



Hunter Valley Operations (HVO)
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting
Wednesday 8 February 2023 at 1.30 p.m.



Attendance

Chairperson

Dr. Colin Gellatly Independent Chair HVO CCC

Community Representatives

Brian Atfield Community Representative
Todd Mills Community Representative
Jeannie Hayes Community Representative via Phone Comms
Di Gee Community Representative via Phone Comms

Singleton Council

CR. Sue George Singleton Council

Company Representatives

David Foster General Manager
Andrew Speechly Manager Environment & Community
Dean Woods Environment & Community Officer (Contract)
Peter Bowman Environment & Community Officer
Jason Martin Approvals Manager – HVO Continuation Project

Apologies

Michael Wellard Community Representative
Janelle Wenham Community Representative
Dr. Neville Hodgkinson Community Representative

Minutes

Sarah Purser

- Welcome**, Col opened the meeting and greeted CCC members. David Foster was welcomed as HVO’s new General Manager and a round table introduction was conducted. Andrew ran through housekeeping and emergency procedures.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners; "We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where we meet today and pay respect to Elders, past, present and future".

- Apologies**; Advised and recorded.
- Declaration of pecuniary interests/conflicts of interest; Standing**; Col and Sarah are engaged by HVO to provide the respective roles of Independent Chairperson and meeting minute taking.
- Out of Session Correspondence - via email**

21/12/22 HVO North Open Cut Continuation Project
Notification; on exhibition from 30 January to 27 February 2023
21/12/22 HVO South Open Cut Continuation Project
Notification; on exhibition from 30 January to 27 February 2023
23/12/22 HVO Continuation Project Monthly Update
23/1/23 HVO Agenda, Business Papers and 2 November 2022 HVO CCC Meeting Minutes
in preparation for today's meeting

5. **Confirmation of the previous Meeting's Minutes;** Col called for formal approval of the Minutes for the Meeting held 2 November 2022 and the CCC confirmed their acceptance. The CCC Meeting Minutes are available on HVO's public website and can be accessed on-line via <https://www.hvo.com.au/documents/>.

6. **Matters arising from the previous meeting held 2 November 2022**

Ongoing Action; HVO to continue to provide the CCC with a monthly update on the HVO Continuation Project.

✓ Update provided at today's meeting by Jason Martin

Ongoing Action; HVO to provide an update on the detailed design for the North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall when the geotechnical studies have progressed.

✓ Update provided at today's meeting by Andrew Speechly

Action Arising 1: Col to correspond with the DPE Water Section, advising of concerns raised at this CCC in regard to river bank erosion as a result of the July 2022 floods and ask if they have any programs in place to address this. Col to extend an invitation to DPE Water Section to attend a future HVO CCC Meeting.

Col confirmed that Andrew had provided him with a contact at DPE Water Section to whom he will extend an invitation to attend the next HVO CCC Meeting scheduled for May 2023.

Action Arising 2: HVO to arrange a site tour to view Historical Homesteads, such as Archerfield, Carrington and Wandewoi, in conjunction with a CCC Meeting. Proposed that the site tour be conducted prior to meeting start.

Andrew noted this request had come from the November 2022 CCC Meeting and HVO plan to arrange this tour ahead of the May 2023 meeting, when weather conditions will be more favourable. Andrew will coordinate the time and details as part of this next Meeting's Agenda.

North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall Update

Andrew confirmed that HVO had previously reported to the CCC that seepage had been identified from the inside of this tailings storage area to the outside alluvium. This had been identified by an extensive monitoring network that is in place for that purpose. In response, HVO undertook a number of investigations, management activities and ceased tailings storage in this area located in North Pit, effectively mitigating the seepage.

As a result of the seepage, HVO are required to install a barrier wall as part of their Environmental Protection Licence to mitigate any potential reoccurrence in the future. In response to this requirement, HVO provided a concept for the barrier wall design, with geotechnical studies to follow to ascertain if this would be effective.

Andrew advised that the geotechnical work had been delayed due to wet weather conditions, however in October 2022 there had been progress made with the drilling of five holes along the edge of the tailings facility. In a subsequent report provided to HVO in December 2022, it was identified that rock had been encountered at approximately 12 to 15. The rock encountered was fractured in places, therefore HVO need to take that information back to the concept as the barrier wall construction methodology needs to consider this.

The construction assessment has commenced and WSP, the Environmental Consulting Company who undertook this work, will come back to HVO with a recommendation before progressing to detailed design.

7. Company Reports | Update on Hunter Valley Operations

Operations Update

- **West Pit;** David advised there had been some fairly significant changes to the mine plan due to the dragline being out of action since November 2022, HVO brought in diggers from Mitchell Pit to concentrate on that sequence and the dragline has since returned to work during the week commencing 6 February 2023. David provided an overview of the mining sequence via mapping and identified the void in West Pit where HVO are currently holding water prior to it being held at a longer term storage area out of the way of future mining.
- **Cheshunt Pit;** David identified a large body of water in the presentation, he advised HVO have done a lot of work over the past six months to relocate that water, as this a priority mining area. HVO are largely back on plan with Cheshunt Pit, with the normal sequence going through there.
- **Riverview;** This pit is in its last sequence, with approximately 6 months remaining prior to it becoming a long term water storage area.

Environment

Complaints

2022; Andrew advised there had been a total of 7 complaints for 2022 and provided an overview of the dates, concerns and complainants locations. Andrew advised the overall trend of concerns raised via complaints in 2021 and 2022 is less than what has been seen in the past.

Since the 2 November 2022 CCC Meeting there had been two complaints in association with a blast in Cheshunt Pit. This was fired on 12 November 2022 in very still weather conditions and therefore the dust cloud took a while to dissipate. The dust cloud was reported by the Gliding Club and a resident from Long Point. In response, HVO have reviewed the blasting permission for Cheshunt. Andrew explained it had been previously determined the main exposure risk would be for Maison Dieu and Gliding Club due to proximity and confirmed that HVO have high wind speed controls in place for those areas. HVO have revised the blasting permissions and speed restrictions are now in place for Long Point also. A low wind speed restriction has also been introduced when wind is towards these receptors. Andrew explained this is to mitigate potential risk of blast dust and fume when it does not get dispersed by wind.

2023; On 1 February 2023 HVO received a lighting complaint from Long Point that was associated with a lighting plant in Cheshunt Pit and subsequently investigated the reason for this. Andrew confirmed that HVO have a planning process for setting up lighting on dumping areas, and an assessment is conducted to ascertain if the light may potentially hit any receptors. This plan for lighting set up is adhered to by HVO as they want to avoid causing any potential lighting issues and concerns. In this instance a check was not identified to be required as it involved a ramp construction. A review is being undertaken of the dig and dump checklist to capture activities beyond dump construction.

Rehabilitation

Andrew noted that it had been reported at the November 2022 CCC Meeting that HVO had fallen behind with rehabilitation due to the wet weather conditions. When the wet weather cleared in the back end of 2022, HVO deployed additional trucks to distribute top soil and were able to hit their rehabilitation target of 65 hectares being seeded in 2022, with 44 hectares of new rehabilitation being required by the approved

Rehabilitation Management Plan. Andrew noted this to be a great recovery from wet weather impacting on rehabilitation delivery.

Rehabilitation - Continued

81 hectares of second stage rehabilitation (with cover crop but not final seed), has also been seeded since the start of 2022 and 52 hectares are scheduled for Q1 2023. All in all HVO added 146 hectares of new rehabilitation in 2022 and going into 2023 HVO have a target of 35 hectares of new rehabilitation.

Feral Pest Management 2023

Program of activities

Peter advised that synchronised baiting/trapping programs are coordinated with other sites and the Hunter Local Land Services (LLS). Typically there is a meeting in March with the LLS and Hunter Pest Managers to plan the dates for the Autumn and Spring 1080 Wild Dog Control Programs and Peter will advise the CCC when dates are finalised. The Summer 1080 Wild Dog Control Program was due to commence 13 February 2023 and conclude on 3 March 2023, Peter confirmed that notifications had gone out to local land holders.

The Autumn and Spring "Hoggone" pig baiting program dates will be planned to coincide with the 1080 Wild Dog Control Programs. In addition, HVO support rural licensee pig baiting programs via bounty payments, Peter noted that 102 pigs were controlled in 2022 through that process.

Peter advised there are now three commercial Kangaroo harvesters operating at HVO and harvesting for 2023 is underway with one program completed and another two planned for this year. A review of 2022 kangaroo control numbers indicate that the harvesting rate has significantly increased.

The total number of animals controlled in 2022 has seen an approximate increase of 50% up on 2021 and Peter does not expect that to significantly change. Peter did note that pig numbers are back up due to the drop in river levels making their access across the landscape easier.

Heritage

Historic Homestead Project

Peter noted these properties include Archerfield, Carrington Stud and Wandewoi Homesteads'. Peter advised that HVO are in the process of engaging Shaun Wright as a Project Manager and that he comes to HVO with a wealth of knowledge and hands on experience in relation to Heritage properties and project management. Peter advised that building assessments and inspections are anticipated to commence in March 2023, so he hopes to have more to report to the CCC at the May 2023 Meeting.

Maintenance

Yard maintenance works and Termite Interception System inspections at LEP listed properties is ongoing. Peter advised the Grounds/Maintenance contractor has been putting a great deal of effort into these properties and Peter is looking forward to showing CCC members around these Historic Homesteads.

Reporting, Exceedances and Inspections

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) Annual Compliance Report was submitted at the end of January 2023, for Commonwealth biodiversity offsets under HVO management. This is a yearly requirement for HVO's Federal offset properties being Wandewoi, Condon View, Mitchelhill, Crescent Head (South and North) and Hook and is to report compliance against HVO's Management Plans.

The WOOP dump remediation progress report has been submitted to the NSW Resources Regulator Andrew explained this area is situated on part of the Hobden's Travelling Stock Route (TSR) near where the truck stop is located on the Golden Highway and relates to an old dump from when HVO were mining South Pit back in the 1990's. Andrew explained this area is not part of a tenement, but rather is being regulated under Section 240 by the Resources Regulator (RR). There are some remediation work requirements and HVO have conducted some initial works, going forward there will be some further repairs to water management. Andrew confirmed HVO have provided the RR with a progress report, along with design and detail on undertakings that HVO plan to do next.

HVO Continuation Project

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Jason advised that HVO submitted the Development Application and supporting EIS in December 2022, he confirmed that landowner notifications had been provided in HVO's Newsletter, along with local newspapers, advising of the DA lodgement.

EIS Public Exhibition

This runs from 30 January to 27 February 2023, the DPE Major Project Website contains the EIS and links to 'Make a Submission'. Jason explained the EIS also contains various volumes and supporting appendices in relation to the Continuation Project.

- This can be accessed via hvo.com.au/continuation
- "Make a submission and have your say"
- Create an account and follow through the steps

Sue queried if there were hard copies of the EIS available and Jason responded that though this is not mandated that yes, HVO will have some physical copies and can make them available to anyone that would like a printed version. Andrew added that should anyone need assistance navigating the DPE Major Projects portal to please get in touch with himself or Jason.

Community Information Sessions

Scheduled for Monday 13 February (4.00 to 7.00pm) at Jerrys Plains School Of Arts Hall and Saturday 18 February (8.00 to 10.00am) at 880 Maison Dieu Road, Maison Dieu. These are open to everyone and being drop in sessions there is no need to book. Jason noted that he will be in attendance, along with David and Andrew from HVO, there will also be representatives from EMM, who are the lead consultant engaged on this project, to capture any feedback.

Website - hvo.com.au

The EIS Summary Booklet, Project Overview Video and further details on the Continuation project can be found at <https://hvo.com.au/>. HVO's website has been rebranded and there is a link to the Continuation project page which contains a lot more information on how to make a submission.

EIS Summary Booklet

Jason explained the EIS is in the order of 5,500 pages, so this booklet has been produced by HVO as a good first step for people to review the project and then delve into more detail on any areas of more interest in the EIS itself.

Other Consultation; Jason confirmed that HVO's Newsletter and Continuation Project Flier detailing Drop in Community Information Sessions had been distributed. Jason encouraged members to let others know that the community sessions are open to all in the community and advised that HVO are hoping for a good attendance. Jason noted there had also been ongoing engagement with both internal and external stakeholders including Singleton Council, equine industry representatives and local landholders as required. Jason added that the HVO Continuation Project Team are available anytime and open to discussions with local land owners on request.

CCC Members were provided with hard copy handouts:-

- ✓ HVO Continuation Project Flier with dates for proposed Community Information Sessions
- ✓ HVO Continuation Project Summary Booklet 2023
- ✓ HVO News | Issue 10 | February 2023 Edition

Next Steps

Jason advised that when the Public Exhibition period closes on 27 February 2023, HVO will collate and review all submission received via the DPE. Jason anticipated HVO's preparation of response to submissions documentation to be provided back to the DPE will be in the order of 4 to 6 months.

The Continuation Project will also run through the Federal Assessment approvals process, under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC). Jason advised to maintain the projects current trajectory that the determination is hoped for in Q1 2024, after which there is post approvals and execution planning and commencement of construction around Q2 2024. Jason explained the main aim for HVO is for continuation of the operation.

Sue queried if the time frame of Q2 2024 would include the road closure and David responded that HVO could commence operations but eventually will need to do the road closure, he advised there is a potential two year time-line on top of that for the road realignment. Jason added that HVO would look to commence that build with the view that Lemington Road stay open until the realignment is completed.

Todd queried if there were any other alternatives to the proposed road realignment and asked if the only option is near Lake James. Jason confirmed that there were other considerations and assessments undertaken as to where the road could go, however there were not a lot of other options that would allow HVO to stay within their current assessed boundary, therefore that is the alignment that HVO are seeking approval for.

HVO South Modification – additional Ammonium Nitrate storage

Andrew advised that HVO had received notification on 8 February 2023 that this modification has been determined and approved, and over the next period HVO will construct that storage facility for ammonium nitrate.

Environment & Community - Update

Community; Andrew advised there had been a good variety of organisations and projects to come out of Round 2 of HVO's Community Grants, with 8 local organisations being successful in receiving funding, including the Jerrys Plains Public School 2023 Jerrys Juniors and Ready4School programs.

Truck Painting Charities; Andrew advised there had been a celebration of this program held on-site in late 2022 that was attended by some of the organisations involved in this partnership arrangement whereby HVO provide funding and in return they assist with training activities. Charities include; Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service, Singleton Family Support, Hunter Breast Cancer Foundation and Prostate Cancer Alliance.

9. Community Representative Feedback

Todd Mills; Todd noted that there had been a dust issue in the latter part of the week commencing 30 January 2023, as a result of winds blowing from the west when HVO's operations are back up on top Cheshunt Dump. Todd noted this is not an issue when the wind is blowing back to the east. Andrew appreciated this feedback and advised HVO are currently building a bund to work within to complete the dumping in that location. He hoped that this year will be the last time that operations are visible from that location.

Di Gee; Di advised that a couple of people had raised an issue with the Ammonium Nitrate storage believing that 10 days was not a good enough length of time for submissions and that detail of this modification had not really gone out there to the wider community, with some people not knowing about this until it was too late. Andrew thanked Di for this feedback and was apologetic that there was nothing that HVO could do to address these concerns at this stage. Andrew noted that these are not time frames that HVO necessarily provide as it is a Department set period.

Andrew confirmed that HVO did try to provide an awareness of this modification to those who were considered to be primary stakeholders, along with the CCC, and that he would take on Di's feedback as part of any future modifications. Di queried who were considered to be the stakeholders and Andrew responded that the Gliding Club were the primary stakeholder due to their proximity.

CR Sue George; Sue advised of the importance of people being made aware of road closures and Andrew confirmed he had some traffic control details to share in General Business.

10. General Business

Andrew advised that he had received some notifications to share with the CCC around traffic controls that will be in place on Lemington Road. These are in relation to a new entrance to Ravensworth, in an area that Ashton has advised some subsidence is occurring, and HVO are looking to repair some damage to the bridge in March 2023. No other general business was put forward. Col closed the meeting thanking all for their attendance and members agreed to continue meeting in the HVO Services Meeting Room.

11. Next CCC Meetings | Proposed Dates | 10 May, 9 August and 8 November 2023

Ongoing Actions

- HVO to continue to provide the CCC with a monthly update on the HVO Continuation Project.
- HVO to provide an update on the detailed design for the North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall - anticipated for August CCC Meeting.
- Col to correspond with the DPE Water Section, advising of concerns raised at this CCC in regard to river bank erosion as a result of the July 2022 floods and ask if they have any programs in place to address this. Col to extend an invitation to DPE Water Section to attend a future HVO CCC Meeting.
- HVO to organise a visit to Heritage Properties as part of the next May CCC.

HVO CONTACTS

Website <https://hvo.com.au/>

Continuation Project via hvo.com.au/continuation

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086443440525>

Meeting Minutes - InSite <https://www.hvo.com.au/documents/>

HVO Complaints and Blasting Hotline: 1800 888 733 (free call)

SMS Blasting Notification System- Send an SMS to 0447 448 982 with word subscribe included in text