

Community Consultative Committee Details

CCC / Project Name:	Stratford Coal Mining Complex	Reporting Period:	January - December 2022
Independent Chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill	Proponent Contact:	Thomas Kirkwood

1. Executive Summary

The Stratford Community Consultative Committee (CCC) is a long established committee initiated in 1995 as part of the Stratford Coal Mine Development Consent approval. With the subsequent approval of the Stratford Extension Project, the Committee members oversee the Stratford Mining Complex in accordance with the Department of Planning and Environment's 2019 Community Consultative Committee Guidelines for State Significant Projects. The mine's area of operation is a 1,500 ha site of former grazing land, east of The Bucketts Way and situated between the villages of Craven and Stratford.

The committee comprises:

- five local community representatives;
- two Mid Coast Council representatives (elected and staff);
- two Stratford Coal representatives, with attendance from other personnel as required;
- one independent Chairperson.

The Committee resumed on site quarterly meetings throughout 2022 with only the February meeting take place by tele/video conferencing because of continuing Covid concerns. Attendance levels remain consistently high as has the committee members' interest in the mine's operations as it moves towards closure. This is a significant commitment by all the members, given the committee has run for nearly three decades. I believe a major contributing factor to its efficacy is based on the dedication of the committee, who are well known and respected members of the local area. The Local Government elections in late 2021 saw a change in elected representation, however the strong rapport between MidCoast Council by virtue of councillor and staff, mine personnel and members continues. Yancoal personnel maintain their long held practice of producing high quality and informative presentations in advance of each meeting to the committee.

Council's Catchment Management Coordinator presented to the February meeting on the Manning River and Estuary Management Plan, what had been achieved and the value of shared monitoring data between Council and Stratford Mine.

Council's Coordinator Community Development presented Council's Annual Financial Report to the November meeting on both the Stratford and Duralie contributions. A very comprehensive summary of the key activities and expenditure for the year which supported community and environmental funding initiatives, such as the Beyond the Shed Program and the Karuah-Borland Landcare Project, the Education Fund and road and bridges contributions.

Other topics of discussion for the reporting period also included:

- general environmental management and monitoring, including air quality, noise, surface water and groundwater
- weeds, pest and pasture management on leasehold and adjoining properties
- community complaints
- broader community engagement and community enhancement contributions to Council and allocation thereof
- Stratford Coal Education Support Fund
- overview of operations and mine closure planning
- coking/thermal coal production ratios
- Rehabilitation Management Plan
- Biodiversity offset management
- Yancoal land management
- Post mining land use and options
- Renewable Energy
- Proposed draft changes to CCC Guidelines and input from members

2. CCC activities over last 12 months

- Committee meetings were held in the months of February, May, August and November. Only one site tour of the Avon North, Stratford East and Roseville West Pits and the pasture rehabilitation areas as part of the November meeting was undertaken because of Covid-19 and ongoing, inclement weather conditions.
- No joint CCC meetings were held during the period, although the committee is appraised of Yancoal's sister operations at Duralie as the mine approaches end of life stages.

3. Key issues

The Stratford CCC maintains its support for the long running Stratford Coal Education Program and the benefits it brings to the youth of the local community. The committee was advised that since the commencement of mining in 1995, Stratford Coal has contributed more than \$795,700 to locally based community and training initiatives via the Education Support Program. During that time, the fund has supported over 200 tertiary students, 138 apprentices and 65 businesses. The committee acknowledged the significant contribution this has made to the local area and reflected on how the existence of the program may be extended to attract a wider source of applicants and if a review of the grants structure should occur. This committee has always been a champion for this fund and that of the other community enhancement contributions and support programs to flow through to those communities directly impacted by mining. Mid Coast Council has resolved to formalise the practice of allocating 50% of the contributions received from Stratford to the Education Fund and 25% of the annual contributions over the next two years to upgrading facilities in the Stratford area in consultation with the committee.

Issue	Actions Taken	Next Steps
Stratford Coal Education and Yancoal Community Support Programs	<p>Actively support ongoing success of Stratford Coal Education Program and Stratford Coal Community Support through CCC networks and media.</p> <p>Included in MidCoast Council media channels</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>As and where appropriate.</p>
Closure Planning Stratford Mining Complex	<p>Update management plans and include relevant changes to committee presentations for discussion at CCC meetings.</p> <p>Consultant interviews undertaken with committee on Socio-Economic Impact Assessment</p> <p>Stratford Renewable Energy Hub fact sheet distributed to committee.</p>	<p>As and when required.</p> <p>Presentation to February CCC meeting. Potential Future workshops.</p> <p>On agenda for February CCC meeting.</p>

4. Focus for next 12 months

The committee sets its meeting dates at the end of each calendar year for the ensuing year to avoid any known potential conflicts.


In December, a fact sheet on Yancoal's investigations into a Stratford Renewable Energy Hub was sent to the Committee. Further information on a potential post mining land use as a sustainable long term business will be discussed at the February 2023 meeting.

Other planned activities for 2023 will be guided by the contributions of the CCC members. These activities are likely to include:

- to investigate potential opportunities to increase agricultural land capability whilst meeting rehabilitation requirements
- ongoing interest in Catchment Management Improvement works and biodiversity connectivity projects.
- The committee resumes its meeting schedule in February each year and will maintain a similar schedule as previous years.

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 for 2022 are available on the website, in addition to those of prior years. All draft minutes and presentations are available on the website within two weeks of each meeting.

Signature of Chair:	
Date:	February 16 2023.