

**MT ARTHUR MINE COMPLEX**

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**MEETING AGENDA**

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

**Venue: Project Office**

Time	Item	Content	Person
3:00	1	Welcome and apologies	Chairperson
3:00	2	Housekeeping and safety	MAC
3:05	3	Meeting context	J.McNaughton
3:10	4	Summary of final draft document	S.Mitchell
3:30	5	Incorporation of feedback	S.Mitchell
4:10	6	Outline of next steps	MAC
4:20	7	Discussion	All
4:35	8	Meeting close	Chairperson

## MT ARTHUR COAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

### Minutes of Meeting (22)

- Location:** Mt Arthur Coal Projects Department Boardroom
- Date:** Wednesday 28 March 2012
- Present:** Martin Rush (MR) Chairperson, Jennifer Lecky (JL) Councillor, Craig Flemming (CF) Muswellbrook Shire Council, Graham Guest (GG) Resident, Julie McNaughton (JM) Mt Arthur Coal, Rebecca Smith (RS) Mt Arthur Coal, Joanne Wilson (JW) Mt Arthur Coal, MARK Burns (MB) Global Soil Systems.
- Apologies:** Eddie Constable (EC) Resident, John Bancroft (JB) Resident, Raymond Webb (RW) Resident, Bruce MacPherson (BM) Resident, Scott Mitchell (SM) Mt Arthur Coal, Shelley Masterson (ShM) Mt Arthur Coal.
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#### Meeting Commenced: 3.10 pm

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

JM welcomed everyone to the Mt Arthur Coal Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Extraordinary Meeting for March 28 2012, and apologies were received.

2. **HOUSEKEEPING AND SAFETY**

JM provided information on general housekeeping and safety at the Mt Arthur Coal Project offices.

3. **MEETING FEEDBACK**

MR – Requested any feedback from the CCC Committee members in regards to the last meeting and upon reviewing the document further.

JM – Currently working on the final document. A list of everybody's feedback will be given to this group and the Department of Planning to show consultation process.

MR – As a group would the committee like to discuss the changes by going around the room with questions?

JM – If it would please the group, could MB first explain his comments/report as he is only with us for the first 30 minutes of the meeting.

The CCC agreed for MB to provide comment first)

MB –discussed his summary as provided to the CCC committee members on Monday 26 March 2012. MB raised the following points:

1. *Overall relevant issues and if it meet the environmental standards?* Yes, feels it is a very good plan and covers the issues in an easy to read and understanding manner.
2. *Major concern of the document was its commentary around controlled grazing.* Mark sees a conflict between established native ecosystems and grazing (cattle grazing). The Mt Arthur

## MT ARTHUR COAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Coal ecosystem will be better off not having a grazing program. . Stock do damage trees especially cattle. In the case of a wind break cattle tend to eat out all lower coverage grasses and scrubs which defeats the purpose of a wind break in the beginning.

3. *Is it a practical document?* Yes. Although there is a heavy commitment to research. This is worrying as sometimes research results in theory do not work in practice. How is this going to have practical monitoring (research vs positive practical outcomes)? It needs to be noted that this issue of research versus positive results is relevant to the mining industry as a whole, not just Mt Arthur Coal.
4. *Bigger issues generic across the mining industry.* Established exotic pastures are good and spread over the ground aggressively, but native grasses are not as successful especially when weeds are an issue in the upper layer of the topsoil. Native grasses can be unreliable as a species for overall germination and survival under certain environmental conditions.

MR – What is the percentage of native grasses/species is there as part of the Mt Arthur Coal rehabilitation Plan?

JM – There is 500 hectares of native grasses as part of the rehabilitation plan.

MB – Weed content in native grasses is strong and native grasses don't compete with weeds very well. Weeds can also be a problem with native ecosystems.

JM – In the past weed control could have been done better but it has been a key focus area over the past 3 years.

MB –The top layer of topsoil stockpiles should be scraped and discarded to get rid of any weeds that may be present and enable rehabilitation to be completed with clean topsoil.

CF – The aim is trying to maintain clean topsoil at all times.

MB – There is a biological argument that stockpiles should not be greater than 3 meters high as micro flora can be affected. Focus on minimal weeds in the stockpile and the soil will be healthy. Also single handling topsoil is a key component to not disrupt the natural working of the soil. Stable soils are the driving force behind successful rehabilitation of areas. By scrapping the top 6 inches of the topsoil dump it will address 98%of weed seeds present within that soil matter. You need healthy stable soils to have successful outcomes.

5. *Document viewed from a critical viewpoint?* Within the document there is a lot of "mine talk" and a glossary of terms may need to be included. There could also be more comment around timelines and commitments to projects/outcomes with some guidance and balance on what is achievable over that timeline. Overall though a good document.

MR – Any questions?

JL – Thought feedback from Mark was great. Cattle grazing is a real issue for me and don't think that grazing is a good option especially given the dry periods of the past 10 years.

## MT ARTHUR COAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

JM – Stability is the most important focus on rehabilitation, including any cattle grazing option.

JL – If land is leased out will Mt Arthur Coal have the authority to control stocking rates (DSE rates) on a per acre or hectare basis?

JM – Mt Arthur Coal will have the correct procedures in place to ensure that over-stocking does not occur and that controlled measures are in place to monitor stock levels and stability.

JL – Grazing would need to be monitored due to environmental conditions not just on a numbers basis.

MR – Getting back to the report itself, is this one of the best, if not the best, biodiversity and rehabilitation management plan you have reviewed?

MB – Yes it is a good plan and it is up there in terms of a good overall biodiversity and rehabilitation management plan.

MR – What is your confidence in regards to the timelines set within this document? What confidence can the community of Muswellbrook have in this document?

MB – The document links back to the EA/EIS/MOP and links back well to the balance mentioned earlier. Any document always comes back to the integrity of the individuals/company who you are dealing with. Mt Arthur Coal is no exception but is considered an industry leader.

MR – Who else would you make a comparison to?

MB – Professionally I cannot make comparisons between mining companies as part of the Privacy Act and professional conduct.

MR – What will the final landform look like? Can a map be provided to the CCC?

JM – MOP plans could be included as an appendix in future versions of the rehabilitation plan. Julie shows some examples of MOP plans.

MB – Is the MOP a public document?

JM – No as it contains some costings which only certain people and government departments see. The MOP could be provided with these areas removed from the document for privacy reasons.

GG – refers to page 14 of the plan which discusses decommissioning issues. Wants to know more in regards to decommissioning of areas within the plan.

JM – If there is a case for decommissioning an area prior to any rehabilitation it will be done. This will be done in consultation with the appropriate people.

## MT ARTHUR COAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Mark Burns leaves the meeting at 3.50pm

CF – Page 4 under 1.1 Purpose, point 3, which relates to post-mining land use and states “Post-mining land use which is compatible with surrounding land uses to provide suitable environmental and community benefits. Would like to see the removal of the word “compatible” and replaced with consistency. Would like this to be repeated throughout the document.

JM – Will take this comment on board and will review in relation to context.

CF – Page 7, 1.6 Principles of the B&RMP, would also like to see the word compatible replaced as mentioned above.

MR – Wants the angles and slopes of the overall landscape to be sympathetic and represent/mimic the natural topography of the geographical area surrounding the mine/rehabilitation area. Land use refers to the physical uses of land. It should not just be about the angle/slope but overall visual appeal, micro and macro considerations. Trying to get an idea of what the landscape will look like in 20 years.

JM – Will look over document and try to reword as requested with the assistance of Scott.

CF – Page 8 it states that Land use will be aligned to the relevant land zonings as per the current Muswellbrook Local Environment Plan (LEP). Have you considered roads and fencing within this section?

MR – In regards to the visual affect, what will be the spacing within the angles/slopes? Would 20/25m be considered enough? The natural area is slightly undulated and within the mining industry there seems to be quite strong angles/slopes in regards to rehabilitation. Request for minimal angles/slopes to recreate and be sympathetic to the natural topography of the area.

JM – Mine has limitations to what they can do as per MOP and EA. Over the next few years it could be a possibility to trial options with more minimal slopes.

CF – When is the next time a change to the MOP is possible?

JM – Will need to design end outcome before dumping starts. Scott is currently working on a draft for this. Feasibility would also play a major role and it would be a huge joint effort from not only the environment team but also the engineers and management.

MR – Could this be considered in the next modification?

JM – The next modification is currently underway, so it would be unlikely. Mt Arthur Coal could provide a presentation on this request if the CCC is interested.

MR – Need to capture some micro relief on the slopes to reproduce slopes that are sympathetic to the natural topography around the mine.

## **MT ARTHUR COAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

JL – Bayswater 3 was the first time that a concept for slight sloping rehabilitation had been successful.

MR – Aim for 100m in any direction to stop the rice paddy look as a final outcome for finished rehabilitation areas.

JM – Cannot commit to this at this meeting. Large body of work by the engineers to see if overburden will fit in the relief areas. The current mine plan has been made as tight as possible to minimise disturbance to the environment. Concerns about micro-relief will be taken on board and will need to be discussed with other departments and at a higher level in the organisation.

MR – Will revisit this point at another time.

CF – Page 18, table 3 on page 22, page 29, all tables need to make reference to micro relief.

CF – Page 33 looks at soil classes. It would be good to have a visual component (core sample) of what the soil classes look like at the moment. This would give the community a visual record of its present condition and could be used as a reference in future years to compare any difference.

JM – Could this be done through analysis and reports? Will a visual option for the community be of any advantage? Has this been done before and has it been used?

CF – Would like to concentrate on soil structure as well as soil types/health.

CF – Page 39 relates to erosion and sediment control within the plan. Will the rehabilitation include natural vegetation areas such as gully erosion to mimic the natural landscape?

JM – Mt Arthur Coal does not want to promote gully erosion as part of the rehabilitation plan. BHPB in the United States is doing good work in regards to this area that may be applicable here.

MR – Wants the CCC to make comment on final voids and set a date for the next meeting.

JM – Wednesday 4 April is the date for the next scheduled CCC meeting.

MR – Dust and noise issues raised at the last meeting will need to be addresses at this meeting.

JM – Those issues will be addressed at the next meeting with Drayton (Joint CCC meeting). This will be held on 10 May and will be held at Mt Arthur Coal.

JM – The Rehabilitation and Biodiversity Management Plan is due to DoPI next month. Mt Arthur Coal will submit a draft to DoPI and will continue to work with the CCC on discussed changes.

MR – Muswellbrook Shire Council has received 24 submissions to be reviewed since the beginning of the year and understand it takes time.

GG – Would like to see the size of the maps increased for the meeting as is finding it hard to read.

## MT ARTHUR COAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

JM – The maps in GG's version of the management plan are printed smaller than the version that will be submitted.

#### 4. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Mt Arthur Coal Community Consultative Committee meeting is proposed to be held on 4 April 2012.

The next Joint Mt Arthur Coal - Drayton Mine Joint Community Consultative Committee meeting is proposed to be held on 10 May 2012 at 4pm in the Mt Arthur Coal boardroom.

**Meeting Closed: 4.50 pm**

ACTION ITEM NO.	ITEM	ACTIONED BY
1.	Provide Mine Operations Plan Maps and include cross section illustrations to indicate sympathetic slopes/angles to surrounding natural topography.	JM
2.	Presentation on Mt Arthur Coal Rehabilitation Strategy/Plan at next CCC meeting	SM