

Ashton Community Consultative Committee Annual Report for 2019.

Community Consultative Committee Details

CCC / Project Name:	Ashton Coal Mine	Reporting Period:	January - December 2019
Independent Chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill	Proponent Contact:	Phillip Brown

1. Executive Summary

The Ashton Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee was established as part of a condition of consent by the Minister for Planning's October 2002 approval of Development Application 309/01 for an open cut coal mine, an underground coal mine and associated surface facilities, known as the Ashton Coal Project. The project is situated approximately fourteen kilometres north west of the town of Singleton in the Local Government Area of Singleton Shire and produces coal for the export market through the Port of Newcastle.

The Committee operates in accordance with the current version of the Department of Planning and Environment's Community Consultative Committee Guidelines for State Significant Projects. Meetings are held three times per year and the committee is comprised of:

- three local community representatives;
- one elected Singleton Shire Council representative;
- two Ashton Coal Mine representatives, with attendance from other personnel as required;
- one independent Chairperson.

The representation on the committee remains unchanged since last year's report; one original community representative since the committee's inception in November 2003, the remainder community representatives have served between five to seven consecutive years and Singleton Council's elected representative for over a decade. As such, the longstanding relationship and knowledge base amongst all the members continues to display a good rapport beyond scheduled meetings. Attendance levels are high and completely consistent with previous years, other than the February meeting which recorded a number of apologies due to circumstances beyond the control of the meeting. Well prepared agenda items and reports by Ashton Coal provided before each meeting are the norm and delivers productive meetings.

Matters discussed during the reporting period varied from company reports and activities to the committee's interest in the Camberwell cottages, weed control management, drought conditions and impacts on rehabilitation progress, potential spelling periods between re-leasing of Yancoal managed properties, Bowmans Creek diversion, long term land uses and rehabilitation and potential uses of mine voids across the industry. Other topics of discussion were:

- general environmental management and monitoring, including heritage, air quality, noise, surface water and groundwater

- operations and environmental activities updates, including incident reports
- Government agencies inspections and reviews
- Chair's Annual Report
- community complaints
- broader community engagement and Yancoal Community Support Program
- Yancoal land management including weeds, pest and feral animal control.

2. CCC activities over last 12 months

- Committee meetings were held in the months of February, June and October 2019.
- The committee has a stable attendance record.
- A site visit of the Bowmans Creek diversion took place prior to the June meeting..
- There were no joint meetings held with other CCC's.

3. Key issues

This committee has been meeting for nearly two decades now and other than an interest in future land use and what technology and innovation may reveal, there does not appear to be any emerging, major areas of concern to the members that I am aware of. Ashton personnel remain responsive to matters raised by all members.

Issue	Actions Taken	Next Steps
Suspicious lighting of roadside fires	Raised at committee meeting, Ashton staff discussions held with other mines in vicinity. Information provided to Local Area Police Command.	Ongoing surveillance. Direct RFS and Police contact numbers provided to the committee.
Camberwell cottages	Information on letting of houses and those to be demolished provided to the committee.	Maintenance works completed for period. Monitoring ongoing.
Feral animal control	Ashton Coal implemented feral and over abundant animal control measures.	Completed October 2019. Control ongoing.


4. Focus for next 12 months

The planned activities for 2020 will be guided by the contributions of the CCC members. These activities are likely to include:

- site inspection of the Bowman's Creek Diversion when flowing
- interest in weed control and land management
- review of ongoing environmental monitoring
- operational activities
- Yancoal community support program.

To the best of my knowledge, there are no outstanding or emerging issues that have not been addressed or are in the process of being so, to the committee's satisfaction.

Committee Meeting minutes and presentations are available on the website within two weeks of each meeting.

Signature of Chair:	
Date:	March 24 2020