

**This meeting is part of the review process.**

**Meeting note taken by:** Robert Bisley

**Date:** 4 June 2018

**Time:** 10:30am

**Project:** Rix's Creek Continuation of Mining Project (SSD 6300)

**Meeting Place:** Singleton Civic Centre car park then proceeded by bus to Rix's Creek Mine.

**Attendees:**

**Commission Members:**

Mary O'Kane (Panel Chair), Andrew Hutton, Tony Pearson

**Commission Staff:**

David Mooney (Team leader), Robert Bisley (Senior Planning Officer), Anna Summerhayes (Legal – Observer)

**Members of Public:**

Michelle Higgins (Rix's Creek Community Consultative Committee), Wendy Bowman (Hunter Communities Network), Wendy Wales (DAMSHEG)

**Applicant:**

John Richards (Chairman), Brett Lewis (Managing Director/CEO), Luke Murray (Chief Operations Office), Geoff Moore (Chief Development Officer), Chris Knight (Environmental Manager), Garry Baily (Manager Mining Development); Chris Moy (General Manager Technical Services/Development); Hannah Bowe (Environmental Officer)

**Meeting Purpose:**

For the Commission to view the Rix's Creek mine site and operations.

The Commission met the members of the public (excluding Wendy Wales who joined the site visit later) and the applicant at the Civic Centre car park in Singleton. The applicant drove the site visit attendees to the Rix's Creek administration building. The Chair of the Panel briefed all present on the process for the visit. The applicant provided the Commission with a short induction and presented a video outlining the historical and current operations at Rix's Creek. Following the video, the site visit commenced.

**Stop 1: Coke ovens:**

- The Commission viewed the historical coke ovens that were used in early Rix Creek mining operations.
- The applicant stated that the coke ovens have been undisturbed for 30 years.

**Stop 2: South Western Lookout Dump**

- The applicant identified the visible neighbours from the lookout and how the final landform would change from its current configuration. The applicant also identified which properties were owned by the applicant and the locations of the visible sensitive receivers.
- The applicant showed the industrial area which was subject to further development stages. They also pointed out the offset areas that were associated with that development.
- The Commission asked what weather conditions would adversely impact the sensitive receivers and the applicant confirmed that it was during South-Westerly wind conditions and the primary impact was noise.
- In a response to a question from the Commission, the applicant stated that the gradient of the rehabilitated land form would range from 10% to 18%, mimicking the existing Hunter Valley land form.
- The Commission asked the applicant if it had issues with spontaneous combustion and the applicant confirmed that it had never been an issue.

#### Stop 3: View into Pit 3

- The Commission viewed the existing pit and the coal seams within the exposed mining faces.
- The Commission sought clarification on the orientation of the current mine plan. The applicant confirmed that the mine plan had been developed to achieve the least disturbance and to accommodate the orientation of the coal seams.
- The applicant identified the location of the proposed western out of pit dump and outlined the extremities of the proposed final void. The applicant stated that the western out of pit dump will have a very small visual impact from residents to the south-west and Singleton.
- The applicant provided a summary of the fleet's utilisation and refurbishment for the Rix's Creek mine and Rix's Creek north mines.
- The applicant stated that mined serpentinite was unable to be captured and was disposed.

#### Stop 4: Proposed out of pit dump location

- The applicant identified the proposed disturbance extent and the likely visually impacted neighbours to the west.
- The applicant identified the proposed mine's interaction with the lease area located in and around Dead Man's gully and, due to the desire to minimise environmental impacts, the intention to not mine within its vicinity.

#### Stop 5: Current rehabilitation

- The applicant provided a summary of the existing rehabilitation works completed to date and the success of the rehabilitation program.
- The applicant is currently rehabilitating tailings dam 4. It will be completely rehabilitated in the near future as the move to the new tailings process using cyclones. In the meantime the tailings area is used during shutdowns and maintenance.
- The Commission questioned how much rehabilitation had been undertaken across Rix's Creek in comparison to the active mining area. The applicant confirmed that there is current around 450ha of rehabilitated land with approximately 500-600ha of active mining area.
- The Commission asked how old the tree growth was within the rehabilitated area. The applicant confirmed that the taller trees were 15 years old and the pasture was 3 years old.
- The applicant identified that the rehabilitation has successfully seen animals return to the area without reintroduction.

#### Stop 6: Rail loop

- The applicant showed the rail loop and coal loading facilities to the Commission.
- The applicant stated that it currently has 170,000 tonnes of coal stockpiled.
- The applicant identified the integration of the Rix's Creek North coal loading facilities with the rail loop.

#### Stop 7: Coal washing facility

- The applicant summarised the activities being undertaken and the machinery used within the coal washing process.
- The applicant identified the commencement of cladding the facilities had already occurred, pointing out the direction of Singleton.

After the conclusion of the site visit, the applicant provided the Commission with a short presentation outlining the Rix's Creek Noise Management Plan and how adverse noise impacts are mitigated. The

applicant explained how the noise and dust predictive modelling works and how it is used daily in operational decisions.

**Documents:**

The applicant provided the Commission with several large sized site maps.

**Outcomes/Agreed Actions:**

The applicant agreed to provide the Commission with additional information on biosolid use for rehabilitation and a copy of the Noise Management presentation.

**Site visit concluded:** 1:15pm