

RIXS CREEK MINE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING: 26/10/2022

PRESENT: Independent Chairperson - Lisa Andrews (LA)

Community Representatives – Patricia Bestic (PB *arrived at 9.14am*), Michelle Higgins (MH), Cr Sue George (SG), Reg Eveleigh (RE) & Deidre Olofsson* (DO).

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

APOLOGIES: Chris Knight (CK),

*joined by phone

- **Welcome**

- The meeting was held on site.
- The Chair formally opened the meeting at 9:03am and welcomed attendees.
- DO joined by phone.
- SG was welcomed as a new Singleton Shire Council representative.

- **Apologies**

- Apologies CK.

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

- The Chair confirmed that she is an approved Independent Chairperson, approved by DPE and engaged by Bloomfield to chair this meeting. LA advised that SG had filled in the mandatory forms.

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

- The minutes of the 25 May meeting were finalised on 9 June.
- There were three actions from the previous meeting.
- Action 1 to write to Singleton Council GM regarding replacement Singleton Council representative was complete, with SG joining the CCC.
- Action 2 to show an internal video of a typical Rix's Creek Mine blast, compared with externally sourced footage of a poor blast, was included in the day's presentation.
- Action 3 to investigate options for recycling clothing was underway. CQ noted he had written to BJs clothing about options and is awaiting feedback.
- SG asked a clarification question regarding the previous minutes and references to waste management. This clerical error was clarified that waste is being diverted 'away' from landfill rather than 'to' landfill.

- **Correspondence (as sent with Meeting Notice on 13/10/22 with one additional item):**

- 31/5/22 - Email to members with the draft minutes
- 9/6/22- Email to members with the finalised minutes and presentation from 25/5/22.
- 9/6/22 – Letter to RE with the finalised minutes.
- 30/6/22 – Email from David Moran, resigning from the CCC due to work/family commitments. Acknowledged and thanked DM for his contribution and service.
- 4/7/22 – Letter to Singleton Shire Council requesting replacement for Cr Sarah Lukeman on this CCC.
- 8/7/22 – Email to members with offer of assistance from Rix's Creek to community of Singleton following the recent flooding impacts.
- 31/8/22 - Email from Singleton Shire Council advising that Cr Sue George is its delegate on this CCC.
- 7/9/22 – Email to Cr George welcoming her to the CCC & providing governance forms for completion and return.
- 8/9/22 – Email from Cr George with the completed governance forms.
- 12/9/22 – Email to members with amended date for CCC (26/10/22).
- 12/9/22 – Letter to RE with same information.
- 13/10/22 – Email to members with the meeting notice, agenda and correspondence report for this meeting.
- 25/10/22 – [Email to members with the reminder for this meeting and site inspection information.](#)

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

Progress of project:

- CQ gave and overview of current operations, noting continued mining operations in the Rix's Creek West Pit and Rix's Creek North Camberwell Pit operations.

Environmental Monitoring and Performance:

- CQ shared a photo of the St Catherine's High School student visit to rehabilitation areas at Rix's Creek South.
- CQ gave overview of environmental monitoring locations.
- Rainfall meteorological data was covered by CQ.
- An operational noise overview was given and CQ talked through the real-time noise monitoring that occurs.
- SG asked if machinery was noise attenuated and CQ confirmed it was.
- CQ noted that one noise monitoring complaint was received. He then showed the noise monitoring locations.
- CQ gave an overview of the noise monitoring system.
- CQ talked through blasting figures and the relevant fume ratings. CQ explained the fume ratings and noted the one complaint that had been received regarding blasting. He said that no exceedances occurred due to blasting during 2022.
- PB joined the meeting at 9:14am.
- Air quality data was covered by CQ. CQ noted one complaint was received in June.
- Deposition dust gauge results were covered by CQ and CQ stated these were well below compliance limits.
- Waste management and improvement of recycling on site to reduce waste and increase recycling was covered by CQ.
- CQ gave an overview of surface water, noting there was three reportable water incidents. He talked through the remediation actions taken as a result of the incidents. MH asked if any are recurring events. CQ noted that the 3 May and 12 September events were repeated events. GM talked about the challenges created by the old underground workings and the lag in water volume data.
- Surface water sample locations were covered by CQ.
- CQ gave overview of electrical conductivity salinity results and water quality analysis.

- Completed rehabilitation figures were covered by CQ, with 8 hectares being completed in total.
- CQ noted the aerial seeding that had occurred on the rehabilitation and buffer lands.
- MH asked about the depth of the top soil. CQ noted the minimum was 100mm and that the sub soil depth as 300mm to 400mm.
- CQ gave the overview new standard rehabilitation conditions. He said the Rehabilitation Management Plan and Forward Program is located on the Bloomfield website for review and that there is also information available on the Resources Regulator site. LA asked if there is link to Resourced Regulator portal and CQ agreed to provide this.
- 2022 Weed Management was covered by CQ. MH asked if Rix's Creek Mine is grazing the areas. CQ said cattle stay away from certain weeds. CQ talked through time spent in the Falbrook pit rehabilitation to target weeds but said some areas had been difficult to access due to flood. PB asked about Green Cestrum and CQ talked through the challenges of managing this weed.

Community Complaints and Response to these Complaints:

- CQ said six complaints had been received which was lower than the previous period. CQ gave overview of the complaints and the company response. He said that no further action was required on blast complaint received by the EPA.

Information provided to the community and any feedback:

- Information to community was covered including the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue (UHMD) tours. LA asked what mines participate in the program and CQ stated that most of the sites, including Rix's Creek Mine, that are associated with the UHMD.
- Support for the community support was covered and LA asked if the company has an electronic newsletter and if the company could make that available. DB noted that there may be some employee information but would consider.
- MH noted she had spoken to Alex Richards from the Foundation and that she was genuinely interested in supporting the community.

General Business

- CQ provided an update on exploration activities.
- CQ gave overview of the blasting at RCM and showed video of two best practice blasts. LA asked if it is a regulatory requirement to film blasts and CQ confirmed that it was. PB asked about the colour of the blast and CQ confirmed there was now fume. BC talked through best practice blasting and how this occurred and mentioned the trial underway with Orica to reduce risks of fume. PB noted the clouds of dust from the internal videos did not rise very high. CQ explained all the factors that support these good blasts. CQ showed externally sourced videos of a poor blast and what causes fume. MH asked if there was a situation where a large blast is a positive and CQ said there is not and explained the factors of a good blast. BC, GM and the group discussed the factors and the science behind best practice blasting.
- DO asked if a blast goes wrong what mechanisms are in place to notify the public. BC said there is no instant system to warn of overpressure or flyrock but with fume there is a process in place with a forecasting tool and talked about the measures to prevent it from occurring. CQ said if a blast did go wrong regulators would be notified and the Pollution Incident Response Plan would be activated. CQ said text messages and emails go to community members. CQ talked about the controls in place to prevent a poor blast. PB asked what is in the fume. CQ said it includes nitrous oxide that can cause harm to health.
- DO asked about the amount of land that had been rehabilitated as per the approval. CQ said he believed around 850 hectares but that he would provide the actual number.
- DO left meeting at 9:55am.
- MH raised clothes recycling and new ABC podcast called 'threads' and recommended the group review this. MH said there is also a podcast on Triple J.

- PB asked about grazing on rehabilitation and if there were also horses. CQ confirmed there was. PB noted last time there were fires that none occurred on mine sites. CQ talked through the fire break management through the buffer and rehabilitation lands as well as work with local rural fire services and local neighbours.
- PB asked about pigs moving in. CQ said pigs have been spotted and that Rix's Creek Mine was working on a management strategy.
- BC gave an overview of the Bloomfield cattle grazing operations, the Hunter Coal Festival and the passion of the group for cattle grazing. Public Tours for the Hunter Coal Festival was covered.
- MH asked about cattle and if they are being compared to other mine sites. CQ talked about the cattle monitoring trial over four years and the positive results compared to analogue sites that showed cattle grazed on rehabilitated land outperformed cattle grazed on land that had not been mined. CQ talked about the company cattle grazing program. Cell grazing versus rotational grazing was discussed and CQ said rotational was the preferred. MH asked if we do late grazing and CQ confirmed that does occur. MH asked about mechanisms to publicise the good news stories from the grazing. BC said the tours that occur as well as visibility of cows so close to the operations were some of the ways. PB said there is information coming out in publications like 'The Land' comparing operations in the mines and other grazing trials and that the Hereford Association was also involved.
- The group discussed some of the negative perceptions from mining. BC said that we need to keep telling the positive story and follow the right processes. PB said that a lot of people have accepted that mining is part of the region and people aren't complaining about the mines like they used to. MH asked about invites to the UHMD Annual Forum and LA agreed to send info to the committee.
- LA suggested the UHMD present to the CCC after to Annual Forum. This was agreed.

Next Meeting

- The meeting schedule was confirmed. The next meeting would be 24 May, followed by 18 October 2023 at 9am at Rix's Creek South.
- The meeting closed at 10:22am and CCC members joined a tour of the site.

Postscript

Questions from DO were sent just prior to the commencement of the meeting. These questions and the company response are as follows:

Q. When will mining be completed closest to Camberwell, near Dulwich?

A. Rix's Creek North development consent PA08_0102 states the applicant may carry out open cut mining operations on site until 31 December 2035.

Q. When Integra underground stop mining and goes into decommissioning, does this impact Bloomfield water supply.

A. Currently Integra UG are transferring water to Rix's Creek mine to store. It is envisaged if Integra UG moves to mine closure Rix's Creek Mine will have suitable water arrangements to maintain operations. Currently due to the elevated rainfall in 2022 we have surplus water on site.

Q. Has Bloomfield any outstanding biodiversity offsets that have not been approved and has Bloomfield referred any to trust to acquire credits.

A. In order to meet the biodiversity offset requirements approved under SSD 6300, Bloomfield has established one property under a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement (BSA), another currently being assessed by the Critical Supply Taskforce and a third property being assessed for credits. Some credit types that are not covered by the properties have been purchased from the market but no credits have been purchased through the Biodiversity Conservation Fund for SSD 6300.

Q. Has deadman hill stabilised, is monitoring continuing.

A. Yes we continue to monitor Deadman Hill. Monitoring results have remained stable.

Q. Has Bloomfield implemented or submitted any renewable projects in planning for transition of work force.

A. At this stage no renewable projects have been submitted for approval at Rix's Creek Mine.

Action items

Item	Action	Responsibility
1	Provide link to Resources Regulator portal (Rehabilitation Reforms) https://www.resourcesregulator.nsw.gov.au/rehabilitation/mine-rehabilitation/seed-portal#anchor-environmental-data	CQ
2	Provide extracts from the employee newsletter covering community contributions <i>Included with minutes</i>	DB
3	Confirm the amount of land that had been rehabilitated as per the approval. <i>2021 Annual Review Total Rehabilitation 745.9ha</i>	CQ
4	Send UHMD Annual Forum information to the CCC https://miningdialogue.com.au/engagement/2022-community-forum	LA
5	Invite James Barben or Craig Milton to present to CCC following UHMD annual forum	CQ/DB