

**Rye Park Wind Farm Community Consultation Committee**  
**Meeting No 21 held at Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Yass**  
**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**Present**

**CCC Members:** Nic Carmody (Independent Chair), Andrew Field, Jayne Apps, Malcolm Day, Cr John Walker, Cr Geoff Frost, Sara Brown.

**Proponent:** James Beckett (Project Land Developer), Martine Holberton (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Advisor) and via Zoom, Marita Giles (Senior Environment and Development Advisor) and Paul Villiers (Head of Projects).

**Observers:** John McGrath, David Sainsbury & Carlene Carmody (Minutes).

The meeting opened at 7.02pm.

**1. Welcome/Apologies**

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Apologies: Christine Hawkins, Graeme Privett. Thank you to the Committee members present for their attendance.

**2. Declaration of Pecuniary or other interests**

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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 at today's meeting.

**3. Confirmation of Minutes**

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*The minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020 were adopted.*

**4. Actions arising from previous minutes**

Action sheet updated.

**5. Correspondence**

Numerous emails from Department and community re Covid-19 and meetings. Requests to attend meeting from David Sainsbury and John McGrath.

**6. Rye Park Wind Farm Project Status**

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**Martine Holberton**

- Presentation of modification application process, summary of submissions following public exhibition of the application, the preparation of the Response to Submissions report and further information on the Benefit Sharing Plan – [refer attached for presentation](#).
- Tilt Renewables currently working on Response to Submissions (RTS) raised during exhibition period for the Modification Application due in July 2020. Once it is reviewed and accepted by the Department then it will be made public via Department Planning, Industry and Environment's [website](#).
- Lodgement of the RTS is anticipated in late July 2020 and should be made available on the website in August 2020.
- No legislated timeframes for the Department to make a decision on the Modification Application, though Tilt Renewables would anticipate that it could occur in early 2021.

- Inform Rye Park Website
  - Published by Tilt Renewables at the commencement of the public exhibition period to ensure the community had readily available access to the modification application information. The website clearly summarises the application and technical assessments and has an interactive map of the wind farm.
  - Also has a forum for the community to notify Tilt Renewables of projects important to the community that could assist in preparation of the Benefit Sharing Plan.
  - Link to the website sent to all CCC members at the commencement of the public exhibition period and identified on the front page of the most recent newsletter (May 2020).
- Public exhibition of modification application
  - Timing not determined by Tilt Renewables - The modification application process is managed by the Department and public exhibition timing and notification requirements in line with Department's requirements.
  - Acknowledge expectations of the community that broader engagement may have been expected though Tilt Renewables acted in accordance with the requirements of the public exhibition of the process, the Department's requirements and with consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Modification application available on the Department's website and USB drives provided to each local council (hard copies offered). Further hard copies of the material were provided on request, including by Jayne Apps for exhibition at the Rye Park Post Office.

Sara Brown: Why wasn't the Exhibition period delayed given the Covid-19 situation?

Martine Holberton: As identified, the Department is responsible for managing the modification application process and any public exhibition requirements.

Nic Carmody: Advised members that they all received the link to the Inform Rye Park Website at the commencement of public exhibition on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Sara Brown: It was set up to fail - people did not have reasonable time to respond to so many issues.

James Beckett: A number of people have made submissions about the consultation process, including the public exhibition of the application in the responses to submissions. The Department will review these submissions and our response prior to making a determination on the modification application.

Sara Brown: We thought Tilt Renewables would be better. You are still failing to consult with people.

James Beckett: The decision on both the timing and duration of the public exhibition was made by the Department and they made it clear to us they are responsible for the process. This was made more difficult by the COVID-19 situation though further materials were provided to people on request.

Martine Holberton: We did hold public information sessions in November 2019. It was at this stage intended to hold additional public information sessions prior to or during the formal public exhibition of the modification application. However, considering COVID-19 and the direction from the Department this did not occur. The reasoning from the Department was that they did not want any confusion in relation to where people should be providing their feedback and making submissions.

Sara Brown: I want it minuted that it was the Department who advised that they were the ones who made the decision to define the consultation period.

Sara Brown: This is a massive change. It was a rehash; you could have done a summary. People do not have the luxury to spend hours processing the complete application.

James Beckett: Agreed and it was a lot of paperwork. It was only 21 days. That is why we tried to break it down via the website. ([Inform Rye Park Website](#))

Martine Holberton: The premise of the website was to allow people a summary without having to trawl through 1200+ pages.

Marita Giles: The mapping is in the Appendices C - Development Layout & E - Infrastructure Changes in the Modification Application report.

Martine Holberton: Displayed links on the website to the maps. Maps were also sent out to people who requested them if they didn't have access to printers or internet. Links also on the site to the Department's website. Quite sad that the Inform Rye Park Website wasn't utilised as much as we had hoped. Information went live at beginning at Public Exhibition. We worked tirelessly for one week to build the website to make things easier for the community.

Sara Brown: I am putting it to you that you live and breathe this. How are we supposed to decipher all this technical information? You cannot answer our questions and you can't absorb our frustration either.

James Beckett: We are only human and sometimes can't speak to every specialist area of the development. We cannot be expected to know the answer to everything, though we do have four Tilt Renewables representatives at this meeting each representing different specialist areas.

Sara Brown: Time frames to respond are not great. John McGrath sent through a lot of questions which you didn't respond to.

James Beckett: To be fair, we advised that we hadn't received them at the last meeting. Andrew Field kindly sent them on, and we did respond. John McGrath then forwarded another two lengthy sets of questions which were also responded to (all CCC members copied in on the response).

Nic Carmody: How many hits did you get on the Inform Rye Park Website?

Martine Holberton: We got little over two hundred hits on the website.

Nic Carmody: That is disappointing.

Marita Giles: There is a Unique identifier on each of submissions so that people who have submitted can locate their submission within the RTS report and the relevant response.

Nic Carmody: Will Modification go to PAC/IPC?

Marita Giles: There have been some planning reforms so potentially not though it will be determined by the Department following submission of the RTS.

James Beckett: Under the Development Consent issued in May 2017, we had a number of options available for the transport of over-dimensional equipment. In the recent Modification Application we sought to include a preferred route to give the community greater clarity on the wind farm development. This preferred route has been selected from the approved route options presented in the existing Development Consent. Consultation with some residents of Boorowa have identified a potential improvement to the preferred transport route (including the use of Meads Lane and Long Street), which is being investigated and may be included as part of the RTS.

Andrew Field: So, the Jerrawa route has been completely dropped?

James Beckett: Our concern on that route option was over the narrowness of the current road pavements and impact on native vegetation within the road reserves that could be impacted as part of the road upgrades. In addition to this, the crossing of the railway line presents a key health and safety risk which could

be avoided by selection of a different route. Under our existing Development Consent we are required to prepare a detailed Traffic Management Plan to minimise disruption to local communities. This will be prepared in consultation with councils, RMS and communities and is subject to approval by the Department prior to the commencement of construction.

Andrew Field: The map that covers the three top areas. Are you going to use this for all import of materials? Where are you getting the water from?

James Beckett: Further to the existing water storages (e.g. Burrunjuck Dam, Yass Dam) we did identify in the modification application to potential to utilise groundwater supplies via new/existing bores within the wind farm. We have engaged a hydrogeologist to undertake an assessment to confirm that this would not impact on other groundwater users should this form part of the final water sourcing strategy.

Martine Holberton: The Inform Rye Park Website has further information on this and the revised water requirements of the Project.

Andrew Field: Why is the difference in the water required now at 118.4 megalitres, previously 900 megalitres or more?

Paul Villiers: The largest water requirements for the project relate to water for concrete batching and for dust suppression during construction. We have revised this requirement based on our knowledge of construction requirements for other projects we have previously built and currently have under construction.

Andrew Field: Doesn't add up, excavation area is larger, roads are larger. Please confirm and revert to the CCC.

Sara Brown: Bango is using 10 megalitres a week currently. It doesn't add up.

Design life and decommissioning:

Cr Geoff Frost: 30 years agreement with Turbine company. If something happens within that timeframe do you replace them? Do they all come down after 30 years? If the technology changes and improves?

James Beckett: Our development consent would be our limiting factor for repowering of the site and should the turbines be decommissioned and new ones installed this would require further approvals. As a business we are looking to make an investment decision for the installation of up to 80 turbines (should the modification application be approved).

Cr Geoff Frost: What is proposed is quite different in substance from the original Epuron proposal. A lot can change in the next 10 years. Will there be ongoing variations? Can the project just continue on after the 30 years?

James Beckett: The development is consistent in the fact that the wind farm is being proposed within the same site boundary and it would have very similar impacts to the original proposal. The key difference is the changes to the technology over the years from the original concept and we now have larger more efficient turbines available to use.

Sara Brown: I would rather you would say it is not out of the question to repower the wind farm.

Martine Holberton: Is the concern around who owns the windfarm or that we will tear down and rebuild it. We are only seeking a development consent to operate the wind farm for up to 30 years. The design life of the wind farm components is 25 years though this could be increased with normal maintenance of the asset.

Andrew Field: So, will you start it up and then sell it on? Is that a possibility or planned?

James Beckett: Our business structure is such that we plan to construct, own and operate the wind farm. You noted we have recently sold the Snowtown 2 Wind Farm in South Australia, which was based on a position to capitalise on an opportunity to gain funds to better progress our development pipeline, including the Rye Park Wind Farm. In saying this, we cannot talk to future financial decisions that may be made by the company's board.

Benefit sharing:

Martine Holberton: We are all aware of the \$230k committed in the Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) that came out of the current approval. Tilt Renewables will be offering the same amount even though there have been 12 wind turbines removed in the modification. Outside of the VPA we are also planning on preparing a Benefit Sharing Plan for projects identified through consultation with the community. Do CCC members have thoughts of how best these funds should be expended?

Malcolm Day: Internet and phone coverage. That will benefit everyone.

Andrew Field: I suggest you spend money on local roads. How do you stop workers using local roads?

Andrew Field: What is the new Tree clearing/disturbance area?

Marita Giles: ground clearance of 541 hectares which includes exotic pasture, native grassland and woodland.

Andrew Field: How many hollow bearing trees

Marita Giles: As per what has been stated in the BDAR ([Appendix G.4 BDAR \(from Chapter 5\)](#)) within the Modification application, approximately 230 hollow bearing trees within box gum woodland for the wind farm.

Cr Geoff Frost: Question on benefit sharing. Amount coming from each turbine. It needs to be indexed and basis for funding should be on megawatt capacity.

Andrew Field: With the modification don't we have grounds to renegotiate?

James Beckett: We are looking at other ways to get more money to the community outside of the VPA, which has been agreed between Tilt Renewables and the Councils. We also have a Neighbour Agreements with non-involved landholders.

Sara Brown: I have an issue with how much money the project will make. This money it will be split over three councils. Every turbine will generate an extraordinary amount of money. So the \$230,000 given to the community is not a lot.

James Beckett: The VPA for the wind farm is roughly equivalent to other wind farms that are within the region and we are encouraging people to inform us of other benefits that we can investigate outside of this formal agreement. As Martine identified there is a page on the Inform Rye Park Website which we would encourage people to look at and make suggestions as to what these benefits could be.

## **7. General Business – questions without notice**

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Sara Brown: I have spoken to your before re offset of trees. Since last summer's fires is there any effect on values, have they been reduced? Is part of those areas hit by the fires part of the offset?

Martine Holberton: I have been speaking to others. We are looking at biodiversity stewardship sites.

Andrew Field: How do you choose the offset areas?

Martine Holberton: There is a requirement of like-for-like offset of disturbed areas. Under the offset arrangements we are investigating it's likely that there will be a combination of on-ground offsets within the wind farm or region in addition to us satisfying some credit liabilities from the offset market established by the State Government.

Sara Brown: In each of our submissions we have reserved the rights to add additional concerns. Can you confirm that you will take on those additional submissions?

Marita Giles: We can but please be aware that we have been given a closing date by the Department so it would be best to do it sooner rather than later. Alternatively, we can address any additional issues/concerns through the CCC.

Sara Brown: As part of your notifications do you look at points for newsletters where people go (e.g. local businesses)? Have you approached anyone?

Martine Holberton: Yes, we have but it is up to the business holder if they want our newsletters there. Often it is a no for various reasons.

Cr Geoff Frost: Following the closure of the Yass Tribune, we now have a new newspaper in Yass – Yass Valley Times. You should consider this for any additional notifications for the region.

Jayne Apps: Have you tried local radio stations?

Martine Holberton: No. We are more often required to make public notifications in regional publications.

Jayne Apps: Should you put up a noticeboard displaying what is going to happen at Rye Park?

James Beckett: It hasn't been considered at this stage, though we would be open to other ways to distribute information about the project as we get closer to construction. We would encourage the CCC members to refer people to us should they be looking for more information.

Andrew Field: I would like the map to indicate involved and not involved residences rather than all in green which looks like it is good to go. Should it include out to 8km now?

Marita Giles: Each relevant assessment has a different zone of influence. For the visual impact assessment, it is prescribed at a 4km radius based on the height of the turbines. The noise assessment takes into account residences to as far as the noise specialists think it will be perceivable for noise. At 8km from the wind turbines the impacts from the wind farm will be minimal.

Jayne Apps: You mentioned local Landcare groups. Did you just contact the landowners associated with the wind farm that are within the group or the rest of the Boorowa Community Landcare group?

Marita Giles: We see benefit that could come from involving the local Landcare groups involved in the ongoing maintenance and actions of our local stewardship sites. I have spoken to Adrian Zammit Head of Landcare NSW in Sydney. We haven't formally spoken to the local groups as yet, though have had discussions with some associated landowners that are part of Landcare groups in the region. We see no conflict of interest in discussing the benefits for Landcare groups should these members also be associated with the wind farm.

Jayne Apps: Question for Cr Walker. Is it true that the Hilltops Engineer didn't know about the Modification Application?

Cr John Walker: You are aware that we have changed Engineers? I can't speak to matters that are staff issues. I was told that the Executive Meetings had been dealing with this and other matters.

Paul Villiers: We can confirm that Tilt Renewables and our civil engineering consultant have been having discussions with relevant council representatives. This previously has included Iain Rice and the GM and John Osland and Rebecca Cooper.

Nic Carmody: Can I suggest all CCC members take the opportunity of contacting the proponents with questions of importance. Please don't wait 3 months until the next meeting.

## **8. Next Meeting**

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Next meeting to be held, 7pm Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020, Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall Annexe.

Meeting closed at 9:00 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		

#### 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		
24	Chris to provide EPBC information	11/10/2018	Tilt Renewables		James to follow up and send to Nic. Links provided attached to minutes
26	Chris to provide a copy of the noise report that was used in the approval.	11/10/2018	Tilt Renewables	Next meeting	
27	Nic to provide a link in an email to the PAC	11/10/2018	N Carmody		Complete
28	Request for Tilt to advise capacity and name of the Transgrid line that the project will feed into.	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		
29	Process for Management Plans	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		
30	What is the approval quantity for tree clearing?	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		
31	Source of water for the project?	7/2/2019	Tilt Renewables		