

RIXS CREEK MINE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING: 26/05/2021

PRESENT: Chairperson - Lisa Andrews

Community Representatives – Patricia Bestic (PB) and Reg Eveleigh (RE).

Singleton Shire Council Delegate - Councilor Sarah Lukeman (SL)

Company Representatives – Geoff Moore (GM), Chris Knight (CK), Chris Quinn (CQ) and Damien Butler (DB) [minute taker]

APOLOGIES: Dave Moran (DM), Brendon Clements (BC), Michelle Higgins and Deidre Olofsson (DO).

- **Welcome**

- SL joined via video conference (Zoom) and asked CQ about the Biodiversity Presentation. CQ confirmed that it was included in this meeting.
- The Chair formally opened the meeting at 9:03am and welcomed attendees. RE attended in person and was welcomed back by the group, following his recent illness.
- Participants were asked to speak in to the microphone so that Zoom attendees could hear all conversations.

- **Apologies**

- The Chair noted the apologies that included DM, DO and BC.

- **Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

- The Chair covered the required declarations, stating that no changes to declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests had occurred. There were no other changes to the declarations.

- **Business Arising from Previous Minutes (responses to issues raised or provision of information)**

- The Chair noted that the last CCC was held 20 October 2020 and the minutes were finalised on 7 November 2020. The action items were completed, including the circulation of the Mitsui Solar Farm presentation. The second action item included a Biodiversity Presentation at this CCC.

- **Correspondence**

Correspondence was noted, including the meeting notice sent on 19 May 2020, along with the log in details for the meeting:

- 28/10/20 - Email to members with the draft minutes
- 7/11/20 - Email to members with the finalised minutes.
- 1/3/21 – Email from Bloomfield advising of Modification 9 approval. This information forwarded to members on the same day.
- 16/3/21 – Email from Bloomfield advising that the Management Plans and Strategies for the Rix's Creek Continuation of Mining Project (SSD 6300) have been approved

and now available on the website. This information forwarded on to members the same day.

- 31/3/21 – Email from Bloomfield advising that the Annual Review Report for Rix's Creek Mine is not available on the project website.
- 11/5/21 – Email from Bloomfield regarding its intention to lodge a modification for Rix's Creek South. This information forwarded on to CCC members.
- 19/5/21 – Email to members with the meeting notice, agenda and correspondence report for this meeting, with options on how to participate. Responses received.
- 19/5/21 – Same information to RE.
- 19/5/21 – Email to DPIE with chair's CCC annual report for 2020-21.
- 25/5/21 – Email to members with the reminder and video-conference link for this CCC.

• **Proponents Reports and Overview of Activities:**

Progress of project:

- CQ gave a project progress update, including operations in the Western continuation area that included pre-clearing work. CK noted the fence line boundary for the disturbance area, advising that this was well understood by all mine employees.

Environmental Monitoring and Performance:

- CQ noted rainfall was significantly above average for the 2020 period.

Community Complaints and Response to these Complaints:

- CQ noted the compliance monitoring that was undertaken by an independent noise consultant. He advised that no exceedances occurred during the 2020 reporting period.
- CQ advised that 15 noise complaints were received and that 11 of these were from one resident. CK noted that two of the complaints came via the EPA. The Chair asked if the mine was compliant and CK confirmed that the mine was compliant.
- CK talked about the noise monitoring plan at Rix's Creek Mine, including night time monitoring and being able to quickly make operational changes if the mine was nearing its limits. He provided an example of what occurs if the mine is reaching its noise limits such as dumping in a lower area of the mine or parking up equipment if needed. He noted that because the mine has someone out in the community monitoring it is able to react very quickly. He noted the application of low frequency and tonal penalties that forms part of the robust noise management system. He advised that at other sites it could be the case that noise penalties are applied afterward, but that the mine does it in real time. CK informed the CCC that the site had entered an industry award for this approach.
- PB asked what type of noise it is that people complain about and if this was limited to blasts. CQ and CK provided examples of the types of noise complaints. PB noted that if there is an inversion on certain nights that she could hear voices from Mount Owen mine. PB noted it was usually a particular type of weather event that causes her to hear noises. CK confirmed that these weather events were typically when the mine applies its penalties.
- SL asked CK about the awards that were being entered and what the mine saw as unique about its approach. CK advised that it was about the proactive nature and the penalties that were applied in real-time. SL summarised that it was the active monitoring, management and operations adjustments and CK confirmed that this was correct.
- CQ noted the use of the envmet model and the monitoring undertaken in the community.
- CQ gave an overview of 2020 blasting, including fume rating. He noted that the 3A recorded was still compliant within the pit and that it was not reportable because it stayed within the lease area. CK explained the rating and noted that while the site had recorded a level 3, it was localised.
- CK noted installation of a monitor at a neighbour's residence and the modelling for fume and inversions that are reviewed prior to every shot.
- In discussing air quality, CK added that with approval of modification 9 there was an update to criteria for PM10 and PM2.5. He noted there were differences between the old consent and the new consent.

- CQ noted the air quality in January 2020, advising that under North West winds elevation likely from upstream sources is seen.
- CQ noted the monitoring and surveillance carried out by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and that it was their determination that the site was managing operations in accordance with its plan.
- PB asked what month the monitoring occurred in.
- CQ noted down time that had occurred with certain systems and that the site had substituted Data from the Singleton NW Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network (UHAQMN) for the period. CK gave more detail about the monitors and how close they were and it was confirmed that the data generally reflects similar results.
- The other substituted data was shown on the map but one monitoring point near RE's house was not on the map. CQ agreed to update the map to mark this.
- CQ advised that no water management incidents had occurred. Sample locations were noted including the areas in which a sample can only be taken in large weather events. He advised that salinity had reduced in significant rain periods.
- CQ provided an overview of rehabilitation including the hectares rehabilitated in certain areas.
- CQ noted weed management and the focus on Acacia Saligna, including the efforts to tackle it before it seeds. CK advised \$40,000 was spent previously to tackle the issues and that this amount was being invested again. PB asked where the Green Cestrum is. CK noted the area near Glennies Creek.
- PB enquired about the Noble Crossing and if this was owned by the mine. CQ confirmed that area is not owned by the mine. CQ informed that because this area wasn't a part of the mine the company didn't complete any weed management within this area. There are three management areas on Glennies Creek where riparian management works are undertaken and Green Cestrum and other noxious weeds are managed.
- CQ spoke about the Independent Audit and went through details of the audit and compliance to the conditions. He then presented the summary of non-compliance noting these were low risk in nature or administrative. He noted the actions being taken. He advised that the 2017 exceedance wasn't reported to the mine by the contractor company doing the testing until a month after the event, hence this recorded was a non-compliance.
- CK noted it was generally a good report and most matters had been addressed.
- CK noted the new Rix's Creek consent and that a number of conditions were not yet triggered.
- CQ then gave the presentation on biodiversity management, including biannual monitoring and noted previous data from Integra. (Action item from previous meeting.)
- CQ showed a photo of ring-tailed possums using the mine installed habitat boxes. He presented pictures of the brushed tailed phascogales and discussed their rarity. He noted that multiple brushed tailed phascogales roosting in one next box hadn't been seen before. The picture was discussed by the group.
- CQ continued and provided an overview of threatened fauna. CQ advised that no foxes or wild dogs had been recorded and PB said this was unusual. CQ said that the mine will still undertake baiting and that this will occur tomorrow. PB asked about kangaroo culling and CQ confirmed it will happen in the 2021 period.
- CQe noted the Biodiversity Audit and the consent requirements. He advised of the requirements and commitments made in the plans. He noted no squirrel gliders had been seen but Bloomfield will still replace the top barb wire with plain wire on the fences. PB asked about cattle grazing and CQ confirmed there was no grazing. PB also asked about fire risk. PB said she was aware of the fire break and noted concern with next spring. CK noted the Biodiversity Conservation Division and that they adamantly said no to grazing on the land. CK noted the mine was doing what was approved, noting that there is some grazing in the southern biodiversity offset but not in the northern area. He noted that this is to allow the trees to come back up. Further, that where grazing is allowed to occur – it will. PB talked about North West wind risks with fire near to town. CK reiterated maintenance of fire breaks. PB asked if the biodiversity agreement was in perpetuity and asked how it is managed in the future if the mine is gone. CK explained this was a bond but it was unclear what happened after 20 years. PB shared her personal knowledge regarding the sale of a property with an agreement and that nobody would buy it. PB noted this stops development and impacts on the town. SL noted Council has an action being undertaken to map biodiversity for the entire Local Government Area. Commenting that it would be good to incorporate what the mine

has with what Council has. SL noted it was also the biodiversity corridors that Council wants conceptual maps for as part of strategic planning statement. SL confirmed that the mapping will confirm critical corridors and that she wants the mine's plans to link up with other areas.

- PB asked about signage noting that along Fallbrook Road she had seen fences cut. PB noted there was a sign with a phone number, which enabled her to report the damage. She said signs would be help as people are cutting fences to steal firewood. CK agreed that a contact number would be included in the signs. The Chair noted this was good feedback to receive and incorporate.
- CK spoke about *casuarina glauca* and the commitment made in the management plan to reduce take over by the plant. He noted since this was written, the plant has now become a threatened species, so is unable to be controlled.
- Examples of nest boxes were brought in to the room to show. PB showed the photo of cut fences to CK and an example of the sign. CK noted more nest boxes would be installed.
- CQ talked about dog baiting and the community communications including advertisements and a letterbox drop to 180 residents. He noted it was also provided to tenants.
- CQ showed the complaints overview and the breakdown of complainants. PB said it was a good breakdown and that it helped put issues in perspective. SL asked about the peak of noise complaints. CK noted other complaints associated and the work done to investigate those complaints. He noted all complaints were fully investigated and that this included independent reporting.
- RE asked about goannas. CQ noted he had seen one. RE said he hadn't seen any for a few years.
- CQ presented the complaint register line by line reinforcing the objective review of each individual complaint that occurred. He noted the installation of a \$20,000 blast monitor when discussing a certain complaint.
- CQ noted the trial occurring to reduce dust from the tailings dam. He advised that the mine can proactively now open spigot lines if predictive monitoring shows increased dust risk.
- CK note the Gowrie complaint was a new resident and that he took extra time to explain to them how dust management works.
- CQ noted the information provided to the community and feedback.
- CQ gave an overview of recent community initiatives including the work to support "Mates in Mining". SL asked about Mates in Mining and CQ gave an overview of its purpose.

General Business

- CK provided an update on RCN Modification 9.
- CK then gave an overview of RCS Modification 1. He noted it was minor in nature. He advised of the movement of coal from other sites and described these, including the cleanup at Curlewis, which was not mined by the company. He noted that 10 truck deliveries per day maximum is planned to occur. PB asked if it was road or rail and it was confirmed to be road. RE asked how many trucks movements could occur. CK confirmed that it is planned to be up to 10. RE noted the traffic jams that occurred with truck movements from Bickham and that he complained about these at the time. CK noted a traffic management plan would be undertaken. GM asked RE for more information about the issue. RE said it was just lots of trucks and CK said this would be different and thanked RE for providing this information.
- CK noted the aspect of exploration and that people may see one small drill rig.
- RE asked if Burning Mountain was where the trucked coal is coming from. CK confirmed this was the case and that it was from the old Bickham site.
- PB asked about the number of acquisition properties. CK noted some properties have acquisition rights but had not taken them up. He noted five properties that were land only that had rights. He then showed the other properties. PB asked if it was off Bridgeman road and CK said yes. CK said there are others under the new consent that provided voluntary acquisition in Camberwell. PB asked if it was both directions of the area and CK confirmed it was.
- PB asked about the bypass and how it may impact on Rix's creek Lane. GM confirmed there was no impact on the lane but that it will impact on the old motel site.
- CK brought up photos of a dust reduction trial. He provided an overview of the trial. PB asked if it was soil that the mine was wetting and this was confirmed. He noted the high-risk period in August and September with North West winds. PB asked if you can walk all over the

tailings dam. CK said some areas you could but others you could not. He noted the recent testing that confirmed where you were able to walk.

- SL advised this was her last meeting as Council representative. SL advised that elections for Local Government are on 4 September 2021 and that caretaker mode commences on 7 August 2021. SL advised that there will be a new Councillor appointed to the CCC. SL thanked the committee and the Chair thanked SL for her commitment to Singleton and wished her well in her future endeavours.

- **Next Meeting**

- The Chair informed the CCC that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 20 October 2021 meeting, commencing at 9am.
- SL asked for copy of the presentation and it was agreed to PDF and send.
- CK and RE discussed truck movements and the potential to go in through the old Maitland diesel haul road to avoid disruption.

The meeting was closed 10:41am with the Chair thanking all for their attendance and contribution.

Action items

Item	Action	Responsibility
1	Update plan to include location of south east dust track location	Chris Quinn
2	Update BOA fence signage to include a contact number for the mine	Chris Quinn