



Hunter Valley Operations (HVO)
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting
Wednesday 8 May 2024 at 1:30 p.m.



Attendance

Chairperson

Dr. Colin Gellatly Independent Chair HVO CCC

Community Representatives

Brian Atfield Community Representative

Todd Mills Community Representative

Di Gee Community Representative

Jeanie Hayes Community Representative

Singleton Council

CR. Sue George Singleton Council

Company Representatives

Andrew Speechly Manager Environment & Community

Nic McLaughlin Environment & Community Officer

Madison Freeman Environment & Community Graduate

Jason Martin Approvals Manager – HVO Continuation Project

Apologies

Dave Foster General Manager

Michael Wellard Community Representative

Janelle Wenham Community Representative

Minutes

Sarah Purser

- 1. Welcome,** Col opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. 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".*

- 2. Apologies;** Advised and recorded.

- 3. 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. CR. Sue George is President of the Singleton Neighbourhood Centre, her son works for the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

4. Out of Session Correspondence

10/2/2024	Finalised/Accepted Minutes from 8 November 2023 Meeting received by HVO.
11/3/2024	Draft Minutes for 7 February 2024 Meeting sent for CCC member comment.
11/3/2024	Acceptance of Minutes without change from CR. Sue George, no other comments received.
3/4/2024	Invitation to attend HVO Family Day on 25 May 2024, as well as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community Information Session details; and ✓ Round One 2024 Community Grant details.
29/4/2024	Invitation to CCC members for 8 May 2024 meeting, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Agenda and Business Papers; and ✓ Draft Terms of Reference (ToR).

5. **Confirmation of the previous Meeting's Minutes;** Col called for formal approval of the Minutes for the Meeting held 7 February 2024 and the CCC confirmed their acceptance. The CCC Meeting Minutes are available on HVO's public website and can be accessed on-line via [Documents Hunter Valley Operations \(hvo.com.au\)](https://www.hvo.com.au/Documents/HunterValleyOperations)

6. Matters Arising

Ongoing Action: HVO to continue to provide the CCC with updates on the HVO Continuation Project.

✓ At today's Meeting by Jason Martin

Action Arising from the previous Meeting: In response to the NSW DPE CCC Guidelines (June 2023), Col to:-

1) Circulate the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest forms to members for sign off and return.

✓ Completed

2) Complete the Terms of Reference (ToR) Template for CCC review and agreement.

✓ The CCC confirmed their agreement to the ToR pending the HVO CCC Meeting time to be updated to 1.30 p.m. Andrew noted that HVO will document control the ToR and this will be uploaded to their external website. Included in the ToR is an Annual Review, which will form part of the CCC Meeting at that time.

7. Company Reports | Update on Hunter Valley Operations - Andrew Speechly

Operations Update

West Pit; There has been minimal changes to operations in this pit since HVO's report at the previous CCC Meeting. Andrew noted there are quite a few machines in the Mitchell Pit area, which is in close proximity to Lemington Road. Mulching and top soil stripping works are being conducted ahead of mining. HVO are looking to re-start the Howick Coal Preparation Plant (CPP) that has been in care and maintenance for over a year around July / August 2024. Andrew identified an area at the north end of West Pit that is for proposed future tailings storage from the CPP, HVO are dumping spoil in there and creating a wall.

Cheshunt; The majority of works are being conducted in Cheshunt Pits 1 and 2, these are heading in a south westerly direction with all pit dumping behind the highest point. Any activities that can be seen from outside of the mine are rehabilitation shaping works on overburden.

Environment

Complaints

There had been three complaints in the January to April 2024 reporting period; one noise, one blast and one traffic concern. Andrew provided detail on each complaint and HVO's undertakings in response to these.

Rehabilitation

6 hectares of rehabilitation have been seeded YTD at Riverview and Barry's. On the most part HVO are conducting shaping works which has commenced at all the 2024 rehabilitation locations. There are two main blocks that make up the 6 hectares and these works will continue into the second half of 2024. Andrew identified the natural landform and contour design that is being created on the edge of Cheshunt.

Works commenced in April 2024 on the Rehabilitated East TSF remediation project, the rehab target is approximately 30 hectares for this year. HVO will put another layer of material on top and then will re-do contour drains and drop structures.

Work has been progressing at the 88.5 hectares of Growth Medium Development (GMD) planned for 2024. Significant maintenance is being undertaken on Carrington rehab to move from cover crop to final seed mix. This area has already been well established as pasture, Andrew explained that given this is planned as a native vegetation area, HVO are now undertaking mulching, boom spraying and adding the final seed mix.

Works have commenced to repair drainage on the old West Out of Pit (WOOP) dump, including design and placement of rocks up to one metre to stabilise the contour drains.

Weed Management

- ✓ Onsite weed management is focussing on riparian areas on the Hunter River and Wollombi Brook.
- ✓ River Red Gums have been planted in priority areas and weed management will continue.
- ✓ These actions will assist to improve HVO's stream health and stability.
- ✓ Additional work is planned in other areas to reduce grassy weeds across site.

Feral Pest Management - Programme of 2024 Activities

Andrew provided an overview of HVO's Wild Dog Control and "Hoggone" Pig Baiting Programs. Programs will run 13 May to 14 June, with an additional "Hoggone" program in response to recent sightings on site and feedback from neighbours regarding an increased presence of pigs. Spring pest management activities are anticipated for September 2024. HVO rural licensee pig control programmes and kangaroo commercial harvests are ongoing.

Biodiversity Offsets

- ✓ Erosion has been repaired at Condon View.
- ✓ Management of African Olives will continue across all offsets.
- ✓ Water tanks will be placed in specific offsets to assist with fire management and weed control.
- ✓ Burnt fences at Crescent Head have been surveyed and will be repaired.

Heritage

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

Andrew identified the Wilton and Mitchell Pit East area explaining that HVO had obtained an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) #5219, that was approved by Heritage NSW in January 2024 after consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs). Those artefacts were salvaged in February 2024 and are now stored under a care and control permit in HVO's shed.

HVO are now going through the process of applying for a second AHIP ahead of mining in Mitchell Pit South. Consultation meetings commenced with RAPs in March 2024. Andrew noted that after HVO's first round of consultation with the RAPs, mowing had been conducted to improve visibility and increase the chance of locating artefacts that had previously been surveyed. Andrew identified where these extant Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (ACH) sites had previously been located within the proposed Mitchell Pit South AHIP area. This area was then re-surveyed and test excavation works were conducted with RAPs during April 2024. HVO had their second AHIP Consultation meeting with RAPs on 2 May 2024. From these works HVO will produce a report that goes out for a 28 day review by the RAPs prior to being submitted to Heritage NSW. Andrew advised that pending approval of this AHIP, salvaging works are anticipated prior to year end.

Historic Homestead Projects; Includes Archerfield, Carrington Stud and Wandewoi Homesteads.

HVO engaged Castlewright to quantify and cost maintenance works, Castlewright invited quotes from restoration companies in April 2024. Yard maintenance works and termite interception system inspections at LEP listed properties are ongoing,

Reporting, Exceedances and Inspections

Andrew provided detail on PM10 dust exceedances at Wandewoi; 4 February, Cheshunt East; 5 February and Jerrys Plains; 13 March 2024. Andrew detailed results of all investigations and actions undertaken by HVO in response to these. Andrew noted the TEOM readings at Wandewoi were not an exceedance of HVO's development consent criteria as this is mine owned land and there are no private residences in that location. HVO did inform their tenants of these results during February in accordance with Condition 4A of their Project Approval.

2023 Annual Average Exceedances

There were five air quality monitoring locations that exceeded the annual average criteria at Maison Dieu HVAS, Kilburnie HVAS, Gliding Cub HVAS, Warkworth TEOM and Warkworth HVAS. These were reported in HVO's Annual Environmental Review with the exception of the Warkworth TSP as HVO's contribution was assessed as not being significant. Andrew noted for the two monitors located at Maison Dieu and Kilburnie HVO's contribution had also been low.

Andrew explained that the High Volume Air Samplers (HVAS) measure erroneously higher than the TEOM's. HVO are seeking to replace the HVAS monitors with Real Time monitoring units and are awaiting DPHI approval of their revised Air Quality Management Plan to commence using these.

Annual Reporting

2023 Annual Environmental Review (AER)

HVO submitted their AER to Government Departments on 28 March 2024, there were three dust non-compliances. Andrew noted that 2023 had been a very dry year with HVO having in the order of 7,000 hours of shut down time. Andrew said it was pleasing that there had been no noise, blasting or water non compliances.

2023 North Void Tailings Storage

The Facility Annual Analysis Report was submitted by HVO on 26 March 2024. Andrew said it was good to note that the groundwater chemistry had declined and stabilised, as has the standing water level, which indicates that current controls are just as effective as a barrier wall. HVO are therefore developing a study to assess alternative options to a barrier wall, the first stage requires an assessment of in situ tailings characteristics. HVO have engaged ATC Williams to take and test samples, they will then assess permeability and some alternative options now that the characteristics are known. Despite the groundwater being stable for the last year, HVO will continue with their current monitoring frequency.

Load Point Pollution Reduction Programme

Completion report was submitted by HVO to the EPA on 28 March 2024. Priority works such as increased water storage and upgraded pipelines have been completed. There will be some ongoing commissioning of mechanical infrastructure and communications.

Management Plans

HVO have recently updated their Management Plans for the Hunter Valley Gliding Club in relation to how HVO operates to mitigate impacts on them, and North & South Aboriginal Cultural Heritage with administrative changes that align with new Glencore standards, these are to be approved by the DPHI.

Exploration Works

In relation to surface exploration, two drill holes are anticipated in EL 5417 and EL 5606 during 2024. Should further exploration works be required in ELs, HVO will conduct consultation with impacted stakeholders. The remainder of surface exploration drilling for 2024 is confined to Mining Leases, with works targeting the Bayswater and Barrett seams to sure up HVO's geological model.

Jeannie had noticed a number of environmental incidents during the reporting period in relation to spills that had been detailed in HVO's Business Papers. Jeannie did not feel they were significant but asked if there was any reason for there being so many. Andrew confirmed that HVO traditionally see spills ranking as one of the most prevalent, but low risk, which is consistent with what is in the Business Papers. HVO have been providing more targeted feedback on ways to avoid spills, particularly around improved storage. Jeannie reiterated that she had no major concerns but had just wondered if the increase in spills had been related to anything in particular i.e. education, change in compliance, or the combination of a number of things. Andrew confirmed that there was no particular trend that would identify a systemic issue.

Todd had noted in HVO's Business Papers that there had been a significant diesel spill at the AECl manufacturing facility. Andrew acknowledged Todd's feedback, he explained there had been an issue with design where someone could turn the valve on and leave this unattended, and in this case an operator had left the area to assist with another task. HVO have upgraded to valves that are spring loaded and will only operate if there is a person in attendance to manually turn them on. The spill was contained by the stormwater system designed for the AECl compound and there was no potential for an offsite spill.

Approvals - HVO Continuation Project

NSW Approval Update

- ✚ Submissions Report and Amendment Report lodged November 2023.
- ✚ Project is currently under assessment by the NSW DPHI, currently working on responses to the departments Requests For Information (RFIs) and/or clarifying matters as required including matters relating to air, noise, water and traffic.
- ✚ DPHI have referred the Project to the Independent Expert Advisory Panel for Mining (IEAPM), Jason explained this process had recently been expanded to open cut operations.
 - Reviewing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) and Water related aspects.
 - Site inspections were completed on 16 and 17 April 2024.
- ✚ Supplementary submissions have been prepared in response to feedback from Government agencies, including the Projects consideration of The Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 that was introduced in December 2023. HVO are working through this act with a response having been provided to DPHI in March.

HVO continue to engage with both Singleton Council and Muswellbrook Shire Council regarding the establishment of a VPA and closure of Lemington Road. Jeannie queried if the VPA's had been completed and Jason responded that from his perspective the foundations are there for both aspects however a formal agreement would be subject to the Project receiving both State and Federal approval.

Jeannie queried what long term coal prices HVO were considering and had a forecast been completed. Jason explained that the Project economics assessment considers consensus coal price forecasts which are typically fairly conservative particularly beyond the next few years.

Jason noted if the Continuation Project is approved the economics assessment has indicated approximately \$3.2B (in net present value terms) in royalties that HVO will pay to State Government, HVO acknowledges there is an impact on one hand associated with mining but then there is the economic benefits on the other that also form part of the assessment. The DPHI will ultimately refer the Project to the NSW Independent Planning Commission (IPC) for determination.

Federal Approval Update

- ✚ The Project has been deemed a Controlled Action for impacts to biodiversity (threatened species) and water.
- ✚ Federal Public Environmental Report (PER) guidelines were issued by the DCCEEW on 19 March 2024.
- ✚ DCCEEW have requested separate PERs for HVO North and HVO South.
- ✚ The Project has been split into 'domains' for assessment under the EPBC Act, Jason identified these domains via mapping.
- ✚ Additional offsets are required as part of the EPBC Act assessment.
- ✚ The Project requires consideration by the Independent Expert Scientific Committee (IESC) for water.
- ✚ PERs are currently being prepared for submission in May/June 2024.

NSW Assessment Timing - anticipated for:-

- ✚ NSW DPE assessment of the Project – Q2 2024
- ✚ NSW IPC Assessment & Determination – Q4 2024
- ✚ Post approvals and execution planning
- ✚ Commencement of construction ~Q2 2025

Federal Assessment Timing - anticipated for:-

- ✚ Submission of Federal PERs – May/June 2024
- ✚ IESC Assessment – July/August 2024
- ✚ Public Exhibition of the PERs – September 2024
- ✚ EPBC Act assessment and determination – post NSW State determination.

Jeannie felt there had been some slippage in timing for the Continuation Project and queried how that affects HVO's plans going forward. Jason acknowledged Jeannie's feedback regarding lost ground and agreed that compared to previous assumptions there has been some delays largely as a result of the ongoing assessment and response to RFIs.

Community

Community Grants Program

Local organisations successful in obtaining funding in 2024 are:-

- ✓ Business Singleton - Singleton Business Awards
- ✓ Maitland Steam & Antique Machinery Association - Mezzanine floor construction
- ✓ Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce - TV, Movie & Nostalgia Festival - Exhibit

Round One of the Community Grants Program for 2024 had recently closed, with thirty-two applications received by HVO. Andrew noted this number of applications was similar to the total received in 2023 so that indicates the word is out and people are aware of this funding. HVO will review these applications and finalised the recipients.

HVO Apprentice Programme

During February HVO apprentices helped build and shape the new play space area at Branxton preschool. Works included building raised garden beds, a stepping stone garden boundary and garden plantings. The apprentices were led by HVOs programme coordinator Paul Watters. The before, during and after photos that HVO provided showed what could be achieved in one day's work. The official opening is on 16 June 2024 and this will be an area the children will enjoy for years to come. CR. Sue George congratulated HVO for their contribution to the preschool.

Community Information Sessions

These were held at Maison Dieu on 13 April and Jerrys Plains on 23 April 2024, Andrew thanked all who had attended. Sessions consisted of monitoring, production and Continuation Project information posters with HVO's Environment & Community Team, as well as Production Staff in attendance.

HVO found new uses for their former picnic tables at Singleton Girl Guides, Jerrys Plains School of Arts and Singleton Motocross Club. Jeannie congratulated HVO, noting that she had been pleased to see the tables at Jerrys Plains.

First Nations Pathway Program - 2024

HVO has become involved with Glencore's Pathway Program which is for Indigenous people around the Hunter Valley. The aim is to get local Aboriginal people on board who are either unemployed or have not been successful when putting in job applications, and provide them with pre-employment training. This not only includes physical skills such as operating a forklift, but financials as well, and is provided by WorkPac in conjunction with Glencore.

Participants are encouraged to indicate what they might want to do in mining and HVO then seek to find them a 14 week placement on site. Andrew noted that HVO has had a focus around trainee operators this year and are keen to get placements into those types of roles.

Andrew was impressed with the program and the confidence shown by the participants, especially as they were in a new environment. Andrew credited Nat who is the main Supervisor/Mentor, the participants call her "Mumsie" and Nat sets how they need to perform and behave. Andrew noted there was quite a good success rate to move into a full time job after completion of the placement program, adding that it doesn't matter how this employment comes about, for example; this could be as a contractor - working for a service company, or at another mining company.

8. Community Representative Feedback

Jeannie advised the level of noise in Jerry's Plains had been a bit more active. Andrew queried if there had been any feedback on the type of noise or timing and Jeannie responded this was in the afternoons and evenings. Andrew said if there is a particular type of noise concern i.e. engine, horn, that specific feedback is useful for HVO to be able to address these matters. Andrew noted that operations in Mitchell Pit are closer to Jerry's Plains than they have been in the past, all equipment has been sound attenuated prior to mining in this area.

Todd had the same feedback as Jeannie, that there had been a bit more noise typically for an hour or two. Todd described this as a bit of a roar that could be due to an inversion, also sometimes rocks on trays, Todd does not phone HVO as it typically does not last.

9. General Business

Col thanked all for their attendance and confirmed HVO's next meeting date.

10. Next Meeting Date

28 August 2024; 1.30 to 3:30pm in HVO's Meeting Room MR1 of the Services Building

Ongoing Updates

- North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall design.
- Continuation Project.

Action Carried Forward

- Col to re-invite the DPE Water Section to attend a future Meeting to discuss the 2022 riverbank erosion as a follow up of his initial invitation on 31 May 2023.
- Peter to provide an overview of HVO's European Heritage Management Plan when finalised

CONTACTS

Website <https://hvo.com.au/>

Continuation Project via hvo.com.au/continuation

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086443440525>

Meeting Minutes - <https://www.hvo.com.au/documents/>

HVO Complaints and Blasting Hotline: 1800 888 733 (free call)

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