



Community dialogue - meeting #5

Hi-Quality – Bulla Spoils Facility

Meeting details

Date: 13 July 2021, 5.00pm to 6.00pm

Venue: Online (via Zoom)

Attendees:

Community representatives:

- Chris O’Neill – No Toxic Soil Campaign (by phone)
- Graham Williams – Sunbury Residents Association
- Heather Dodd – Local resident (by phone)
- Michael Osborne –Sunbury Business Association

Apologies:

- Anthony White – Controller, Sunbury SES

Hi-Quality

- Lance Ingrams –Regional Manager, Victoria
- Amy Watson – Partner (Forge Communications)

i.e community

- Todd Beavis - Principal (facilitator)

Purpose

The meeting was held to continue the dialogue between Hi-Quality and community representatives in relation to the establishment of the Bulla Spoil Processing Facility to collect, treat and dispose of material from the tunnel boring machines on the West Gate Tunnel Project. Representatives from Transurban and AECOM were invited to present on the West Gate Tunnel Project and Assessment of PFAS in Groundwater respectively.

Agenda

The key items on the agenda were the presentations from Transurban and AECOM. However, when it became apparent that not all participants could attend, or could only do so by phone, the decision was made to reschedule the presentations so that all community representatives could participate via Zoom. The decision was made to proceed with a brief meeting, given the limited participation.

Key points of discussion

i.e.

- Given the intended focus of the meeting was changed, Lance began providing a brief update of works happening on-site and community representatives had opportunities to raise any questions or concerns they had since the last meeting.
- Initial questions related to the building of the bund wall (barrier) along Sunbury Road as part of the site establishment works, specifically in relation to the planting of trees and whether the bund would be removed at the end of the project. Hi-Quality representatives advised that some existing vegetation would be removed during construction and that the bund would be finished with plantings and landscaping, though these plans had yet to be finalised. Community representatives were also advised that it is expected the bund would be removed at the end of the project.
- Questions were then asked about who is responsible for testing the material from the tunnel boring machines and reporting the results, noting that it was important for the community to understand who to direct requests for information to. Representatives were advised that initial testing was undertaken at the pivot site (where the material comes out of the tunnel) and then transported to the Bulla Spoil Processing Facility where further testing would be undertaken by CPB John Holland Joint Venture (the JV). Hi-Quality confirmed that the testing of the spoil (material from the tunnel) is the responsibility of the JV, who are obligated to comply with reporting requirements set by the EPA, and any decisions to make information publicly available rests with the JV.
- Community representatives were then interested to know what would happen to the material if testing showed that PFAS levels were higher than expected, in particular how long the material would remain onsite in Bulla and where it would be taken if the contamination levels were higher than Hi-Quality was licenced to manage. Hi-Quality advised that if the PFAS contamination exceeded the level they are approved to manage, that the material would be removed from the facility as soon as possible and another solution would need to be found for its safe disposal, such as disposal at a thermal plant. Community representatives asked that a clear timeline and process be provided, a commitment was given by Hi-Quality to clarify this with the JV and report back to the group.
- Discussion then turned to communication with the broader community, with a focus on upcoming plans for an online briefing that would be recorded and shared by Hi-Quality and the community groups. It was noted that the Sunbury Residents Association had organised a similar briefing with representatives from Victoria's Big Build to discuss impacts of level crossing removal in Sunbury.
- Members of the dialogue accepted that an online recorded briefing arranged by Hi-Quality was a good next step in the engagement process, however, that there must be a public facing briefing or information session with all the project partners (Transurban and the JV) at some point in the near future. Hi-Quality advised that they are talking to the project partners about arranging a session and that this would likely happen once the contract was finalised between Hi-Quality and the JV.
- Hi-Quality advised that in addition to the online recorded briefing, a newsletter would be distributed across Bulla and Sunbury in August providing an update on the project and information about issues of interest to the community.
- Members were asked if there were any specific areas of interest they would like to know more about from Hi-Quality, other project parties or state government. Key issues raised included information about the Bulla Bypass, traffic management plans for the transport of the material and the maintenance of Bulla Bridge.
- The meeting closed with Lance providing a project update, advising that upcoming works included decommissioning some operations onsite to allow for the construction of the new facility and land

i.e.

clearing. Land clearing would likely begin next week, including tree trimming and erecting a fence along Sunbury Road.

- A question was asked as to whether tree trimming was being done in replacement of planting new trees. Hi-Quality advised that some trees need to be trimmed and that vegetation would be planted along or near the bund wall, though, as mentioned earlier, plans had not been finalised. The group was advised that the barrier would be approximately 4 metres high and 15 metres wide.
- Hi-Quality advised that approval from the Minister for Planning on the Secondary Consent documents is expected in the next week or two.

Next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting involving the briefing from Transurban and AECOM would take place as soon as possible and that the date would be sorted out in the coming days in consultation with the presenters.