

RIXS CREEK MINE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING: 22/10/2025

PRESENT: Independent Chair - Lisa Andrews

Community Representatives – Sue George (SG) (Zoom), Reg Eveleigh (RE), Deidre Olofsson (DO) & Patricia Bestic (PB),

Company Representatives – Chris Knight (CK), Sharon Turnbull (ST - minutes), Julius Harris-Payne (JP) & Thomas Holz (TH).

APOLOGIES: Michelle Higgins (MH), Brendon Clements (BC) & Chris Quinn (CQ)

- **Welcome**

- The meeting was held on-site at Rix's Creek North.
- The Chair formally opened the meeting at 9:06 am.
- The Chair provided an Acknowledgment of Country.
- The Chair noted that Ben Kleinschafer (BK) from the Bloomfield Group will present an overview of the proposed RCN Solar Farm Project.
- The Chair noted that a site tour will take place after the conclusion of the meeting.

- **Apologies**

- Apologies included CQ, BC & MH (who did attend via Zoom briefly, but had technical issues)

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

- The Chair covered the required declarations. There were no changes to the declarations.

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

- The Chair noted the timing of the previous CCC, held on 27 May 2025, the actions that arose, and that the minutes were finalised on 22 July 2025.
- There were three actions from the previous meeting.
- The first action was to follow up with Ausgrid regarding the light at Rix's Creek North entrance. CK has submitted the required form to Ausgrid but has not received any response from them. He will follow up with them again. Hold over.
- The second action was to determine the numbers for vehicle requirements for the mine tour. The Chair emailed the number of tour participants, and the action is complete.
- The third action was to provide an update on the Singleton Sustainability Committee at the next meeting. CK has this update available and will present it under general business.

- **Correspondence**

- The Chair noted the correspondence sent with the meeting notice on 10 October 2025, with the addition of the meeting reminder.

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

Progress of the project:

- CK provided an overview of the progress of the project noting the current mining areas.

Environmental Monitoring and Performance:

- CK outlined the Environment Monitoring Locations and identified air quality, water and noise monitoring locations.
- CK provided an overview of rainfall data, noting the increased rainfall during the month of May with rainfall to date from April this year of 468mm.
- Operational Noise was covered, and CK noted that there were two noise complaints received during the reporting period; there were no noise related reportable incidents.
- CK outlined the noise monitoring locations and gave an overview of the predictive forecast models used at site. An application to move NM3 was approved by NSW EPA following an EPL variation noting that properties where monitoring previously occurred had been bought by other mines recently.
- There were 70 production blasts. CK noted one complaint received and explained the blast fume ratings. The blast was classified with a fume rating of 1A and was not at a level required to be reported. CK noted that any blast with a fume rating of 4 or above which occurs onsite is reportable and any blast fume that leaves site with a fume rating above 3 is also reportable. A fume rating of 1 is low.
- Air quality was covered, and CK explained the real-time monitoring that occurs. CK advised that four complaints had been received.
- CK covered the air quality monitoring noting that the deposited dust and PM10 levels were below the criteria. CK said noted the trend in PM 10 prior to the May rain event. CK advised that RCM has had a number of unannounced and offsite dust inspections from the NSW EPA and NSW Department of Planning and was found compliant.
- CK covered waste management, noting the metal and battery recycling figures. CK pointed out that the amount of general waste has been reduced, which appears to be due to the extra focus on recycling.
- SG congratulated Bloomfield on the recycling initiative. CK noted that it is more economical to recycle given the general waste levy and additionally more beneficial to the environment.
- Surface Water was covered and CK advised that RCM has had three reportable incidents. Two sediment dams had recently overflowed due to the rain event in May. CK clarified that these dams were not mine water. The third event received an official caution and a penalty of \$30,000 from NSW EPA. The incident was at the Elsmere Colliery underground mine workings, which date back to the 1870s which are located at Rix's Creek South. CK explained that due to the excessive rainfall in May water entered the underground workings which then came up through an open borehole to the surface which then entered Stonequarry Gully. CK noted that the borehole was drilled to define the location of the old underground workings as the old plans can contain survey inaccuracies.
- DO asked how much water is in there? What is the original size, and how deep is it? CK advised that the Colliery workings are not large in comparison to modern day underground mines with a depth from surface to about 80m deep. CK noted that he will provide the location of the Colliery workings at the next meeting. The RCM draws water from there for reuse on the minesite. He also noted that there were no complaints regarding surface water.
- RCM water monitoring locations were shown on a map. They cover the whole site. The water licence allows RCM to extract water from the underground workings.

- CK covered the freshwater sampling, showing results of both clean water and mine water storages. DO asked if the clean water was drinkable. CK advised that the stock can drink it. Mine water can have an electrical conductivity (ec) of generally around 5,000-10,000ec. Horses and cattle can drink water with increased salinity and CK will provide information on what levels are recommended for cattle and horses at the next meeting. **Action.**
- Photos showing recent rehabilitation at the western out of pit dump were presented with CK noting 5.6 Ha of rehabilitation had been completed during the current reporting period, compared to the approximate 15 Ha annual commitment. He also said that the biannual rehabilitation monitoring will commence in November. The total rehabilitation of the mine is detailed in the annual report. CK shared photographs of the recently rehabilitated area at West Pit. The West Pit South batter showed the rehabilitation right up to the active overburden dump demonstrating that Bloomfield is rehabilitating as soon as practically possible.
- DO asked about the contours showing in the photo. CK advised that the contour banks in the landscape are to provide sediment control and direct water. DO asked if those are rocks? CK advised that the contour banks are constructed with overburden then covered in topsoil to allow pasture growth.
- CK covered Weed and Pest Management.
- DO asked if greenhouse gases would be in the annual report. CK noted that the NGERs emissions will be reported in the Annual review and finalised this month. The information contained in the review can be provided once approved. DO asked if greenhouse gas values would report as two mines. CK noted that Rix's Creek Mine is one facility as determined by the Clean Energy Regulator. Rix's Creek Mine and Bloomfield Mine as well as other parts of the business are reported under Bloomfield's parent company SRI. CK also noted that Rix's Creek Mine is not a safeguard facility as it does not produce more than 100,000t CO₂-e.
- There were two lighting complaints. Lighting plants are now not to be moved without consulting an OCE. The OCE needs to manage the correct placement of the lighting plants. The previous automated timing problem has been corrected. The night-time noise compliance technician also checks the light visible from the mine nightly when operating. DO raised her concerns with the increase in lighting complaints.
- DO asked what is a tailings beach? CK advised that as the tailings is deposited into dams the material settles around the edges of the dam wall so as to construct a "beach" which is where the coarser material forms an angle on the side of the dam wall and the finer material runs to the centre where any excess water is removed. The Resources Regulator requires dry beaches against the constructed dam walls for stability purposes. It also allows the tailings to consolidate as the dam fills, making it easier to cap when capacity is reached.

Community Complaints and Response to these Complaints:

- CK covered complaints. PB asked who was responsible for the complaints. CK explained that, out of the total nine complaints received, there were eight different individuals.

Information provided to community and Feedback:

- CK noted that the Singleton High School Teachers RCM site tour occurred in July. This was organised as part of the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue's School Mine Tours Program, providing teachers with a firsthand look at the mining process, from exploration and approvals to operations, rehabilitation, and closure planning.

Community Support:

- The Chair handed out The Bloomfield Group Community Investment Report 2024 to all committee members. The report contains details of Bloomfield's community investment for the 2023/24 financial year.
- It was noted that if anyone was interested in receiving the quarterly Bloomfield Newsletter, they should give their email address to ST to organise delivery.

• General Business

- DO inquired about the Integra purchase and Falbrook Pit. CK advised that the Falbrook Pit is in care and maintenance. There has been rehabilitation carried out. DO asked about the dust management of the void. CK advised that water carts are run as required. Water is used from the Falbrook Pit for dust suppression and CHPP. The Falbrook pit is used for water storage and water balancing around the site. DO asked how much water is in there? CK to supply the amount of water held in the Falbrook Pit. **Action.**
- CK provided an update on the Rix's Creek North Continuation Project, noting that assessments were continuing. CK advised that the biodiversity assessment is being finalised. Five additional drill holes have been drilled to update the fugitive gas model.
- The project was referred to DCCEE (Cth) and was determined on 16/10/25 as a controlled action.
- Meetings have occurred with Transport for NSW & Singleton Shire Council regarding the road adjustment. SG stated that Council was in favour of the project. DO asked if the New England Highway was classified under the National Road Act 1974. CK responded yes.
- CK noted that an extension to the Secretary's Environmental Assessments Requirements (SEARS) has been provided till April 2026. Time is needed due to additional biodiversity requirements.
- Bloomfield will be talking to potentially impacted neighbours who may receive mitigation or voluntary acquisition rights if the Project is approved. PB asked if there were many impacted. CK advised that around 15 landowners may be impacted. TH advised that a significant amount of background work has been done on mine planning, focusing on the project's approvability.
- PB advised that project acceptance in general is much higher than in past 20 years. DO asked if there would be a public meeting. CK replied that the preference is to meet with potentially impacted people directly. For general updates on the Project, Bloomfield would be more likely to hire a coffee van for general consultation opportunities with the public. The Chair remarked that the Department has been moving away from public meetings. DO asked if those affected would get a letter with project information and an invitation to meet and discuss the Project. CK noted that this will occur and Bloomfield will be in contact with those residents.
- DO asked if the sale of properties around Camberwell is going through. TH advised that an agreement between Yancoal and Bloomfield has been signed (as has been noted in the public domain). The transaction is subject to satisfying condition precedents, which the parties are working towards. The transaction supports the company's RCN Continuation Project and the potential relocation of the New England Highway, should the project be approved.
- DO raised the sale of the Donaldson mine and Abel mine from Yancoal, especially in relation to rehabilitation. Discussion ensued and CK confirmed requirements for mine closure.

- CK provided an update on the Singleton Sustainability Advisory Committee, which has been operating for 10 years. Upcoming events;
 - Garage sales (state-wide initiative to encourage reuse and recycling items)
 - Native bees & pollination workshop
 - Backyard habitat – giving trees away.
- **RCN Solar Farm Project overview by Ben Kleinscaffer.**
 - BK gave reasons why the Solar Farm Project was considered:
 - Reduce power costs
 - Reduce scope two carbon emissions
 - Reduce impact on the power grid
 - Support TBG's commitment to the environment
 - Support TBG business diversification
 - The placement of the project will be on buffer land already owned by TBG and will remain grazing land. Entry is near the cattle yard on the RCN mine entry road. This site was selected to have minimal visibility to neighbours.
 - The concept design will produce 5MWac / 6.5MWp capacity, and consist of an inverter substation, a power line to RCN substation and 9200 solar panels. The panels feature a tracking system that allows for panel adjustments.
 - The benefits will be a reduction of 8000MWtt annually. There will be no noise, no impact on existing roads, minimal lights and no dust once construction is completed.
 - PB asked who owns the solar farm, and whether it will be sold. BK replied that the TBG owns the solar farm. It would be unlikely to be sold. TBG could keep the farm and sell to the grid.
 - PB asked after the process to maintain the pasture under the panels. BK replied that TBG have decided not to graze under the panels. TBG don't run sheep, and cattle are too big and rough to be located near the panels. TBG are looking into a robotic mower to maintain the grass.
 - DO asked if the tracking on the panels is mechanical, and if so, how much maintenance is required. BK advised that only small motors are required for the tracking process, and the motors being considered have a lifespan of 12-15 years.
 - DO asked how long the expected lifespan is for the systems. BK replied that they should get a good 25-30 years from them. PB and DO both agreed that it is an ideal location for post-mining land use.
 - DO asked if batteries will be used? BK advised that batteries will not be used at this stage, even though the inverter is designed to allow for battery storage. However, the mine site will utilise all the higher voltage power from the inverter, and no power will be sent to the grid.
 - The solar farm is expected to have development approval by the middle of next year and be up and running by mid-2027.

Next Meeting

- The Chair asked if next year's meetings should remain as biannual on Wednesdays at 9:00 am. All agreed.
- The meetings scheduled for next year are:
 - Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 9:00 am
 - Wednesday 21 Oct 2026 at 9:00 am
- The meeting was declared closed at 11:13 am.

Action items

Item	Action	Responsibility
1	Show location plan of old underground workings	CK
2	Follow up with Ausgrid regarding the light at the Rix's Creek North entrance.	CK
3	Provide water quality requirements for stock.	CK
4	Provide the amount of water held in the Falbrook Open Cut.	CK
5	Provide copy of Green House Gas report at May 2026 CCC	CK