

**MINUTES OF THE MT OWEN COMPLEX  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2005 at Mt Owen Mine**

Meeting opened by Mary Robinson at 10.10am.

**Present:**

Community: Patricia Bestic, Wendy Williams, Leanne Cramp, Alan Noble, Jenny Marshall, Gillian Holmes, Sam Deaves  
Singleton Council: Mary Robinson (Chairperson), Brian Thomas.  
Mt Owen Mine: Geoff Marschke, Tony Morris, Derek Walls, Lisa Richards, Gerrie Jordaan.  
Other: Tim Procter (Advitech), Julie McMillan (HLA-Envirosciences)

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for the meeting were received from Deidre Olofsson, Alec Schmierer, Nigel Charnock, and Val Scott

**2. Introduction of New Members**

Sam Deaves - local resident welcomed by Mary on behalf of the CCC.  
Lisa Richards will run future meetings in conjunction with Nigel Charnock, taking the place of Geoff Marschke.

**3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests**

Mary Robinson asked Committee members to declare any pecuniary interests. There were no such declarations from the Committee.

**4. Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2005 were accepted as a true record of that meeting. Moved: Patricia Bestic seconded: Alan Noble. Carried.

**5. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes**

**5.1 *Condition of Ravensworth Homestead.***

Jenny stated that there weren't white ants in the homestead five years ago when she was there and asked why the pests weren't controlled before the damage became a problem. Derek explained that the report issued when the mine took over the homestead stated that it was already infested. A consultant has inspected the property and will report to the mine suggesting treatment, and the company can then act accordingly.

## **5.2 Relocating Giveway Sign on Bowmans Creek Bridge**

The Giveway Sign currently on the western approach will be moved to the eastern end this week.

## **5.3 Upgrade of road markings**

Wendy expressed concern about the safety of residents and employees using the Hebden Road without line markings, in particular the bad corner near the former Coffey's house, and asked that the council readdress the problem. Brian stated the need for a letter to council written by the CCC, perhaps asking to meet on site, which will be directed to the Traffic Committee (RTA/Police/Council) for discussion. Derek said the mine has written to council three times and has had responses but agrees that a further letter should be written focussing on the CCC request.

Wendy also asked about the Hebden Road realignment to remove sharp corners north of the Mine entrance. Progress on land exchange and the construction program is to be requested from Council. The general consensus of the committee is that the road upgrade process is slow and frustrating.

## **6. Review of Operational Performance**

Geoff provided a presentation updating the Mt Owen Complex progress since the last meeting including:

- 30.5ha of forest has been cleared this year in the new mining area, bringing total area of Ravensworth Forest cleared to date to 205 ha.
- Brief explanation of noise bunds, dump area, active mine areas, B6 & C1 areas
- Prediction to finish mining in the B4 area in October,
- Rehabilitation overview including stabilization, reseeding, progression of dump and projection of rehabilitation of forest over the dump area to be completed by 2008.

After general comments were made by the committee about the amount of dust in the area lately, Derek stated that there aren't many surface blasts left in the current area. With regards postponing blasts Derek explained that besides slowing the mining process, if explosives are left in the ground too long they don't do their job properly and new problems are created. It is always difficult scheduling blasts at this time of year due to the wind.

Sam asked if the trees planted in the rehabilitation areas will be watered. Geoff replied that it isn't practical to irrigate such a large area. Brian asked for confirmation that trees and/or areas would be replanted if initial stock wasn't successful. Derek explained that they would replant as necessary which they will do due to both the mine's commitment to rehabilitation and also because they are legally bound to regenerate, having paid a bond to ensure this will happen. Leanne asked how many hectares will be rehabilitated in a specific time frame, considering the total amount intended to be disturbed is so large and actual rehabilitation to date appears insignificant as yet. Geoff replied that in excess of 260 ha in total will have been completed at Mt Owen by 2008. Derek explained that the restoration of parts of the Mt Owen dump has been delayed by approx. 12 months due to the delay with the western dump approval.

Gillian questioned how an area is deemed to be successfully rehabilitated. Derek explained that there is an on-going research program in conjunction with the University of Newcastle which

measures density of plants, species of fauna and use of local species, using best practice. The University has been impressed with the rehabilitation progress based on their monitoring. Gerrie added that sustainability is the key issue. Derek provided an example, citing the area successfully replanted eight years ago has not yet been formally approved by the DMR, with final approval potentially up to 30 years after the initial planting period. Rehabilitated areas are not approved within a few years of planting and then forgotten. Derek suggested that the University could do a presentation to the CCC if desired.

Leanne asked if the mine will use the extra 10m height approved for the dump. Derek explained that Mt Owen do not wish to use the total allotment, for one thing it is very expensive to cart overburden to that height, and they will use only the minimum required. The option of utilising the remaining area will be kept as a contingency only and the mine will rehabilitate it as soon as they can be sure it is not needed.

Tony provided a presentation on the Staged Development of the Mt Owen Complex:

Stage One is the integration of Ravensworth East (early 2004), the establishment of a tailings disposal facility, construction of a second ROM dump station and securing the new DA. Tony explained that the new Ravensworth East Dump Hopper would remove the need for two trucks hauling coal on the West Pit haul road.

Stage Two is the CHPP infrastructure expansion, including a new bin and preparation plant module. Tenders for infrastructure expansion, and planning and assessment for proceeding with the Glendell project have commenced.

Allan asked when the Glendell project will start. Tony answered that a date has not been set and they are making an economic evaluation at the moment. Derek further explained the need to analyse current coal prices and the projected market for coal, evaluating these with the cost of infrastructure. The final figures may cause another delay of the project. The project will not start in 2006.

Brian enquired if diversion of creeks has been incorporated into redesigning plans for Glendell. Tony explained that it is a difficult deposit to mine and they will be including cost of diversions, power lines, dumps, etc. Economically the new plans for Glendell will be downsized from those suggested 20 years ago, including a smaller pit, not as many diversions and a shorter working life. Derek said that approval for Glendell has been in place for nearly 20 years but times have changed and the mine has informed DIPNR that they will adopt the same practices as used in the current Mt Owen operations including noise attenuated equipment. This will allow the same controls over both mines and DIPNR appreciate this modern approach. Gerrie added that Thiess will be vying for the work at Glendell and would look at minimizing mining noise.

Mary asked when the lease for Glendell runs out. Derek replied that it will expire in 2013.

## **7. Review of Environmental Performance**

Geoff provided an update on the existing dust monitoring network, including:

- There was one exceedance of the annual average dust deposition limit at one residence and Mt Owen has notified both the resident and DIPNR. Results for two months in particular increased the average over the 12 month period. Sam asked if only the particular resident

was notified and Geoff replied that yes they were the only ones notified as it was considered in light of other results that the impact was localised. Sam also asked for clarification of the maximum increase of 2g per m<sup>2</sup> per month. Geoff answered that the criteria refers to the annual average increase when compared to the baseline data.

- Dust deposition gauge results for the year will be included in the Annual report. Sam questioned the predicted averages listed in the EIS in the Falbrook Area. Geoff explained that the Consent predictions are based on operations as a snapshot in time, calculated at four points in time over the life of the operation. For the annual average exceedance detailed above this was from top soil stripping which contributed to the higher figures. The EIS predictions don't necessarily pickup individual aspects of the operation as happening simultaneously, but model the over all averages, with conditions in the Consent to accommodate variations.
- HVAS monitoring results including four PM10s and 3 TSPs.
- PM10 near Ashton will be relocated now approval has been received (August) for modifications, to the Ravensworth East consent
- New PM10s will be located near Middle Falbrook Road and Allan's property.
- Annual report will include all annual average results and graphs for the 12 month period ending 31<sup>st</sup> July.
- Blasting summary detailed 106 blasts for Ravensworth East. Four percent of the blasts exceeded 115dB(L), which falls under the allowance of 5%. One blast exceed 120dB(L) and was reported to DEC (EPA). There were 162 blasts at Mt Owen with only 1 exceedence of the 115dB(L) limit, which represented 0.7% of blasts.
- The noise monitoring locations will be operational soon, including one the location of which is still to be determined. Mt Owen are developing protocols with DIPNR for noise assessment, including differential values, spot checks, EIS requirements and validating predictions

Geoff also provided the following contact numbers for the CCC:

Nigel Charnock	0407 231 785
Lisa Richards	0408 220 261
Geoff Marschke	0417 641 906
Todd Cordey	0429 647 709 (cattle issues)

## **8. Update on the implementation of key Mt Owen Consent Conditions**

Geoff discussed the Approvals Update including:

- Managements Plans still with DIPNR
- Flora & Fauna Management Plan in development
- Noise and Dust Monitoring (to be discussed later in the meeting by Tim Proctor)
- Early Morning Blasting (on today's agenda)
- Web Site (also on today's agenda)
- Ravensworth East modification to Consent, received 02 August, effectively making the consent consistent to that at Mt Owen. This will allow a single Annual Report, monitoring program and plans for both mines.
- Annual Report is in preparation

Sam asked for clarification of DIPNR stating there will be a review of management plans when mines start to operate within 500m of the nearest property. Geoff explained that as a minimum there are compulsory external audits every three years and that plans must be reviewed in accordance with the audit findings. Also, if there is a major change in circumstance an application may be made for a review of the plan. Any changes would be subject to the same review and approval processes as the current plans.

Leanne asked about the status of the Dust and Health Brochure which is now over its 6 month approval due by date. Geoff replied that a draft has been completed in conjunction with the Minerals Council and will be submitted to NSW Health shortly. DIPNR have approved an extension until the end of November. The intent is to have a single industry brochure.

In regard to continuous dust and noise monitoring, trigger levels and alarms will be determined after a few weeks of monitoring results from all the monitors to identify realistic data.

Leanne stated that she has been told the mine is shut down during crib breaks when she has rung with a complaint and asked if this is correct. Derek replied that mining quite often stops totally during crib breaks. Gerrie added that if critical, employees will continue working through the crib breaks such as water carts and graders. Geoff agreed and added that sometimes one truck can still be out completing it's final run before crib.

## **9. Update on the Mt Owen Early Morning Blasting Trial Program**

Geoff summarised the Program Limitations:

### Pit Areas

Restricted to Mt Owen Main (North) Pit and Eastern Rail Pit

### Weather Conditions

Wind speed less than 4 m/sec. No apparent Pasquill stability category G is present (per the old EPA noise document).

### Blast Monitoring Limits

Overpressure reporting limits as contained in EPL4460 apply, including reporting of exceedence of 120dB(L) for overpressure and 10mm/sec for ground vibration.

### Objectives

Blast earlier to beat the wind while exercising the need to be careful of inversions.

### Blast Monitoring Locations

Near to both Leanne Cramp and Allan Noble's residences and one to the west near the old Ravensworth Homestead.

### Proposed Portable Monitors

Initial locations have been suggested as Middle Falbrook, a location in the SE area and another in the NE area. Leanne suggested covering the Camberwell area too (as proposed by Diedre in correspondence).

Leanne asked if the weather station on the overburden dump will be installed before the first early blast. Geoff replied that it would be installed prior to the first blast.

## **10. Mt Owen Complex Website**

Lisa provided an explanation of the website.

The Environmental Monitoring page will be divided into the relevant monitoring categories as required by the consent including, Blast Monitoring, Dust Monitoring, Noise, Water and Weather monitoring. Each of these sections will be divided into sub-categories of Criteria, Monitoring Location Plan and Results. The Results section will contain current data and archived data in both table and graph formats. The archive data will contain results dating back to the beginning of the 2004 Consent. The results section will also include any relevant comments, eg: early morning blasting trial undertaken. The Criteria wording will come straight from the consent to provide consistency.

The Weather Monitoring Data. will be divided into temperature, humidity, rainfall, solar radiation and a windrose graph. Gillian asked if inversions can be included. Lisa replied that they could probably be included within the Blasting results.

Brian asked if specific blast results could be included not just the averages. Lisa said this could be made available if the information was desired.

Jenny asked when Mt Owen anticipates this information will be available on line. Lisa replied that it will be available immediately after approval is received from DIPNR.

Lisa asked if the committee members present were happy with the proposed monitoring data layout and also the current print options proposed (a full monthly monitoring report or full monitoring criteria report). Those present thought the options were fine and did not require changing.

## **11. Complaints Summary**

Geoff provided a presentation on the history of complaints by month, year, complainants and complaints made since the last meeting. The graphs showed that complaints received are traditionally higher over the winter months and that 2005 complaints (Aug '04 to Jul '05) were down over the previous year. Of the 149 complaints received, 103 were due to noise, 28 for dust, 7 for blast vibration and 11 for blast dust fumes.

Leanne asked for clarification of complaint monitoring, eg: if a resident calls to make a noise complaint and then calls half an hour later regarding dust is it calculated as two complaints. Geoff replied that yes it would be classified as two separate complaints.

Sam asked if both the 1800 number and phone calls made direct to the mine were included in this data. Geoff confirmed they were both included but the 1800 number is preferably because it informs the supervisor at the same time.

## **12 Update on the Mt Owen Complex Continuous Noise and Dust Monitoring Network**

Tim Procter from Advitech began by thanking the CCC members for their help in supporting the development. He presented a location map detailing Advitech's equipment:

- East & SE dust and noise instruments
- Middle Falbrook Road noise unit (which has been operational and reliable for 18 months)
- Dust monitor at the Deaves property
- Noise monitor near Leanne Cramp's residence which is operational
- Dust monitor at Alan Noble's which is operational and a noise monitor that awaits power.
- Dust monitor on Hebden Road
- Last noise unit will be installed somewhere near Goorangoola Road at a site to be confirmed. The site will need to have access to a decent land line connection because the mobile service is not adequate in that area.

He explained that dust monitors require electricity for power. Noise monitors can be run by solar power, but are still being fine tuned for audio readings.

Advitech is currently negotiating with Telstra for continuous CDMA coverage on a monthly rate. Tim showed an example of graph results for noise and dust levels and gave a brief explanation of determining mine noise as opposed to other contributing noises. eg: noises created by birds, wind, road usage, large dogs, the rescue helicopter, planes, trains etc.

The current equipment will satisfy the EPA and DIPNR's reporting requirements for real-time data collection and also has a forecast facility. The assessment and reporting of data will be quarterly.

TSP and PM10 monitors will stay in place for the immediate future to help correlate the continuous monitoring data. The 24 hour reports are supported by the 24 hour continuous audio recordings.

Advitech are conferring with DIPNR to identify the relevant data that will be used for determining compliance. Exclusions will include such things as rain, wind speed >5m/s, thunder, large dog barking, road noise, etc.

### **13. General Business**

#### ***13.1 Communication of Mt Owen Complex CCC member details to the wider public***

Brian stated that the Council is happy to list the members on the council website, explaining that this is to contact members to discuss ongoing issues not an avenue for complaints. Leanne proposed that Mt Owen include the date of the next CCC meeting with the blasting hotline ads that they put in the Argus and Hunter Valley News, explaining that it is a closed meeting. Lisa will discuss this with Felicity.

#### ***13.2 Mt Owen Complex CCC Newsletter***

Brian suggested that a second newsletter is not required. Any relevant information from the CCC meetings can be incorporated into the existing Mt Owen Newsletter. The committee members present agreed with this sentiment and wish to keep the current arrangement.

#### ***13.3 Complaints Management Protocol***

Carried over to next meeting when Nigel is present.

#### ***13.4 Night contact with mine***

Wendy has been approached by a resident asking for a contact number for the mine for any issues that arise at night. The incident that led to this request regarded cattle on the road. Tony or Geoff will speak to Todd Cordey and suggest that signs be fixed to fences around the mine with contact details in relation to cattle control.

The committee members wish to have a 24 hour contact number for the mine with regards other issues that may arise at night, eg: fire. Tony and Geoff will liaise with Gerrie to investigate options for a contact number for the control room, supervisor or other suitable mine representative for this purpose. Geoff asked if any of the committee members had called another mine at night. Gillian said she had called Camberwell and was able to speak to a person on a landline.

Jenny expressed the need for the contact number to be finalised before the next meeting and the information forwarded to the committee members well before November.

#### **14. Next Meeting**

The next meeting has been tentatively scheduled for Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November, commencing at 9:30am at Allan Noble's property on Glennies Creek Road to inspect the monitoring equipment. Following the inspection the meeting will continue at the Mine. Lisa Richards will send out a map showing how to get to Allan's with the next meetings agenda.

Meeting closed at 1.00pm. An offer of an inspection was made but not taken up.

Minutes prepared by Julie McMillan.

*Action Items next page*

**Action Items:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Raised at CCC meeting on:</b>	<b>Status</b>
Provide presentation on Mt Owen Complex Biodiversity and Land management Plan, which was delayed at meeting on 26/11/04,	HVCC	26/11/04	Agenda for next meeting
Review current Blasting Notification Protocol to determine if there is further scope to notify residents upon changes to the weekly blasting schedule	Thiess	04/03/05	Discussed at 31/05/05 meeting and decided Geoff to implement system for Thiess to call the Blast Hotline to check the information is correct. Complete
Availing wider community of a list of CCC members	All CCC members	31/05/05	Completed. To be included in Council Website.
Discussion of Complaints Management Protocol –	All CCC members	31/05/05	Agenda for next meeting
CCC newsletter	All CCC members	31/05/05	Completed. To be retained in current Newsletter
Review of Draft Blasting Trial Program	All CCC members	31/05/05	Following preparation of draft Program. Completed, Presentation to meeting of 30/8.
24 hour contact number for mine	HVCC & Thiess	30/08/05	To complete before next meeting
Letter to Singleton Council regarding line markings on local roads	All CCC members	30/08/05	Letter to be prepared on behalf of CCC. On agenda for next meeting