

## Meeting Minutes

### Stratford Coal Community Consultative Committee Meeting

Stratford Mine Site  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

#### Attendees:

Margaret MacDonald-Hill	CCC Chairperson	Richard Clarke	CCC Member
Thomas Kirkwood	Stratford Coal Pty Ltd	Kevin Lowrey	CCC Member
John Cullen	Stratford Coal Pty Ltd	Philip Greenwood	CCC Member
Graham Chase	Stratford Coal Pty Ltd	Norm Bignell	CCC Member
Lauren Whitelaw	Stratford Coal Pty Ltd	Anthony Berecny	CCC Member
Lyndie Hepple	MidCoast Council		

#### 1. Site Tour

Site tour postponed due to weather. Site tour date to be proposed to the CCC via email in the coming weeks.

#### 2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair opened the meeting at 9:01 am.

Apologies: Mr Jarrad Galvin.

#### 3. Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Ms MacDonald-Hill declared that she is the Independent Chair, appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

The declarations of the Stratford Community Consultative Committee (CCC) members remain current.

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024 were confirmed.

Moved by Mr Philip Greenwood; seconded by Mr Norm Bignell.

#### 5. Business Arising from Previous Meeting

- 1. Annual Action Item: MidCoast Council to provide an annual financial report each November on the spending of the Stratford Coal community enhancement contributions made to Council.*

Mrs Lyndie Hepple presented the details of the Community Enhancement Funding – Duralie and Stratford 2023/2024 Financial Report. Apart from the Duralie Contribution, the Report outlined the current financial state of the Stratford Coal community contributions to Council for the purpose of community works programs, contribution to general road maintenance and the Stratford Education Fund.

Mrs Hepple gave an update to the works in Stratford Park and Stratford Cemetery and requested that the CCC consider allocating additional funds to complete the Stratford Park and Stratford Cemetery works which would include new signage, completing the fencing and maintenance and upgrade of the toilet blocks. Mrs Hepple also spoke about the proposed replacement works of Wards River Playground to the south of Stratford Mining Complex and requested that this project be considered by the CCC for funding allocation.

Additionally, Mrs Hepple stated that prior to her arrival to the Stratford Mining Complex this morning she was asked by a colleague to discuss with the CCC the consideration of funds for kerbside gutter upgrade works on Woods Street, Stratford.

The Stratford CCC discussed the works presented by Mrs Hepple and supported that the funds should be prioritised to the Stratford locality and incomplete park and cemetery works. The Committee did not support the allocation of funds to the replacement of Wards River Playground as the proposal is not located in Stratford and stated that funding priority should be for finalising the unfinished cemetery and park works, following completion of these works, further discussion would be appropriate.

2. **New Action Item 1:** SCPL to provide information on the water quality within the Old Main Pit in the next Stratford CCC presentation.

Complete – presented in *Environmental Management and Reporting*.

3. **New Action Item 2:** Yancoal to advise Committee when SREH is submitted and placed on exhibition.

Complete – Email provided to Committee by Mr Jarrad Galvin on 4/10/2024.

## **6. Correspondence**

Details of correspondence was included in the meeting Agenda.

The Chair added that additional correspondence was circulated by herself to the CCC on 31/10/2024 via email and contained the Community Enhancement Funding – Duralie and Stratford 2022/2023 Financial Report.

## **7. Company Reports and Overview of Activities**

SCPL presented the Company Reports and Overview of Activities:

1. Progress at the Mine: (refer to CCC presentation available on website for further detail)

Mr Cullen presented the Overview of Activities. Mr Cullen described the backfilling works in both the Bowens Road North (BRN) Pit and Roseville West (RVW) Pit and stated that works will continue in those areas over the next few months. Mr Cullen also discussed the proposed Q1 2025 decommissioning and dismantle works of the Stratford CHPP.

Mr Berecny asked if the CHPP has been sold and Mr Cullen replied that although there has been interest in the purchase of the infrastructure no sale has been made. Mr Greenwood asked what infrastructure would be dismantled as part of the proposed CHPP decommissioning works and Mr Cullen stated that it includes all CHPP infrastructure including the rail loop, conveyors, loader, tunnels etc.

Mr Lowrey asked the history of the RVW Pit and why it has been classified as a void in the final landform. He added that in hindsight the location of the final void, in relation to its proximity to Stratford Village, should have been considered further to assess passive impacts on the village. Mr Cullen stated that the location of the final void was determined in the original consent and final size of water storage has been dictated by a combination of site water storages and available material. Mr Chase added that the approved void is larger and closer to Stratford Village and stated that the reduction in void size at RVW Pit has reduced over time due to mine planning decisions.

2. Environmental Management and Reporting: (refer to CCC presentation available on website for further detail)

Mr Kirkwood Presented the overview of Environmental Reporting and gave an update to the Committee on the new Stratford Coal website. The new website can be found by navigating the Yancoal webpage and invited the Committee to contact himself or the Environment and Community Team for assistance with website navigation if required.

Mr Kirkwood then presented the new slide on the Stratford Main Pit water quality and asked the Committee for inputs and feedback on what other parameters to add on the slide for future CCC presentations.

Mr Greenwood suggested that a comparison between Stratford Main Pit water quality be made with Stratford East Dam water quality. He stated that by adding this comparison it would help minimise the spread of misinformation regarding mine water quality at Stratford and assist with community discussions.

Mr Lowrey asked the Committee to put emphasis on site tours for future CCC meetings and suggested the presentation could be shorter to accommodate time constraints. Mr Kirkwood added that time constraints for Committee Members could further be accommodated by proposing the site tour at the end of the meeting and having it as an optional attendance. The CCC agreed with Mr Lowrey's suggestion.

***New Action Item 1: An optional site tour to be held at the end of each CCC meeting (weather permitting).***

Mr Greenwood asked for an update on the proposed Forest Oak planting. Mr Kirkwood replied that it hasn't been included in recent planting programmes but is likely to be added in for infill planting program in 2025. Mr Greenwood added emphasis on the local importance of planting Forest Oak, Mr Kirkwood agreed and stated the requirement within the Biodiversity Management Plan.

Mr Berecny asked if other Yancoal sites could utilise any of the Biodiversity Offset Areas (BOAs) at Stratford and Mr Kirkwood replied that the BOAs can only be used for Stratford Mining Complex offset requirements.

Mr Greenwood made comment on the high occupancy rates of the Stratford Nest Boxes and stated that the 93% occupancy rate likely has exceeded expectations of the project. Mr Kirkwood credited the original project design and applauded the amount of care, research and development that has gone into the nest box programme which has produced positive results. Mr Greenwood suggested that the SREH Project look towards Stratford Mining Complex to utilise local learnings in regards to biodiversity projects.

3. Mine Closure Planning: (refer to CCC presentation available on website for further detail)

Mr Chase provided an update on the mine closure planning progress, with a focus on finalising technical studies and continuing ongoing consultation with mine closure stakeholders.

Mr Greenwood asked for clarity around the timing for the commencement of Stratford East Pit backfilling works and Mr Chase stated that it will be sequential with BRN backfill and would commence in 2025.

Discussion was then had around the management of the Stratford final landform in regards to the proposed SREH project. Mr Chase stated that the role of the Closure Plan is to focus on the Stratford Mining Complex with consideration of synergies with the SREH where possible.

4. Community Complaints: (refer to CCC presentation available on website for further detail)

Mr Kirkwood provided the overview of Community Complaints.

5. Community Programs: (refer to CCC presentation available on website for further detail)

Mr Kirkwood provided the overview of Community Programs and stated that the Community Support Program (CSP) closed in September with 37 applications currently being reviewed. Mr Kirkwood stated that the next round of the Education Support Fund (ESF) opens in December 2024.

6. Stratford Renewable Energy Hub Update: (refer to CCC presentation available on website for further detail)

Mr Kirkwood provided an update of the SREH.

Mr Kirkwood presented that the EIS submissions closed on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and Yancoal is currently reviewing public submissions and is preparing a response to issues raised in the submissions.

Mr Lowrey shared frustration on the process to provide a submission on the Major Projects website. Mr Kirkwood encouraged the Committee to provide feedback on faults via the submissions Portal.

The Chair asked why the SREH has had no independent assessment. Mrs Lauren Whitelaw responded that as the project approval pathway was deemed as Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI), which bypasses the Independent Planning Commission (IPC).

Mr Greenwood added that he wanted to applaud the efforts of MidCoast Council in regards to the time and effort spent making a positive submission to the SREH.

Mr Lowrey made comment regarding the predicted noise levels in the SREH EIS and outlined that it is proposed to be louder than the mine. Mr Greenwood stated that its likely due to the construction noise impacts. Mr Lowrey raised concerns for the SREH proposal in regards to noise on the local environment.

## **8. General Business**

Mr Berecny stated that he heard via two local real estate agencies that Yancoal is moving all tenants out of Yancoal-owned properties. Mr Kirkwood stated that SCPL only engages Hannafords for property management and that all tenants are not being moved from properties.

Mr Greenwood presented to the CCC the positive contribution the Committee has made for Stratford Mining Complex and expressed his recommendation that SCPL relay the benefits of the CCC to the SREH and proposed a Committee for the project.

Mr Lowrey re-emphasised the importance of scheduled site tours and the Committee agreed.

The Chair discussed the CCC Terms of Reference (TOR) and asked the Committee to confirm the current TOR. The Committee agreed and confirmed.

The Chair then applauded the efficiency and work of the Stratford CCC and thanked everyone for all their efforts and contributions.

### **9. Proposed Meeting Schedule**

2025 proposed meeting date:

- 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 with a review of frequency thereafter.

Meeting closed at: 10:15 am.

### **Summary of Action Items from this meeting**

1. **Annual Action Item:** *MidCoast Council to provide an annual financial report each November on the spending of the Stratford Coal community enhancement contributions made to Council.*
2. **New Action Item 1:** *An optional site tour to be held at the end of each CCC meeting (weather permitting).*