

## Minutes of Meeting

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### Liverpool Range Wind Farm

### Community Consultation Committee

<b>Present:</b>	Danielle Annells	Independent Chairperson	DA
	Greg Piper	Uninvolved landowner	GP
	Linda Gant	Uninvolved landowner	LG
	Ant Martin	Involved landowner	AM
	Anne-Louise Capel	Involved landowner	ALC
	Sean Constable	Upper Hunter Shire Council	SC
	Leeanne Ryan	Warrumbungle Shire Council	LR
	Gordon Fraser	Observer (OEH)	GF
	Hugh Sangster	Epuron	HS
	Donna Bolton	Epuron	DB
<b>Guests:</b>	Steve Loane	GM Warrumbungle Shire Council	SL
	Waid Crockett	GM Upper Hunter Shire Council	WC
	Warwick Giblin	OzEnvironmental Pty Ltd	WG
	Andrew Ellis	NSW Dept Ind, Resources & Energy	AE
<b>Apologies:</b>	Graeme Booker	Coolah Caravan Park	GB
	Pauline Dunne	Observer (OEH)	PD
	Donna Ausling	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	DA1
	Councillor Ron Campbell	Upper Hunter Shire Council	RC
	Julia Imrie	Mudgee District Environment Group	JI
<b>Date:</b>	28 July 2015		
<b>Venue:</b>	Coolah Council Chambers		
<b>Purpose:</b>	Meeting No 9		

**Minutes:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Agenda / Comment / Discussion</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	<p>DA opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting number 9 at 12.05pm.</p> <p>This meeting was scheduled to introduce the new Epuron team, gauge community sentiment and hear a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) proposal from Warrumbungle Shire Council and Upper Hunter Shire Council.</p> <p>Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed to CCC members prior to the meeting and minutes of the last meeting were distributed at the meeting. Meeting apologies were accepted from;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pauline Dunne, NSW OEH.</li> <li>b. Graeme Booker, Coolah Caravan Park</li> <li>c. Donna Ausling, Liverpool Plains Shire Council.</li> <li>d. Cr Ron Campbell, Upper Hunter Shire Council.</li> <li>e. Julia Imrie, Mudgee District Environment Group.</li> </ul> <p>Leeanne Ryan advised she is replacing Alia Slamet as the Warrumbungle Shire Council representative on the CCC.</p>	Noted
2.	SL gave an acknowledgment of country to the traditional owners of the land.	Noted
3.	<p>DA asked all CCC members present to give brief update on community issues they knew about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LG – The community wants to know where Epuron is up to with the project. The powerline route is still an issue – crossing Durridgere.</li> <li>• GP – Doesn't see that much is happening with the project. Would like to see commitment to a VPA for the community enhancement fund.</li> <li>• AM – Wants to hear about the progress of the project. Generally hearing positive sentiments in the community, even since the government has been expressing dislike of renewables. Sees so many positives for a district and frustrated that the government does not see this. To hear the PM say so many negatives hurts me and makes me non-political – to think what this district could lose.</li> <li>• WC – Reinforced AM's comments. The profile of wind energy has been raised at the Federal level. If there was a change of government and labour policies were to occur then this is a project that might occur.</li> <li>• SL – The Council represents the wider community with a State Significant Development (SSD) like this, especially through Section 94 and 94a fees/contributions or VPA which recognise the impact of the development. We have just been through the Cobbara Coal Mine project where the impact of the project has been huge with ninety families leaving Dunedoo with the buy up of land for a project that never happened. The government has helped but we want to put the Council's case. In council chambers I haven't heard any negatives although council hasn't yet put forward a position on the project.</li> </ul> <p>The roads need to be discussed.</p> <p>Council wants to know if the wind farm will purchase or lock up land for offsetting and if not who will own and manage it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LR – Support concern about a lack of VPA, it is important to have something come back to the local community. Council want to avoid</li> </ul>	<p>Noted</p> <p>HS</p> <p>HS</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>HS</p> <p>HS</p> <p>Noted</p>

	<p>PMSW/OEH offsetting ownership as this makes the land unrateable. Mudgee had \$100,000 taken out of the rateable base for mines. Liverpool Plains LGA had 4000 ha of prime grazing white box and Koala habitat locked up and removed from the rates base.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GF – Has heard of many people wanting windfarms. Ernst and Young report has been released providing benefit sharing options. OEH wants this industry to go forward.</li> <li>• ALC – Noted that also a WSC councillor so potential for conflicts of interest. Generally the community needs more information about the project. Use the Coolah Diary and Merriwa Ringer and provide an update in the local media.</li> </ul> <p>It would be handy to tell people who to lobby to get more positives.</p> <p>Any local VPA needs to be transparent so that the local community knows what is going on. Local businesses need to gear up and to learn how to do that. Mr Hinman had lots of paperwork on his website from a presentation he gave a little while back. People need to have the process of gearing up explained to them.</p> <p>A gas pipeline development in the central ranges established a camp out of town and brought food in. We don't want that here, we want to get the local benefits on board.</p> <p>Would like Epuron to update the landowners on what DGRs still have to be done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SC – Keep in touch with the Merriwa business community as it wants to know how to be involved in the project. Wants to be informed and to know how to prepare. We knew that there would be a hiatus through NSW planning but keep updating the community.</li> <li>• AE – I work for the Division of Resources and Energy, and am on the Narrabri CCC, the Shenhua CCC and now the role also cover Renewables. Role is to be useful as a conduit to the government and to get the right information to the right people at the right time. AE is in the area 3-4 days a week.</li> </ul>	<p>HS</p> <p>HS</p> <p>HS</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>HS</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>DA requested minutes of the previous meeting be circulated. After reviewing the minutes there were no changes proposed. DA moved that the minutes be accepted. The minutes were accepted by all CCC members present.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>DA asked HS to provide an update on the project, including a Q&amp;A</p> <p>HS – discussed PPT presentation with 13 slides as attached that covered the following main points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussed actions that had been carried out from last meeting</li> <li>• Noted it has been a difficult two years for the industry. In June 2015 the RET legislation passed with a 30% reduced target. This is a reduction but it is a positive because the industry has some certainty since 30 more projects need to be built by 2020 to meet the target.</li> <li>• HS gave update on NSW planning process and noted Epuron is working to address issues raised in 48 submissions (43 submitters) to the exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS):             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 12 from agencies providing comments</li> <li>○ 31 from public with 5 supportive, 9 comments and 17 objections - 9 of the objections came from over 200km away</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Summary of the issues raised in submissions was presented</li> <li>• HS advised that the 1 turbine in Liverpool Plains Shire has been removed</li> </ul>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

	<p>and otherwise there have only been small changes to the proposed project layout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maps displayed to show changes within the wind farm boundary and in the powerline alignment. Epuron advised that the exact powerline route is still to be identified and it is continuing discussions with land owners in the area.</li> <li>• LG noted that some landowners do not want the Transmission line and the environmental impacts.</li> <li>• SL asked about Epuron’s intentions with regard to securing environmental offset land. Epuron advised it is still working through the detail with OEH and has not currently identified specific land. SL expressed that Council’s wishes is that this not be rateable land and it is important that it needs to be land with a management plan for pests, weeds and fires. SL and WC expressed the desire to be ‘kept in the loop’ about the discussions and engaged well before a decision is made.</li> <li>• HS discussed some consultation that has taken place including with Australian Astronomical Observatory in regards to night lighting and night work in conjunction with dust. As the proposal stands not night work or night lighting is proposed and no issues of concern were identified. Will address concerns about the Dark Skies Park – an SEPP-LEP initiative of WSC.</li> <li>• SL suggested timing might be Dec 2015 for Response to Submissions, March 2016 for a Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) review and Dec 2016 for a decision. HS noted that he hoped a decision would be made earlier than this as stated in the presentation.</li> <li>• HS requested that anyone in the community advise Epuron of any landing strips that are not on the current wind farm map or are but should be removed. CCC members pointed out that when the need for fire fighting arises disused landing strips may come back into use.</li> <li>• HS requested additional feedback more generally</li> <li>• SL will liaise with Catherine van Laeren of Mid-Western Regional Council to keep her updated.</li> <li>• It was noted that the power line route is proposed to be in this Council area and perhaps Catherine could be invited to participate in the CCC once again.</li> <li>• It was noted that all the displays about the project need a refresh. ALC - requested photomontages to be updated and provided to LG at Cassilis, Coolah Council chambers and Merriwa Council chambers. Also requested that a summary of the CCC meeting outcomes be provided to the local media (the Coolah Diary and Merriwa Ringer) as had been done to date. DA requested that Epuron circulate the summary prior for the CCC to review prior to sending to media, and that copies of published information be shared at subsequent CCC meetings.</li> <li>• DA suggested that Epuron put out a newsletter and to keep up the frequency of communication with the community, explain what’s going on at present and address the issues raised through the CCC, such as the requests for information about local landing strips.</li> <li>• In response to the call for more regular communication raised by ALC and GP, DA also suggested that Epuron prepare a community engagement calendar in order to keep a regular schedule of information flowing to the community. The CCC can advise on local events to include on the calendar such as Epuron to consider attending local events such</li> </ul>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>HS</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>All</p> <p>All SL</p> <p>HS</p> <p>HS</p> <p>HS</p> <p>HS</p>
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	<p>as the Merriwa Show, the Coolah Horse sports and to consider a presence in high schools. ALC also reiterated the importance of the opportunity to maintain a regular presence on radio. All agreed it is important for Epuron to keep the communication going even if the news is that ‘there is no news.’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HS suggested that a forum discussing potential opportunities and preparation for winning work on the wind farm             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ GF noted that while it will be useful to hold a workshop on getting paperwork in place to enable local businesses to bid for work during construction as subcontractors, it is important to note that local companies bids are often higher than larger companies and they won’t get the work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ALC noted that it can be more useful to have a focus on jobs during operation.</li> <li>• SL noted he had met with the Department of Planning and Environment and they expressed the view that VPAs are the most suitable mechanism for community enhancement.</li> </ul>	<p>AE/HS</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>DA invited Warrumbungle Shire council and Upper Hunter Shire Council to present their perspective on community enhancement funds including VPAs.</p> <p>WG noted that 80% of the wind turbines are in Warrumbungle Shire and 20% are in Upper Hunter Shire. This is a major project, with regional influence and no stone will be left unturned in representation to planning. The key part is around the financial contributions to the community, to the regional community. Council is to be involved to represent the interests of ratepayers in each shire. Presentation is attached key points are;</p> <p>Community benefit would be spread into 2 sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Infrastructure upgrades (i.e. roads) – which can be either through s94 contributions or as part of VPA and negotiated by council with the proponent</li> <li>2. Ongoing annual fund during operation ideally through a VPA but other models exist and form some parts:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Community enhancement fund</li> <li>b. Road maintenance fund</li> <li>c. Administration costs</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>It is crucial to set up the frame of reference of any ongoing funds before the fund is setup. This includes defining the community in which it can be distributed and the mechanism for managing the distribution. Councils suggest a section 355 committee for management of the fund as it has statutory reporting requirements and has cross checks built into the transparent process. The member makeup of such a committee can be flexible and should include some council members/staff as well as the local community to ensure that local interests are correctly represented.</p> <p>Discussion following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ALC noted it will be important to ensure the committee is not stacked with those who say what councils want – need real community reps.</li> <li>• LG noted there is local resistance to council holding funds.</li> <li>• SL confirmed that he heard council needs to explain to the community that the fund would not end up in consolidated revenues.</li> <li>• WC said a section 355 committee should have a specific frame of</li> </ul>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

	<p>reference which can state for example where the funds are spent and where they are not to be spent – ring-fencing off the areas benefitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LG advised resistance would remain in Cassilis if there is a section 355 committee. Experience with a 355 for the Cassillis Hall is that she does not believe funds are shared equitably.</li> <li>• GP noted that quite a bit of work has been done on this in places such as England and this project doesn't have to be tied to a particular model, it is a negotiable process.</li> <li>• SL noted that there are two mining developments in Narrabri which have community funds of \$40million that are restricted in use (ie not consolidated revenue). These community enhancement funds can be used as cofounding to leverage 50/50 state and federal funding grants and can actually increase the benefit even more</li> <li>• LG noted that such leveraging doesn't have to be through council.</li> <li>• SL advised it did have to be via council.</li> <li>• AM noted that he would like to think that the committee would be more independent with council a member on it and not the controller. It is important to translate the intent of having local community benefit into the distribution of the fund.</li> <li>• SL noted that it should not be us and them – the council is the community.</li> <li>• AM noted that LG had stated that council did not represent the local people's interests.</li> <li>• SL advised that a 355 committee administers the Cobbora fund and that committee has to ensure it has acquitted itself equitably. It has subcommittees to consider various things.</li> <li>• GP noted it is crucially important how the fund is set up with clear direction for the use of the money.</li> <li>• LG queried if Cobbora is a one off. This was confirmed and LG noted that the wind farm fund is very different with on-going funding. The s355 committee works on majority rules.</li> <li>• WC noted it can have 1 councillor from each council and the rest can be community members and a s355 committee can be administered as part of the VPA which is a legal document signed as part of the consent process with legal responsibilities.</li> <li>• GF queried whether the committee had considered asking the community how to do it. He noted it would be wise to consider the Embark model in Victoria which includes the CWA, Scouts, local fire captain and others and expends \$160,000 per annum.</li> <li>• WG advised that council have a document showing how 10 wind farm funds in other parts of the state are administered (including proposals).</li> <li>• SL raised the issue of water being trucked in to the construction site if the area is in drought. Coolah could do with a back-up water supply to leave a legacy of water security. He would prefer a legacy type project over BBQs and rotundas that have to be maintained.</li> <li>• Equally, quarries could be created which can provide on-going resources for the community with ongoing road maintenance etc.</li> </ul> <p>SL, WC and WG then left the meeting</p>	
7.	<p>DA noted that it would be critical to have a well engaged community and encouraged further discussion about the structure of the community fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP noted that was a good reason to go along with a s355 committee</li> <li>• LG suggested training and job opportunity for young people could be a</li> </ul>	Noted

	<p>strong part of a s355 and also a commitment to a country education foundation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP said there could be sub-committees within the s355 committee – like the Cobbora version.</li> <li>• LG noted the S355 is not the only way to set up funds. Cassillis has really been on the fringe of council’s radar, it is a battle to be heard.</li> <li>• AM noted that they are on the edge of 2 shires and might as well not be in either. Would not like decisions to be made in Warrumbungle or Scone.</li> <li>• GF noted he would encourage community consultation and research and looking at overseas models and to get community buy-in</li> <li>• Epuron to ask Catherine Van Leuren if she will consult with the CCC.</li> <li>• ALC noted that any s355 committee would have to be future-proofed against council amalgamations given it would operate for over 25 years.</li> <li>• GP asked what the approximate sum of the fund would be.</li> <li>• HS advised that based on Gullen Range and 278 wind turbines it would be <math>\\$1666 \times 278 = \\$463,148</math></li> </ul>	HS Noted
8.	<p>DA noted that it would be useful to have a workshop for the CCC to deliberate thoroughly on the options at hand and plan for engaging the community about the options , in order to make a recommendation to Epuron. DA noted that it will be important to plan for this meeting well so that the CCC can get to a position of clarity about the pros and cons of the options, and to engage the community for input.</p> <p>GF, GP, LG and ALC noted they would assist in the planning for this session.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ALC, LG, GP, GF, Epuron and DA would have a meeting to plan for workshop TBA.</li> <li>2. The workshop for all CCC members will be on Tuesday 15 September</li> <li>3. The project newsletter will notify the community of the process, and be used as one of the vehicles to consult further with the community about their wishes.</li> </ol>	DA/HS  ALC, GP, GF, LG
9.	DA closed the meeting at 2.20 pm.	Noted

Minutes to be circulated to:

Attendees

Absentees

Enclosures:

PPT from WG

PPT from HS

Doc showing 10 Wind farm funds examples from WG