

Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting Minutes

Gullen Range Wind Farm

Date:	Wednesday 20 February 2019
Location:	CWA Hall Spring Street Crookwell
Time:	5.00pm to 6.15pm
Attendance:	Peter Gordon (Chair) Charley Barber (Community Representative) Dimity Taylor (Community Representative) Leo Pearce (Asset Manager -NGRWF) Isabel Nelson (Community Engagement – NGRWF) Councillor Paul Culhane from Upper Lachlan Shire (ULSC) Tom Hughes (Observer) Christine Hughes (Observer) Victoria Mendl (Observer)
Apologies:	Scott Martin, Business Manager from Goulburn Mulwaree Council Rosemary Howe (Community Representative)

Introduction by Chair (Peter Gordon)

- Absence of Council and Community representative noted

Conflicting and Pecuniary Interests

- None

Minutes of Previous Meeting

- Minutes from 19th September 2018 were approved and are on the website.

Business arising from the Previous Minutes

- No business arising from previous minutes

ACTION items from Previous Minutes

- NGRWF would now make the flowchart showing the review process for the Clean Energy program (CLEP) available on the GRWF website. The brochure will include it next time it is revised.

Issues raised by community representatives

- CB commented that a GRWF shutdown should be of public notice and asked why the recent GRWF shutdown wasn't announced by NGRWF in a public forum?
 - LP responded that the shutdown was due to a minor electrical fault and NGRWF would take his comments into consideration and provide feedback at the next meeting.
- DT reported that the members of the community were concerned about wind turbines affecting the Rural Fire Service (RFS) duties in the event of a bush fire. DT asked (1) how NGRWF was managing bush fire risk and (2) if NGRWF could circulate their Bush Fire Management Plan to the CCC?
 - LP explained that NGRWF consults with the local RFS and reviews its Bushfire Management Plan annually. If bushfire risks are identified, NGRWF will work with land owners to manage or remove the risk. Wind turbines and the wind farm would be turned off by remote control in the event of a bushfire in the vicinity of the wind farm. NGRWF would circulate its Bush Fire Management Plan to the CCC, noting that some contact information regarding employees and nearby residents would be removed for confidentiality.
- CB asked if there was a diesel generator at the wind farm?
 - LP responded that a diesel generator was not kept on-site, as the wind farm already had two sources of power, one from the wind farm and the 330kV connection and the other from Essential Energy. If a diesel generator was required for maintenance reasons, it would be hired only for that period. There are no large quantities of fuel or diesel fuel stored on-site.
- DT asked how bush fire risk is managed for the solar farm?
 - LP advised that NGRWF consults with local RFS. Grass is kept short by mowing and will soon be grazed by sheep. In the event of a bush-fire, the solar farm can be completely electrically disconnected via remote control. The RFS would then have safe access to fight a fire. A site visit is being organised for local RFS members to become familiar with the wind farm and solar farm.
- DT asked whether there was any truth to a rumour in the community that more wind turbines would be added to GRWF?
 - LP responded that there were no plans to add more wind turbines to the Gullen Range Wind Farm.
- DT asked if there was any truth to a rumour in the community that BJCE Australia had bought the Crookwell IGA and Criterion Hotel.
 - LP responded that BJCE Australia had not purchased the Crookwell IGA or the Criterion Hotel.

Correspondence

- No correspondence.

Company Reports and Overview of Activities (Leo Pearce and Isabel Nelson)

- Proposed Changes to Community Enhancement Program Document (CEP)
 - The purpose of the CEP Document and the Clean Energy Program (CLEP) Guidelines was outlined. The basis for the proposed CEP changes to the CLEP Funding section of the Document was explained, including (1) the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) request to no longer be part of the approval process for the Independent Member position on the Energy Committee (2) changes based on NGRWF's learnings from administering the program over the past four years.
 - The proposed changes were discussed. The CCC members confirmed that they approved each of the proposed changes to the CEP Document.
- CLEP update: Approx. **105** buildings have completed Stage 1 of the Program. **55** Stage 2 applications have been approved so far, with **44** installations completed at a value of approx. \$280,000. For the Q4 2018 Funding Round, GRWF received a total of 5 Stage two applications. The next Funding Round (Q1 2019) closes on 22nd March. NGRWF has currently allocated approx. \$100,000 more than required under the wind farm Development Approval to the program.

The CCC discussed Stage one of the CLEP, giving mixed feedback regarding the benefit of the energy efficiency audit and \$150 voucher to the applicant. IN explained Stage 1 aims to assist the resident in having the knowledge required to apply for grant funding in Stage 2 of the CLEP. IN reported that applicant feedback regarding the audits and vouchers had mostly been very positive. NGRWF would take the CCC feedback into consideration when making future improvements to Stage 1 of the program. Informative Clean Energy Council Guides to installing Solar PV and batteries were available on the GRWF website.

There was also discussion about multiple applications to the CLEP for the same property. IN explained that the program aims to maximise the spread of CLEP funds across eligible residents. Currently, the Energy Committee reviews whether to allow multiple applications annually. To date, multiple applications for the same property are not allowed due to the popularity of the program. The starting date of the CLEP was 23rd December 2014, with approx. \$70,000 a year of CLEP funding accruing from this date. The CLEP annual reports and audits are available on the GRWF website.

- Community Fund – Applications should open very shortly for 2019/2020 Funding Round. The Council will be advising us soon. There will be another grant writing workshop organised to provide grant writers with skills, tips and techniques that will help their local community organisation submit grant applications to a variety of providers, including the Community Fund. Information will be posted to the NGRWF website.
- Tour update: Four successful tours have taken place since the last CCC meeting in September, including the National Wind Farm Open Day Tour. All the tours were fully booked or very close to full. The next public tour will take place on 19th March. Due to the popularity of the wind and solar farm tours, NGRWF is currently in discussion with other local wind farms and Crookwell tourism about expanding the public tours to other sites. RDA (Regional Development Australia) Southern Inland is facilitating these discussions. The Community Representatives asked for the 2019 Tour brochure to be circulated with the Minutes.

- STEM Industry School Partnership Program (SISP): In late 2018, BJCE Australia partnered with RDA Southern Inland, in a pilot program funded by the NSW Department of Education, which aimed to provide students with age appropriate Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) skills. Since the last CCC meeting, GRWF has hosted 4 local schools. Our engineers also went into the Crookwell Public and Crookwell High schools to assist students with their STEM projects. The program will continue in 2019 and GRWF is pleased to partner again with RDA Southern Inland.
- Community Information Plan (CIP): The annual review is due for the CIP. It was agreed that NGRWF would email out the CIP information prior to the next meeting for the CCC to review. The CIP would be reviewed at the next meeting.
- Compensatory Habitat Management Plan Area
 - The Annual Report is being compiled for DPE at the moment and will be submitted before the end of the month.
 - The results are that:
 - Weeds have been reduced and are being controlled.
 - More revegetation activities have been recommended for 2019.
 - Pest animals – Pigs have been substantially reduced, there are deer however there appears to be very little damage from deer at this stage and they are identified as a minor priority. Foxes have increased in number and it is recommended to focus on reducing fox numbers.
- Wedge tailed eagles: Studies over the last 4 years have found that there were 4 breeding pairs in the Project Area in 2015, 2 pairs in 2016 and 2017 and 3 pairs in 2018.
- Wind Farm outage: Due to an electrical cable earth fault in the main substation, the wind farm protection system switched off the wind farm. There was a delay in restoring the wind farm due to the cable requiring replacement and specialists being brought in to check that the high voltage equipment was OK to reenergize.
- Community Complaints and Response to Complaints
NGRWF had just received a noise complaint prior to the CCC Meeting, which is why it is not yet shown on the Complaints Register. NGRWF will report back to the CCC about this complaint at the next CCC meeting.

Action Items

- Attach the GRWF Bush Fire Management Plan to the minutes.
- Attach the 2019 wind and solar farm tour brochure to the minutes.
- Community Information Plan to be reviewed at the next CCC. NGRWF will email the CIP information to the CCC prior to the next meeting.
- NGRWF would respond to CB's comment at the next meeting about notifying the public of any wind farm shutdowns in the future.

NB: A date for the next meeting was not discussed. Potential dates for the next meeting will be circulated to CCC members.