

Burrendong Wind Farm Community Consultative Committee (CCC)

TIME / DATE: 12:12- 13:28, Thursday 29 June 2023

VENUE: The Horatio Motel, 15 Horatio St, Mudgee NSW 2850

ATTENDEES:

Chairperson: Garry West (GW)

Community Members: Nathan Coates (NC) (alternative for Jacqui Coates), James Mort (JM), Heather Gough-Fuller (HG-F) - online, Justin Gard (JG) – online.

Council Representatives: Cr Sam Paine (Mid-Western Regional Council) (SP) – online.

Ark Energy Representatives: Andrew Wilson (AW), Melissa Pisani (MP), Rebecca Riggs (RR), Tim Chan (TC)

Minute Taker: Tim Chan

Meeting opened at 12:12

1. **Apologies:** Chris Pilley (CP), Brad Bliss (BB), Cr Jessica Gough (Dubbo Regional Council).

2. Welcome

- Chairperson opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed everyone to the meeting. No new declarations of Conflicts of Interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and accepted and uploaded to the project website. All the actions have been completed.

Business arising from the previous meeting:

- Burrendong SOS: Chairperson contacted DPE requesting group have representation on the CCC. DPE declined. Decided to keep Burrendong SOS meeting and representation separate from CCC meetings.
- Decommissioning: Example decommissioning consent conditions for the Ungula Wind Farm were circulated to the committee

4. Correspondence

Nil

5. Project overview

- AW gave general update on the status of the project with a copy of the presentation to be published on project website.

- AW provided update on Ark Energy ownership and retiring of the Epuron brand. Development of the Burrendong Wind Farm project is not impacted by the change in company ownership.
- AW provided an update on the national electricity market specifically in NSW which is driving the need for new renewable energy generation projects.
- The proposed number of wind turbines has been reduced from 105 to 70. Key changes include: 33 were removed in the south, 2 were removed in the northeast, and 8-10 smaller changes to turbine locations through the site due to biodiversity and/or heritage constraints.
- NC asked if powerlines will be included in photomontages. AW advised that the photomontages will focus on wind turbines, but powerlines and other infrastructure is assessed as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- JM asked about the voltage of the wind farm power line. AW advised the power line would be 330kV, the same as the existing TransGrid transmission line. The wind farm power line is expected to be a pole mounted design.
- NC asked when a project sale would take place. AW advised that a sale may happen following development approval, but it has not yet been decided whether Ark Energy would build the project or sell to a new owner.
- Expected timing for lodgement of a project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is about one month away. Draft reports are currently in the process of being reviewed.
- GW asked if the next CCC meeting would be held before lodgement. AW advised next CCC meeting is planned for when the EIS is on public exhibition. A public info session will also be held during the exhibition period.
- GW advised any submissions during the exhibition period will have to be online through the DPE Portal.
- NC asked if assessments are only cover the properties hosting infrastructure. AW advised the field surveys are limited to the properties where the direct impacts are going to be, but the broader region is considered as part of the assessments.
- NC asked where public sightings of species registered. TC provided details of the Atlas of Living Australia website.
- Maps on display in the meeting room will be made available on the project website.
- GW outlined the typical timing of CCC meetings following EIS submission (meetings not normally held until response to submissions is submitted by the proponent and then prior to construction).
- JM asked about Ark Energy's experience with wind farm construction. AW noted Ark Energy's interest in the MacIntyre Wind Farm currently under construction in south east Queensland with lessons learnt being applied to future projects.

- NC mentioned a 2km wind turbine setback from dwellings in Victoria. AW noted that the proposed 2km setback had been withdrawn.

6. Matters, which community representatives wish to raise

- **Question JM:** What is the current status of consultation with landowners along the transport route?
- **AW:** Advised that discussions with landowners, Mid-Western Regional Council (as the road authority) and DPE are ongoing. The proposed upgrade works are on or adjacent to the current formed road in order to minimise any potential impacts, however land survey works have identified a number of locations where the formed road has been constructed outside the road reserve on privately owned land. Realignment of the road reserve and/or acquisition of some private land will be required. This will require agreement with any affected landowners. Council requirements regarding road standards and design specifications have been discussed and incorporated into the proposed upgrade works.
- **Question JM:** What are the council's requirements for roads regarding dust and sealing?
- **AW:** Council's preference is for sealing of the road.
- **Comment HG-F:** Advised they are familiar with that road and the conditions during both wet and dry conditions. Would be interested to know what commitments are made about maintenance during construction?
- **AW:** Advised the wind farm company would maintain it during construction and then maintenance would revert to the council after construction has been completed.
- **JM:** Sought clarification on the possibility of compulsory acquisitions along the access route.
- **AW:** The preferred option is an agreement with affected landowners, however if compulsory acquisition is required it will be a matter within MWRC responsibility. Discussions with MWRC are ongoing.
- **JM:** What about road fencing?
- **AW:** Ark Energy would be willing to consider fencing of road if requested by the adjoining landowner.
- **Question NC:** Is the proposed pumped hydro project going to be located on some of the same land as the Burrendong Wind Farm?
- **AW:** Yes, there are some common landowners for the two projects.
- **Question JM:** Do you see any value in having one of the landowners along the transport route represented on the CCC?
- **GW:** Advised that DPE did not support any new members being added to the CCC at this stage.

- **MP:** Confirmed that Ark Energy are happy to consult with any individuals or groups outside of the formal setting of a CCC.
- **Question JM:** How many of the proposed turbines are on Water NSW land?
- **AW:** Current site map shows proposed wind turbine locations and cadastral boundaries. The EIS will include further details of wind turbine co-ordinates and involved land parcels.
- **Comment by SP on proposed road upgrade works:** I am familiar with these types of negotiations with project proponents and private landowners. Our council team is looking at it – it is not an unusual process for major projects in the region.
- **JM:** Noted that potential impacts from road upgrade works are unique for those in the community that are affected.
- **NC:** Asked about expected costs of decommissioning wind turbines and whose responsibility is it for decommissioning. The Ungula Wind Farm conditions of consent, previously circulated were referenced and that it is the responsibility of the Proponent to decommission. Ark Energy agreed to provide an example of a wind farm decommissioning plan, including costs. [ACTION]

7. **General Business**

GW acknowledged that input from CCC members during the development phase has been important and valid despite the shift in the DPE view on the most effective time for establishing a CCC to the period following any project development consent.

General discussion regarding transmission line configuration. AW advised the southern connection from Wellington had spare capacity. Both the northern and southern wind farm powerline corridors connect to the existing Wellington to Mt Piper 330 kV line which has ample spare capacity.

Members sought clarification regarding the proposed community benefit programme. AW confirmed it is proposed to be \$3,000 per turbine per year indexed to CPI.

8. **Meeting dates, times, venue**

No meeting date can be confirmed, but GW and AW will coordinate and circulate proposed dates once the timing of the public exhibition period has been confirmed.

Meeting closed 13:28

Actions

NO.	ACTIONS	ACTION BY
1	Example decommissioning plan to be circulated with CCC members	AW
2	Provided online link for public submissions of identified species.	TC
3	Maps on display in the meeting room to be made available on the project website.	AW