

2021 Gullen Range Wind Farm Community Information Plan Review

Section 4 of the Gullen Range Wind Farm (GRWF) Community Information Plan requires that the outcomes and effectiveness of the plan are evaluated on an ongoing basis and reported to the CCC.

This document reports on the communication tools (imperative and additional) listed in section 3.1 of the plan in order to assess their effectiveness.

The changes to the landscape for community engagement were ongoing in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were fewer local events for GRWF to sponsor and participate in. Sporting teams remained hesitant to recommence seasons and newspapers remained on reduced circulation of paper-based publications. Regular events conducted by GRWF, such as the monthly BBQs undertaken in 2019 in front of Crookwell IGA and GRWF public tours and school visits did not recommence. In response to the reduced engagement opportunities through conventional means, where possible, GRWF adapted its approach by proactively moving to engaging across online platforms.

Table 1 shows the Imperative communication tools

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
Community Consultative Committee (CCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two meetings were held in 2021. Information about meetings, including minutes, is provided on the GRWF website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF assesses the CCC has been effective in providing a forum for (1) asking questions relating to the wind farm and (2) informing the committee about wind farm work and activities. However, it would be more effective if an additional community member could be sourced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise for more Committee Member(s)

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
<p>1800 telephone number, email, website enquiry/complaints form</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing and monitored daily. • 83 calls to the 1800 telephone number. • There were 309 emails to info@gullenrangewindfarm.com • GRWF contact information is provided as part of the info@gullenrangewindfarm email signature. • 26 website contact us form enquiries received. • Contact information is advertised in the local newspapers. It is also provided on public tours (when they are operating) and at community events attended by GRWF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF assesses these communication channels to be effective at providing processes for the community to communicate with the wind farm. This is supported by the high number of calls and emails. 	
<p>Clean Energy Program (CLEP)</p> <p>CLEP comprises two stages. The first stage is an energy efficiency audit, which helps residents identify the best way to improve energy efficiency in their home. The second stage is applying for the energy efficiency grant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During Year 7 of the Clean Energy Program (23rd December 2020 to 22nd December 2021), a total of two Stage 1 applications were received, 3 Energy Efficiency audits were carried out (including 1 application received at the end of Year 6) and 3 Stage 1 vouchers were issued to applicants. • Stage 2 of the Clean Energy Program: seven applications were approved by the Energy Committee, with the total value of all the approved grants for Year 7 amounting to approx. \$48,990. • GRWF made more than 40 phone calls and sent 130 emails to local residents regarding the CLEP during 2021. • There were 360 visits to the Clean Energy Program’s webpage in 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of the GRWF Clean Energy Program has been less effective than in 2020, with fewer applications received for both Stage 1 and 2 of the CLEP compared to 2020. • GRWF believes the CLEP has continued to be effective as a community engagement tool. This is supported by the high visitation rate to the CLEP webpage, the high volume of emails sent, and phone calls made by GRWF. In addition, there was an opportunity during these CLEP communications for GRWF to answer questions about other aspects of the wind farm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote in newsletter. • Consider advertising in local publications. • Proactively engage with Stage 1 applicants via phone and follow-up emails to encourage them to progress to Stage 2 of their applications.

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Community Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the Community Fund is provided on the GRWF website, CCC and at community events attended by GRWF. The Community Fund Workshop took place again in 2021 to assist the community with the grant application process. The workshop took place on 16 March but as only one attendee registered, it was held via teleconference. There were 314 visits to the Community Fund webpage in 2021. Three projects were funded in 2021, with information about funding outcomes available on the GRWF website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF believes that the Community Fund grant scheme was effectively communicated to the community, with three community projects receiving grants in 2021. This is supported by the high volume of visits to the Community Fund webpage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote in newsletter. Consider advertising in local publications. Increase project success stories in local media. Work with ULSC to improve publicity opportunities.

Table 2 shows the Additional communication tools

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
Wind Farm public tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 public tours of GRWF remained on hold. Members of the public can register via the GRWF website if they wish to be notified by email when the tours recommence. There were approx. 1,075 visits to the Gullen Range Wind Farm's tour web page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tours have not been effective in 2021, as they remained suspended due to COVID-19. High visitation rates to the tour web page, almost double to 2020 views, suggests the public continue to be interested in attending the tours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-engage with Upper Lachlan Tourism to activate the public tours – exploring what is possible in 2023.

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Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live and updated frequently. • 29 news updates posted to the website. • Dedicated COVID-19 response page. • In 2021, there were 4,593 unique visitors to the website and 10,570 page views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation and users declined in 2021 compared to 2020. • GRWF assesses the website to be an effective communication tool, providing the public with regular news updates about the wind farm, including its activities in the community and programs. 	
Sponsorship	<p>Seven community groups/projects were sponsored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 143rd Crookwell Show • Crookwell Men’s Bowling Club’s Gullen Range Triples Classic Tournament • Crookwell Ladies Open 4s Bowling Tournament • Goulburn Railway Bowling Club’s 2021 Rose Tournament • 2021 Gunning Arts Festival and FlashWrite Project • Crookwell Public School’s student prizes • Crookwell Junior Green Devils Rugby League Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF has been proud to support local community groups. • GRWF believes their sponsorships have been an effective way to help local community groups and establish goodwill in the community. Note that some of these sponsorships have been through BJCE Australia, the owner of GRWF. 	
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF did not post LinkedIn news items in 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF does not have any active social media channels. 	
School engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF continued to be an Industry Partner for the STEM Industry School Partnership Program (SISP) in 2021, participating in the 2021 STEM on Demand Conference, contributing to material to be used in lessons and presenting to five local schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF assesses that its school engagement was effective at educating, informing and encouraging learning about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and renewable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working to recommence the STEM program in 2023 with

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School engagement contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately, GRWF could not host wind farm visits in 2021 due to COVID-19 restraints. 	<p>energy in 2021. Students were also provided with a forum to ask questions about the wind farm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is evidenced by GRWF engaging with primary and high school students from five local schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 8 STEM students Years 4-6 school students
Presentations to interest groups	Presentations to interest groups were suspended due to the pandemic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less effective than 2019 and 2020 due to the low number of presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommence interest group sessions in 2023. Tours and school program will take priority.
One-on-one meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met with 2 community members throughout 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The individual meetings were effective, however fewer one-on-one meetings (particularly in face-to-face settings) were conducted in 2021 compared to previous years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We expect the frequency of one-on-one meetings to increase in 2023 now with eased COVID restrictions.
Newspaper advertisements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2x 6 monthly advertisement of complaints line were published in the local newspapers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Goulburn Post has the largest readership in the region and that's why it was chosen as the newspaper to public the advert in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More adverts in 2022/23, with additional information in advertisements for

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Newspaper advertisements contd.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Goulburn Post reaches a wider audience than our newsletter and our website. 	community interest e.g., tours, CLEP etc.
Media reports of wind farm progress & activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 third-party media release for Gunning Arts Festival sponsorship. 29 news items were posted to the GRWF website. 1x radio news story with ABC Central West for the CLEP program. A dedicated COVID-19 web page remained published on the website to remind the community about GRWF's COVID-19 response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF assesses its media reports and releases have been effective at providing regular updates about the wind farm and its activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase media stories for community engagement, CLEP and tours.
Local community event participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 143rd Crookwell Show: GRWF was a sponsor of the show. There was no onsite activation in 2021. Attended the Goulburn Railway Club's Rose Tournament presentation ceremony. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF has endeavoured to participate in local events throughout the year, however, due to COVID-19 and travel restrictions, fewer opportunities were available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to recommence our information and face painting stand in 2023.
eNewsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Quarterly newsletters were published in 2021. GRWF activities were also announced in the regular Biala Wind Farm digital newsletter, such as the Community Fund, Clean Energy Program, and sponsorships initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2021, project information was combined into a project newsletter that was issued quarterly. These will remain ongoing in 2023. 	

Conclusion

GRWF believes the Community Information Plan (CIP) has overall been effective during 2021 in spite of the ongoing challenges caused by the COVID pandemic.

With reduced opportunities for face-to-face engagements, we focussed on keeping the community updated via our website news page and through the quarterly newsletter. We will continue to increase and improve our engagement and communication with the community in 2023 as we review pre-COVID initiatives such as our public tours and the school's program etc.

GRWF will continue to identify and implement future improvements to the CIP in consultation with the Community Consultative Committee.