
**MINUTES OF THE ASHTON COAL PROJECT
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2007
1.00PM - ASHTON COAL PROJECT SITE OFFICE**

ATTENDEES:

Cr John Martin	(JM)	Singleton Council (Chairman)
Brian Thomas	(BT)	Singleton Council
Greg Summerhayes	(GS)	Dept. of Primary Industries - Minerals
Thelma DeJong	(TD)	Community Representative
Deidre Olofsson	(DO)	Community Representative
John McInerney	(JM)	Community Representative
Paul Ashford	(PA)	Community Representative
Peter Dundon	(PD)	Invited guest
Peter Barton	(PB)	Company Rep (Development Manager)
Lisa Richards	(LR)	Company Rep (Environmental Co-ordinator)
Brian Wesley	(BW)	Company Observer (U/G Mine Manager) (part of meeting)
Adam Spargo	(AS)	Company Observer (Graduate Engineer)
Sherry Russell		Minute Taker

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairman introduced himself and opened the meeting at 1.05pm.

LR introduced Peter Dundon and Greg Summerhayes to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cr Fred Harvison.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST BY COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Nil declared.

4. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes from the meeting held on 5 December 2006 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved: John McInerney

Seconded: Thelma DeJong

5. GUEST SPEAKER – PETER DUNDON, Bsc, MSc (GROUNDWATER ASSESSMENT FOR THE SUBSIDENCE MANAGEMENT PLAN)

PD introduced himself to the meeting and advised he would be specifically speaking on Panels 1 to 4 for the Underground operation with respect to ground water monitoring. He provided a detailed overview of the groundwater modeling and the impact of mining operations on groundwater and alluvials.

DO raised the question of what happens when the alluvium is saturated – will this increase inflow levels and cause cracking? Rainfall can cause increases in water flows but cannot cause cracking.

BT raised the issue of a security bond being paid to DPI – any relevance to seepage issues? GS advised that the DPI is able to put security bonds on activities that are undertaken within the mine lease area but not outside the mine lease area boundary.

The Committee thanked PD for his presentation.

Peter Dundon left the meeting at 2.05pm.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

It was noted that in future, where the minutes relate to specific matters (or objections) are raised by individual members that this be noted broader terms. DO mentioned she had received a few enquires from residents who had read the minutes, which were attached with the last Newsletter, and requested the minutes provide more detail.

7. REPORTS AND OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

7.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT – KEY ISSUES

Longwall Installation

BW provided the meeting with an update on the longwall panel installation and advised that the development for Longwall 1 is nearing completion. Development of Longwall Panel 2 will commence shortly.

Glennies Creek Road

PB advised we were waiting on approval from the RTA which was received recently. The contractor engaged to undertake the works, Daracon, will now need to obtain a licence from the RTA to carry out the works. The works are scheduled for completion in April.

CHPP Construction

First coal through the plant is expected to take place on 24 March 2007. PB advised that a fully enclosed acoustic house will be installed on the new plant to reduce noise impacts.

MacGen Tailings Disposal Project

Pipeline is now through Bowmans Creek and Brunkers Lane. PA advised he had problems with the pipe being underground rather than above ground. What happens if there is a power outage and tailings are not able to be moved? It was advised that the piping was pipe in pipe. PB advised the company's contingency plans in the case of power outages ie. able to be flushed out.

7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL

LR provided a presentation on the latest environmental monitoring results to date. LR advised the company has engaged a blast consultant to ensure vibration levels are managed as we are now blasting nearer the Church. LR advised the vibration levels are still below our criteria at the Church. A structural engineer has been engaged to inspect the cracking at the Church. This inspection is due to take place next week.

LR advised that noise monitoring was undertaken in November 2006 and again in February and March 2007. We are currently waiting on the March results and will advise at the next CCC meeting.

JM asked about blasting and the timeframe for conclusion – 5 years was stated. PB responded that blasting will take place for a further 2.5 to 3 years.

LR advised that the 2007 Autumn rehabilitation works will commence in around two weeks time. This will incorporate a 10 hectare trial area using a compost product produced by Global Renewables which is a renewable urban waste source.

JM asked about changing the EIS to allow the planting of hybrid trees. LR advised this issue was raised at the recent DPI inspection. GS advised that there were sometimes objections to using species that aren't native to the area. DPI are in agreement with LR that the objective for our site is to establish trees and that we could look at using hybrids.

Department of Planning undertook a follow up inspection to the 2005 Compliance Audit in February 2007. The officers were happy with the commitment shown by Ashton with respect to environmental issues. BT asked if a final document will be issued from Dept of Planning stating that the non-conformances have been rectified by Ashton. LR responded that this question was raised with Dept of Planning specifically and they responded that no formal report would be issued as the follow-up was an inspection and not an audit, and as such, the items would be addressed in general correspondence. BT asked if this correspondence could be made available to the Committee. The correspondence is ongoing general business correspondence between Ashton and the Department and not in a form of an audit report and would not be made publicly available by the Department.

DPI inspection was undertaken on 20 February 2007. GS provided feedback to the committee on the inspection which was undertaken. GS advised that DPI were generally happy with the compliance level. It was noted that the AEMR submitted last year was a much better prepared document than the one previously submitted. GS mentioned that more effort needed to be put into rehabilitation works on site. Happy that the new compost trial is being undertaken.

7.3 SECTION 94 – LIST OF PRIORITISED WORKS

TD advised she has spoken with Garry Woodman from Singleton Council with respect to the plans for the gazebo to built on Council land. He advised that the paperwork was still dormant in his tray. PB suggested that a meeting be made with Garry Woodman to try and progress / resolve this issue. PB will call Garry Woodman at Council to arrange a meeting to discuss, Thelma to attend, along with any other interested CCC Committee members. JM suggested that BT attend the meeting given his background on the issue.

7.4 ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Complaints process has been reviewed – system has been updated and we have been in contact with Q Link to iron out any anomalies.

Website has been updated with all environmental data.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

PA asked about first flushes systems for his residence. LR advised we are in the process of getting prices and expect an offer to be made to local residents in the near future. AS advised that it was possible for the first flush to be installed at PA's property this week.

TD mentioned about the tank water not being drinkable after water has been tested. PB mentioned that there was a commitment to de-sludge water tanks in the village. LR mentioned that it would be beneficial for a filter system / first flush system to be in place prior to the de-sludging of tanks. PB mentioned that this issue may have been raised through the community surveys. PB mentioned that if residents raise the issue with her that they should contact LR so their details could be noted.

BT asked about methane gas in relation to the underground works and what we would do with it. PB advised that do not have high methane gas levels at the present time. As the underground progresses there will be a higher level of gas. PB advised that there has been a development application submitted with the intention of moving the gas to Liddell for recycling and to be used in the provision of energy.

9. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 19 June 2007 at 1.00pm.

10. SITE INSPECTION OF THE OPERATIONS

No site inspection was undertaken.

MEETING CLOSED AT 3.40PM

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY
Singleton Council to be contacted with regard to arranging a meeting to discuss the Section 94 Contributions.	PB