

Bloomfield Colliery

Community Consultative Committee

Extraordinary meeting re Bloomfield Colliery Continuation Project

Location: Bloomfield Colliery

Time: 11.00 am

Date: 11 December 2023

ATTENDEES	
Name	Organisation
Lisa Andrews (LA)	Independent Chairperson
Janet Murray (JM)	Community Representative
Michael Jacobs (MJ)	Community Representative
Marc Hope (MH)	Cessnock City Council
Brayden Luke (BL)	Cessnock City Council
Brad Donoghoe (BD)	Bloomfield Colliery
Chris Knight (CK)	Bloomfield Colliery
Damien Butler (DB)	Bloomfield Colliery (minutes)
Geoff Moore (GM)	Bloomfield Colliery

Apologies	
Greg Lamb (GL)	Bloomfield Colliery
Jack Dwyer (JD)	Community Representative
Adam Ovenden (AO)	Maitland City Council
Dennis Thurlow (DT)	Community Representative

Item	Issue	Action
1	Welcome & Introductions	
	The Chair opened the CCC meeting at 11:07am and welcomed members to the extraordinary meeting to discuss the Bloomfield Colliery Continuation Project. Zoom facilities were made available, though all attendees attended face-to-face. The meeting was not recorded via Zoom, instead Bloomfield offered to provide individual briefings to members who could not attend. Marc Hope attended on behalf of Cessnock City Council and requested that Brayden Luke, Cessnock City Council Ecologist join the meeting.	
2	Apologies – JD, AO, GL & DT.	
3	Declarations	
	The Chair noted that there had been no changes to members’ declarations and pecuniary interests. The Chair advised that she is an approved Independent Chairperson with the Department of Planning and	

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	Environment, appointed by the Secretary to chair this CCC and engaged by Bloomfield.	
4	Business Arising	
	<p>The previous CCC was held on 19 October with the minutes finalised 27 October The actions from the previous meeting were noted. There was one action the Chair was to follow up with GL to check for completeness.</p> <p>The Chair noted the briefing on the new CCC guidelines would occur in 2024.</p>	Action: LA to follow up with GL regarding action item 1 from previous meeting.
5	Correspondence	
	Correspondence included the meeting notice sent on 7 December including the meeting agenda.	
6	Bloomfield Colliery Continuation Project	
	<p>CK thanked those in attendance and began a presentation on the Continuation Project. CK noted that the mine was preparing a community newsletter for distribution in mid-January 2024 and that it was important to brief the CCC before this.</p> <p>CK noted an initial briefing with Maitland City Council had recently occurred.</p> <p>CK provided the background to the site. CK noted it was the smallest mine in the Hunter Valley and gave an overview of the existing approvals.</p> <p>CK gave an overview of the site and the proposed modification, noting the modification does not involve an increase in production, additional equipment or additional infrastructure. CK said it will allow mining to continue in two locations: Creek Cut area and the Workshop area.</p> <p>CK said the mining areas will be largely protected by the natural topography to the west and north and that emplacement areas will generally be below the natural surface. CK said the modification will require a variation to the current Project Area and disturbance limit.</p> <p>JM asked what the purpose was for mining the workshop area. CK advised that the area needs to be rehabilitated. He noted the shallow underground mine workings in the area that also needed to be remediated. CK gave more detail on the Creek Cut area, noting it would be continued 600 metres to the North and be no closer to areas than previously mined.</p> <p>CK provided more detail on the workshop area. JM asked if the buildings had to be removed. CK confirmed they would be. MJ asked if it was planned to be open cut mining. CK confirmed it was and would just be going down to the old underground workings. CK noted a temporary diversion of Elwells Creek. MJ</p>	

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	<p>asked if the mine was looking to achieve the original contour for the creek line. CK confirmed the mine was. MJ asked if a clay bed would be put down and CK confirmed there would be.</p> <p>While observing the indicative production schedule, JM asked why the mine wouldn't just mine at the approved rate and get it done sooner. GM talked about reasons why including blending and BD noted the need for additional machinery, which may mean more impacts.</p> <p>CK gave an overview of the final landform including the reduced size of the final void and flatter landform. CK said the void will move further to the north but facilitate more backfilling. JM asked what the flat area would become. CK spoke about the biodiversity offset study and returning the area to pasture. CK talked about future land use and the need for future offsets if it was not returned to pasture.</p> <p>CK noted that the assessment requirements had been approved and outlined the key environmental considerations and early consultation. CK noted that registered aboriginal parties had been contacted and an advertisement has been placed seeking interest from groups and individuals with cultural knowledge. MJ asked if the project is a registered major project and if it will go out for community feedback. CK confirmed it will go on exhibition later in the year and the Chair noted the CCC would be alerted when it does go on exhibition.</p> <p>CK advised of the Social Impact Assessment approach, noting Ozark was doing the cultural heritage assessment. CK said there would be requests for interviews with CCC members that would come via the Chair.</p> <p>CK gave an overview of the project timeline. MJ asked about the scope of the work GHD would conduct and asked if the scope could be provided. CK noted this.</p> <p>CK advised of the upcoming newsletter. The Chair asked it to include information on how community members can nominate to join the CCC.</p> <p>BL noted his experience working on the site with his previous employers including Umwelt and GHD. He queried the lodgment under the assumption of minimal environmental impact. CK advised how this was assessed. MJ said it was important not to do what the Kurri Kurri pipeline did which he said was to follow a different path than what was outlined in the EIS. CK said a BDAR would be completed and the biodiversity assessment began early this year and included putting out 600 roof tiles for the legless lizard assessment, none of which had</p>	<p>Action: Provide GHD's SIA scope</p> <p>Action: CK to add CCC information to the project newsletter.</p>

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	<p>been found at this stage.</p> <p>CK gave an overview of flora and fauna assessments.</p> <p>JM asked about the plan for biodiversity offsets. CK talked through the current planning including the current sites and a site being established at Maison Dieu. JM said the community would rather see offset areas being dedicated on the site and CK said that was one of the options. MJ said Maitland has one of the lowest biodiversity offset areas in NSW at only 14%. MJ said the site was one of the largest biodiversity options in Maitland. BL said the site was one of the premier biodiversity areas in the local area. BL said he believed the mine was impacting an ecological stronghold and that this may be further devalued. BL noted that these were his personal views and not the views of the Council, and stated that he believed it would be an uphill battle for the mine to justify minimal environmental impact. CK said that an assessment of serious and irreversible impacts (SAII) would be undertaken as part of the Biodiversity assessment and justification would be provided in the EIS and the BDAR.</p> <p>MJ asked if the larger surface area would mean more water being pumped out leading to more water contamination. CK talked through the current discharge license. MJ asked about how often water sampling occurs at Four Mile. CK said it occurs monthly and daily during any discharge. MJ asked if this information was on the website and CK confirmed that it was. MJ said he often sees kids playing in the creek. CK noted the continual monitoring that occurs and that TSS, pH and other items are measured when discharging. BD said the catchment size would not increase.</p> <p>MJ asked if the operating times would be similar. BD said they would be. MJ said light pollution was bad as viewed from Hunter Valley Grammar School. CK noted the community line that could be called to quickly rectify the issue and not to wait until CCC meetings. BD said he would investigate.</p> <p>JM reiterated her comments from the previous CCC including that she believes we are in a climate crisis, coal mining should not be extended and that the carbon budget has already been destroyed.</p>	
7	General Business	
	<p>JM wanted it on the record that she believes that there should be no extension of mining and does not support the project.</p> <p>There was no other general business.</p>	

8	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>The Chair noted the quarter 1 meeting was set for 19 February 2024 at 11am. CK noted there would be an extraordinary meeting before submitting the EIS.</p> <p>MJ asked for the key dates and CK said they were in the presentation that would be provided.</p> <p>CK noted some of the continuing biodiversity studies being conducted in January 2024. MJ said it would be good to understand what's here.</p> <p>JM asked for the next meeting to start at 10am. Agreed.</p> <p>The Chair thanked attendees for attending the extraordinary meeting. MJ asked for the minutes to be distributed before Christmas and also noted his disappointment that Maitland City Council was not in attendance. The Chair noted they had been briefed.</p>	<p><i>Postscript: Chair received email following the CCC from Adam Ovenden, Maitland Council's Coordinator City Planning, apologising for not having a representative in attendance. CK will contact AO to provide a separate briefing.</i></p>
9	<p>Meeting Close:</p> <p><i>The meeting closed at 11:44am with LA thanking all for their attendance and wishing members a happy festive season.</i></p>	

ACTION ITEMS:

ITEM	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
1	LA to follow up with GL regarding actions from the previous meeting. (Provide link to Historic Heritage Conservation Management Plan.)	LA/GL
2	Add CCC information to the project newsletter	CK
3	Provide GHD's SIA scope	CK

Acronyms referred to in minutes:

CCC	Community Consultative Committee
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement