

Ashton Community Consultative Committee Annual Report for 2021.

Community Consultative Committee Details

CCC / Project Name:	Ashton Coal Mine	Reporting Period:	January - December 2021
Independent Chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill	Proponent Contact:	Phillip Brown

1. Executive Summary

The Ashton Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee was established as part of a condition of consent by the Minister for Planning's October 2002 approval of Development Application 309/01 for an open cut coal mine, an underground coal mine and associated surface facilities, known as the Ashton Coal Project. The project is situated approximately fourteen kilometres north west of the town of Singleton in the Local Government Area of Singleton Shire and produces coal for the export market through the Port of Newcastle.

The Committee operates in accordance with the 2019 version of the Department of Planning and Environment's Community Consultative Committee Guidelines for State Significant Projects. Meetings are held three times per year and the committee is comprised of:

- three local community representatives;
- one elected Singleton Shire Council representative;
- two Ashton Coal Mine representatives, with attendance from other personnel as required;
- one independent Chairperson.

The representation on the committee remains unchanged from previous years. The members are well respected and known to each other. With the disruption from Covid-19 impacts on meetings, the committee was indeed fortunate to hold the December meeting at a member's private residence. Such is the camaraderie amongst the whole committee, a small but effective committee, well versed in what is happening in their local areas. Logged complaints have continued the trend of previous years and remain minimal. Agenda items and comprehensive reports are provided by Ashton Coal personnel in advance of committee meetings.

There is not much change from previous years in the matters discussed during the reporting period; company reports and activities, the Camberwell cottages, weed control management, feral animal control, rehabilitation progress and leasing of Yancoal managed properties remain the staple topics. The proposed Ashton-Ravensworth underground integration modification was introduced to the committee at the December meeting with no major concerns raised.

Other matters discussed were:

- general environmental management and monitoring, including heritage, air quality, noise, surface water and groundwater
- land management and rehabilitation activities
- Ashton Coal statistics including production ratios, sales, total recordable injuries, employees and environmental incidents
- mining areas, extraction plans, exploration boreholes rehabilitation and drilling planning
- operations and environmental activities updates, including incident reports
- community complaints
- Yancoal community sponsorship and donations

2. CCC activities over last 12 months

- Committee meetings were held in the months of February, June and December.
- No site tours were undertaken because of Covid-19 restrictions.
- There were no joint meetings held with other CCC's.

3. Key issues

There are no emerging major issues of concern from the members that I am aware of. The most topical subject shared by the community members is the visual aesthetics of the Camberwell Village, the maintenance and weed control of the company owned properties. It is obvious that these long term residents are proud property owners who value their homes and surroundings and want to preserve the beauty and nature of their environment. With changing weather patterns, some land management plans obviate timely control of these issues. However, Ashton personnel remain responsive to all matters raised by the committee.

Issue	Actions Taken	Next Steps
Kangaroo culling and feral animal baiting control	Request by committee that prior notice be given to CCC members.	Advance notice is given to committee, along with existing public notification advertisements at each event. Ongoing as required.
Camberwell cottages and land held by company	Information on properties status and maintenance provided to the committee.	Ongoing to each meeting.
Weed management	Additional species added to list weed management program.	Included in 2021/22 weed management program.


Focus for next 12 months

The planned activities for 2022 will be guided by the contributions and interests of the CCC members. These activities are likely to include:

- site inspection of the Bowman's Creek Diversion when flowing
- interest in weed control and land management
- review of ongoing environmental monitoring
- operational activities
- Yancoal community support program
- Update on Ashton-Ravensworth modification.

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 are available on the website within two weeks of each meeting.

Signature of Chair:	
Date:	March 2 2022