

**Liverpool Range Wind Farm (SSD 6696)
Community Information Session – Monday 26 June 2016
Summary of issues raised**

1. Summary

- Community attendees:
 - ten people attended with all having the opportunity to ask questions or make comments.
- Department attendees:
 - Mike Young (Director, Resource Assessments)
 - Diana Mitchell (Senior Planning Officer, Resource Assessments)
 - Anthony Ko (Planning Officer, Resource Assessments)
- Independent facilitator attendees:
 - David Ross (Director, Phoenix Strategic Management)
 - Debbie Corlet (Associate, Phoenix Strategic Management)

2. Overview of key views raised by community members

- Assessment process
 - If proponent could reapply and whether they would need to comply with any policy changes
- Ongoing consultation
 - Potential for further consultation with affected landholders
 - Concerns with the Department regarding where notification of the information session was advertised
- Submissions and the exhibition period
 - Final date for making submissions
 - Request to relocate hard copy availability of EIS amendment away from Cassilis library to a more suitable location
- Commencement of works, if approved
 - How long proponent has in which to complete works
 - Support from community individuals for proposal and anticipated benefits for Cassilis and Coolah
- Traffic impacts
 - Concerns regarding haulage of blades in particular and the significant impacts on traffic flow
 - Concerns with road traffic noise and proponent's response to these concerns

- Farming land and biodiversity
 - Whether travelling stock routes are proposed to be shut off during construction
 - Impacts of the turbines on Wedge Tailed Eagle numbers
- Water
 - Concerns about the amount of water to be used during construction
- Noise
 - Whether further noise testing will take place
 - Department's powers to make proponent do something about noise mitigation
- Community benefits and voluntary planning agreements
 - What community benefits the project will provide to the area eg improved telecommunications
 - The initiation of a community benefits fund and concerns about the local council managing this process
- Bushfires and risks to aviation
 - The potential for the proposed operation of the windfarm to make it harder to fight bushfires
 - The siting of turbines near air strips and issues associated with presence of agricultural aircraft spraying

3. Comments and questions from the community

Discussion on making submissions

- Can people request that you come and visit them?
- Department:
 - Yes absolutely. We would prioritise those who are closest to the windfarm.
- So that occurs after the submission.
- Department:
 - Once we start our formal assessments. We need to go and talk to certain landowners, especially those who have sent a submission.
 - Please make the submissions as detailed as possible. We need specific concerns you might have.
- Will submission be accepted if post marked before 18 July 2017?
- Department:
 - That is definitely okay but online submissions are better.
- When you lodge online – there is a section to tick regarding declaration of reportable donations. Can you please explain?
- Department:
 - Political donations need to be reported. Proponents have to as well.

Discussion on assessment process

- If it goes against them (the proponent) can they reapply?
- Department:
 - Yes, they can but they would have to change their project.
- What if government policies change?
- Department:
 - Any new application would have to comply with policy changes.

Discussion on exhibition

- Can viewing of documents be held elsewhere in Cassilis (rather than library)?
- Department:
 - We are broadly moving to online. We will do our best to make them available.

Discussion on traffic impacts

- Concerns re road haulage and the huge traffic problems it will cause.
- Department:
 - State Government needs to make the assessment regarding the Golden Highway. The company need to look at the impact on local roads though.
- It is quite dangerous in foggy conditions.
- Department:
 - It is up to the RMS to work out if there are any issues.
- How long will works last?
- Department:
 - 3 years but peak is in the middle year.
 - We will look at vehicle noise, safety issues, disruptions to use the road.

Discussion on travelling stock routes

- Impact on the TSR's. Are they going to be shut off?
- Department:
 - They are Crown Land – so can't interfere. Our understanding is that they (proponent) sought not to interfere with agriculture enterprise.

Discussion on water management

- During the construction phase there will be a lot of water used.
- Department:
 - Yes, it is a lot of water. If they draw down on private bores they need Water Licencing. There are protections in place.
 - Our assessment is informed by the submissions – but we go well beyond that and issues raised by agencies etc. Whole range of government policies need to be considered.

Discussion on noise issues

- Epuron to do more noise testing?
- Department:
 - Yes. The EPA are the key technical agency for noise. Noise monitoring would be undertaken once a windfarm is commissioned. If done today, there is no background noise.
- Can Department make them do something about noise mitigation if approved?
- Department:
 - Yes, we set criteria that they have to meet. The company can't go ahead until agreement is reached with the land owners.
- Noise levels tested?
- Department:
 - Proponent must model road noise criteria. Exceedances are then predicted and then identify what monitoring might need to be done.

Discussion on commencement of works, if approved

- If all OK when do the windfarms start?
- Department:
 - They have 5 years to start the project.

Discussion on community benefits and voluntary planning agreements

- What information is there on the community benefit to having this project?
- Department:
 - There are tangible benefits. There is a process but details are unresolved. It is our understanding that proponent will offer money for the community benefit fund if project is approved. Administered by the council.
- How do we know what is proposed to benefit Cassilis?
- Department:
 - We don't know what the particular initiatives are going to be. There will be a voluntary planning agreement. There are terms of reference to ensure the benefits remain local and how it gets spent. We want proper arrangements around that.

Discussion on bushfires and risk to aviation

- Aviation issues in terms of fire, aerial and the eagles?
- Department:
 - Spoken to OEH and there is a certainly an issue if the windfarm proceeds in regard to the Wedge Tailed Eagle.
 - Bushfires –the way we assess this is to consult with the RFS and talk to the pilots who fight fires. The blades are turned off so they aren't spinning. So, in most situations – they can fight fires.
 - The RFS have informed us that in making access tracks (for access to turbines) and making them good – on tops of ridges – the ability to fight on the ground is often enhanced.
 - Nearby air strips – we need to move the turbines away because of this.
- What about agricultural aircraft spraying seed?
- Department:
 - We would look at that. No closer than twice the height of turbines.

Discussion on consultation and advertising of information session

- Where was it advertised?
- Department:
 - It was advertised in 3 papers and we wrote to 200 local people. We are also happy to meet with individuals who are close to the windfarm. Recommend that people contact Anthony Ko at Anthony.Ko@planning.nsw.gov.au.
 - Also check website – www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au
 - We will investigate using the Post Office for exhibition since the Library is only open on the Wednesday and the school will close for holidays soon. DPE will also advertise in The Coolah Diary, The Land Newspaper, and Merriwa Diary.
- Can the presentation go in the minutes with a link?
- Department:
 - The Presentation will be uploaded to the website.