

**DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – 20 March 2024**

ATTENDEES:		
Lisa Andrews	LA	Independent Chairperson
Annette Rahn	AR	Community Representative
Tony Lonergan	TL	Community Representative
Troy Martin	TM	Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (WLALC) Business Development Officer
Jennifer Leckie	JL	MSC Councillor
Paul Smith	PS	Upper Hunter Shire Council (UHSC) Representative
Theresa Folpp	TF	Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) Representative
Geoff Mackenzie	GM	Dartbrook Operations HSEC Manager
James Bailey	JBA	James Bailey & Associates
Dorian Walsh	DW	James Bailey & Associates
APOLOGIES:		
Arthur Mitchell	AM	Community Representative
Allison McPhee	AMC	UHSC Councillor
Jeff Beatty	JB	Dartbrook Operations Planning and Approvals Manager

1. INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES:

- 1.1 The meeting was opened by LA at 09:06.
- 1.2 The above apologies were noted. Introductions were made, including for TM, who was representing WLALC at the meeting for De-Anne Douglas.

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.
- 2.2 LA acknowledged completed forms received from JB and GM since the previous meeting.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1 LA confirmed there were no comments on the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 December 2023. Final minutes of the meeting were sent out on 5 January 2024.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 4.1 LA confirmed there were no action items noted during the previous meeting.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

- 5.1 LA noted that correspondence since the previous CCC meeting was included in the March 2024 meeting agenda, except for two questions raised by TF on 13 March 2024.

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- 5.2 LA confirmed that GM would respond to both of TF's queries in the 'Community Questions' item of the agenda [see Section 7].

6. PROJECT / COMPANY UPDATE

- 6.1 GM provided an update on the Dartbrook restart schedule, noting:
- The US\$60M funding to allow the restart of mining operations had been received. The initial component of the funding was being drawn down for the continuation of construction activities and in sourcing long lead-time items (belting, conveyor structure, mining equipment) required in advance of the restart of mining;
 - AQC were no longer statutory 'Mine Operators' of Dartbrook. Tetra Dartbrook has formed a Joint Venture with AQC and Dartbrook Operations Pty Ltd and were being appointed as the Mine Operator. A Joint Venture Committee is being formed to approve all future activities on site;
 - Site operations will be coordinated by a recently appointed General Manager, David Sykes, who has a long history at Dartbrook during previous mining operations on site;
 - The current schedule has first coal being produced in August 2024;
 - Construction activities to prepare the site for restart of mining were ongoing, including the shotcreting of the Hunter Tunnel to prepare for installation of the new conveyor that would connect mining areas to the East Site facilities.
- 6.2 TF asked whether Dartbrook had encountered any issues in sourcing gear. GM confirmed that there were no major issues at the moment, with most of the remaining long-lead time items having a maximum wait-time of 12 weeks.
- 6.3 JBA asked for clarification on current employment and plans once mining operations had restarted. GM noted that the current construction workforce was around 60 people, with a maximum workforce of approximately 200 required at full production. Dartbrook were also going through a process to complete an Enterprise Agreement that would allow direct employment.
- GM also referred to Dartbrook offering bridging courses for trainees to get exposure to working in underground coal mining. Six trainees had been put into the program to date.
- 6.4 TL asked how many 'continuous miners' would be needed at full production. GM confirmed that three operating miner units was the goal within 12-18 months of restarting mining. These would include:
- 1 remote miner operated from the surface; and
 - 2 more 'traditional' miners, operated by a crew working underground.
- All continuous miners on site whether operated remotely from the surface or not would be fitted with proximity sensors and automatically shut down if underground personnel come within a designated danger zone.
- 6.5 GM gave an update on the first round of Dartbrook community funding that is being made through the Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA) with MSC and UHSC and the Muswellbrook projects that would be supported for 2023/24 FY and 2024/25 FY.
- TF noted that MSC were reviewing their VPA policies and were looking at setting up a Community Benefit Fund model similar to that in place at Singleton Council, for transparent assessment of nominated projects. The updated MSC VPA policy will be available for public comment in April 2024.
- PS was requested to give an update on the status of the UHSC VPA contributions at the next CCC.

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- 6.6 GM referred to an Article in the Hunter River Times for International Women’s Day, regarding a graduate Chemical Engineering student who has been working on site. He noted that the initiative had been very successful for all involved.
- 6.7 TL referred to a recent article from the Institute for Energy Economics reporting that fugitive greenhouse gas emissions (such as methane) from coal mines was being underestimated. TL asked how emissions were monitored at Dartbrook. GM noted that assessment of emissions was easier in an underground compared to an open cut mine. Systems are in place to continuously monitor the flow rate and makeup gases from the Dartbrook ventilation shaft so volumes of methane being emitted can be calculated.
- TF questioned how fugitive emissions are accounted for. JB confirmed that greenhouse gas reporting was currently provided to Commonwealth regulators, however the NSW EPA had also developed a policy and action plan. It was discussed that various State and Federal Guidelines dictate how fugitive emissions are determined.
- TL asked whether total greenhouse gas emissions would go up during operations. GM confirmed that emissions would go up and there was a general requirement to manage and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to the maximum extent practical. GM also referred to the regulatory Safeguard Mechanism for facilities that emit more than 100,000 tonnes per year, which is a further incentive to reduce emissions.
- 6.8 DW provided an update on Dartbrook stakeholder consultation and environmental monitoring results since the last CCC meeting.
- All compliance monitoring data were within approved criteria, with the exception of elevated PM₁₀ monitoring results on 19 December at High Volume Air Sampler sites ‘Macairstrip’ and ‘Fan Site 1’. Dartbrook notified Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure of the elevated results and provided them with an investigation report confirming that Dartbrook’s activities had were not the cause of the exceedance.
- 6.9 DW confirmed that no environmental incidents or complaints had been recorded since the previous meeting.

7. COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

- 7.1 GM responded to TF’s questions of 13 March:
- For Spontaneous Combustion management, Dartbrook were required to have two plans. One was required under the conditions of the Development Consent and the other was a much more detailed plan required by the Mining Regulator.
- The second Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan was more detailed and heavily safety-focused, outlining procedures to monitor for and respond to potential spontaneous combustion events. GM confirmed that a Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP) in the document included responses for Dartbrook Control Room Operators and Statutory officials that must be taken based on real-time gas monitoring trigger levels.
- GM was requested to provide an overview of the Spontaneous Combustion TARP at the next CCC meeting.
- DW confirmed that the Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan required under the development consent was lodged with the Resources Regulator in 2023. Once approved, it will be published on the Dartbrook website.
- On safety performance at Dartbrook, GM confirmed that two fatalities had occurred during previous operations, one from a roof fall incident underground and the other during unloading of a truck on the surface. GM stated that like other operations, Dartbrook continually review all high potential incidents that are communicated to the industry through the Resources Regulator, to confirm improvements that could be made to site

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safety systems and procedures. The Resources Regulator also complete regular audit inspections of the site and underground areas to assess critical controls.

- 7.2 No other community questions were raised.
- 7.3 LA confirmed with DW that the 2023 Annual Review would be published at the end of March. DW will provide a summary of the Annual Review at the next meeting.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

- 8.1 No general business was raised.

9. MEETING CLOSE

- 9.1 LA closed the meeting and noted the next CCC would be held on 19 June 2024, starting at 9am.
- 9.2 LA closed the meeting at 10:03.

Action Items

ITEM	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
1.	Provide an update on the status of Dartbrook UHSC VPA and community projects at the next meeting.	PS
2.	Present an overview of the Spontaneous Combustion TARP at the next meeting.	GM
3.	Provide a summary of the 2023 Annual Review at the next meeting.	DW