



WATERMARK COAL MINE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Meeting No 2

Date: Wednesday 4 July 2018
Time: 10.00am
Location: Shenhua Conference Room, Gunnedah

Attendance: Independent Chairperson
Garry West

Council Representative
Councillor Murray O'Keefe (Gunnedah Shire Council)

Community Members
Patricia Duddy
Ron Fuller
Malcolm Heath
Mark Kesby (Environment Representative)
Greg Griffiths (Indigenous Representative)

Shenhua Watermark Representatives
Debbie Watson (Community Liaison Officer)
Gerry McDonald (Human Resources Manager)
John Trotter (Environment Manager)
Zhao Liang
Kevin Gong

Meeting Opened: 10.05am

1. Opening of Meeting by the Chairperson

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and advised the Committee that the last scheduled meeting to be held on 13 June 2018 was postponed due to the unavailability of Shenhua staff.

2. Apologies

Councillor Andrew Hope (Liverpool Plains Shire Council)

3. Overview of CCC Guidelines

The Chair gave an overview of the CCC stating that he was Independent and that he is required to prepare an annual report to the Department on this CCC. The Committee was not a decision-making body but a forum for discussion between the Company, community, stakeholders and Council.

The Chair further declared that whilst he is appointed by the Department of Planning & Environment he is paid a fee by the proponent and reimbursed travel costs.



4. **Declarations of Pecuniary or Other Interests**

The Chair advised that a Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests were not a requirement previously but under the new Guidelines there is a requirement for each Committee member to complete both a Declaration and a Code of Conduct. He asked all Committee members to complete these and forward to him.

5. **Business Arising from Previous Minutes– 28 March 2018**

- The location for the venue for holding CCC meetings was discussed with it noted that a more neutral venue might be more suitable. Members felt that the meetings were more about the opportunity to raise issues without feeling inhibited which has not been a problem to date.

The Chair advised that it is normal practice to hold meetings on the proponent's site. J Trotter stated that when the Company moves into operation it will be more opportune to meet at the Company's site office so mine site inspections can be conducted simultaneously with CCC meetings.

The Chair noted the members' comments and advised that the meetings will continue to be held at the Company's office but if it becomes apparent that members are feeling inhibited the change in venue location can be raised again.

- Minutes of the previous meeting have been uploaded onto the Company website.

Minutes Accepted

6. **Correspondence**

Nil.

7. **Shenhua Watermark Reports**

G McDonald provided an update on the Project to the Committee:

- The Company is pleased to welcome a new Environment Manager, John Trotter. He is well qualified and experienced in the environmental management field having extensive experience with mining operations in the Hunter Valley and as a NSW Government Environment Inspector.
- Shenhua is still waiting for the NSW Resource Minister to release the Company's Exploration Licence Renewal.
- The Company is still waiting on the Federal Environment Minister's decision on the 2015 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act (ATSHIP Act), Section 10 application. The second Claim made in 2017 is also still awaiting a determination.
- The Environment Management Plans are continuing to be developed.
- There is planning underway for a program of works for further Geo-technical ground investigation for the soil testing required to complete the detailed design of foundations for mine construction as well as some in-fill drilling in the Eastern Pit area.



- Some on-site hard rock salt water bore drilling within the mine site will also be required to finalise water requirements for the coal processing plant.
- The drilling program is wholly on Company land and in full accordance with NSW Government requirements and licensing.

R Fuller asked if there had been previous drilling on-site and G McDonald replied that in 2010 a series of drilling programs were commenced to analyse the location of the coal resource.

There have been some enquiries from the community on the commencement date for the Project and G McDonald advised that the Company was still waiting for the EL Renewal and the decision on the Indigenous claim so a definitive timeline cannot be provided at this point.

8. CCC Meeting Frequency

The Chairperson asked members for suggestions on the frequency of the CCC meetings as this was an opportunity for discussion on how often the Committee convenes. As the Project is not currently operating, if we maintain quarterly meetings, there may be no new information to provide to the Committee. The Chairperson noted that he is conscious of the time members are required to volunteer to attend meetings.

The majority of members felt that unless there was a change in approvals for the Project there was no need to meet quarterly.

It was agreed that the next meeting be held on 6 February 2019 unless there is a change in circumstances for the Company or a Committee member has a community issue to raise whereby the Chair will call a meeting with adequate notice to members.

It was further agreed that a quarterly Newsletter be provided to the Committee from the Company updating on any issues or progress of the Project. Newsletter to be forwarded by the Chair for circulation to members.

9. Other Agenda Items

ARC Linkage Koala Project

Report provided by G McDonald – Attachment 1

The Committee asked if the number of Koalas had been determined. G McDonald responded that the preliminary research indicated a decrease in numbers which can be attributed to climate, disease and weather conditions. It is a view that the estimation models are not accurate so an accurate figure will not be available until the end of the study. It was advised that Eastern Fall research on Koala numbers had used song meters to locate Koalas.

It was noted that there a number of Koala research groups that have received funding and it was hoped that the groups would co-ordinate together to achieve the best outcome. G McDonald stated that it was important that groups worked together as any variables in the area may impact on the ARC results and they should be advised accordingly if any variables have been added to the site.

Committee members asked about attending the site with the ARC group and it was advised that they would have to contact the ARC Project Leader.

G McDonald advised that the ARC Linkage Project will not provide recommendations to Shenhua but the information provided in the research will be used to improve the Koala Management Plan.

Offsets Program

Report provided by K Gong and L Zhao – Attachment 2

The Committee asked if there was a budget for ongoing work on the Offset properties, if they are occupied and do the neighbours share any of the costs? L Zhao responded that there is an annual budget which is regularly reviewed. All properties are currently leased and occupied, and neighbours do share the cost of boundary fence repairs.

It was noted that the properties were located on very productive black soil agricultural land and needs to be managed appropriately. M Heath offered to visit the properties with Shenhua staff to provide advice on their management and to help them gain an understanding of the issues involved in farming and suggested that the Committee would benefit from a site tour of the offset properties. G McDonald advised that the Company would welcome him attending the properties with staff to provide input on farm management. The Chair advised that a site tour was not necessary at this stage.

The method of hiring contractors was questioned and it was advised that the Licensees manage the land and it was their responsibility to engage any contractors that are required. The Company is not involved in the day-to-day running of the properties. G McDonald noted that all licensees are long standing productive tenants and provide advice to Shenhua on the management of the properties.

It was asked if a Cultural Heritage Assessment was completed on the Offset Land. J Trotter advised that it was not required to be completed as there was no change of use or impact. It was suggested that if the lease expires and the land becomes vacant that a Cultural Assessment be undertaken before the land is re-leased. G McDonald advised that the Company would not commit to this as it would set precedence for all rural properties that have a change in ownership.

In regard to the reduction of size in the EL Renewal it was asked if Shenhua had plans to dissociate itself from that parcel of land? G McDonald advised that there were no plans for this as there are requirements in the Conditions of Consent in regard to water monitoring on that land.

It was asked if water monitoring was being undertaken and if so were there any changes in the water levels? G McDonald noted that ongoing water monitoring was being conducted on a regular basis. J Trotter advised that a drop in water levels would be expected due to the climate and adverse season conditions. Data will be collated to determine future impacts.

10. General Business

Nil

11. Next Meeting



Wednesday, 6 February 2019 at 10.00am.

Meeting Closed: 11.40am

Action Items

Item	Action	By Whom
1		
2		
3		

Rehabilitating a changing landscape: using the latest advances in koala ecology to direct adaptive management

An ARC Linkage project jointly funded by Government, Universities and Shenhua Watermark Coal.

Budget over 3 years

- \$1,495,739 total budget
- Commonwealth Govt (ARC) contributes \$384,000 cash
- Shenhua contributes \$180,000 cash and \$180,000 in-kind
- OEH contributes \$30,000 cash and \$290,000 in-kind
- Universities contribute \$430,886 in-kind

Aims

- Develop a toolbox planning tool for management and conservation strategies and demonstrate how the tools will be applied in a practical way.
- Define optimal tree-planting designs (tree, patch and landscape) to mitigate impacts
- These will integrate robust measures of koala ecology and health with validated relevant measures of the nutrient status of leaves and soils, to precisely and cost-effectively focus efforts to sustain and rebuild koala and tree populations in changing agricultural landscapes.
- Soil and leaf chemical analysis to characterise existing sites and correlate areas of activity with degrees of high/poor quality habitat
- Radio tracking up to 50 koalas over the project life
- Full literature review, including the recent Gunnedah Council Koala Plan of Management
- 2 x PhD and 3 x Honours students
- Results published in international scientific journals
- press releases
- Results can be included into Shenhua Watermark Environmental Management Plans to improve the sustainability of the koala population

Research will be undertaken on Shenhua Watermark and other land within and near the project area.

The Project Leader Dr Valentina S.A. Mella and the following persons:

- 5 academics from 4 Unis (plus student participation)
 - Clare McArthur, The University of Sydney
 - Mark Krockenberger, The University of Sydney
 - Benjamin Moore, University of Western Sydney
 - Clive McAlpine, The University of Queensland
 - Brian Wilson, The University of New England
- Daniel Lunney, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
- Mark Howes, Shenhua Watermark Coal Pty Ltd

Assistance also provided through access and hospitality of Landholders including the Duddy, Friend, and Blackmore families.

Some Interim Findings so far

The Koala population significantly impacted by Chlamydia (70% in some areas).

While tree type and landscape characteristic are still being analysed, there are some interim conclusions that have been stated in student thesis work:-

- More likely to find Koalas higher in the tree in cooler times and lower in hot times.
- Detection is dependent upon a variety of factors requiring more analysis but including site characteristics, tree size (not canopy size) and site context more broadly.
- Koalas in the Gunnedah region utilise a wide range of tree species. Almost all areas with trees on the Liverpool Plains are used by koalas.
- Koala food tree species were important drivers of koala occupancy *Eucalyptus populnea* and *Eucalyptus albens* were used the most.
- Other *Eucalyptus* species such as *E. camaldulensis*, *E. dealbata*, and *E. melliodora* were also used with a relatively high frequency.
- Turon Park and Emerald Plains may have high rates of koala activity because they both have high proportions of koala food trees due to their participation in tree-planting programs.

Analysis of linking soil types and nutrients, tree and leaf chemistry etc are still progressing as is the tracking and territory data and more detailed health analysis.

Offset Lands Work Completed at Tambar Springs Properties

The following is a list of work provided by Zhao Liang which has been done and will continue ongoing repairs to infrastructure at Tambar Springs:

- Repairing concrete troughs on the three properties to stop water leaks
- Replacing sections of polythene pipe
- Repairing water sources including 2 windmills, 1 pump jack on bore, replacing 2 submersible pumps and providing generator power to pump (purchase of 3 submersible pumps and 3 generators)
- Cement rendering water tanks
- Repairs to solar pumps, tanks and troughs (purchase of new 27,000L water tank, purchase of new concrete and poly troughs)
- Establishing graded fire tracks
- Slashing of access tracks to dams, gateways as well as around farm buildings
- Repairs to house hot water services and garden fencing, purchase of 2 pressure pumps for houses, regular mowing of all gardens
- Repairs to cattle yards,
- removing timber from fence lines and tidying up
- 2016-2017
 - Installed approximately 3kms new fencing on Glendowder southern boundary, approximately 3 kms to go currently being installed (Mick Carter)
 - Installed approximately 1.5kms of new fencing on northern boundary Glendowder (Justin and Donna Grant)
- 2017 – 2018
 - installation of 1000m new fence on Mt. Erin northern boundary (Paul Anderton)
 - installation of 1750m new fence north western boundary Glendowder (Wal Warden)
- Engaging Jim Myers Gunnedah to shoot kangaroos.
- Brad Eyre Mullaley to trap pigs, reduction of animal pests, catch goats
- Spraying St. John's Wort under advice from John Unwin, Weeds Officer, Coonabarabran
- Spraying boxthorns. This program is ongoing.
- Spraying of fallow weeds.
- Spraying of weeds, repairs to fencing, maintenance of buildings and farm tracks all ongoing.