

**DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES – 18 September 2024**

<b>ATTENDEES:</b>		
Lisa Andrews	LA	Independent Chairperson
Annette Rahn	AR	Community Representative
Tony Lonergan	TL	Community Representative
Arthur Mitchell	AM	Community Representative
Theresa Folpp	TF	Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) Representative
Jeff Beatty	JB	Dartbrook Operations Head of Operational Services
Geoff Mackenzie	GM	Dartbrook Operations HSEC Management Advisor
Ian Crawford	IC	Dartbrook Operations HSEC Superintendent
John Robinson Jnr	JR	AQC (Guest)
John Swan	JS	AQC (Guest)
James Bailey	JBA	Xenith Consulting
Dorian Walsh	DW	Xenith Consulting
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>		
Paul Smith	PS	Upper Hunter Shire Council (UHSC) Representative
Allison McPhee	AMC	UHSC Councillor
De-Anne Douglas	DD	Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council
Jennifer Leckie	JL	MSC Councillor

### **1. INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES:**

- 1.1 The meeting was opened by LA at 09:01.
- 1.2 The above apologies were noted. Introductions were made, including for JR and JS (guests representing AQC). LA noted the recent MSC and UHSC Council elections and potential changes in Councillor representation on the CCC from October.

### **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 that final minutes of the previous CCC meeting were sent out on 24 July 2024.

### **4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 4.1 LA noted the actions arising from the previous minutes, including:
  - Updating the CCC's Terms of Reference and Council representation on the CCC. LA noted this action would be held over to the next meeting while the election results were determined;

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- Update to the presentation slides for the previous meeting to reflect the community complaint received in May 2024. LA confirmed that DW re-issued an updated presentation with the draft minutes from the previous meeting;
- Dartbrook to report on greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction measures being considered (see JB update in **Section 6**);
- Advising the site land manager about the boxthorn issue around the Evaporation Ponds that needs to be treated (see JB update in **Section 6**);
- Dartbrook to report on site access security measures to be put in place (see JB update in **Section 6**); and
- Confirm arrangements for inspection to be held following the September meeting. LA and JB confirmed arrangements, with GM to provide brief induction and risk review prior to the inspection (see **Section 9**).

## **5. CORRESPONDENCE**

- 5.1 LA noted that correspondence since the previous CCC meeting was included in the 4 September 2024 meeting agenda and subsequent reminder email.

## **6. PROJECT / COMPANY UPDATE**

- 6.1 JB gave an update on the Dartbrook restart schedule, noting:
- Major milestones since the previous meeting, including first coal in August. The current schedule is aiming to have the CHPP recommissioned in October;
  - First coal has been cut, with coal delivery occurring as of 4 September;
  - Two continuous miners are now operating underground;
  - A site visit by NSW Minister for Resources & Finance Courtney Houssos and Federal Member for the Hunter Dan Repacholi;
  - A Greenfield Enterprise Agreement was signed off by the Fair Work Commission in July.
- 6.2 JB outlined the GHG initiatives being investigated by Dartbrook to reduce Scope 1 emissions, including:
- Ventilation Air Methane capture;
  - Gas drainage and power generation; and
  - Use of electric vehicles.
- Scopes to study each of these initiatives are being developed. It is intended that each of these studies will be completed within the next 12 months.
- 6.3 TF questioned whether gas was available for extraction. JB confirmed that more assessment needs to be done, however there was a resource available that could potentially be used via the existing sealed boreholes to the west of site.
- 6.4 JB noted that boom gates will be set up at entry points to the CHPP and administration / workshop areas to control access.
- 6.5 JB gave an update on the scope and assessments proposed for the DA 231-07-2000 MOD8 (MOD8) application noted at the previous meeting. MOD8 will seek to extend the mine life by six years to the end of 2033.

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JBA confirmed for LA that a Social Impact Assessment would be prepared as part of the Modification Report for MOD8. A link to a survey with questions to support the MOD8 SIA had been included in the recent Dartbrook community newsletter distributed at the end of August. LA will email copies of the newsletter to the CCC representatives.

- 6.6 TF asked whether Dartbrook had any issues following the recent earthquakes in Muswellbrook. JB outlined the process that was followed to confirm if any damage had occurred. These inspections confirmed that all underground seals remain intact and no other damage was identified.
- 6.7 AR asked whether MACH Energy notify Dartbrook of Mt Pleasant blasting. GM confirmed that blasting vibration was generally not an issue for underground safety. The main potential risk for the underground operations was blast fume. TF mentioned that blast times for all relevant sites are listed on the MSC website.
- 6.8 JB noted that the bulk coal quality sample taken since the previous meeting is being analysed. JB will provide an update on the results of the coal quality assessment at the next CCC meeting, noting that some information may need to remain “commercial in confidence”.
- 6.9 DW provided an update on Dartbrook stakeholder consultation and environmental monitoring results since the last CCC meeting.

All compliance monitoring data was within approved criteria and surface water monitoring trends upstream and downstream of the site were closely aligned. Dartbrook are in the process of recommissioning the ‘Hulbert’ HVAS monitoring location.

DW and JB noted contact from a neighbour regarding noise from the workshop. Investigation of the workshop found that the noise may have been from the slamming of rubbish bins. JB responded to the neighbour over the issue.

- 6.10 TL felt that the boxthorn weed control at the Evaporation Ponds (raised at the last meeting) may not have occurred. JB understood that this had been completed but will follow up. TL also noted a couple of cattle were in the ponds area that would need to be moved out.

## **7. COMMUNITY QUESTIONS**

- 7.1 LA noted that no community questions were raised prior to the meeting.

## **8. GENERAL BUSINESS**

- 8.1 TF referred to the Local Government elections held the previous weekend and changes in MSC representation to the CCC. LA noted that results are usually formalised in October.
- 8.2 JR gave an update on the management of agricultural land that is now owned by Trepang and operated as a Joint Venture. As noted at previous meetings, all surface land not required for mining activities was separated out and will be used as a beef fattening property. Seven irrigation pivots have been installed on the farm, supported by water entitlements from a mix of river, aquifer and bore licences. JR noted that only a small portion of the water entitlement is held as a high security allocation.
- 8.3 JB noted that discussions are continuing between Trepang / Dartbrook and Energy Co. regarding the use of the Dartbrook Site Access Road as part of the transport link between Newcastle and wind farm developments located further to the north-west.
- 8.4 LA confirmed there was no other general business.

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**9. MEETING CLOSE**

- 9.1 LA closed the meeting and requested that the next CCC meeting would be brought forward one week and held on 27 November 2024, starting at 9am. No objections.
- 9.2 GM presented a brief Job Safety Analysis (risk assessment) to the CCC prior to the inspection of the CHPP area to be held immediately following the meeting. All attendees signed relevant induction paperwork.
- 9.3 LA closed the meeting at 9:38 am.

**Action Items**

ITEM	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
1.	Give an update at the next meeting on the process for appointing an additional MSC representative on the CCC (action held over from July meeting).	LA
2.	Send a copy of the Dartbrook community newsletter to CCC representatives.	LA
3.	Follow up with the land manager regarding treatment of boxthorn around the Evaporation Ponds.	JB
4.	Provide update on metallurgical studies to CCC when available	JB