

RIXS CREEK NORTH & RIXS CREEK SOUTH COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING: 22/05/2018

PRESENT: Chairperson- Councilor – Sarah Lukeman. (SL)
Community Representatives – Reg Eveleigh (RE), Michelle Higgins (MH), Patricia Bestic (PB).

Company Representatives – Garry Bailey (GB), Geoff Moore (GM), Luke Murray (LM), Brendon Clements (BC) Chris Knight (CK), Chris Quinn (CQ), Hannah Bowe (HB) (Minutes).

APOLOGIES: Greg Hall, David Moran, Deidre Olofsson and Lyn MacBain.

Meeting commenced 10:07 am at Rixs Creek South training room.

1 AGENDA

- Councilor Sarah Lukeman (SL) chaired the meeting – provided welcome and opened the meeting.
- SL commented that the Agenda was not provided prior to meeting.
- CQ explained the Agenda to the meeting.

2 PECUNIARY INTERESTS

- MH mentioned herself and her husband own a physiotherapy practice and often see clients who are Rix's Creek employees.
- GB mentioned that there was a large amount of Rix's Representatives due to management structural changes – GB stated that this would be his last meeting prior to his retirement and that GM would be taking over his role. GB mentioned that as of Monday 28th May BC would be taking over LM previous role of Operations Manager – Rix's Creek.

3 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- CQ clarified that the previous minutes have been displayed on the website and available to the public in draft form prior to today's meeting where the CCC will have the opportunity to reject/ accept the previous meetings minutes or make any comments/ suggest changes.
- SL requested clarification that her previously mentioned typos and suggested comments/ changes have been included in the draft minutes.
- Reg Eveleigh moved the previous minutes.
- Michelle Higgins seconded the previous minutes.

4 BUSINESS ARISING.

- CQ explained that during the previous CCC meeting DO commented that the 2016 Annual Review document had been uploaded and presented as a final document prior to regulatory approval and endorsement. CQ advised the CCC that the final submitted 2017 Annual Review document which has been distributed to the CCC and

which is available for public viewing via the Company website is still technically in draft form as we have not yet received formal regulatory correspondence confirming its approval.

5 PRESENTATION AND OVERVIEW OF SITE ACTIVITIES

MANAGEMENT CHANGES

OVERVIEW

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

AERIAL PHOTO

LAND OWNERSHIP

- SL asked is Big Ben Holdings also owned by Bloomfield – GB replied yes, it is the parent Company.

LOADING UNITS

OPERATIONS SUMMARY

MINING SEQUENCE STYLE

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Weather

Wind

Waste

- RE asked if we recycle batteries, CQ confirmed yes we do, they are collected and taken off site by SIMS metal services.
- MH asked if we are still having issues with disposing used truck tyres. CQ answered that we are continuing to use what is considered best practice and placing used tyres into the pit and utilising a shapefile register to plot exactly where tyres are located and record information such as number of tyres, brand, size etc.
- PB asked if there is any foreseen use for these tyres in the future, noting that some other mines have re-excavated buried tyres for re-use. GB answered that no, when the tyres are removed they are deemed to be in a non-operational 'not safe' condition.
- MH asked if tyres can be used as wall stabilisation or in gardens. CK answered that a small number of tyres do have a temporary use in the form of water diversion / drainage and delineating different facilities, however manual handling and safety issues are a chief concern due to the nature of the tyres and as such current procedures are deemed best practice.

Operational Noise

- PB asked how many individual people made up the 34 recorded noise complaints. CQ answered that due to previous comments made by the CCC members we do not break down to that detail. MH commented that it is good to discuss how many individual residents are making complaints as it provides a clear view of the overall impact of the operation on residents. GB mentioned that the DPE have included a complaints breakdown the recent EIS and that it is of benefit to thoroughly analyze complaints data in this way to more accurately represent community concerns.

Noise Monitoring Locations

Predictive Model

Blasting

- MH asked how the difference between a complaint and enquiry is defined. CQ answered that residents often state if their contact is or is not a complaint, or we ask to confirm the nature of the contact.
- PB commented that if each complaint was associated to the relevant / associated blasts a broader understanding of community concern can be represented, commenting that the breakdown of individual complaints provides a clear idea on community impact.
- SL commented that a more effective representation of blast complaints would be X complaints were received by the Company relating to X blasts.
- MH commented that a blast complaint could be in relation to vibration, over pressure or fume and stated that these specifications should be communicated. CQ responded that a redesign of complaints register is currently underway which will include a primary complaint in addition to any additional concerns discussed.

- MH asked if there was follow up communication with residents who made complaints to the Company. CK responded yes, as per complaints protocol the Company does follow up with complainants.

Predictive Model for Blast Fume and Dust

Air Quality

- GB informed the CCC that Rix's Creek had recently been involved with the NSW EPA's spring dust trial. GB explained the trial which acquired three months of data from each mine in the Hunter Valley with the EPA's intention to develop a dust forecast model. The requested data was from 1st September until 30th November 2017 and included air quality results, daily production totals of overburden and coal mined, weather data and operation records which detailed all changes made to the operation to mitigate and control operational dust during the trial period.

Rix's Creek North PM10 Results

- CQ explained the three month grace period approved by EPL3391 variation to allow install and launch of the RCN NW TEOM due to necessary land access arrangements being completed with neighboring landowners.

Rix's Creek South PM10 Results

- CK commented that including wind speed and direction data could potentially be of benefit when analysing these results.

Air Quality

- MH asked if Rix's Creek Mine is still significantly lower in air quality results than other mines in the Hunter Valley, CQ responded that this data would need to be accessed via other mining operations Annual Review documents.
- MH asked if there is a general trend of air quality complaints compared to meteorological data highlighting extended dry periods. CQ answered that while 2017 was greatly below annual rainfall average, this correlation is not possible to determine as only one air quality complaint and one enquiry were received in 2017.
- PB commented that Rix's Creek Mine has a very minimal impact on nearby residents and local communities despite having a very large number of community residents which could potentially be impacted by the operation due to the close proximity of the Mine to the township of Singleton and surrounding suburbs.
- MH commented it is commendable that Rix's Creek has such a minor impact on local residents when it is situated very close to town.
- GB commented that quite often the real time air quality monitors return elevated dust readings in air entering Rix's Creek and reduced dust readings in air leaving the Rix's Creek Mine site. This is evidence that quite often, when under north-westerly wind conditions, the air that enters Rix's Creek Mine is impacted by separate upper Hunter Valley operations located to the north of Rix's Creek and that the dust suppression and best practice methodologies put in place at Rix's Creek prove to be significantly effective, resulting in the improvement of air quality prior to reaching the south-east air quality monitors and subsequently the communities to the south-east of Rix's Creek Mine.

Air Quality Monitoring Sites Map

- GB commented that the majority of Depositional Dust Gauges have been removed due to EPL variation as per air quality monitoring shift to updated upstream and downstream best practice methodologies.

Weeds and Pests

- MH asked what the recorded uptake of ground meat baits. CQ responded that the uptake was communicated to have been very successful, however there is an unknown difference between wild dog uptakes and fox uptakes.
- MH asked what communication occurs around feral pest control. CQ and GB answered that we communicate with residents on all feral / pest management programs via the necessary procedures, and we liaise with neighbouring land owners to coordinate programs when possible to increase the success rate of programs.
- MH requested that Rix's Creek approach Singleton Council to coordinate pest programs. SL responded that feral pest control is typically the responsibility of Local Land Services.
- **Follow up:** SL to follow up as per request of MH to please provide additional information in relation to Singleton Councils role in feral animal control programs.
- PB asked how many kangaroo tags were utilised. CQ responded that approximately 200 tags were used.

Weed Management Areas Map

- PB asked if Rix's Creek undertakes weed control on both sides of Glennies Creek. CQ answered yes, weed spraying is conducted on the southern side of Glennies Creek as per standard site contractor engagement, and the Company communicates with land owner on the northern side and provide that land owner with chemical to target weeds along Glennies Creek.
- SL requested that Glennies Creek weed management areas please be included in future maps.

Water Management

- CQ commented that in April 2017 a combined Water Management Plan which included both RCN and RCS sites has been created and this was submitted to The NSW Department of Planning and Environment however the Company have not yet received feedback relating to this submission.

EPL3391 Surface Water Sample Locations Map

Surface Water – Electrical Conductivity

Surface Water – pH

RCN Water Monitoring Locations Map

RCS Water Monitoring Locations Map

Ground Water

- SL asked if ground water is sampled, CQ answered yes, bi-monthly and quarterly ground water samples are collected. Also, annual full suite analysis of ground water samples is completed.

Rehabilitation

- MH asked what was the survival rate of the 4730 tube stock planted in 2017. CQ responded that we do not have precise success rate data, however the visual impression is that the survival rate is very poor, approximately 1:6 success rate along Glennies Creek and potentially even lower along Rix's Creek Lane due to extended dry conditions and below average rainfall.
- PB commented that an additional issue when attempting to establish tube stock during extended dry periods is the increased salinity of water resources causing increased stress to the tube stock when manually watered.
- MH asked if there are salinity resistant species available. CQ answered that we have a specific native tree species mix which is utilised when planting tube stock. CQ then continued to explain that we also have a specific native tree seed mix which is utilised when direct tree seeding areas. CQ explained that the ideal methodology is direct tree seeding over pasture which allows for tree growth to occur when the conditions are ideal and therefore maximising the success rate of trees and reducing costs.
- MH commented that the success rate will be higher with groundcover. CQ answered that when direct tree seeding our method is to establish a cover group where Biosolids is utilised as per standard site pasture rehabilitation procedure.
- MH commented that Biosolids will be high in phosphorus and therefore not ideal conditions for native trees. CQ clarified that the nutrient spike which does result from Biosolids application is neutralized via the initial pasture crop within eight months.

2017 Rix's Creek Rehabilitation Map

2018 Rix's Creek Rehabilitation Map

Rehabilitation Trials and Research – 4ha Rehab Trial RCS

- MH commented that, specifically in relation to kikuyu grass, a diverse grass species mix is needed to avoid nitrogen issues and cattle health concerns. CQ responded that where cattle have been grazing on rehabilitated mine lands, no cattle health issues have occurred, further explaining that an appropriate pasture species (summer or winter mix) has been developed specifically for grazing, the final land use goal.

2017 Rehabilitation Monitoring / Rehabilitation Performance

Community Complaints

Annual Review – Independent Audit

- CQ commented that of note, there is no longer a 'not verified' option available during an audit process, conditions are to be stated as being compliant or not compliant.
- CK explained, using the example of Schedule 2, Condition 12D receiving a non-compliance: *The blast management plan does not include a protocol that has been developed in consultation with the surrounding mines*, that email evidence was provided to auditors

demonstrating Rix's Creeks historical and ongoing consultative communication with neighbouring mines in relation to blasting, however as there was no specific protocol in place this system was deemed not to be adequate.

- MH commented that there are potential repercussions for the Company if approved plans and documents are not provided to authorities by strict deadlines. MH asked if there are any repercussions placed on regulative authorities to provide approval or feedback on submitted documents in accordance with any defined schedules or deadlines. CK respond that DRG do function in accordance with deadlines and target schedules, and that DPE can and do, on occasion and upon request, respond to submissions more rapidly if deemed necessary.

Questions arising from the 2017 Rix's Creek Mine Annual Review?

- PB asked about the progression of the proposed housing developments on land abutting Rix's Creek Mine eastern buffer land off Bridgman Road. SL commented that Singleton Council has approved the re-zoning of this land. GB commented that Rix's Creek's preference for this rezoning and urban development was for Singleton Council to time base or stagger the rezoning and development process in a way in which housing development would uniformly progress westward as Rix's Creek mine also progressed further westward away from the community, however this was not possible.
- RE asked if Black Swans had been identified within the operation. CQ answered yes, Black Swans are often seen. Most often on the more brackish mine water dams.
- SL asked if any monitoring samples are tested for aluminum. CK explained that a question that arose during the continuation project, following concerns raised from neighbouring landowners and lease holders, was the presence of aluminum in surface water. Consequently, as part of the revised submissions document, further analysis was undertaken via a 3rd party which identified that initial concerns were raised due to incorrect analysis techniques being requested and this caused confusion. SL asked if this has been the only space of concern from aluminum, and asked if there was recorded concerns relating to aluminum in waste or dust? CK responded no, stating that the initial concern was associated with clays and since the correct testing methodologies have been employed, this is no longer an issue.
- **Follow up:** CK will forward GW section to SL.
- GB commented that the long term viability concerns of cattle grazing on rehabilitated lands was an attributing pressure for the recently completed ACARP study '*The Upper Hunter Grazing Trial*' which was completed to specifically examine cattle grazing on rehabilitated mine land, which positive results published.

Meeting Break 11:45 – 12pm

6 GENERAL BUSINESS

Approvals Update – Rix's Creek South Continuation Project

- CQ explained that the Rix's Creek Continuation Project assessment report by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment has been completed and is approvable with strict conditions. GB explained that The Independent Planning Commission of NSW (The IPCN - previously the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC)) will be on site on Monday the 4th June, with the public meeting to follow on Wednesday 6th June at 11:30am at the Charbonnier Hotel Singleton. On Friday 25th May, Company representatives will meet with the IPCN in Sydney.
- MH asked if the public can attend the public meeting, GB replied yes, however if the opportunity to publicly speak at the meeting is desired, applications must be made to the IPCN by 12pm Monday 4th June. GB explained that not all applications to speak at the meeting will be approved by the IPCN.
- GB asked the CCC if the IPCN had been in contact with any CCC members or the chairperson, as the commission have stated that they will be inviting six community members from six different organisations. The CCC and the Chairperson responded no.

ML1725 consultation

- PB asked where Stoney Creek Rd was located. This was identified on the aerial map – Plan of ML1725.

Independent Chairperson

- RE asked why the change to Independent Chairperson was necessary as the current Rix's Creek CCC was working effectively. CK explained that not all CCC work effectively so the NSW Government has responded to pressures to broadly improve the CCC system and provide a standardized, detailed CCC strategy and thus created the Community Consultative Committee Guidelines.
- CK informed the CCC and Chairperson that Rix's Creek will commit to advise the current CCC members of the application process when more information becomes available.
- MH asked if Rix's Creek requires two CCC's for each of the two Development Consents. CK responded no, explaining that Rix's Creek gained approval to operate one CCC when the Company originally purchased the previously owned Vale Integra Open Cut (Rix's Creek North).
- GB thanked the current CCC for their involvement and contribution to the Rix's Creek CCC.

Questions

- MH asked what is required or expected from CCC members. GB responded that going forward, more involvement and communication will occur. MH asked what is the term for involvement. GB replied that from 1989 to 1995 the CCC was run by the Department of Mineral Resources and in 1995 there was a variation for Council to run the CCC.
- PB commented that there is a housing development under construction along Sunnyside Lane, and queried if this has had an impact on the air quality monitors in that area. CQ replied that no significant spikes have occurred suggestive of external influence.
- SL asked if Rix's Creek have since revised all boundaries and area of approved mining. GB responded yes, there is a heightened awareness within the Company.

Historical mining outside an approved area at former Integra Open Cut

- CK provided an overview of the recently identified issue of mining having occurred outside the approved area. This historical issue is deemed a legacy issue as the disturbance occurred prior to The Bloomfield purchasing the Rix's Creek North Mine, previously the Vale Integra Open Cut. The notification process to regulators is currently underway, with no penalty expected to be received by the Company.

Proposed Next Meeting

- 9am Wednesday 17th October 2018 RCS Training Room.
- CQ advised the CCC that while previously the CCC have been provided with a half yearly report however moving forward this half yearly report will now be replaced with meeting presentations that will outline the environmental performance and activities of Rix's Creek for the first half of 2018.

Meeting close 1pm

These Meeting Minutes were approved on 17th October 2018 during CCC meeting