

HUNTER VALLEY OPERATIONS

Hunter Valley Operations (HVO)
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting
Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 1.30 p.m.

Attendance

Chairperson

Dr. Colin Gellatly Independent Chair HVO CCC via WebEx

Community Representatives

Brian Atfield Community Representative

Jeannie Hayes Community Representative via WebEx

Singleton Council

CR. Hollee Jenkins Singleton Council via WebEx

Company Representatives

Tony Morris General Manager

Andrew Speechly Manager Environment & Community

Merri Bartlett Environment & Community Officer

Peter Bowman Environment & Community Officer

Nathan Lane Approvals Manager - HVO Continuation Project

Apologies

Michael Wellard Community Representative

David Love Community Representative

Todd Mills Community Representative

Janelle Wenham Community Representative

Di Gee Community Representative

Dr. Neville Hodgkinson Community Representative

Minutes Sarah Purser WebEx

- Welcome;** Col opened the meeting and welcomed members in attendance both on site and via WebEx. 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.

4. Out of Session Correspondence

Merri via email;

3/03/2022 Hunter Valley Operations Continuation Project - February 2022 Update
7/03/2022 Dates for Community Information Sessions
17/03/2022 Hunter Valley Operations - Community Grants - Round One 2022
23/03/2022 Draft CCC Meeting Minutes - 16 February 2022
25/03/2022 Hunter Valley Operations Maison Dieu Community Information Session rescheduled to 30 April 2022

Merri via email;

11/04/2022 Hunter Valley Operations - 2021 Annual Review
4/04/2022 Hunter Valley Operations Continuation Project - March 2022 Update
26/04/2022 Reminder about Hunter Valley Operations Maison Dieu Community Information Session on Saturday 30 April 2022
10/05/2022 Details for CCC Meeting on 18 May 2022 with Agenda and Business Papers

5. **Confirmation of the previous Meeting's Minutes;** Col called for formal approval of the Minutes for the Meeting held 16 February 2022 and the CCC confirmed their acceptance. The CCC Meeting Minutes are available on HVO's public website - InSite, and can be accessed on-line via <https://insite.hvo.com.au>

6. **Matters arising from the previous meeting held 16 February 2022 - Action Items**

Action Arising: With respect to Warkworth air quality exceedances Neville to provide Col with a letter addressing his main points on behalf of the community representatives on the CCC.

Col confirmed that he had received draft correspondence from Neville and that it was upon himself to provide feedback. Andrew advised that HVO had since completed their investigation and review of these exceedances resulting in some relevant information that can be provided to the CCC. Col felt that this would be beneficial to address concerns in regards to the location of HVO's air quality monitor's. In response to a query Andrew confirmed that this relates to the Warkworth Village area.

ACTION 1: HVO to provide the CCC with results of their investigations and review of the two annual average exceedances against annual criteria at Warkworth monitoring in 2022. Col to review Neville's correspondence and provide feedback.

7. **Company Reports | Update on Hunter Valley Operations; Presented by Tony Morris**

Mining Operations

Tony noted that there had been extensive rainfall with around 450mm this year following 900mm last year leading to full capacity of site dams. Within the pits there was in the order of 1 gigalitre of water stored in various locations. Tony noted that delivery of targets for West, Cheshunt and Riverview Pits had all been impacted by wet weather and absenteeism related to Covid-19. Tony hoped HVO were on the back end of these issues going forward and for parts of Cheshunt Pit to recommence in May after numerous rain delays.

Tony advised that the Pathway Program run by Programmed has seen 24 personnel from indigenous backgrounds commencing work with HVO, which has been a positive experience for these trainees and for Glencore.



Environment; Presented by Andrew Speechly

Complaints

There had been three complaints YTD in 2022; two relating to blast overpressure in Jerrys Plains and Maison Dieu that were compliant and an anonymous alleged reckless driving complaint in Warkworth. Andrew provided an overview of HVO's investigation into the driving complaint and detailed the communication that was delivered to the workforce in relation to safe driving expectations both on and off site.

Rehabilitation

Planned in 2022

-  65 hectares of new rehabilitation - 5 hectares completed YTD
-  72 hectares second stage rehabilitation - 70% completed YTD

Andrew explained that the wet weather impacts on production has had an equivalent effect in delaying rehabilitation progress. HVO have recently approved the bulkshaping of a natural landform design area in Cheshunt Pit to be progressed to topsoiling. There is quite a bit of work being conducted on second stage rehabilitation with 40 to 50 hectares seeded to final.

The breakdown for new rehabilitation in 2022 is 44 hectares of woodland and 21 hectares of pasture. Andrew explained that in terms of breakdown of the 65 hectares; 2/3rds is native woodland and the balance is pasture. HVO's site target for pasture versus native is; pasture 60 to 70% and native 30 to 40%. Brian queried if the seeding was via aerial methods and Andrew responded this was conducted via direct drill.

HVO Aerial Seeding

Weather permitting, Seed & Starter 15 fertiliser will be applied by crop duster plane to dumps and exposed areas in West Pit, Carrington, Cheshunt and Riverview Pits in May. Andrew advised that aerial seeding is conducted annually and identified on a map the Northern (West Pit and Carrington) and Southern seeding areas. Andrew explained these areas are not ready for rehabilitation due to not being at final landform height.

Andrew acknowledged there had been interest in the seed mix that HVO utilise, he explained that for the past 5 to 6 years this has been 35 kilograms made up of tetila annual ryegrass, oats coolabah, unhulled couch, aurora lucerne, wooly pod and forage brassica. Starter 15 fertiliser is added bringing the total mix to 150 kilograms per hectare. Andrew confirmed there is no Rhodes grass in the mix which Jeannie was pleased to hear. Andrew noted there is a high level of coordination required for aerial seeding and providing weather conditions are favourable, HVO will cover 319 hectares in May.

Feral Pest Management 2022 - Presented by Peter Bowman

Peter advised that there had been a slow start to the year with regard to Kangaroo pest control activities however this should progress with the on-boarding of two new commercial harvesters bringing the number up to three.

Peter provided an overview of the program of activities for 2022 in relation to synchronised baiting trapping programs coordinated with other sites and the Local Land Services (LLS). The Wild Dog Control Program was completed February with next programs to be conducted in Autumn (May) and Spring (October).

In relation to dog trapping, Peter noted that results from a third party licensee, commercial trappers and the LLS, indicate that if a dog is taken out of a territory, another dog will have replaced it within 28 days, therefore programs need to be maintained on an ongoing basis.

Hunter Land Management will operate the Autumn & Spring 'Hoggone' pig baiting program on behalf of HVO and the dates will coincide with Wild Dog Control programs. Peter noted one licensee has trialled Hoggone and his success in controlling 47 pigs will be reflected in the numbers presented at the next CCC. Peter hopes HVO will get similar results when they roll out their program in May.

Peter acknowledged the success of the pest control programs is largely attributable to the co-ordination with various mine sites and corporate entities in the valley, which the LLS has taken the lead on and as a result, is very successful and well supported with the level and timing of activity high.

Peter said it was worth noting that the LLS, Mount Pleasant Mine and MAC Energy had sponsored an aerial wild pig shoot in Merriwa in 2019 which had a positive long term effect. A similar program is planned for 2022 so this will likely see some improvements in numbers over the next 12 months.

8. Heritage - Presented by Peter Bowman

Proposed activities:

+ Archerfield Stables

- ✓ Arboreal maintenance completed
- ✓ Structural works underway with anticipated completion in May 2022

In 2023 the next project will be to level the internal structure of the Stables, Peter noted this building is of importance to HVO as it pre-dates the Homestead. Agricultural heritage items have been kept in situ during the structural works and in two years HVO hope to have this building to where it needs to be and then move on to the Distillery.

+ Dog Leg Fence

Peter advised that HVO will maintain an asset protection zone around this fence to ensure if there is a fire it can be defended. Peter noted the fence is almost two centuries old so it is of significance that parts of the fence are maintained. Brian queried if there had been discussions around moving the dog leg fence to Jerry's Plains which Peter confirmed was correct, he felt that would be a great result to have this on display due to its significance.

+ Yard maintenance works and Termite Interception System inspections at LEP listed properties ongoing.

Reporting, Exceedances and Inspections - Presented by Andrew Speechly

+ *Annual Environmental Review report* was submitted to DPE and Resource Regulator on 31 March 2022, and is currently under their review.

+ *North Void TSF Annual Analysis report* submitted to EPA 30 March 2022. Andrew noted that management activities have arrested any seepage and it continues to recover. HVO remain committed to conduct works around the design and installation of a barrier wall for future risk management.

Incidents - Presented by Andrew Speechly

Andrew advised there had been two water incidents and provided an extensive overview of overflow events at Dam 2N, 35S and 15N on 8 March and Dam 32N (Coffeys) on 28 March 2022. Andrew provided detail of rainfall measurements recorded at site weather stations during this period, HVO's reporting protocol, along with investigations and actions undertaken by the company. Andrew confirmed that it was deemed that neither of these incidents would have caused environmental harm.

Andrew added that HVO will soon commence a project that will connect the water management systems of the two train loadouts, enabling better management of Dam 32N. This work will occur as part of a Pollution Reduction Programme. Works are due to commence in quarter 3 2022.

HVO Continuation Project - Update; Presented by Nathan Lane

EIS study work is ongoing - lodgement of development applications Q2 –Q3 2022 following consultation;

Nathan explained the EIS study work is an iterative process with a focus on minimising impacts with results currently forecast to be finalised in May and June with consultation to follow.

EPBC HVO North and South Referral submitted to Federal Government;

This relates to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* whereby for HVO North; there has been potential impacts considered for flora, fauna and water and HVO South only flora and fauna. This EPBC referral is currently under validation and the Federal Department of Agriculture Water and Energy who will review the project and if granted, determine the assessment requirements for the project. Nathan explained these assessment requirements are methodology based, similar to Secretaries Environmental Assessment Requirements.

Site Verification Certificate (SVC) submitted for Hunter Valley Loadpoint Extension;

No Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) has been identified.

Community Consultation Sessions

Two community consultation sessions had been held; one at Jerry's Plains on 23 March and the second at Maison Dieu on 30 April 2022. Topics of interests included the Lemington Road realignment (travel time, flood immunity, traffic noise), air quality, noise, and the visual aspect of the final landform at HVO South.

Jeannie queried if there had been a number of options investigated for the Lemington Road realignment or was there just the one option and she was interested if any other alternatives had been investigated and considered. Nathan confirmed that as part of the project design, several options had been looked at in the final design considered all constraints i.e. geographical, crown land, power lines, offset land etc. There is now the one option proposed in the EIS however Nathan noted there will be detail on the alternatives that were considered and how HVO came to reaching this one as the best alignment option in the EIS.

Jeannie felt that moving Lemington Road further to the east would not benefit the community of Jerrys Plains and queried the additional travel time. Nathan confirmed that to quantify the distance from node to node, a comparison to current travel distance will be documented in the EIS. Nathan noted the improvement in flood immunity in relation to Moses Crossing's potential to flood would be a benefit of the new alignment.

Jeannie had hoped that construction cost would not be a mitigating factor when alternatives were being sought for the Lemington road realignment and queried if it hadn't been considered to build a bridge or realigning the road closer to the Village of Jerry's Plains. Nathan confirmed that HVO did look at different options, the constraints associated with those, and that the rationale is documented.

Project design evolution and avoidance; Nathan noted there had been significant changes to the project design with a focus on the least environmental impacts and strong community approach.

Aboriginal heritage; CM-CD1 is currently protected from disturbance by Condition 40 of the HVO North DA and the Mine plan avoids CM-CD1. Two out of four test pits dated to the early Holocene/terminal Pleistocene period. The scoping report considered mining through this area therefore the subsequent decision to avoid it resulted in changes to HVO's air quality, noise and geotechnical studies and a delay in EIS finalisation.

Planned relinquishment of remaining South Lemington Pit 1, South Lemington Pit 2 and Riverview. HVO South Short Rail loop; Resulting in Avoidance of Warkworth Sands Woodlands (WSW).

No future plans to use the existing approved Temporary Crossing of the Hunter River-HVO South -Singleton Council Approval 2001; To enable large equipment movement (such as the Dragline) between operations north and south of the Hunter River. This will not be carried forward with the new project.

Proposed Lemington Road Alignment

Nathan presented drone footage travelling the centre line of the proposed Lemington Road re-alignment from north to south. To explain the design and constraints, Nathan talked through the imagery step by step indicating landmarks, constraints such as power lines and areas of avoidance due to minimising impacts on ecological communities such as the Warkworth Sands Woodlands. Nathan noted that HVO will maintain a 100 km/hour road travel speed to assist in decreasing travel time impacts.

MTW/HVO Lemington Underground Water Storage Modification

HVO are currently reviewing draft conditions received from the Department of Planning and these are pending HVO's response.

COMMUNITY

HVO recently provided sponsorship to the Jerrys Plains Bicentennial weekend held on 30 April and 1 May 2022 and also assisted with maintenance tasks at the Jerrys Plains School of Arts Community Hall. Brian expressed his appreciation, along with the residents of Jerry's Plains, for HVO's support with the Bicentennial weekend.

HVO have received nine applications as part of Round One of the 2022 Community Grant programme which are currently being assessed. Round Two of this programme is scheduled to open in September with an application link to be provided closer to the time.

- 9. Community Representative Feedback;** Brian thanked HVO for their assistance with the Bicentenary and appreciated the help provided to the community. Jeannie agreed that support had been much appreciated and also around Mental Health First Aid. Hollee congratulated HVO for the Bicentennial support for Jerry's Plains and also for the heritage restoration activities.
- 10. General Business;** In response to a query from Col, Hollee advised there was a likelihood that a local Council election would be held towards the end of July. Col advised it was good to have Hollee on board as Singleton Council representative for this CCC. Col thanked all for their attendance at the meeting.

11. Next CCC Meeting: Wednesday 17 August 2022

Actions Arising

ACTION 1: HVO to provide the CCC with results of their investigations and review of the two annual average exceedances against annual criteria at Warkworth monitoring in 2022. Col to review Neville's correspondence and provide feedback.

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 when the geotechnical studies have progressed, these studies are programmed to commence in 2023.

HVO Complaints and Blasting Hotline is 1800 888 733 (free call) - Attended 24/7

To make an environmental complaint | Find out road closure times for blasting

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

Websites - HVO -information about the operation: <https://hvo.com.au>