



**Hunter Valley Operations (HVO)  
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting  
Wednesday 27 August 2025 at 9.30 a.m.**



**Attendance**

**Chairperson**

Dr. Colin Gellatly Independent Chair

**Community Representatives**

Brian Atfield	Community Representative
Neville Hodgkinson	Community Representative
Jeanie Hayes	Community Representative
Michael Wellard	Community Representative
Janelle Wenham	Community Representative
Di Gee	Community Representative

**Singleton Council Representative**

Cr. Sue George Singleton Council

**Company Representatives**

Ben De Somer	Manager Environment & Community
John Martin	Maintenance Manager
Brenton Hubert	Superintendent Environment & Community
Jason Martin	Approvals Manager

**Apologies**

Todd Mills	Community Representative
Peter Nichols	Community Representative
Dave Foster	General Manager
Nic McLaughlin	Environment & Community Officer

**Minutes**

Sarah Purser

**1. Welcome**

Col opened the meeting and greeted members. John Martin was introduced and welcomed in his attendance on behalf of Dave Foster. Ben 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".*

**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.

**4. Correspondence**

- 1/7/25 Draft May Meeting Minutes sent to CCC for comment, along with HVO's Historic Management Plan.
- 18/7/25 Letter to Di Gee with copies of HVO's Historic Management Plan.
- 20/8/26 Invitation to today's CCC Meeting, including Agenda, Business Papers and Grant Application information. An invitation for the CCC to attend a visit to Wandewoi Homestead and inspect recently completed maintenance works post meeting was also included.
- 20/8/25 Confirmation from the Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure (DPHI) that HVO CCC Annual Reports are now available on the DPHI website.

## 5. Confirmation of the previous Meeting's Minutes

Col called for formal approval of the Minutes for the Meeting held 7 May 2025 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/Hunter_Valley_Operations)

## 6. Matters Arising

**HVO to provide their Historic Heritage Management Plan to the CCC when finalised.**

✓ Actioned; Nic circulated to members on 1 July 2025.

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

### Operations Update

**West Pit & Mitchell Pit (North/West);** Ben provided an overview of the proposed mining progression. West Pit is located adjacent to Lemington Road and continues to progress in a south westerly direction. Mitchell Pit is located to the west towards Wandewoi and continues to progress in a south east direction.

**Cheshunt (South);** Operations continue to advance in a westerly direction being the same progression as reported at previous CCC Meetings.

### Environment

#### Comparative Rainfall 2023 to 2025

HVO provided annual rainfall data by month for 2023 and 2024 with a YTD comparison for 2025. Brenton noted that recent rainfall had been well above the previous two years.

#### Comparative Rainfall 2013 to 2025

HVO presented the annual rainfall data for this period that indicated the average total was in the order of 600mm.

#### Monthly Rainfall 2025

For the period 1 January to 15 August 2025 the total rainfall recorded at Cheshunt was 529.6mm and HVO Corporate was 554.4mm.

### Rehabilitation

HVO's rehabilitation target for 2025 is 55.6 hectares of new rehabilitation and 10.8 hectares of Growth Medium Development (GMD). All rehabilitation had been released with shaping anticipated to be completed by mid October 2025 and seeding to progress thereafter. GMD areas will receive a follow up spray, seeding was scheduled for completion during Spring.

### Rehabilitation Maintenance

Ben provided an overview of rehabilitation works proposed for 2025 inclusive of infill planting at Wilton Pit rehabilitation and the relocation of habitat trees and translocation of orchids from Mitchel Pit to WN230 rehabilitation area. Cattle grazing had commenced at Carrington for tall grass control, this will then move to a system of paddock segregation and rotational grazing. HVO were mulching Acacia Saligna at Riverview and weed spraying rehabilitation and topsoil stockpiles, along with conducting minor erosion repairs.

## **Biodiversity**

Activities had focussed on infill tube stock tree planting at Mitchelhill West offset, Hook offset, Carrington Billabong and the Hunter Valley Load Point. Ben advised that HVO were investigating the use of phosphite in Carrington Billabong to reduce impacts to River Red Gum that is caused by the phytophthora fungi.

Ben provided an overview of works that had been conducted at the Crescent Head Offset, inclusive of; mapping of fence and track repairs that were required after fire and flood, installation of brackish frog points to control chytrid fungus, trialling of a 'frog hotel' to provide a habitat for Green and Golden Bell frogs.

## **Operational Weed Management**

Ben provided detail of the activity focus for HVO's operational weed management and the species being targeted in the Hook and Mitchelhill biodiversity offset areas (BOA's), also within the riparian areas of the Hunter River and Wollombi Brook.

## **Vertebrate Pest Management**

Ben detailed the results of HVO's Autumn 2025 pest baiting program. Feral pig trapping was being undertaken due to being identified as the most effective control method.

**Current Programmes;** Ben provided an overview of HVO's programmes in relation to feral pig and kangaroo control. HVO's rural licensee feral pest control program remains ongoing with an increased bounty as an incentive for licence holders.

**Remaining Activities for 2025;** Ben detailed HVO's proposed activities for Spring and Summer in relation to wild dog and fox control, and the "Hoggone" pig program.

## **Heritage**

### **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage**

The Mitchell Pit South AHIP #5350 surface artefacts salvage works had been completed during January 2025. HVO submitted the Salvage Report to the DPHI in July 2025. HVO's Care Agreement for artefacts was to be updated giving consideration to potential storage at the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) "Keeping Place" that is located in Muswellbrook.

Members of Glencore and other Hunter Valley industry groups had undertaken a two day culture and heritage training workshop in Muswellbrook in July 2025 covering theory, artefact identification and site visits. Ben noted that this had been a good experience particularly in relation to building cultural knowledge to engage with HVO's Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP's).

### **Historic Homestead Projects**

Ben advised the parapet upgrade and drainage repairs had been completed at Wandewoi Homestead and showed before and after pictures of these works. Ben reiterated HVO's offer to take members to view the Wandewoi Homestead after this meeting. Brian was interested to view the property however the majority of community representatives had other commitments. Next on HVO's agenda is Archerfield Homestead followed by Carrington Stud.

Di felt it was a pity when properties fall into a state of disrepair and queried the individual responsibilities of tenants and HVO. Ben responded in the most part the tenants responsibility is for basic care and maintenance as a person would do for their own home. The wider extent of the property is for HVO to manage and ensure that what is serviceable and useable is maintained.

Ben provided an extensive overview of priority repairs and maintenance identified for Archerfield and Carrington Stud scheduled to commence in 2025. Ben noted that 2025 is year one of a five year plan for these properties and further works will be addressed over time. Ben offered to provide an update on the next action items for Wandewoi and Archerfield Homesteads and Carrington Stud at forthcoming CCC Meetings, and proposed this for year end 2025 or early in 2026.

## Monitoring

**Blast Monitoring;** HVO identified the locations of blast monitoring units located at nearby privately owned residences that function as regulatory compliance monitors. No reportable exceedances had occurred during the reporting period (Q2 2025).

**Air Quality Monitoring;** HVO identified the locations of their extensive network of air quality monitoring equipment that is within and surrounding the operation. No reportable exceedances had occurred during the reporting period (Q2 2025). HVO noted there was a regional air quality event/exceedance on 27 May 2025 that had been deemed an "extraordinary event" by the DPHI.

## Reporting

The HVO CCC Annual Reports for 2023 and 2024 had been submitted to the DPHI. The 2025 Report is to be prepared after the CCC Meeting scheduled for 5 November 2025. The DPHI website lists all State Significant Project Annual Reports by year:-

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/assess-andregulate/development-assessment/communityconsultative-committees/annual-reports>

**Exploration Works 2025;** No exploration had been undertaken on Exploration Leases during 2025. All surface exploration had been contained within Mining Leases. There was no surface exploration in Exploration Leases forecast for the remainder of 2025, however should this change HVO will conduct consultation with impacted stakeholders.

## Community

**Complaints;** There had been three complaints 2025 year to date; two concerns regarding blasting and one for noise.

**Bright Spot;** HVO was the winner of the Commitment to Community Award at the Novaskill Excellence Awards.

**HVO Apprentices;** Provided an in-kind donation to Singleton Neighbourhood Centre by assisting with moving donations from Big W. As part of each HVO Apprentice's pathway to qualification, HVO requires participation in community activities. In recent years this has included community gardening builds, landscaping at a pre-school and tree planting. HVO advised they are open to suggestions for projects that benefit a large segment of the community, are large enough for 20 apprentices over one, or multiple days, and are in the local area i.e. Singleton, Jerrys Plains and nearby surrounds. The CCC were encouraged to reach out to HVO should they become aware of a project that falls into this criteria.

## Community Contribution Summary

HVO detailed the fourteen successful applicants that had been granted a total of \$67,653 in round one of the Community Grants. HVO confirmed that round two Community Grants Applications were open for the month of September as per email advice to the CCC on 20 August 2025.

**Actioned Post Meeting;** Nic circulated the link to HVO's Smarty Grants application portal to members on 1 September 2025.

### Further community engagement and support had been provided by HVO to:-

- ✓ The annual Singleton PCYC Book Fair - \$5,500 HVO grant
- ✓ In-kind donation to the 2025 Hunter Valley Alpaca Colourbration
- ✓ Jerrys Plains Primary School - Pyjama day, 100 days of Kindy and NAIDOC week
- ✓ Witmore; \$5,000 grant to aid the establishment of their Inclusive Eats mobile food truck
- ✓ Business Singleton Awards Night; Dave Foster was in attendance with the recipients of the Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award
- ✓ Rotary Club of Singleton on Hunter - Annual Singleton Art Prize
- ✓ Singleton Family Support - Mindful Mondays as part of the painted truck tray agreement

## Upcoming Community Events

### HVO were providing support to the following events during September through to November:-

- ✓ Singleton Show; Platinum Sponsor
- ✓ The Great Cattle Dog Muster; Silver Sponsor
- ✓ Singleton Library – Parenting Teens Workshop – A Mental Health Tool Kit
- ✓ Young Business Mind Awards
- ✓ HVO Community Information Sessions were scheduled for September 2025 at Maison Dieu and Jerrys Plains

## HVO Continuation Project (HVOCP)

### NSW Approval Status

In August 2025 HVO submitted an Amendment Report (NSW EP&A Act) to assess the residual impacts of the HVOCP. HVO provided a summary of the Proposed Amendment and production profile for the period 2027 to 2045. An Economic Impact Assessment had been undertaken by Ernst & Young. Conceptual mine plans for years 3, 6, 8, 12 and 15, and conceptual final landforms for both HVO North and South were also presented. HVO detailed quantitative and qualitative assessments in relation to the HVOCP with a summary of outcomes. The next key steps include; continued consultation with key stakeholders, public exhibition of the Amendment Report anticipated to be in September 2025, Submissions Report estimated for Q4 2025, a NSW DPHI assessment period and NSW Independent Planning Commission (IPC) Assessment and determination.

### Federal Approval Status

The HVOCP requires a standalone Federal assessment and approval under the EPBC Act. HVO has lodged EPBC referrals in May 2025. The next steps include; a controlled action decision on the project - anticipated for September/October 2025, assessment requirements to be issued, Environmental assessment preparation to be followed by a public exhibition period.

## 8. Community Representative Feedback

Neville acknowledged HVO for a good presentation at today's meeting. Neville felt that the community would be interested in the works being undertaken by HVO in relation to the Green and Golden Bell frogs and also Historic Homestead Projects. Neville felt there has not been a lot of attention directed towards the Great Lodge and HVO confirmed that a management strategy had been included in the Historic Heritage Management Plan for that property.

Neville noted that work continues around air quality in the Hunter Valley with good levels of monitoring and that this is a wider issue not specifically pertaining to HVO. It was confirmed that the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue and other parties are active in collecting data and Neville noted his main interest was around what can be done to further improve air quality in the region.

Brian asked if HVO had any specific areas on site or Historic Homesteads that would be worthwhile for members to visit. Ben suggested that rehabilitation and new equipment may be of interest and the CCC agreed that a tour be organised in conjunction with the next Meeting scheduled for 5 November 2025.

Di queried if HVO have systems in place to check for riverbank erosion on their property. Brenton confirmed that HVO engage consultants to review certain points in relation to the general establishment of the river bank, stability, species and the like. Di identified an area that can be seen from her property where some parts of the banks are gone and there are trees falling over, noting this had been due to the recent wet weather conditions. Di felt this was not only for HVO but also for other landowners to look for erosion on their river frontage areas. Ben felt Di had made a good point, to work to preserve banks on each side of the river, and worth looking into areas where erosion has been identified and control is permitted.

Di queried if HVO continue to conduct water tank cleaning for Jerrys Plains residents as she had been asked about this on a few occasions. Ben confirmed this program runs within landholder agreements and a mitigation zone. Residents can reach out to HVO direct to discuss this service.

There was a general discussion regarding the proposed alignment for the Hunter Transmission line and HVO identified this via mapping. In response to a query regarding the proposed realignment of Lemington Road, Jason advised that should HVO receive approval for the HVOCP the estimated timeframe to commence construction would be early 2027.

## 9. General Business; Nil

**10. Next Meeting Dates;** Col closed the meeting, thanking all for their attendance, and confirmed the next CCC meeting is scheduled for 5 November 2025, commencing at 9.30 a.m.

### Updates for 2025

HVO Continuation Project (HVOCP).

HVO to outline the North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall design when progressed.

### **HVO CONTACTS**

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

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

Facebook [HVO Facebook](#)

Meeting Minutes - [Documents Hunter Valley Operations \(hvo.com.au\)](#)

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