

## **Black Rock Community Consultative Panel**

### **Meeting 1 – Minutes**

**Date:** 11 August 2025

**Time:** 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

**Location:** Black Rock Motor Resort, 284 Rhondda Road, Wakefield

**Chair:** Professor Roberta Ryan

**Minutes:** Kate Robinson

### **1. Welcome and introductions:**

#### **Chair:**

- Professor Roberta Ryan, University of Newcastle – specialist in social planning, political sociology, and regional development.
- Her role is independent of both project proponent (Black Rock) and consent authorities; role is to facilitate community input and ensure transparency.
- Black Rock has voluntarily opted for this panel process (it is not a statutory requirement). The establishment is to promote open and transparent communications with its neighbours and the wider community.
- The CCP follows the [NSW Government guidelines for Community Consultative Committees for major projects](#).
- Current focus for the panel: construction phase – particularly issues affecting immediate neighbours and local residents.
- Future focus for the panel: expand to broader partnerships, community benefit projects, and opportunities as the project develops.

#### **Panel members:**

- **Andrew Overdyke:** Teacher, Wakefield School (School for Specific Purposes – maximum 7 students per class, focus on behavioural support).
- **Anna Noon:** Founder & Director, Groundswell Collective (Lake Macquarie sustainability NFP); Wakefield resident.
- **Tony Palmer:** CEO & Founder, Black Rock – initiated panel process following recommendations from Newcastle Uni white papers (Roberta Ryan, Kate Robinson, team).
- **Marsha Rodrom:** Coordinator of Cultural Engagement, Marketing, and Tourism, Lake Macquarie City Council.
- **Steve Masia:** Manager of Development Assessment & Certification, Lake Macquarie City Council – noted that the Regional Planning Panel determined the DA, not Council.
- **Peter Land:** Local resident, Jefferson Road (400m boundary to site); Under Manager, Mandalong Colliery.
- **Pete Coughlan:** President, Wakefield Residence Amenity Partnership – engaged throughout original DA process; family on School Road.

- **Dan Palmer:** Works with Black Rock team on community projects, documenting local stories.
- **Josh Soondarum:** Black Rock General Manager and project liaison; background in private sector, finance, and government.

## 2. Recruitment process

The panel members were briefed on the recruitment process that led to their appointment:

- Selection criteria included: strong community networks; ability to share information both ways (community to project; project to community).
- Recruitment advertised via Lake Macquarie City Council's community page and local networks.
- Applications assessed against criteria; final selection made by the Chair.
- Council invited to nominate a representative/s.

## 3. Terms of Reference

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) were provided to panel members ahead of the meeting. The Chair provided background on the ToRs:

- Based on NSW Government Community Consultative Committee guidelines (originally for large mining projects) – adapted for this multi-use development.
- Emphasis: advisory/consultative role; not a decision-making body.

It was also noted that substitutes are discouraged for continuity; an exception was noted for Wakefield School, where either the Principal or Andrew Overdyke may attend.

### Actions:

- Section 4 requires a language change: from "landowner representatives" to "community representatives."
- Black Rock to publish the final ToR on its website - CCP page.

## 4. Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct was provided to panel members ahead of the meeting. The Chair emphasised:

- Respectful discussion is required.
- Comments are not to be attributed to individuals outside meeting.
- Members are not to speak to media on behalf of the panel; the Chair is the media spokesperson.

Action:

- Black Rock to publish the Code of Conduct on its website - CCP page.

## **5. Conflict of interest declarations**

Pecuniary and non-pecuniary conflict of interest declaration (COI) forms were provided to panel members ahead of the meeting. The Chair spoke to the following:

- The COI forms are based on the [NSW Government guidelines for Community Consultative Committees for major projects](#).
- Pecuniary interests relate to the potential for a financial loss or a gain, while non-pecuniary relates to non-financial but that may arise from family or personal relationships, involvement in community, social or other cultural groups that may include an interest of a financial nature.
- Panel members were asked to complete the forms, which will be held by the Chair. She does not require specific details about the interests where one is declared.
- The Chair noted that panel members inform her if their COI situation changes.

Action:

Community panel members to sign and return the COI form to the Chair.

## **6. Meeting frequency & procedures**

The panel discussed the future meeting schedule and general procedures:

- There will be a minimum of four meetings per year; more frequently if project activity increases.
- The next meeting will be late October. 9AM on Mondays was agreed as the best time for members.
- The panel agreed that face-to-face meetings are preferred. Hybrid meetings can be held if needed.
- Panel members can request items for inclusion on the agenda.
- There will be a standing item on the agenda for issues / complaints.
- Minutes will be circulated for comment prior to finalisation. Final meeting minutes will be determined by the Chair
- Minutes will be published on the Black Rock website.

Action:

- Chair to issue invitations for the next meeting.

## 7. Project update

Tony Palmer provided the following update to the Committee:

### 7.1 Current site works:

- Current focus is the front area bounded by the hotel, the eastern road and the T-intersection.
- Bulk earthworks are underway on the entrance road connecting the apron to the go-karts and skid pans.
- Key task is removing unsuitable fill (old mine backfill material) down to subgrade, as it cannot support construction.

### 7.2 Sub-surface investigations:

- The main focus recently has been investigative drilling along the track corridor to assess mine subsidence risks.
- Areas that are not impacted by undermining: village, go-kart track, vehicle dynamics area (VDA), hotel, car park, and stables.
- Received a comprehensive subsidence report confirming the track corridor is safe and stable.
- The team undertook additional verification: independent geotechnical peer review and new drilling for up-to-date core samples.
- History of the site: after a fire, ~1,500 boreholes were drilled and filled with a slurry of fly ash and water to grout mine workings. Investigations confirmed void filling effectiveness.
- Current findings: only one significant sinkhole (8m wide) detected near the hotel, caused by an old drift with fines washed out. Requires remediation (close-pattern drilling and grouting).
- Next step: subsidence advisory to review results and engineers to prepare remediation plans for any identified voids.

### 7.3 Development Application (DA) modifications:

- Original DA wording assumed one large project approval. During detailed design, changes are inevitable. Examples:
  - Go-Karts Building: requires an awning/portico with operable curtains to house chargers for electric karts (a minor modification, not a change of use).
  - The Lodge: may need repositioning (e.g. rotate 12 degrees and shift 3m) to avoid mine voids—another DA modification.
- Modifications will be lodged throughout the project as sub-projects are started. The modifications do not change the overall scope or use of the site.
- The community will be alerted to modifications by Lake Macquarie City Council through its established planning process procedures where there is any potential for impact on them.

#### 7.4 Community engagement and communication:

- Black Rock committed to be proactive in communication of activities and upcoming changes/modifications before public release.
- Panel members are not required to have technical knowledge nor to be across every detail of the project. It is the responsibility of Black Rock to highlight where there are project activities that will impact surrounding residents.
- There will be a standing agenda item for complaints and community feedback.
- Communication channels are under review including letterbox drops, website updates, and targeted briefings.
- Suggestion to hold a detailed public community briefing.

#### 7.5 Looking ahead: road and track development (construction staging)

##### Ground preparation:

- At natural ground level, parts of the site will be covered with a protective blanket layer to prevent cracks migrating to the surface.
- Over this, approximately 450mm of road base will be laid in two layers.
- Surface treatment: two asphalt layers — a sealing layer followed by a 40mm wearing course.

##### Track segmentation:

- Due to its length, the circuit cannot be laid in a single continuous run.
- Current works are focused on the first 2.5 km of the North Circuit, identified as the highest subsidence risk area.
- Extensive investigative drilling has been completed here, making this the first section to be laid.

##### Safety systems:

- Laying asphalt is approximately one-third of the overall track works.
- Additional requirements include:
  - Safety barriers, partly sourced from Newcastle Street Circuit.
  - Catch fencing in high-risk areas.
  - Installation of timing systems, flag marshal posts, and other safety infrastructure.
- Estimated timeframe: approx. 18 months to complete full track safety systems and supporting infrastructure.

##### Noise and environmental management:

- Before construction and bulk works commence, temporary noise monitoring stations will be installed.
- A new round of planning and peer review with an acoustic engineer will be undertaken to support the Noise Management Plan.

- Noting the track is being built in a staged approach, the Noise Management Plan will be delivered ahead of any track use.
- The plan includes rules for use by drivers to prevent misuse (burn-outs) etc.
- Responding to a query from the panel, Mr Palmer confirmed all power and water infrastructure are going into the existing, cleared road reserve corridor.
- Broader operational management planning will cover noise, traffic, disaster recovery, and event management, requiring 12 months of preparatory work.

#### Community Driver Training initiative

- The Vehicle Dynamics Area (VDA) will be made available to the local community.
- Every 16-year-old learner driver (with their parent/guardian) will be able to access a free half-day driver training program, similar to initiatives previously run at Sydney Motorsport Park.
- This is intended as a grassroots road safety program with long-term community benefits.

#### Public Access Model

- The site will not be freely open but accessible through regulated ticketing and bookings.
- Public entry will be available for:
  - Accommodation guests at the on-site hotel when participating in a driving experience.
  - Restaurant visitors.
  - Driver training participants.
  - Branded experiences (e.g. manufacturer test drive events).
- On-site attendance will be capped at 500 people to ensure safe management.

#### Project management:

- The civil works for the track are treated as a standalone project.
- Other project components (e.g. Village, Main Precinct) are managed as parallel sub-projects.
- A development manager oversees the entire program, while multiple contractors deliver discrete packages of work.
- Coordination occurs at detailed planning meetings once builders are appointed.

### **8. Actions summary and next steps**

- ToR to be amended and published on the Black Rock website.
- Code of Conduct to be published on the Black Rock website.
- Members to complete and return conflict of interest forms to the Chair.
- Community members email contact list to be compiled and published on the CCP webpage for community inquiries.

- Invitation to be issued for the next meeting - proposed for late October (Monday, 9AM).
- Chair to circulate draft minutes for comment before publishing.

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**Meeting closed:** 10.30AM

**Minutes prepared by:** Kate Robinson

**Date:** 11 August 2025