

Coppabella Wind Farm Community Consultation Committee
Meeting No 10 – Mechanics Institute, 15 Wellington Street, Binalong
6pm Thursday 19th November 2020

Present:

CCC Members: Nic Carmody (Independent Chair), John McGrath, Brenden McKay, Noeleen Hazell, Doug Painting.

Proponent: Tom Nielsen, Medard Boutry & Alison Deale

Observers: Nan Betts, Bruce Hazell, Carlene Carmody (minutes), Barbara Folkard, David Winterflood.

Invited Guests: Kath Elliott – TransGrid, Katrina O’Reilly - DPIE (apology)

The Meeting opened at 6:00 pm

1. Welcome/Apologies

Apologies were received from Cr Rita O’Connor (Hilltops), Katrina O’Reilly (DPIE).

2. Declaration of pecuniary or other interests

Nic Carmody Chair declared – did a small printing job for a member of the Committee.

3. Confirmation of minutes or previous Minutes

The minutes of Meeting No 9 held on 6 August 2020 were confirmed. All outstanding items on action sheet have been completed.

4. Correspondence

Department Planning have circulated information, which was passed onto committee members – Social Impact Assessment Guidelines 2020, on exhibition until 27th November.

5. Project Update – Tom Nielsen

Presentation given – see attached.

Alison Deale: Community Engagement Update.

Community shop front has re-opened with reduced hours.

Sponsorship has been slow as there are not many events being undertaken currently.

Tom Nielsen:

Progressing generally, not a great deal of change. Focus after last three months has been focussing on Connection agreement and getting an investor/financing in place. TransGrid REF amendment is now approved. Connection agreement has been signed.

Work on site since our last meeting has been impacted by wet weather.

Grid connection: Due Diligence is ongoing. Currently negotiating the access standard (with AEMO and TransGrid) somewhere between the Minimum Access Standard and the Automatic Access Standard. Connection Contract signed with TransGrid.

John McGrath: You have organised a delivery agreement with TransGrid but there is no fixed amount agreed.

Tom Nielsen: Fixed amount is being put at 275MW at connection point. Financial model says you have upfront capital to develop the project, then minimal ongoing costs. 25 years is the expected design life of the project as defined in the financial model. Once at end of design life you can decommission the project or repower the project by replacing turbines. This would however involve a completely new approval process if it were proposed.

Kath Elliott: If you have made a submission to the TransGrid REF you will be receiving a letter of response in the next two weeks advising that the planning approvals with TransGrid have now been met. Determination is on the [TransGrid website](#) and the Submissions report. We are just waiting to be advised by Goldwind as to when they would like to start.

John McGrath: Is there only one switchbay for the connection? There are two switch bays.

Kath Elliott: It will be on the drawings on our website.

Tom Nielsen: There is a switchyard inside.

John McGrath: There are one either side.

Questions to Kath Elliott (TransGrid):

John McGrath: What guarantee to landholders that this work will be any better than the 2017 work. There was legacy work left, with some still not satisfactorily completed.

Kath Elliott: We try to work with the landholders early.

We will be doing a property plan with landholders to identify issues and document information. Some things we can resolve early, some may take more time. Other's we may not be able to resolve. The document then clearly shows what has been agreed to minimise misunderstandings.

I personally will case manage them to endeavour to not replicate mistakes previously made. Mitigate impacts and leave properties in good condition.

If issues are not finished, then the contractor's bond will be held until all work is completed.

Noeleen Hazell: Do the landholders have any rights to deny access.

Kath Elliott: Each property holder has signed an agreement with us to provide access. If at some point people change their mind, we then must work that out. If there are issues where people have concern, we try to work through those issues. We do not want to have bad relationships; we want positive relationships with them as we will be going onto their properties over 25 years.

John McGrath: TransGrid Contractors, have in the past, been on site without notification. People have experienced having contractors on their property without knowledge.

Kath Elliott: We encourage property holders to contact us so we can resolve it. Unfortunately, a lot of work is outsourced to contractors which obviously does make it harder. There are human beings involved and whilst we instruct them to do the right thing, they don't always do.

Project Update Questions:

Chair: Do we have a date for the commencement of Civil Works.

Tom Nielsen: Connection before Christmas, then investor to come on board. Earliest we are looking is March/April 2021. We expect Civil Works then to start looking for suppliers in the lead up to that. We understand that Yass is quite limited at the moment for accommodation due to other projects in the area.

6. General Business – without notice

Chair: Cr Rita O'Connor advised me that the Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with Hilltops Council and the proponent is now on exhibition for comment. Once finalised, advertisement and appointment of a Committee for the distribution of Community Enhancement Funds, interested parties need to apply.

Tom Nielsen: VPA is from start of operations. We classify that as when Operational Completion has been met. Hold points When turbines are all fully commissioned and able to operate that is when the VPA start.

Questions John McGrath:

1. TransGrid: Why is it that TransGrid claim they had no knowledge of the expected power output of the Yass Valley Wind Farm? When as late as EPURON's document 2012 from EPURON's table 3.5 Estimate of Greenhouse Gas Savings Yass Valley Wind Farm Preferred Project Report | November 2012 Page 20 **Estimate in EA 2009 NSW Wind Farm Greenhouse Gas Savings Tool** Combined number of Turbines 152 Coppabella 148 Marilba with Turbine Capacity (MW) 2.5, that Goldwind purchased off EPURON in 2017. Thus the combined Wind Farm Capacity **380 (MW)**. As TransGrid had previously rejected connection to the 03 330KV transmission line to the South of the former much larger Valley Wind Farm? Likewise by now TransGrid had also rejected connection to the almost parallel 132KV transmission lines the 990 and 970 left the 132KV south, leaving the transmission line the 99M the only logical choice for connection? The 99M has a nominal rating of 125MVA=MW near enough MW= 1,000,000 watts. With a contingency rating of 12MVA thus maximum 137KVA on a hot summer's day to a maximum of 154KVA with a contingency rating of 29MVA on a cold winter's night-that is above the maximum capacity of the 99M 132KV transmission line is 154MVA/MW on a cold winters night, then the 99M never had the capacity to carry 380MW from as far back as 2012? That alone half of that alleged output at 140MW, if equally split between Coppabella and Marilba?

Kath Elliott: I don't know the history of this.

Tom Nielsen: Back when it was Marilba and Coppabella they had two points of connection in the planning approval

John McGrath: The only point of connection was the 99m.

That pathway was rejected by the Dept of Planning. The Marilba section was not approved. It was only the Coppabella approved. We looked at only using 45 turbines and to have 135MW. Constraints on the line led us to review. So, we ended up having to go to the **332M**

John McGrath: It is a lack of transparency – the constraints on these lines. It is basically the lack of transparency.

Tom Nielsen: We have responded to this previously. We had a technical case that work

Kath Elliott: I am not sure I follow you. What is your major concern? Is it that we are going to be upgrading the line and impacting on properties again?

John McGrath: I have been doing this for 16 years. Lack of transparency on the grid. I have enough knowledge of this. It cannot deliver power to the grid.

Kath Elliott: We are upgrading our infrastructure to allow Windfarms to supply to the grid.

So, you don't want a renewal energy project in your area?

John McGrath: I do not want it.

Kath Elliott: We are giving you the answer, but you aren't happy with the answer?

John McGrath: Yes.

Kath Elliott: I think we are going to have to agree to disagree. You don't like the answer, but I can't give you the answer you want. It is not palatable to you, but I cannot give you an answer that isn't correct.

2. Goldwind: How will you access from 1 ridge to the next ridge across the Coppabellas?

Tom Nielsen: The Coppabella's as you enter the site you go along the valley to the substation. There will be a temporary compound site. From there will be connections to the ridges.

Medard Boutry: At the back of the Planning Approval Appendix 3 shows you the layout and where access roads are intended to be. The project is not allowed to build access roads outside the approved development corridor.

Tom Nielsen: The original DA road footprint didn't allow us to access those hills well enough. We have had to look for a new route. There is some balance to making sure existing grades aren't too steep. The expectation is to follow natural contours as much as possible.

3. TransGrid Goldwind: Why are more and more already agreed intermittent generation renewable projects being constructed across Australia when it has been proven that these facilities destabilise the transmission system as occurred in South Australia state-wide blackout in 2016? Yet it's claimed Yass valley Wind farm preferred report November 2012 Dot Point 2 **"It would improve the security of electricity supply through diversification of generation locations"**.

Tom Nielsen: This has to do with current transmission. It is well reflected by the [NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap](#) which looks at a lot of new renewables coming on board. The more diversification the better. The more geographically spread out the better coverage for supply.

John McGrath: These things destabilise the grid.

Tom Nielsen: I see the eventual reality that there will be increasingly more renewables in the Grid as more coal supplied energy goes offline.

Kath Elliott: A lot of this is a big government policy issue. Federal Government is concerned that the power industry needs to do more renewable energy. They are driving more investment into renewable energy. TransGrid needs to be able to connect those generation projects solar or wind into the grid.

4. TransGrid Goldwind: Why are more and more already agreed intermittent generation renewable projects being constructed across the world when it has been proven that these facilities can never produce a base load and the existing generation to the SE Australian Grid is already constrained?

Statement

5. Goldwind TransGrid: When wind towers are designed for operation at sea level, or below (The Netherlands) as in Europe, why is it that companies such as Goldwind insist on installing these towers on very high exposed ranges, in rural areas of Australia? When the logical choice of location is on the eastern Australian seaboard in our major population centres?

Tom Nielsen: The answer is simply market economics. The goal is to find areas of high wind near electricity grid. Out west there is high wind but no grid. In NSW many suitable areas are along the Great Dividing Range and other areas with higher elevations. I agree there are probably better spots to put it but it won't result in cheap cost effective power.

6. Goldwind: Should the Coppabella industrial generation estate ever reach decommissioning stage? **Considering YVWF preferred Project Report November 2012 3.16 Decommissioning Issues response Decommissioning and rehabilitation. "Responsibility for the decommissioning and rehabilitation decommissioning the wind farm will be the responsibility of the proponent's"** In this case that is Goldwind? Or is it EPURON? As this project has already changed hands once as above who will own it at the end of its commercial life, and will Goldwind honour their decommissioning requirements? Will Goldwind slip away from its decommissioning responsibilities in the guise of a \$2-00 company?

Tom Nielsen: Proponent is Coppabella Wind Farm Pty Ltd, which is currently owned by Goldwind. Decommissioning is the responsibility of whoever owns Coppabella Windfarm.

Medard Boutry: Decommissioning is a planning obligation (Condition 44 and 45 or Schedule 3 of the consent) and a legal obligation through the landowner leases

- What state will the access roads and hard stands be left in?
Medard Boutry: roads – need to be decommissioned and removed unless an agreed alternative use is identified to satisfaction of the Secretary of Planning and the landholder. This is after 25 years of operation and decommissioned.
- Whose responsibility will it be for ongoing restoration of those access roads and hardstands?

Medard Boutry: If the landholder does not want the road then we decommission and remove it.

- Will ever Whitefield's Road be widened from the allowance of 5 meters.

Tom Nielsen: We have already cleared the trees required. There will be no more tree removal.

Medard Boutry: Details of the Whitefields Road design are provided in the approved Traffic Management Plan available on the [project website](#).

7. Goldwind: To date are there still no political donations of any type associated with Coppabella, as signed off by Ning Chen as sole director 07/09/2017?

Tom Nielsen: No.

Kath Elliott: You talk about constraint on the network. If you go onto our website, go to publications our [Transmission Annual Planning Report](#). I will email the link the Chair to be forwarded on. There will be similar documents in other states. We look after the NSW and ACT.

7. Next Meeting

Next meeting date Thursday 18th March 2021, venue to be advised.

Meeting closed at 7:20 pm

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS ITEMS

No	Action	Meeting	Owner	Deadline	Comment
1.	nil	06/08/2020			