

BOWMANS CREEK WIND FARM COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (CCC)

DATE: Wednesday, 26th August 2020

VENUE: Seminar Room, Muswellbrook Library, 126 Bridge Street, Muswellbrook

ATTENDEES:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Chairperson: | Dr W.E.J. Paradise AM | Chair |
| Community Members: | Catherine Ball (Zoom) | CB |
| | Martin Cousins (Zoom) | MC |
| | John Madden | JM |
| | Sue Sylvester | SS |
| | Brigitte Thomas | BT |
| | Nigel Wood | NW |
| | Peter York | PY |
| | Nola Connor (Alternate) | NC |
| Council Representatives: | Cr Godfrey Adamthwaite (Singleton Council) (Zoom) | GA |
| | Dr Paul Smith (Upper Hunter Shire Council) | PS |
| Epuron Representatives: | Julian Kasby | JK |
| | Andrew Wilson | AW |
| NSW Dept of Planning | Anthony Ko (Zoom) | AK |
| | Nicole Brewer (Zoom) | NB |

Minute Taker: Kerri Garvie

Meeting opened at 5:08pm

1. Welcome:

The Chair welcomed everyone present, including those on zoom.

2. Apologies:

Muswellbrook Council
Ken Sylvester (Alternate)

Apologies accepted by the Chair.

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest by Committee Members:

- The Chair indicated that he was paid to Chair the Committee. All committee members had previously submitted their forms on pecuniary interests to the Chair. NW and PY declared a pecuniary interest. NW had been offered a Neighbour Agreement, which he had rejected in writing. PY had also been offered a Neighbour Agreement, which he was still reviewing.

4. Minutes from the last meeting:

- The Chair reiterated that the minutes of the meeting were not meant to be a verbatim record but are to provide a summary of the discussions and to record key points and any resolutions and actions agreed to at the meeting. This is also reflected in the NSW Department of Planning's guidelines for CCCs.
- The minutes were declared as a record of the previous meeting.

5. Business arising (including online questions):

- The Chair referred to the statement in the previous minutes that NC had not been aware that she had been appointed as an alternate member of the committee. The Chair indicated that on further investigation the letter of appointment had indicated that NC was an alternate member which was confirmed by NC.
- On request from PY the Chair asked AK or NB to elaborate on the Department of Planning's position on local Councils involvement in the CCC, specifically the position of Muswellbrook Council. NB introduced herself as the Director of Energy Assessments. The NSW Department of Planning had been in touch with a number of the CCC members in regard to the Councils attending CCCs. NB acknowledged that the Chair had made various approaches to Muswellbrook Council to attend (both Singleton and Upper Hunter had representatives attending). NB said the Department encourages the councils to attend, however it could not make a Council attend. NB also stated that there are other avenues for Councils to provide its inputs and comments on a project.
- NW put the question to NB about the guidelines and the CCC, stating that the Secretaries Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) says that a CCC had to be formed and if the guidelines are not complied with, the project application will not be exhibited by the department. NW also went on to say the guidelines also say the committee will comprise of Council representatives from each local government area and asked the Department's position on this.
- NB replied that the Department had established the CCC and appointed Dr Wej Paradise as the Chair and they have to go with the best efforts to include Councils. NB didn't think it would preclude them exhibiting the EIS and the Department will be formally requesting Council's comment on the project. NB also then stated that the purpose of the CCC was to encourage discussion between the community and the proponents. It is meant to be for the flow of information about the project and in no way prevents the EIS from going on exhibition.
- NW then asked how hard and fast were the guidelines of the CCC, then stated that he had been involved in the mining industry for a long time and if they prepared any project the way Epuron have, it would not be acceptable. NB replied that they have to work with the ultimate purpose of the CCC and that they cannot force anyone to attend the meetings, and that they could not hold up the EIS because the Council hadn't attended a CCC meeting.
- NW asked how the CCC gets transparency on discussions between the proponent and the Council if they didn't attend. NB reiterated that the purpose of the CCC is to

provide a forum for discussions between the proponent and the community. NB also stated that the CCC is not a decision-making body or a regulatory body.

- GA again put his thoughts forward that he thought the Department of Planning were putting the cart in front of the horse. GA also stated that there should be some sort of forum but it is not to the true nature of a CCC as the majority of the members on the committee appear to be opposed to the project.
- NB put forward that a decision had been made when the Department prepared the Wind Farm guidelines, to include in the standard SEARS, the setting up of a CCC early in the project.
- NY added that he agreed with the Department and voiced his concern that he didn't think that Epuron had a genuine consultation with the committee while the EIS was being prepared, and that Epuron need to consult with the CCC as they develop the EIS. NY also stated that the information presented at the first CCC meeting was very generic and had nothing to do with what was in the EIS and thought that Epuron needed to lift their act.
- NW stated that JK had answered some of the question brought up at the first meeting but not all of them and more questions have come up. NW then requested that the minutes be a bit more accurate and not summarised as much.
- The Chair indicated that we would do our best but also reiterated that the minutes were not meant to be a verbatim record of the meeting. The Chair also noted that that there had only been a few changes/additions from a few committee members.
- NW then brought up that he had asked for his 2 motions brought up at the last meeting to be put in the minutes. The Chair stated that they were initially summarized in the draft minutes. He also stated that bringing forward such motions at the last minute without consultation with the Chair was inappropriate.
- The minutes as adopted had included the motions.
- NW then said one of the other questions that had not been answered from the last meeting was the question about how many projects have been proposed and then not approved versus approved. JK replied that it would depend on the definition of proposed, as they have investigated many sites that didn't go through the full process. NW then asked if any had been knocked back. JK replied that there was one recommended for refusal by the Department but was overturned by the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) and one project that was rejected by the Joint Regional Planning Panel. PY then asked if this included Lotus Creek. JK stated that Lotus Creek is still a current project and although it had been refused under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC), Epuron were still developing it.
- NW then asked about the Wind Farm footprint in NSW. JK replied that he did not know and that was a question for the Department as they would have figures on that.
- NW then asked whether there was more than one radio interview to advertise the zoom meeting. JK replied that he only did the one interview with Mike Pritchard and was not sure how many times this interview was replayed.
- The next question raised by NW was the question asked by SS at the previous meeting about the wind monitoring mast closest to her place. NW thought that JK had got confused with Singleton and Muswellbrook as SS lives in the Singleton LGA, and that the height of both of them had been reduced although Epuron had been

given conditional consent from the Singleton Council for 120 mts. JK replied that this was correct.

- NW then asked AK if the hiring of a third-party consultant to conduct the visual assessment of the project was correct. AK replied that as the visual impact of most Wind Farms was a key determining factor and the Department was likely to obtain such third-party advice. NB confirmed that the Department will be seeking independent landscape advice.

6. Project Update:

- JK presented the project update. JK did say that there was some more detail that Epuron can provide about the EIS process which would be valuable for the CCC. JK went through the powerpoint presentation (Attachment 1), JK stated that he thinks that this project can play an important role in the provision of energy for NSW, with NSW currently being a net importer of electricity. JK went on to state that the area proposed had good wind, which is an important factor, and that it was very close to the electricity network. The land that is being proposed for the infrastructures is predominately grazing land. JK also mentioned about the strict noise levels of about 35 decibels or the existing background +5 decibels, and the background monitoring that had been conducted.
- PY asked how many background monitoring locations had been used. JK said 5 had been used and also stated that there was the opportunity for more background monitoring to be done, right up to construction. NW then stated that requests for more monitoring be done and had not received any response from Epuron. JK said he had sent it to NW, but again NW stated that he thought he hadn't received anything and would have to check.
- Discussion then moved to the transportation of the components being an issue due to them being long and heavy. The preferred route would be along the Hunter Expressway, assuming the parts come into the Port of Newcastle, then Hebden Road onto Scrumlo Road then onto private land.
- PY then asked what time of the day JK thought the movements would occur. JK replied that this was something that would be developed within the Traffic Management Plan and in consultation with various stakeholders (RMS, the Police, the local community) and taking into consideration bus routes and peak times. GA made a comment about travelling through Singleton during the morning and the afternoon peak times, and how that would be near impossible to get the blades and larger components through during these times.
- SS then asked about getting onto the Northern side with no roads. The route to be taken and the upgrading of roads to allow for heavy vehicle travel was discussed. SS then asked if Goorangoola Road, on the southern side, would be an option and JK said this would not be an option. JK then stated that all new roads would be roadbase and that they would be permanent. No definite route has been determined and PY stated that this was the type of thing that the community was getting frustrated about, and the fact that the EIS should be in final draft and there wasn't a definite route and that Epuron is spending millions of dollars putting together an EIS but can't answer simple questions. Again, PY reiterated that working together would benefit both sides.

- NW then queried the transportation coming from the Port of Newcastle and asked if all of the components would be imported. JK replied that most of the components would be and that they do purchase what they can from Australian manufacturers.
- The Chair enquired whether the parts were too heavy for helicopters. JK replied that they were.
- Property values were discussed and JK mentioned that the NSW Government have undertaken studies to assess potential changes to property values close to wind farms. The findings were that there were no discernible property value impacts close to Wind Farms.
- NW requested which part of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) is Epuron going to be in discussions with about the bushfires. JK stated it would be the Head Office, not the local captains.
- PY then asked whether any consideration had been taken from the Parliamentary Inquiry into Bushfires. AW replied that “More renewables, less coal” were the outcomes of the Bushfires enquiry.
- SS then posed a question about the decommissioning of the turbines. JK replied that one of the conditions of the wind farm is that all above ground infrastructure is to be removed at the end of the project. This is also addressed in the landowner agreements. SS then asked if she could ask NB or AK about this. AK responded that there would be consent conditions in place regarding the rehabilitation and the decommissioning, and the thing with development consents are that they are tied to the land. If the Wind Farm owner was to become insolvent, the responsibility falls back onto the landowner, and this should be stated in the landowner agreements.
- NW then posed the question to NB if she had ever seen a landowner agreement. NB’s response was that as the landowner agreements were commercial in nature, and therefore the Department is not party to those commercial agreements. NW then brought up that having seen a neighbour agreement, that it would be up to the individual but then asked if all individuals have the amount of resources required to negotiate a suitable outcome and if the Government should have more oversight on some of these agreements through a policy.
- NB’s response was that the landowner and neighbour agreements are slightly different but still the department isn’t party to those contracts. Although the Department need to understand the nature of the agreements.
- NW – “So on the host agreements, I can understand it is between the owner and the landowner, but in reality, in 20 years’ time, there could be literally thousands and thousands of wind turbines to be decommissioned, sitting on the horizons and skeletons decaying and nothing happening to them”. NB responded saying she did not think that there would be thousands of turbines decaying. There will be someone wanting to recycle the materials and did not think that NW’s scenario will play out. NB also stated that the decommissioning obligations still run with the land.
- GA had a question about the decommissioning. He asked JK how long was the expected useful life of these particular turbines? JK and AW both replied it was 25 years. GA said we would still need electricity in 25 years and asked if it would be an option to repower the turbines (as in the USA) by checking for fractures and replacing parts. NB replied that although the turbines might have a design life, there is nothing in the consent conditions that says that they have to be decommissioned at the end of 25 years. NB also added that the commission allows for the turbines to

be maintained as long as it fits within the approval envelope. Blades could be replaced with more aerodynamic blades.

- More discussion was entered into about the agreements and if the Department approve them. Again, NB stated that because the agreements are of a commercial nature, the Department only want to know about conditions which may have implications for the general community. For example, each agreement may have different noise level agreements, and the Department would want to understand the potential impacts such agreements might have.
- NW referred back to the decommissioning and stated that the mines have to provide a security deposit to make sure the funds are available for end of mine life obligations. Mines cover the security deposit by paying a bank guarantee every year. NW then asked why this is not happening with the Wind Farm land so when the decommissioning needs to be done, the money would be available and the turbines would not be left to rot away.
- NB replied that the mining space is quite different to wind turbines in that with mining, the state owns the resource, and the impact on the land is quite different to turbines on land. The nature of the rehabilitation is also more significant for mining land than what it is for wind turbines.
- JK continued the presentation and touched on the benefits and opportunities for the region, not just through direct employment through construction but also local business growth. Also, rental payments are paid to the host landowners, which are generally spent in the local economy. Direct employment for this project is estimated to be in the range of 150 during construction, which is 1.5 to 2 years, down to 12-15 full time employees after completion.
- NW asked where those 12-15 full time jobs would be located? NW also said you can operate the turbines from Sydney. JK replied that yes, they can be operated from Sydney, but the remaining employees will be local for maintenance and operational purposes and could be expected to live locally.
- JK then went on to update the timing since the last CCC meeting. Epuron are now saying the EIS will be lodged in September 2020, and should go on public exhibition in late September, early October 2020. PY asked if there were any particular issues that were delaying any new information coming out. JK responded by saying that the revised layout needs to get fed back through all of the other reports, reviewed and finalized.
- NW asked whether the timeframe for the public to respond to the EIS, due to the COVID 19 restriction, would be extended? NB replied that for the sake of significant developments, it will be a minimum of 28 days and there would be potentially no extension of the time frame as outlined in the regulations.
- PY then asked how does the IPC (Independent Planning Commission) work. NB answered that if there are more than 50 objections from the community and/or the council objects, the application then goes to the IPC for determination.

7. State Significant Development assessment process:

- AK and NB discussed the assessment process with a Powerpoint presentation (Attachment 2).
- AK started by stating that the department is responsible for coordinating the whole of the assessment with different levels of the government. During the assessment

process they will be working closely with the 3 councils, along with relevant regulators, such as the EPA, Biodiversity Conservation Division and the DPI. A delegation from the Minister has been provided to determine such applications where there are less than 50 objections and where councils haven't objected. Also, to make sure that Epuron haven't made any political donation. In July of this year, supplementary environmental assessment requirements were issued because the Commonwealth decided that this project would have potential impacts on threatened species and communities. Licences and permits would also need to be sought for water access, road construction and this would all be integrated into one assessment process, which the Department of Planning are coordinating. Once the submission is received from Epuron, a quick check will be done against the requirements of the Environmental Planning and Assessment regulations. This will then be placed on display and the Department encourage people to lodge submissions. He indicated that the easiest way to do this was online. There is the ability to remain anonymous however the Department does need to know some details in case the person needs to be contacted.

- NW then asked how the key issues, such as landscape and visual, noise, biodiversity, transport, hazards/risks, heritage, water and soils, waste, and social and economic impacts are to be considered? NB replied that individuals can put in submissions on any concern that they have. PY stated that some of the community members don't have computers or internet and asked if hard copies are still accepted. NB replied that online is the preference but will accept hard copies.

AK mentioned there were links on the bottom of the slides and that if the CCC members have any questions, they should feel free to contact him.

MC asked how long it takes the Department to review the EIS before it goes on public exhibition. NB replied that this review is high level and would usually take around a week.

8. Questions and Clarification (including online questions):

- NW had sent a number of questions to JK (and copied to the Committee) that had been responded to via email. NW then requested that all the questions and answers be put into the minutes. JK then indicated that the last set of questions pertained to neighbour agreements being negotiated and were considered private and confidential and should not be included in the minutes. NW did not think they were and said that nothing was confidential unless both parties agree. JK then argued that due to every agreement being different, the agreements should be regarded as confidential. PY thought that the questions and answers were very general. Both JK and AW stated that if the CCC members had been contacted by a community member they would be happy to discuss the issues with them.
- The Chair indicated that he would seek legal advice on whether the questions relating to clauses in an agreement regarded as confidential by Epuron should be included in the minutes. (Questions and answers to items not regarded as confidential are listed in Attachment 3)
- NW then had a generic question with regard to the Commissioners recommendation and stated that most of the recommendation weren't included in the agreements. JK replied that every agreement was different and that some agreements relate to different aspects and that they are all different in nature. NW then stated that the

commission calls for every agreement to be balanced and that every agreement he had seen had not been balanced.

- The Chair reiterated that he would take further advice and there would be no assurance that the questions associated with a potentially confidential document would be included in the minutes.
- NW said he had one more question in relation to visiting Muswellbrook Council five days after the last meeting and was provided with a number of documents about noise, property values and fire statements. NW asked why these hadn't been provided at the last CCC meeting. JK stated that all of the documents were available on Epuron's website and that Muswellbrook Council were on Epuron's mailing list and these documents could be accessed by anyone.
- MC had a question about bird strike. He mentioned a recent article about technology that had been used in Tasmania to detect eagles being one option. MC had also read about the painting of the blades that had a positive impact on reducing bird strikes. MC was hoping that Epuron would have a look at this and comment on it if possible.

9. Issues for Future Meetings:

The Chair mentioned that the issues for future meetings and the date of the next meeting will be determined by when the EIS is to be submitted. NW indicated that if the meeting was left until the end of October, it would only give the CCC a week to go over it and make submissions assuming the EIS was on exhibition. AW mentioned that the first week of exhibition of the EIS may be an appropriate time for the next meeting. All members agreed. AW said that once Epuron have a better feel of the timing, they would give the members 2 weeks' notice.

10. General Business:

- BT asked if it would be possible to know how far the closest house was to the turbines in Australia. JK stated that he did not know exactly but guessed it would be less than a kilometer. BT then expressed her interest in talking to people that live close to turbines. Both good and bad opinions. PY then asked if there was any benefit to actually visiting a Wind Farm. AW mentioned that Wind Farms often have open days.
- SS had a question from a community member about the size of the cement bases for the turbines. AW replied that they about 15-20 meters across and about 2 meters deep. BT thought that 2 meters deep was not very deep. SS also confirmed that if a community member wanted any information, they could contact JK or AW direct. JK said to pass his details onto them or to give him their details and he would contact them.
- PY requested printed copies of the EIS for all CCC members. JK said he would take that on board and PY replied that he thought it would be beneficial to have hard copies.
- PY then thanked AK & NB for attending the meeting and that he thought it was invaluable. The Chair then mentioned that AK had previously mentioned that he would be happy, once the EIS went on exhibition, to talk to people if they had questions. NB then said that there may not be time as the Department had not set a

time to go on site and that it might not be during exhibition. It may not be until once they had all of the submissions, so as to understand their concerns.

- SS then asked NB if she had been to the site. NB replied that they have not visited the site as yet but do have detailed information.
- CB told AK that the Department was welcome to visit the site anytime. AK said to either call or email to organize.
- The Chair thanked AK and NB for their time and participating in the meeting by Zoom.

11. Next Meeting:

- To be in the first week of the exhibition of the EIS. Possibly between 6 - 9 October 2020

12. Meeting Close:

The meeting closed at 6.57pm

Bowmans Creek Wind Farm



Community Consultative Committee
Meeting #2

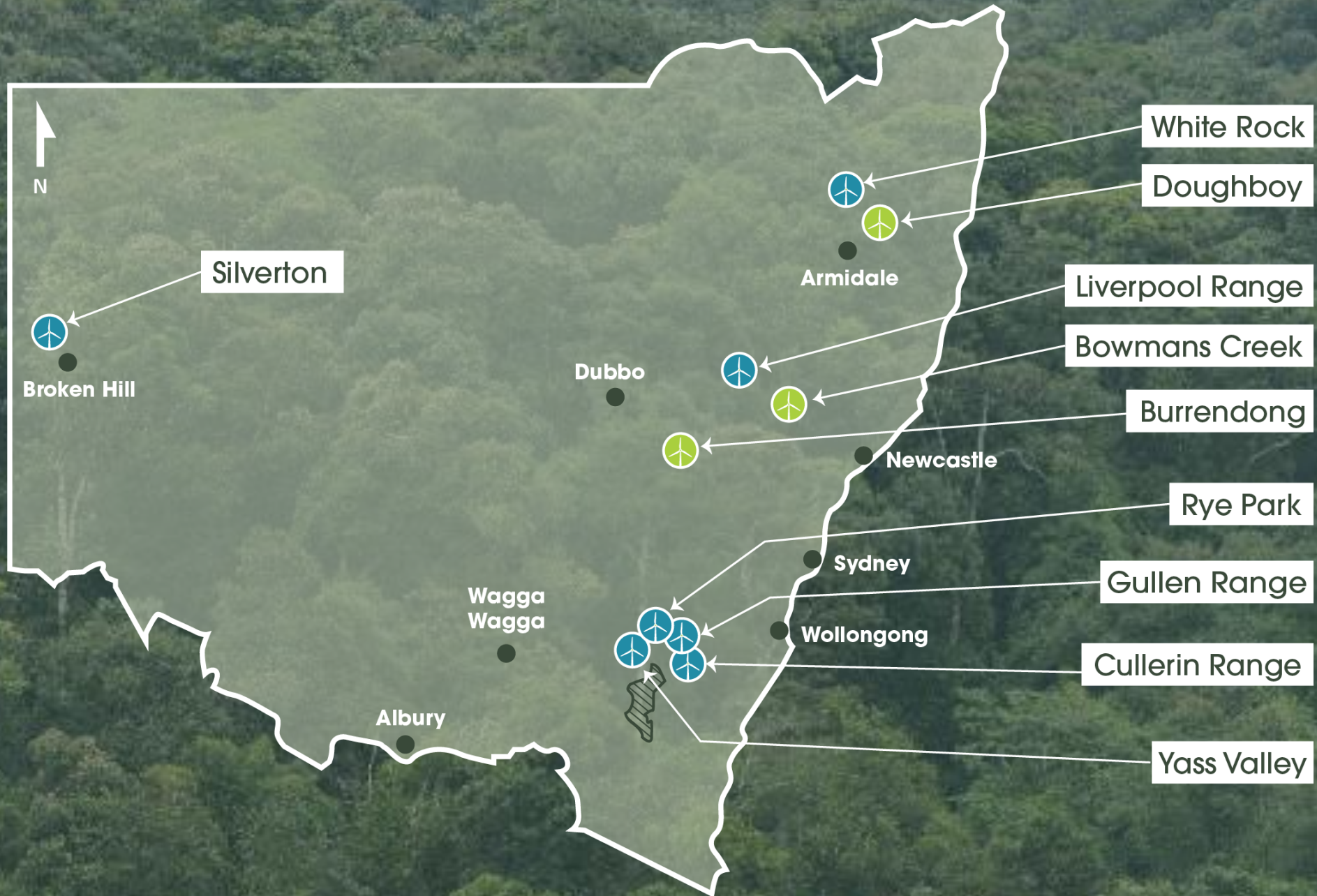
Wednesday 26 August 2020



Epuron

Expertise in large scale wind development

- Australian owned
- Since 2003, 7 projects successfully completed (4 constructed and operating)
- Broad experience in the National Electricity Market
- Projects have been acquired by AGL, Goldwind, Origin, Tilt Renewables





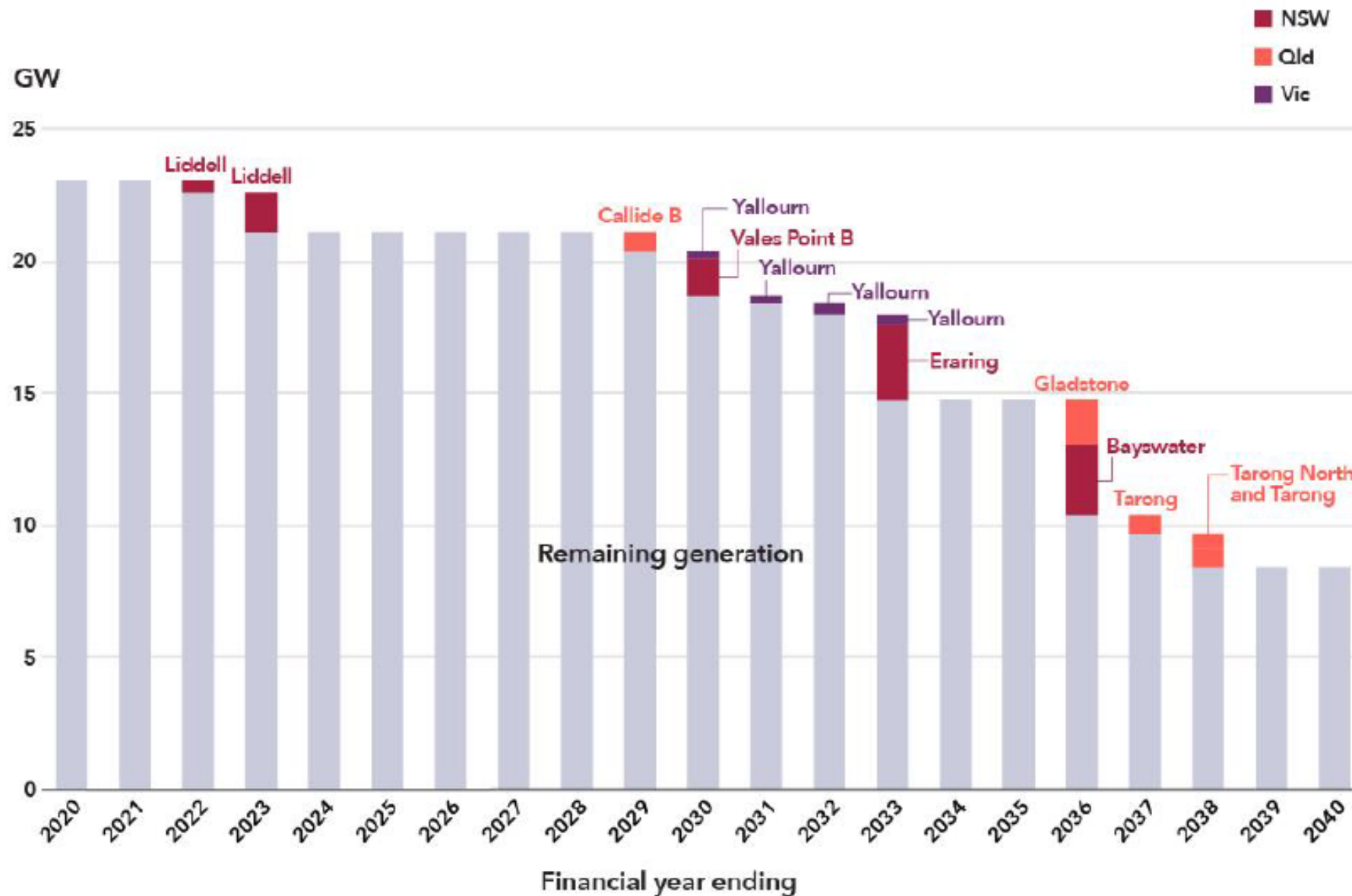
KEY:  Current development  Completed Projects

The bigger picture

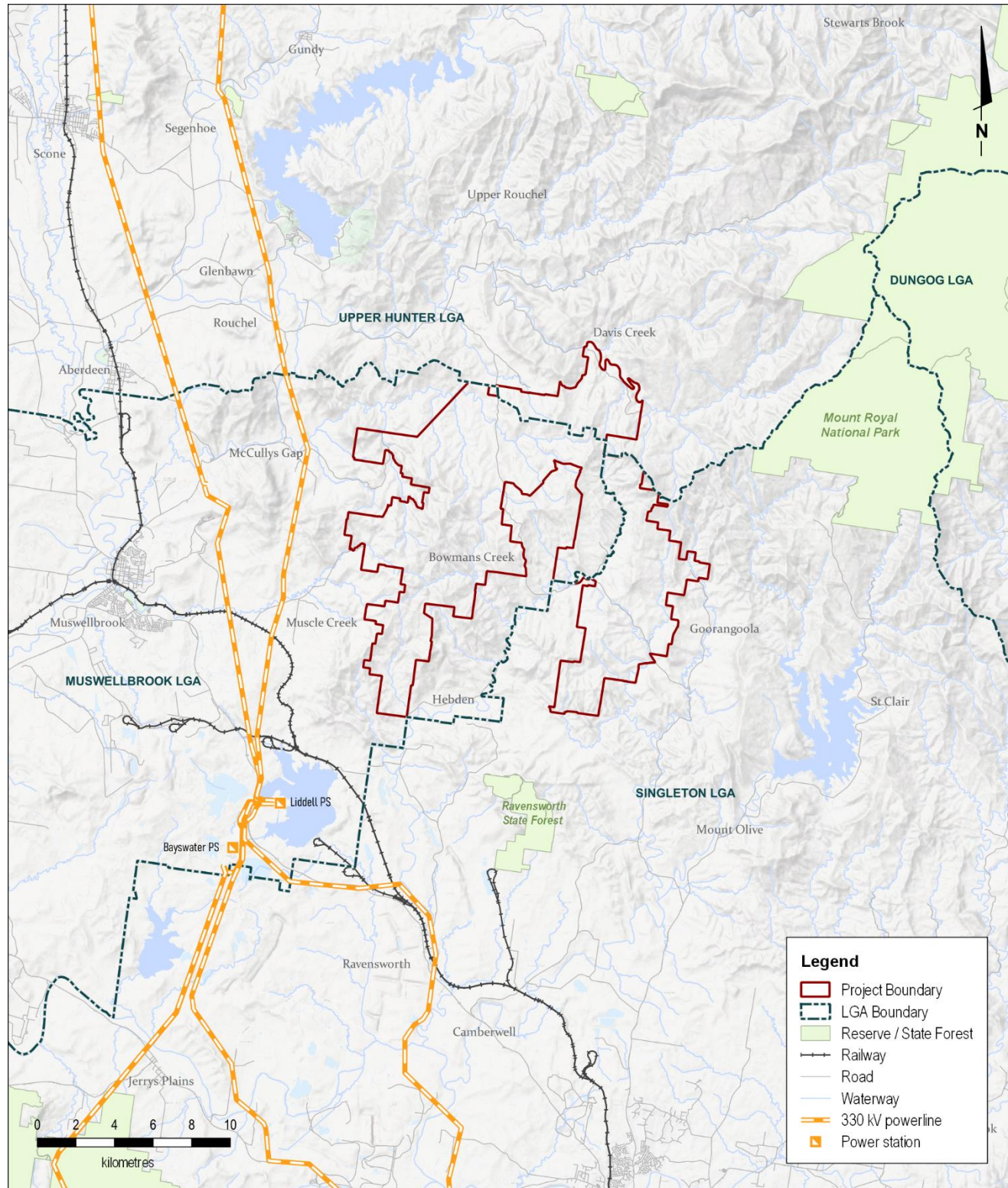
- ▶ Bowmans Creek WF can play an important role in NSW energy
 - We want to tell you about it and understand your concerns
- ▶ Epuron brings 16 years experience in wind development
 - We know there are concerns and challenges and we know how to work through them
 - For example: visual impact and noise
- ▶ Australia needs new power sources
 - All operating coal power stations in NSW planned to retire by 2043
 - NSW currently a net importer of electricity and more generation is required in the system

Power stations are closing

Figure 9 Coal-fired generation remaining as power stations retire*



* Based on expected closure years provided by participants as of November 2019. Modelled outcomes vary slightly from these timings and are based on expected closure years reported in August 2019.

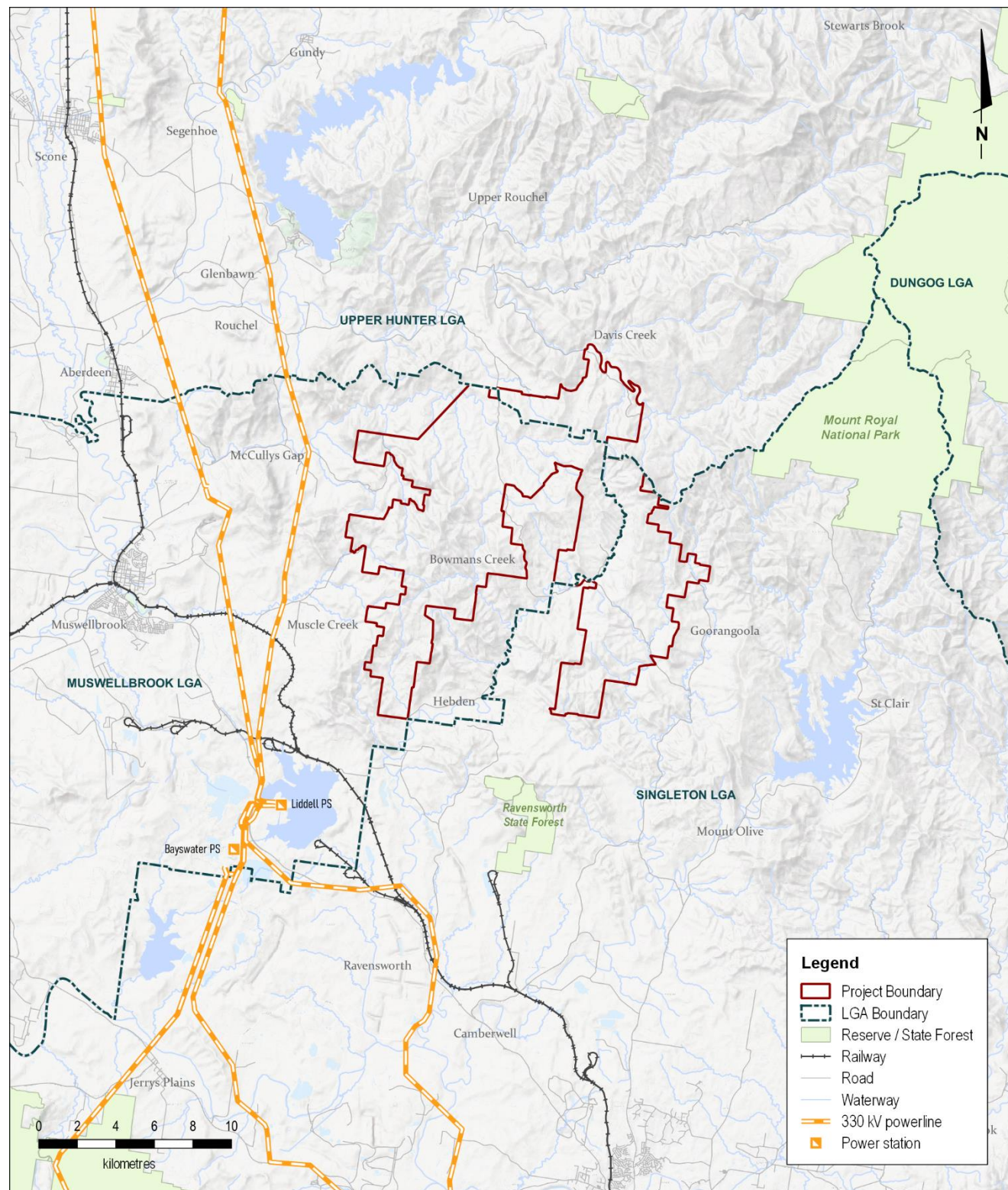


Why Bowmans Creek?

- ▶ Good wind
- ▶ Excellent capacity within existing transmission network
- ▶ More cost effective connection to the network
- ▶ Downward pressure on electricity prices
- ▶ Private grazing land – land use compatibility

Bowmans Creek Wind Farm

EPURON

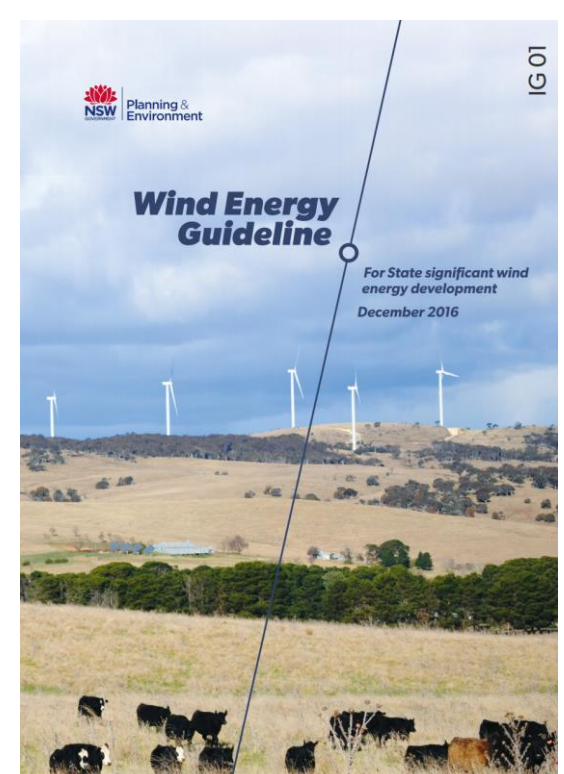
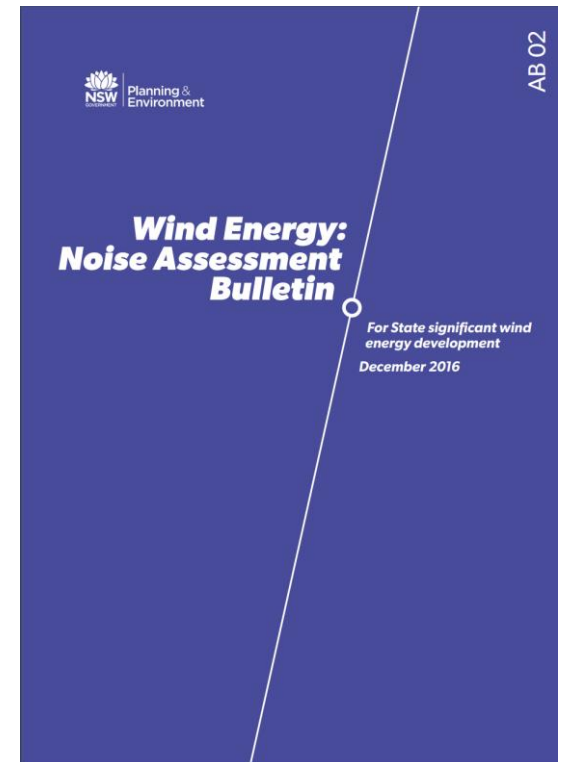


► Project to date

- Scoping Document May 2019
- Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued in Jul '19
- Specialist studies nearing completion, including; Visual, noise, fauna, archaeology transport, aviation.
- Community consultation ongoing
- Revised layout as a result of community feedback and specialist recommendations

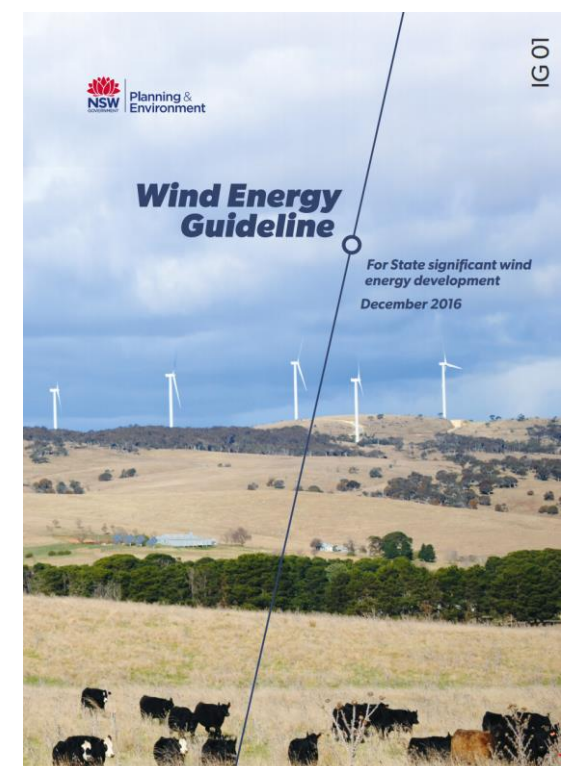
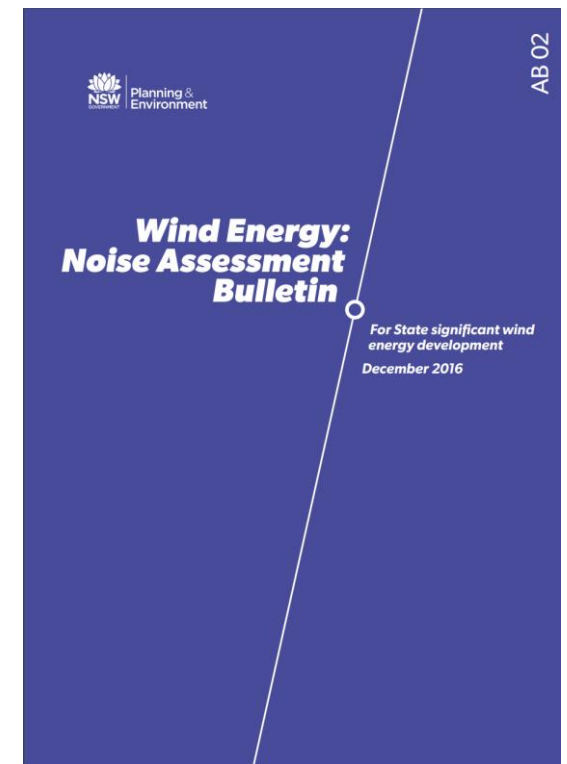
EIS - key specialist assessments

| Area | Guidelines |
|----------------|--|
| Visual | NSW Wind Energy: Visual Assessment Bulletin (DPIE) |
| Noise | NSW Wind Energy: Noise Assessment Bulletin (DPIE) |
| Biodiversity | Biodiversity Assessment Method 2017 (OEH) |
| Heritage | OEH codes and guidelines for consultation and assessment |
| Transportation | Guide to Traffic Generating Developments (RMS) |



Further considerations

| Area | |
|---------------------|---|
| Property values | Review of the Impact of Wind Farms on Property Values |
| Bushfires | Risks associated with construction and operation of wind turbines |
| Aviation | Local airports and private landing areas plus aerial agriculture |
| Health | Latest advice from the National Health and Medical Research Council |
| Social and economic | Potential impacts and benefits for the region and State |
| Water and soils | Water demand, river or creek crossings and water sources |



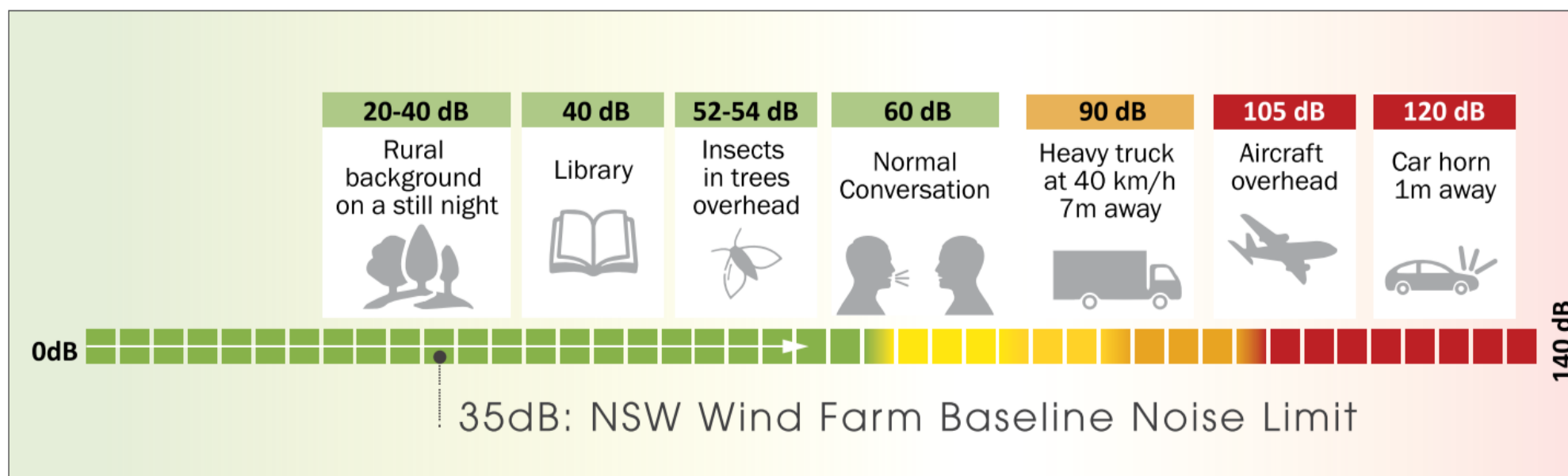
Visual

- ▶ NSW Wind Energy: Visual Assessment Bulletin
- ▶ Strictest requirements of any state in Australia, with comprehensive and rigorous assessment criteria
- ▶ Each residence within 4.4km assessed
- ▶ Photomontages created from public and private viewpoints



Noise

- ▶ Assessment against the Noise Assessment Bulletin
- ▶ Strictest noise limits in of any state, lower than anywhere in Australia
- ▶ Background noise monitoring at multiple locations
- ▶ Operating noise limits at a residence is the greater of:
 - 35dB(A), or
 - Existing background plus 5dB(A)
- ▶ The project will be required to meet these noise limits and demonstrate compliance through a noise monitoring program.



Biodiversity and Heritage

- ▶ Assessment teams undertook surveys between Sept '19 – Jan '20 and in Mar '20
- ▶ Local Aboriginal groups were consulted and assisted with cultural heritage surveys
- ▶ Mitigation measures developed including Offset Strategy for vegetation clearance
- ▶ Fauna surveys included; Glossy Black-Cockatoo, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Square-tailed Kite and Powerful Owl.



Transportation

- ▶ Delivery of turbine components likely to come from Port of Newcastle
- ▶ Transportation route assessed from Port of Newcastle to site
- ▶ Hunter Expressway, New England Highway, Hebden Road, Scrumlo Road
- ▶ Transportation assessment contains predictions of numbers of vehicle movements
- ▶ Delivery of turbine components to be scheduled in consultation with RMS, council and local community with consideration for peak road use times and school bus routes.



Source: <https://www.armidaleexpress.com.au/story/4336369/blade-runner-along-highway/>

Bushfire Risk

- ▶ Assessment of the risk of bushfire from the wind farm including potential impacts to aerial fire fighting
- ▶ Development of Bushfire Management Plan in consultation with RFS
- ▶ RFS position that fire on a wind farm managed in the same way as any other bush fire
- ▶ Examples in Australia of bushfires fought on a wind farm with fixed wing water bombers
- ▶ Access tracks can provide benefit for ground based fire fighters

Property Values

- ▶ Wind farm impacts on value of surrounding properties has been subject of two studies commissioned by the NSW Government
- ▶ NSW Valuer General found no reductions near any of the eight wind farms investigated
- ▶ Urbis commissioned by NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
 - Compared sales from same property before and after the wind farm was established
 - Same property resale analysis indicates that all of the properties examined demonstrated capital growth that aligned with the broader property market of the time

Community Information Sessions October 2018 & November 2019

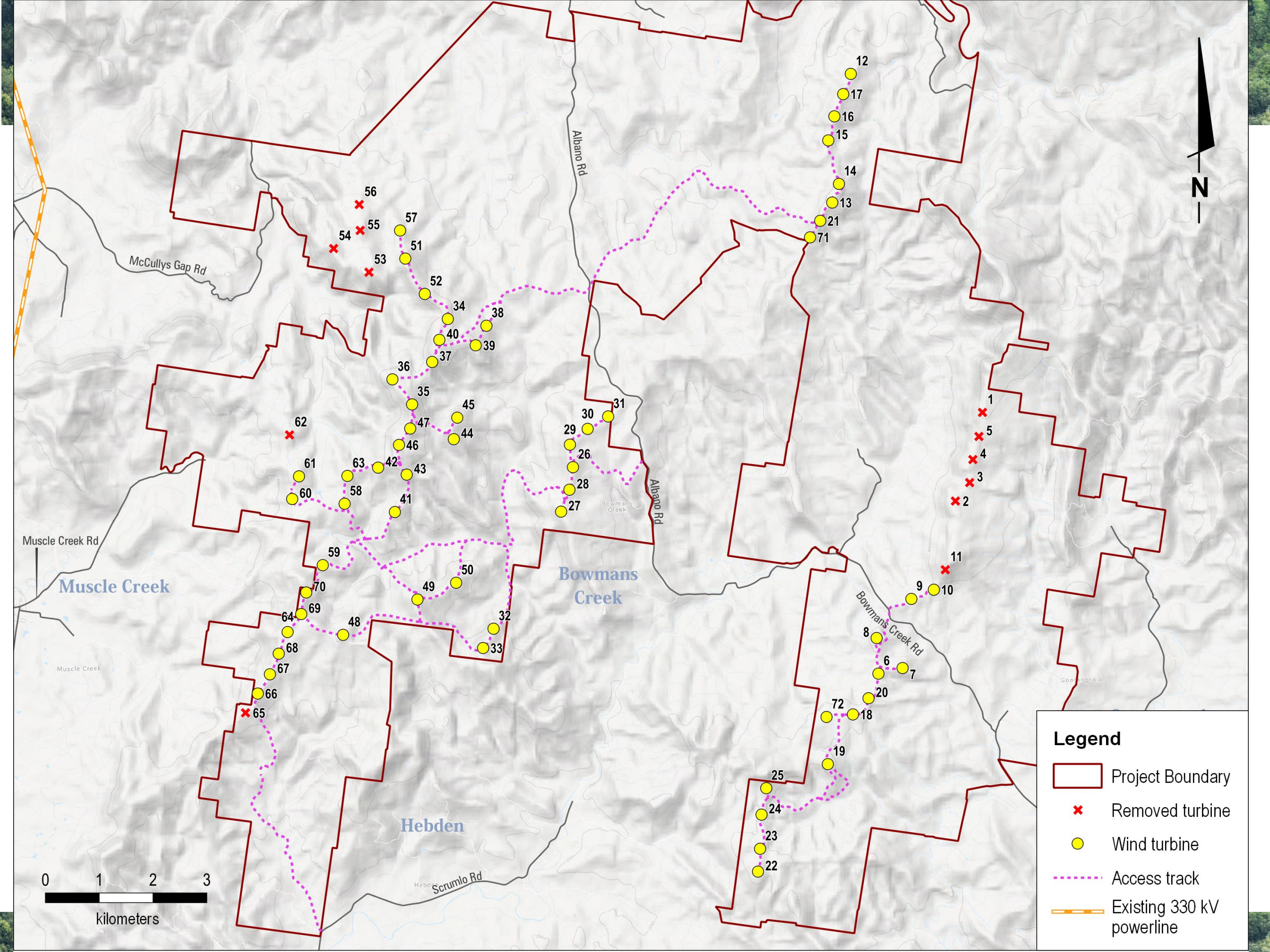
- ▶ Four sessions in each series - McCullys Gap, Muscle Creek, Hebden, Mt Pleasant
- ▶ Approx. 200 attendees across eight sessions
- ▶ Matters raised:
 - **Positive:** Employment, cost effectiveness, community funding, clean energy
 - **Concerns:** Visual impact, noise, property values, traffic, bushfire risk, new powerline

Additional consultation

- ▶ Phone calls and face-to-face meetings with neighbours
- ▶ Introductory letters
- ▶ Regular project updates to our mailing list
- ▶ Presentation to council
- ▶ Chamber of commerce

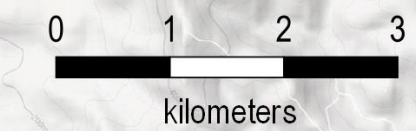
Concerns

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Visual impact | Detailed analysis in the EIS, removal of 12 turbines |
| Noise | Background noise measurements and strict legislative standards apply |
| Transportation | Avoiding use of Muscle Creek Rd, McCullys Gap Rd (Sandy Creek Rd), Goorangoola Rd. Transport management plan developed in consultation with stakeholders |
| Property values | Evidence suggests nil or positive effect |
| Bushfires | Bushfire management plan developed in consultation with RFS. Access tracks improve access for ground fire fighters. |
| Decommissioning | All above ground infrastructure will be removed at end of project life |



Legend

- Project Boundary
- Removed turbine
- Wind turbine
- Access track
- Existing 330 kV powerline

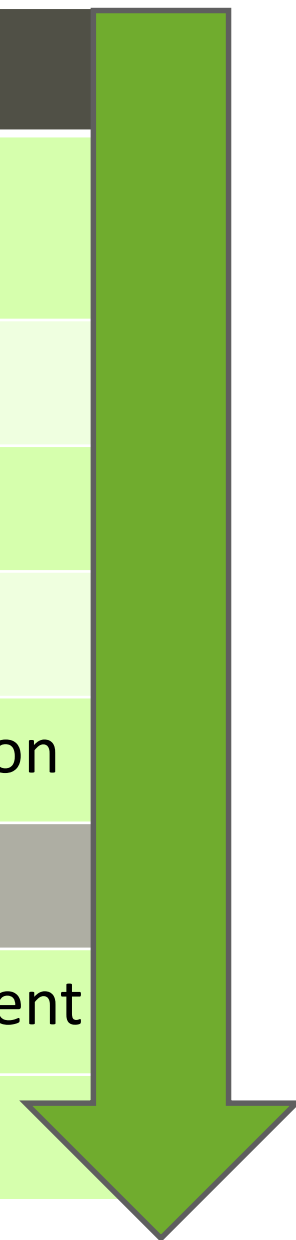


Benefits and Opportunities

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Local business growth | Significant work for local suppliers and contractors |
| Local investment | Benefits to region through jobs and land payments |
| Local economy | Boost to local retail and hospitality |
| Jobs | Direct employment for 150+ jobs during construction (18 – 24 months) and 12-15 full time operation and maintenance jobs |
| Community funding | Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with local councils providing \$3,000 annually per wind turbine installed for community projects (ie up to \$180k p.a.) |

Timing & next steps

| Timeframe | Item |
|------------------------|---|
| Sep 2019 – Sep 2020 | Preparation of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) |
| Sep 2020 | Target lodgment of EIS |
| Sep - Oct 2020 | Public exhibition of EIS |
| 1st half 2021 | Respond to submissions and DPIE assessment |
| 2nd half 2021 | Determining Authority recommendation and determination |
| Subject to DA approval | |
| 2022 – 2023 | Pre-construction activities and construction commencement |
| 2024 – 2025 | Operation |




Thank you



More information:

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Bowmans Creek Wind Farm

Anthony Ko
Team Leader, Energy Assessments
26 August 2020

Overview

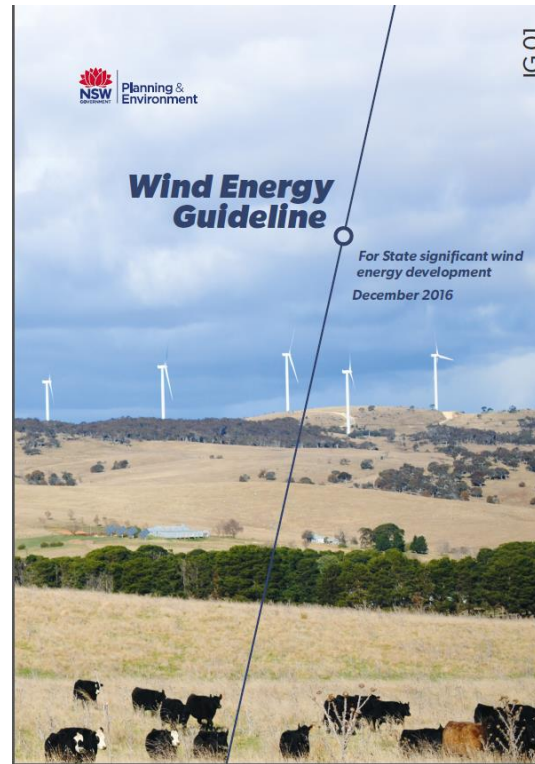
- Role of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- Overview of the assessment process
- Opportunities for community input

Statutory Context and role of DPIE

- State Significant Development – EP&A Act
- Consent Authority – Minister/Independent Planning Commission
- Other approvals:
 - Commonwealth Bilateral Assessment
 - EPA licence
- SSD applications are assessed by the Department
- Whole of Government assessment

Role of Wind Energy Framework

- Guidance to the community, industry and regulators
- Planning framework for the assessment of large-scale wind energy development
- Includes:
 - Wind Energy Guideline
 - Guidance on PEA
 - Standard SEARs
 - Visual Assessment Bulletin
 - Noise Assessment Bulletin



Role of Wind Energy Guidelines

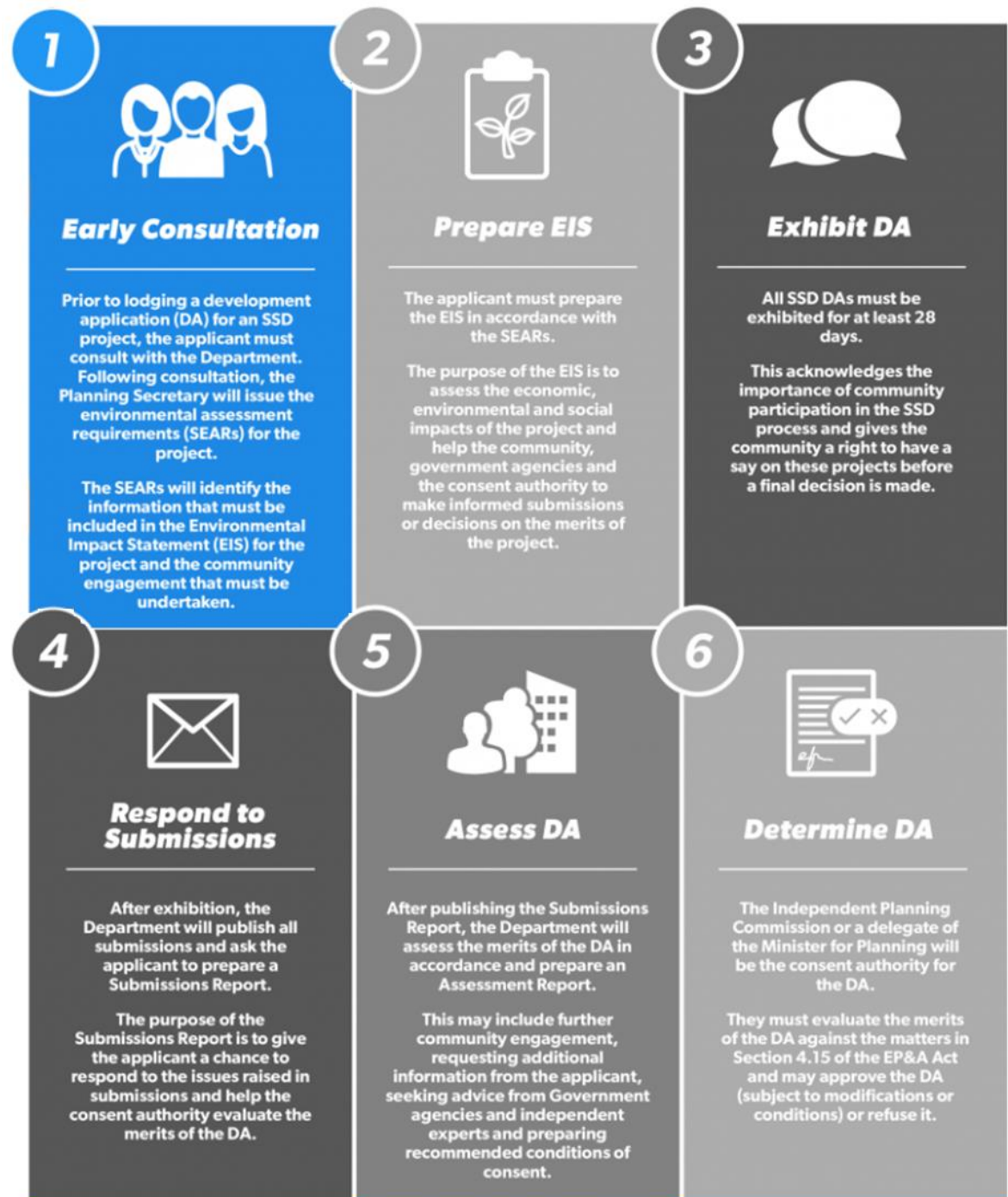
- **Visual Assessment Bulletin:**
 - How visual assessment should be prepared
 - Assessment tools for where further assessment is needed:
 - distance from turbines
 - viewing multiple turbines
- **Noise Assessment Bulletin:**
 - How noise assessment should be prepared
 - Criteria for NSW

State Significant Assessment Process



Early Consultation

- SEARs issued July 2019
- Supplementary SEARs July 2020
- Matters that must be addressed in the EIS
- Key Issues
 - Landscape and Visual
 - Noise
 - Biodiversity
 - Transport
 - Hazards/Risks
 - Heritage
 - Water and Soils
 - Waste
 - Social and Economic



Further information

<http://planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects> Search “**Bowmans Creek**”

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/assessment/state-significant-development/ssd-process> - **The SSD process**

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/renewable-energy> - **NSW Wind Energy Framework**

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/communityconsultativecommittees> - **Community Consultative Committee guidelines**



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Questions

ATTACHMENT 3

Questions for the CCC meeting August 26th, 2020 submitted by Nigel Wood

I would like more detail than the detail provided at the CCC meeting held on July 15th on the following questions.

1. What date did Epuron have their first discussions with representatives of Planning NSW/DPIE?
 - a. Who attended that meeting?
 - b. What have been the dates and who were the attendees of any subsequent meeting with the DPIE?
 - c. Did Epuron take any minutes of these meetings, and if they did can we obtain a copy of the minutes.

2. What date did Epuron have their first discussions with representatives from Singleton Council?
 - a. Who attended that meeting?
 - b. What have been the dates and who were the attendees of any subsequent meeting with the representatives of Singleton Council?
 - c. Did Epuron take any minutes of these meetings, and if they did can we obtain a copy of the minutes.

3. What date did Epuron have their first discussions with representatives from Muswellbrook Council?
 - a. Who attended that meeting?
 - b. What have been the dates and who were the attendees of any subsequent meeting with the representatives of Muswellbrook Council?
 - c. Did Epuron take any minutes of these meetings, and if they did can we obtain a copy of the minutes.

4. What date did Epuron have their first discussions with representatives from the Upper Hunter Council?
 - a. Who attended that meeting?
 - b. What have been the dates and who were the attendees of any subsequent meeting with the representatives of Upper Hunter Council?
 - c. Did Epuron take any minutes of these meetings, and if they did can we obtain a copy of the minutes.

5. What date did Epuron have their first discussion with Michael Johnsen MP?
 - a. Who attended that meeting?
 - b. What have been the dates and who were the attendees of any subsequent meeting with Michael Johnsen?

- c. Did Epuron take any minutes of these meetings, and if they did can we obtain a copy of the minutes.
6. Have Epuron or any future owners of the project been offered any incentive at all to obtain approval, construction or post construction incentives of the Proposed "Bowmans Creek wind farm" (the project), including the offer or offers to waiver any fees, costs or money that may need to be spent to facilitate the project, including the upgrade or construction of any access roads. **The answer provided only said No incentives had been received.** Nothing about incentives for the future.

Questions generated from the CCC meeting held on July 15th, 2020

For the Chairman - Wej

1. What has happened regarding representation at the CCC from Muswellbrook council?
2. A lot of information was missed in the minutes as originally forwarded, why was this? And how will we get them more accurate next time?
 - a. Can a member of CCC also record the meeting as a backup? It can be a lot to remember especially if the meetings start to be a few months apart.
3. Will Anthony Ko be in attendance?

For Epuron

1. Epuron to provide a break down of the Companies that have purchased wind farm projects once approved.
2. Epuron to provide details of the number of wind farm projects proposed and then actually approved.
3. What is the total footprint for wind farm development in NSW?
4. Regarding questions about Turbine #54 being dropped out of the project Mr Kasbey advised that Epuron waiting on specialist recommendations concerning the layout and this needs to be reviewed prior to release. When was the final layout of the wind turbines signed off?
5. Peter York asked how the social impact study were being measured. It was confirmed that this was being done by an independent consultant. Peter York then asked if anyone from the CCC had been contacted by this consultant. No CCC member indicated they had

contact with the consultant. Another concern was raised by Peter York that it was a requirement of SEARS that the proponent consults the committee during the preparation of the EIS, and that this does not appear to have been done. Andrew Wilson said that a round of email questions and answers had been circulated. Peter York then restated that, to his knowledge, nobody on the committee had been consulted or asked their opinion of the project.

- a. In relation to this question would Epuron please provide:
 - i. Demographics of the people consulted
 - ii. Geographical areas of the people consulted
 - iii. The total number of people contacted who participated in the survey
 - iv. Why weren't any CCC members contacted?
6. The question was asked asking Epuron how they were advising members of the community of the up coming Zoom sessions (held on 21st, 22nd & 24th of July 2020). In response to Mr Kasbeys answer it was suggested that Epuron should also advertise in the local papers and radio. Did Epuron advertise as suggested?
7. A question was asked about the approval process Epuron went through for the wind monitoring mast, would you please confirm if the wind monitoring mast in Singleton received a retrospective DA and if it along with the wind monitoring masts was lowered to 108m
- a. Regarding the process both Mr Kasby and Mr Wilson informed the meeting the Department was notified after the masts had been lowered, which department was notified?

Question for Mr Anthony Ko

1. During the CCC meeting a question was raised about the visual impact assessment, Mr Wilson advised the meeting that the will DPIE hire their own third party consultant to conduct a visual assessment for the project. Is that the case?

Other questions for the meeting

In relation to the Bowmans Creek Wind Farm – Proposed Neighbour Agreements

Questions submitted under this section were deemed confidential as they related to specific agreements being negotiated between the proponent and individual landholders.

The Chairman discussed this issue with the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the NSW Department of Planning. Further review of the guidelines gave directions on various aspects of this issue.

Specifically:

Section 6 (para 6) “.committee members may ask for certain information (e.g. a declaration of interest, site visit photos, or information which the proponent considers to be commercial in confidence) to be kept confidential by the committee.”

Section 5 (para 5) “The proponent must provide the committee with timely, accurate and comprehensive reports on the project, including the status of the project, existing operations, environmental performance and community relations. This does not include matters of a financial or commercial nature.”

Section 4.6 Pecuniary and other interests. (See full section)

Section 4.10 Dispute resolution. (See full section)

Section 6 (para 6) as described above indicates that a committee member may ask for information to be kept confidential by the committee. Epuron as the proponent and committee member have requested that this information be kept confidential. As the information comes from a document that Epuron regards as confidential it would appear fair and reasonable to respect this request.

Responses provided by Epuron online 25th August 2020:

Additional detail to responses at CCC meeting on 15th July

Q. 1-5 Epuron commenced discussions with relevant government stakeholders during April 2018 (Muswellbrook Shire Council & Member for Upper Hunter), May 2018 (Singleton Council and Upper Hunter Council) and June 2018 (Department of Planning). Since then we have maintained regular contact over the course of the project providing updates on the project. Consultation with Council generally involves the General Manager or Development Manager and any subject matter specialist deemed appropriate, for example a road engineer when discussing proposed road upgrades. Historical records of meeting dates and attendees are not considered relevant to matters in the current purview of the CCC, and meeting minutes have not typically been recorded by Epuron.

Q. 6 This question was answered at the previous meeting and is recorded in the minutes. Epuron has not been offered any incentives in relation to this project.

Questions generated from the CCC meeting held on July 15th, 2020 (For Epuron)

Q. 1 Companies that have purchased Epuron wind farm projects are Origin Energy, AGL, Goldwind and Tilt Renewables. This information is on our website.

Q. 2 Epuron has been involved in nine wind farm projects that have gained development approval.

Q. 3 The total footprint of wind development in NSW is a question more appropriate for the NSW Department of Planning. Some useful resources about projects that are operating, in construction or in the planning process are listed below.

<https://www.resourcesandgeoscience.nsw.gov.au/miners-and-explorers/geoscience-information/products-and-data/renewable-resources-map>

<https://energy.nsw.gov.au/renewables/renewable-generation/wind-energy-nsw>

Q. 4 The development of the proposed layout is an iterative one that evolves with the most up to date information. The current proposed layout was presented at the recent online community information sessions starting on 21st July 2020, based on the latest information available.

Q. 5 The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) undertaken by an independent specialist and included in the EIS draws on the extensive consultation undertaken for the Project. The SIA addresses the social dimension of all issues raised and includes input gathered from community information days, face-to-face meetings and CCC correspondence undertaken between 2017-2020. Issues raised by the CCC at its meetings to date and as individual attendees at community information sessions have been included in the EIS and addressed in the SIA.

A consultation issues summary can be provided should the CCC wish to review it to provide any additional feedback. Alternatively, if any individual member of the CCC feels that they have not been adequately consulted they are invited to complete the Public Opinion Survey that was available at our community information sessions by Wednesday 9 September 2020, and this will be forwarded to the independent consultant managing the SIA. The survey is available at: https://epuron.com.au/documents/770/BOW_Public_Opinion_Survey_2019.pdf

Q. 6 The community information sessions scheduled in July 2020 were promoted in a number of ways including local radio.

Q. 7a The NSW Department of Planning was notified after the masts had been lowered.