

## Meeting Notes

### Eraring Ash Dam Expansion- Community Consultative Committee (CCC)

Meeting No. 1

Thursday 14 May 2020 – 5.30- 7.30 pm

Location: Zoom Meeting

Chairperson: Margaret Harvie

Community Representatives: Joan McCarthy, Ron McCarthy, Neil Wynn, Kim Grierson, Derek Pola, Colin Bright – representative of the Anglican Parish of South Lakes, Gary Blaschke – representative of the Coal Ask Community Alliance.

Lake Macquarrie Council representative: Cr David Belcher

Origin representatives: Tony Phillips, Group Manager Operations Eraring, Lauren Barnaby, Group Manager Environment and Community, Fernanda Maluly Kemeid, Ash Strategy and Management Lead.

In attendance: Emma Scutella (notetaker)

Apologies: None

Item	Description	Details
1.	<b>Welcome, Acknowledgement of country and introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Margaret Harvie (MH) acknowledged that wherever members might be we are meeting on Aboriginal Land and paid respects to elders past, present and future.</li> <li>MH acknowledged the unusual meeting circumstances given COVID-19</li> <li>MH advised that first few meetings would be mostly about Origin providing CCC with the information that they need about the expansion and operations of the Ash Dam</li> <li>Tony Phillips (TP) introduced himself and introduced the site and project and spoke to the current actions by Origin related to COVID-19.</li> <li>Introductions from all meeting members – where they live/ interest in the project and sharing something about their experience of the Covid lock downs</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Declarations of pecuniary and other interest.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colin Bright (CB) declared that donations have been made from Origin to the Anglican Parish of Southlakes. Colin is on the CCC as a representative of the Anglican Parish of Southlakes</li> </ul>
3.	<b>Discussion about the purpose and operation of the CCC and questions on the Draft Terms of Reference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MH referenced the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) which had been circulated to members prior to their appointment.</li> <li>This TOR will be a topic of discussion and will be finalised at the next meeting. This gives members time to consider them further to our first meeting.</li> <li>Neil Wynn (NW) asked about the ability to ask questions/ raise issues outside of dam itself eg. Questions about the power station.</li> <li>MH explained that the CCC is established by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) for issues related to the modification / expansion of the Ash Dam.</li> <li>While Origin are under no obligation to answer questions outside of this project it is envisaged that other issues will arise and questions about these will be answered to the extent that this is reasonable and possible.</li> </ul>

4.	<p><b>Ash Dam Expansion Project Presentation Inc. Approvals and the history of those approvals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lauren Barnaby (LB) explained project including providing a map of site.</li> <li>• NW requested further explanation of site map including the location of Lake in relation to the site.</li> <li>• CB asked about the action in relation to the main wall stability. LB advised that there was a separate project underway to address this issue.</li> <li>• Fernanda Maluly Kemeid (FMK) explained that the ash is deposited on the Western side not the Southern embankment – therefore there is no new ash against the embankment.</li> <li>• Kim Grierson (KG) asked if the new area is going to be lined to stop water leaching through the ash.</li> <li>• LB advised that there are mine voids under new area and these voids will be grouted to form a barrier to prevent water moving out and stop access of water/potential for contaminants. LB discussed parties to be consulted for Mine Void Management Plan (MVMP) as per the conditions of approval. Conditions require consultation with EPA, Mine Subsidence NSW, DPIE Water, Dams Safety NSW and Centennial Coal. Following this the MVMP is submitted to DPIE for approval. KG asked how long process will take and LB advised that submission was due in a couple of months.</li> <li>• KG asked what RL (Relative Level) means on the site map. LB advised it is a term used in surveying for elevation relative to a site datum.</li> <li>• LB explained the DPIE conditions of approval – this was as per those outlined on the slide as part of the presentation (attached).</li> <li>• NW asked about the progress of the 80% ash recycling target. LB advised that it is currently around 35%.</li> <li>• NW would like to know what the plan is to get it to 80%. TP explained that stations focus was currently on the production of power not ash. The station is in the process of finding avenues for recycling ash.</li> <li>• TP and LB committed to providing a more targeted presentation on ash recycling, challenges and future opportunities at a future meeting.</li> </ul>
5.	<p><b>Questions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gary Blaschke (GB) Presented prepared questions from the Coal Ash Alliance. These are in Attachment 1 along with Origin responses or timing for future response.</li> <li>• Ron McCarthy (RM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- where is the water from the Ash dam leaching to? Perhaps into the lake? Why was a barrier not put in place to prevent heavy metal pollution going into the lake? Where is the leaching measured? What action does Origin take in reponse to results from measuring.</li> <li>- It was suggested that a presentation on monitoring might be the topic of a future meeting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- can we have an onsite visual inspection of the area and location of the water testing.</li> <li>- Do the current contracts for recycling stop others coming in wanting to purchase fly ash? He is aware that there are companies who want it but are unable to get fly ash.</li> <li>- TP advised that the current contracts in place do not stop others from accessing fly ash but those with contracts are given priority. TP also noted that due to the COVID-19 measures, Origin is currently unable to facilitate a site visit, however would look at providing video imagery to help explain the dam and the relevant Project Area.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Joan McCarthy (JM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- questioned an article she had read regarding recycling ash and it being used for agriculture and gardens – this article didn't address the issue of toxicity, is it possible to have more information on this issue/ situation?</li> <li>- LB indicated that there are government guidelines related to the classification of coal ash and its suitability for recycling. LB committed to providing information on the EPA Coal Ash Order and the requirements for this use at the next meeting.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are we importing ash or are we just talking about the ash that is being produced at Eraring?</li> <li>- TP advised there was pre-existing ash in the old dam and the rest is only that produced from Eraring - there is none brought in.</li> <li>- He wanted to know the current recycling rate?</li> <li>- TP advised that recycling was at 35% - 40% depending on the market, electricity demand and operational requirements.</li> <li>- And you are hoping for 80%?</li> <li>- TP answered that they are hoping to go further than 80% but 80% is the first step.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Derek Pola (DP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "The monitoring results published are only a fraction of the monitoring that is required by the EPA. Is it possible to make available a full suite of monitoring results including water quality results for episodic discharge over the dam spillway ?</li> <li>- With increased leachate as a result of the dam expansion are there additional monitoring points and where are they situated?</li> <li>- What is the current timeframe for the ash dam extension construction."</li> <li>- Derek requested transparency and that all monitoring results to be made public.</li> <li>- He also requested copy of the map used in the presentation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Update on Project progress</b></p>	<p>LB provided an update on project progress as per the presentation (attached).</p> <p>KG asked if the company could create a purpose for the use of ash.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – Origin to provide more detail on the potential options for recycling/ use of the ash at next meeting.</p> <p>DP asked about the control of dust from the site and the how this occurs? FMK explained that there is localised weather forecast system in place on site including several dust monitoring stations. Measures to mitigate dust impacts include use of water cannons, water trucks, polymer applied to unused areas, temporary capping to areas.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>What we are hearing from the community about the expansion project (Round the table for all members)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DB             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General anxiety in the community around the expansion</li> <li>- There is also the issue of haulage of fly ash from dam – impact of transportation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• KG             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dust as a result of transportation is an issue/many complaints – she has seen people providing photos of the dust and its impacts.</li> <li>- Pollution into the lake a major concern and its impact on the shore birds.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• GB             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transparency is a public concern – see attachment 1 with comments on 2017 EPA environmental compliance report.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• DP             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community is spooked</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A high and extreme level of interest in what is going on</li> <li>• JM             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People can't believe that they can no longer freely eat the seafood of the lake</li> <li>- Concern that it has it taken so long to fix dam wall</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NW             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Toxic ash plumes are concerning</li> <li>- Discussed wind activity/ash plumes prior to Christmas and asked FMK if they used helicopters. FMK confirmed that helicopters are used by Eraring. TP also acknowledged that ash plumes are something that they need to get better at handling and they are in process of upgrading watering system which should make significant difference going forward.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• RM             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of multi axle trucks was an issue which seems to now be solved using private roads</li> <li>- Public on the western side are complaining of ash</li> <li>- Public on eastern side complaining about impact on fishing</li> <li>- Closure / relocation of sports and recreation area. There have been rumours regarding new location. There was general discussion around the lack of information about the future of the Myuna Bay Sport and Receration Centre (MBSRC)</li> <li>- LB advised that they are working with the NSW government Office of Sport (OoS) to find a suitable new location on Origin owned land.</li> <li>- LB &amp; TP confirmed that Origin are paying for the relocation.</li> <li>- The relocation and future facility will be the subject of further community consultation, lead by OoS.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
8.	Future meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings to be held at 3.30pm on a Thursdays.</li> <li>• Next meeting 3.30pm Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July.</li> </ul>
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## Attachment 1

	QUESTION	ORIGIN RESPONSE
	<b>Questions from the Coal-Ash Community Alliance inc – Gary Blasche</b>	
1.	Is there any data or information on the ash dam expansion & strengthening works project in relation to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal erosion,</li> <li>• Concentrated leak,</li> <li>• Backward erosion,</li> <li>• Suffusion,</li> <li>• Soil contact erosion or</li> </ul>	An Environmental Assessment was undertaken for the Expansion project, in accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, and can be found on the DPIE's website. <a href="https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=MP070084-MOD-1%2120200128T232922.221%20GMT">https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=MP070084-MOD-1%2120200128T232922.221%20GMT</a> )

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have filter traps been installed in both existing walls and new extensions?</li> </ul>	<p>This report includes information and data relating to all potential environmental impacts and associated mitigation measures associated with the project, in particular hydrology and geotechnical matters. Furthermore, the project is currently within the detailed design phase, and will be required to comply with the conditions of approval. As the design progresses, Origin will be in a position to discuss further questions on the topics raised.</p>
	<p>Relating to the long term ash management strategy...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eraring has approx. 35 mt currently stored, It produces 1.3 mt annually, Over a 12 year lifespan it will produce 16 mt, Giving a total storage of 51 mt,</li> <li>• Best scenario of 80% recycling per annum will still have a balance of approx. 3.28 mt per year</li> <li>• Giving us nearly 40 mt, plus the existing 35 mt =75 mt in 2036 (12 years) <i>twice as much as today!</i></li> </ul> <p><i>How do you solve this problem and what are your plans for remediation, not just capping?</i></p> <p><i>From origins long term ash management strategy: p12.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2005-2006 recycled... 44.5%</li> <li>• 2018-2019 recycled... 34.8%</li> </ul> <p><i>Last three years lowest percentage in 15 years... 27.6%, 29.8% &amp; 34.8%</i></p> <p><i>Yet the report states that origin has been actively seeking new markets and improving the existing market, seemingly not over the past few years... Can this be explained?</i></p>	<p>The ash generated by Eraring Power Station (EPS) fluctuates annually based on Station output. The ash recycling rate has been increasing and most recently (March/April 2020) the ash recycling rate is approximately 20% higher than in 2017. As outlined in the 2019 Long Term Ash Management Strategy (LTAMS) ash generation has been approximately 1.5Mtpa. Over an 11 year period (2022-2032) if EPS was to continue to operate at the same output level as it has in the past, this would equate to 16.5 Mt of additional ash being generated. If 80% ash recycling was achieved over this period it would equate to 13.2 Mt of ash being recycled over 11 years and an additional 3.3 Mt of ash being placed in the ash dam, or 0.3 Mtpa.</p> <p>The 2019 LTAMS outlines in detail the ash recycling projects being advanced and these are in progress, tracking towards the ash recycling goal.</p> <p>With regards ash dam rehabilitation the ash dam expansion MOD1 conditions of approval requires Origin to prepare a Rehabilitation Management Plan for all land disturbed by the development. This plan must be submitted to the Secretary for approval within 3 years of approval of MOD1, that is December 2022. Origin are committed to meeting the requirements of this condition.</p>
	<p>In relation to the 2017 epa environment compliance report <i>coal ash dams and emplacements...</i></p> <p><i>A summary of it findings is as follows...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 sites audited including eraring, vales point &amp; munmorah.</li> <li>• 416 assessments</li> <li>• 335 found compliant</li> </ul>	<p>The Eraring Power Station was audited as part of the report mentioned. There were findings requiring Origin's action. These were addressed as required by the EPA. There has been no further action from the EPA regarding this audit.</p> <p>The number and category of findings by the EPA for Eraring were: 1 – CodeOrange</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 81 failing (not compliant or unattainable)</li> <li>• 8 found as orange code</li> <li>• 11 found as yellow code</li> <li>• 36 found as blue code</li> <li>• 26 not determined</li> </ul> <p>No answers to which sites failed, what the issues were or what outcomes came from the 81 failures.</p> <p>Was eraring’s audit part of the 81 failures or 26 not determined &amp; if so what were the issues?</p>	<p>2 – Code Yelllow 14 - Code Blue</p> <p>The nature of the findings were varied, relating to water management, operational procedures and maintenance.</p> <p>All Actions have been completed.</p>
	<p><b>Questions from Derek Pola</b></p>	
	<p>The monitoring results published are only a fraction of the monitoring that is required by the EPA. Is it possible to make available a full suite of monitoring results including water quality results for episodic discharge over the dam spillway ?</p> <p>With increased leachate as a result of the dam expansion are there additional monitoring points and where are they situated?</p> <p>What is the current timeframe for the ash dam extension construction.”</p>	<p>Origin has committed to providing a more detailed briefing on site monitoring activities at the next meeting.</p> <p>Currently the construction phase is estimated to be completed by early 2022. This is dependent on a number of design and engineering factors. Origin will update the CCC on the progress of the program of works in future meetings.</p>