



**Mt Arthur Coal (MAC)  
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting  
Wednesday 14 August 2024**

**Attendance**

**Chairperson**

Dr. W.E.J Paradise (WP)

Independent Chair MAC CCC

**Community Representatives**

Jennifer Lecky (JL)

Community Representative

Lavinia Hutchinson (LH)

Community Representative

Claire Quigley (CQ)

Community Representative

Di Gee (DG)

Community Representative

**Stakeholder Representatives**

De-Anne Douglas (DD)

CEO Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC)

**Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC)**

Theresa Folpp (TF)

Muswellbrook Shire Council

**Company Representatives**

Grant Clouten (GC)

General Manager

Amanda Walker (AW)

Manager Corporate Affairs

Jelinda Millgate (JM)

Principal, Community, NSWEC

Jimmy Nixon (JN)

Superintendent Environment

**By Invitation**

Craig Milton (CM)

Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue

**Apologies**

Sarah Bailey

Manager Land Access, Approvals & Heritage

**Minutes**

Sarah Purser

1. **Acknowledgement of Country;** led by JM.

2. **Welcome & Apologies**

WP opened the meeting at 9.02 a.m. welcoming all. WP introduced new Community Representative; Claire Quigley (CQ). CQ provided an overview of Launchpad9 and Hunter iF, noting that she is passionate about regional development and advancement.

3. **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

*Standing;* WP is remunerated for Chairing the meeting, as is SP for taking the minutes.

4. **Minutes of the previous Meeting held 15 May 2024**

WP confirmed the minutes had been circulated and have been approved as a true and accurate record.

**Matters Arising**

**Action Arising; MAC to connect LH with MAC's Local Buying Foundation's Grants Officer.**

✓ Completed by AW

**Action Arising; MAC to capture water discharge status in the Environmental Monitoring Results for Water in the Quarterly CCC Environmental Management Report.**

✓ Completed by JN, included for this meeting

**Action Arising; In response to a query from LH on MAC's economic contributions, MAC to source relevant data from MAC's Annual Reporting.**

- ✓ Completed by JM, referred to data from the Mod 2 Economic Impact Assessment (EIS).

**5. Report from the Chair - Wej Paradise**

WP confirmed that efforts continue to encourage people to join as CCC members.

**ACTION 1: WP to liaise with AW regarding interest expressed by two parties to join the MAC CCC that had been in response to the Company's Community Newsletter.**

**6. Operational Update - Grant Clouten**

Reporting Period: FY23/24 Q4 April to June 2024

- **Production;** MAC has had good results for the full financial year 23/24, being above budget on production and saleable coal. MAC's achievements from a global perspective had been recognised by BHP.
- **People;** There is a strong management team in place and a very stable workforce with little attrition.
- **Safety;** Potentially MAC's best year in terms of recordable injuries over the last nine years.
- **Forecast;** There are no fundamental changes planned going forward in FY24/25 and the business will likely produce very similar volumes to that in FY23/24.

**7. Reports from Community / Stakeholder Representatives**

**De-Anne Douglas - CEO Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC)**

During NAIDOC week the Wanaruah LALC ran three flag raising events, an Awards evening, and a family fun day. DD awaits the construction certificate for the Keeping Place Shed, the DA has been approved and funding has been sourced through two groups. DD noted this will also greatly enhance opportunities for community programs. An Aboriginal Youth Worker is now shared between Wanaruah LALC and Singleton PCYC, this means Wanaruah LALC can extend their free services to Childcare Centres and Preschools in areas they have not been out to before.

**Jennifer Lecky - Community Representative**

One of the most exciting things for JL is the Muswellbrook Conservatorium, she noted this would not have been possible without BHP and other mining contributions. JL noted a highlight being a 15 year old writing a four part symphony that had been played by the whole orchestra. JL had been taken on a tour of rehabilitation and complimented MAC on the beautiful rehab that had been achieved in those areas.

**Lavinia Hutchinson - Community Representative**

LH noted as part of the Parliamentary Inquiry into beneficial and productive post-mining land use, there was to be a forum held at Muswellbrook RSL Club on 20 August 2024. LH queried if that was public and AW directed LH to the Parliament of NSW website for more detail.

LH advised there is an ever increasing expectation for key stakeholders to continually give their time and contributions to a vast range of committees. The Upper Hunter is in a unique position with a lot going on in the region that needs to be discussed. LH has a large amount of involvement with organisations both at a Government and Business level. LH queried compensation in relation to the rising expectation for people to contribute to a growing number of committees.

With respect to CCC's, WP advised the directive around compensation to members is contained within the NSW DPHI CCC Guidelines. Whilst community members, stakeholders and local Government are not paid, there is some avenue for cost recovery e.g. in terms of travel. WP confirmed that Chairs do provide feedback to the Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure (DPHI) that CCC membership is a big call on peoples time.

WP felt it would be worthwhile for LH to provide her feedback to the DPHI. WP acknowledged there is a concentration of CCC's in the Upper Hunter and that people have been asked to give their time to provide input in these forums, he will continue to mention this matter as a CCC Chair.

**ACTION 2: WP to provide LH with contact details for the DPHI representative for the MAC CCC.**

LH is concerned that national publications are picking out stories from various sources about what is happening in the region and the negative aspects that are being reported are detrimental to Upper Hunter's future. LH would like to see the sector come together and utilise the Hunter River Times (HRT), an Independent Publishing Company, as a tool to disseminate true stories about their business and the industry. As an example LH felt Community Newsletters could be published in the HRT. LH is passionate about supporting the HRT as she believes they are critical to communicating the correct message of what is happening in this community.

LH explained that she is seeking detail around regional funding as in time some of these sources will need to be replaced and that should be a consideration of current recipients. LH acknowledged BHP's Local Buying Foundation's (LBF) support for the Business Chambers. LH thanked JM for helping her workshop figures in relation to BHP's LBF spend.

LH advised Coal Australia is an initiative of Nick Jorss of Bowen Coking Coal and there will be invitations to an event at Newcastle Town Hall on 2 September 2024. JL confirmed she had received an invitation to this event.

LH was very positive about the Cultural Spectacular that is to be held on 14 September 2024 at Muswellbrook Showground and provided an overview of what is in store for this event.

**8. Pathway to 2030 Update - Presentation by Angela Fiumara and Harry Chauvel - Iceni**

The Closure Legacy Expectations Assessment (CLEA) was aimed at gathering insights to contribute to the development of recommendations to BHP to leave a positive post mining legacy, aligned with community values and aspirations in Muswellbrook, Denman and the broader Hunter Region.

Stakeholders include the Community Consultative Committee, Business and Industry, Government, and the Communities of Muswellbrook, Denman, Singleton and Scone. Iceni's goal was to get as diverse representation as possible.

Iceni provided an overview of their key findings and the direction of their proposed recommendations, these included (but were not limited to):-

**✚ Land use and site rehabilitation**

- ✓ Collaborate with diverse groups regarding rehabilitation and plans for future land use.
- ✓ Repurpose land to support local economic growth and community needs.
- ✓ Maintain and repurpose mine infrastructure to support long term sustainability.

**✚ Community Engagement & Collaboration**

- ✓ Actively involve the community in closure decisions and future planning.
- ✓ Support community development through dedicated funds and engagement groups.
- ✓ Amplify Indigenous voices and integrate their input into closure and future land use plans.

DD commended the consultation process at a workshop that she had attended. DD said that everyone had been listened to and been afforded an opportunity to have their say.

### **Workforce**

Iceni noted there was a call for more information on how workers will transition from MAC into future roles, additional training, and life without working in mining. LH queried the cumulative impact of other organisations doing the same things in the same space. LH asked if BHP is working with other organisations, particularly in relation to workforce. AW advised MAC are actively seeking people to have those conversations with, she asked that they please be referred to MAC as the more people they can engage with directly will benefit understanding the challenges, opportunities and the linkages.

To add to LH's comments, WP noted there are always discussions around the cumulative impact of environmental effects, but now in the sense of closure of some industry and proposals for new industry these need to be put into the context of what BHP is doing individually with the Hunter more generally.

Iceni noted that cumulative impacts are addressed by having very consultative and diverse representative engagement groups and processes. This provides an opportunity to pull in these various other views and initiatives and gain a better knowledge of what else is happening more broadly. MAC are consulting with their people about their aspirations post 2030 as pathways are individual. Those discussions have commenced and MAC are considering retraining plans.

### **+ Culture and Heritage**

- ✓ Collaborate with the community to protect and restore important Cultural sites, for example; gain access to land for Indigenous practices and education.
- ✓ Ensure Historical sites are preserved and restored thoughtfully, for example; Balmoral House potentially being used for community purposes.
- ✓ Recognise and honour the history of mining and BHP's role in the area, for example; legacies such as statues, centres and museums.

### **+ Communication and access to closure information**

- ✓ Keep everyone updated with timely information about the closure process.
- ✓ Provide easy access to closure details through dedicated channels.
- ✓ Share plans for workforce transitions openly.

Iceni acknowledged LH's feedback regarding community news and understand the community is wanting more detailed information about the closure. There is a need for communication to be received in different ways that resonate with the community, as LH had mentioned - the Hunter River Times, Social Media and Newsletters.

WP asked if members had any questions for Icení.

CQ queried the time frame for Icení's recommendations and implementation roadmap. Icení anticipate to have their final reports to MAC around mid September. CQ queried if Icení had an opportunity to delve into small / medium size business, being a core part of the value chain, and had anything specific come from that group. Icení did hold two small business workshops and in response to the question of what support they need from BHP, the resounding response was more information around MAC's plans, workforce and rehabilitation, so they can plan and develop their own skills in the context of what future opportunities are. There was also interest around infrastructure on site as there could be opportunity for new manufacturing industry, so they could scale their workforce to that.

AW thanked everyone for taking part in the CLEA, she felt it was admirable that people have been so willing and comfortable to participate and the views from the community are really helping to inform the way forward.

LH also commended the engagement that had been conducted and the way questions were asked. Icení confirmed the importance of the personal validation sessions and noted that AW would have sent out an invitation to the CCC, as well as other groups.

TF felt the recommendations and roadmap would be useful for other companies, particularly around closure of mine sites in the Shire. Icení agreed and there is recommendation that BHP share the results of the CLEA broadly to the different levels of Government, Industry etc. as it provides good insights and is effectively a change process more broadly across the region.

WP and the CCC thanked Icení for their update at today's meeting.

### **Reports from Community / Stakeholder Representatives (Continued)**

**Claire Quigley**; provided an overview of the following initiatives and events:-

- ✓ **Upper Hunter Shire Council Branding Initiative**; Funded by the State Government Resources for Regions Program. CQ offered to send through information on Place Identity to the CCC and WP confirmed that CQ had members emails to share these details.
- ✓ **Hunter iF**; CQ advised there will be an Innovators Lunch at the Donald Horne Building, Muswellbrook, on Friday 16 August 2024 if the CCC would like to attend and support this.
- ✓ **Reimagine Regional Business Event**; to be held at Singleton Civic Centre on 28 August 2024. CQ noted this is about getting small and medium sized business into the room and Hunter iF are actively involved in this.

CQ spoke about staffing conversations, feedback from Singleton, Scone and Muswellbrook is that business are finding it hard to secure staff, given they are competing with mines for houses and talent. CQ queried if there is an opportunity to talk about Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's) in relation to the workforce transition. CQ acknowledged that SME's had asked for more information so that they can plan. CQ put forward as a conversation point that it is more than just providing this information to SME's but to also assist them with the tools and skills to apply that information.

LH advised she is seeking funding through LBF to deliver five workshops in October, one of those will be about exploring diversification so she felt that would be a great opportunity to get SME's in through that.

**9. Report from Muswellbrook Council - Theresa Folpp**

TF advised that Council is in caretaker phase until the elections in September, it is business as usual for staff but in terms of decisions they are quite limited at the moment. WP queried if there had been a response from the Minister with regard to Council seeking additional CCC membership, TF responded there had been a reply and will revisit that once the new Counsellors are elected to then be nominated to the CCC's.

**10. Land Management & Environment - Jimmy Nixon****Rehabilitation**

JN advised a big highlight for MAC is the completion of 145 hectares of rehabilitation last financial year, this is the largest annual target he was aware of in the past 20 years. This rehabilitation had been done at optimum time for pasture growth. TF queried if cattle will be run on this rehabilitation and JN responded that will be set up once the area has grown, matured and soil profiles have been developed. MAC will need to ensure that the pasture will be resilient enough for agricultural land use.

**Weed Treatment**

JN provided an overview of weed species and treatments conducted by MAC. MAC are compiling their FY24 Annual Report and a lot of detail on weed assessment, progress and mapping will be contained within this report. The weed teams are tracked via GPS so MAC can present the data to show where they are getting across rehab and other parts of the mine.

**Environmental Monitoring Results**

There were no exceedances for Air Quality, Blasting, Operational Noise and Surface Water during the reporting period. A Groundwater exceedance had been closed out by the DPHI, following their approval of three proposed recommendations; Bore X14MD-2D should be inspected with a down hole camera to review the bore's construction. The trigger level for pH for Bore X14MD-2D should be reviewed in the next revision of the Water Management Plan, and Water level triggers should be reviewed following updates to the site groundwater model scheduled for 2025.

TF queried if there is a type of barrier between the Pit and the Hunter River to stop the alluvial water from getting in. JN confirmed that is correct, there is an alluvial cut off wall in place. As you go onto the alluvial flats on Denman Road there is an area MAC identifies as the Alluvial cut-off wall, that is a structure MAC has built into the ground to prevent transfer of alluvial water into the pit. There are above ground portions that provide flood mitigation controls as well.

LH noted that air quality has never been a key focus for her, however a family member being diagnosed with respiratory issues led her to consider coal and dust in proximity to the train station. LH pondered if the mine closure would be perceived as a good thing in relation to a potential improvement in air quality.

JN confirmed that emissions will reduce when MAC closes, as from then onwards there will only be a portion of operations dedicated to rehab. JN noted that it has been on offer to present the Dust Pack to show how MAC manage dust and demonstrate their commitment to operate in the best possible manner to make sure they meet their obligations.

JL has been on these committees for the last 30 years, she feels the changes that have been put in place and the importance of looking after the community have grown incredibly, in particular a key focus on things that affect the community. JL noted that she does speak to MAC about rehab and other issues. JL reads all of the company reports provided to Council and feels she can make a positive contribution in this community by being on all these committees.

TF noted that even when BHP closes in 2030 there will still be a considerable number of mines operating in the vicinity of Muswellbrook. TF felt the real noticeable improvement to air quality will more likely be seen around 2045 onwards when more mines start to shut down and the air will be noticeably more crisp.

AW confirmed that air quality had been explored through the MOD Social Impact Assessment (SIA) in relation to the MAC's application for a four year extension. The SIA contains figures around emissions and dust projections, so the SIA may provide a good sense of that information for LH. JN noted additional data can also be found in the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA).

LH noted there is still a large proportion of community that are not really aware of what is going on with renewables and feels it is critical to look at how this industry actually engage. JM noted a very successful area of community engagement comes from MAC's attendance at events such as the Highland Games and the Upper Hunter Show. JM advised that MAC has spoken to hundreds of people across these events that are held all around the region, with community coming up to have good open discussions and this provides MAC with the opportunity to answer any questions.

#### 11. Update from Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue (UHMD) - Presented by Craig Milton

LH congratulated the UHMD and AW in relation to a Business Hunter Forum in Newcastle, LH noted this summit had provided a good opportunity to increase awareness of the UHMD.

CM advised the next UHMD Community Forum will be held Tuesday 29 October 2024, more information can be found at <https://miningdialogue.com.au/>

#### 13. Next Meeting on Site at Mt Arthur Coal Wednesday 20 November 2024

14. Meeting Close; LH advised she will be an apology for the next CCC Meeting.  
WP closed the meeting at 11.15 a.m. thanking all for their attendance.

#### Action Carried Forward

MAC to advise when the Public Exhibition period is known for the EPBC Referral documentation.  
In progress - no updates from DEECW at the time of today's CCC meeting.

#### Actions Arising from this Meeting

**ACTION 1: WP to liaise with AW regarding interest expressed by two parties to join the MAC CCC that had been in response to the company's Community Newsletter.**

**ACTION 2: WP to provide LH with contact details for the DPHI representative for the MAC CCC.**

#### Presentations on offer for 2024 MAC CCC Meetings

- Pathway to 2030;  
Presented by Amanda Walker and Liz Watts at the 14 February and 15 May 2024 Meetings.  
Presentation by Icení at the 14 August 2024 Meeting.
- Monitoring Systems for dust management and how MAC calculate site / other contributors - Jimmy Nixon.
- 3 Yearly Independent Environmental Audit Summary Report - Jimmy Nixon
- Biodiversity Offset Land Management - Mark Nolan
- Heritage Property Update - Jimmy Nixon