

HUNTER VALLEY OPERATIONS

Hunter Valley Operations (HVO)
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting
Wednesday 16 February 2022 at 1.30pm (held via WebEx)

Attendance

Chairperson

Dr. Colin Gellatly Independent Chair HVO CCC

Community Representatives

Brian Atfield Community Representative

Jeannie Hayes Community Representative

Di Gee Community Representative

Dr. Neville Hodgkinson Community Representative

Singleton Council

CR. Hollee Jenkins Singleton Council

Company Representatives

Michael Redman Operations Manager

Andrew Speechly Manager Environment & Community

Merri Bartlett Environment & Community Officer

Nathan Lane Approvals Manager - HVO Continuation Project

Specialist Presentation

Morgan Wilcox Associate Archaeologist - E.M.M. Consulting

Apologies

Tony Morris General Manager

Michael Wellard Community Representative

David Love Community Representative

Todd Mills Community Representative

Janelle Wenham Community Representative

Minutes

Sarah Purser

- Welcome;** Col opened the meeting and welcomed members in attendance via WebEx Teleconference due to Covid-19 precautions. Hollee was congratulated on her re-elected role as Councillor for Singleton Council. **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 note taking. Hollee disclosed that her son is currently employed by Glencore.
- Out of Session Correspondence**

Merri via email;

30/11/21 Detail on Hunter Valley Operations South Coal Project Modification 6 - Determination

2/12/21 Draft Minutes from CCC Meeting held on 17 November 2021

20/12/21 Lemington Underground Water Storage - Water Quality Assessment

3/2/22 Agenda and Business Papers for today's Meeting

Nathan via email;

2/12, 10/1 & 2/2 Monthly EIS Updates for the HVO Continuation Project

5. **Confirmation of the previous Meeting's Minutes;** Col called for formal approval of the Minutes for the Meeting held 17 November 2021 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 17 November 2021 - Action Items**

Action Brought Forward; HVO to provide an update on Archaeological Deposit CM-CD1 when assessments are finalised.

✓ Presentation at today's meeting by Morgan Wilcox - Associate Archaeologist - E.M.M. Consulting

Action Arising: HVO to provide a monthly update on the HVO Continuation Project commencing December 2021 and to schedule an extraordinary CCC prior to the public submission period for the EIS Assessment should that not fall in line with the next CCC Meeting scheduled for 16 February 2021.

✓ Completed.

Action Arising: In response to a query from Neville, HVO to provide the weblink to access the HVO South Minor Modification - ANE Manufacture modification on the DPIE portal.

✓ Completed.

Action Arising: HVO to provide the section in the Statement of Environmental Effects that details water quality in Lemington Underground Water Storage Modification in relation to water being extracted versus being stored.

✓ Completed.

7. **Company Reports | Update on Hunter Valley Operations; Presented by Michael Redman**

Safety Snapshot

Injury Rates as at end January 2022

Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) – 0.00 (Target 3.00)

Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) – 0.00 (Target 1.00)

Michael advised safety continues to be very pleasing with no recordable injuries during the reporting period, he noted this to be an outstanding effort from all employees and contractors.

Jeannie acknowledged the zero injury record to be extremely outstanding and pleasing to see, she queried why this improvement may be the case. Michael responded that approximately 12 months ago HVO developed an Assurance Program on site which targeted activities based from incident trends both in the industry and on site, and is to verify that controls in the Safety Management System are effective and being followed. Michael advised this has most likely accounted for the pleasing results, alongside HVO's solid engagement with their workforce.

Jeannie asked if the reporting is still as good in terms of the workforce having the empowerment to report safety hazards and Michael confirmed that is certainly the case, he noted there is a strong reporting culture at HVO. As an example, Michael stated that hazard reporting remains very healthy and Jeannie was pleased hazard recording continues to be addressed.

Mining Operations

Michael advised that since the CCC meeting in November 2021 it had been a challenging period due to wet weather progressing through the back end of quarter four which had resulted in equipment delays and the bridge at Moses Crossing and Lemington Road having been closed on three occasions in 2021.

Covid-19 created ongoing challenges in December 2021 and in early January 2022 HVO implemented a broader Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) program whereby everyone had the opportunity to report for a RAT test through a third party provider. Whilst Covid-19 has provided challenges, HVO are seeing cases decrease and that situation easing.

- ✚ **West Pit;** Operations continue with some extended hours on Dragline 104 to recover some shortfall from 2021. In April 2022 HVO will introduce their second 9800 Excavator and there will be a re-balance of employees and equipment from Cheshunt Pit, located in the southern part of the operations, into West Pit.
- ✚ **Cheshunt Pit;** This pit has also been impacted by rainfall, Michael identified on mapping where water had been an issue in Pit 1 and Pit 2, noting that HVO had required additional infrastructure for the process of moving water around site.
- ✚ **Riverview Pit;** Michael noted that the dragline continues to progress towards the Golden Highway and the dragline strip will be completed by mid-2023. HVO continue to manage impacts, with community remaining at the forefront regarding how HVO operate, which may change how the strips are excavated with the dragline throughout 2022.
- ✚ **New Equipment;** Michael provided an overview of new equipment coming to site as part of a capital replacement program at HVO. In response to a query from Neville, Michael confirmed that all new equipment will be put to work with sound suppression on board and therefore are compliant with HVO's requirements. Michael noted that this was part of the equipment specification in the tender scope.

Environment; Presented by Andrew Speechly

Complaints 2021; HVO had 25 complaints in 2021. Since the November CCC Meeting there had been one additional dust complaint on 10 December 2021 at Maison Dieu.

Complaints YTD 2022; Andrew advised HVO had received two complaints, both of which related to blasting overpressure / noise; one was from Jerry's Plains on 5 January 2022 with the other from Maison Dieu on 11 February 2022.

Rehabilitation Plan; Andrew identified on mapping the planned rehabilitation progression for 2022

Completed in 2021

- ✓ Rehabilitation = 72.5 hectares
- ✓ Growth Media Development = 77.5 hectares

Planned in 2022

- ✓ Rehabilitation = 65 hectares
- ✓ Growth Media Development (GMD) = 72 hectares

Andrew advised that in 2021 HVO had a rehabilitation target of 78 hectares however the persistent wet weather conditions that Michael discussed earlier had impacted on the delivery of overburden material to areas HVO needed to rehabilitate and therefore also influenced HVO's ability to shape those areas in the last quarter of 2021.

Despite the wet weather impacts HVO made up significant ground achieving 72.5 hectares, a large portion of this was the rehabilitation of an old CHPP stockpile area at South Lemington. HVO also seeded 77.5 hectares of GMD in 2021, which is defined in HVO's Mine Operation Plan (MOP). GMD identifies areas that have received all the topsoil and a cover crop but have not had the final seed mix applied.

Hollee queried HVO's planned rehabilitation for 2022 being less than the completed rehabilitation in 2021 and asked why there is a lesser amount of rehabilitation planned from the year before as she thought this was required to increase annually. Andrew explained rehabilitation is dependent on available areas i.e. what dump areas will be ready at final height and location to shape. Each year HVO identifies available dump release areas and a cut-off date which allows enough time to complete shaping, topsoiling and seeding. Dumps are progressively released throughout the year with a target dump release cut-off in September at which point a total of 65 hectares is scheduled to be available.

Pest Management 2022 - Presented by Andrew Speechly

Andrew provided an overview of the program of activities for 2022 in relation to synchronised baiting trapping programs coordinated with other sites and Local Land Services (LLS). Wild Dog 1080 control programs will be conducted in Summer, Autumn and Spring. "Hoggone" pig baiting programs will run in Autumn and Spring, along with open range shooting linked to kangaroo commercial harvesting. The 2021 pest management numbers were similar to 2020 except for kangaroos.

8. Heritage - Presented by Andrew Speechly

Proposed activities:

- ✚ Archerfield Stables - arboreal maintenance pending approval from Singleton Council (Q1 2022)
- ✚ Archerfield Stables structural works (Q1 2022)
- ✚ Planning for temporary onsite storage of Archerfield agricultural heritage items while repair/preservation works are conducted at the Archerfield Stables.
- ✚ Yard maintenance works and Termite Interception System inspections at LEP listed properties is ongoing.

Reporting, Exceedances and Inspections - Presented by Andrew Speechly

Andrew advised there had been no inspections to report and that HVO have provided notification to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) of three annual average exceedances against annual criteria. Andrew confirmed these exceedances will be investigated by an external consultant and reported in HVO's Annual Review.

- 1) Depositional Dust Gauge - Warkworth gauge recorded 9.3 g/m²/month which exceeded the consent criteria of 4 g/m²/month.
- 2) TSP - Warkworth monitor recorded 94.6ug/m³ which exceeded the consent criteria of 90ug/m³.
- 3) PM_{2.5} -Maison Dieu High Volume Air Sampler (HVAS) recorded 9.6 ug/m³ which exceeded the consent criteria of 8ug/m³

Andrew noted that the Maison Dieu HVAS had high readings compared to other gauges and was out of alignment with the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network (UHAQMN). HVO are reviewing the validity of those levels and investigating alternative monitoring to place in that location.

Andrew explained that HVO are using a HVAS with a PM_{2.5} head installed on it and Hollee queried how old the HVAS system is and what would be the life span expectancy. Andrew responded that HVO commenced monitoring PM_{2.5} approximately 2 1/2 years ago. Andrew confirmed the HVAS is not very old and have a life span around the 10 year mark. He added that HVO are purchasing a number of new HVAS units to replace older units.

Andrew advised the following reports are now available on HVO's public website Insite;-

- ✚ Annual EPBC Compliance report.
- ✚ Annual biodiversity report in relation to Mitchell Hill Property maintenance and restoration required under an enforceable undertaking with the Commonwealth.

HVO Continuation Project - Update; Presented by Nathan Lane

- + **EIS study work ongoing** - lodgement of development applications in Q2 2022 following consultation.
- + **EIS study work iterative process** - focus to minimise impacts.
- + **EIS study results currently forecast to be finalised March / April.** Nathan noted amenity studies i.e. air quality, noise and blasting were currently being conducted and scoping phase feedback suggested that those studies were likely to be of most interest to the community. HVO have two Community Information Session's planned for March but if the results of this EIS study are not published at that time, HVO will conduct further community engagement when completed.
- + **Consultation process** - Nathan explained priority is given to those in close proximity / level of impact first, and that he works with Andrew and Merri to ensure people closest to the operations are informed of any potential amenity impacts.
- + **The EPBC Referral is currently being developed with submission planned for March 2022.** Nathan explained that this covers matters of national environmental significance and HVO will refer the project to the Federal Government for assessment who will then outline what studies they require to be undertaken as part of the EIS.
- + **Further baseline monitoring-** Nathan provided an update on further baseline studies in noise and aquatic ecology.
- + **Monthly EIS Updates to the HVO CCC commenced following the November 2021 Meeting.** Nathan advised members that these updates will become more detailed as HVO finalises studies and that he will continue to keep the CCC up to date in between meetings and on a monthly basis. Nathan confirmed his contact details have been provided and should the CCC or a member of the community have a query regarding the Continuation Project to please not hesitate to make contact with him.

Archaeological Deposit CM-CD1 - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment

Presented by Morgan Wilcox - Associate Archaeologist - E.M.M. Consulting

Morgan advised that EMM had been engaged to conduct the archaeology study for the Continuation Project and that an element of those investigations was to look at CM-CD1 which is a deposit identified in the late 1990's. Morgan provided an extensive overview of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment.

Key elements of presentation:-

- + **CM-CD1 Previous Studies**
- + **CM-CD1 Project Investigation**
- + **CM-CD1 Investigation Summary**

Morgan advised results of investigations clearly demonstrated that CM-CD1 deposits are early Holocene or late Pleistocene. Morgan explained there are only a handful of these sites, so due to the rarity and being of high archaeological and cultural value, HVO will continue to avoid disturbance to CM-CD1.

Morgan called for any questions and Neville responded that he had found the presentation very interesting. Neville asked how it is known that there are no other significant deposits 50 to 100 metres, or even generally across site, from where they had been identified. Neville queried if any archaeological investigations had been conducted to the left and right hand sides of the CM-CD1 curtilage.

Morgan referred to mapping and identified the holes that related to the geomorphological investigation conducted by Dr Hughes. Morgan advised that Dr Hughes had conducted these series of holes as a process of refinement to identify where the deposit occurs. Morgan confirmed that the colluvial deposit is derived from up slope and there are very discreet deposits from the top of the ridge down to the water way. Morgan explained it is unlikely that the deposits occurred in situ, but more so cultural activities associated with the quarry site at the top of the ridge that have eroded downwards over time.

Morgan explained the CM-CD1 curtilage is quite a defined landform in that it can be identified from other land, and noted there will be an opportunity for further investigations. Morgan said it was pleasing and significant to find a Pleistocene site that can be protected and she was thanked by the CCC for her presentation.

HVO South Minor Modification - ANE Manufacture

- ✚ Modification of existing consent (PA 06_0261) to allow for the construction and operation of a modular Ammonium Nitrate Emulsion (ANE) manufacturing plant within the existing approved HVO South mine disturbance area.
- ✚ Manufacturing subject to update of the Environmental Protection Licence

Andrew confirmed the CCC had been advised that a Statement of Approval had been received from the DPE and since that time HVO have applied to vary the Environmental Protection Licence. This facility was also inspected by the Resources Regulator who recommended to Safe Work NSW that they issue a licence for the facility.

MTW/HVO Lemington Underground Water Storage Modification

- ✚ Response to government submissions provided to DPE. Further response in development for DPIE Water regarding water licensing. Neville queried the location of Lemington Number 2 mine and Andrew identified this on mapping.

Community

- ✚ ***Round One of HVO's Community Grants Programme (CGP) will open in April 2022;***

Hollee queried the funding amount that is available through the CGP and Andrew responded as a guideline HVO would be seeking project applications around the \$5,000 mark which are then assessed against criteria. Andrew explained that HVO also assess funding for larger projects, for example with Jerry's Plains Public School, in addition to the two annual CGP rounds.

- ✚ ***HVO is planning on holding an Apprentice Day at the Singleton Community Garden with the date to be determined;***

Andrew confirmed that HVO have teamed up with the Singleton Community Garden Committee and thanked Hollee for the referral. Hollee said that improvements to the gardens will be very much appreciated and provide benefit to people far and wide and thanked Andrew and Merri for their undertakings for HVO Apprentices to complete improvement works over the coming months.

- ✚ ***An Apprentice Day is also planned at the Jerrys Plains School of Arts Community Hall;***

An Apprentice Day is planned to provide assistance with a number of maintenance tasks.

Community Information Sessions are planned for:-

Wednesday	23 March 2022	4.00 to 6.00 p.m.	Jerrys Plains School of Arts
Saturday	26 March 2022	8.00 to 10.00 a.m.	880 Maison Dieu Road, Maison Dieu

HVO will advise near neighbours of these session details and also offer alternative engagement options in light of the current Covid-19 situation. Hollee suggested the more notice HVO can provide the better to enable community members to fit these sessions into their calendars so that they are well populated. Andrew responded he would take Hollee's feedback on board and explained that the timing for Community Information Sessions is based on when HVO expect to have a sufficient amount of information to share, particularly with regard to the EIS.

Nathan added that HVO do provide other means of engagement and if people are not able to make it to these sessions, HVO can offer an alternative time that suits. Nathan noted that due to Covid-19 there may be some vulnerable people that wish to limit their public exposure, in which case HVO are also happy to send out information to be discussed via a video or telephone conversation.

9. Community Representative Feedback

Dr Neville Hodkinson

Neville raised the dust exceedances reported by HVO at the Depositional Dust Gauge and TSP HVAS units at Warkworth in 2021. Neville noted that the issue has been brought up at previous CCC meetings and that there seems to be an anomaly in that pocket in Warkworth and he is concerned about the effect of dust on people living in this area. Neville noted that Warkworth is surrounded by three mines; Wambo, MTW and HVO and he would like the CCC to also seek feedback from Wambo Mine regarding this matter.

Neville believes peaks are occurring in Warkworth to get those readings and questioned where the dust is coming from. He noted that the source of the dust could be from a neighbour ploughing a field or from the three surrounding mines and believes something needs to be done to locate the source.

Neville is mindful that exposure to dust has been reduced enormously but believes there is a lot more to do and feels if there is a monitor reading large amounts of dust being produced, this should be made known to near residents. Neville queried if a camera could be installed in the case that the dust source may be visible.

Neville queried if there had been interest received from the DPE or EPA as a result of these exceedances and Andrew responded that HVO have only recently provided that information to DPE and that these exceedances will be investigated and reported in the 2021 Annual Review.

Andrew advised that HVO are considering if Warkworth is an appropriate location to monitor for depositional dust and explained that HVO's North Pit is a significant distance from the Dust Depositional Gauge, so any contribution from HVO would likely be minor. Likewise with the Warkworth TSP HVAS, prevalent wind directions and location of the monitor with respect to the mine operations, the contribution from HVO is likely to be low. HVO are reviewing their monitoring network to ensure monitors are located at nearest private residences.

Neville queried the exceedance at the Maison Dieu PM 2.5 HVAS and asked what time frames these measurements were based on. Andrew advised that one sample over 24 hours is taken every six days and each one of those samples are used to calculate the annual average.

Andrew noted the most effective monitoring in Warkworth for assessing ambient air quality is provided via the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network (UHAQMN) which is a real time continuous system. He explained that the UHAQMN TEOM provides real time data and HVO are collecting that information for operational response and compliance reporting. Nathan acknowledged the potential contribution by surrounding mines and advised that background levels do exist and also contribute as had been seen in the past via the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network where there had been elevated readings during the 2019 bushfire season.

Neville reiterated that issues around air quality at Warkworth have been raised previously and he feels this needs proper investigation at an appropriate level. Col noted that HVO had advised that the reported exceedances at Warkworth are to be investigated by an external air quality consultant.

Neville clarified his main point is that he believes there must be peaks in air quality at Warkworth that trigger exceedances and his concern is that people residing in that vicinity are potentially receiving that level of exposure and feels the three mines surrounding Warkworth need to be contacted and asked for their responses to this concern. It was agreed that Neville provide Col with a letter addressing his main points on behalf of the community representatives on the CCC as to how this will be achieved.

Action: 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.

10. General Business

Col called for any general business and Merri advised HVO had prepared a slide to show where Lemington Number 2 mine was located for Neville so she will send that to Neville. Col thanked all for their attendance at today's meeting.

11. Next CCC Meeting:

Wednesday 18 May 2022 – 1.30pm

Ongoing Actions

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

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, 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>