
**MINUTES OF THE ASHTON COAL PROJECT
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2008
1:00PM - ASHTON COAL PROJECT SITE OFFICE**

ATTENDEES:

Godfrey Adamthwaite	(GA)	Singleton Council (Chairman)
Sarah Roberts	(SR)	Singleton Council (Environmental Officer)
Paul Ashford	(PA)	Community Representative
John McInerney	(JM)	Community Representative
Thelma DeJong	(TD)	Community Representative
Steve Ernst	(SE)	Observer
Peter Barton	(PB)	Company Rep (General Manager) – part of meeting
Brian Chilcott	(BC)	Company Rep (O/C Mine Manager) (PB substitute)
Lisa Richards	(LR)	Company Rep (Environment & Community Relations Mgr)
Adam Spargo	(AS)	Observer (Environmental Co-ordinator)
Cassie Storm	(CS)	Observer
Sherry Russell		Minute Taker

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1.07pm.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Greg Summerhayes from the Department of Primary Industries and Deidre Olofsson (Community Representative)

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST BY COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

PA advised that the purchase of his property will be complete with settlement occurring on 3 December 2008. PA informed the meeting that he will tender his resignation at the completion of the meeting. GA thanked PA for his contribution to the CCC. Steve Ernst was in attendance at the meeting as an Observer. SE has an interest in becoming a Community Representative on the Committee. SR advised that SE would have to apply for the position through Singleton Council. The position will be advertised in the next newsletter. Council to confirm other advertising requirements.

4. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes from the meeting held on 30 September 2008 were accepted as a true and accurate record:

Moved: *Thelma DeJong*

Seconded: *John McInerney*

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

GA addressed the meeting and advised that an anonymous complaint had been made to the General Manager of Singleton Council by a member of the community with regard to GA's previous dealings with Ashton as a subcontracted photographer. GA advised he would be more than happy to discuss the concerns with the complainant if they wished to do so. GA does not believe that he has a conflict, and expressed his desire to remain as Chairman of the CCC. GA asked if anyone present had an issue with him Chairing the meeting. Nobody acknowledged they did – GA reaffirmed that if people wished to discuss in private they can contact him at any time.

6. REPORTS AND OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

6.1 OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

LR provided the meeting with an overview of the current operations being undertaken on site. The SMP for longwalls 5-9 has been submitted to the Department of Primary Industries and is open for public comment until 10 December 2008. Copies can be viewed at the DPI Singleton office or the administration office at Ashton. LR advised that in the original development consent there was no provision for Longwall Panel 9 due to the width of the other 8 Longwall Panels. A Development Consent variation will be submitted to enable the inclusion of Longwall Panel 9 due to the reduction in width of the other panels.

BC provided the meeting with an overview of the open cut mining operations. JMc enquired as to end of mine life. BC responded open cut mining is expected to be complete in June 2010.

SEOC application process is still continuing – currently behind schedule due to current global financial position, port infrastructure works and drilling works to ascertain the extent of the alluviums. Environmental assessment works still being undertaken – preliminary environmental assessment (PEA) has not yet been submitted to the Department of Planning. PB advised that the SEOC project has been given approval by the Board of Felix Resources. LR advised that the "community open day" will be held in the new year.

6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL

DUST MONITORING

LR provided the meeting with an overview of the dust monitoring data collected over the past three months. Dust gauge 2 is recording high levels – these are due to the impact from Ravensworth's operations. Two exceedances of the Ashton contribution have been recorded in September and October 2008. On 31 October 2008 there was an exceedance of the Ashton contribution at monitoring sites 1 and 8. There were controls taken with regard to the shutting down of the excavators on this day. LR explained the changes which were implemented and their impact on reducing dust levels.

BLAST MONITORING

27 blasts have been carried out to date. One blast has been recorded over the 115dB_L bringing the percentage to 4.2% against a criteria of 5%. There are no exceedances of any criteria for the year to date.

NOISE MONITORING

One exceedance recorded at a property in the village during the reporting period. Reading was 40dB_L – limit is 38dB_L.

COMPLAINTS

A total of 27 community complaints were received. A total of 17 complaints received from the Department of Environment and Climate Change (formally the EPA).

REHABILITATION WORKS

Construction of the northern and southern drop structure is now complete. These drop structures will allow water to move from the top of the eastern emplacement to the storage dams across site. Total of 27ha of rehabilitation has been completed during Autumn 2008. The OGM trail was presented to the Annual NSW Minerals Council Conference and received excellent feedback.

TD enquired as to how much more material will be dumped on the top southern side of the dump. BC responded that no additional material will be dumped in that area, but it needs to be rehabilitated. LR advised that dumping is now being undertaken on the northern area. Topsoiling also needs to be undertaken on the dump.

6.3 SECTION 94 SIGNAGE

The meeting held with Council. Two preferred locations have been selected. Council to come back with firm pricing for the signage – waiting on response. SR advised she will chase up the appropriate section within Council to get some responses.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

LR advised that a mine lease variation has been approved for ML4918.

TD queried if approval is required for underground mining taking place within a certain distance of waterways. LR advised that no special approvals above our current process is required for underground mining but there are guideline standards of distance for open cut mining.

JMc raised the issue of what proposals Ashton have with regard to the maintenance of Camberwell. JMc concerned that the future for Camberwell will not be good and would like to see infrastructure works undertaken within the village ie. guttering, street lighting, etc. LR advised that a streetscaper has been engaged to come up with proposals and a concept plan. LR advised that open consultation will be undertaken with the community. There are also consultation requirements with Council in relation to what can be done. SR supported and further explained the need to involve Council in any street/community scape planning.

8. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 3 March 2009. A site inspection (underground visit) is to be held prior the next meeting for interested members. It is envisaged the underground inspection will start at 9.00am with the meeting commencing at 1.00pm. Lunch is to be provided by Ashton. Please phone Sherry on 6570 9101 to confirm attendance at both the meeting and site inspection.

9. SITE INSPECTION OF THE OPERATIONS

No inspection of the site was undertaken.

MEETING CLOSED AT 2.30PM

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY
The SEOC Presentation will be uploaded onto the Ashton website after the consultation process with all stakeholders has been undertaken. DO to be provided with a hard copy of the presentation.	LR / AS