

**Minutes of the Community Consultation Committee (CCC)
Meeting No. 11 held at Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall Annexe,
Wednesday 17 February 2016**

Present

CCC Members: Nic Carmody (Chair), Graham Privett, Andrew Field, Sara Brown, Christine Hawkins, Cr James Wheelwright, Jayne Apps

Proponent: Michael Head

Observers: Bert Barrass, Peter Crisp, Matthew Smith, Rod Gibson, Fiona Gorman, Ros Gibson, Mark Fleming (OEH), Mike Inkster, John McGrath, David Sainsbury, Mike Young (Director Resource Assessments DP&E), Diana Charteris (Senior Planning Officer DP&E), Rose-Anne Hawkeswood (Planning Officer DP&E), Andrew Bray (AWA) and Shirree Garland (minutes).

1. Welcome/Apologies

The meeting opened at 7.10 pm

Apologies were received from Malcolm Day, Greg Medway and Graham Purches.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary or other Interests

Nil

3. Introduction of Guests and New Attendees

The Chair, Nic Carmody, Mike Young (Director Resource Assessments DP&E), Diana Charteris (Senior Planning Officer DP&E), Rose-Anne Hawkeswood (Planning Officer DP&E) from the Department of Planning & Environment and Mark Fleming from OEH to the meeting.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

Sara Brown provided the following amendments to the minutes:

It was noted that a copy of the October minutes were yet to be forwarded to Committee members.

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2015 were adopted with the inclusion of the above amendments.

ACTION: *Nic Carmody to forward copy of October 2015 minutes to Committee members.*

5. Actions arising from previous minutes

5.1 Estimate of the Number of Houses within 5km

Michael Head advised that there would be approximately 180 houses located within 5km of the wind farm.

5.2 Proponents or Developers?

Michael Head advised that Trust Power were the proponents.

5.3 Light Vehicles and Light Traffic Routes

Michael Head provided updated maps identifying both routes for light vehicles and light traffic to Committee members. 'Light vehicles' includes everything under 4 ½ tonne.

ACTION: *Committee members to advise Chairman if electronic version of maps are required.
Chairman to arrange for distribution.*

5.4 Website Information

Jayne Apps asked whether any of the Councils had included information links on their respective websites.

ACTION: *Chair to contact Yass and Boorowa Councils to request links be included on their websites.
Cr James Wheelwright to arrange with Upper Lachlan Council.*

6. Rye Park Wind Farm project update – Michael Head

Michael Head advised that the most significant update was that Wargeila Road had been removed from maps as it had been decided to remove focus on 330kV line route. This is due to a few issues including timing and easement arrangements, also other matters that are considered Commercial in Confidence. Michael advised that there would now be 109 turbines.

Michael advised that it was likely that Trust Power would seek a variation to remove this transmission line from the project. Consultants will be required to rewrite reports.

Confirmation was provided that Wargeila Road would not be used for any construction traffic.

6.1 Community Benefit Fund

Michael advised that there would be three separate community funds set up, one in each Council area as Section 355 Committees. Consultation has commenced with Councils. It is proposed that \$2,500 per turbine + CPI (from 2010) would be paid annually. If insufficient applications for funding were not received, within the specified radius, applications will then be received from within the current LGA boundaries.

Agreement has been reached with councils that not less than 20% will be allocated to a disadvantaged Education Fund.

6.2 Final Location of Turbines

Discussion was held on the final location of turbines. Michael advised that the turbine manufacturer would have the final say in relation to locations. Turbine numbers will then be identified for specific council areas. Michael advised that turbines will not be selected until approval of the DA. Michael re-enforced that the turbine supplier will be obliged to meet certain turbine production targets and noise compliance regulations.

Tenders will be called for the turbines, with up to ten companies possibly having site inspections etc. Michael advised tenders would not be called for until the Secretary has given approval and all Appeals have been exhausted.

Trust Power will be seeking to have the ability to micro-site up to 100m. To minimise micro-siting during construction, the most likely sites have been determined.

6.3 CO Emissions

Andrew Field asked whether there was a minimal target in relation to the clearing of land and CO₂ emissions. Mike Young advised that CO₂ emissions had not been looked at for individual renewable energy projects, however, he believed that the greenhouse gas emitted as a result of clearing is likely to be low in terms of the order of magnitude of savings from renewable energy projects.

6.4 Noise Monitoring

Michael Head advised that noise monitoring would be undertaken on site, pre-construction, for a minimum period of 6 weeks, over all wind conditions and directions.

Mike Young advised that a range of options for turbine models could be in the DA, as long as the DA demonstrates that all turbine models would be compliant with the relevant noise criteria at non-associated residences. Mike confirmed that if approved, a condition of the project approval would require compliance monitoring to be undertaken at representative non-associated residences post project commissioning to ensure that the Company demonstrates that they meet the relevant noise criteria.

Michael Head advised that the use 157 high turbines, sitting 700 metres above sea level, was determined primarily due to the terrain and the turbulence

6.5 Roads

Michael Head advised that they would be discussing acceptable road usage, number of traffic movements and road conditions with councils.

Concern was raised regarding Cooks Hill Road, the huge impact on the road from another commercial operator, and also that the road had several blind spots. Michael advised that negotiations were in progress regarding road upgrades etc. Surveyors were currently looking at roads, culverts and bridges.

ACTION: Updated transport maps, including all roads to be provided.

Jayne Apps raised concern regarding the corner of Dillon & Long Streets and the adjacent retirement village. Michael advised that they were currently working with Council in relation to this issue.

7. Department of Planning and Environment Representatives

Mike Young advised that he was present to clarify the planning process. Mike advised that he is currently heading up a team of technical professionals to assess major development in NSW, including renewable energy and mining projects. He recognises the community's need for clarity in the planning process.

Mike provided a summary of the planning process.

- The exhibition of the original DA was two years ago.
- The formal process is that a response to submissions is prepared by the proponent following exhibition of the DA and submitted to the Department for assessment.
- The response to submissions is expected to be received by the Department around the end of March, including a revised Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- The revised DA will then go on public exhibition.
(The need for submissions to be put in was reinforced to ensure that all concerns are officially considered, although previous submissions on the project would be considered by the Department in its assessment).
- The exhibition period of the revised DA will be for a period of at least 30 days. There is no statutory requirement for the DA to be put back on formal exhibition. The statutory requirement for exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a minimum period of 30 days.
- The Department recognises that the DA documentation can be confusing and difficult to understand. The Department will hold a public information session while the revised DA is on exhibition, providing a further opportunity for concerns to be raised.

The question was asked as to whether it would be possible to extend the exhibition period to enable a reasonable amount of time for documentation to be reviewed. Mike Young advised that the Department may consider a longer period, however, it is likely to be 30 days. Michael Head advised that Trust Power would provide a reasonable amount of 'hard copies' of the EIS.

Mike advised that it was the Department's role to undertake a thorough assessment of the project, which includes undertaking due diligence, engaging independent experts and visiting the project site.

The Department ensures the community is aware of what is happening by engaging with the community which may include holding a public information session.

Mike advised that the requirements of the statutory assessment process is separate to the Department's guidelines. The Government recognises that the draft Guidelines could be improved. The Department is now in the process of developing new guidelines for State significant projects. These guidelines will provide improved guidance on the planning process, even though a lot of the technical aspects will remain the same.

Updated Community Consultative Committee Guidelines will be available on the Department's website shortly.

ACTION: *Any specific questions for Mike Young to be provided to the Chair to collate and forward through to the Department. Mike will endeavour to provide a written response to the next meeting.*

Mike Inkster raised the issue of noise and the health impacts of the turbines. Mike Young advised that the Commonwealth have prepared documentation based on literary reviews. It was suggested that any issues regarding health impacts be raised with the Commonwealth Government.

Mike advised that the greenhouse gas emitted as a result of clearing is likely to be low in terms of the order of magnitude of savings from renewable energy projects. He will, however, look into CO₂ emissions when removing trees.

7.1 Planning Assessment Commission

Mike advised that the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC), independent decision makers, would make the final decision on the DA. The PAC consists of a pool of 15 professionals, with varying backgrounds. A panel is selected to assess and determine the DA from these 15 members, based on their background and availability.

The Department will exhibit the revised DA for at least 30 days. Following exhibition, the Department will then finalise their assessment, taking into account any submissions, independent expert advice, policies and legislation. This assessment process is likely to take a couple of months. The Department's Assessment report will then be forwarded to the PAC for their consideration.

A public meeting may then be held by the PAC in the local area, providing the opportunity for concerns to be raised directly with the PAC. A notice of the public meeting would be advertised and notification would be provided to everyone that has put in a submission.

Nic thanked Mike Young for his presentation and time in attending the meeting.

8. General Business

8.1 Council representation

Sara Brown voiced disappointment that council representatives were not attending meetings and therefore not representing their community. Nic advised that there was no 'enforcement' to ensure that Councillors attended these meetings, there may be times when they have conflicting meetings.

8.2 Neighbourhood Benefit Agreement

The question was asked as to why the Neighbourhood Benefit Agreement was only per property unlike the Community Benefit Fund which is paid annually per turbine? Michael Head advised that the Neighbourhood Benefit Agreement was a voluntary agreement.

Mike Inkster advised that NSW was the only State currently undertaking Neighbour Agreements. Michael Head advised that NSW do not receive a ratable increase on the land which is why the Community Fund is there to make up additional Funding.

8.3 Screening

The issue of screening was raised, in particular when properties were partially brought for their view and also the effect on land values. Mike Young advised that the Department considers the visual impact and mitigation measures in its assessment.

8.4 Compensation for Landholders - Fire

Peter Crisp asked who would compensate the landholder in the event of fire caused by turbines. It was suggested that there be certain guarantees put in place in by the Government.

8.5 Location of Meetings

Ros Gibson asked whether meetings could be rotated to different council locations. Nic advised that it was the Committee's decision as to where meetings were held. Meetings had been to other locations but attendance had been low.

8.6 OEH

Mark Fleming advised that in relation to the CO comment, South East Forests have done some work in this area which may be applicable. Mark advised that OEH will work with the Department of Planning at public meetings to share information.

8.7 Environmental Affect

David Sainsbury advised that his main concern was about the condition of the environment, including wildlife and flora, he stated that the ground is unstable and was concerned regarding possible erosion with the removal of trees etc. He also had concerns regarding fires.

9. Next Meeting

Next meeting Wednesday 4 May

Meeting closed 9:41 pm

ACTIONS

No	Action	Meeting	Owner	Deadline	Comment
1.	Follow up with Mike from Trustpower regarding Nic's emails about appointment new committee members	3.0			
2.	Provide copy of Committee Guidelines to all Committee members	4.0	N Carmody		
3.	Previous minutes to be amended to reflect agreement/disagreement of committee members on subject of funds.	5.0	M Head		
4.	Michael to circulate previous minutes, people to provide feedback to Nic, and then Nic will edit and publish to the website before next meeting.	6.	N Carmody/ M Head		Complete
5.	Members to read Michael's draft report and come back with comments/questions next meeting	7.3	Attendees		
6.	Councils to look into adding information links on their websites to enable members of the public to find the information about the wind farm.	7.3	Councillors		
7.	Michael to bring copies of windfarm maps to the next meeting, and to send out link to booklet from exhibition	7.3	M Head		Complete
8.	Confirmation of the total number of houses within 5 km and total number of properties without houses in the same distance to be provided at next meeting by Trustpower	Trustpower			
9.	Forward copy of October 2015 minutes to Committee members	17/2/16 4.0	N Carmody		
10	Committee members to advise Chairman if electronic copies of maps required	17/2/16 5.3	N Carmody		
11	Contact Upper Lachlan, Yass & Boorowa Councils to request information links be provided on their website	17/2/16 5.3	N Carmody J Wheelwright		
12	Updated transport maps, including all roads to be provided	17/2/16 6.5	M Head		
13	Specific questions for DP&E to provided, collated and forwarded	17/2/16 7	N Carmody		

