

# **Minutes of Sunnyside Coal Mine Community Consultation Committee**

**Meeting Held:** Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

**Venue:** The meeting was held in the Board Room at Namoi Valley Brickworks with a site tour following the meeting.

**Commencement Time:** 3:30pm

## **1. Present and Apologies**

**Present:** Mr Michael Broekman (MB) (Chairman)  
Mr Bruce Reid (BR) (Community Representative)  
Mr Andrew Kennedy (AK) (Community Representative)  
Mr Stephen Benham (SB) (Council Representative)  
Mr Danny Young (DY) (Environmental Manager)  
Miss Jill Scealy (JS) (Environmental Officer)  
Mr Michael Clark (MC) (Project Manager)  
Mr Tim Muldoon (TM) (Community Liaison Officer)  
Mr Graham Reid (GR) (Guest – Bruce Reid's son)

**Apologies:** Mr Glenn Bailey

## **2. Previous Minutes**

Moved that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true and accurate record by Bruce Reid, seconded by Andrew Kennedy.

## **3. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

### **3.1 Payment costs of tank clean-out – “Woodlawn”**

TM indicated that a cheque had been issued to BR following his request for re-imburement of costs for cleaning out his rain water tanks as he considered that the mine had contaminated his water.

BR stated that he had made a claim to Whitehaven for re-imburement of water analysis costs which cost approximately \$300. He didn't have a receipt for the analysis so Whitehaven hadn't paid it.

TM reiterated to BR that Whitehaven had advised him in writing that payment for the water analysis would not be issued until a copy of the water analysis results were provided to Whitehaven.

BR stated that he is sceptical about everything and that he has good reason to because DY couldn't provide threshold limits for all parameters analysed in the tank water. BR said that he is unhappy with the colour of the water and that his daughter (who visits the property) could notice the difference in the colour of the water. BR also stated that he is sceptical about the companies that analyse the water and provide results.

MC and DY reiterated to BR that water analysis is undertaken by a NATA (National Association of Testing Authorities) accredited laboratory and the threshold limits that DY provided at the time that Whitehaven organised analysis of the water were from the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2004. The Guidelines do not provide threshold limits for some parameters and Whitehaven can only provide the information that is available.

TM stated that he wanted to make it clear to the Committee that payment for water analysis and tank-cleanout at the "Woodlawn" property after the event will only be made on this occasion. If any surrounding landholder has an issue that they believe is associated with the mine, and they believe that Whitehaven should incur any associated costs, they must approach the Company about the issue before incurring any costs.

### **3.2 Review of bus stops along haul road**

MB stated that he had sent a letter to the Gunnedah Shire Council (GSC) on behalf of the CCC in relation to review of bus stops along the haul route and Blackjack Road.

MB tabled a letter from Wayne Kerr, GSC's Director Infrastructure Services, dated 18th August 2010, which is summarised below:

- Road authorities cannot afford to provide and maintain bus stops at every property access along the haul route.
- Council liaised with bus operators and landowners to determine the most appropriate bus stop locations and Whitehaven contributed entirely to the cost of these bus stops.
- In relation to the entrance to the Waterways Wildlife Park, it is rare that a developer is required to upgrade or be responsible for intersection treatments at existing operations.
- Sunnyside's Project Approval does not require Whitehaven to upgrade any entrances to existing properties and the additional traffic generated by the mine would unlikely warrant this given the Oxley Highway's State Highway classification.
- Council will liaise with bus operators regarding any improvements sought for the Blackjack Road/Oxley Highway

and will advise the CCC upon investigation of these matters and discussion with the RTA.

- Council is discussing with the RTA and Whitehaven the winding of the shoulder between Coocooboonah Lane and the already widened pavement beyond Wilga Park.
- Council is unable to force Whitehaven to contribute anything beyond the Minister for Planning's determinations and the RTA's development strategy for the highway.

MB also tabled a letter from Wayne Kerr, dated 6th September 2010, that was sent to the CCC following a telephone conversation with AK. The letter indicated that Council has no objection to Whitehaven upgrading the intersection upgrade at the Waterways Wildlife Park but funding would be on a voluntary basis in addition to the community enhancement funds provided to Council.

The Committee agreed to carry over this item until Glenn Bailey is present as he initially raised concern about the Blackjack Road/Oxley Highway intersection bus stop.

### **3.3 Noise monitoring at "Woodlawn"**

BR said that the noise consultants had left a message on his phone notifying him of the proposed dates for noise monitoring but the monitoring had not been conducted.

DY said that noise monitoring had been postponed due to wet weather but the noise monitoring had been conducted a week ago. The noise consultants had verbally notified DY that noise levels were compliant at "Woodlawn". A written report will be issued to Whitehaven and DY indicated that he would forward a copy to BR.

BR said that the noise levels can vary with atmospheric conditions and the noise monitoring could have been conducted during favourable conditions.

GR said that he had noticed today that the constant beeping of the equipment horns that had previously annoyed him had stopped.

MC said that the installation of the buzzers within the cab of the excavator and trucks had been delayed but all had been completed on Monday (6<sup>th</sup> September 2010).

GR thanked Whitehaven for ceasing use of horns and AK commended Whitehaven for this action.

MC said that the horns are still connected for emergency purposes but would not be used for general operational activities.

GR said that occasional use of the horn is not an issue it was just the constant use that was a problem.

### **3.4 Dust monitoring at “Woodlawn”**

DY said that he had spoken to ALS (environmental monitoring contractor) who would organise for installation of a deposited dust gauge.

JS explained to BR that deposited dust monitoring includes dust from all sources so an elevated result may not be related to mining operations.

BR said that he knows that you can use isotopes to determine the dust source. When referring to the impact he believes the mine is having on him and his property BR stated “if you toss me a bone, you’ll probably keep me quiet I think”.

### **3.5 SWL graphs**

Following a query at the last CCC meeting about why there was a gap in the SWL graphs, DY stated that ALS had been contacted and had since issued SWL information (which has been included in the graphs in the Environment Monitoring Report).

### **3.6 Coal trucks negotiating Coochooboonah Lane/Oxley Highway intersection**

MC stated that he had contacted Leigh Lamey at Toll on the day after the last CCC meeting advising that a complaint had been lodged during the CCC meeting in relation to Toll trucks cornering too fast at the intersection and crossing over the dedicated acceleration/merging lane into the highway lane.

Leigh Lamey indicated that the issue would be raised in Toll’s toolbox talks. A copy of the toolbox talk and signatures of attendees has since been provided to Whitehaven.

BR said that he has no complaints in relation to the truck drivers.

### **3.7 Tree corridor**

GR noted that his sister, Vivienne Reid (guest at previous CCC meeting), had suggested a tree corridor to provide a visual screen between “Woodlawn” and the mine. GR explained that BR is 83 and GR is looking at retiring to “Woodlawn” in a couple of years. GR said that he is happy to supply the trees and plant them but he would like Whitehaven to pay for a fence

(approximately 2km) to prevent stock accessing the trees. GR said that he would use the tree planting as publicity for his business. GR said that it is not going to solve their problems but it will block out light, reduce truck noise and cover up the raw bund area that is visually confronting.

DY said that he would be happy to discuss the proposal with GR.

GR noted that Whitehaven representatives had indicated at the previous meeting that by the time the mine ceases operations the trees still will not be sufficiently established to provide an effective screen.

MC confirmed that the mine life is approximately 5 years.

GR asked whether production at Sunnyside would be reduced to avoid the government's proposed mining tax and DY/MC indicated that they believed this would not be the case.

BR stated that there is "stacks" of coal under the "Werona" and "Woodlawn" properties.

#### **4. Mine Progress**

MC provided an update on the mine progress, as summarised below:

- 69 LTI free days as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010. First LTI since commencement occurred on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010 (at the time the site had 599 LTI free days) when a contractor was struck on the nose by a piece of steel tubing and required two sutures.
- As discussed previously, in-cab beepers have now been installed to remove the constant use of equipment horns.
- No longer pumping water from "Werona" as there is sufficient storage in onsite dams from surface runoff.
- 3 shots have been fired since the last meeting with no compliance issues.

#### **5. Environmental Report**

DY provided the Environmental Monitoring Results, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

GR said that the visual impacts don't worry them (ie. BR and his family) as much as the heavy metals, like cadmium, that are dug up from deep down. GR asked if it is reasonable for them to be concerned and then said that he is concerned for the people working at the mine. GR said that it is concerning when they turn on the TV and see sick kids in Queensland even though people are saying there is no proof that it's related to mining.

DY said at this stage there is no conclusive evidence that the issues recently reported are related to mining.

MC said that both respirable and inhalable testing is conducted on site personnel twice a year.

JS asked MC if there have been any issues identified during this sampling.

MC said that no failures had been recorded. Results are provided to the employees who have been tested and any exceedances are notified to Industry and Investment NSW and trigger retesting.

BR said that PM<sub>2.5</sub> dust floats in the atmosphere. On a still day he looks out and sees a slight black cloud over the mine. He asked if it's true the PM<sub>2.5</sub> dust floats in the atmosphere.

DY said that the PM<sub>2.5</sub> dust particles are more likely to hang in the air but you wouldn't be able to see them. It would be larger visual dust particles that he could see.

MB said that individual dust testing has been occurring for a long time.

MC explained that the testing is conducted over a full shift with the monitor attached to the individual. Testing is independently conducted by Coal Services.

## **6. Complaints**

No complaints have been received via the complaints line or Whitehaven personnel since the last CCC meeting.

AK raised a formal complaint on behalf of the "Glendower" residents in relation to ongoing noise from the mine.

DY indicated that he would contact the residents to discuss the issue.

## **7. General Business**

7.1 BR indicated to the Committee that he would like one of his children to attend each meeting as he has difficulty hearing discussions and remembering things.

DY stated that the CCC Guidelines require Committee members to be approved by the Department of Planning (DoP). Whitehaven could approach DoP if the Committee wishes to pursue this approach.

MC suggested that if BR has a family representative attend each meeting then it should consistently be the same representative otherwise we will have to repeat discussions from meetings that either representative didn't attend.

GR nominated BR's daughter Vivienne as the family representative.

DY said that Whitehaven will approach DoP on the basis that BR will be the primary member (as he is lives at "Woodlawn") and Viviene will be the support person. The only issue is that original CCC members were advertised and this wouldn't be.

- 7.2 Discussion about the bus stops along the haul route continued after being discussed at the beginning of the meeting. The Committee moved a motion to close out the issue with bus stops along the haul route and carry over the issue with the Blackjack Road bus stop to the next meeting in the absence of Glenn Bailey (who original raised the issue).

AK asked if Whitehaven has an agreement with Council for road maintenance.

DY said that we have an agreement with Council whereby Whitehaven contributes to a significant proportion of the road maintenance costs but Council undertakes the road works.

## **8. Date for next meeting**

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 – 3:30pm, Namoi Valley Brickworks.

Meeting closed 4:30pm

Site tour 4:45pm – 5:20pm (MC, SB, MB, AK, GR)

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Michael Broekman - Chairman