

Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Advisory Committee

Meeting 07 Minutes (with confidential information redacted)

MEETING #07 MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH 2018

UPSTAIRS, 55 GREY STREET TRARALGON VIC 3844

ATTENDEES

Ms Susan Lloyd (Chairperson), Latrobe Valley Community

Mr Roland Davies, Latrobe Valley Community

Mr James Faithful, Latrobe Valley Mine Operators (ENGIE Hazelwood)

Mr Ron Mether, Latrobe Valley Mine Operators (EnergyAustralia Yallourn)

Cr Graeme Middlemiss, Latrobe City Council

Mr Phil Stone, Latrobe City Council

Mr Terry Flynn, Southern Rural Water

Ms Jane Burton, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR)

Dr Grace Mitchell, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

Mr Alan Freitag, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

Mr Brett Millsom (Secretariat), Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR)

APOLOGIES

Ms Joanne Brunt, Aboriginal community representative

Ms Sarah Gilbert, Latrobe Valley Mine Operators (AGL Loy Yang)

Mr Tim Delany, Gippsland Trades and Labour Council

Ms Nicole Griffin, Gippsland Water

GUESTS

Emeritus Professor Rae Mackay, Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner

Mr John Krbaleski, Executive Director, Low Emission Resources, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

Ms Ann Kirwan, Program Manager, Land Use Strategy, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

Professor Peta Ashworth, Chair in Sustainable Energy Studies, School of Chemical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology, The University of Queensland

Dr Kathy Witt, Research Fellow, Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology, The University of Queensland

Dr Jill Harris, Research Fellow, Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre, Sustainable Minerals Institute, The University of Queensland

Ms Nina Burke, Strategist, Great Latrobe Park

Dr Rob Gaulton, Consulting Geologist, Great Latrobe Park

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Agenda Item	Minutes
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1 Committee administration

Minutes from last meeting and actions arising

- Minutes from the previous meeting of the Committee (Meeting #06) were noted.
- Apologies for Joanne Brunt, Tim Delany, Sarah Gilbert and Nicole Griffin were noted.
- The completed actions in the Action Register were noted.

Project Status update

Delivered by: Jane Burton, Director Coal Resources Victoria, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR).

- The receptors, scenarios, water metrics and geotechnical metrics reports are currently undergoing final reviews from Jacobs. The Advisory Committee was provided with a brief on these studies at the December 2017 Meeting (Meeting #06)
- The first complete draft of the geotechnical baseline report has been received by the Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy (LVRRS) Project Team. A briefing on the findings will be provided to the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (LVMRAC) in due course.
- The 'Question and Answer' document answering the key questions asked by a number of attendees at the November 2017 LVRRS Open Days will shortly be distributed to attendees.
- The LVRRS Project Team has also prepared a table of reports and products that will be prepared as part of Stage Three of the Project. This will be provided to members of the LVMRAC shortly.
- Reports providing further information about public attitudes to mine rehabilitation are currently being finalised.

2 The Great Latrobe Park

Delivered by: Nina Burke, Strategist and Dr Rob Gaulton, Consulting Geologist, The Great Latrobe Park.

The Great Latrobe Park is one mine rehabilitation proposal currently being investigated by a group of Latrobe Valley locals as an alternative to the pit lake rehabilitation option.

- The Great Latrobe Park Team comprises a number of dedicated people with specific expertise and experience in relevant industry and community development.
- The Great Latrobe Park envisions the Latrobe Valley's open cut mines and surrounding areas becoming treasured assets rather than sterile wastelands. They advocate that steps be taken at an early stage to ensure that this option is not negated, neutralized or restricted.
- The Great Latrobe Park wants to see the community involved in the decision making for the rehabilitation of the Latrobe Valley coal mines.
- The team believes that the Latrobe Valley could, as a result of the initiative outlined, become an international tourist. This would create strong positive outcomes for the economy and for the environment.
- The rehabilitation outcome envisioned by the Great Latrobe Park would offer a range of amenity options including education opportunities, facilities for sporting and cultural events, horticultural attractions and a broad spectrum of recreational facilities.
- Similar ideas have been realised internationally including such as the Butchart Gardens in Canada, the Eden Project in Cornwall in the United Kingdom and large rehabilitation projects related to mining areas in Germany.
- It was noted that locally within the Latrobe Valley interest in the concept is growing.
- The Project Team has four requests of the LVMRAC.
 - Expand the criteria for rehabilitation goals from "safe, stable and sustainable" to include "visually attractive and useful".
 - Ensure full, serious consideration of the principles encompassed in the Great Latrobe Park concepts and **not** endorse any plans that could be contrary to the achievement of these principles.
 - In recognition of the statement "ensuring that the community and key stakeholders have a decisive voice"

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when it comes to the region's future" (Latrobe Valley Rehabilitation Strategy 2016-2017) initiate an effective community consultation process with a focus on longer term holistic concepts and opportunities.

- Assist with the identification of plant and equipment that could or should be preserved for mining/heritage reasons before it is scrapped, sold or otherwise disposed of.
- It was asked where the team is currently at with the project. Nina Burke advised that work was underway to prepare a Project Brief and Project Plan.
- It was asked if the project has been funded. Nina advised no as the concept is at a formative stage and has not yet sought funding.

3 Land Use Planning proposed engagement

Delivered by: Ann Kirwan, Program Manager, Land Use Strategy, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and planning (DELWP) is currently preparing to undertake a series of public engagement workshops on land use planning matters to develop a preliminary land use planning vision for the Latrobe Valley's brown coal mine voids and surrounding areas.

- DELWP's Planning Group is providing land use and planning policy inputs into the development of the LVRRS and developing key decision making criteria related to land use.
- Planning is underway for a series of public engagement sessions to develop a preliminary land use vision for the mine voids and surrounding areas.
- It was noted that consideration needs to be given to the fact that this engagement will essentially be discussing preferred community and stakeholder land uses of land that it privately owned. Consideration needs to be given to how representatives from the mine operators are involved during these sessions to ensure they understand and are aware of the views and ideas being presented for land that is owned by them.
- For the first proposed preliminary vision public consultation workshop, it was noted that the morning will focus on "what you have told us so far". It was recognised that this should also include the information that was provided to the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry.
- It was advised that the locations of the workshops for each mine should correspond to the nearest town (i.e. Morwell for Hazelwood, Moe for Yallourn and Traralgon for Loy Yang)
- It was advised that DELWP should give careful consideration to not raising expectations during this process. Ann Kirwan advised that the final landform and land uses will be informed to a large degree by the findings of the water and geotechnical studies but the open conversation needs to start with the community early. It will be clearly communicated that this is very much a preliminary exercise, with further technical data still to be gathered to inform land use planning studies.
- It was asked what the ultimate outcome of this exercise will be. Ann Kirwan advised that end product will be a preliminary land use visioning statement.
- It was noted that there needs to be a better way of articulating to the local community how the various entities working on mine rehabilitation in the Latrobe Valley fit together. If the Committee is having difficulty understanding this, it is likely the community almost certainly is. Consideration ought to be given as to how the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner might be able to help in this instance.

4 Public Attitudes to Brown Coal Mine Rehabilitation

Delivered by:

Professor Peta Ashworth, Chair in Sustainable Energy Studies, School of Chemical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology, The University of Queensland

Dr Kathy Witt, Research Fellow, Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology, The University of Queensland

Dr Jill Harris, Research Fellow, Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre, Sustainable Minerals Institute, The University of Queensland.

The University of Queensland has undertaken comprehensive market research and follow up focus group discussions to better understand public attitudes to brown coal mine rehabilitation in Victoria, with a particular focus on the Latrobe Valley.

- The University of Queensland has been engaged by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) to undertake market research and focus groups to better understand public attitudes to mine

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rehabilitation in Victoria and the Latrobe Valley.

- The objective was to better understand:
 - current knowledge and interest in mine rehabilitation plans for the Latrobe Valley.
 - Preference for the three different mine rehabilitation scenarios (full pit lake, partial pit lake and dry pit).
 - Expected likely outcomes of mine rehabilitation.
 - Levels of trust in information sources and institutions.
 - Differences between the broader Victorian public and those living in the Latrobe Valley region.
- A total of 1,583 people participated in the survey across Victoria and the Latrobe Valley.
- Approximately 50 people took part in six focus group discussions across the Latrobe Valley.

Findings

- Current knowledge of mine rehabilitation is fairly equally split between generally positive views regarding the economic benefits, jobs and environmental restoration associated with mine rehabilitation compared with the negative views relating to impacts of the mine closure and pollution.
- Latrobe Valley residents strongly believed that mine rehabilitation should benefit local communities.
- Younger people were generally less engaged with the issue of mine rehabilitation.
- The term 'safe' was better understood than 'stable' or 'sustainable' where more information was needed.
- Regarding the views of expected time taken, water required and costs associated with achieving the full pit lake rehabilitation option at any one of the Latrobe Valley's three brown coal mines a large proportion of both the Victorian and Latrobe Valley samples answered 'don't know'.
- Around 80 per cent of survey participants believed the mine operators should finance mine rehabilitation and approximately 70 per cent believed government should also contribute to this.
- Of the three scenarios (full pit lake, partial pit lake and dry pit) the full pit lake was the preferred scenario overall.
- The focus group discussions confirmed that the full pit lake was the preferred option and seen as the safest and most stable and sustainable option. The dry pit however was seen as the most feasible with participants viewing this as the cheapest and easiest option to achieve and expecting this would be the option that was ultimately delivered.
- When asked about tradeoffs, the Latrobe City sample ranked a scenario that delivered a low cost, safe, stable and sustainable rehabilitation outcome with only minimal rehabilitation that preserved access to coal for the future as the most preferred option.
- The focus group discussions revealed a view that coal is seen as a surrogate for jobs and the opportunity costs of losing such a valuable resource are too high. If there was an alternative to coal mining employment in the region, people would be happy to see it go.
- Latrobe City residents have lower levels of trust in both the mining industry and government compared to the Victorian sample.
- People in the Latrobe Valley want more information about mine rehabilitation. The preference for information was from local sources with local newspapers being the most used sources of information followed by local radio and family, friends and colleagues.

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Round-the-table updates

Susan Lloyd (Chairperson), Latrobe Valley community

- The Chairperson and the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner recently met with the Minister for Resources, the Hon. Tim Pallas MP. An invitation for the Minister to attend an upcoming meeting of the Committee was extended.
- The Chairperson reminded people about the international mine closure conference in Germany later in the year.
- The Gippsland Coastal Board has requested a presentation on the LVRRS, particularly regarding water management/useage that could impact on the Gippsland Lakes.

Cr Graeme Middlemiss, Latrobe City Council

- Council will shortly finalise its view regarding its preferred vision for the rehabilitated landform of the mine voids and surrounding areas.

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James Faithful, Latrobe Valley mine operators (ENGIE)

- ENGIE's most recent workplan variation has recently been signed off by Earth Resources Regulation.
- ENGIE is currently preparing for a public community information session next week (Wednesday 14 March 2018).

Terry Flynn, Southern Rural Water

- Southern Rural Water has commenced preparation of its long-term water resource assessment.

Ron Mether, EnergyAustralia

- EnergyAustralia has applied for an extension of its Mining Licence.
- 21 February 2018 Environment Review Committee meeting was open to the public as a means of community engagement. This was well attended.

Jane Burton, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

- There's significant interest within Victoria and Australia regarding mine rehabilitation. There has been a number of PhD students approach the Department looking to undertake research in mine rehabilitation.

Emeritus Professor Rae Mackay, Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner

- The Commissioner recently released a report of feedback from his *Overseeing our Future* event held in December 2017. The report is available on the Commissioner's website.

6 Other business and next meeting

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday 26 April 2018.
