

**RIX'S CREEK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE MEETING**

MEETING 20/9/2016

- PRESENT:** Councillor - Val Scott. Community Representatives – Reg Eveleigh, Patricia Bestic and Michelle Higgins.
- Company Representatives – Garry Bailey, John Hindmarsh (Minutes), Jason Desmond and Chris Quinn.
- APOLOGIES:** Chris Knight (Department of Planning & Environment), Lyn MacBain, Deidre Olofsson, David Moran, Greg Hall.

Meeting commenced 10:10 am following a site inspection.

1 AGENDA

Councillor Val Scott chaired the meeting.

2 PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None reported.

3 PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of meeting 10/5/2016 Accepted. Moved Patricia Bestic, Seconded Reg Eveleigh.

4 BUSINESS ARISING.

Nil.

5 PRESENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING REPORT.

SUMMARY

- Presentation of Annual Review Report for the period January to end June 2016 for Rix's Creek (RC). This included Rix's Creek South (RCS) and Rix's Creek North (RCN) monitoring data.

ACTIVITY

- Operations continuing at RCS in Pit 3 (West Pit) which is focus of operation. Liebherr R9800, Hitachi EX5500 excavator two main digging units with Hitachi 3600 excavator used on an "as needs" basis. Operations commenced at RCN following transition from care and maintenance to operational. First blast was in March 2016, first overburden moved April 2016 and first coal moved May 2016. Mining at a much lower rate than the former owner's Vale Integra with a Cat 6060 excavator the main digging unit with a second Hitachi 3600 excavator used on an "as needs" basis. Cat 6040 excavator commencing start of October as well as 24 new operators to man across three shifts.
- Due to the purchase of RCN the pits have now undergone name changes known as West / Artes / Camberwell and Falbrook Pits.



Question:- Who uses the Rix's Creek North entry?
 Personnel who work at each location use the various entrances. Rix's Creek North personnel use the RCN entrance off Bridgeman Road and Rix's Creek South personnel use the old Rix's Creek south entrance.

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Question:- What's happening with the RCN CHPP?

Work is being undertaken maintaining the CHPP and bring it up to an operational state. It has a higher throughput than the RCS plant.

Question:- Is the 6040 a new machine?

No, it is part of the equipment that came with the purchase of the open-cut from Vale.

Question:- How many people will be employed for the 12 month period?

Twenty-four with eight per shift (day / afternoon / night). Ten commenced yesterday. Production will commence after the long week-end 4th October, 2016.

WEATHER

- Rainfall for January to June 2016 was 406.5 mm which was 29.5 mm above average for the period. Predominant winds during Jan-March were from the SE, April was a transition month from NW to SE, whilst May and June were from the NW.

AIR QUALITY

- No gauges exceeded annual average of 4 g/m²/month.
- Total suspended particulates and PM10 across all sites were elevated in May following three dry months and strong NW winds. The PM10 50ug/m³ 24-hour limit was exceeded once in May at the Rix's Creek site with a reading of 51 ug/m³. The 50 ug/m³ limit was exceeded twice at the Richard's residence in March and May with readings of 80.8 ug/m³ and 65.5 ug/m³. All of these three exceedances are likely due to local factors as the other monitoring sites on these dates did not have elevated readings.

Question:- How often is the equipment checked?

Deposition gauges monthly, TEOM's quarterly and just setting up maintenance for the DustTrak units at present.

Question:- Is the real-time data reported to the Regulators?

No. This data is for the management of the operation. Will be reported in the Annual Review report.

- Three complaints were received in relation to air quality during the period. One complaint was received 23/2/2016 from a resident in Long Point regarding visual dust related to a West Pit blast and two complaints on 23/5/2016 from two separate residents in the Bridgman area related to dust from the Falbrook Pit Tailing's Dam facility.

WATER QUALITY

- Both sites undertake monthly analysis of water sampling. RCS undertook full-suite water analysis during June 2016 with RCN to be undertaken during the second half of 2016.
- All sites had results similar to previous years with the only stand out results seen in February 2016 at the Maison Dieu and Blackwattle Creek sites regarding salinity. Both times these were a result of flushing the creeks via rainfall / runoff.

Question:- What is the aim with water quality post rehabilitation?

Water will be suitable for agriculture i.e. cattle to drink, not for human consumption as runoff is just like undisturbed areas, usually contains suspended solids or clay particles and may have some salt from the catchment.

Question:- The high salinity content in the water is there soil testing undertaken to see if the salt is concentrated in the soil?

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No. Salinity tends to concentrate in the pools in Rix's Creek as the Creek dries up and is flushed out when there is sufficient rain to produce runoff to flush the Creek with clean runoff water.

Question:- Next inspection can we look at the dams? As a tour is better than just reading the report.
Yes.

Question:- Can a compass be included on the map of monitoring locations.
Yes.

- One water incidents occurred during the period. This incident saw five sediment containment dams (three at RCS and two at RCN) filling to capacity and overflowing off site. This was due to substantial rainfall of 141.5 mm over a 72 hour period. Subsequently all site sediment dams were reviewed and cleaned / increased in capacity as necessary across site. The incident report is provided in Appendix 3 of the report.
- There was one enquiry received 11th January 2016 from Camberwell in regards to the potential release of water into Glennies Creek on 29th December 2015 from RCN. Site personnel undertook an inspection of the site and there was no evidence of any water being released from the site.

NOISE MONITORING

- Monitoring for the period was undertaken during March and July 2016. Additional monthly attended monitoring was undertaken by an independent noise consultant during January – June 2016. Additional nightly noise monitoring by Rix's Creek personnel was undertaken during every night of production throughout this period for maintaining site compliance.
- Throughout both March and July 2016 no exceedances occurred as per the project specific noise criteria. Mine was audible on several occasions.
- Nine complaints and three enquiries were received during the January to June 2016 period regarding noise. Seven of the complaints were received by one complainant across seven dates located at Maison Dieu. Another complaint was received by the one complainant across one date located at Long Point whilst another was located at Camberwell.

Question:- What are the acronyms on page 33 of the report and what do they mean?

We will put an abbreviations section in the next report containing acronyms. The old 1994 consent require noise to be assessed as an L_{A10} measurement. While the Industrial Noise Policy currently measures operational noise as L_{eq} . L_{A10} is the A-weighted sound pressure level that is exceeded for 10 % of the time over which a given sound is measured. Which is approximately the average of the maximum noise levels. L_{Aeq} is the equivalent continuous noise level - the level of noise equivalent to the energy- average of noise level occurring over a measurement period. The average noise energy during the measurement period.

- Noise monitoring locations to cover both RCS and RCN sites were discussed. There is 10 noise compliance sites in total with 6 being monitored on the night of monitoring aligned with noise enhancement from the site/s.

BLASTING

- There were 65 blasts during the period from January to the end of June 2016. 51 blasts were fired in Rix's Creek South West Pit on the southern side of the New England Highway whilst 14 blasts were fired in the Rix's Creek North Camberwell Pit. The first blast at RCN was 10th March 2016.
- No blasts exceeded vibration or overpressure levels. No blasts had excessive fume.
- Three blast vibration results in the period exceeded 5 mm/s vibration but no greater than 10 mm/s at the Dulwich residence. There is a contractual agreement in place that has continued with the change of ownership.

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- Six complaints were received in regards to blasting during the period.

REHABILITATION

- 7 ha of pasture rehabilitation completed in June, 7 ha of tree seed completed in April, 5270 tubestock planted and 1000 reeds during June following good rainfall.
- Approximately 6 km of clean water drains installed on rehabilitation areas during April.
- RCS has met MOP target for 2016 of 400.2 cumulative hectares (3.4 ha ahead) whilst RCN has 15 ha to achieve the second half of 2016 to reach 282.4 cumulative hectares (currently at 267.4 ha). The focus for the second half of 2016 is the Falbrook Pit batter at RCN and the West Pit OOPD/Arties Pit 9-ways at RCS. There will also be tree-planting preparation for visual screening, habitat corridors, Glennies Creek riparian zone works and Biodiversity Offset Area's (BOA's). Further areas will be rehabilitated as they become available.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- Rix's Creek South Approvals update:
 - Modification 7 approved 4th February 2016 to allow for movement of coal between RCS & RCN sites for washing.
 - 5-yearly Independent audit to be completed second half of 2016 – DPE/Council have approved Umwelt to undertake.
- Rix's Creek South Continuation update:
 - Response to Submissions nearing completion.
 - RTS adjusted for Integra purchase.
 - Addressing independent Economic Assessment review.
 - Biodiversity Offsets under discussion with Department of Planning & Environment.

Question:- Are the biodiversity sites planned to be on site within the mine lease or off site?

Part of Biodiversity sites for Rix's Creek North are off site, Appletree Flat with the remainder on site. With the Rix's Creek Continuation project the proposal is to pay an amount to OEH who will offset the calculated ecosystem credits disturbed by the project from the funds paid by Rix's Creek to OEH. The amount of money has been determined in line with the Upper Hunter Strategic Assessment methodology agreed between industry and the Government.

- Draft VPA submitted to Council officers.
- Rezoning application for Bridgeman road being addressed by Department of Planning & Environment Newcastle office.

Question:- What is the Bridgman Rd rezoning?

The Bridgman Rd rezoning is linked to proposed residential development north of Singleton Heights. This development will progress closer to the Rix's Creek Coal Handling & Preparation Plant as well as the main northern rail line. Newcastle branch of the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) is currently assessing this application.

- Rix's Creek North Approvals update:
 - Modification 4 approved 24th February 2016 – modification to existing BOA's.
 - Modification 5 approved 26th February 2016 –to allow for movement of coal between RCS & RCN sites for washing.
 - Modification 6 approved 23rd August 2016 - splitting of the former Integra Underground and Open Cut consents.

Question:- Does this modification clarify the splitting of the Vale Integra CCC?

Yes this is clarified in the modification 6 that identifies that the function of the CCC may be combined with other CCC's in the area i.e. Rix's Creek and Mt.Owen.

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Question:- Can the wind roses be larger and more visible in the 2016 Annual Review?
Yes, this can be done.

Question:- Can the next site inspection include more rehabilitation areas.
Yes, we can focus more on the rehabilitation side.

NEXT MEETING/S:- Tuesday May 23rd 2017 @ 10 am. Presentation of 2016 Annual Review.

Meeting Closed 11:56 am.