

CHARBON COAL PTY. LIMITED

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CHARBON COLLIERY COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF MEETING 03/09/12

Present: Margaret MacDonald-Hill (Chair - MMH), Brian Nichols (Charbon Mine Manager - BN), Matt Gray (Charbon Environment and Community Co-ordinator - MG), Alan Jackson (Community Representative - AJ), Bob Craze (Community Representative - BC), Jack Pennell (Community Representative - JP), Naida Wills (Community Representative - NW), Jorgen Andersen (Rylstone District Environment Society - JA) Andrew Hendy, (Charbon Environment Graduate, observer - AH).

Apologies: Esme Martens (Council Representative - EM) and Nell Schofield (Alternate Community Representative - NS).

Welcome:

MMH welcomed members of the Charbon Colliery Community Consultative Committee.

Declarations of Interest:

MMH declared her position as the Independent Chair approved by the Director General, Department of Planning & Infrastructure, Member of the Mine Subsidence Board and Ministers' Arbitration Panel.

Confirmation of Previous Minutes:

JA confirmed that the minutes be accepted,
BC seconded.

Business Arising:

JA asked about baiting feral animals.

MG Charbon is working with National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and various people – will address in General Business. Have received a letter from NPWS.

AJ asked about what will happen with the Railway line after the mine closes.

BN will investigate the possibility of keeping it open.

JP unlikely that Charbon would be contributing to it.

MG would be an issue if another industry wants to utilise it.

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- BN Charbon would not be in a position to support the project.
- MMH will put in a general enquiry with ARTC and ask about interest in the rail loop.
- JP Cement/lime works could be a possible interest.

- MMH MG was going to contact nearby resident with regards to noise.
- MG there are a few issues with noise, but will outline in presentationr.

Correspondence:

None.

Reports:

Operations Report:

- BN pointed out current operations on aerial photograph.
There have been a number of changes to the mine plan since the previous meeting – will be pulling out of Haystack in the next 3 weeks and relocating back into an area known as the Eastern U/G. The plan for the next 12 months is to complete development workings, and then go back into Haystack.
Currently working in Panel 701. Charbon has 2 U/G working units.
Charbon has had good results from both the U/G and O/C in 2012; have had SMP and Clause 88 (permission for extraction) approved.
In Haystack have had some geological interference forcing a review/rethink of mine layout – will work around/isolate geological issues however this is not related to the move to eastern U/G.
Charbon will cease mining in 2015 – U/G will finish first (around March 2015). Haystack O/C is completed, and we are currently doing some work to get into 8-Trunk O/C.
There is a current downturn in the markets. The plan for Charbon is pretty much set – have recently discussed in detail the mine closure dates. The O/C will finish about December 2015, however if there is a change in the markets there is still coal available.
- MMH asked about the workforce numbers at Charbon.
- BN replied about 150 most of whom live in the local area.
The southern O/C and Western Outlier are the current O/C workings – hopefully 8-Trunk will be starting shortly as well – currently waiting on SEWPaC approval.
Kandos lease is not looking favourable due to the coal quality issues.
The timeline for Charbon Colliery is subject to change with business plans.
- JA asked if Inglenook is going well?
- BN exploration is in progress. Scheduled start is now for about 2017.
- MG the hope had been to finish at Charbon and move fairly quickly into Inglenook or some other project – not going to happen now.
- BN Charbon has had over 1000 days (1035 days) injury free.

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- Production is on target to be a record year – expected to get about 1.3 million tonnes for 2012.
Mine has been going since the 1920's.
- NW Believed it has been since 1910.
- BN records show since the 1920's, but was no doubt some form of mining prior to that. Most of the coal is exported now.
- JA asked to where? Thailand?
- BN Asia.
- NW asked about the plan for the land after mining has ceased – would the land be sold off?
- MG after the land has been rehabilitated and the infrastructure dealt with, it will be a decision for the company accountants.
- BN a number of options have been discussed.
- NW the community will need to procure a good access agreement.
- BN no final decisions have yet been reached.
- Life of Mine (LOM) is essentially a mine closure program.
- NW raised concerns regarding the retention of the workforce.
- BN the number of employees now will be the same as required when the mine finishes – although can't stop people looking elsewhere at the moment. There have already been a few of the younger employees looking at work in the Mudgee area.

Environmental Update:

- MG will be looking at other industries to use existing infrastructure, such as dams, rail loop etc. at Charbon after mine closure. Charbon needs large body of water for use on site – most of the water taken from the dam downstream is recycled on-site and so ultimately ends up back in the dam.
- Will email a copy of the presentation to anyone who wants one.
- Dam at LD003 had polymer (flocking agent) spread by boat in March 2012. Previously alum was used as a flocking agent, or another Aluminium-based salt – today it is possible to tailor a polymer to the specific water quality, and can now use very low concentrations to reach the same level of effectiveness.
- JA Explained another technique (biological system), that can work effectively over a long time frame (years).
- MG currently attempting to drop dam water levels to keep capacity for rainfall events.
- MG Dust management is a one of Charbon's big-ticket items. Pointed out on aerial photo road where coal is hauled by truck on-site. A magnesium-based salt is used on this road that binds the road surface – will transfer this technology to southern O/C area as well. However best way to minimise dust is through rehabilitation.

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- Have recently received final report on external environmental audit – site is 97% compliant, and developing an action plan for the non-compliances. When it is finally approved CCC members will receive a copy.
- Update of new requirements with regards to publishing monitoring data on website within 14 days of receiving data/results. EPA understands that this can be an onerous task, and allow that once we have a set of data we can then publish (i.e. monthly monitoring reports). However, if we have an incident data/results need to be published quicker.
- Showed CCC members Pollution Incident Response Management Plan (PIRMP) that was prepared by a consultant and uploaded to website on the 31/08/2012.
- MMH noted in regard to the website data/information published, the balance has swung for greater transparency and accountability.
- MG feral goats are a big problem on-site – pigs are also becoming a bigger issue than in the past.
- NW there is a problem when shooters go in, as the goats scatter and end up down near old mine site and further down the valley in the hundreds. Baiting and trapping is more effective than shooting – also for pigs, as shooting scatters them.
- BC Kandos State Forest has been opened up to allow shooting.
- JA Government has allowed this, but State Forest is not so happy. Forestry seem to have given up on controlling wild dog populations.
- NW there is no legal access to Kandos State Forest.
- MG will need to continue with rehabilitation in southern O/C.
- NW asked if Charbon is going to leave any of the exposed cuttings as a historical aspect, and to show the geology of the area.
- MG would like to.
- Explained the benefits of seeding rehabilitation area with a helicopter compared to using an agricultural-spreader towed behind a tractor. Both cost about the same, however by using a helicopter it takes a few hours rather than days.
- MMH asked if the seeds in the seed-bank have a lifetime that they remain viable.
- MG yes – Charbon have had viability tests on the seeds completed by Newcastle University. Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority (HNCMA) has used some of the seed for seeding.
- Microbial testing of the soil in rehabilitation areas has been undertaken. Howard Wildman grows various types of fungi that can be added to soil to improve fertility.
- Invertebrate monitoring is getting much more extensive – in new rehabilitation sites there are a lot of insects, but not much diversity. In reference sites there are not as many insects, but greater diversity.
- MG There have been no complaints in the last 2 years.
- 2 neighbouring residences are to be acquired due to noise exceedances.

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Outlined partnerships with various organisations – Greening Australia is working with Charbon on the seed-bank and is also interested in using rehabilitation areas for a source of seeds for native grasses.

General Business:

MMH advised she had received a request from NS on the Carbon Emissions Report from the previous meeting. There was some confusion as the presentation to the meeting was on biodiversity offsets. However, the information was provided via correspondence direct to Centennial.

MG showed CCC members the Centennial Environment website for Charbon, and where published environmental information can be found. Suggested NS have a look at the website and Charbon's monitoring data, and can also look at various government websites to see where Charbon fits in comparison to other industries/companies.

MMH NS had asked about sitting fees.

Not something normally paid, as CCC members are appointed in a voluntary capacity and comprised of local, community members who have an interest in what is going on with the mine.

All general consensus that interest was in what was happening and no expectation to be remunerated.

JA Noted it would be good to have a better variety in committee members – e.g. some members who are in their 20-30's. In those circumstances, would possibly need to review as the situation may be they lose a day's work to attend a meeting.

Meeting Closed: 11:35am

Next meeting: 4th March 2013