

BLOOMFIELD COAL MINE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR 2020

Bloomfield Community Consultative Committee Details

CCC / Project Name:	Bloomfield Colliery	Reporting Period:	January - December 2020
Independent Chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill	Proponent Contact:	Greg Lamb

1. Executive Summary

The Bloomfield Community Consultative Committee (CCC) was established as a Consent Condition of Approval granted by the Minister for Planning in September 2009, to allow for the completion of open cut mining operations and rehabilitation. The committee held its inaugural meeting in May 2010.

The Bloomfield Mine is an open cut operation at Ashtonfield, producing 0.6 million tonnes of product coal, mainly for the Asian Market through the Port of Newcastle. The mine is located, west of the M1 Motorway and bounded generally by the New England Highway and John Renshaw Drive. The mining of coal has taken place at this location for over one hundred years by both underground and open cut operations.

The Abel Underground Mine is in close proximity to Bloomfield operations and although the Abel mine is currently on care and maintenance, the Abel consent allows for the utilisation of the Bloomfield coal handling and preparation plant, the rail loading facility and other related infrastructure for the processing of coal.

Committee membership remains small but attentive. The CCC operates in accordance with the Department of Planning and Environment's 2019 Community Consultative Committee Guidelines for State Significant Projects.

The committee is currently comprised of:

- three local community representatives and one designated alternate;
- one Maitland City Council representative;
- two Bloomfield Mine representatives, with attendance from other personnel as required;
- one independent Chairperson.

Meetings are held three times per year, generally with one annual site inspection, although this was impacted by Covid-19 with the cancellation of the March meeting. As stated in previous reporting, the majority of the mining lease is in the Cessnock Local Government Area, however Cessnock Council has stood by its 2016 decision not to have representation on the committee, although it does receive copies of meeting minutes. Maitland Council does send a representative to meetings when staff resources permit.

For the reporting period, the committee's interest has still focused on the Colliery's attempts to stop the illegal trespass, tree felling and dumping of rubbish on Bloomfield managed land. This has extended to preventative measures from other adjoining land owners and approaches to Cessnock Council.

As tree felling is presumably seasonal for the collection of firewood, at the request of one of the community members, a search for sustainable firewood policies across NSW Local Government was carried out. The investigation revealed no set policies have been adopted by local councils but did find a community group partnership incentive carried out within the Uralla Shire. The Hunter Local Land Service has been approached to ascertain if there are any partnership opportunities, but to date, no response has been received.

The committee was also informed of the Resources Regulator audit in July, the completion of mining in the north west area of pit with expected rehabilitation to be completed by 2021, a review of the capacity of existing tailings dam to be undertaken and the slowing of operations at Bloomfield with the transfer of employees to Rix Creek, the reduction in the production of coal by one third and the scaling back of operations with the Coal Handling Preparation Plant to operate on average of one week per month.

Other topics of discussion for the reporting period also included:

- general environmental monitoring
- noise and odour management
- land management; weed control, rehabilitation, feral animal and fire hazard reductions
- biannual rehabilitation modelling
- progress of the Heritage Conservation Management Plans for the Buttai Cemetery and the Buttai Reservoir
- operations update
- current mining status
- community complaints
- NPI 2019/20 Report
- NGERS 2019/20 Report
- 2019 Annual Review
- 2019 Chair's Annual Report

Members are active in their respective communities, raise matters on behalf of those communities, in addition to disseminating information through their individual networks to the broader community. The number of community complaints remains minimal and are mainly noise orientated.

2. CCC activities over last 12 months

- The March meeting was cancelled because of Covid-19 however the scheduled meetings in June and October took place in accordance with all Government requirements.
- A site visit of the operations was conducted prior to the October meeting.
- There were no joint CCC's held.

3. Key issues


The impetus of the committee is on the future of the area once mining is completed and the management of the environment in the interim.

Issue	Actions Taken	Next Steps
Elimination of odour - John Renshaw Drive	Source of odour identified, pipeline extended and diverted away from area.	Work complete and effective. No further issues raised during 2020.
Illegal tree felling and dumping of rubbish	Additional earth bunding and placement of deterrent material, increased patrol of the area by Bloomfield. Search of Local Government policies for collection of sustainable firewood that could provide a solution. Contact with Maitland and Cessnock Councils. Referred to Local Land Service.	Ongoing. No policies found. Hunter Local Land Services approached. No reply received

4. Focus for next 12 months

The planned activities for 2021 will be guided by the contributions of the CCC members. To the best of my knowledge, there are no outstanding or emerging issues that have not been addressed or are in the process of being so, to the committee's satisfaction.

Committee Meeting minutes and presentations are available on the website within two weeks of each meeting.

Signature of Chair:	
Date:	April 1 2021