrook Library as per previous years. KF also requested that a copy of the document was provided to him on CD.
- 7.2 DW and JB described the proposed program for additional monitoring of surface water quality and aquatic ecology surrounding the Dartbrook site. The program will involve the monitoring of surface water quality and aquatic ecology at 12 locations (four existing and eight new locations), distributed upstream and downstream of the site. TL described the conditions and infrequent flows of Sandy Creek. In discussing the program and the mine planning for the open cut more generally, several questions were raised by CCC members, including:
  - Drawdown of water and loss of access as a result of mining operations (AR). JB described the process and factors involved in assessment and prediction of drawdown which occurs as a result of mining activities and typical avenues available to impacted

**MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD AT DARTBROOK – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

landholders (agreements, compensation, etc). TL noted the difficulties in regulation of such changes.

- Likely extent of the proposed open cut operations. JB confirmed the extent of the known resource which was technically available to be mined in the area. AR2 referred to the documents being prepared for the upcoming Gateway Application and confirmed that a conceptual open cut mine plan would be included in the document. JB stated that an advertisement providing a 30 day notification for lodgement of the Gateway Application had been made in the Hunter Valley News on the 18 April. TL suggested that this advertisement also be included in the Scone Advocate & Muswellbrook Chronicle.
  - KF questioned whether there would be any issues with the southern boundary of the Dartbrook site being so close to Mount Pleasant operations. JB and SB confirmed that an approved barrier agreement would need to be in place between Dartbrook and Mount Pleasant operators to allow mining immediately adjacent respective mining lease boundaries.
  - JB confirmed that the concept open cut mine footprint would not cross Sandy Creek.
  - JB noted that AQC were also awaiting confirmation from DoI-Water over the adequacy of the proposed program. DoI-Water had expressed general support for the program at a meeting held in March; however the Department had not yet formally confirmed the adequacy of the program.
  - SB referred to the assessments around determination of the source of water flowing into the Dartbrook Hunter Tunnel. JB confirmed that isotopic testing had previously been undertaken and that DoI-Water were seeking further clarification on the volume of water from each water source that reports to the tunnel.
- 7.3 KF noted that a decision on whether to endorse the proposed monitoring program would be made by CCC members at the next meeting.
- 7.4 TL requested that DW send a link to the Gateway Application document to G. Casey once it was publicly available.
- 7.5 DW summarised the program of works proposed for additional groundwater monitoring sites in proximity to the Hunter Tunnel and the upcoming exploration program and proposal to seal and rehabilitate the remaining historic exploration holes still in place from the 1980s.
- 7.6 JB provided an update on the Underground Modification, including the environmental assessment (EA) approach approved by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) and options being considered for the truck haulage route, timing and development of a shaft west of the Hunter Tunnel to provide access for coal to the Hunter tunnel. JB also noted that some private residences are were expected to be in the environmental impact 'management zone' if the modification is approved.
- 7.7 AR asked what additional work would be required if coal extracted for the underground modification would need to be washed (the proposal is for coal to be crushed only). JB confirmed that a further modification would need to be approved by DPE to allow this after the expiry of the current development consent. SB also noted that assessment of reject and emplacement activities would need to be undertaken if washing were to recommence. AR2 described the coal quality planned for extraction by the bord and pillar operation and also noted that market conditions, customers and end-uses planned for coal extracted from the underground would mean that crushing rather than washing coal was viable.
- 7.8 JB provided an update on the Open Cut project proposal and planned EA approach, which would include consideration of worst-case contributions from existing and planned mining

**MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD AT DARTBROOK – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

- operations in the locality, including Mount Pleasant and West Muswellbrook. JB confirmed that any Gateway Certificate for the open cut would likely be 'conditional'.
- 7.9 JL noted that a detailed closure plan would be developed as part of the Open Cut project assessment, including consideration of post-mining landuse.
- 7.10 SB questioned where the process for ecological offsets was up to. JB confirmed that Hansen Bailey was in the early stages of developing an offset strategy for the Open Cut project and determining an appropriate mechanism which would be acceptable to government. JB then outlined the various options available for determining and securing the required offsets and discussed the issues associated with each. Updates on the offset strategy and nominated mechanism will be provided at future CCC meetings.
- 7.11 JB outlined the updated Social Impact and consultation process required for the Open Cut project under the new DPE guidelines. This would involve early consultation prior to DPE providing Secretaries Environmental Assessment Requirements. This early consultation would seek to record representative views from stakeholders in the local community, Kayuga and Aberdeen on key issues to consider in preparing the Open Cut project EA.
- 7.12 KF noted that the presentation from the previous meeting in March 2018 was no longer confidential and could be made public.
- 7.13 AR2 confirmed the general mining process and arrangement of the new (for the Hunter region) In-pit Crusher Conveyor (IPCC) technology and the proposed progression of mining from east to west. The selection of the IPCC method due to environmental constraints was also discussed, along with other options available to control dust emissions during mining.
- 7.14 KF referred to issues with heating and spontaneous combustion previously experienced on site during longwall mining operations. JB confirmed that the location of the old workings were well understood and that key surface infrastructure and mining activities could be located to minimise any interaction with these areas and the potential to exacerbate any underground heating.
- 7.15 DW provided a general update on environmental monitoring results (for meteorology, air quality, surface water and greenhouse gas) and land management undertaken since the CCC meeting held in November 2017. In the discussion on greenhouse gas results, TL noted the high contributions to greenhouse gas generation from fugitive emissions from the old underground workings and questioned whether AQC had put any thought to putting in a system to capture some of this gas. AR2 confirmed that AQC were in discussions with a company whether it would be feasible to put such a system in place.
- 7.16 TL also noted the presence of Prickly Acacia in a few areas of site and the need for long-term, ongoing control after the first treatment. DW to follow up on this with Ron Connolly (AQC Dartbrook Land Manager).
- 7.17 SB noted that this meeting would be his last as he finishes at MSC in June 2018. Anthony Willis will attend future meetings as the MSC representative.

**8. MEETING CLOSED**

- 8.1 The meeting closed at 11:45am.



## **Australian Pacific Coal**

### **MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT DARTBROOK – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

- 8.2 KF suggested that the timing of the next CCC meeting be brought forward in light of the pending open cut application. The meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 11 July 2018, starting at 10am.
- 8.3 DW to send out copy of the meeting presentation slides to all CCC representatives.