

**MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING – 14 June 2023**

ATTENDEES:		
Lisa Andrews	LA	Independent Chairperson
Annette Rahn	AR	Community Representative
Arthur Mitchell	AM	Community Representative
Tony Lonergan	TL	Community Representative
De-Anne Douglas	DD	Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council Representative (WLALC)
Theresa Folpp	TF	Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) Representative
Paul Smith	PS	Upper Hunter Shire Council (UHSC) Representative
Jeff Beatty	JB	Dartbrook Operations Planning and Approvals Manager
Geoff MacKenzie	GM	Dartbrook Operations HSEC Manager
James Bailey	JBA	James Bailey & Associates
Dorian Walsh	DW	James Bailey & Associates
APOLOGIES:		
Cr Allison McPhee	AMC	UHSC Councillor

1. INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES:

- 1.1 The meeting was opened by LA at 09:05.
- 1.2 PS noted the apology from AMC.

2. DECLARATIONS

- 2.1 LA made a declaration in relation to her appointed role as Independent Chair to the CCC and confirmed the process for any declarations from CCC members.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1 LA confirmed there were no comments on the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 March 2023. Final minutes of the meeting were sent out on 13 March 2023.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 4.1 LA noted the two actions arising from the previous minutes, being:
 - DW to present on the noise monitoring program proposed for the Dartbrook East Site after the initial 12-month period after recommencement of operations. DW gave an overview to the CCC on the noise monitoring program, noting that a combination of continuous management monitoring and quarterly attended compliance monitoring would be used at the East Site after the first year of mining operations. TF noted that she was comfortable with the proposed noise monitoring arrangements; and
 - JB to notify LA in advance of the commencement of construction. LA noted that this notification had been provided by JB on 13 April 2023.

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5. CORRESPONDENCE (AS EMAILED WITH AGENDA ON 5/6/23 WITH ONE ADDITIONAL ITEM)

- 5.1 LA confirmed the correspondence received since the March 2023 meeting:
- 22/03/23 – Email to members with the draft minutes for review.
 - 31/03/23 - Email to members with the finalised minutes together with the presentation.
 - 5/4/23 – Email to members with the Dartbrook Annual Review for 2022 submitted to DPE.
 - 13/4/23 – Email to members advising of the recommencement of the Dartbrook Mine.
 - 5/6/23- Email to members with the meeting notice and agenda for this meeting.
 - 13/6/23 – Email to members with reminder for this meeting.

6. PROJECT / COMPANY UPDATE

- 6.1 JB provided an update on the Dartbrook restart schedule, noting that:
- The scheduled date for first coal extraction had been pushed back from August to October 2023. This was primarily due to procurement issues;
 - The Coal Handling and Preparation Plan (CHPP) facilities at the East Site are expected to be worked up over the period from October 2023. Operations at the CHPP were currently planned to restart in January 2024. A decision on CHPP operations after the initial workup phase has not been determined, with operational plans to be confirmed;
 - There are currently approximately 60 people employed on site for construction, generally involved in the Hunter Tunnel dewatering and recommissioning work. JB noted that approximately 70 ML has been pumped out of the Hunter Tunnel by air drive pumps. When questioned by AM and TL, JB noted these pumps were used due to ventilation works being re-established in the Hunter Tunnel at the time, with compressors for these pumps located on the surface at the East Site. Diesel equipment has subsequently been introduced into the tunnel since ventilation has been set up.
- 6.2 TL questioned the water storage capacity of the goaf and JB confirmed that current estimates are a volume of approximately 5,000 ML.
- 6.3 JB noted that concept plans are being considered to use gas generated from the underground workings on site as a resource for the processing of mine water to improve water quality and in electricity generation. While there are a number of issues for Dartbrook to get through in coming to a suitable plan, the initial goal is to produce in the order of 8 – 10 MW, enough electricity to power the site. JB stated that there is a growing need to be conscious of carbon emissions and that these programs could also have the added benefit of saving costs to the business.

7. PROJECT UPDATE – ENVIRONMENTAL & LAND MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 DW gave an update on environmental compliance monitoring, stakeholder consultation and land management undertaken since the previous meeting. All compliance monitoring data were within approved criteria except for an elevated dust deposition result recorded at deposition dust gauge 'MacAirstrip' that was unrelated to Dartbrook activities. No other exceedances were recorded.
- 7.2 DW stated that no environmental incidents or complaints had been recorded since the March CCC meeting.

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7.3 DW confirmed the following reports had been provided to regulators for comment since the March CCC meeting:

- 2022 Dartbrook Annual Review;
- Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan; and
- Site Water Management Plan.

JBA noted that all environmental management plans and reports that were required to be published would continue to be made available on the Dartbrook website as they are approved.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 TF raised that MSC had recently met with Dams Safety NSW regarding the publication of information on monitoring requirements and risks associated with 'declared dams' located in the Muswellbrook Shire so this could be accessed by the community.

8.2 JB noted that cattle would soon be moved over to the rehabilitated Reject Emplacement Area (REA) on the East Site again to control grass cover and manage bushfire risks. Dartbrook has contacted the neighbouring landholders to notify them that stock will be back on the REA.

8.3 TL requested an update on the movement of wind farm blade components through the area. TF confirmed that MSC had raised a number of questions with the main developer and was waiting on a response. TL asked whether the feasibility of transporting the wind farm components by rail had been considered. TF noted this option hadn't been considered in the MSC response and that there were a number of other stakeholders involved in the rail network that would have to be considered.

8.4 DD gave an update on the WLALC activities since she took over the role 12 months ago, including:

- Upgrades to the LALC facilities and gardens;
- Development of a business case and management strategy for the Muswellbrook Common;
- Employment, education and training opportunities; and
- Art showcases and workshops.

8.5 LA confirmed that there was no further General Business.

9. MEETING CLOSE

9.1 LA scheduled the next CCC meeting for Wednesday 20 September 2023, starting at 09:00am.

9.2 LA closed the meeting at 09:43, prior to a site tour of the Penetrated Block Extraction mining equipment to discuss its abilities, operational capabilities and technologies.

Action Items – Nil.