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**MINUTES OF THE ASHTON COAL PROJECT  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007  
1.00PM - ASHTON COAL PROJECT SITE OFFICE**

**ATTENDEES:**

Cr Fred Harvison	(FH)	Singleton Council (Chairman)
Brian Thomas	(BT)	Singleton Council
Thelma DeJong	(TD)	Community Representative
Deidre Olofsson	(DO)	Community Representative
John McInerney	(JM)	Community Representative
Paul Ashford	(PA)	Community Representative
Peter Barton	(PB)	Company Rep (General Manager)
Lisa Richards	(LR)	Company Rep (Environment and Community Relations Manager)
Adam Spargo	(AS)	Minute Taker (Environmental Coordinator)

**1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIRPERSON**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 1.08pm.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Greg Summerhayes.

**3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST BY COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES**

Nil declared.

**4. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes from the meeting held on 18 September 2007 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

**Moved:** *Thelma DeJong*

**Seconded:** *John McInerney*

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## 6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

JM raised a concern regarding information provided in the previous meeting about tank water quality in Camberwell Village. The statement in question read “*LR indicated that we (Ashton Coal) have completed water testing and that no unusual results were found in tanks in Camberwell.*” JM suggested that this statement implies that testing of all tanks in Camberwell Village was completed. Following this it was decided that further information regarding this statement would be supplied.

During August 2007 water quality testing was conducted on a number of tanks in Camberwell as well as tanks in Muswellbrook, Singleton, Branxton and Kurri. Testing was conducted to determine if there was any significant difference in the water quality of tanks in Camberwell and other areas of the Hunter Valley. A total of 4 houses were tested in Camberwell. The analysis conducted included a range of physical and chemical properties along with microbiological analysis involving total coliform, fecal coliform and e-coli counts. Review of the results showed that there was not a significant difference in water quality between the tanks tested in Camberwell and tanks tested in other areas of the Hunter Valley. The testing was undertaken as an internal check following comments that the tank water quality in Camberwell was a health concern due to impacts by the Ashton Coal Operations.

## 7. REPORTS AND OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

### 7.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT – KEY ISSUES

#### **Open Cut and Underground Operations**

PB provided an overview of the current operations at both the underground and open cut. The Longwall move was completed successfully and ahead of schedule in November and extraction of coal in Longwall 2 has commenced.

PB also indicated the expected impacts of the port restrictions on Ashton Coal.

#### **Subsidence Management Plan Approval Longwall Panels 5-8**

PB described that Ashton Coal will require SMP approval for Longwall Panels 5 – 8 by June 2009. With a 12 month approval process the SMP is expected to be ready in June 2008.

#### **South East Open Cut Plans**

PB advised that Ashton Coal were completing further drilling of the South East Open Cut land to determine the feasibility of extracting the coal. PB indicated that we would expect to have a feasibility study report finalised in the first or second quarter of 2008. This report will define if a development application for the area will be made.

### 7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL

LR provided a presentation on the latest environmental monitoring results to date.

FH enquired about the decrease in the rolling annual average PM10 levels over the past 3 months. PB indicated that this is due mainly to the dominance of south easterly winds and consistent rainfall.

BT asked if the enquiries are addressed in the same fashion as a complaint. LR described the process of receiving the complaint and indicated that they are treated in the same fashion. Furthermore the operators (OCE, Maintenance Supervisor) receiving the complaint are not aware if it is an enquiry or complaint. The term enquiry is purely for filing and reporting purposes within the environment department.

BT suggested that fields around Camberwell are green following the rain received in November however it would appear that the rehabilitation works on the slopes of the Ashton Coal pit seem brown. AS replied that a rye corn cover crop was seeded in autumn this year which is an infertile species. The plant is seeded to colonise the area quickly and provide protection against erosion and out compete weed species such as galinea. Now that the plant has begun to die off, the perennial species such as rye grass, Lucerne and Clover are coming through and will begin to establish. The dead rye corn causes the slopes to appear brown.

### **3 yearly Independent Compliance Audit**

LR asked if the CCC would like to discuss the findings of the 3 yearly compliance audit conducted in August 2007. The CCC members indicated that they would like additional time to review the audit and would like it added to the Agenda for the next meeting.

PA enquired about the water discharge non-compliances and what was being done to prevent these in future. PB indicated that the dams are designed to handle a 1 in 100 year ARI storm event. The discharge occurred outside of this limit. LR indicated that the discharge was reported to the DECC and DPI and both agencies indicated that they would not be taking further action due to the size of the storm event the discharge was associated with. PB also indicated that when dam levels approach discharge water is pumped into the Open Cut pit and can also be pumped to the Mac Gen tailings dam.

## **7.3 SECTION 94 – LIST OF PRIORITISED WORKS**

LR indicated that a meeting with Singleton Shire Council will be organised in the new-year where the new plan for Signage of Camberwell Village will be discussed.

## **7.4 ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

As above for Section 94.

## **8. GENERAL BUSINESS**

DO asked what the SEOC pit will look like and where will it be situated. LR described the area of the exploration License and where drills are situated. Following the meeting PB showed the CCC members the area on an aerial plan.

PA asked what will be done with some of the empty houses in Camberwell. PB indicated that some of these house will have people moved in whilst others will be cleaned up by Ashton Coal.

**9. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 11 March 2008 at 1.00pm.

**10. SITE INSPECTION OF THE OPERATIONS**

No site inspection was undertaken.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 3.40PM**

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**ACTION ITEMS**

ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY
Contact Gary Woodman regarding meeting with Singleton Shire Council to discuss section 94 works.	LR
Organise a Mine Closure Planning presentation for Singleton Shire Council at the council meeting held on the 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2008 at 5:30pm.	LR
Address the maintenance of unused houses in Camberwell.	LR
Discuss compliance audit report at next CCC meeting.	CCC