

Newstan/Awaba Community Consultative Committee (CCC) – 2024 Annual Report

CCC project name:	Newstan/Awaba Collieries	Reporting period:	January 1 to December 31 2024
Independent chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill	Proponent contact:	Roxanne Hoffman Environment and Community Coordinator

1. Executive summary / introduction

The Newstan/Awaba Community Consultative Committee was established in 2011 combining the two collieries into one committee. Mining began at the Awaba Colliery in 1947, prior to the implementation of the 1979 Environmental Planning and Assessment. Mining ceased in March 2012 and the mine still remains on care and maintenance. In the area now referred to as Newstan, underground coal mining began in 1887 and the mine continued under existing rights until 1999 when a consolidated consent was approved by the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning. In 2014, Newstan was also placed on care and maintenance, although an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to recommence mining currently rests with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI). A feasibility study is underway and an amended variation report is likely to be submitted in 2026. Both collieries and associated surface infrastructure are within the Lake Macquarie City Council Local Government Area, east of the M1 Motorway and located south of the Awaba village, south west of the township of Toronto, extending from the western extremity of Lake Macquarie to the eastern foothills of the Watagan Mountains.

The committee is comprised of:

- Two local community representatives;
- An elected Councillor and staff representative of Lake Macquarie City Council;
- Two Centennial Newstan representatives, with attendance from others as required;
- An independent Chairperson.

2. CCC activities over last 12 months:

- The committee's normal meeting schedule changed during 2024 with ordinary meetings held in April and December. Apart from regular reporting on general environmental management and monitoring, operational activities, land and water management with a pollution reduction study to address outcomes from an extreme weather event experienced early 2023, progress on remediation of the Awaba seep and sinkholes, the *Tetratheca Juncea* transportation, ongoing site vandalism, the committee undertook a site tour prior to the April meeting, of the southern reject emplacement area (SREA), where a subsidence event from previous mining had occurred in March.
- The Extraordinary August meeting was held to apprise members on two forthcoming modifications to the Northern Coal Logistics consent previously notified to the committee in July. Modification 4 for the expansion of the Cooranbong Stockpile and Modification 5 for the beneficial use of the coal washery reject. Whilst modification 4 raised little interest amongst committee members, modification 5 did raise some concerns on the proposed traffic route on public roads with safety and increased vehicle movements interacting with new developments in the area, including the recently approved Black Rock tourist resort.

- Centennial personnel advised of studies currently being prepared to assess these matters and to advise members when a response to submissions would be lodged with the department. At this meeting Centennial personnel also advised of a forthcoming Modification 6 for a redesign of SREA to accommodate updated water management and relocation of power lines.
- At the December meeting and in view of increased activity at the Newstan and Awaba sites, the committee decided to increase the meeting schedule for 2025 to three meetings each year. The currency of the Terms of Reference was confirmed with minor changes to Council's representation and increased meetings.
- The community representatives, as long term members, bring considerable local knowledge to the meetings and continue to enjoy the established rapport with mine personnel. As stated in previous reporting, although a very small committee, one of the members is an environmental advocate and represents four other local stakeholder groups. This does contribute to the group's broader community engagement.
- The partnership with Centennial personnel continues to provide support to the welfare of disadvantaged people residing in the area by way of donations at Christmas via the Pamper Care Project, administered through the local Neighbourhood Centre. Picture below shows the Mine Manager, Environment and Community Coordinator and committee member with only a portion of the goods donated for the 2024 Christmas drive. A great team effort.



3. Key issues

The key issues for the committee are consistent with those of previous years. The collieries remain on care and maintenance while Centennial reviews the feasibility of the extension project, with an anticipated variation report to be prepared by 2026.

Issue	Actions taken	Next steps
Illegal dumping and trespass on mining lease	Installation of security cameras and additional bollards to prevent access. Close liaison with local Police, Council and RID Squad.	Ongoing.
Traffic route for Modification 5	Committee held extraordinary meeting in August. Presentation to the December meeting with specialist staff. Commitment given to advise when Response to Submissions lodged with department completed.	Specialist staff to attend March 2025 meeting.

4. Focus for next 12 months:

- Increased meeting schedule to address increased site activities with modifications. Continued comprehensive reporting on company operations, including monitoring and environmental performance and any community complaints/ responses and planned activities.

Name of chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill
Date:	February 11 2025.