

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
Cleary Bros Albion Park Quarry Community Consultative Committee
Held via Zoom videoconference
Thursday 3 December 2020 at 1:20 pm

Present:

Chairperson	Brian Weir (BW)
Fig Tree Hill Representative	Susan Dunster (SD)
Community Representative	John Murray (JM)
Shellharbour City Council Representative	Mark Miller (MM)
Cleary Bros Environmental Officer	Mark Hammond (MH)
Cleary Bros Representative	Todd Kalajzich (TK)

Welcome

BW welcomed all members and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land and paid his respects to Elders past and present.

BW thanked everyone for making the effort to meet in these unusual times.

Item 1: Apologies

Item 2: Declaration of pecuniary or other interests

Brian Weir indicated that he received a small sitting fee to chair the meeting.

Mark Hammond and Todd Kalajzich indicated they are employees of Cleary Bros.

Susan Dunster represents Fig Tree Hill, adjoining land owner.

Item 3: Record of Minutes & Business arising from previous minutes

SD noted an inaccuracy in the wording of the Discussion on Item 5(iv) of the minutes dated 23/7/2020, whereby the last paragraph of this section stated "agency satisfied with Cleary Bros response" should have stated "..the agency appears to have been satisfied with Cleary Bros response". Amendment accepted. No other matters arising.

Item 4: Correspondence

The Chairperson referred to an email from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment acknowledging receipt of the annual report on the operation of the CCC.

The Chairperson referred to contact with consultants undertaking the Independent Environmental Audit of the Albion Park Quarry. The Chairperson identified the key issues discussed at recent CCC meetings and provided a copy of the annual report on the operation of the CCC.

Item 5: Cleary Bros reports and overview of activities

The following report was provided to all members as an attachment to the agenda, and read out by MH:

i) Progress of the project

Currently excavating rock from Stages 5 and 6. For the four months to 31 October 2020, 243,261 tonnes of hard rock products were produced on site, including approximately 166,057 tonnes of blue basalt products and 77,204 tonnes of red agglomerate. This represents an annualised rate of production of 729,783 tonnes. Production going forward is expected to remain at approximately the same rate.

ii) Issues arising from site visits

No site visit is planned for this CCC meeting.

iii) Monitoring and environmental performance

Dust

Cleary Bros are continuing to encounter difficulties commissioning the real time dust monitors at the Albion Park Quarry. These dust monitors measure the concentration of fine dust particles in the air. Since the last meeting these have been returned to the manufacturer for refurbishment, however since then one monitor has continued to be problematic. Once operating reliably, they will be calibrated to allow replacement of the existing dust monitoring gauges on site, and allow modifications to site activities where required in real time to respond to the monitors.

Depositional dust, which consists of larger dust particles that can settle out on surfaces, have varied across the site (12-month average), with the gauge closest to the site entrance continuing to record elevated readings (averaging 11.2g/m²/month) due to the Albion Park Rail bypass earthworks directly adjacent. All other gauges have recorded between 1.5 and 3.5g/m²/month, which are similar to or slightly higher than the previous report. As annual averages, these measurements are still impacted from the deterioration in regional air quality from the bushfires last Summer, which led to higher depositional dust levels being recorded at this time.

The High Volume Air Sampler records dust particles that are suspended in the air and are smaller than 10 micrometers, which is referred to as particulate matter (PM₁₀). There was one exceedance of the daily PM₁₀ criteria since the last CCC meeting which was reported to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. This incident resulted in an incremental impact of 50.6 µg/m³, which is marginally above the limit of 50 µg/m³. The annual average (to the end of October 2020) has improved from the past report to 21.9µg/m³,

and will likely continue to improve over the following months due to the probability of improved regional air quality this Summer compared with last Summer.

Boreholes

Cleary Bros have increased sampling frequency of groundwater bores to monthly for a period of 6 months. Groundwater levels as recorded across the monitoring network are generally at lower levels compared with the historical average, however have generally shown some increases over the past few months in response to improved rainfall. Groundwater quality has also noticeably improved with the rainfall inflows.

Blasting

All blast results have complied with EPA and DP&E limits. FY21 average and maximum blast overpressure (noise) at the nearest sensitive receptor were recorded as 108.0 dB(L) and 112.2 db(L) respectively. FY21 average and maximum blast vibration at the nearest sensitive receptor were recorded as 2.66mm/s and 4.84mm/s respectively. This is consistent with FY20 results.

Rehabilitation and Revegetation

Planted vegetation within the revegetation areas are now largely self-sufficient with no additional watering required. The focus in these areas is now on restricting annual weed growth around the smaller seedlings, to ensure they can compete. In most parts on the western side of the creek line, continued tree growth is largely controlling further weeds under the expanding canopy.

We have continued to see good rainfall in August and October 2020, which have allowed the completion of initial planting in Zone 4, and half of the initial planting in Zone 5. These areas are both fenced off and protected from grazing animals including pests.

Planting out of the remainder of the final revegetation area (Zone 5) is planned to be completed by the end of the year. Work will then focus on infill planting to replace dead plants, as well as weed control.

Community complaints

One community complaint has been received since the previous meeting in July 2020. This complaint related to impacts from blasting activity received directly from a community member. The complaint was investigated with a response provided to the complainant.

v) Information provided to the community and any feedback

The Cleary Bros website is regularly updated to ensure all required information is current, including approvals, management plans, and environmental monitoring data.

Cleary Bros recommends the above report is received and noted by the CCC

Verbal report to the meeting

MH provided further verbal updates as follows:

In regards to Boreholes, MH stated that water levels in groundwater monitoring bores have increased significantly in the past month and closer to historical levels.

Discussion

Re. Item 5(iii), JM asked whether dust levels in the gauge affected by the Albion Park Rail bypass works were likely to improve in the future.

MH responded that he expects dust levels to improve once the Albion Park Rail bypass roadworks are completed.

JM asked whether goats were still impacting on revegetation and plant growth.

MH responded that the fencing seemed to be keeping them out, and the wetter conditions over the previous year has meant that there is a lot more vegetation and so any impacts are not so noticeable.

TD also stated that the neighbouring quarry had been culling goats which has reduced their population.

Resolved: Report received and noted.

Item 6: Other Agenda Item

i) Development Application for Stage 7 of the Quarry

MH shared a presentation on the project which has been included with the final meeting minutes.

MH also stated that Cleary Bros are expecting to submit the EIS in or about February 2021.

Discussion

JM suggest Cleary Bros keep SD informed on the project.

SD responded by saying yes she has been kept informed.

SD asked when the consultant undertaking the social impact assessment would be in contact.

MH responded that the consultant would be in contact within the next week.

JM asked about opportunities to provide feedback on the proposal.

MH explained that feedback could be provided to the consultant undertaking the Social Impact Assessment, as well by making a submission when the EIS is lodged and is exhibited.

JM asked about visual impacts from residential areas, and what was being done to minimise these impacts.

MH explained that the draft project plan is to extract along the western limits early in the project timeline, so that the exposed faces could be rehabilitated at an early stage. In the early stages, it is expected that the project will not be highly visible from the Shell Heights area, however in later years once the eastern half of the site is extracted, it is likely that some of the western faces will be visible from Shell Heights. By the time they are exposed, it is expected that vegetation will be well established which will soften the view from the east. MH also mentioned that bunds will be established in certain areas to try to soften sight lines where practical.

JM asked what the bunds will be made out of.

MH explained that the bunds will be made from soil and vegetated, noting there will likely be some visual impact during the construction of these and until they are vegetated.

JM noted that it would be important to keep dust levels down given the closer proximity to adjacent residences.

TK responded that dust mitigation measures such as sprays would be used to reduce the potential dust nuisance.

Item 7: General Business

JM suggested a site visit to the quarry would be beneficial

Following some discussions around the timing of the site visit, MH proposed that a site visit could be undertaken shortly after the submission of the EIS for the Stage 7 area, which would allow members to view the proposed project area while the project is on public exhibition.

There being no further General Business, the Chairperson closed the meeting.

Meeting closed 1:51 pm

Next meeting planned for Thursday 22 July 2021 at 1:00pm.