

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

**Friday 1 September 2006 at Mt Owen Mine**

**1. Opening of Meeting**

Meeting opened by Mary Robinson at 10:10am.

**Present:**

Community: Alec Schmierer, Patricia Bestic, Jenny Marshall, Gillian Holmes, , Wendy Williams, Alan Noble, Deidre Olofsson

Singleton Council: Mary Robinson (Chairperson), Brian Thomas

Mt Owen Mine: Nigel Charnock, Trevor Wells, Linda Dunn, Ben Seaborn, Gerry Jordaan

**2. Introduction of New Members**

Nigel introduced Linda Dunn (Graduate Environmental Officer from Thiess), Ben Seabourne (Environmental Coordinator from Thiess replacing Geoff Marschke) Trevor Wells (Operations Manager, Xstrata Mt Owen) and Gerry Jordaan (Operations Manager, Thiess Mt Owen Mine). Nigel also welcomed Fergus Hancock from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Fergus was invited to give a talk on the application of DNR stream diversion principles to Mt Owen mine's Betty's Creek diversion.

**3. Apologies**

Apologies for the meeting were received from Val Scott.

**4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests**

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

**5. Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 25 May 2006 were accepted as a true record of that meeting. Moved Patricia Bestic, seconded by Alec Schmierer.

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

Nigel Charnock provided the CCC with an update on the implementation of key Mt Owen Consent Conditions. Key points of his presentation were:

- Progressive development of continuous noise and air quality monitoring systems (continuous improvement).
  - Alarming
  - Operational Response Protocols
  - Training for Supervisors
- Three attenuated O/B excavators and 2 fleets of attenuated O/B trucks (11 trucks) operational.
- Compares to EIS target of one attenuated excavator and one fleet of trucks by Yr 3 (end of 07).
- Noise Monitoring Summary and Detailed Reports now available via Mt Owen Website
- Commencement of Early Morning Blasting Trial following approval by the DoP in late May 2006
  - Brian Thomas asked if any complaints had been received regarding the early morning blasts.
  - Nigel Charnock said there had been some complaints received relating to early morning blasts. Details of these complaints were discussed during the presentation of environmental monitoring performance by Ben Seaborn. Ben advised the CCC that 3 complaints had been received from 2 complainants in relation to two of the early morning blasts
- The Early Morning Blast Program approves up to 12 blasts per year between 7am & 9am- 7 blasts under the program to date in 2006
- Bettys Creek diversion – construction of lower diversion commenced in June 06.
- Target date for completion of lower diversion, including revegetation is Q1 2007 – finalisation delayed to avoid ERP mining interaction & timing of revegetation.
- Progressive implementation of Biodiversity Offset Strategy with focus on planting of source areas in the NW and Forest East Offset Areas
- Construction of alternative GGBF habitat dams within conservation areas completed.
- No feedback on following draft EMP's, Programs and Strategies submitted to DoP:
  - Environmental Management Strategy
  - Noise
  - Air Quality
  - Blasting
  - Water

- Environmental Monitoring Program

Nigel Charnock provided the CCC with an update on the development and implementation of the Mt Owen Bushfire Management Plan (BMP). Key points of his presentation were:

- Consultation undertaken with adjoining landholders, CCC, HCFFAC, RFS & MOC staff in July 2006
- Key areas of concern for community included:
  - Access
  - Water Points
  - Communication protocols
  - Control of vegetation growth in conservation areas
  - Protection of infrastructure
  - Stakeholder recommendations & concerns to be addressed in the BMP
- DA 14-1-2004 and DA 52-03-99 require the development of a “Conservation Sensitive” BMP in consultation with the HCFFAC and to the satisfaction of Council and the RFS.
- XMO has engaged Ecological Australia to prepare the BMP
- The key objectives of the BMP are to:
  - Minimise the likelihood of unplanned fire occurring
  - Protect neighbouring properties and public safety
  - Contain out breaks to within the property boundary
  - Protect mine infrastructure and environmentally sensitive areas
  - Protect the flora and fauna from unplanned fire events
  - Utilise fire as a management tool to maintain and enhance native ecosystems.
- XMO currently manages approximately 8000 ha of land comprising mining lease areas and adjacent buffer land.
- Many different land uses are undertaken across the MOC including mining, infrastructure areas, grazing, cropping, biodiversity conservation, archaeological and heritage sites.
- BMP will cover all XMO managed landholdings across the Mt Owen, Ravensworth East and Glendell mining areas and associated buffer lands.
  - Wendy Williams thanked Nigel Charnock and XMO for the BMP and the opportunity to be involved in the consultation process. Nigel said that it had been a very useful exercise with a valuable exchange of information between XMO and local landholders.

## **7. Review of Operational Performance**

Trevor Wells provided an overview of progress of the Glendell development since the last meeting. Key points included:

- Existing Development Consent in place and all required Mining Leases obtained
- Proposing modification to existing Consent to allow integration into MOC and implementation of common EMS- consultation with key stakeholders on the project to commence in Q4 2006
  - Diedre Olofsson asked how stakeholders would be identified.
  - Nigel Charnock said that the process to identify stakeholders would commence shortly and take about two months to complete. Nigel expected that Camberwell village residents would be included.
- Proposed modifications will provide benefits to the community in comparison to the current approval as a result of an improved mine plan, shared use of infrastructure with Mt Owen, reduced equipment fleet and the implementation of current environmental practices and standards at Glendell
- Planning for site infrastructure commenced
- Construction to commence in Q2 2007 and mining in Q3/4 2007

Trevor Wells provided an overview of mining progress at Mt Owen and Ravensworth East (West Pit) since the last meeting. Key points included:

- Trevor presented fly over views of mining progress at North Pit and West Pit and discussed the on-going development of the West Dump
- Trevor advised the CCC that mining had recently commenced in the Eastern Rail Pit.
  - Alec Schmierer asked if much overburden was required to be removed from the East Rail pit area.
  - Trevor Wells said that the deposit was quite shallow with only about 1 million tons of coal to be extracted, which meant that mining would be completed in the ERP within approximately 12 months.

## **8. Review of Environmental Performance**

Ben Seaborn provided an overview of environmental performance since the last meeting using a Powerpoint presentation of figures. Key points included:

- An aerial photograph of the locations of fixed dust, water, blast and noise monitoring units for the Mt Owen Complex. The majority of noise and dust monitoring locations were concentrated in the Fallbrook Rd area.
- Total suspended particulate results from three locations for the July 2006 quarter.
- Total suspended particulates – 12-month rolling averages. Results were below the assessment criteria.
- 24-hr PM<sub>10</sub> results from four locations for the July 2006 quarter. One PM<sub>10</sub> monitor had been relocated to away from Ashton mine to a more representative location further north on Fallbrook Rd.

- 24 hr PM<sub>10</sub> – 12 month rolling averages. Results were below the assessment criteria, except for the Ashton monitoring site before its relocation. However, this unit was not representative of the Mt Owen Complex.
- 24hr PM<sub>10</sub> continuous monitor average results for July 2006.
- 24hr PM<sub>10</sub>continuous monitor rolling 12-month average. Calculations begin from the time of installation in December 2005. Results were below the assessment criteria.
- An aerial photograph of dust deposition monitoring locations was presented.
- Annual average dust deposition results for individual monitoring locations for the past 5 years.
  - Gillian Holmes questioned why dust gauge D16 was higher than others
  - Nigel Charnock said that the mine believed that local mining conditions in Tailings Pit 2 at Ravensworth East had led to higher localized dust deposition results at this location. Nigel advised that the affected resident had been provided with dust monitoring results on an on-going basis and that there was on-going dialogue between the two parties.
  - Gillian Holmes asked about increased traffic in Forest Rd.
  - Trevor Wells said that it was likely to be associated with creek diversion work, but this was only temporary.
  - Alan Noble asked if recent dusty conditions were associated with the diversion.
  - Nigel Charnock said the diversion work and strong north westerly winds could have contributed.
- Blast exceedence results from the Cramps property monitoring location for the past 12 months. No exceedences were recorded.
  - Gillian Holmes asked what the actual reading were from the last early blast monitoring.
  - Ben Seaborn said he did not have the data at hand but could supply it.
- Blast exceedence results from the Ravensworth East monitoring location for the past 12 months. No exceedences were recorded.
  - Deidre Olofsson requested that actual blast reading be included in the presentation rather than just exceedences.
  - Ben Seabourne agreed and would supply data at the next meeting.
- A comparison of EIS noise predictions to actual monitoring results for autumn 2006. The monitored result of 2% exceedence (>44dB (A)) compared favorably with the predicted EIS exceedence rate of 19% for year 3.
  - Gillian Holmes asked why noise results were better than expected.
  - Nigel Charnock said that the new attenuated trucks would have helped reduce noise levels.
- Figures covering recent complaints history were displayed with 2 in June, 4 in July and 18 in August. Complaints data covered all categories but 70-80% related to noise.
  - Jenny Marshall suggested that the reduction may be due to the Cramps moving.
  - Nigel Charnock agreed however there were many other neighbors in the area
  - General discussion regarding early morning blasts. Trevor Wells said that noise issues had to be balanced against improved dust fallout.

## **9. Presentation on the application of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Stream Diversion Principles to the Mt Owen Mine Betty's Creek Diversion by Fergus Hancock (DNR)**

Fergus Hancock presented an overview of the history and development of DNR principles for stream diversions and their application to the Mt Owen, Betty's creek diversion. Key points included:

- Fergus outlined his experience over 15 years with various government departments.
- Outline of the history of stream diversions in NSW in the mining and quarrying industries.
- Stream diversions had a history of failure due to:
  - The only design criteria were based on civil engineering requirements resulting in a straight ditch design.
  - Stream diversion had to cope with a 1 in 50 year flood to avoid flooding of the mining area.
  - Too steep a gradient – no pools retained.
- Now stream diversions require:
  - There should be no increase in overall stream gradient and the stream must include 'meanderings'.
  - The energy of flow must not be evenly spread i.e. the flow is bunched into a series of pools and rapid flow areas over rocks.
  - Use of gravel and rocks to dissipate energy at times of high flow.
  - Techniques to manage energy at bends with creek wall design.
- National guidelines now cover the construction of stream diversions.
- The natural Betty's creek is controlled by vegetation whereas Bowman's Creek has largely lost its vegetation. Diversion will try to simulate the vegetation of the original stream.
- The diversion will be designed to allow flooding to dissipate the energy associated with high flow.
- Flooding increases discharge time and reduces energy and stream scouring.
- The diversion will avoid the use of 'hard' engineering techniques (bridges, culverts, rock cuttings) as these lead to natural degradation of the stream in the vicinity.
- The diversion will utilize natural outcrops of bedrock to advantage.
- There is a natural increase in salinity at Betty's Creek downstream due to the shallow coal deposits in the area.
- In the future the creek may be diverted back over the rehabilitated land with reconstituted natural vegetation, however the Bettys Creek diversion has been designed and will be constructed as a permanent structure.
  - Deidre Olofsson asked if the new guidelines were proven.
  - Fergus Hancock said that work in the urban Sydney and in WA had yielded positive results.
  - Alan Noble asked if there were any measures to counter increased flow into Main Creek/Glennies creek.
  - Fergus said that battering, regeneration of vegetation at confluence of creeks would help and that the Bettys Creek diversion into Main Creek was designed so that it would not increase peak flows in Main Creek downstream of the diversion.
- Nigel Charnock thanked Fergus for his presentation.

## **10. Update on Community Projects**

Nigel presented an update on XMO community projects.

- XMO 2007 Community Support Program
  - Environment
    - Implementation of Mt Owen Biodiversity Offset Strategy
    - Yorks Creek Cultural Landscape Remediation Project
  - Glennies Creek Enhancement Project
  - Education/Training
    - Mt Pleasant Primary School- Enhancement Program
    - Mt Pleasant School – Singleton Horse Sports Day
    - Miscellaneous Contributions (e.g. school book prizes)
    - NSW Minerals Council Tours and School Mine Tours
    - Apprentice Program - Workplace Training
  - Health
    - Currently reviewing potential projects following consultation with Singleton Council Community Support Officer
  - Community Welfare
    - Currently reviewing potential projects following consultation with Singleton Council Community Support Officer
  - Other
    - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Trust
- Viewpoint Program
  - Commenced late Mar 05
  - Phased program
  - Pilot interviews completed: survey instruments refined
  - Second round of Stakeholder interviews in progress: includes landholders, community groups local & state government
  - No site involvement other than helping to identify stakeholders
- Glennies Ck Rehabilitation Project
  - Conservation Volunteer Australia rehabilitation crew commenced weed control activities in late August 2006
  - Work on creating windbreaks and stock shade with natural vegetation corridors has commenced along Glennies Creek Road.
  - Tree planting along Glennies Creek to commence after completion of creek bank fencing.
- Yorks Creek Rehabilitation Project
  - Field Day recently held for local Aboriginal community so that they could view the Yorks Creek project area and discuss opportunities to be involved in the project

- An Expression of Interest Form has been sent to local Aboriginal Groups for rehabilitation works, including fencing, weed control, revegetation activities and archaeological monitoring.
- On-ground works expected to commence in September/October 2006

## **11. General Business**

Nigel Charnock presented an update of the progress on the Ravensworth Homestead renovations:

- XMO engaged EJE Architecture to prepare a structural and material condition report
- Stage 1 included identifying items suffering deterioration/damage, recommending appropriate repair methods for each building component & establishing priorities – completed Feb 06
- Stage 2 involves preparation of quantities and costing for individual items requiring repair – commenced April 06.
- In summary, required work involves:
  - repair to stonework (repointing of degraded mortar joints or repair of degraded stone faces)
  - repair to deteriorated roofing
  - termite treatment and repairs to timber framing and carpentry
  - repair to plaster walls and lathe and plaster ceilings
  - repair to timber window and door joinery, including repair to damaged glass
  - bulk of the work involves repairs to the stone walls
  - Considering its age condition of the buildings is considered good and the required repairs and maintenance works could be expected given the age of the Homestead
  - The good condition of the Homestead has been assisted by constant occupation & continuing site presence

Hebden Rd line markings:

- Nigel Charnock stated that a letter had been forwarded to Council following Mar 06 CCC meeting highlighting concerns about safety of motorists on Hebden Rd and need for line marking on crests and curves.
- Mary Robinson said that council was still looking at the project from a budgetary viewpoint and no starting date had been decided. Mary Robinson said she would ask council again and report back to the next meeting.

Vacant CCC position:

- Brian Thomas reported that no replies had been received since the vacant community position on the Mt Owen Complex CCC had been advertised in the July 2006 Mt Owen Community Newsletter. Nigel Charnock suggested that as the CCC already comprised 8 community reps and was functioning well, this was not a great concern.

### Kangaroo Culling:

- Nigel Charnock advised the meeting that culling of Eastern Grey Kangaroos had already commenced in August under NPWS permits across Xstrata owned land in the Ravesnworth Area. General agreement from the meeting that the local kangaroo population was a problem.
- Gillian Holmes asked if any dog baiting had been carried out. Nigel said that baits had been laid in recent months to coincide with a regional baiting program and a good take had been reported.

### Frequency of CCC meetings:

- General discussion of pros and cons of reducing the frequency of the CCC meetings. While other mine CCC meetings were held 6-monthly, it was agreed that the progress towards the Glendell development required more frequent consultation. As such, a 4-monthly frequency was agreed to.

Brian Thomas informed the meeting that community enquiries, blast information and emergency phone numbers for the Mt Owen Complex had been added to the council's web site.

Deirdre Olofsson raised the problem of Green Cestrum in the local area and asked if XMO were spraying. Nigel Charnock said that Green Cestrum was part of XMO's on-going weed control program and spraying was being carried out. However, Nigel noted that if land holders higher up the catchment did not spray it was difficult to control this weed.

## 12. Next Meeting

The meeting agreed that Friday was still the most convenient day for most members to attend.

The next meeting has been scheduled for **Friday 24 November 2006** at Mt Owen Mine.

Meeting closed – 12:30 pm by M. Robinson

Minutes prepared by – Ralph Brown

**Action Items:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Rose at CCC meeting on:</b>	<b>Status</b>
Actual blast recordings to be included in Environmental Performance reporting at next meeting.	Ben Seaboune	1/9/2006	Ben Seaborn to provide data – next meeting
Mine's Community Inquiries, Blasting and Emergency Contact Numbers to be added to Council's website	Brian Thomas	7/03/2006	Complete
Letter to Singleton Council regarding line markings on local roads. Mary Robinson to provide update at next CCC meeting.	SSC	22/11/2005	Mary Robinson check progress at council.
Advertise for community rep to fill vacant CCC position following departure of Leanne Cramp	Xstrata Mt Owen	22/11/2005	No Response
Provide Presentation on the Mt Complex Bushfire Management Plan and provide feedback from the CCC on the proposed content and format of the Plan	Xstrata Mt Owen	25/05/2006	Complete
Invite Fergus Hancock from the Department of Natural Resources to talk about the principles of stream diversions at the next CCC meeting	Xstrata Mt Owen	25/05/2006	Complete