

RIXS CREEK MINE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING: 20/10/2021

PRESENT: Independent Chairperson - Lisa Andrews

Community Representatives – Patricia Bestic (PB), Councillor Sarah Lukeman (SL), Michelle Higgins (MH)

Company Representatives – Geoff Moore (GM), Chris Knight (CK), Chris Quinn (CQ), Damien Butler (DB), Brendon Clements (BC), Dave Holmes (DH - Observer)

APOLOGIES: Dave Moran (DM), Deidre Olofsson (DO), Reg Eveleigh (RE),

- **Welcome**

- The meeting was held solely on Zoom due to COVID-19 site rules.
- The Chair formally opened the meeting at 9:07am and welcomed attendees. DH was welcomed as a graduate and an observer.
- SL confirmed council elections had not taken place and were delayed until December, hence why she was attending this meeting as the LGA representative.

- **Apologies**

- Apologies included DM, RE & DO.

- **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.

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

- The Chair noted that the last CCC was held on 26 May, 2021 and the minutes were finalised on 14 June, 2021.
- The action items were noted, including updating the plan to include the location of the south east dust track location. CQ confirmed that this was complete.
- The second action was biodiversity offset area signage including a contact number for the mine, and CQ confirmed that had also been actioned.

- **Correspondence – As sent on 12/10/21:**

- 2/6/21 - Email to members with the draft minutes
- 14/6/21- Email to members with the finalised minutes and presentation from 26/5/21.
- 14/6/21 – Letter to RE with the finalised minutes.
- 13/7/21 – Email from Bloomfield regarding the approval of Modification 1 of SSD 6300 Rix's Creek South Continuation of Mining Project by DPIE on 12/7/21. This email was forwarded to CCC members the same day.
- 12/10/21 – Email to members with the meeting notice, agenda and correspondence report for this meeting, with link on how to participate via video-conferencing.
- 19/10/21 –Email to members with the reminder for this meeting.

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

Progress of project:

- CQ provided an update on project progress including continued operations in the RCM West Pit. He noted pre-clearing work for the western continuation commenced in 2021.

Environmental Monitoring and Performance:

- CQ showed a photo of wedge tail eagles roosting in the Arties Pit Woodland Rehabilitation Area.
- CQ showed the updated plan for monitoring locations. He noted Upper Hunter Air Quality monitoring locations had also been included in the plan.
- CQ said there was positive news on rainfall, which he said was good for rehabilitation work.
- CQ gave an overview of operational noise. He noted there were no operational noise exceedances for the reporting period. Seven noise complaints were received and four were from a single complainant. CQ showed the noise monitoring locations in the community.
- The Chair asked about the complaints data and whether that was from the last meeting or the entire reporting period. CQ confirmed they were from the January to the October period. CQ confirmed that the data presented at the previous CCC was for the 2020 period.
- CQ then spoke about blasting, confirming 66 blasts were conducted. He gave an overview of fume ratings and noted five complaints were received and related to vibration. All were from the one complainant and there were no exceedances recorded.
- CQ gave an overview of air quality, noting real-time monitoring continued to be conducted. He noted one complaint had been received in relation to air quality. He noted the elevation in September due to NW winds however he stated that this was still below the EPA guidelines.
- On water management for the period, CQ noted no complaints were received. CQ advised the CCC that one external reportable incident had occurred. This incident related to passive seepage from historical underground workings from the 1800's. CQ advised that this was controlled as soon as it was internally identified and that the mine was cooperating fully with the EPA in relation to that incident. SL asked where the seepage had come from. CQ confirmed the water had come from old underground workings where the water had seeped up from the ground.
- CQ gave an overview of sampling locations. He noted elevated EC readings after large rain events, pointing to June 21. CQ noted the elevated EC reading at the New England highway bridge and advised that this led to identifying the passive seepage event. He said there had been stagnant pools of water in the stone quarry gully. He said when the mine identified the source it was controlled on the day. The area was sandbagged and a submersible pump has stopped any further seepage going offsite.
- CQ gave the figures on rehabilitation, noting positive progress for 2021.
- The photos of the new signage in the biodiversity area was not showing in the presentation due to a technical malfunction, but CQ agreed to provide that photo in a circulated version of the presentation. This was listed as an action.
- CQ gave an update on weed management, noting the targeting of acacia saligna. He showed a map of the extensive weed mapping. CQ advised that a contracting company was working on target areas.

Community Complaints and Response to these Complaints:

- CQ updated the CCC on community complaints. 17 community complaints had been received in 2021 to date. MH asked about the seven noise complaints and if they were from the same incident. CQ didn't believe they were but said he would go through the detail. CQ went through the complaint register noting the register was also located on the Bloomfield website. CQ confirmed that if RCM receives a complaint, action is taken and that this results in findings and actions to minimise impact. CQ noted one blast complainant had been invited and accepted the invitation to attend site to meet the blast team and review the data. The Chair said this was good and very proactive.
- CQ gave an overview of the Spend Local Vaccination initiative in which all fully vaccinated employees receive a \$250 voucher to be spent locally. DB advised that 62 percent of the workforce had received a gift card and that The Bloomfield Group was also providing on site vaccinations through a local provider. SL said using the Spend in Singleton gift cards was a great way to support the community and it was great to see the business was using that initiative. CQ also advised of new Youth off the Streets and Lifeline initiatives to support Singleton and the Hunter.
- MH commented on community engagement when there is a complaint. MH said a complaint provides a great opportunity to explain the processes. MH asked if the CCC has a strategy in terms of how to engage people in the CCC and encourage members. The Chair advised that she had noted that too for later discussion, advising that the CCC has five community members but can have up to seven. The Chair noted DM is often unable to attend because of work commitments and the Chair was going to recommend the CCC conducts recruitment within the guidelines and suggested engaging local organisations and advertising for nominations. The Chair encouraged CCC members to consider people and also suggested that if people are complaining the mine should be letting them know that they could join the CCC. PB supported that proposal. SL also supported that, including reaching out to broad network of stakeholders.

General Business

- CK gave an update on SSD6300 Modification 1. He noted that the Mod was approved in July 2021 and, as required under a new condition, an Exploration Management Plan was developed.
- CK advised that, as required under a new condition, a Coalaceous Haulage Material Management Plan has been developed to cover transport of remnant coal material from Curlewis (Old Preston Colliery) to Rix's Creek South. MH asked why a company would leave old coal behind and if it wasn't of value then why is it of value to RCM. CK said he could not speak on why other companies had left it, but that the mine had been asked to remove it and were happy to. CK confirmed it was a remediation project not a derelict mine project. He noted it was around 4,000 tonnes and as per the management plan it would be 5-10 trucks per day from Curlewis. SL asked if Singleton Council made a submission. CK confirmed nothing was received from Council within the timeframe. SL said she would follow that up. SL noted that there were large projects dominating resources at Singleton Council and apologised for no response. CK said RCM was still happy to receive comment and talk with Council.
- CK advised that RCM had commenced exploration to further refine the geological model.
- The Chair asked the presentation be emailed through and asked for any other business.
- SL noted the support of YOTS and Lifeline and thanked RCM for the support for Cancer Council in Singleton. The Cancer Council Singleton office has now closed. SL noted the disappointment in the decision and thanked RCM and staff for their support of the Cancer Council.
- MH mentioned that her house in Maison Dieu looks like it is sold, but MH is still a business and property owner in Singleton. MH asked if CCC was happy to have her stay on. The Chair said MH was able to stay on as she was still a property owner in the LGA and that her contributions were highly valued.

- PH asked about progress on the Mitsui Solar Farm. PB also asked about the biodiversity offset area that had been set aside and what the location of that land was. CK said there was an offset site north of Stoney Creek road, and advised that there was an offset agreement in the process of being approved. CK offered to give an overview at the next CCC. PB said Singleton would expand in that direction and wondered about the impact on a biodiversity area of Singleton expanding. GM noted it had been fairly quiet in terms of progression from Mitsui. GM said the advice was that the status of the project hadn't changed and that various studies were still required. GM said he had recently contacted Mitsui to ask what their plans are but had not received a response at this stage.
- GM offered additional comment on the Curlewis remediation project. He noted the challenges of trying to do the right thing and clean up the site. GM said that a meeting had been held with DPIE, EPA and Resources Regulator and, along with Bloomfield, all want to see the site cleaned up, but the legislation makes a simple job very difficult and getting a mechanism to allow it to happen has been very challenging. He noted the high costs involved and that it was disappointing. BC noted financially, bringing down coal from Curlewis was a loss making activity but that the best way to clean it was to wash it. He said there was not going to be any money made, rather it was the right thing to do.
- SL noted the Glennies Creek water line and expansion. She advised that the water was not potable until it was processed in the water treatment plant.

Next Meeting

- The Chair proposed to maintain the current meeting schedule. The Chair noted the next meetings would occur on Wednesday 25 May at 9am, and Wednesday 26 October at 9am.
- The meeting closed at 9:59am. The Chair thanked SL for her commitment to the committee and noted that Council would provide another delegate in due course.

Action items

Item	Action	Responsibility
1	Provide photo of the new signage in the biodiversity areas in the circulated presentation	Chris Quinn