

**MINUTES OF THE DARTBROOK COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING – 20 September 2023**

<b>ATTENDEES:</b>		
Lisa Andrews	LA	Independent Chairperson
Annette Rahn	AR	Community Representative
Tony Lonergan	TL	Community Representative
Kamer Edwards	KE	Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (WLALC) Representative
Theresa Folpp	TF	Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) Representative
Jennifer Leckie	JL	MSC Councillor
Paul Smith	PS	Upper Hunter Shire Council (UHSC) Representative
Jeff Beatty	JB	Dartbrook Operations Planning and Approvals Manager
Geoff MacKenzie	GM	Dartbrook Operations HSEC Manager
James Bailey	JBA	James Bailey & Associates
Dorian Walsh	DW	James Bailey & Associates
Lachlan White	LW	Paspaley Pastoral Company Representative (Observer)
Stewart Hughes	SH	Paspaley Pastoral Company Representative (Observer)
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>		
Allison McPhee	AMC	UHSC Councillor
Arthur Mitchell	AM	Community Representative

### **1. INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES:**

- 1.1 The meeting was opened by LA at 09:00.
- 1.2 LA co-ordinated introductions from meeting attendees and noted:
  - o An apology from AMC;
  - o KE's attendance, representing the WLALC for De Anne Douglas; and
  - o The observers present from Paspaley Pastoral Company.

### **2. DECLARATIONS**

- 2.1 LA made a declaration in relation to her appointed role as Independent Chair to the CCC and confirmed the process for any declarations from CCC members.

### **3. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 3.1 LA confirmed there were no comments on the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 June 2023. Final minutes of the meeting were sent out on 7 July 2023.

### **4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 4.1 LA confirmed there were no action items from the previous meeting or business arising.

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**5. CORRESPONDENCE**

- 5.1 LA confirmed the correspondence received since the June CCC meeting.
- 5.2 LA referred to the correspondence received from TF prior to the meeting, requesting an update from Dartbrook regarding bushfire preparedness on site. DW confirmed that this update would be provided as part of the CCC presentation under item 7 of the meeting agenda.

**6. PROJECT / COMPANY UPDATE**

- 6.1 JB provided an update on the Dartbrook restart schedule, noting that:
  - Dartbrook were hoping to receive the next funding required to transition into production in early October 2023, although the negotiations have taken longer than initially scheduled;
  - Since the previous meeting, a workforce of approximately 60 personnel have been working on maintenance, infrastructure refurbishment and compliance projects. These have included works in the Hunter Tunnel and maintenance of surface facilities;
  - The current schedule is targeting first coal in early December 2023, with first sales around March 2024.
- 6.2 TF questioned what workforce JB would be aiming for during mining. JB confirmed that Dartbrook would be looking to employ around another 100 people, taking the total workforce to approximately 160 personnel.

**7. PROJECT UPDATE – ENVIRONMENTAL & LAND MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 DW outlined stakeholder consultation that had occurred since the previous CCC meeting.
- 7.2 JB gave an update on the approaches made to Dartbrook from three renewable companies regarding the potential use of the Dartbrook mine access road for oversize overmass (OSOM) vehicles required to move wind farm equipment from Newcastle to their project areas. The proposed route was discussed and JB noted his concerns regarding risks in OSOM vehicles using the mine access road, including potential damage to roads and bridges and blockages in the event of breakdowns. If these events occurred, they could impact access to the New England Highway for the Dartbrook workforce, emergencies services and local landholders.

JB stated his preference that a consolidated approach is developed to manage OSOM vehicle movements required for renewables projects, rather than these being dealt with on an individual company basis. This would need to formalise arrangements for other companies to use the Dartbrook mine access road.

TF stated that MSC are meeting with DPE the following week to discuss this matter. Representatives from Dartbrook, MACH Energy and Energy Co. had been invited to attend. Using rail as an option to transport the components had been ruled out by the rail asset owner due to capacity constraints on the existing rail line.

JB noted the current schedule put would likely see these OSOM movements start within 12 months and continue over a period of 8 – 12 months from commencement. JB will provide an update on any further discussions at the next CCC meeting.
- 7.3 DW outlined environmental compliance monitoring results and management activities undertaken since the previous CCC meeting. All compliance monitoring data were within approved criteria and historic ranges, however DW noted that the HVAS monitor 'Hulbert' is not recording data after being vandalised.
- 7.4 DW stated that no environmental incidents or complaints had been recorded since the June CCC meeting.

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7.5 DW and JB gave an update on Dartbrook bushfire management activities in the leadup to the bushfire season, including slashing of roadsides and around site infrastructure and cattle grazing on the rehabilitated REA to reduce fuel loads. JB stated that that all fire response infrastructure on site such as hydrants and sprinklers has now been refurbished. JBA also confirmed that the site Bushfire Management Plan had been developed in consultation with the RFS and includes the location of Dartbrook dams and other services.

7.6 GM noted that the site Emergency Response Management Plan has been tested since the previous meeting following an incident underground. The plan was implemented well, with only one minor improvement being identified, to confirm the street address of the West Site facilities for local emergency services.

JB noted that a wider review has been carried out since the previous CCC meeting to confirm that all safety systems on site are compliant with regulatory requirements.

**8. GENERAL BUSINESS**

8.1 TF raised that an application had been made to develop a 400 MW battery between the Dartbrook CHPP and Aberdeen. MSC have requested that the proponent completes a cumulative noise assessment.

8.2 TF also noted that MACH Energy are proposing to construct a new TV transmission tower adjacent to Mount Pleasant due to local impacts to reception.

8.3 LA confirmed that there was no further General Business, prior to delivering a presentation on the revised 2023 CCC Guidelines for State Significant Projects developed by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

**9. MEETING CLOSE**

9.1 LA scheduled the next CCC meeting for Wednesday 6 December 2023, starting at 09:00am.

9.2 LA closed the meeting at 09:49.

**Action Items**

ITEM	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
1.	Provide an update on any further discussions regarding the use of the Dartbrook mine access road for renewables project vehicle movements.	JB
2.	Send a template of draft Terms of Reference and associated documents out with the draft meeting minutes.	LA