

Rye Park Wind Farm Community Consultation Committee
Meeting No 18 held at Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Yass
Thursday 30th May 2019

Present

- CCC Members:** Nic Carmody (Independent Chair), Andrew Field, Sara Brown, Jayne Apps, Christine Hawkins, Cr Geoff Frost (Yass Valley Council),
- Proponent:** James Beckett & Steph Cook (Tilt Renewables)
- Observers:** Carlene Carmody (Minutes), John McGrath, Bert Barrass, David Winterflood, David Sainsbury.

The meeting opened at 7.05pm.

1. Welcome/Apologies

Apologies – Cr John Walker (Hilltops Council), Greg Medway, Malcolm Day and Graeme Privett. Thank you to the observers and to the Committee for their attendance.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary or other interests

All attendees required to complete Code of Conduct and Pecuniary Interest forms for the Department. Both were distributed to those present to complete as required by the new CCC guidelines. There were no changes to the declarations for those attendees.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2018 were adopted.

4. Actions arising from previous minutes

Action sheet updated.

5. Correspondence

Nil

6. Annual Report

Submitted and online.

7. Rye Park Wind Farm Project Status

Steph Cook advised the company is pushing ahead with the detailed design of the Project and continuing the pre-construction investigations that are required as part of the Development Consent. Tilt Renewables has also been in discussions with parties regarding a power purchase agreement (PPA) for the sale of electricity generated by the wind farm.

No PPA has been entered into with these third parties and as identified at the previous CCC meeting the company is progressing the studies necessary for a modification to the consent to increase the efficiency of the site by taking the maximum tip height of the turbines to 200m. Further information on the potential to modify the tip height was:

- An increase to the tip height would allow for the use of more technologically advanced and efficient wind turbines.
- We are undertaking a review of the visual, noise, ecology and civil design of the wind farm as these would be the key areas potentially affected by a change to the larger wind turbines.
- Specialist studies are ongoing.
- Tilt Renewables would not seek to change the noise conditions under the current Development Consent. Specialist studies will be undertaken to show that the larger wind turbines will be able to meet the current noise requirements.
- A 200m tip-height for the wind turbines is consistent with other projects in the market and wind farms that are being approved in New South Wales (NSW). The Bango Wind Farm is approved to construct turbines up to 200m.

James Beckett:

- Tilt Renewables are actively undertaking the preliminary investigations for a modification to the Development Consent due to the current energy market conditions and a desire to make the site more efficient which would allow for the company to be better placed in securing a PPA.
- Having a PPA/offtake agreement underpins the financing of a project and the ability of our company to make a financial investment decision. The project would proceed without a modification to the Development Consent, however, modification would make it more financially attractive.
- This is a priority project for Tilt Renewables, and we continue to invest substantial time and money in developing the site.
- The visual impact assessment will identify houses which will be impacted, and we are awaiting the results of the assessment. Also, confirm that the assessment will include consideration of other nearby proposed wind farms (i.e. Bango Wind Farm) as necessary.
- The State and federal election results don't change the fact that new investment in renewable energy needs to be economically viable and these projects need to stack up without reliance on changes to government policies. Large scale renewable investment is cheaper than investment in new coal and gas fired generation. The industry needs to rely on economic arguments in addition to the benefits in relation to climate change.
- Timeframe for commencement of the project is five years from the approval of the Development Consent, which is available on both the Tilt Renewables and Department's website. The definition of 'commencement' is in the Development Consent.

Questions on project status:

Chair – asked if the timeline and status of the current project or modification application could be regularly communicated to the Committee. Steph Cook agreed as they wanted to be as transparent as possible to the community.

Christine Hawkins – Cumulative impacts – I hope that all people impacted are consulted. Good to know that impacted residents will be given the same courtesy as landholders.

Who is the type of companies you approach for the PPA's?

Steph Cook – Typically speaking PPA's are sought with the large energy retailers (e.g. Origin Energy, AGL, etc.) as well as other large corporate entities that on sell power or consume large amounts of electricity through their own businesses. In the renewable energy industry, it is common for longer-term PPA's (e.g. 15 years).

Sara Brown – 1) As an intermittent power source can you provide guarantee required by the system.

Steph Cook: – The Rye Park Wind Farm will connect into the National Electricity Grid. NSW has a large amount of fossil fuel base load and can accept additional intermittent generation. The ability of the grid to absorb the additional intermittent load will be modelled and require sign off from AEMO and Transgrid prior to an offer to connect. The system is managed on an entire grid system level, so it is not necessary to have storage located at the wind farm.

Sara Brown - 2) In consideration to Rye Park Township if you go ahead with 200m modification what consideration is being made to location of the village and its residents – there are a cluster of people in this location. It is so foreign to the environment, it cannot be masked. It needs to be more than viable economically, to cause such an impact.

James Beckett: There is a current approval for the wind farm to be at this location. In relation to an increase in the tip height, we are doing the relevant assessments – including reviewing the potential changes to the visual impact and this will be reviewed once we have the results of the specialist study. The specialists that we are using are experts in their field.

Sara Brown - 3) What is happening now? It concerns me that you must make changes to make it more financially attractive.

James Beckett: Energy market conditions are different to what they were when project was first proposed. In addition to this wind turbine technology has advanced and we want to be in a position to take advantage of the quality wind resource the site has. The larger turbines would allow us to increase the capacity of the site, which makes it more of an attractive investment decision. Due to this we would likely to be able to get to the development of the site sooner.

We have seen through the PPA discussions that potential PPA partners held off awaiting election results and this has combined with the market expectations to make securing a PPA more difficult. We expect that there to be a re-balance of expectations as renewable investment in NSW is expected to grow significantly as the energy mix changes in coming years.

Jayne Apps – 1) David Fitzgerald as Tilt Renewables' Community and Stakeholder Engagement Advisor isn't in attendance. He should be present at the CCC meetings.

James Beckett: Unfortunately, David was unavailable to attend today. Tilt Renewables are currently constructing a new 80-turbine wind farm in Victoria (Dundonnell Wind Farm) and David is heavily involved in the ongoing engagement activities of this project.

Jayne Apps – 2) It is noted that none of the host members of the Committee are in attendance at the meeting.

Andrew Field – this has been noted and that Tilt have met with them prior to the meeting and now they don't turn up to the CCC meeting.

James Beckett: We normally try and take advantage of being in the region to meet with the host landowners on an individual basis. In meeting with those landowners associated with the CCC they passed along their apologies on this occasion, though acknowledge the preference for all to be in attendance.

Chair: I will send an email to all CCC members advising that having missed 3 meetings and under the CCC guidelines they can be removed from the Committee. If they feel they cannot meet their commitments then we can advertise for new members.

Christine Hawkins – It is a requirement for all CCC members to be communicating with the broader community and sharing any updates provided by Tilt.

Sara Brown: – the issue is that Tilt has separate meetings, which I understand that it is on a different commercial basis, so they then don't attend the CCC meeting. All members of the CCC should take the time to attend the meetings.

Jayne Apps – 3) Can an email be sent to the two other councils about their representative's non-attendance.

Chair: Suggested to the CCC members if a local council representative is not here you should contact your local Council and ask why.

Cr Geoff Frost: From a council point of view there is not a lot happening so no incentive to attend. Once the project makes progress it would be expected that council's representation would return.

Cr Geoff Frost: I have spoken to our General Manager about having a reference to the project on their website. Council is happy to upload minutes of the CCC minutes but are reluctant to be seen promoting any specific development and would therefore not have a link to a proponent's website on their page.

John McGrath: Grid protection studies – what is involved?

Steph Cook: Prior to connection we will submit a series of studies to AEMO and Transgrid to show that the connection of the wind farm will have no detrimental effects to the stability of the grid.

David Winterflood: The mountains and geological conditions around Rye Park have a high iron content. Every year we get fires there. When the towers are there we won't be able to bring in the fire planes to fight fires.

Sara Brown: On fires – have you taken any lessons learnt from recent fires in NSW. Two definitely linked to windfarms. One was a bird that caused an arc. The other was set off by a worker doing maintenance on a Total Fire Ban day. Do we have surety that this won't happen? What will you do about it? We are volunteers that fight fires and several volunteers in this area who will not come to the rescue of your site.

James Beckett: We have standard management measures in relation to fire prevention for all the existing wind farms that we operate around Australia and New Zealand. Our contractors would implement the conditions of approval and any Tilt Renewables requirements during the construction of the wind farm. We acknowledge that this is clearly an issue of importance for the community and is something that we will put back in detail as we get further into the construction planning.

8. Next Meeting

Next meeting to be held, date to be advised perhaps late September, Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall Annexe.

Meeting closed at 8.25 pm

No	Action	Meeting	Owner	Deadline	Comment
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/Tilt Renewables		Councillors reminded again to arrange this meeting 11/10/2018
21.	Coppabella Site inspection to be arranged following commencement	24/8/17	N Carmody	31/03/18	Not commenced
25	Councillors to advise when members of the Community Enhancement Fund for the project are appointed	11/10/2018	Council Representatives	Ongoing	

COMPLETED ACTION

2.	Provide copy of Committee Guidelines to all Committee members	4.0	N Carmody		Complete
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
1.	Follow up with Mike from Trustpower regarding Nic's emails about appointment of new committee members	3.0			Complete – Department accepted alternates for Committee.
3.	Previous minutes to be amended to reflect agreement/ disagreement of committee members on subject of funds	5.0	M Head		Complete – minutes amended
9.	Forward copy of October 2015 minutes to Committee members	17/2/16 4.0	N Carmody		Complete

10.	Committee members to advise Chairman if electronic copies of maps required	17/2/16 5.3	Tilt Renewals		Electronic copies of maps to be provided to Committee members by Tilt Renewals
12.	Updated transport maps, including all roads to be provided	17/2/16 6.6	M Head		Electronic copies of maps to be provided to Committee members by Tilt Renewals, including road details
13.	Specific questions for DP&ES to be provided, collated and forwarded	17/2/16 7	N Carmody		Complete
14.	Arrange for copy of Response to Submissions Documents to be provided to the Rye Park Post Office	12	N Carmody		Complete – advised that preferred locations were received from Councils, distribution list amended to include Rye Park Post Office. Apologies were received.
15.	Raise with Department issue of Rye Park Post Office not being included on distribution list	12	N Carmody		Refer above
17.	Confirm whether new Draft Guidelines apply retrospectively and whether council representation changes if a development covers various LGAs. Provide link to Guidelines to members.	12	N Carmody		Complete – copy of new guidelines provided to Committee Members.
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		No longer applicable as CCC Guidelines Provide proper procedure.
5.	Members to read Michael’s draft report and come back with comments/questions next meeting	7.3	Attendees		Done
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		Tilt Renewables		Complete
11.	Contact Upper Lachlan, Yass & Borrowa Councils to request information links be provided on their website	17/2/16 5.3	N Carmody J Wheelwright		Complete
16.	Provide email members list of heights of all wind monitoring towers	12	Tilt Renewables		Complete
18.	Re-appointment to Committee – Chair to advise Department that all current members would like to remain on the Committee. Chair to advise members once confirmation is received	24/8/17	N Carmody	31/10/17	Complete

19.	Maps – electronic maps to be provided to committee members, to include LGA boundaries. To provide clear definition 3 separate maps will be provided.	24/8/17	Tilt Renewals	30/09/17	Complete
23.	Confirmation of location of the compound near R51	3/5/2018	Tilt Renewables		Chris has distributed response – it has been removed.
22.	Copy after the development approval to be emailed to all committee members.	30/11/17	N Carmody		Complete
24	Chris to provide EPBC information	11/10/2018	Tilt Renewables		James has supplied link - Complete
26	Chris to provide a copy of the noise report that was used in the approval.	11/10/2018	Tilt Renewables	Next meeting	Complete
27	Nic to provide a link in an email to the PAC	11/10/2018	N Carmody		
28	Request for Tilt to advise capacity and name of the Transgrid line that the project will feed into.	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		Emailed to all members 12/2/2019
29	Process for Management Plans	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		Emailed to all members 12/2/2019
30	What is the approval quantity for tree clearing?	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		Emailed to all members 12/2/2019
31	Source of water for the project?	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		Emailed to all members 12/2/2019