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## Project Consultation Plan

### Catherine Hill Bay Residential Subdivision

**Property:**

Catherine Hill Bay

**Applicant:**

Coastal Hamlets Pty Ltd

**Date:**

July 2013



**ROSE**

Creating a quality way of living



# Document Control

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## 1.0 Introduction

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Community consultation is an important part of most major construction projects. Consultation provides a process for exchange of information that benefits all project stakeholders.

The community of stakeholders in construction projects can include the owner/developer, the construction company and workers, statutory authorities with regulatory and management responsibilities, local organizations, local businesses, adjoining land owners and local residents. Other interests may include the news media and potential purchasers of the site.

The purpose of project consultation is to allow for information exchange between the proponents and the community, allow a range of views on the project management to be expressed and canvas problem solving options should the need arise.

Of particular importance is the input of adjoining owners. Adjoining owners can provide valuable information on the effectiveness of project controls and management, and can often anticipate problems.

To promote stakeholder participation, a range of project communication processes are required. A common source of project complaints is a misunderstanding of project requirements and management. Early advice from the community about problems, or perceived problems, is a part of effective site and project management.

The keys to effective project consultation are community confidence and transparency in the process. It is the intention of this project consultation plan to set out the scope and purpose of project consultation and outline the processes to be used.

## 2.0 The Project

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The project is construction of a large residential subdivision of up to 550 residential lots and associated infrastructure.

The construction will proceed in stages. The first stage will be the bulk earthworks over the former Moonee Colliery and Catherine Hill Bay Coal Washery sites.

The site has a range of sensitivities including:

- Coastal location;
- Location of part of the site in a heritage conservation area;
- Local heritage items;
- Large areas of adjoining conservation land managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service;
- Downstream wetlands;
- Downstream coastal lagoons;
- Public access to Moonee Beach and the Munmorah State Conservation Area;
- Potential Aboriginal cultural heritage values;
- The adjoining Catherine Hill Bay Village;
- Potential contamination from the former use of the site; and
- Unconsolidated fill over former mine areas.

The project is subject to the major project approval issued by the NSW Planning and Assessment Commission in May 2011 and as modified in May 2013. There is also an approval under the Commonwealth Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) issued in February 2009 with a new approval expected late 2013.

Legal responsibility for compliance with project approvals and relevant legislation lies with the land owner, Coastal Hamlets Pty Ltd.

Responsibility for ongoing site management is delegated to the site construction companies via a site Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Further delegation of responsibility, by the construction company, to contractors, can be made via Environmental Management Plans. The environmental management plan process establishes clear chains of responsibility and accountability for compliance with project approvals.

## 3.0 The Value of Community Consultation

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For Coastal Hamlets in particular and project stakeholders, there are a number of potential benefits from the implementation of a successful community consultation program. These include:

- A higher level of compliance with statutory project requirements;
- Greater confidence in site management procedures and their effectiveness;
- Better environment protection;
- The benefits of local knowledge;
- More effective complaints handling;
- Early identification and resolution of issues; and
- Lower project costs.

Community feedback will be used to inform project management of potential environmental, social and economic impacts for the Catherine Hill Bay project.

Good communication is good project management. Consultation is an important form of community engagement which if not done properly can result in loss of confidence and trust.

The purpose of consultation for the Catherine Hill Bay project is to allow for information exchange between the proponents and the community, allow a range of views on the project management to be expressed and canvas problem solving options should the need arise.

## 4.0 Purpose of Project Consultation Plan

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This project consultation plan is to give effect to a number of project requirements being:

*To provide information to those most likely to be affected by project works (i.e. address a basic civil right).*

And

*To satisfy a commitment made by Coastal Hamlets to undertake community consultation (i.e. to honour a commitment made before project approval).*

And

*To satisfy a condition of project approval (i.e. achieve an environmental compliance).*

And

*To establish an effective public participation process (i.e. make public participation a part of project management).*

Coastal Hamlets has made the following project commitment:

*B6 Community consultation*

*A detailed programme for future community consultation will be developed by the proponent (and be subject to the prior approval of the Director General) and commenced 3 months prior to the start of works.*

This commitment will be effected through a Community Liaison Committee for the Project. Draft terms of reference for the Community Liaison Committee are provided at **Attachment A**.

## 5.0 Stakeholders

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Stakeholders is the description for the individuals, community organisations and statutory authorities who may have an interest in a project.

The stakeholders most likely to be affected by a construction project are nearby residents whose amenity may be affected.

The range of potential stakeholders for the Catherine Hill Bay project is considerable and may include those listed below. As previously stated Coastal Hamlets is accountable to stakeholders for effective communication.

### 5.1 ADJOINING LAND OWNERS

- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service / Minister for the Environment;
- Coal & Allied Pty Ltd;
- Lake Macquarie City Council; and
- Catherine Hill Bay residents.

The expectation of adjoining land owners is minimal impact from project works, ready availability of information and ready access to site managers should any problems arise.

### 5.2 STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

- NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure;
- Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities;
- NSW Roads and Maritime Services;
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service;
- NSW Mines Subsidence Board; and
- Lake Macquarie City Council.

The expectation of statutory authorities is policy and approvals compliance.

### 5.3 SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Water and sewer infrastructure providers;
- Ausgrid;
- Lake Macquarie City Council;
- Telecommunications providers; and
- Busways.

The expectation of service providers is that their requirements be considered and their infrastructure, and infrastructure capacity, not be compromised by works or project outcomes.

#### **5.4 COMMUNITY GROUPS**

- Catherine Hill Bay Surf Life Saving Club;
- Catherine Hill Bay Boardriders;
- Bahtabah Local Aboriginal Land Council; and
- Catherine Hill Bay Progress Association.

Depending on the objectives of the group they may, or may not, have an interest in the project.

#### **5.5 LOCAL BUSINESSES**

There may be interest in business opportunities arising from the project.

#### **5.6 SITE WORKERS**

The project workers and contractors become local stakeholders through site induction processes and the ongoing application of environmental management requirements.

## 6.0 Communications Options

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The community will be informed and consulted through the following mechanisms.

### 6.1 CONTACT PERSONS

Contact persons will be nominated for the site contractor, Coastal Hamlets, and as otherwise required. Stakeholders will be encouraged to raise matters of concern with the contacts.

### 6.2 WEBSITE

A website will be established prior to commencement of site works to provide a library of project information. Information available on the website will include project approvals, management plans, works scheduling, fact sheets, contact persons (including emergency contact), the minutes of community meetings, and the minutes of community liaison committee meetings.

### 6.3 COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Coastal Hamlets will support a Community Liaison Committee to address community issues via formal access to project management.

The primary purpose of the meetings will be to allow for discussion of community issues between the project managers and the stakeholders. Stakeholders will be free to ask questions and raise issues for discussion, related to project management and the site.

The meetings will have an ongoing agenda and will be minuted. A set of draft terms of reference are provided as **Attachment A**. Accountability and transparency will be provided through the publication of Committee agendas and minutes. The first committee meeting will be held before works commence. It is intended to hold meetings at a minimum rate of monthly while site works are in progress.

### 6.4 SIGNAGE

The work site will have prominently displayed signs providing project information such as contact names, phone numbers and emergency numbers.

### 6.5 MAIL

Postal services, or email, will be used to contact stakeholders.

### 6.6 COMPLAINTS PROCESS

The complaints process will provide for a rapid investigation and response to problems by project management.

All complaints received will be investigated and acted on as necessary. In all cases the complainant will be advised of the results of the investigation and any resulting action.

## **6.7 NEWS MEDIA**

Notices may be published in local newspapers to advise of project events and milestones.

Only persons nominated by Coastal Hamlets Pty Ltd will have authority to make statements or issue information to the news media on behalf of the project management. A list of persons authorized to make media statements will be available on the project website.

## **6.8 FACT SHEETS**

Fact sheets will be prepared to provide project information to the public. Fact sheets will be available via the project website. Fact sheets will be updated as necessary and may be mailed directly to residents and stakeholders at key points in the construction process.

## **6.9 DIRECT CONTACT**

From time to time stakeholders may be contacted directly by project personnel.

## **6.10 COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

Coastal Hamlets will also hold general community meetings to pass on information about the project.

The dates, locations, times and content of such meetings will be at the discretion of Coastal Hamlets Pty Ltd. Coastal Hamlets will seek the advice of the Community Liaison Committee on the need for, and timing of, community meetings. Community meetings will be held regularly at intervals of approximately 6 months.

## 7.0 Complaints process

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The complaints process is an extremely important aspect of the communications strategy.

An effective complaints process allows for timely input to a project by individual stakeholders.

The complaints process provides an independent review of operations and works that allows for detection, investigation, and early resolution of problems and perceived problems.

A complaints register will be maintained and will be made available for inspection on request. The details to be recorded in the register are provided at **Attachment B**.

Complaints will be able to be made via post, via email, by telephone or direct to the site office.

### 7.1 OBJECTIVE OF COMPLAINTS PROCESS

To provide a process for the timely and appropriate response to public complaints.

### 7.2 COMPLAINTS PROCESS PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- All complaints registered;
- All complaints promptly and appropriately investigated and documented;
- All complainants contacted and advised of investigations progress within two days; and
- All complainants followed up to ensure that effective complaint resolution has been achieved.

### 7.3 RESPONSIBLE PERSON

As nominated by the site Construction Environmental Management Plan the responsible person, or in their absence the Site Manager, is responsible for receiving, registering, investigating, documenting and correcting all complaints.

Any representative of the project proponent or the site management can receive a complaint.

### 7.4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY/MITIGATION MEASURES

The details of all complaints however, or by whomever, received will be registered on an Environmental Complaints Form.

Mediation procedures will be instigated where a complaint is unable to be resolved.

The Responsible person will ensure that the details of the investigations and any follow up actions (or justification for no action) are recorded within the Environmental Complaints Form in respect of each complaint.

## **7.5 COMPLAINTS REPORTING**

All complaints will be reported to the site manager.

The Site Manager is responsible for reporting complaint details to Coastal Hamlets and/or the EPA/Local Authority/DoPI in accordance with approval/permit/license conditions.

Information regarding all complaints received (including how the complaint was addressed and whether resolution was reached) will be reported in the Construction Compliance Report.

The results of a complaint investigation will be reported to the complainant.

## **7.6 CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

Following an investigation, a non-conformance report is to be issued to any party whose actions or omissions have given rise to the complaint and there is a proven breach of site Construction Environmental Management Plan or approval /permit /licensing conditions or guidelines.

For a complaint where Construction Environmental Management Plan or regulatory guidelines are not breached, the Responsible person, the Project Manager or the respective Contractor Manager/representative are to investigate how work practices may be modified to lessen perceived or actual environmental impact.

## **7.7 FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Examples of incidents or failure to comply in relation to the management of environmental complaints include:

- Insufficient information recorded on the Environmental Complaints Form;
- Failure to submit the Environmental Complaints Form as soon as practical following the receipt of the complaint;
- Complaints not documented or reported, and/or record not maintained;
- Failure to notify the complainant of action taken; and
- Failure to implement corrective actions.

## **Corrective Actions**

Should a failure to comply occur with the management of environmental complaints one or more of the following corrective actions will be undertaken as appropriate:

- Conduct additional training of staff regarding complaint management; and/or
- Review procedures to reduce risk of procedural failure.

## 8.0 Emergency Contacts

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All adjoining owners and key stakeholders will be provided with a list of emergency contacts.

The emergency contacts and contact numbers will be made available on the project website.

The list will be updated as necessary.

The emergency contact list will include the following:

- Site manager;
- Site foreman;
- Site OH&S officer;
- Site environmental officer; and
- Coastal Hamlets representative.

Generally the Site Manager will be the primary emergency contact.

In addition to the emergency contacts the contact details for the complaints process will be provided including postal address, email address, and a 24 hour 1300 phone number will be established.

## **9.0 Communications Strategy**

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The timing and sequence for project communication with the public will be as follows.

### **9.1 PRIOR TO SITE ESTABLISHMENT**

- Community consultation plan approved by Department of Planning & Infrastructure.

### **9.2 PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION**

- Website established;
- Adjoining owners/stakeholders notified by mail of likely works commencement date;
- Local newspaper notice of first community liaison meeting date; and
- First community liaison meeting held.

### **9.3 DURING CONSTRUCTION**

- Website updating;
- Ongoing community liaison meetings;
- Ongoing mail outs as necessary;
- Complaints process operating; and
- Communications plan updates as required.

## **10.0 Management of the Consultation Process**

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### **10.1 CONSULTATION MANAGEMENT**

Responsibility for the community consultation process rests with Coastal Hamlets Pty Ltd.

The process will be managed in accordance with this plan.

The scope of consultation will be in accordance with this plan.

### **10.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROCESS**

The success of the consultation process will be judged on how well the following promise is kept:

*We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input has influenced decisions.*

### **10.3 VARIATION OF THE PROJECT CONSULTATION PLAN**

The Project Consultation Plan is part of the approved project documentation. The approval of the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure will be required to vary the plan.

The Community Liaison Committee will be consulted before any proposed amendment to the Project Consultation Plan. The documented approval of the Committee for any changes will form part of any request to amend the plan.

# Attachment A

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*COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE*

## **COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE**

### **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **Purpose of the Committee**

The purpose of the Community Liaison Committee is to inform the community and other stakeholders of activities taking place on the Coastal Hamlets Catherine Hill Bay residential subdivision site, and in particular on matters of environmental management and monitoring.

The Committee is also to give members of the community a forum in which to formally advise of any concerns with the project.

#### **Function of the Group**

The purpose of the Community Liaison Committee is to:

- Focus on construction and operational matters that will impact on the community;
- Explore ways these impacts can be minimised in consultation with Coastal Hamlets project management team;
- Identify issues in the community regarding construction and operational matters and bring them to the table for resolution with Coastal Hamlets; and
- Disseminate information about the progress of the project to the community.

Matters the committee may discuss include:

- Construction impacts on the amenity of surrounding areas. These could include noise and vibration, traffic and transport, heritage, air quality, landscaping and visual impacts;
- The effectiveness of implementation of those management plans related to construction impacts which affect the community; and
- The strategies that will be used to address community concerns.

*The committee's role is to suggest and recommend measures to Coastal Hamlets. It does not have the authority to implement measures.*

#### **Membership**

The minimum committee membership will be:

- The Chair being a Coastal Hamlets Pty Ltd representative;
- One representative for construction contractors;
- One Local Government representative;
- One OEH/NPWS representative depending on need and availability (being the major adjoining land owner/manager);
- One DoPI representative depending on need and availability (being the supervising authority); and
- At least two local residents /and or representatives of local community groups (refer to Section 5.4 of the Community Consultation Plan)

At the chairs discretion non- members such as specialists or consultants may be called to advise on technical issues associated with the project.

## **Commitments**

Coastal Hamlets has voluntarily committed to initiating and retaining the Community Liaison Committee as a best practice method of engaging with the community and key stakeholders. Coastal Hamlets believes that doing so will enable the company to continually improve and effectively operate as part of the local community.

Accordingly, Coastal Hamlets commits to providing the necessary resources to ensure the proper functioning of the committee.

Members of the Community Liaison Committee will:

- Work collaboratively as part of a project team;
- Work in an open and honest fashion, and with respect for each other;
- Understand that at all times it will be necessary to listen to and negotiate different points of view and perspectives, and to make compromises accordingly;
- Consider each other's opinions and views to be of equal importance;
- Refrain from any form of conduct that may cause a reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment;
- Exercise their best possible judgment in a manner that reflects the group or section of the community that they are representing; and
- Respect that the project is a commercial business operation and information shared is done in good faith, with the expectation it will be treated with due discretion.

## **Meeting Procedures and Administration**

Meeting procedures should be in a manner determined by the Committee once it has been established. The following are suggestions:

- *Co-ordination and secretarial function:* performed by Coastal Hamlets;
- *Frequency of meetings:* monthly during active site works and otherwise as determined by the committee;
- *Notice of meetings:* committee members to be notified at least 2 weeks before the meeting;
- *Setting the agenda:* the Agenda will be a "Standard" agenda with minor adjustments made by the chairperson to provide more detail of items to be covered. Significant changes to the agenda are to be agreed at the preceding meeting, or by notifying the Chairperson at the prior meeting; and
- *Minutes:* the minutes of the meeting should be distributed to the members as soon as possible after the meetings.

## **Role of the Chair**

The independent chair will:

- Ensure the Community Liaison Committee fulfils its terms of reference;
- Implement principles and protocols in a fair manner with all members;
- Take active and positive steps to ensure full and proper liaison and coordination between members;
- Chair meetings in a manner that ensures agenda items are limited to those issues within the scope of the committee and dealt with in a timely manner; and
- Act to resolve any potential conflicts.

## **Media protocol**

Members of the Community Liaison Committee are free to state their own or their organisation's viewpoint to the media but in doing so should make it clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the Community Liaison Committee.

## **Attachment B**

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*ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLAINTS REGISTER RECORDING FORM*

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLAINTS RECORDING FORM

This Form is to be used to register details of any communications made by the general public, the media, NSW DoPI or the NSW Environmental Protection Agency in respect to any environmental complaints in regard to the Catherine Hill Bay Subdivision Project.

Date of Complaint	
Time of Complaint	
Nature of Complaint <i>(What is the environmental impact?)</i>	
Name of Complainant	
Address	
Phone No.	
How Received (e.g. telephone, email, in person)	
Investigation Officer	
Investigations Carried <i>(include validity checks)</i>	
Cause of Problem	
Action Taken	
Time and Date Action Taken	
Resolution	
Feedback to complainant	