

Coppabella Wind Farm Community Consultation Committee

Meeting No 4 – Café on Queen, 15 Queen Street, Binalong

Thursday 8th November 2018 – 5.00pm-7.00pm

Present:

CCC Members: Nic Carmody (Independent Chair), Cr Geoff Frost (YVC), Paul Regan, John McGrath, Noeleen Hazell, Brenden McKay, Libby Elliott

Proponent: Sunny Rutherford, Tom Nielsen, Alison Deale - Goldwind Australia

Observers: Bruce Hazell, David Hazell, Richard Hyles, Barbara Folkard, Matt Bingley and Carlene Carmody (minutes)

The Meeting opened at 5.17 pm

1. Welcome/Apologies

Apologies were received from Cr Rita O'Connor (Hilltops) & Doug Painting.

2. Declaration of pecuniary or other interests

No changes to any Committee member's declarations.

3. Confirmation of minutes or previous Minutes

The minutes of Meeting No 3 held on 19 June 2018 were confirmed. All outstanding items on action sheet have been completed.

4. Project Update – Tom Nielsen

Tom advised that there was not much to update since the previous meeting. He provided a brief overview of the project status.

Project modification process is still underway. NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) considers the proposed modification has merit and is within the public interest. DPE has now recommended approval and referred the modification to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC). A public meeting will be held at Yass Soldiers Club 12th November at 13:30. Written submissions will be taken after the meeting for those that cannot attend.

Project Update:

The tendering process for the Balance of Plant contract is underway. Two contractors have been shortlisted.

Roads & Maritime Services (RMS) have designed access at the Hume Motorway/Whitefields Road intersection.

Negotiation with Transgrid to connect the project into the network is ongoing and may require changes to the existing transmission line. The poles between the project and Yass need to be upgraded to allow co-locating of the existing line and the wind farm power line.

Meteorological masts currently on the project site will be taken down this week.

Focus on sponsorship in last few months – some events Goldwind has assisted with recently:

- Bowning School fence
- Harden Kite Festival
- Yass Irish & Celtic Festival
- Binalong Art Show

Visitors centre – had 80 visits in recent months. Questions asked regarding employment and sponsorship.

Questions asked about sponsorship arrangements. Sunny clarified the process currently. Tom advised that should the project not proceed community engagement activities in the local area would cease.

The Chair noted most of the recent sponsorship appeared bias towards Yass Valley Council (YVC). This highlights the inequity the project per turbine contribution will have in future years. Sunny advised that the recent high number of sponsorships in particular areas is due to those who have applied. Sunny highlighted that Goldwind's annual additional fund of \$100,000 that has been committed through the project modification period is intended to mitigate this concern.

Some committee members expressed concerns about the impact that sponsorship is having on the communities – divisive. It is influencing people and how they view the project. Sunny noted that sponsorship is a common tool to engage with and build relationships with rural communities.

Tom advised that they are happy to receive feedback regarding other models at any time.

5. General Business – without notice

John McGrath had a number of questions

1. Are wind farms intermittent power generation source.

Tom responded yes.

2. If Goldwind need to cut in 14-metre-wide access tracks at Gullen Range. Why are they telling us that they can build a wind farm utilising larger components and claim to only wish to use a 5-metre-wide access tracks for Coppabella. How wide is the track going to be?

Tom: The recommended modified consent from DPE for Whitefields Road has a minimum of 5 metres width of sealed road with 500m gravel shoulders. There is a maximum vegetation limit set as well.

3. Will Goldwind stop activity during the Superb Parrot season?

Tom: There will be no clearing of trees during Superb Parrot breeding season, traffic movements will continue during this time.

4. How do you expect to obscure visual impact on 171 metre moving towers by planting trees?

Tom: Visual Impact Mitigation is a condition of the consent and will be offered to all residents within 5km prior to construction commencing. Goldwind will engage an external consultant for the implementation of visual impact mitigation measures (such as landscaping, vegetation screening, provision of awnings/blinds). Measures will be planned and implemented in consultation with the landowner. Tom read out the relevant approval condition.

Nic asked how long residents will have to do this – is there a time limit?

Tom noted that the notification to all landowners is required to be sent prior to construction commencing. If Goldwind receive a request to undertake landscaping they must complete this within 12 months of receiving the request. There is no time limit specified in the consent, however it notes that residents should consider the merits of delaying this request until the wind turbines are visible from their residence.

5. Whilst it appears burying 33KV (33,000) volts) 700mm deep is legal what actual mechanical protection will Goldwind use?

Tom: Question taken on notice.

6. Upgrading on 99M line – more detail required on Transgrid's upgrading of the line.

Tom: Negotiation with Transgrid is ongoing. Transgrid have advised that the future capacity of the line may not be the same since the approval of a nearby solar farm. Transgrid have proposed to upgrade the transmission line which could include a change from dual pole design to a single pole design. Full details on this have not yet been received. Transgrid will charge Goldwind an annuity for the cost of the transmission line.

Cr Frost – what will the capacity of the new line be?

Tom: 280MW – full capacity of the project.

7. Does Goldwind have a power purchase agreement in place?

Tom: No, we will be connecting at spot pricing. Goldwind has a several projects within its portfolio without power purchase agreements for example, White Rock Wind Farm.

8. How many RPM is the rotor of the generator spinning at?

Tom: Will check it is somewhere between 12-13 rpm. I will check and advise. Will also equate this to tip speed.

9. Is Goldwind still planning to use a turbine with blades mounted at 90 degrees to the generator shaft?

Tom: Explained to the committee how the turbines operate with the blades at 90 degrees to the main shaft.

10. Why are you waiting to the back end of the Coppabella project to allocate funding for decommissioning?

Tom: Funding for decommissioning is proposed to come from income from the project's generation.

11. Who guarantees this?

Tom: A commitment to establish a decommissioning plan, including a fund, was included in the modification process for the project.

12. If you go broke straight away – who pulls down the towers?

Tom: This is very unlikely to occur. The value of the asset would be greater than the decommissioning cost.

The Chair noted that he has heard feedback from a number people with concerns about this across several different wind farm projects. He suggested DPE should create an annuity charge/fund for NSW to establish a decommissioning fund.

13. **Barbara:** how do you account for what has occurred in California where there are wind farms left?

Tom: There is a regulatory requirement within the consent for the project that requires all turbines to be removed within 18 months of cessation of operations. Tom noted he is aware there were only two such projects one in California and one in Hawaii. Those projects were built where there was no regulatory requirement to decommission.

14. **Cr Frost** – the concern is who has done the research on viability of the project. Has the modelling been given to the State Government? Will they step in if needed?

Tom: State government bodies have not requested the financial modelling for the project.

15. **John:** Is the host landowner to put money into the decommissioning?

Tom: No.

16. **Paul Regan** - How many people will be employed per tower?

Tom: During the construction period there will be up to 200 people on site. During operations for the project, there will be approximately 10-15 permanent staff on site.

17. **Paul:** What Traffic will flow on Berremangra and Coppabella roads? What is the incidence of traffic?

Tom: proposed to upgrade as an all-purpose access track as part of modification. This will be for light vehicles. Upgrades on hosts property. Externally it will have to be negotiated with Council. Still negotiating with Council on the exact detail of their requirements.

The Chair asked for the definition of a light vehicle. Seems to be some confusion around this.

18. **Barbara:** What about the people who are close to wind farms who become unwell. What will you do about them? Suggest you start investigating what you will do in terms of compensation.

Tom: Goldwind don't expect the Wind Farm to cause medical issues. Tom noted Barbara is welcome to send him information on Vibro-acoustic disease or any other medical issues. Tom noted he is aware of the recent issue in Victoria with noise.

19. **Noeleen Hazell:** It has now been proven that the noise is a nuisance. It is left to them to prove it. What is the number that the state says on a noise level that is above ambient?

Tom: The consent is the base is 35dB or background plus 5dB. Our assessment is based on only the 35dB limit, which is a conservative approach.

Do you have data available on the harmonics?

Question taken on notice.

20. **Paul Regan:** Is there a legal shooting distance from a turbine?

Tom: Question taken on notice.

6. Next Meeting

Next meeting date to be advised, possibly 21st February 2019.

Meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

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No	Action	Meeting	Owner	Deadline	Comment
9.	Advise of any suggestions to improve community engagement	6/3/2018	CC Members	Ongoing	No approaches provided, happy to receive at any time.
10.	Mechanical protection to be used for the underground cabling	8/11/2018	Goldwind	Next meeting	
11.	RPM for the rotor of the generator	8/11/2018	Goldwind	Next Meeting	
12.	Definition of a light and heavy vehicle and proposed use of these vehicles on Berremangra and Coppabella roads	8/11/2018	Goldwind	Next meeting	
13.	Provision of information on harmonics	8/11/2018	Goldwind	Next Meeting	
14.	Legal shooting distance near Wind Turbines	8/11/2018	Goldwind	Next Meeting	

COMPLETED ACTIONS

No	Action	Meeting	Owner	Deadline	Comment
1.	Provide a copy of overview presentation to committee members	5/10/2017	Goldwind	30/10/2017	Presentation provided
2.	Include specific community sponsorships in next brochure	5/10/2017	Goldwind	31/11/2017	Included in brochure
3.	Advise distance that towers will stand back from hollow bearing trees	5/10/2017	Goldwind	Next meeting	Information provided
4.	Provide information to the Committee regarding the National Electricity Guarantee	6/3/2018	Goldwind	30/3/18	Information provided
5.	Provide link to information on specifications on new turbines	6/3/2018	Goldwind	30/3/18	Link provided
6.	Provide original gradient of road to Committee members	6/3/2018	Goldwind	30/3/18	Information provided

7.	Provide a copy of site map to Committee members	6/3/2018	Goldwind	30/3/18	Information provided
8.	Provide Committee Members with a link to the PAC website	6/3/2018	Goldwind	30/3/18	Link provided
10.	Advise of depth of cable trenches and length of blades	19/6/2018	Goldwind	31/07/2018	Completed
11.	Advise who would be responsible for the administration of the Community Enhancement Fund?	19/6/2018	Goldwind	31/07/2018	Completed
12.	Provide copy of Responses to Submissions to Report to members	19/6/2018	Goldwind	31/07/2018	Completed

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