

ABEL UNDERGROUND COAL MINE

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Meeting #35

Monday 29th August 2016
Abel Underground Mine Administration Building
DRAFT

1. OPENING & WELCOME

Mrs Margaret MacDonald-Hill declared the meeting open at 5:05 pm.

2. PRESENT

Mrs Margaret MacDonald-Hill (Chairman), Mr Alan Brown, Mr Allan Jennings, Mr Terry Lewin, Mr Brad Ure, Mr Ian Turnbull, Mr Phillip Brown, Mr Tony Sutherland and Mr Ryan Tubridy (minutes).

2.1 APOLOGIES

Mr Greg Lamb, Mr Aaron McGuigan.

3. PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No change since last meeting.

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Previous Minutes 30th of May 2016 confirmed by Mr A Brown and seconded by Mr Jennings.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

5.1 Mine Subsidence Districts (MSD)

Mrs MacDonald-Hill advised that she was surprised that the area had not been included in a MSD, especially following the discussion held at previous Board meetings and the fact this had been raised by the former Chair and the process has been going on for years. Mrs MacDonald-Hill tabled a flow chart detailing the process of identifying if an area would be included as an MSB District.

General discussion took place regarding what the declaration of an MSD means.

Mr Lewin asked what the declaration meant to the Mine regarding contributions that the mine has to pay.

Mr Sutherland replied that the royalty that mines pay is calculated in different ways and has nothing to do with the declaration of Mine Subsidence districts.

Mr Jennings added that from discussions with the Board he heard that the MSB weigh up costs of extra footings in an area vs. future repairs. Also that possibly the MSB are waiting for Abel's future to become clearer before declaring a MSD.

Mr Lewin stated that he was aware that property was still covered for damage even without the MSD but asked on what legal basis? Mrs MacDonald-Hill replied that it was under the Mines Subsidence Act.

Mr A Brown asked if damage was still covered then what was the purpose of an MSD?

Mr Sutherland replied that the mine had been asking for the declaration since 2005 for the main reason of community awareness. He mentioned that if a person from out of town was looking at purchasing in Black Hill and the area was in a MSD, then they would be aware of mine workings before proceeding.

Mr A Brown stated that he thought the purpose was also for awareness and to ensure future developments are built to deal with possible future subsidence, instead of band aid repairs to impacts of mining.

Revision History					
Edition	Revision	Comment	Author	Date	Authorised by:
1	0	Draft Minutes	R Tubridy	09/09/16	P. Brown
		Approved Minutes			

Mr Jennings asked if the area was in a MSD and a new construction was to an approved standard would the mine be able to take coal closer to the house? Mr P Brown noted that it was not the case and the subsidence control zones were established without taking into account types of construction.

Mrs MacDonald-Hill advised again that the Mines Subsidence Act was under review and will be before Parliament in the coming weeks. She also commented that she believed the declaration was in the best interest of the community.

Mr Turnbull advised that a council representative had advice from MSB that the Black Hill area represented a minimal degree of subsidence and did not fulfil some of the requirements that constitutes the area being in a MSD. Mr Turnbull commented that in Cessnock Council's draft submission to the proposal was that future development in Black Hill area would be considered on its merits with any amendments made to be considered in consultation with the MSB. He also noted the declaration would benefit the Council Planning officers with advice on areas and that whilst Council does have knowledge of mining in areas it does not know 100 percent of areas that have been mined. He also commented that the MSB had also said that dealings with Cessnock Council had been positive.

5.2 Modification to be lodged in August

Mr P Brown advised that lodgement of the modification has been deferred pending results of the current drilling program and environmental studies. He advised that there was no date when it will be lodged but would keep the Committee/community updated.

Mr A Brown asked if the modification was still to include longwall mining.

Mr P Brown commented that the company is looking at mining options in the Lower Donaldson seam that does include longwall mining which was already approved.

5.3 Pre mining inspections

Mrs MacDonald-Hill checked with the MSB and the Department of Planning and Environment in regard to the timing of pre-mining inspections and commented that generally prior to second workings was deemed to be pre mining although each site can be different. She advised that if the owner had concern then the MSB would generally come out earlier to inspect.

Mr Jennings commented that he would like some community awareness that first workings were going to take place under certain properties and give the owners the choice to have pre mining photos or surveys conducted.

Mr P Brown commented that the company have noted the discussions raised from last meeting and going forward as part of the next modification the Company would notify owners when first and second workings would be carried out.

5.4 Abel to review drive way issue/ Francis property

Mr P Brown advised that a claim had been lodged with the MSB regarding the roadway/access track impacts.

Mr Jennings mentioned that he had spoken to Mr Richard Pickles from the MSB and was going to inspect the road in the following week

5.5 Allan Jennings to follow up sign off of PSMP

Mr Jennings advised that he had received the signed PSMP.

5.6 Pavement at intersection of JRD/Blackhill Road

Mr P Brown advised that the intersection has been repaired.

5.7 Website updates

Mr P Brown advised that issues were repaired and that the website will be updated next year.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence was noted on the Agenda. There were no questions.

7. COMPANY REPORTS AND OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES**7.1 Abel Mine Update**

Presented by Mr P Brown. Refer to Presentation.

7.2 Environmental Update

Presentation by Mr P Brown. Refer to Presentation.

Mr P Brown handed out documents showing where wild dog baiting would be undertaken. Mr P Brown also noted that after consultation with the Harding property neighbours, the property was not going to be included in the baiting.

Mr Ure commented that everyone in the area was participating in baiting and would like the Harding property to also be involved, to which Mr P Brown noted he would consult again with the neighbours.

7.3 Blackhill Road Undermining Update

Presented by Mr P Brown. Refer to Presentation

Mr P Brown stated that the current status is that MSB is calling for tenders before finalising design and getting Cessnock Council approval.

8. COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

No further questions raised.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

Mr Jennings noted that when reading the Abel newsletter in the Blackhill Rd update he had issue with the word "cessation" of mining instead of "suspension of mining".

Mr Sutherland replied that the statement referred to cessation of mining beneath Blackhill Road area.

Mr Jennings asked if the mine needed to be involved anymore with issues being dealt with between owners and the MSB. Mr P Brown replied that if there was no further issues the mine did not need to be involved.

Mr Jennings also mentioned that a neighbour was having problems communicating with MSB regarding dam repairs. Mr P Brown advised that the Mine would contact the MSB and the neighbour on these issues.

10. NEXT MEETING

5th December 2016

The meeting was declared closed at 5:50 pm by the Chairman.