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**MINUTES OF THE ASHTON COAL PROJECT  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2011  
2.45PM - ASHTON COAL PROJECT SITE OFFICE**

**ATTENDEES:**

Steve Ernst	(SE)	Community Representative
John McNerney	(JMc)	Community Representative
Michael Bestic	(MB)	Community Representative
Tracey Vollebregt	(TV)	Alternate Community Representative
Godfrey Adamthwaite	(GA)	Singleton Council (Chairperson)
Brian Thomas	(BT)	Singleton Council Representative
Brian Wesley	(BW)	Company Rep (General Manager)
Lisa Richards	(LR)	Company Rep (Environment & Community Relations Mgr)
Scotney Moore	(SM)	Company Rep (Environment Coordinator)
Cassandra Ferguson	(CF)	Minute Taker

**1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIRPERSON**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 2:54pm. A site visit was conducted prior to the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Nil.

**3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST BY COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES**

MB declared he acted on behalf of clients who have a working relationship with ACOL. GA declared his company Silky Oak Productions will have a cameraman working on site tomorrow conducting recording works for ACOL.

**4. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes from the meeting held on 13 September 2011 were accepted as a true and accurate record:

**Moved:** Michael Bestic      **Seconded:** Steve Ernst

**5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Section 94 – Town signage – Development Approval has been received. Singleton Council has contacted a builder. ACOL have requested Council advised them of details on dates for work schedules. Alan Fletcher will be the Council contact for the work.

Galenia trials – SM provided CCC members with a copy of 4 trial reports. The content of the trial reports and outcomes were discussed. BT asked if the information will be shared with the general public. SM advised yes as the trials were conducted by the

Department of Primary Industry (DPI) in partnership with ACOL. The DPI will be making the information publically available.

CCC members names to be added to website. An advertisement for the vacant CCC position will be placed in the next ACOL newsletter. To be send out in December 2011.

## **6. REPORTS AND OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITES**

### **6.1 OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS**

#### **Underground & Bowmans Creek Diversion Project**

Longwall 7B is scheduled to finish in early January 2012. Relocation to Longwall 8 will then commence. Longwall 8 is planned to finish in May – June 2012. The mining will then move into Longwall 6B. Questions were raised from CCC members regarding the mining sequence in relation to mining near the creek. BW explained the mining sequence mentioned above will allow for 6 months construction on the Bowmans Creek Eastern diversion.

Development commenced in the ULLD in the second half of the year. Mining conditions in the ULLD seam have been favourable. Within this seam ACOL will mine under private land to a depth of approximately 105 meters at the shallowest.

SE asked how many tones were sterilized due to mining sequence as a result of delay in approvals for Bowmans Creek Diversion construction. BW Replied from Longwall 7 A & B sterilized was 600,000 ROM tones. ACOL have a commitment within the development consent to not mine within 40 meters of the high bank of Bowmans Creek. SE asked what kind of equipment will be used for the diversion; LR replied small dozers, excavators, trucks and water carts, possibly scrapers in some areas.

The Bowmans Creek Eastern diversion construction is due to commence this Thursday (8 December). The eastern is the first priority and will take approximately 3-4 month to construct. BW confirmed no mining will occur under the diverted sections of the creek.

#### **North East Open Cut (NEOC)**

BW advised the NEOC is no longer producing. Rehabilitation works are ongoing.

#### **South East Open Cut (SEOC)**

LR advised there has been no change with the SEOC development application. The Planning and Assessment Commission (PAC) received submissions from NSW Office of Water (NOW) and NSW Department of Health. ACOL have supplied additional information on these issues to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) who are to supply an additional report to the PAC.

MB queried the main issues with the delay in the approval. LR advised that it was a late submission from NOW regarding the close proximity of Glennies Creek to the proposed pit, and groundwater assessments. NOW had raised some concerns through the assessment process regarding these issues. Based on this ACOL had committed to a cut off wall, which is a trench backfilled with a clay barrier, designed to be an impermeable barrier between the pit and Glennies Creek. The clay for the cut of wall

would be sourced from the SEOC project area. DPI also commissioned and managed an independent expert review to be undertaken by an expert agreed to by NOW & ACOL. The independent expert agreed the wall would address the issue. The report was completed in February 2011 and NOW did not supply a response to this until DPI had completed and submitted their report to the PAC in August 2011. It is this late response that has been delaying the process.

The DPI and PAC decision making process was discussed.

## **6.1 PROJECTS OVERVIEW**

### **Proposed Gas Drainage Network & Ventilation Development Consent Modification**

BW provided an overview on the location of the projects and the infrastructure involved. In both the gas drainage network and ventilation shaft proposed development. JMc asked if ACOL had looked at tapping the proposed gas drainage system in Macquarie Generation. BW advised Macquarie Generation is to look at a feasibility study of this. Flaring is also an option.

BW discussed the ventilation shaft development. The decision for the site location was based on underground operation layout factors. The development will also involve the drilling of service drop holes to transport road base material underground. LR advised independent noise assessment has been conducted and will be continued on throughout the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

### **Extraction Plan**

BW provided details on the Extraction Plan. He advised CCC meeting attendees that Extraction Plans (EP) will now be replacing Subsidence Management Plans (SMP). EPs will be developed and submitted to relevant government agencies for the Upper Lower Liddell seam longwalls and Longwall 6B of Pikes Gully. MB queried how long the EPs will take to process and the considerations for the approval. BW replied they take approximately 4-6 months to be processed and the EPs consider predicted subsidence impacts (including subsidence remediation), subsidence management measures and water inclusive of surface and groundwater interaction.

## **6.3 ENVIRONMENTAL**

### **Dust Monitoring**

LR provided an overview of the dust monitoring sites and results for the three month period. Ashton Coal did not exceed their PM<sub>10</sub> criteria during the quarter.

### **Blasting**

Ashton Coal was compliant in all blasts that took place over the last period. The final production shot in the NEOC occurred in September 2011. No blasting has occurred since September 2011.

### **Water Monitoring**

LR provided an overview of the surface and ground water monitoring results for the three month period.

**Noise Monitoring**

Statutory noise monitoring was undertaken in August and there were no exceedences of the Ashton criteria.

**Complaints**

There were 3 complaints and 1 enquiry over the period. Complaints were in relation to noise, dust, blast and shared road access facilities.

**Environmentally-Related Operations Changes**

Nil environmental related operational changes were made during the reporting period.

**7. GENERAL BUSINESS**NSW Minerals Council Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue

Cassandra Ferguson is sitting on the Community Working Group.

Scotney Moore is sitting on the Rehabilitation Working Group.

Lisa Richards is sitting on the Environmental Working Group (SM fills in for her in case of absence).

Updates were provided to the CCC meeting attendees on the progress of the groups.

Questions were asked concerning Yancoal, the majority owner of Ashton Coal. Information was provided to meeting attendees regarding Yancoal and their future business vision and expanding their business ventures.

**8. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 13 March 2012 @ 1.30PM CCC meeting ACOL Boardroom

**MEETING CLOSED 4:36PM**

ACTION ITEMS	
ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY
CCC member advertisement to be placed in next ACOL newsletter	CF 31/12/11