

**BANGO WIND FARM
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**



CCC MEETING #2 MINUTES

12:00 – 2:00pm, Tuesday 6th May 2014
Old Council Chambers, 65 Court Street, Boorowa

Present:

Lisa Andrews (LA)	Independent Chair
Adrian Maddocks (AM)	CWP Renewables
Naiomi Finlayson (NF)	CWP Renewables
Thomas McGrath (TM)	Community Representative
Terry Sellwood (TS)	Community Representative
Jayne Apps (JA)	Boorowa District Landscape Guardians

Apologies:

Andrew Winterflood (AW)	Community Representative
Wendy Tuckerman (WT)	Mayor, Boorowa Council

Absent:

Ann Daniels (AD)	Councillor, Yass Valley Council
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Meeting commenced at 12:16pm.

Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Bango Wind Farm (BWF) Community Consultative Committee (CCC), hosted by CWP Renewables (CWPR). Each person was invited to introduce themselves and state their position on the Committee.

Apologies

Andrew Winterflood and Mayor Wendy Tuckerman sent their apologies.

Declaration of Interest

The Chair declared her interest as Independent Chair of the BWF CCC, engaged by CWPR.

Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Minutes of CCC #1 were confirmed by Tom McGrath and seconded by Jane Apps.

Business Arising

Item 1: Chair to make enquiries on whether the NSW Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) can instruct CWPR to undertake an independent assessment of local property value impacts.

LA contacted Toby Philp from the DPE and was advised that there is no requirement for the proponent to provide an independent valuation. Economic issues, including potential impacts on property values, are an issue that the proponent is to address in the preparation of its Environmental Assessment (EA).

Item 2: CWPR to review wording of EA to account for neighbouring landowner objections to turbines within 2 km of their dwelling.

AM stated that these objections will be accounted for in the EA where appropriate.

Item 3: CWPR to carry out further consultation with the Rural Fire Service (RFS) to confirm its position on BWF and wind turbines in general.

AM stated that the RFS have been contacted and no further clarification was offered. Their position remains the same; they have no objection and the onsite tracks assist fire fighting activities by providing access to areas otherwise unreachable from the ground.

Correspondence

- 26/08/13 Email to CCC members with copy of a report on the impact of wind farms on property values, via Tom McGrath.
- 26/08/13 Email from LA to DPE on whether CWPR can be directed to undertake an independent report.
- 27/08/13 Email response from Dept Planning advising that the company has to address economic impact in their EA.
- 03/09/13 Email to CCC members with draft minutes of August 2013 meeting.
- 31/10/13 Email to CCC members advising of postponement of November 2013 CCC meeting.
- 10/12/13 Email to CCC members with copies of reports forwarded on via Jayne Apps.
- 09/04/14 Email to CCC advising that a meeting will be scheduled for next month.
- 21/04/14 Email to CCC members - Meeting Notice and Agenda for today's meeting.

Accepted by Tom McGrath, seconded by Terry Sellwood.

Reports and Updates

AM gave presentation covering:

- Rebrand of Wind Prospect CWP to CWP Renewables (www.cwprenewables.com.au)
- Recent project activities
- State Government planning changes
- Community participation initiatives
- RET review
(<http://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/policy-advocacy/renewable-energy-target.html>)
- Direct Action
(<http://www.greghunt.com.au/Portals/0/PDF/TheCoalitionsDirectActionPlanPolicy2010.pdf>)

The presentation is included as an attachment and the above links can be used to access the information mentioned in the meeting.

Questions that arose from presentation are as follows:

Q. Has the name changed or has the company been taken over?

A. Only the name has changed from WPCWP to CWPR, the parent companies remain the same (Continental Wind Partners and Wind Prospect Group).

Q. (Regarding attachment 2 and RET Review submissions) Is it a matter of emailing the provided list of people?

A. There are a number of options for completing a submission including online options (websites shown in presentation) and email / posting your submission to the addresses provided in the attachment.

Q. Is CWPR involved in the development of solar farms?

A. Yes, we are looking at solar farms as well as wind farms.

Q. (Question directed at JA representative of the Boorowa District Landscape Guardians by TM) How do the Landscape Guardians feel about the RET? Do they only object to wind farms in the Boorowa Area or to renewable energy in general?

A. (JA) The Boorowa District Landscape Guardians believe wind farms have too much of an impact on built up areas. It is the turbines we object to. The Landscape Guardians are supporters of renewable energy in principle.

(JA) Personal opinion is that the Bango Wind Farm is less intrusive than others in the area.

Questions & Answers – incorporating General Business

Motion put forward by LA to move the venue for the next CCC meeting to Yass to encourage Yass Council to participate. Committee expressed its disappointment in both Councils' non-attendance at the meeting. LA advised that she would write to both Council's seeking alternate representatives be nominated in case the primary person cannot attend.

Next meeting to be held in Yass, possibly at the Council Chambers or Town Hall. Seconded by TM.

Action Arising: LA to write to Yass and Boorowa Council seeking nominations for alternative representatives if primary representative cannot attend.

Q. The NSW Guidelines are still in draft form, are CWPR following these guidelines in the Development of the Bango Wind Farm and the preparation of its EA?

A. The Draft Guidelines were issued in December 2011 and remain in Draft form. CWPR is adhering to these where possible. For example, the neighbour agreement policy requires us to engage with neighbours with a residence within 2km of a turbine. We have three options in this regard:

1. obtain a signed agreement with the neighbouring landowners;

2. remove all turbines within 2km of a neighbouring residence; or
 3. justify our position and seek approval for these turbines from the Department of Planning.
- Option 3 is only being considered where we believe the impact of turbines within 2 km can be justified, but the DPE will ultimately decide if that is acceptable.

Q. Is distance calculated from the residence?

A. Yes. With the Bango wind farm there are instances where we have agreements with neighbouring landholders, others where we have removed turbines from within 2km of residences and there are instances where we have turbines proposed within 2km and we will seek approval from the department for these. For example a derelict building which has turbines proposed within 2km. Our reasoning is that the topography of the area means the building will be shielded from many of the impacts associated with the turbines and the building is not a primary place of residence. Due to the current draft state of the guidelines, it is unclear how the Department will deal with this.

Q. Will CWPR be the owner and builder of BWF?

A. Yes we will build, own and operate, with the potential to bring in partners at later stages if the company chooses to do so.

Q. What is the status of the Environmental Studies? Have Wedged Tailed Eagles (WTE) and other endangered species been taken into account?

A. WTEs are not endangered but they are protected. The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) has requested that they be taken into account when preparing our Environmental Assessment. Current and old nesting sites have been documented on-site and the turbine layout has been designed so that adequate distances between nests and turbines have been maintained. In some cases turbines have been moved or removed all together. There is also the possibility of moving WTE nests as a last resort.

Q. WTE have two modes of flight. When slope soaring how will turbines placed in their path effect the eagles?

A. As their focus is on the ground, it is possible they may not see the blades. The EA takes this into account and looks at the impacts on eagles nesting and foraging habits. Following recent consultation, OEH are happy with the approach taken in the EA.

Q. How have other species been accounted for in the environmental studies? Hawks, for example.

A. OEH did not feel this was necessary, there are however generic assumptions made when assessing impacts on species. Since receiving the adequacy comments from OEH there has been a great deal of dialog and several meetings to discuss the impacts of the project on bird, and other, species in the area.

Q. Are there studies which have been done by other wind farm which look at these impacts?

A. Unfortunately these types of studies are not carried out unless someone is willing to pay for them. There are wind farms which have conditions on them to monitor bird strike during operation. Monitoring in these instances consists of counting dead birds at the bottom of turbines, which is then reported and can form the basis for future analysis of bird impacts.

Q. The Reardon Report stated a 30 – 60% reduction in property values surrounding wind farms.

A. There are concerns surrounding the information in this report. For example, the sample size was very low and the properties assessed had other key issues (such as highway frontage and power lines) affecting attractiveness/value. There are other studies and reports that repeatedly show there are no long term impacts on property values from wind farms.

Action Arising: CWPR to send the Clean Technica report “How many studies will it take before people believe wind farms don’t harm property values?” to CCC members.

It was noted by TS that the circumstances are different in Australia than in Europe. In Europe land is more in demand and there is less choice. As a result overseas studies can’t be relied upon.

Q. What are the most optimistic timeframes for the project?

A. RET Review outcome	Late 2014
Submit EA to Planning	Late 2014/early 2015
All Approvals	Late 2015
Start Construction	Late 2016
Operation	2018

Q. Rye Park Wind Farm was declared a controlled action under the EPBC Act recently. Has Bango Wind Farm been declared a controlled action?

A. Yes, we have to submit information under the EPBC Act for approval.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 4th November 2014
12 noon

It was agreed that the next CCC meeting should be held in Yass to encourage participation by other CCC members. Venue to be confirmed nearer the time.

One month notice will be given for any change of date.

Meeting closed at 1:44pm.

Attachments

1. CWPR Presentation Handout
2. Clean Technica report “How many studies will it take before people believe wind farms don’t harm property values?”

ACTION ITEMS

1. Send out copy of Clean Technica Report to CCC members (attached to minutes)
2. LA to write to Yass and Boorowa Council seeking nominations for alternates