



Hunter Valley Operations (HVO)  
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting  
Wednesday 10 May 2023 at 1:30 p.m (site tour 10.30 a.m)



#### Attendance

##### Chairperson

Dr. Colin Gellatly

Independent Chair HVO CCC - Via Teleconference

##### Community Representatives

Brian Atfield

Community Representative

Jeannie Hayes

Community Representative

##### Singleton Council

CR. Sue George

Singleton Council

##### Company Representatives

Andrew Speechly

Manager Environment & Community

Dean Woods

Environment & Community Officer (Contract)

Jason Martin

Approvals Manager – HVO Continuation Project

##### Apologies

David Foster

HVO General Manager

Michael Wellard

Community Representative

Janelle Wenham

Community Representative

Todd Mills

Community Representative

Di Gee

Community Representative

Dr. Neville Hodkinson

Community Representative

##### Minutes

Sarah Purser

**Site Tour;** CCC Members were taken on a Historical Homestead Site Tour to; Wandewoi Homestead, Carrington Homestead, Archerfield Homestead and Outbuildings.

1. **Welcome,** Col greeted members and the CCC advised that the tour had been well received.

*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".*

2. **Apologies;** Advised and recorded.

3. **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. CR Sue George is President of the Singleton Neighbourhood Centre.

#### 4. Out of Session Correspondence - via email

8/3/23	Draft CCC Minutes for 8 February 2023 meeting
16/3/23	HVO Continuation Project Update
19/4/23	HVO Newsletter and Community Grants
20/4/23	Vacation Programme
1/5/23	HVO Agenda, Business Papers and Minutes for today's Meeting
1/5/23	Coolatai Grass Awareness Workshop information

5. **Confirmation of the previous Meeting's Minutes;** Col called for formal approval of the Minutes for the Meeting held 8 February 2023 and the CCC confirmed their acceptance. The CCC Meeting Minutes are available on HVO's public website and can be accessed on-line via [Documents Hunter Valley Operations \(hvo.com.au\)](https://www.hvo.com.au/Documents/HunterValleyOperations)

## 6. Matters arising from the previous meeting held 8 February 2023

**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.**

✓ Andrew confirmed an update had been provided at the February CCC Meeting, since then HVO have engaged a consultant to do the detailed design and are aiming for a report to be provided to the EPA in September 2023. Andrew advised it was likely that HVO will be able to provide an updated briefing at the November 2023 CCC Meeting.

**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 advised that he had not been able to arrange a time for the DPE to attend a CCC Meeting, however he hoped they may be available for the next Meeting scheduled for 9 August 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.**

✓ Tour conducted prior to commencement of today's Meeting.

## 7. Company Reports | Update on Hunter Valley Operations

### Operations Update

- **West Pit;** Andrew identified where the majority of machinery is operating, with HVO working the terraces on the western side of the pit in a southerly direction. Andrew noted activity is as close as it can be to Lemington Road and that operations will have started to extend south in Wilton and Mitchell Pits.
- **Cheshunt Pit;** Andrew advised that mining movement in this pit is in a westerly direction, he indicated the advance of the mine and where dumping is concentrated.
- **Riverview;** There are approximately three to four months left of HVO operating in Riverview, after which it will be turned into a temporary water storage site.

HVO are going through a re-structure of North and South Mines and on-boarding a Mine Manager for each, this is in recognition of the size and scale of the role and will afford these two areas to have better accountability of their equipment.

Col queried, in relation to overall operations, what was HVO's progress in terms of coal produced versus target. Andrew responded HVO are travelling quite well, he noted the current focus is on getting waste moved and coal available for the Prep Plants. HVO are on-boarding people to drive trucks, there are more numbers needed so they continue recruiting along with going through contractor to permanent placement.

## Environment

### Complaints

Andrew advised there had been three complaints; which is a relatively low level. There was one lighting complaint from Long Point on 1 February, an anonymous alleged reckless driving complaint on 11 April and blast dust issue at Long Point on 29 April 2023. Andrew advised that HVO had reminded their people to take safe driving habits out of the mine and confirmed the blast on 29 April was fired within HVO's blasting permissions, he acknowledged that dust plumes can be visible. In addition, HVO re-opened a private road in response to feedback that the closure had created a hazard when coming out onto Comleroi Road at Warkworth. Andrew noted that road will eventually become closed, however HVO took that feedback on board to resolve that concern.

### Rehabilitation

- Annual Report submitted to Government for period July 2022 to December 2022. Government has approved annual reporting from 1 January 2023 to align to Consent reporting.
- Andrew advised that rehabilitation is progressing well with 8 hectares seeded in 2023 against 44 hectares of new rehabilitation required and the Cheshunt geoflup shaping has commenced. 52 hectares of second stage rehabilitation has been seeded since start of 2023 and 45 hectares scheduled for H2 2023 with 97 hectares being the total requirement. Andrew identified an area in Riverview that HVO have seeded, he explained most of the focus will be in the south as dump areas are not ready in the west.
- Extensive maintenance works completed during Q1 2023 based on 2022 Rehabilitation Monitoring, with a focus on weed management.

## Feral Pest Management 2023

### Program of activities

Andrew provided the dates and timing for HVO's Wild Dog Control Program and Hoggone Pig Baiting Program, he noted HVO rural licensee pig control programs are ongoing via bounty payments. Kangaroo commercial harvests also continue. Andrew ran through control numbers, he expected these numbers to pick up during the year.

## Heritage

**Historic Homestead Project;** Includes Archerfield, Carrington Stud and Wandewoi Homesteads'. HVO's Project Manager conducted initial inspections on 2 May 2023 with detailed building inspections and assessments to follow.

**Maintenance;** Yard maintenance works and Termite Interception System inspections at LEP listed properties is ongoing. CCC members were provided with an inspection of Historic Homesteads prior to commencement of today's meeting.

## Reporting, Exceedances and Inspections

**Annual Environment Report;** The link to HVO's Annual Environmental Review for 2022 was circulated to the CCC on 6 April 2023; [Documents – Hunter Valley Operations \(hvo.com.au\)](https://www.hvo.com.au/Documents-Hunter-Valley-Operations)

**Annual Analysis Report for the North Void Tailings Storage Facility;** this report is submitted to the EPA and includes an analysis of monitoring data for the year, ecological monitoring at Carrington Billabong, plus the capping and remediation program that identifies how the tailings in that facility are consolidating.

**Cheshunt East PM10 dust exceedance 6 March;** 61.1 ug/m<sup>3</sup> measured versus criteria of 50 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. Andrew explained this criteria is inclusive of HVO plus all other sources. Results of investigations determined that HVO's maximum contribution was calculated as 20.3 ug/m<sup>3</sup> which is about 30% of that total. Andrew said the main thing to note was that on this windy day, with winds up to about 10 metres per second, HVO had adhered to their Management Plan i.e. responded to dust alerts and made operational changes to minimise dust generation. HVO will submit an incident report to the DPE for their assessment. HVO also notify landholders in accordance with the HVO North consent and provided the results of their investigation.

## HVO Continuation Project

### Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

**Public exhibition of the HVO Continuation Project EIS;** was 30 January to 27 February 2023, this resulted in a high level of Project support being in excess of 90% and a relatively low level of objections being 67.

#### Initial review of the submissions indicates:

- **Key supporting themes:** are jobs and employment, community benefit and contribution, environmental performance, and ongoing demand for coal.
- **Key objecting themes:** are GHG emissions/global warming, final voids, biodiversity, noise, air quality impacts etc.

### EIS Consultation

**Community Information Sessions were held on;** Monday 13 February at Jerrys Plains School Of Arts Hall with 11 attendees and Saturday 18 February at 880 Maison Dieu Road, Maison Dieu with 9 attendees. Jason noted that these sessions provided an opportunity for community to meet the Project and Social Impact Team.

**Website;** HVO's new website is up and running at [HVO.com.au](http://HVO.com.au), the EIS Summary Booklet has been produced and the Project Overview Video and further details on the Project can be found at [hvo.com.au/continuation](http://hvo.com.au/continuation)

**Government Agencies;** HVO conducted a pre EIS lodgement meeting with Singleton Council on 5 January, followed by a briefing to Singleton Councillors and Staff on 7 and 14 March 2023 respectively. There is ongoing consultation at both State and Federal Level with Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Meetings and a Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD) and DPE site visit occurred on 22 February 2023. Interactions are with DPE and Priority Assessment Program (PAP), priority Assessment Team as well.

**Other Consultation;** Includes the Community Newsletter prepared February 2023, a Glider Club briefing on 24 February 2023 and MP Dan Repacholi Project update on 27 February 2023.

**Next Steps;** Jason provided an overview of the step through process that will be undertaken along with anticipated time frames.

### NSW Approval

- Response to Submissions (RTS) currently being prepared with submission anticipated for August 2023.
- Continued stakeholder engagement including with Singleton Council regarding the establishment of a VPA and Lemington Road closure application.
- Independent Planning Commission (IPC) Determination anticipated for Q1 2024.
- Post approvals and execution planning.
- Commencement of construction estimated for Q2 2024.

### Federal Approval

- Finalise Federal Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) referrals; June 2023.
- Separate Federal EIS / Public Environmental Report (PER) to be prepared; December 2023.
- EPBC Act approval post NSW determination.

Jason provided an overview of the State and Federal submission and approval processes given that the HVO Continuation Project will not go through a bilateral process, he explained that HVO will prepare a separate EIS to go on exhibition at a Federal level. Jason confirmed that the same project will be presented at a Federal level. Jeannie noted this process would be costly for a mine and queried if Federal delegates would visit the mine, Jason felt they would come to site given that the process is not bilateral and confirmed representatives have been at HVO in the past. In terms of approvals Jason acknowledged that HVO have to put a strong case forward in terms of mitigation and the offset any impacts.

### Community

HVO received nine applications as part of Round One of the 2023 Community Grant programme, there was a good spread of projects in terms of local needs i.e. health, education etc. and these are currently being assessed. Whilst many HVO employees live in Singleton, consideration was given to other areas where they reside such as Kurri Kurri, the Upper Hunter; Muswellbrook and Aberdeen, so for this Grants round the footprint was spread a bit further.

- Muswellbrook Netball Association - Netball uniforms
- Novaskill - Mental Health First Aid Training for the Singleton Local Community
- Aberdeen Preschool INC - Social Area
- Kurri Kurri Minor Rugby League - Upgrade of safety and training equipment
- Singleton Heights Pre-School Inc - Improving Physical Development Outcomes for Children
- Singleton Neighbourhood Centre Inc - Food Program
- Singleton Mountain Bike Club Inc - Mountain Bike Race timing equipment
- Witmore - Community and Housing Recycling Crew

Round Two of the programme is scheduled to open in September with an application link to be provided closer to the time.

### Sponsorships

- ✓ Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc - The Great Cattle Dog Muster
- ✓ Rotary Club of Singleton on Hunter Incorporated - The Singleton Art Prize
- ✓ Gold Sponsor for Singleton Business Awards

### Fundraising and Community Support

**Mark Hughes Foundation (MHF);** Staff at HVO raised \$10,000 to help this foundation continue its fight against brain cancer. Andrew acknowledged the initiative to support MHF had come from a fund raising

employee group and given staff and contractors cannot wear beanies on site, the money had been raised via the purchase of hard hats with a specially designed logo.

**HVO Apprentices planted in the order of 420 trees at the Liddell Recreation area, supporting Landcare**  
Andrew advised this was a highly successful Apprentice day that indicated the magnitude of what the apprentice group can achieve, he acknowledged they were a great team with a positive outcome for Landcare.

## 9. Community Representative Feedback

Jeannie thanked Jason for his response to questions around the Continuation Project and said she was appreciative of the tour of Historical Homesteads.

## 10. General Business

Nil declared. Col thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting.

## 11. Next CCC Meeting; 9 August 2023 at 1.30 p.m.

**Proposed Next Meeting Date;** 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 updated briefing on the detailed design for the North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall - proposed for November 2023 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 - hoped for the next CCC Meeting Scheduled for 9 August 2023.

### HVO CONTACTS

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

Continuation Project via [hvo.com.au/continuation](https://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