



CHUNXING ULAB
Community Liaison Committee Meeting
27.10.2021
7.00pm
Zoom Meeting

Agenda Items & Minutes

Topic	Host
Welcome Committee Members and Visitors	Richard Elkington
Apologies	Richard Elkington
Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting A motion to approve the previous meeting minutes from 8th September 2021 was made by Richard Elkington and seconded by Mark Richards.	Richard Elkington
Project Status Report Robin advised the EPA have responded to three submitted reports - the Baseline Soil Assessment, the Communication and Engagement Plan, and the Construction and Environmental Management Plan. Chunxing have been working to supply the EPA with additional information requested to meet all items requiring clarification. Robin advised the Baseline Soil Assessment Report has included additional offsite soil measurements from land owners around the site, and within 500m of the construction area, and are to be completed in November. EPA have tentatively accepted the report and have allowed three months to complete these works. Robin advised the CEMP has additional sections added including a shaker grid and wash bay for vehicles. Chunxing has also added additional details regarding dust suppression and noise abatement during construction. Noise levels will not increase significantly considering the heavy industrial vehicles that already operate in that area. The Communication and Engagement Plan has had some small changes made and is expected to be accepted by the EPA. Robin advised Chunxing has also been completing design work for the culverts collecting storm water, storage pond design and external concrete bund. The storm water hydraulic system, pumping capacity and equipment for storm water controls and the water treatment plant have been redesigned and updated. Sewer design for when the site is in operation has also been completed. A trade waste agreement with Gippsland Water has been applied for and tentatively accepted.	

The construction storage pond design has been updated. Robin advised he has been costing installation of the water line across the site to supply the construction area and have a permanent water metering system installed.

Dr Lakshman advised that the same reports need to be submitted to the council for evaluation within two weeks.

Richard asked if the reports were evaluated by council's administrative body. Karen Egan advised it would be an administrative process, and approval would be based on all relevant information being included in the submitted documentation.

Richard asked if it would be likely that construction works occur concurrently on Chunxing and Latrobe Valley Magnesium's (LVM) sites. Robin advised yes. Richard asked if it was possible to separate the measurements of air quality from the sites. Robin advised we would limit our construction time frames from 7am to 6pm. Robin further advised that the majority of civil construction work for LVM would be completed before Chunxing started site works. Robin advised we would monitor our site and operate within the guidelines Chunxing have been given.

Robin presented a slide of the proposed air monitoring towers to be placed close to the Hazelwood North School site. Chunxing is currently pricing the system.

Richard asked when site works would begin. Robin advised mid to late November. Weed control and a full survey need to be completed and the contaminated no go zones need to be pegged and flagged. The soil consolidation, construction pond and sewer connections would begin. Major site works are planning to start in the first week of January, dependant on approvals being in place.

Dr Lakshman advised we still need council approvals to proceed, and that it will take around 30 days of evaluation after submission in the next week.

Philip asked what criteria/compliance LVM had to meet to operate in their current capacity. Philip advised he could not find any information about the project, especially as Chunxing have such strict guidelines and compliance requirements. Philip asked if LVM were under the same restraints.

Mark Richards advised he thought it was approved prior to the last council elections and that it was approved without any restrictions. Mark asked how cross contamination from neighbouring sites would be controlled. Mark suggested a wind direction capability on the air monitor may be considered. Robin advised Chunxing would consider the idea.

Shane Mynard asked how the contaminants in the air are differentiated between neighbouring sites. Shane advised that Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) would be visiting in December to check water supply adequacy for emergency incidents for both Chunxing and LVM as other industrial incidents have highlighted issues with similar developments.

Karen Egan advised there was a difference between Council and EPA roles in developments. Council controls land development and land use. EPA manages environmental issues. Richard asked if a community consultation was set up for LVM. Karen advised it was unnecessary as there was no works approval as it was a demonstration plant and a different process to what was required by Chunxing.

Robin
Krause

Stacey Clark advised that LVM applied for and were granted a research, development and demonstration licence. (Now called a pilot program). LVM is a much smaller project to prove a concept, not a full scale operation. Under the Environment Protection Act there is no requirement for community consultation. Mathew Peak asked if LVM's licence was time limited. Stacey advised yes, but was unsure when the expiry is. Usually around 2 years. New legislative frame work sets out requirements for EPA and duty holders for licence types.

Richard stated that a lot of new industries such as "big" batteries and LVM seem to have had little community consultation or attention and conversely ULAB have had intense scrutiny. Karen advised that LVM did engage with the community for a number of years but the council received no feedback or interest from the community.

Leo Billington suggested there was no community consultation for LVM. Karen advised a Community Liaison Committee was not required as a works approval was not required. Leo stated it would be protocol and good manners for the community to be advised of the LVM project. Stacey advised the duty holder could be invited to do that and provide some information.

Philip asked why all industries aren't subject to the same consultation and communication. Chunxing should not be singled out for scrutiny. Stacey replied that if LVM wish to become a full blown commercial operation they will need to go through a development license process (works approval) similar to Chunxing. Karen advised she was bound by the planning and environmental act and regulation. Any consultation that was done was outside the requirements of the act and was done because there was community interest in the project. Richard suggested that any new industries should brief the communities on their proposals.

Dr Lakshman advised the LVM pilot plant is processing forty thousand metric tonnes of fly ash, compared to Chunxing's process of fifty thousand metric tonnes of ULAB feed.

Shane advised that there were two new proposed battery plants in the district. Shane advised FRV & CFA had received no information regarding the LVM development, and had concerns for water supply. Shane also asked how it was determined which plant contaminants come from, as it could affect emergency response. Stacey advised it is determined on what the companies are licenced to discharge. Robin confirmed the monitoring station is on the boundary of Chunxing and LVM. Stacey and Shane will follow up further after the meeting.

CEMP Report Discussion

Construction Environmental Management Plan. Robin advised Chunxing submitted the initial plan two months ago. Further clarification was required by the EPA, including the sequence of work. Chunxing have expanded the CEMP to include soil details, top soil placement, distribution of soil between areas, dust control and machinery access. Additional testing has produced a result of allowing a mixture of 4% lime mixed into the soil to compact to 150kPa which is suitable to build on. Soil will be consolidated to a depth between 600mm and 1000mm.

Robin advised Chunxing were also installing shaker grids and a wash plant to wash all vehicles before leaving site.

Leanne asked if a full car wash was going to be installed at the site. Robin advised not during construction, but a full car was would be installed for operation of the plant.

Robin advised Chunxing have completed a noise analysis to complete work on site, and that noise guidelines will be met.

<p>Robin advised the storage ponds have been redesigned to be heavy enough to ensure a rise in ground water will not push the ponds out of the ground. Due to the storage pond bases being thicker the wall height have been made higher to accommodate this change.</p> <p>Robin advised the CEMP has been updated with a detailed construction sequence, schedule, preliminary works, water works, office area and equipment list.</p> <p>Chunxing have made an agreement with the EPA and Council that all reports will be submitted to both organisations.</p> <p>Robin advised we need to complete an additional report prior to commissioning - Environmental Improvement Plan, for operation of the plant. This will be completed and submitted in the next 12 months.</p> <p>Richard asked if an environmental community review/monitoring committee was a requirement during the operational phase. Robin advised no. Chunxing has to provide an environmental management plan that covers operational risk, plant controls within the granted works approval, and the ability to shut down the plant with these conditions.</p> <p>Mark asked if the wall heights of the ponds had been increased for storage capacity. Robin advised no, it was only to accommodate the thicker bases of the ponds to stop them lifting out of the ground when empty during an unexpected rise in groundwater levels.</p>	<p>Robin Krause</p>
<p>Baseline Report Discussion</p> <p>Robin advised the EPA requested information regarding sampling in the Western buffer zone area. Chunxing referred back to sample data from 2008 during rehabilitation of the site at that time. This information shows soil testing across the site was consistent.</p> <p>The EPA also requested soil testing of the neighbouring area within a 500m radius of the site to provide a baseline measurement. This is to ensure Chunxing does not pollute this area during operation. A consultant has contacted the surrounding landholders to conduct testing in the first two weeks of November. The soil report is due in January 2022. This will provide baseline and future operational data for the EPA.</p> <p>Robin advised there is one well on site contaminated with a petrochemical. EPA has asked for further assessment to ensure this contamination does not spread to the surrounds or the buildings onsite. Robin advised the building specifications, slab, vapor barriers and water traps will avoid any moisture or contaminants penetrating the slab. The EPA has given tentative approval that these control systems meet their requirements.</p> <p>Robin advised the Baseline Report now has tentative approval from the EPA.</p> <p>Robin advised there are still six reports that need to be assessed to allow construction. The following set of reports will cover operational and environmental requirements, risk control, fire protection and pumping.</p> <p>Leanne asked about baseline monitoring. Robin advised Chunxing have completed soil and ground water testing. Robin advised baseline air monitoring has not been completed. Equipment is not readily available but Chunxing have a contractor working on the air monitoring tower.</p>	<p>Robin Krause</p>

Leanne asked if Chunxing were going to use XRF monitoring. Robin advised Mt Isa only do this monitoring in the community and it is only designed for light dust samples. XRF is not used commercially as it's not accurate with a high dust burden. They have been trialled in the plant but were not as accurate as sampling with a dust collection sent to a laboratory for analysis. Consequently Chunxing will not proceed with it as it's unproven in a commercial environment.

Leanne asked if baseline air and ground monitoring was being done in the school grounds. Robin advised no, Bronwyn's property has proven to be several hundred meters away from the school boundary and Chunxing are looking for a closer property to set up the monitoring station. Robin advised due to legal restrictions we could not do monitoring on the school grounds.

Richard asked if the well contamination was a legacy of the previous site use. Robin advised yes, and there were 12 wells in total on the site. The wells within 200m of the contaminated well were not affected. Soil testing within 30m of the well show no contamination in the samples. It is a spot source of contamination that disperses into the ground water. Chunxing have demonstrated the chemical cannot get into the building.

Leanne asked what the chemical was. Robin advised it was TCE Tetro Chloro Ethelene. The level is not harmful.

Mark advised TCE was an industrial cleaner. Robin advised that it was present in the contamination history report prior to the rehabilitation of the site by the previous owner.

Community Questions and Comments

Philip advised he was happy with the transparency of Chunxing's information. He suggested that other developments in the area were also worthy of similar scrutiny.

Stacey advised the EPA website has a page that displays when approvals are granted.

The Committee discussed the date for the December meeting, a poll will be held to determine the date. Mark suggested that we have a site visit in early December if possible, and definitely prior to February. This being dependant on an appropriate stage of site development.

Robin
Krause

Agenda items for next meeting - date to be advised.

Richard
Elkington

December Meeting time & venue to be confirmed.

Richard
Elkington

Close