



Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm
Level 11, 75 Miller St
NORTH SYDNEY, NSW 2060
Phone 02 8456 7400

Minutes of Meeting

Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm Community Consultation Committee

Present:	Nic Carmody	Chairman	NC
	Councillor David Needham	Yass Valley Council	DN
	Councillor Matt Stadmler	Harden Shire Council	MS
	Councillor Cathy Sanderson	Harden Shire Council	CS
	Councillor Neil Reid	Harden Shire Council	NR
	Sharon Langman	Harden Shire Council	SL
	John McGrath	Non-involved landowner	JM
	Paul Regan	Non-involved landowner	PR
	Mark Glover	Non-involved landowner	MG
	Rowena Weir	Non-involved landowner	RW
	Sam Weir	Bookham Agricultural Bureau	SW
	Andrew Wilson	Epuron	AW
	Donna Bolton	Epuron	DB
Apologies:	Stan Waldren	Involved landowner	SW
Observer:	Dieuwer Reynders	Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinator NSW-ACT border	DR

Date: 1 March 2013

Venue: Kitchen Annex, Yass Memorial Hall, Comur Street, Yass

Purpose: Meeting No 1

Minutes:

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
1	<p>NC opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting at 2:10 pm. The meeting agenda was distributed to members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Stan Waldren, representing involved landowners.</p> <p>NC noted he is not being paid as the chair of the committee. There were no other declarations of pecuniary interests.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
2a	<p><i>Role and governance of the committee (including how it can provide constructive input into the projects)</i></p> <p><i>Membership, purpose, what is expected, what is not expected of the committee.</i></p> <p>NC explained how he became the chairman of the committee. NC noted the Department's Wind Farm Guidelines are in draft form and advice from the Department of Planning & Infrastructure is that it is good to follow the Draft guidelines but not necessary.</p> <p>AW noted he will take the minutes and distribute within 2 weeks of the meeting in time for councils' meetings.</p> <p>DN requested that a large scale map of the wind farms be provided to the two councils.</p> <p>NR requested advice on what is not expected of the committee. DN recommended the list provided to the Rye Park CCC.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>AW</p> <p>AW</p> <p>AW</p>
2b	<p><i>Frequency of meetings</i></p> <p>It was agreed that the meetings would initially be held monthly.</p>	Noted
2c	<p><i>To whom the committee reports</i></p> <p>DN noted under the draft guidelines the independent chairperson of the CCC will report annually to the Director General of the Department of Planning & Infrastructure.</p> <p>NC noted that the community representatives should also report back to the community.</p> <p>NR advised that the council meetings are on the 3rd Wednesday of the month for Harden Shire and the 4th Wednesday of the month for Yass. It would be useful for the CCC to provide their minutes at least a week prior to these dates to enable timely reporting at the council meetings.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>AW</p>

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
2d	<p><i>Who provides feedback to the committee</i></p> <p>The community can contact the CCC members by email to have their views represented at the CCC meetings:</p> <p>John McGrath yowerweena@westnet.com.au Paul Regan pregan@southernphone.com.au Mark Glover markbglover@gmail.com Rowena Weir srweir@bigpond.com</p> <p>AW noted that the committee can invite individuals with particular expertise to address the meeting as required.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
3	<p><i>Project consultation details</i></p> <p>AW provided background to the two wind farm projects. Epuron commenced development of the Yass Valley Wind Farm project in 2008. In 2009 Origin bought the project and there was an obligation within the sale for Epuron not to contact the community. Epuron acquired the project from Origin in 2012. It was acknowledged that the communications have not been perfect but Epuron is working to improve this. Epuron has initiated the Community Consultation Committee and created websites for Conroys Gap Wind Farm and Yass Valley Wind Farm and is updating in gaps in the contact database for project newsletters.</p> <p>MG noted that Epuron has not communicated adequately with members of the community within 10km of the wind farm site.</p> <p>DN noted that the committee should focus on what can be done from this point onwards rather than what was done previously.</p>	
4	<p><i>Current status of the projects</i></p> <p>AW read through a presentation on the Conroys Gap project distributed to the committee. He noted that Epuron is planning to modify Conroys Gap so that the 18 approved turbine locations can be built – the consent currently permits building on 15 of the locations.</p> <p>PR asked if the approval had lapsed for Conroys Gap. AW confirmed it had not.</p> <p>SW asked who the turbine manufacturer was. AW noted that was commercially sensitive information and had not been publically released.</p> <p>MG asked if a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) had been signed and to see Epuron's balance sheet. AW noted that a PPA for the project had not been signed yet and that Epuron is a private company whose balance sheet is not in the public domain.</p> <p>MG suggested that Epuron set up a decommissioning trust fund for Conroys</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>Gap. AW noted that conditions of approval for the project, including conditions relating to decommissioning, had already been issued by the Department of Planning. AW will circulate a copy of the decommissioning conditions.</p> <p>DN requested Epuron to provide a large scale map which has both Conroys Gap and Yass Valley wind farm turbine locations and houses identified.</p> <p>JM and SW noted concerns about the potential impact of the wind farms on aerial water bombing and aerial agricultural operations in the vicinity of the wind turbines.</p> <p>NR requested that any advertisements about the wind farms be placed in all of the local papers – Yass Tribune, Harden Murrumburrah Express, The Land, Cootamundra Herald and the Gundagai Independent.</p> <p>NC suggested that Epuron ask the local councils for help to distribute project information to surrounding residents to ensure no one is missed.</p> <p>AW read through a presentation distributed to the committee on the status of the Yass Valley Wind Farm project.</p> <p>JM asked how soil erosion will be addressed during construction. AW noted that a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) which will include an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Management Plan will be prepared prior to the commencement of construction. The plans will be subject to approval by the Director-General.</p> <p>JM noted that he understood the capacity of the TransGrid 132kV transmission line (No. 990) was not sufficient to accept the output of the Conroys Gap wind farm. Epuron has assessed the capacity of the transmission line and is confident of the feasibility of connecting to that line.</p> <p>MG requested a hard copy of the Yass Valley Wind Farm Environmental Assessment (EA). AW noted that hard copies of the EA are available at the council offices. AW offered to provide CDs of the EA to the committee members. MG declined this. DN suggested the committee does not need a copy of the EA as it is not a decision-making body. Anyone seeking to influence the decision on the wind farm should engage with the Department of Planning & Infrastructure.</p> <p>DB noted that the EA was the previously exhibited document and the currently exhibited document is the Preferred Project Report (PPR). AW confirmed that he will print four hard copies of the PPR for MG JM PR and SW/RW.</p> <p>DN noted that he would like to see a consultation plan that involves other stakeholder groups such as bushfire etc. He was also interested in how much the community fund would be over the life of the projects. He noted a preference for s94 processes.</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>AW</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>AW</p>

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
5	<p>Proposed date for next meeting</p> <p>Date: Friday 5th April (Rescheduled for Thursday 4th April)</p> <p>Time: 2.00 to 3.30PM</p> <p>Venue: Yass Council Chambers preferred venue</p>	All
6	Meeting closed at 3.30 pm	Noted

Minutes of Meeting

Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm

Community Consultation Committee

Present:	Nic Carmody	Chairman	NC
	Councillor Neil Reid	Harden Shire Council	NR
	John McGrath	Non-involved landowner	JM
	Paul Regan	Non-involved landowner	PR
	Mark Glover	Non-involved landowner	MG
	Sam Weir	Bookham Agricultural Bureau	SW
	Andrew Wilson	Epuron	AW
	Donna Bolton	Epuron	DB
Apologies:	Stan Waldren	Involved landowner	SW
	Councillor David Needham	Yass Valley Council	DN
	Rowena Weir	Non-involved landowner	RW
Observer:	Dieuwer Reynders	Renewable Energy Precinct	DR
		Coordinator NSW-ACT border	

Date: 4 April 2013

Venue: Yass Valley Council Chambers, Comur Street, Yass

Purpose: Meeting No 2

Minutes:

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
1	<p>NC opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting at 2:10 pm. The meeting agenda was distributed to members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Stan Waldren, representing involved landowners, Rowena Weir, representing non-involved landowners and David Needham representing Yass Valley Council.</p> <p>There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of Previous meeting</p> <p>The requested Preferred Project Reports and Conroy's Gap Decommissioning Consent Conditions were distributed.</p> <p>AW noted, as requested, what is not expected of the committee. The <i>NSW Planning Guidelines – Wind Farms</i> state: As the committee is not a decision-making body, it is not a requirements that consensus be reached on issues discussed.</p>	AW
	<p>MG noted that meetings are to be held on the first Friday of the month if possible.</p> <p>NC noted the current meeting was arranged due to availability of the Council Chambers</p> <p>Fridays are preferred if the Council chambers are available</p>	
	<p>PR noted that the minutes should include more of the detail of the discussion as some questions were left off the previous minutes such as how many host landowners are there for the Conroy's Gap development. AW noted there are 4</p>	AW
	<p>The Minutes are to be circulated as draft and any comments on the draft are to be sent to NC as soon as possible to enable a final version to be distributed</p>	AW
3	<p>Conroy's Gap Wind Farm update</p> <p>AW advised the committee that he has finalised the visual impact assessment but has not yet compiled the modification application. This application seeks permission to build all 18 of the approved wind turbine locations rather than 15 of the 18 as in the current approval.</p> <p>JM noted that he had not been consulted regarding Conroy's Gap</p> <p>MG quoted the Preferred Project Report and Consultation document re consultation and stated that it was inaccurate. NC point out that this related to Yass Valley Wind Farm not Conroy's Gap. NC noted that the Epuron statement quoted by MG is accurate.</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>JM noted that two wind monitoring masts were put up even though the community didn't want them. NC explained that while they were refused by council they were subsequently approved by State government.</p>	
	<p>NR noted that he had been elected as the Harden Shire Council representative on the CCC and is keen to assist with mailing lists and can be responsive without waiting for official minutes. Either Neil or Sharon Langman can assist.</p> <p>AW continued with his update noting that grid connection studies are ongoing.</p> <p>JM noted he had contacted 20 odd landowners round Conroy's Gap and nobody had consulted them. No one has consulted anyone in his family, except the two members who are host landowners, other than at the 2005, 2006 and 2010 open houses.</p> <p>AW noted that the Conroy's Gap Wind Farm was approved before he joined the company. MG noted that AW should not 'hide' as AW is representing Epuron and therefore should take responsibility for actions taken previously by Epuron representatives. It is Epuron not AW that is being discussed. NC noted that it is the job of all members of the CCC to get information about the projects out into the community.</p> <p>SW noted it is Epuron's responsibility to contact the community. NC advised that the CCC can ask Epuron to consult.</p> <p>MG suggested that all residents and landowners within 5km of a WTG should be contacted by phone and offered a meeting</p> <p>PR noted that all residents within 2kms are to be contacted in the Director General's Requirements.</p> <p>AW corrected this as the DGRs do not specify distance but mention neighbouring landowners. AW noted that Epuron chose to consult with residents within 5km and sent newsletters to 130 identified parties.</p> <p>NC suggested the newsletters could be sent registered post. MG noted that not everyone has a mailbox.</p> <p>NR noted that Harden Shire does not yet have it's rural addresses bedded in to an address system. He noted it is important to ensure that everyone gets a letter but the Council's issue with rural addresses may be the reason Epuron hasn't managed to contact everyone.</p> <p>NC requested that Epuron bring the newsletter list to the next CCC meeting so that all members can assist in updating it. NC advised that the updated list could be sent to council to ask them if they will send newsletters to anyone within 5kms not on the list.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>AW</p>

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>SW noted he had spoken to one landowner who had not been contacted. MG suggested it was because there is a gag clause in Epuron contracts. AW noted there is no gag clause relating to the agreement but there is a confidentiality clause around the commercial terms which is normal business practice.</p> <p>NR requested that Epuron bring a copy of the confidentiality clause to the next CCC.</p>	AW
	PR noted that a number of landowners he had contacted had advised they were not involved with the project. AW noted that publicly available maps show the properties currently included in hosting wind farm infrastructure.	
	<p>JM noted that he had been an employee of TransGrid from 1981 to 1996 and knows that the transmission lines in the area are 'fully loaded'. NC asked if he could clarify whether that meant they don't have available capacity for the Wind Farm. JM advised that the connection won't work.</p> <p>NC asked if a TransGrid assessment had been undertaken. AW confirmed it had. NC noted that the matter is beyond the remit of the committee and was a risk the developer should consider.</p>	
	<p>SW raised aerial farm management concerns. He said he had spoken to a pilot caught in turbulence 10 km downwind of the Gunning Wind Farm on a quiet day with little wind, who said it was like flying in a washing machine.</p> <p>AW advised that aerial aviation issues are not new. The many aerial aviation companies that Epuron has spoken to all advise that each individual carries out their own risk assessment and the usual practice is for those landowners affected to be compensated for any additional aerial agriculture costs that are the result of the wind farm. This compensation could be included as a condition of the development approval.</p> <p>MG noted that he has 700 acres of land that can only be supered by aerial spreading and if he can't put super on, it lowers the carrying capacity of his property.</p> <p>NC noted that Ted Macintosh is to be invited to the next meeting to discuss the issue. SW to invite Ted.</p>	SW
	JM queried the safety issue with fires and aviation. NC noted that the RFS has advised that it is not a problem.	
4.	<p>Yass Valley Wind Farm update</p> <p>AW advised the committee that Visual Impact and Noise assessments are being updated. He advised that there is a preference to connect the wind farm into the 330kV line to the south.</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>JM noted that he has not been able to comprehend the connection of the wind farm (Conroy's Gap) since it was first discussed with him in 2005.</p> <p>MG noted that he felt the aerial issues had not been sorted. AW said it is likely to be dealt with through a Statement of Commitment which might say that there will be compensation for the difference in price for those who can't use aerial agriculture services for spraying and fertilising. MG requested an updated map of Agricultural airstrips. NC noted that Sam is to ask Ted Macintosh to attend the next meeting and provide an update on the location of all airstrips in the vicinity of the wind farm.</p> <p>MG requested a history of Epuron's political donations from 2007. AW noted they are all declared on the website with each application. The most recent application was Liverpool Wind Farm – see https://majorprojects.affinitylive.com/public/5084f0e86778f7e7cdc1b3382bdee79e/Aplication%20Form%20.pdf</p>	
	<p>PR asked if AW had received a letter from Renee Grogan. AW confirmed he had. JM suggested Epuron would struggle with some of the questions.</p>	
	<p>PR asked who is the Proponent at the time of decommissioning – who is the legal owner? AW noted that the Proponent is the entity receiving planning consent and that it is usual for there to be a special purpose vehicle eg Yass Valley Wind Farm Pty Ltd so that the consent and land agreements all sit with that entity and that entity can be owned by different parties but it has the rights and obligations that go with the consent and the agreements.</p> <p>SW asked if that was an accepted practice worldwide. AW noted that it was. SW noted there are many wind turbines which have been decommissioned world-wide which are still standing. He noted he would like a bond in place for decommissioning.</p> <p>JM noted that under the Conroy's Gap decommissioning conditions (JM cited 1.9(c), presumed to mean 1.11 (c),) there was a requirement for notification of surrounding landowners re decommissioning but he still has not been consulted.</p> <p>AW noted there is an obligation to prepare a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) 3 months prior to construction which will include a detailed assessment of impacts and how they will be managed.</p> <p>SW asked if the 'towers' for Conroy's Gap had been ordered. AW noted that a contract for the supply of the wind turbines had been signed but that it was conditional on securing a PPA for the project.</p>	
	<p>JM noted that neither he nor his family had ever been consulted about Conroy's Gap.</p>	
	<p>PR asked AW if he had ever been on the main ridge at Coppabella. AW affirmed he had. PR noted the crane hardstands are 900m² and queries how will you manage that on a 10m wide ridge? He noted that Epuron don't care just want to get approval and sell for</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>a buck.</p> <p>AW noted that a constructability feasibility study had been undertaken for the site and Origin Energy had done the same. There are costs involved in building on steep terrain but they are not major hurdles.</p> <p>NC added that the Proponent has to submit a detailed design and a CEMP before the start of construction.</p> <p>JM noted that Black Trig is erosion prone. MG suggested not to blast when conditions were wet as the soil wouldn't stay in place. NC asked if anyone had any other questions. PR noted he had 2 pages of questions.</p>	
5.	<p>General Business</p> <p>MG queries impacts to Eastern Bentwing Bats (EBB) noting he knows they are in the area as both he and his neighbour have one in their freezers.</p> <p>PR asked if Epuron could guarantee that there will be no decrease in property value as a result of the wind farm. NC noted that the Planning Department would say it's not a planning consideration. PR noted he is asked this question frequently.</p> <p>NC asked if neighbours can show impact whether they can they be compensated. AW clarified that this was not the case. Where a property owner can show impact and the proponent can mitigate it they will.</p> <p>NC noted if anyone is having an impact on a business they should contact council.</p> <p>AW noted this are no examples of decreased property values attributable to wind farms. He noted that normally there is an obligation for a community fund and this could be used for anything on the property eg for a neighbouring property to deal with soil erosion.</p> <p>JM asked what happens to the soil removed for the turbine base AW noted it is generally used in the road construction. NC added that roads have to be built to council specifications.</p> <p>MG queries a table in section 7.4.3 of the EA under fauna, threatened species assessment where the EBB has a X. AW clarified that this X indicated there is the potential for the species to be present. MG suggested EBBs could be breeding on either side of Childowla Road or in the wilderness area off Bogolara Road in Babinda He wanted the assessment updated. NC noted that it was a matter for alerting OEH to this and Dieuwer Reynders will follow up with OEH re EBBs. Mark Glover noted he wished</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>to hear about this directly on 0417 268049</p> <p>SW noted that Bookham will be in the lee of the wind turbines and asked what will be in it for the community. AW agreed this was a good point and if Bookham is the most impacted community it should benefit to a greater degree from the community fund.</p> <p>MG suggested boat people with backpacks could be employed to spread superphosphate.</p> <p>NR noted that he understood the Council used the community fund for a new hall at Breadalbane and wondered if there could be a Section 94 for road improvements for trucks bringing in gravel?</p> <p>NC noted that the State government would set money aside for roads and the Section 94 contributions are for specific things. Loss of amenity is the biggest issue with wind farms and he believed compensation should go to neighbouring landowners.</p> <p>MG suggested Sarah Laurie has brought up good anecdotal evidence about adverse health impacts, and these concerns needed to be addressed. DR noted that one of the Doctors she has cited has publicly stated that his study was taken out of context and incorrectly referenced by Dr Laurie.</p> <p>JM suggested there were concerns about the conglomeration of wind farms in the area and asked why we don't have interconnectors for the power.</p> <p>NC advised that the development applications will be assessed by the State Government and all wind farms are developed independently of others.</p> <p>AW noted that in rounds of meeting he had met with neighbours several said members of the Bookham Agricultural Bureau had put out a non-attributed leaflet about the wind farm. This leaflet has a lot of inaccurate information. AW asked SW if the bureau had sent out this information.. SW said the bureau had not. For clarification: SW noted subsequently that he and a number of other individuals who are also members of the Bookham Agricultural Bureau are forming a Bookham Landscape Guardians Group and this group sent out the leaflet.</p> <p>DB gave an update on Carroll's Ridge and Birrema Wind Farm proposals.</p> <p>Carroll's Ridge Wind Farm site will not be proceeding and land agreements had been terminated and equipment decommissioned.</p> <p>Birrema Wind Farm site has additional wind monitoring in progress and Epuron will continue to monitor the site for a further 6-12 months to assess the wind resource.</p> <p>JM asked if Carroll's was not proceeding because there was no wind. DB noted that the wind resource is excellent but that the Eastern Bentwing Bat remains a significant constraint. Other developers may choose to progress the site. JM noted that it was bound to kill at least one EBB so it couldn't proceed. DB noted that the assessment related to whether there would be significant impacts, not an impact to a single bat.</p> <p>NR queried whether there would be any change to the access on the Hume and Hovell</p>	DR

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	Walking Track at Conroy's Gap. It was confirmed that there would be no change. NR requested that a small zone outside of the impact zone be removed from the map. AW confirmed he would do this.	AW
6	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>Epuron is awaiting information from Yass Valley Council or NC re the venue for the next meeting. Due to council chambers being booked on Friday 3 May the Chambers are provisionally booked for Thursday 2nd May. To be confirmed by NC.</p> <p>Proposed date for next meeting</p> <p>Date: Thursday 2nd May</p> <p>Time: 2.00 to 3.30PM</p> <p>Venue: Yass Council Chambers (provisional)</p>	
6	Meeting closed at 3.40 pm	Noted

Minutes of Meeting

Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm

Community Consultation Committee

Present:	Nic Carmody Councillor Neil Reid John McGrath Paul Regan Andrew Wilson	Chairman Harden Shire Council Non-involved landowner Non-involved landowner Epuron	NC NR JM PR AW
Apologies:	Stan Waldren Councillor David Needham Rowena Weir Mark Glover Sam Weir Donna Bolton	Involved landowner Yass Valley Council Non-involved landowner Non-involved landowner Bookham Agricultural Bureau Epuron	StW DN RW MG SaW DB
Observer:	Dieuwer Reynders	Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinator NSW-ACT border	DR
Date:	2 May 2013		
Venue:	Yass Valley Council Chambers, Comur Street, Yass		
Purpose:	Meeting No 3		

Minutes:

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
1	<p>NC opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting at 2:05 pm.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Mark Glover, Stan Waldren, Rowena Weir, Sam Weir, David Needham and Donna Bolton.</p>	
2	<p>Pecuniary and other interests</p> <p>There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.</p> <p>JM noted that he is related to families that are involved and also to families that are neighbours to the projects.</p> <p>JM and PR noted that they had attended meetings of the Yass Landscape Guardians and Boorowa Landscape Guardians.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of Previous meeting</p> <p>A number of proposed changes to the minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. The amended minutes of Meeting No. 2 were adopted by the committee and will be distributed to the committee members and placed on the Epuron website.</p>	
4	<p>Conroy's Gap Wind Farm update</p> <p>AW provided the following update on project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with neighbours to the wind farm site regarding the proposed modification application is ongoing • The modification application is currently being drafted • Grid connection studies that are needed as part of the grid connection application process with TransGrid have been completed by Epuron's consultant 	
	<p>JM queried the route and voltage of the powerline connecting the Yass Valley Wind Farm to the grid. AW indicated the route of the powerline on the map and noted that the powerline was likely to be 330kV, the same as the voltage of the TransGrid line that it would connect to.</p>	
5	<p>Yass Valley Wind Farm update</p> <p>AW provided the following update on project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated noise assessment is in progress • An updated visual impact assessment including additional photomontages is in progress. • A revised Submissions & Preferred Project Report is expected to be submitted 	

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	<p>to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure in June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with neighbouring residents is ongoing. Both councils have provided assistance with confirming mailing addresses for the neighbouring residents. 	
	PR queried the number of houses located within 2km and within 5km of the Yass Valley Wind Farm. AW agreed to circulate the details to the committee.	AW
	JM queried the details of the biodiversity studies carried out for the project. AW & DR confirmed that the studies had been carried out by Epuron's biodiversity consultant in accordance with the Director General's Requirements (DGRs) and that the assessments had been scrutinised by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage for adequacy and completeness.	
	PR queried whether Epuron had consulted with the Catchment Management Authority. AW confirmed that they were one of a number of agencies that had been consulted about the project.	
	<p>PR asked when details of the community fund would be known. AW noted that the requirements for the community fund are generally included in the conditions of approval issued by the Department of Planning & Infrastructure. [For example, for the Conroys Gap wind farm, prior the commencement of construction, the proponent must prepare and submit for approval to the Director General a Community Enhancement Program to fund community infrastructure and services in the locality of the project. Contributions to the fund will be \$25,000 pa (indexed by CPI) from commissioning of the project until the end of its life.] The full conditions of approval are on the Epuron website http://www.epuron.com.au/project/conroys-gap/downloads/ under the Government Approvals tab.</p> <p>AW noted that the CCC could play a role in identifying suitable projects for the annual funding as well as in administering the fund. PR noted that he is the new chairman of the Binalong Landcare Group and that this may a suitable agency to discuss projects with at the appropriate time.</p>	
	PR queried whether there were any community meetings planned for Bookham or Binalong. AW advised that although Epuron were currently contacting all landowners within 5km, there were no plans to hold a community meeting. At this stage in the project's development the focus is on addressing any particular concerns of immediate neighbours rather than those of the broader community. If there were groups (eg Progress Association) that needed more information, Epuron could provide more targeted information to groups.	
	JM asked whether there were any photomontages and assessment of the visual impact of the wind farm from Yass. AW advised that he was pretty sure there were photomontages of the Conroys Gap wind farm from Yass. The locations of the all the photomontages for both projects are shown on maps in the respective Environmental Assessments. JM believes photomontages should be done from Yass, Bowning,	

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	<p>Goondah, Bookham and Binalong.</p> <p>JM asked whether photomontages be put on display at publically accessible places such as the tourist bureau, post office and council noticeboard so that more people can be made aware of what is happening.</p>	AW
6	<p>General Business</p> <p>JM tabled a number of queries from community members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A request for an open house or public meeting to better inform the local community – AW advised that although Epuron were currently contacting all landowners within 5km, there were no plans to hold a community meeting. At this stage in the project's development the focus is on addressing any particular concerns of immediate neighbours rather than those of the broader community. • Concerns from neighbours about construction traffic issues experienced at the Crookwell II site (Union Fenosa). AW noted he was not aware of any current construction activities at the Crookwell II site but that proponents were bound by the terms of their planning approval including preparing a traffic management plan and adhering to fixed times for construction activities • Sizes of wind turbines - AW noted that the maximum wind turbine size is identified in the Environmental Assessments for each project. [This are as follows: Conroys Gap – hub height 80m & tip height 125m; Yass Valley – hub height 100m & tip height 150m • Economic benefits and local employment of wind farm projects – AW noted that economic benefits including job creation has been noted in the Environmental Assessments for both projects and agreed to provide the links to independent assessments of the economic benefits for wind farm projects in general.http://www.climateinstitute.org.au/clean-energy-jobs.html/section/430 http://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/resourcecentre/reports.html <p>DR confirmed her role as a representative of the NSW government and the Office of Environment and Heritage as listening to thoughts and concerns and to provide non-partisan information where required. DR noted that in relation to local jobs, it is important that the local communities make workers and suppliers feel welcome - something for towns to think about.</p> <p>NC requested that Epuron provide a draft project timeline for each of the projects.</p> <p>NR confirmed that large-scale map of the projects had be put up at the BP service station in Jugiong. A notice regarding the project had been included in the Jugiong Journal. NR asked NC to check his email address as he hadn't received the reminder for today's meeting. NR reiterated his offer to assist with mailing out project information or newsletters.</p> <p>PR expressed his concern about the lack of a representative from the involved landowners in the three meetings to date. AW and JM to identify an alternative to StW.</p>	AW

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
7	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>The frequency of the meetings was discussed and it was agreed to hold meetings every 2 months.</p> <p>Proposed date for next meeting</p> <p>Date: Thursday 4th July 2013</p> <p>Time: 2.00 to 3.30PM</p> <p>Venue: Yass Council Chambers</p>	
8	Meeting closed at 3.35 pm	Noted

Minutes of Meeting

Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm Community Consultation Committee

Present:	Nic Carmody	Chairman	NC
	Councillor Neil Reid	Harden Shire Council	NR
	Councillor Ann Daniel	Yass Valley Council	AD
	John McGrath	Non-involved landowner	JM
	Stan Waldren	Involved landowner	StW
	Rowena & Sam Weir	Non-involved landowner	RW
	Mark Glover	Non-involved landowner	MG
	Chris Shannon	Bookham Ag Bureau	CS
	Andrew Wilson	Epuron	AW
Apologies:	Paul Regan	Non-involved landowner	PR
	Alan Keith	Non-involved landowner	AK
	Donna Bolton	Epuron	DB
Observer:	Chris Mackenzie Davey	Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinator NSW-ACT border	CM
Date:	4 July 2013		
Venue:	Yass Valley Council Chambers, Comur Street, Yass		
Purpose:	Meeting No 4		

Minutes:

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
1	<p>NC opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting at 2:05 pm.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Paul Regan, Alan Keith and Donna Bolton.</p> <p>Chris Mackenzie Davey is currently representing the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage as the Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinator. Chris Shannon has replaced Sam Weir as the representative of the Bookham Agricultural Bureau. Councillor Ann Daniel has replaced Councillor David Needham as the Yass Valley Council representative.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of Previous meeting</p> <p>After a discussion, the minutes of meeting number 3 were accepted by the committee and will be distributed to the committee members and placed on the Epuron website.</p>	AW
3	<p>Matters arising from the Previous Minutes</p> <p>MG queried when the updated photomontages will be available and suggested that copies be made available to the Yass Tribune as well as displayed at publically accessible places. NR requested that a hard copy of a photomontage be made available in Jugiong. AW noted that the updated photomontages will be available in the Preferred Project and Submissions Report and will advise the committee as soon as they are available as well as provide copies to be displayed in the publically accessible places.</p>	AW
4	<p>NC queried the number of houses located within 2km and within 5km of the Yass Valley Wind Farm. AW agreed to circulate the details to the committee – see below:</p> <p>Yass Valley Wind Farm: Non-involved residences within 2km = 6 Non-involved residences within 5km = 95</p> <p>Conroys Gap Wind Farm: Non-involved residences within 2km = 6 Non-involved residences within 5km = 31</p>	
5	<p>AW noted that it was difficult to provide a time line for the two wind farm projects as the start of construction was dependant on the demand for the output of the wind farms to satisfy the Renewable Energy Target. The construction duration is expected to take 18 – 24 months once a commitment is made to proceed.</p>	
6	<p>Conroy's Gap Wind Farm update</p> <p>AW reported no change to the status of the Conroys Gap Wind Farm project.</p>	
7	<p>Yass Valley Wind Farm update</p> <p>AW provided the following update on project activities:</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated noise assessment has been completed An updated visual impact assessment is expected to be completed shortly An aviation impact assessment is in progress A revised Submissions & Preferred Project Report is being prepared. AW will notify the committee members as soon as the report is available. 	AW
8	<p>General Business</p> <p>JM expressed his concern about the potential impact of the wind farms on fire fighting. AW noted that this will be addressed in the Preferred Project and Submissions Report.</p>	
9	<p>MG and SW noted that although Ted McIntosh had been invited to attend the CCC meeting to discuss the potential impacts on aerial agriculture he has decided not to attend as he was planning on making a submission opposing the project.</p> <p>It was suggested that the wind turbines could be shut down during aerial agricultural operations in the vicinity of the wind farm.</p> <p>NR suggested that SW, JM and MG could approach aerial agricultural operators in the area to ensure that details of all the airstrips in the vicinity of the wind farms were identified.</p>	
10	<p>SW queried the amount to be contributed to a community fund by the wind farm company. AW noted that the amount of the community fund was usually specified in the conditions of approval for the project. For example:</p> <p>Conroys Gap: \$25,000 pa for 15 turbines</p> <p>Boco Rock : \$2,500/turbine pa</p> <p>Gullen Range: \$1,666/turbine pa</p>	
11	<p>AW noted that Epuron are planning to include a commitment for 50% of the Yass Valley Wind Farm community fund to go towards a clean energy program (eg solar pv or solar water heating) for all non-involved residences located within 5km of a wind turbine. The intent is to provide a benefit to those residents that are most affected by the proposed wind farm.</p> <p>In relation to the quantum of the community fund NR noted that the Jugiong Action Group managed to do very well with limited funds.</p>	
12	<p>JM queried how erosion was going to be managed during construction. AW noted that an erosion and sediment control plan would be prepared as part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan that would be submitted to the Director-General of the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure for approval prior to any construction activities taking place. AW will try and source a sample erosion & sediment control plan.</p>	AW

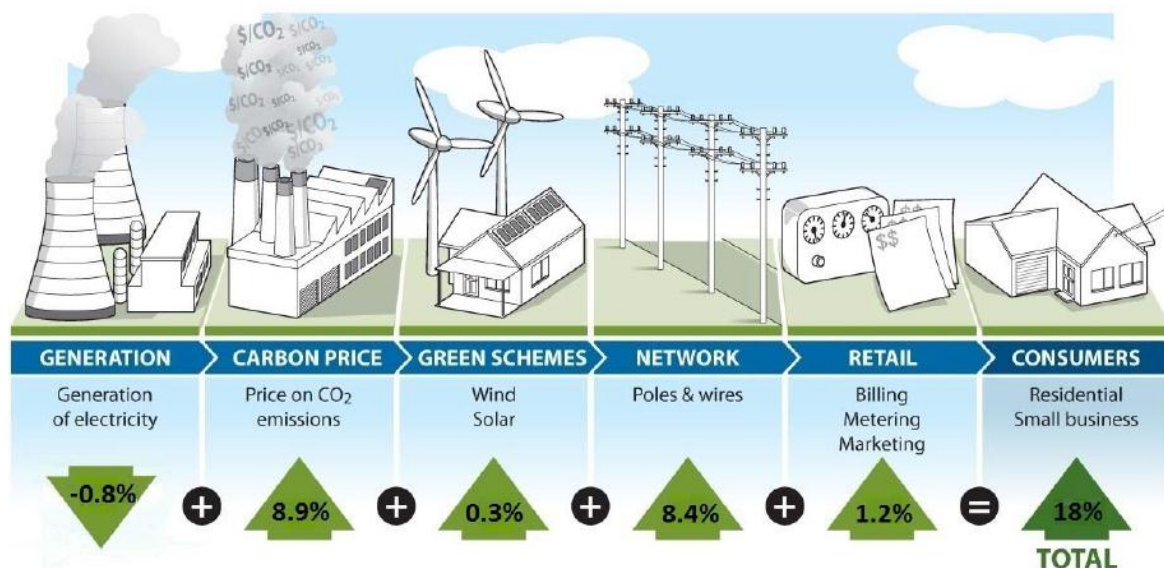
Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
13	JM noted that he had observed a number of wind farms during his recent visit to Holland, Belgium & Czechoslovakia. They generally consisted of a small number of turbines in each wind farm.	
14	MG queried where water would be sourced from for the construction of the wind farm. AW noted that a relatively small volume of water would be used in the construction of the wind turbine foundations and for dust suppression on the access tracks. The Yass Valley Wind Farm Environmental Assessment (section 8.1.1 & 8.1.2 on pages 195 – 196) identified a number potential water sources and estimated the water usage of 19.4 ML over the construction period of 24 months.	
15	CM offered to arrange a tour of a wind farm under construction for the CCC in October. There was a generally positive response to this opportunity. CM to provide further details at the next meeting.	CM
16	NC suggested that the council representatives investigate with their respective planners whether Section 149 Planning Certificates could be used as a means to notify potential landowners of a planned or approved wind farm in the vicinity of a wind farm.	NR AD
17	AW noted that he had received a request from Alan Keith to join the CCC. Alan lives to the east of Conroys Gap within 2km of a proposed Yass Valley Wind Farm turbine. The committee had no objection to Alan joining the CCC. NC suggested that no more than two additional members be allowed to join to avoid the committee becoming too large.	
18	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>The day and venue for the committee meetings was discussed and it was agreed that the current venue (Yass Valley Council Chambers) and day (Thursdays) was acceptable to the majority of the committee.</p> <p>Proposed date for next meeting</p> <p>Date: Thursday 5th September 2013</p> <p>Time: 2.00 to 3.30PM</p> <p>Venue: Yass Council Chambers</p>	
19	Meeting closed at 3.44 pm	Noted

My electricity bill has gone up a lot – how much of it is due to wind energy?

The answer is - not very much.

IPART, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal in NSW receives submissions from electricity retailers and then determines each retailer's new pricing regime which is based on their real costs. The price you pay varies according to which retailer you are with and what kind of supply or contract you have. The recent price increases for electricity in NSW are on average 18% and this is made up as shown in the IPART Fact Sheet 'Consumer summary of final decision – June 2012' ¹.

Figure 1 Drivers of increases in average regulated retail electricity prices on 1 July 2012, across NSW (including inflation, %)



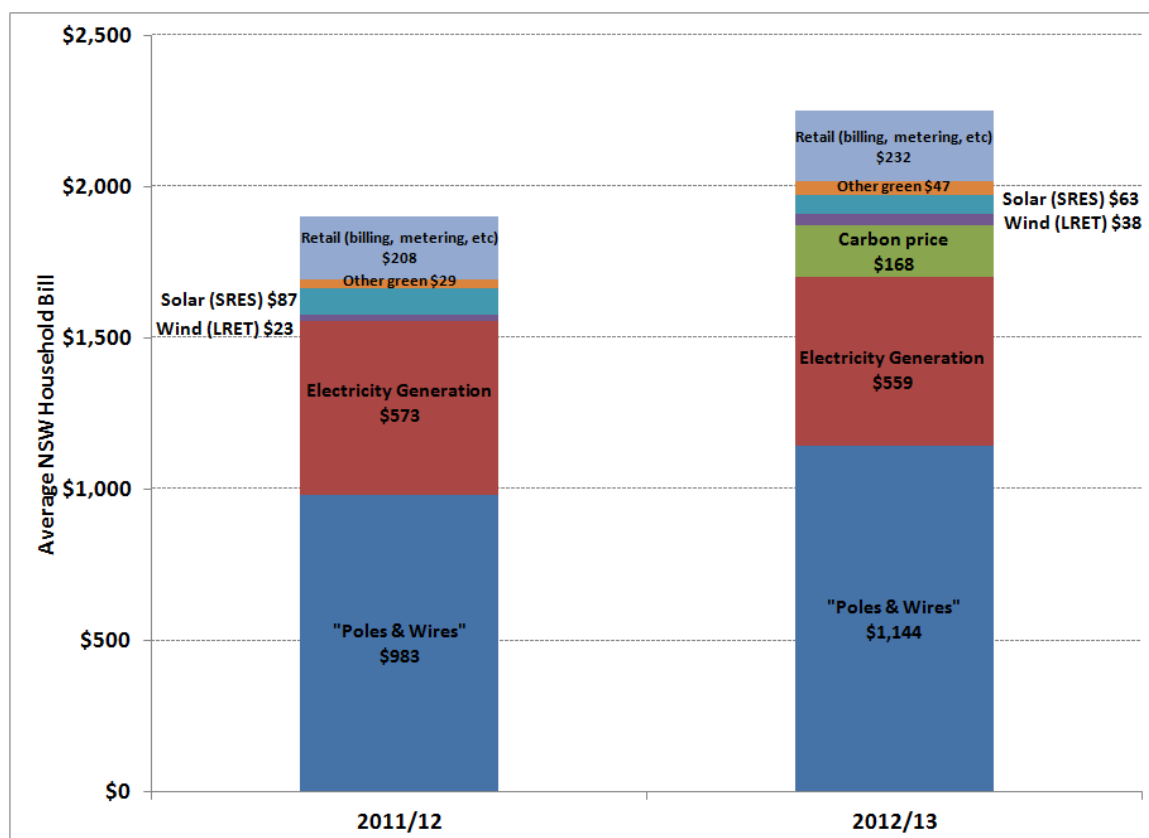
Note: 'Green Schemes' include all of the Commonwealth and NSW Government schemes designed to reduce greenhouse emissions except for the Commonwealth Government's carbon pricing mechanism.

From this you can see that the carbon price and the network charges are the main contributors to the price increases on bills and **only 0.3% of the current price increases** are attributable to wind, solar and other green schemes.

The following chart and table show more about the component increases for the average NSW household as defined by IPART.

As you can see large-scale renewables (mainly wind) represent just 0.7% of the increase or \$15, bringing the total contribution to around \$38 for the year 2012/13.

1. http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Electricity/Fact_Sheets_Information_Papers - go to Fact Sheet – consumer summary of final decision – June 2012 <http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au/household-assistancesupporting/>



	2012/13	Increase (\$)	Increase (%)
"Poles & wires"	\$1,144	\$161	8.4%
Electricity generation	\$559	-\$14	-0.8%
Carbon Price*	\$168	\$168	8.9%
Large renewables (LRET, mainly wind)*	\$38	\$15	0.7%
Small renewables (SRES, mainly solar)*	\$63	-\$24	-1.2%
Other green*	\$47	\$17	0.9%
Retail (billing, metering, etc)	\$232	\$23	1.2%
TOTAL	\$2,251	\$346	18.1%

Note, our recent electricity bills stated that the 'NSW Govt estimates that Federal carbon tax and green energy schemes add about \$316 a year to a typical 7MWh household bill.' This amount represents the total contribution of these components. The actual increase is \$176 of which the carbon price makes up \$168. See the marked items in the table above (*).

1. http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Electricity/Fact_Sheets_Information_Papers - go to Fact Sheet – consumer summary of final decision – June 2012 <http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au/household-assistancesupporting/>

Minutes of Meeting 5

Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm

Community Consultation Committee

Present:	Nic Carmody	Chairman	NC
	Councillor Neil Reid	Harden Shire Council	NR
	Councillor Ann Daniel	Yass Valley Council	AD
	John McGrath	Non-involved landowner	JM
	Sam Weir	Alternate for Rowena Weir	SW
	Mark Glover	Non-involved landowner	MG
	Chris Shannon	Bookham Ag Bureau	CS
	Paul Regan	Non-involved landowner	PR
	Andrew Wilson	Epuron	AW
	Donna Bolton	Epuron	DB
Apologies:	Alan Keith	Non-involved landowner	AK
	Rowena Weir	Non-involved landowner	RW
	Stan Waldren	Involved landowner	StW
Observers:	Chris Mackenzie Davey	Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinator NSW-ACT border	CM
Date:	Thursday 5 September 2013		
Venue:	Yass Valley Council Chambers, Comur Street, Yass		
Purpose:	Meeting No 5		

Minutes:

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
1	NC opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting at 2:10 pm. Apologies were noted from Rowena Weir, Alan Keith and Stan Waldren.	-
2	Pecuniary or other interests No declarations were made.	-
3	Minutes of Previous meeting One correction was made to the Minutes – Paul Regan was quoted as having queried the number of houses located within 2km and within 5km of the Yass Valley Wind Farm but did not attend the previous meeting – the query was made by Nic Carmody. With this correction the minutes of meeting number 4 were accepted by the committee and will be distributed to the committee members and placed on the Epuron website.	AW
4	Matters arising from the Previous Minutes Large scale printed photomontages were distributed among committee members to put up at agreed locations including Jugiong service station, Yass Valley Council offices, Yass Library, Harden Shire Council offices, Barneys of Bookham and Binalong. JM requested a photomontage for Bowning. AW to prepare and provide to JM who will arrange for it to be displayed at the Bowning pub. It was noted that AW had circulated a sample erosion and sediment control plan to the committee members. AW advised that the Preferred Project and Submissions Report was with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) but he had no further advice about process or timeframes. AW noted that DPI advised that notices were routinely sent out to homes within 8-10 km of a proposed development. JM said he didn't believe that this had happened.	AW
5	Conroys Gap Wind Farm update AW advised that Epuron continue to work on securing a power purchase agreement and investment partner. The modification application for the three additional wind turbines has not been lodged due to concerns about the possible impact the modification would have on the timetable for constructing the approved fifteen turbines. NC asked if the modification would increase the capacity (MW). AW confirmed that the modification would increase the capacity from 30 to 36MW. CS asked what the capacity of the wind turbines would be. AW confirmed they would be 2MW for Conroy's Gap and between 1.5MW and 3.6MW for Yass Valley. AD asked how many were on order for Conroy's Gap. AW advised fourteen were on	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>order with an option for additional turbines.</p> <p>PR asked for the name of the manufacturer of the Conroy's Gap wind farm wind turbines. AW noted he is not at liberty to announce that yet.</p>	
6	<p>Yass Valley Wind Farm Update</p> <p>AW told the committee that the Preferred Project and Submissions Report was lodged with the DPI on 30 July and will be viewable when it is released by the DPI.</p> <p>MG requested a copy of the aviation assessment. AW advised that all parts of the Report would be available when it had been accepted by the DPI. Comments were expected back from government agencies by the end of the week after which it was expected to go onto the DPI website.</p> <p>MG queried whether further submissions would be invited. AW noted that DPI had not confirmed the assessment process from this point. AW will notify the committee when the Report has been released and confirm the assessment process.</p> <p><u>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Referral</u></p> <p>MG noted that the EPBC referral had been withdrawn on 16 August. AW confirmed this and noted that it was about to be re-lodged. AW noted that the reason for the withdrawal and re-lodgement is that while state planning approval runs with the land, ie the holder of the land holds the approval, EPBC approval runs with the applicant and not the land.</p> <p>PR asked why the referral had been withdrawn. AW explained that the Yass Valley Wind Farm may be constructed in multiple sections and hence ownership and liabilities of each section of the wind farm needed to be separated.</p> <p>AD queries whether that meant that the wind farm could be sold. AW confirmed that this was the case.</p> <p>JM asked who approves the EPBC referral. AW noted it is SEWPaC – the Federal Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.</p> <p>MG queried which species triggered EPBC control. AW noted that a number of different species on the Yass Valley site including Box Gum Woodland CEEC, Yass Daisy, Golden Sun Moth and the Superb Parrot were of interest under the EPBC Act.</p> <p>MG asked if the documentation was available. AW agreed to email the link to the EPBC website when the reports are on it.</p> <p>PR noted that it looks bad that the referral is being split. AW reaffirmed that the reason was to accommodate potential multiple owners of the site and enable any determination and conditions to be split in order for the responsibilities and liabilities to align with the project owners.</p> <p>NJ noted that if work needed to proceed on some of the turbines then splitting the referral would mean those turbines could proceed to construction without any impact on the other section of the wind farm.</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>AW</p>
7	<p>General Business</p> <p><u>Membership of the committee</u></p> <p>AW advised that the CCC has members representing neighbours to both the Conroy's</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>Gap and the Yass Valley Wind Farms. Once either of these projects move to construction then the CCC would need to split into two separate committees.</p> <p>AW noted that there was also not a good representation of neighbours located close to the wind farm sites and that this would be important when the projects were in the operation phase, particularly in relation to the role of the CCC in administering the community fund.</p>	
8	<p><u>Community Fund</u></p> <p>AW read out the Statement of Commitment in relation to community fund:</p> <p>“From commissioning the Proponent will contribute \$2,500 per wind turbine built per annum to a Community Enhancement Program. The Proponent will pay the annual contribution to the CCC for distribution.</p> <p>At least 50% of the funds may be allocated to residential clean energy improvements such as solar water heating or solar PV panels or similar benefit to non-involved properties within 5km of a wind turbine.</p> <p>When the wind farm construction contracts are finalised a new CCC is to be elected to represent the neighbouring community through the construction and operation phase and manage the Community Enhancement Program.</p> <p>The CCC is to be constituted in line with Appendix C of the Draft <i>NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms</i> or as updated. The allocation of funds will be determined by the elected CCC to ensure the community benefit is distributed in line with the community’s own view of an equitable distribution of funds.”</p> <p>It was agreed to discuss the proposed community fund in more detail at the next meeting.</p>	
9	<p><u>Response from RFS re potential impacts of wind farms on fighting fires</u></p> <p>AW noted that the RFS had provided a response to its queries regarding the potential impact of wind farms on fighting fires both on the ground and from the air. A summary of the response has been included in the September project newsletter. MG noted that he would provide a copy of the RFS letter to PR.</p> <p>A copy of the September project newsletter was provided to each of the committee members.</p>	MG
10	NJ noted an article on wind farms in the edition of <i>The Land</i> dated 22 August 2013 and that the draft <i>NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms</i> were still in draft form.	
11	NJ noted that the distribution of project newsletters to residents in the McMahon’s Reef area was now working. MG noted that the consultation is now happening satisfactorily as it should have been five years ago.	
12	JM queried what percentage of wind farm construction jobs were expected to be sourced from the local area. AW undertook to check the statistics from recent wind farm projects and advise the committee by the next meeting.	AW
13	SW queried which of the possible wind turbine locations on the Conroys Gap site would be built. AW agreed to notify the committee as soon as the layout had been finalised.	AW

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
14	CM confirmed that he had requested permission for the planned visit to the Gullen Range wind farm site but hadn't heard back yet.	CM
15	CM noted that Infigen were holding an Open Day at the Woodlawn Wind Farm on Friday 8 th November 2013 and anybody could register their interest in attending on their website http://www.infigenenergy.com/community/open-days.html	
16	NC queried whether the operational noise compliance audit of the operating wind farms in NSW had been released by the NSW government. AW noted that their report hadn't been released yet.	
17	<p>NC queried whether consultation plans were available on the Epuron website. AW agreed to check and include a link in the minutes.</p> <p>The Community Consultation Plan for the Yass Valley Wind Farm is included as Attachment 6 to the Environmental Assessment http://www.epuron.com.au/project/yass-valley/downloads/ under the under the "Environmental Assessment & Submissions Report" tab.</p> <p>The Community Consultation Plan for the Conroys Gap Wind Farm is included in section 6.1 (page 81) of the Environmental Assessment http://www.epuron.com.au/project/conroys-gap/downloads/ under the "Environmental Assessment & Submissions Report" tab.</p>	
18	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>Proposed date for next meeting</p> <p>Date: Thursday 7th November 2013</p> <p>Time: 2.00 to 3.30PM</p> <p>Venue: Yass Council Chambers - booked</p>	
19	Meeting closed at 3.44 pm	Noted

Minutes of Meeting 6

Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm

Community Consultation Committee

Present:	John McGrath Andrew Wilson Michael Kurnik	Non-involved landowner Epuron Epuron	JM AW MK
Apologies:	Nic Carmody Councillor Neil Reid Councillor Ann Daniel Paul Regan Mark Glover Chris Shannon Alan Keith Rowena Weir Stan Waldren Chris Mackenzie Davey	Chairman Harden Shire Council Yass Valley Council Non-involved landowner Non-involved landowner Bookham Ag Bureau Non-involved landowner Non-involved landowner Involved landowner Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinator NSW-ACT border	NC NR AD PR MG CS AK RW StW CM
Date:	Thursday 7 th November 2013		
Venue:	Yass Valley Council Chambers, Comur Street, Yass		
Purpose:	Meeting No 6		

Minutes:

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
1	AW opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting at 2:20 pm. Apologies were noted from Nic Carmody, Cr Neil Reid, Cr Ann Daniel, Paul Regan, Mark Glover, Chris Shannon, Rowena Weir, Alan Keith and Stan Waldren and Chris McKensie-Davey.	-
2	Pecuniary or other interests No declarations were made.	-
3	Minutes of Previous meeting No comments were received on the draft minutes of meeting number 5. The minutes were accepted and will be placed on the Epuron website.	AW
4	Matters arising from the Previous Minutes Item 4 - An additional photomontage for the Bowning Pub had been prepared and displayed by JM. Item 12 - AW advised that for the Gullen Range wind farm currently under construction that approximately 70% of the construction jobs were sourced from the local area. Item 14 – Site visit to Gullen Range wind farm site – CM had offered either 31 October or 14 November as possible dates for the visit, but hadn't had a response back from NC.	
5	Conroys Gap Wind Farm update AW advised no change in the status of the Conroys Gap wind farm project.	
6	Yass Valley Wind Farm Update AW advised that there was no update on the timing of the assessment process from the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure. EPBC Approval – A decision on the section of the project south of the Hume Highway was expected within the next week. The section of the project north of the Hume Highway is a controlled action. An Additional Information Report will be submitted within the next few weeks to enable the Department of Conservation to complete their assessment.	
7	General Business <u>Potential impact of wind farms on property values</u> JM queried whether Epuron can state that there will be no devaluation of neighbouring properties as a result of the wind farms. AW responded that the potential impact on neighbouring properties had been addressed in the project Environmental Assessments.	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
8	<u>Community Fund</u> It was agreed to discuss the proposed community fund in more detail at the next meeting.	
9	Next meeting: The proposed date for next meeting was discussed with possible dates in late January 2014, February or early March 2014.	
10	Meeting closed at 2:45 pm	Noted

Draft

Minutes of Meeting 7

Yass Valley Wind Farm & Conroys Gap Wind Farm

Community Consultation Committee

Present:	Nic Carmody Councillor Neil Reid Paul Regan Mark Glover John McGrath Tony Reeves Chris Shannon Sam Weir Mark Fleming Andrew Wilson Michael Kurnik	Chairman Harden Shire Council Non-involved landowner Non-involved landowner Non-involved landowner Involved landowner Bookham Ag Bureau Bookham Ag Bureau NSW OEH Epuron Epuron	NC NR PR MG JM TR CS SW MF AW MK
Apologies:	Alan Keith Chris Mackenzie Davey	Non-involved landowner Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinator NSW-ACT border	AK CM
Absent:	Councillor Ann Daniel	Yass Valley Council	AD
Date:	Thursday 6 th March 2014		
Venue:	Memorial Hall, Comur Street, Yass		
Purpose:	Meeting No 7		

Minutes:

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
1	NC opened the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting at 2:00 pm. Apologies were noted from Alan Keith and Chris McKensie-Davey.	-
2	Pecuniary or other interests No declarations were made.	-
3	Minutes of Previous meeting No comments were received on the draft minutes of meeting number 6 which had been emailed to committee members on 25 November 2013. The draft minutes will be resent to the committee prior to being finalised and placed on the website.	AW
4	Matters arising from the Previous Minutes JM queried the extent of local labour likely to be used for the construction of a wind farm. AW noted that for the Gullen Range Wind Farm 70% of the construction workforce had been from the local area.	
5	Conroys Gap Wind Farm update AW advised no change in the status of the Conroys Gap wind farm project. A new wind monitoring mast was being installed on the site as part of verifying the wind resource on the site. JM queried whether the new mast was at Carroll's Ridge. AW confirmed that it was being installed on the Conroys Gap Wind Farm site. The recent news regarding the as-constructed locations of the Gullen Range Wind Farm turbines was discussed. AW noted that more recent wind farm project approvals included a micro-siting allowance of 100m. SW queried the proposed planning modification to allow the construction of three additional turbines. AW advised that the proposed modification was not currently being pursued and noted that neighbours closest to the proposed wind turbine locations had been consulted as part of considering the modification. JM queried whether TransGrid would build the grid connection for the wind farm. AW confirmed that the wind farm would enter a connection agreement with TransGrid to provide the connection to the existing transmission line.	
6	Yass Valley Wind Farm Update AW advised that feedback from the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure was expected within a week. AW agreed to notify the committee directly with any update on the status of the planning approval, rather than waiting for the next meeting. EPBC Approval – AW noted that the Commonwealth Department of Environment had provided further comments on the Referrals and that Epuron were in the process of responding to these comments. PR queried the reason for splitting the EPBC referral in	AW

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
	<p>two parts. AW confirmed earlier advice (see minutes of meeting No. 5) that the reason was to accommodate potential multiple owners of the site and enable any determination and conditions to be split in order for the responsibilities and liabilities to align with the project owners.</p> <p>AW agreed to include the URL to the referrals in the minutes of the meeting. http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/epbc/epbc_ap.pl?name=current_referral_detail&proposal_id=7002 http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/epbc/epbc_ap.pl?name=current_referral_detail&proposal_id=6989</p> <p>JM queried whether Superb Parrots had been considered as part of the environmental assessment. AW confirmed that Superb Parrots had been adequately considered in the biodiversity assessment in accordance with the Director Generals Requirements. MF agreed to clarify the requirements for the assessment of potential impact on the Superb Parrot.</p> <p>PR asked whether there was a map showing the landowners involved in the project. AW noted that the latest version of the Preferred Project & Submissions Report (which should be made public soon) included a landowner map.</p> <p>JM queried the connection of the wind farm to the 132kV transmission line located to the north of the project site. AW confirmed that the preferred connection was to the 330kV transmission line approximately 12km to the south of the site, but that approval was also being sought for an alternative connection to the 132kV transmission line.</p> <p>PR queried the establishment of the community fund. AW confirmed the commitment to contribute to a community fund commencing from the operation of the wind farm. AW suggested that details of community funds for existing wind farms may be publically available.</p> <p>MG queried whether visual screening would be provided for properties located greater than 5km from a turbine. AW noted the expected conditions of approval would be to offer visual screening for all residences located within 5km.</p> <p>SW whether screening for noise would be provided. AW noted that vegetation doesn't necessarily provide effective screening of noise, however the conditions of approval will require compliance with the relevant noise guidelines.</p> <p>JM asked whether rainfall was being monitored on the wind farm site. AW noted that rainfall hadn't been measured, other than when background noise measurements were being recorded.</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>MF</p>
7	<p>General Business</p> <p>The minimum number of committee members to be present to hold a CCC meeting was discussed. It was agreed that for all future meetings a minimum of 6 committee members would be required for a quorum.</p>	
8	<p>The recent news regarding the as-constructed locations of the Gullen Range Wind Farm turbines was discussed. AW noted that more recent wind farm project approvals included a micro-siting allowance of 100m.</p>	

Item	Agenda / Comment / Discussion	Action
9	SW provided a copy of a letter in relation to concerns about potential impacts from the wind farms on aerial agriculture operations. SW clarified that the letter was addressed to Epuron from Sam & Rowena Weir and from Mark Glover and was not from the Bookham Ag Bureau.	
10	NR queried whether Fred Ziems and Peter Morse on McMahons Reef Road were included on the consultation contact list. AW confirmed that they were.	
11	NR noted that an article about the Yass Valley Wind Farm had appeared in the Cootamundra Herald on Wednesday 5 th March 2014.	
12	JM noted that he had never received a newsletter in relation either the Conroys Gap or Yass Valley Wind Farms. AW noted that he did not believe this was correct, but would check Epuron records. JM provided his correct mailing address.	AW
13	JM noted that the feedback he had received from the display of a photomontage in the Bowning pub had been negative.	
14	Next meeting: It was proposed and agreed to hold meetings quarterly unless there was any significant progress or news on either of the projects. The proposed date for next meeting was Thursday 12 th June 2014	
	Meeting closed at 3:15 pm	

Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap *Wind Farms*

Project Update | August 2012

Acquisition by Epuron

Epuron announced the acquisition of the Yass Valley Wind Farm and Conroy's Gap Wind Farm projects from Origin Energy on 27 July 2012.

"Both sites have an excellent wind resource and are in close proximity to a number of possible grid connection points on the TransGrid network," Epuron Director Andrew Durran noted. "We look forward to working with the landowners and neighboring community to get both projects to the point where they can be constructed."

Community Consultation Committee

While the project consultation process for both wind farm projects has been underway for some time, Epuron is now seeking to establish the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) in preparation for a first meeting in the coming months.

The purpose and objectives of the CCC are:

- To enable Epuron to formally provide the local community with information about the two proposals;
- To enable the community to express and for Epuron to understand any concerns regarding the potential impacts of the proposals;
- To enable Epuron to consider whether and how to incorporate any suggestions and feedback into the final design of the proposals;
- To demonstrate how and where feedback has been incorporated and resulted in amendments to the final proposals; and,
- To formally advise of potential community benefits that can be integrated into the proposals.

Membership of the CCC is targeted to include the following:

- An independent chairperson;
- A representative of the involved wind farm landowners;
- A representative of the non involved neighbouring landowners;
- Representation from key local stakeholder groups or associations;
- A representative from each of the local councils (Yass Valley Council and Harden Shire Council); and
- Representatives from Epuron including the Project Manager.

If you are interested in joining the CCC, please complete the Nomination Form enclosed and return to us.

For further information on Epuron's Consultation Framework, please refer to our website at <http://www.epuron.com.au/downloads/>

The next steps

Epuron will now recommence consultation with respect to the projects and establish a Community Consultation Committee to assist in this process. Epuron will also develop an ongoing consultation plan for the projects in line with its Community Consultation Framework.

Epuron now aims to complete the additional work required to respond to the submissions received for the Yass Valley Wind Farm and complete the planning approval process to allow both the projects to be connected to the electricity grid.



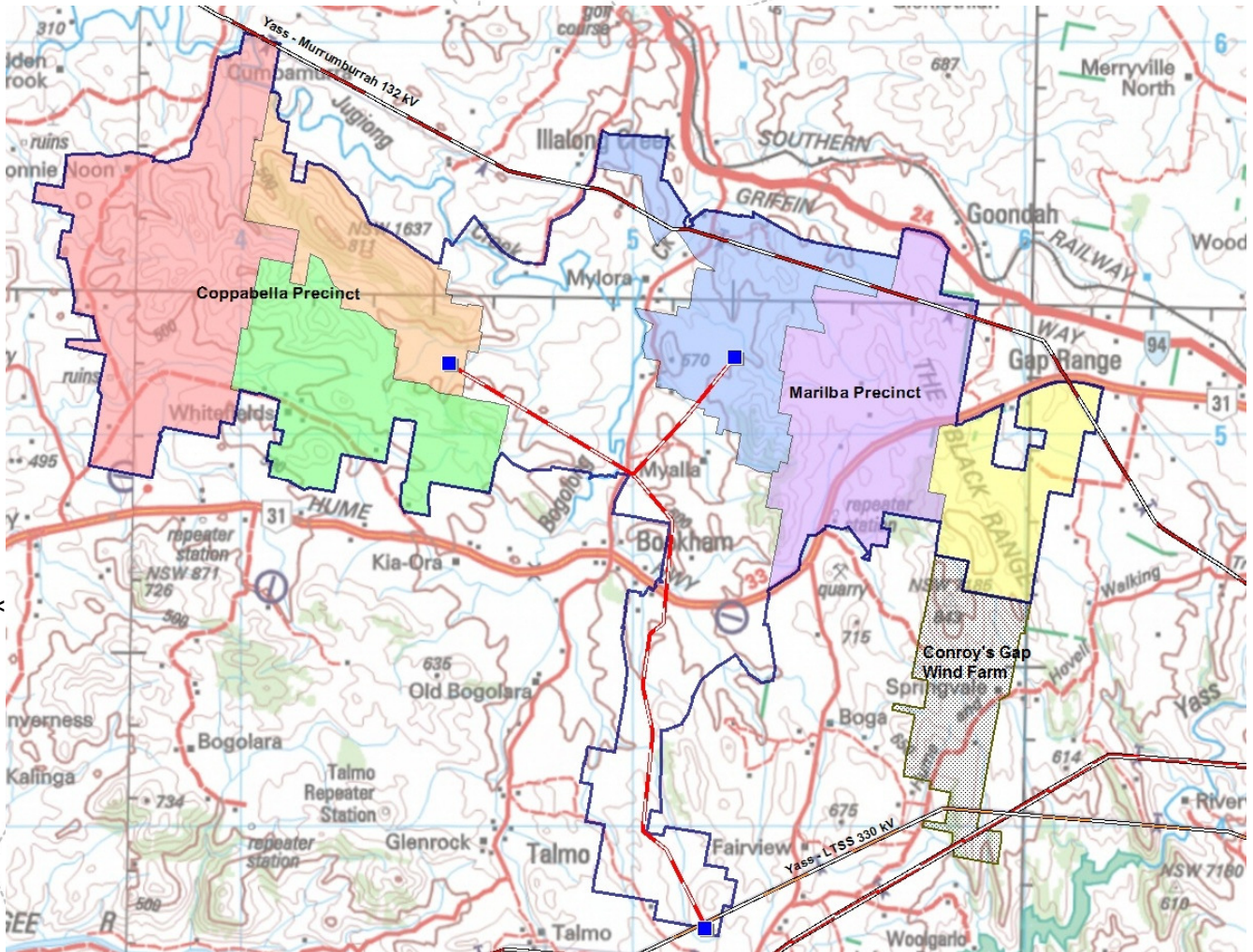
Growing Demand

The demand for projects like the Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farms is driven by the Australian Governments Renewable Energy Target (RET). While construction under this target stalled for a number of years, demand for new projects is again growing strongly which should support construction of these wind farms.

Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farms

EPURON

Project Update | August 2012



Yass Valley Wind Farm and Conroy's Ridge Wind Farm Site Locations



Representative view of the Yass Valley Wind Farm turbines from the Hume Highway

Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farm

Project Update | August 2012

EPURON

About Yass Valley Wind Farm

The Yass Valley Wind Farm is to be located approximately 25km west of Yass and consists of up to 152 turbine locations across two precincts, Coppabella and Marilba. Epuron has been working on the Yass Valley Wind Farm since 2008 and has been assessing the wind resource with a number of wind monitoring masts across the site. After an extensive community consultation program, Epuron submitted the development application and Environmental Assessment (EA) in November 2009.

The EA was placed on public exhibition in November and December 2009. Twenty two submissions were received, sixteen from private individuals and six from government agencies.

Further details of the wind farm and the project Environmental Assessment are available on Epuron's website at

www.epuron.com.au/project/yass-valley/

Conroy's Gap Wind Farm

The Conroy's Gap Wind Farm is to be located approximately 17km west of Yass, and achieved development consent in 2007. The project comprises 15 turbines and a maximum capacity of 30 megawatts, together with the related electrical connections and other infrastructure. It is located to the south of the Hume Highway and adjacent to the proposed Yass Valley Wind Farm. Epuron entered into a contract for the supply of wind turbines for the site in June 2012.

Further details of the wind farm and the project Environmental Assessment are available on Epuron's website at www.epuron.com.au/project/conroys-gap/

About Epuron

Established in 2003, Epuron is a leading Australian renewable energy company with a focus on development of utility-scale wind and solar energy projects.

Epuron is one of Australia's most successful wind farm developers. It has developed the highest yielding wind farm, largest wind farm, the largest number of wind farms, and the largest number of wind turbines in NSW. Epuron continues to develop more projects around NSW.

In solar energy, Epuron's focus is megawatt-scale power generation in both grid-connected and off-grid markets. Its TKLN Solar project is currently under construction in the Northern Territory, ready to supply three remote communities in Australia's outback.

Epuron is working with both mining and utility clients to provide reliable, off-grid power using solar and wind energy to supplement diesel or gas power supplies. Epuron's ability to provide both solar and wind energy, and to integrate these with either diesel or gas generators, sets it apart. Its custom-designed systems provide the maximum renewable energy contribution and fuel savings, and at the same time ensure reliable power generation.

Epuron is Australian-owned and operates out of its office in North Sydney, NSW.

For more information see www.epuron.com.au.

Please send us your feedback

Write to us:



Epuron
Level 11, 75 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060



Email or Internet:

a.wilson@epuron.com.au
www.epuron.com.au

Phone us:

02 8456 7400

Community Consultation Committee

Nomination Form

We are seeking nominations for members from the local community to join the Community Consultation Committee (CCC) for the Yass Valley Wind Farm and the Conroy's Gap Wind Farm.

It is planned that the CCC will meet quarterly (or as otherwise required) at a local venue to be advised.

The purpose and objectives of the CCC are;

- To enable Epuron to formally provide the local community with information about the proposals;
- To enable the community to express and for Epuron to understand any concerns regarding the potential impacts of the proposals;
- To enable Epuron to consider whether and how to incorporate any suggestions and feedback into the final design of the proposal;s
- To demonstrate how and where feedback has been incorporated and may result in amendments to the final projects; and,
- To formally advise of potential community benefits that can be integrated into the proposals.

Nominees Role

Yes, I would like to nominate myself to join the CCC for the Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farms in one of the following capacities.

Please tick the relevant box below.

- ☐ An independent chairperson
- ☐ A representative of the involved wind farm landowners
- ☐ A representative of the non involved neighbouring landowners
- ☐ Representation from key local stakeholder groups or associations (please provide details of group or association below)

Nominees Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please provide reasons for your nomination: _____



Thank-You for your nomination

Should you require any further information please call us on **02 8456 7400**.

Please return this Nomination Form to:



Address:

Yass Valley & Conroy's Gap
Wind Farms
Level 11, 75 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060



Email or Internet:

a.wilson@epuron.com.au
www.epuron.com.au



Yass Valley Wind Farm



Project Update | December 2012

Response to Submissions and Preferred Project Report

Epuron submitted its Preferred Project Report to the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure on 30 November 2012. The report has been placed on exhibition by the Department for the period from 14 December 2012 until 1 March 2013.

The report provides a response to the twenty two submissions received and addresses the issues raised in those submissions. Details of a number of changes made to the wind farm infrastructure layout as a result of those submissions are provided. These changes include reducing the site area slightly, as well as altering the transmission line connection location to reduce impacts.

The Preferred Project Report is available on the Epuron website at <http://www.epuron.com.au/project/yass-valley/downloads/>, as well as on the Department's website <http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au>. A hard copy is also available for inspection at the Yass Valley Council offices and the Harden Shire Council offices.

Following exhibition of the Preferred Project Report, the Department will complete their assessment and make a determination of the proposal.

Community Consultation Committee

A limited number of responses were received in response to Epuron's request for nomination to join the combined Community Consultation Committee for the Yass Valley and Conroys Gap wind farm projects. Epuron is planning to hold a Community Consultation Committee meeting in February 2013.

Grid Connection

Epuron has recently commenced the grid connection process with TransGrid. A feasibility assessment for the proposed 330kV connection is expected in April 2013.

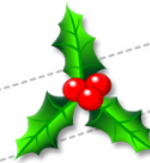


Field assessment of the alternative powerline route

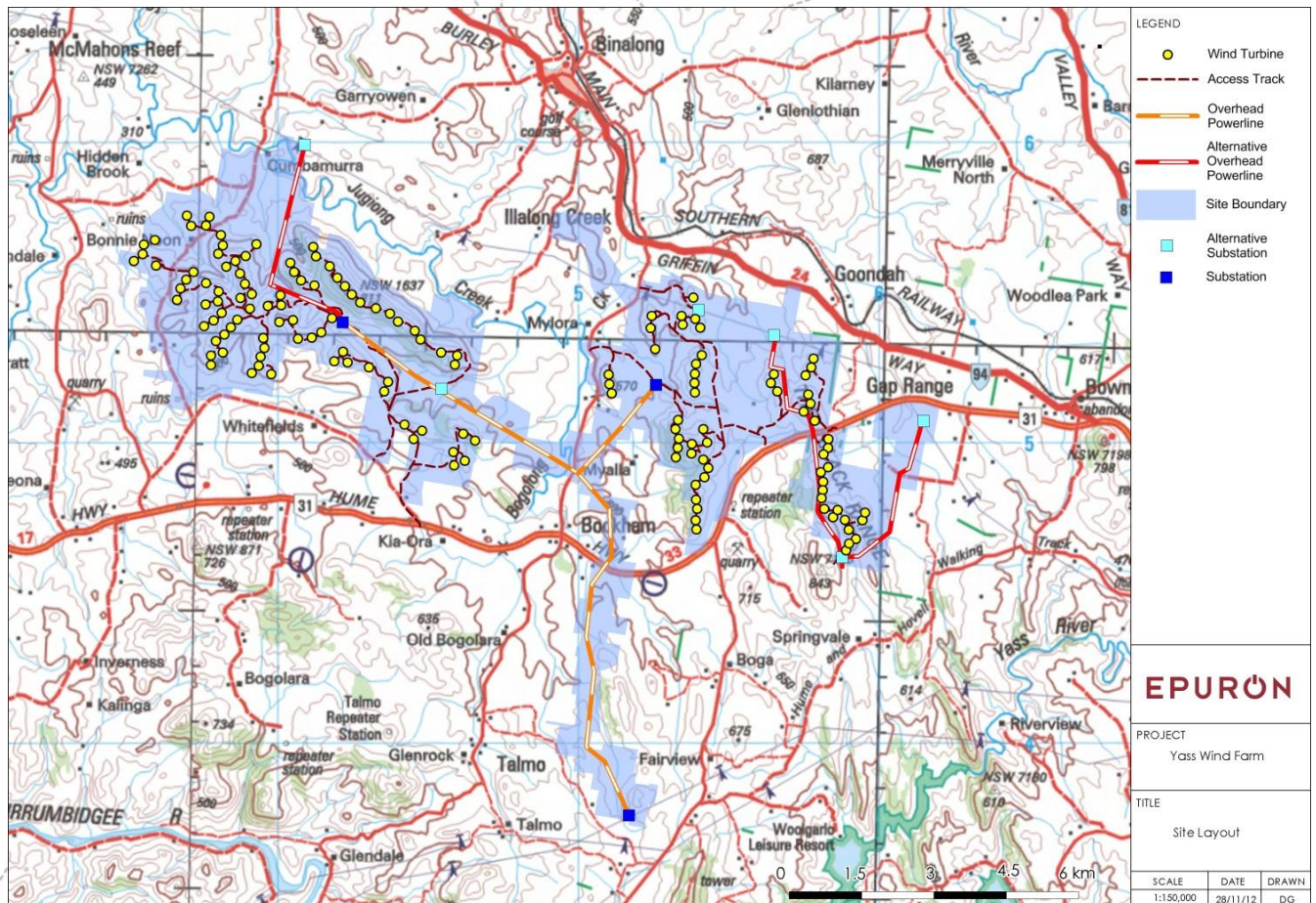
*Merry
Christmas*

Yass Valley Wind Farm

Project Update | December 2012



EPURON



Revised Wind Farm Site Layout



About Epuron

Established in 2003, Epuron is a leading Australian renewable energy company with a focus on development of utility-scale wind and solar energy projects.

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Epuron is Australian-owned and operates out of its office in North Sydney, NSW.

Please send us your feedback

Write to us:

Epuron Pty Ltd
Level 11, 75 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

Email or Internet:

a.wilson@epuron.com.au
www.epuron.com.au

Phone us:

02 8456 7400

Merry Christmas

Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farms

Project Update | May 2013

Status of the projects:

Yass Valley Wind Farm

The Yass Valley Wind Farm site is located 25km west of Yass and consists of up to 147 turbine locations across two precincts, Coppabella and Marilba. The Environmental Assessment (EA) went on public exhibition in November 2009. Shortly after this Origin Energy acquired the project from Epuron. Twenty two submissions were received in response to the exhibition of the EA, seven of which were from government agencies.

In mid 2012 Epuron acquired the project back from Origin Energy and set up a Community Consultation Committee. In November 2012 Epuron lodged the Preferred Project Report which responded to submissions and was exhibited from 14 December to 1 March 2013. Epuron is currently in the process of responding to the fifteen submissions received to the Preferred Project Report. Consultation is ongoing with the community.

Conroy's Gap Wind Farm

Conroy's Gap Wind Farm received planning approval in May 2007. The site is located to the south of the Hume Highway and adjacent to the proposed Yass Valley Wind Farm. The project was developed by Epuron and along with Cullerin Range Wind Farm was acquired by Origin Energy in November 2007. Epuron has since resumed ownership of the proposed project and entered into a contract for the supply of wind turbines for the site in mid 2012. The approved project enables 15 wind turbines to be built on any of 18 approved locations on the site to a maximum of 30MW. With increases in the efficiency of wind turbines Epuron is now seeking a modification to enable wind turbines to be located on all of the 18 approved locations. This will bring the total capacity of the wind farm from 30MW to 36.9MW.

Ongoing consultation

Epuron's consultation with stakeholders is continuing with both wind farm sites including through meetings, newsletters, media articles, the website and direct correspondence.

Wind farm access roads aid firefighters



During recent grass fires in South Australia, started by lightning, the benefit brought by the access roads built for a local wind farm was revealed.

"They were absolutely of great benefit in helping us fight the fires," said the Snowtown Country Fire Service (CFS) Captain. "If it weren't for the those roads the fires, which were going at a fair rate of knots, would have just kept going. "They acted as a natural fire break, giving us an edge to work to enable us to back burn if we needed to. These new access roads provided an unexpected bonus, but they'll help us control fires in the future."

The NSW Rural Fire Service Aviation Section deals with large numbers of obstacles in the landscape when fighting fires. They view wind turbines like any other obstacles in the terrain and work around them to fight fires.

Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farm

Project Update | May 2013

EPURON

Draft Wind Farm Guidelines

A few residents have questioned whether the approval of residents within 2kms of a wind turbine is required for the Yass Valley Wind Farm to proceed through planning. This is not a requirement. Under the 'Draft NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms' consultation with neighbours with a residence within 2km and an initial high level assessment of impacts is required to progress to the issuing of Director General's Requirements (DGRs). The DGRs for Yass Valley Wind Farm were issued in January 2009.

The Draft Guidelines note:

"A Gateway for an increased level of initial assessment of the proposed development applies if the applicant does not receive written consent from landowners with residences within 2km of proposed turbines. This approach has been designed to provide for increased consultation with relevant landowners by the applicants **before the proposal proceeds through the assessment process.**" Yass Valley Wind Farm went on public exhibition prior to the exhibition of the Draft Wind Farm Guidelines. However, while the wind farm predates the guidelines, as we proceed through the final stages of the project, Epuron is reviewing the layout of the wind turbines and considering information provided through consultation in light of the guidelines to ensure that impacts are minimised wherever possible. Further information on the Draft Guidelines can be found at

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/>

Community Consultation Committee

The Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap wind farms Community Consultation Committee (CCC) has met three times this year and will meet again in July at the Yass Council offices.

Minutes of the meetings are available at

www.epuron.com.au/project/yass-valley/downloads/

The committee members are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Independent Chair | Nic Carmody |
| • Harden Shire Council | Councillor Neil Reid |
| • Yass Valley Council | Councillor David Needham |
| • Non-involved landowner | John McGrath |
| • Non-involved landowner | Paul Regan |
| • Non-involved landowner | Rowena Weir |
| • Non-involved landowner | Mark Glover |
| • Bookham Ag Bureau | Sam Weir |
| • Involved landowner | Stan Waldren |
| • Epuron | Andrew Wilson |
| • Epuron | Donna Bolton |
| • Precinct Co-ordinator | Dieuwer Reynders |

The CCC welcomes suggestions and questions from the community which can be addressed to the Independent Chair directly or via a CCC member.

Wind Farms, Sound & Health



A report released by the Victorian Department of Health in April this year has found that the inaudible sound caused by wind farms, known as infrasound, does not affect human health.

The report assessed the evidence and found it does not support claims that inaudible sounds can have direct physiological effects.

The report says infrasound is generated by many sources, such as trains, breaking waves and air conditioners. The Department found the evidence showed wind farms produced no more infrasound than the background level in other environments.

A copy of the report can be found on the departments website at www.health.vic.gov.au/.

Please send us your feedback

Write to us:



Epuron
Level 11, 75 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

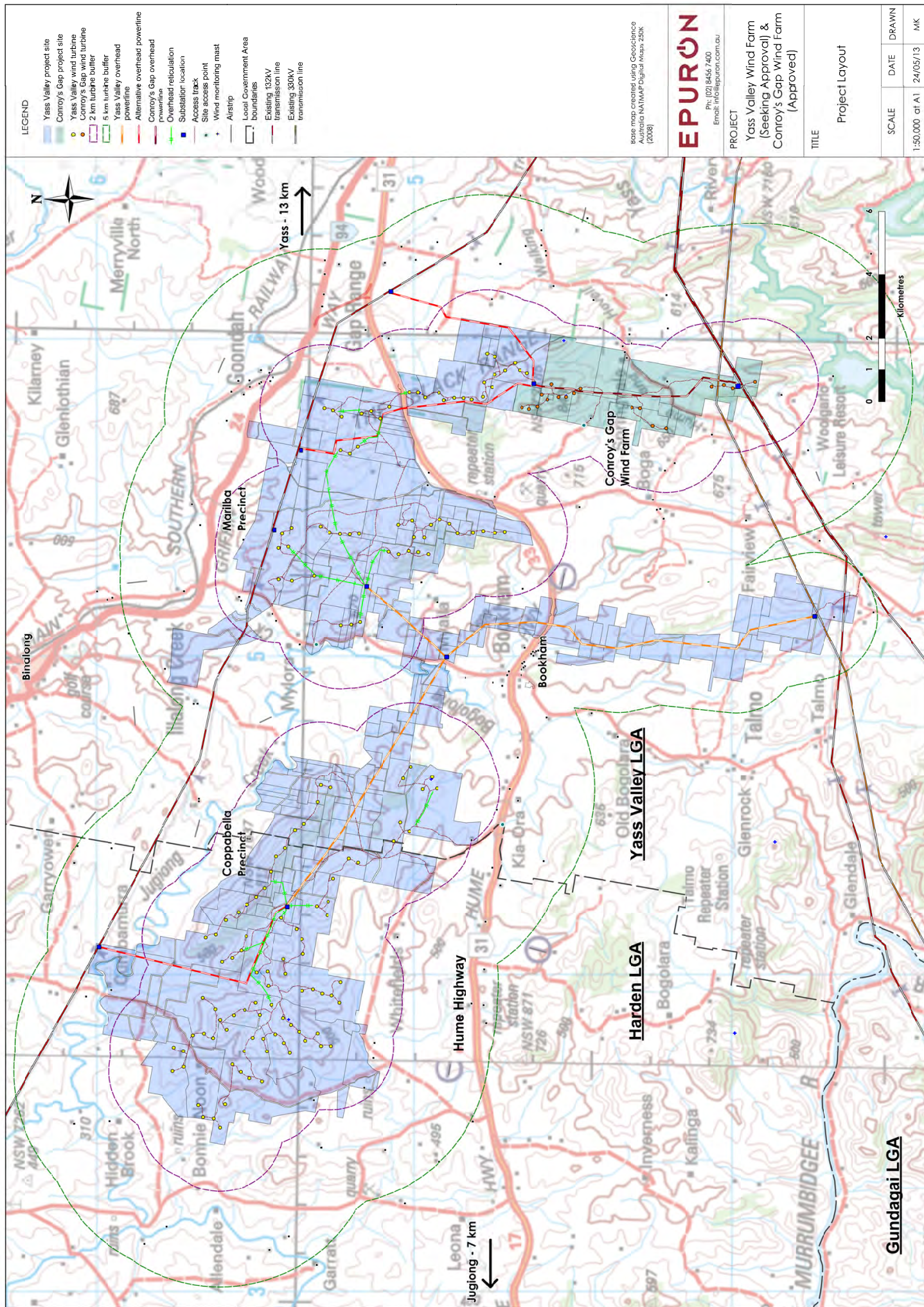


Email or Phone:

a.wilson@epuron.com.au
www.epuron.com.au



02 8456 7400



Base map created using Geoscience
Australia NATMAP Digital Maps 250K
(2008)

EPURON

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PROJECT

Yass Valley Wind Farm
(Seeking Approval) &
Conroy's Gap Wind Farm
(Approved)

TITLE

Project Layout

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN
:50,000 at A1	24/05/13	MK

Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap *Wind Farms*

Project Update | September 2013

Status of the wind farms

The Conroy's Gap Wind Farm is an approved wind farm located south of the Hume highway 17 km west of Yass. Orders have been placed for the wind turbines.

Yass Valley Wind Farm is a 144 wind turbine proposal around 30 km west of Yass and currently going through the planning approval process. The Environmental Assessment and the subsequent Preferred Project Report have been on public exhibition. An updated Preferred Project & Submissions Report is with the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure and a determination is expected soon.

Consultation

For some months we have been meeting with neighbours out to and beyond five kilometres from both the Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farm sites to listen to any concerns and to suggestions about the benefits neighbours would like to see.

Many people wanted to see a financial benefit associated with living near to a wind farm. Some neighbours requested free electricity. Epuron discussed the opportunity for a different kind of free energy by using a percentage of the community fund to enable neighbours to install rooftop solar PV, and solar water heating. This has been developed into a statement of commitment which allocates up to 50% of the community enhancement program funds to neighbours living within 5 km of a wind turbine who submit an application for solar power or water heating.

Ongoing consultation

Epuron's consultation with stakeholders is continuing with both wind farm sites including through meetings, newsletters, media articles, the website and direct correspondence.

Community Consultation Committee

The Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap wind farms Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meets every two months at the Yass Valley Council offices. The committee is chaired by former mayor Nic Carmody.

Minutes of the meetings are available at

www.epuron.com.au/project/yass-valley/downloads/

The CCC welcomes any suggestions and questions from the community which can be addressed to the Independent Chair directly or via a CCC member.

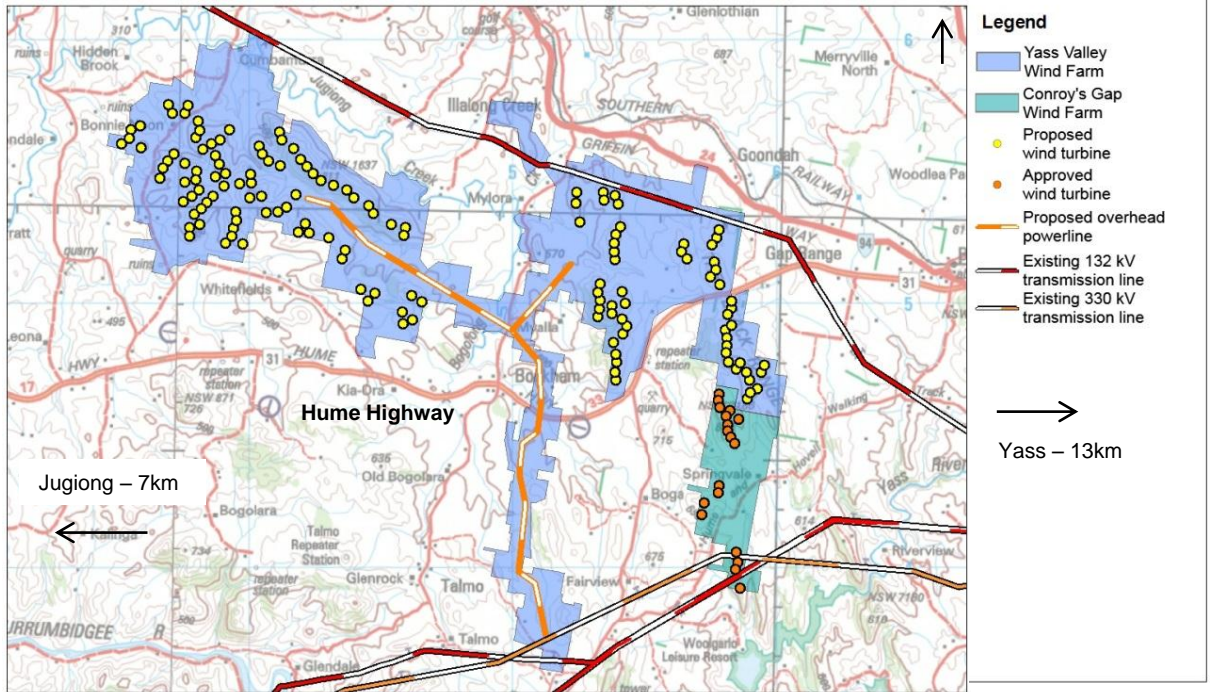
Below – Photomontage of Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farms from the Hume Highway 2.5 km east of Bookham, looking east (nearest wind turbine 5.1 km)



Yass Valley and Conroy's Gap Wind Farm

EPURON

Project Update | September 2013



Jobs and opportunities

A number of people have asked about the kinds of skills and experiences needed to work on either the construction or maintenance of the wind farms.

Below is a list of the skills and qualifications that local people have which might be useful for gaining employment on the wind farm.

If you would like your name to be added to the list of local people interested in working on the wind farm please send your name, address, phone number and email along with your skills and experiences and/or equipment for hire to info@epuron.com.au

- Electricians HV/ LV
- Engineers
- Heavy vehicle drivers
- Steel fixers
- Riggers
- Labourers
- Crane operators
- Excavator operators
- Mechanical fitters
- Welders
- Project managers
- Environmental officers
- Plumbers
- Supervisory roles
- Project managers
- Landscapers
- Gardeners
- Cleaners
- Maintenance staff
- Caterers
- Administration staff
- Safety officers

Please send us your feedback

Write to us:



Epuron
Level 11, 75 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060



Email or Phone:

a.wilson@epuron.com.au
www.epuron.com.au
02 8456 7400

Rural fire service



Epuron wrote to the Rural Fire Service to ask how they viewed the presence of wind farms when fighting fires on the ground or from the air. The August 1, 2013 response from the Assistant Commissioner noted:

On the ground...

"...fire moving across the area of a wind farm is generally managed in the same way as any other bush fire. Fire fighting strategies by ground-based resources would continue and be subject to prevailing weather and topographic conditions."

And from the air...

"...aircraft would avoid wind turbines in the same manner as they avoid other obstructions, such as power lines."

Yass Valley *Wind Farm*

Project Update | July 2014

Status of the wind farm

The Yass Valley Wind Farm is located around 30 km west of Yass and on land to the north and south of the Hume Highway. Both the Environmental Assessment (EA) and the subsequent Preferred Project Report (PPR) have already been on public exhibition – the EA in November 2009 and the PPR from December 2012 to March 2013.

Following submissions to this report, Epuron has provided a response to the submissions raised to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

The updated Preferred Project & Submissions Report is currently being reviewed by DPE prior to their detailed assessment. Over time the requirements for various studies can change as knowledge improves, and DPE has requested additional information on some aspects. For example, the potential habitat offered by hollows in dead branches and trees has become a more significant issue for the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) since the original biodiversity assessment was prepared. Epuron has been working with OEH to quantify this potential impact to habitat where wind turbines are located in close proximity to dense woodland.

It is anticipated that the wind farm assessment and determination will be completed in the coming weeks. Epuron will provide details of the final Preferred Project & Submissions Report once it is accepted by DPE.

Ongoing consultation

Epuron's consultation with stakeholders is continuing including through CCC meetings, newsletters, media articles, the website and direct correspondence. Please contact us if you would like to be put on our direct mailing list.

Jobs and opportunities

Epuron is working with the Southern Tableland group to put on a Renewables job forum in the region. For information about this group see their website at <http://southerntablelandsrenewables.org.au/>

Don't forget to let us know if you would like your name to be added to the list of local people interested in working on the wind farm. Please send your name, address, phone number and email along with your skills and experience and/or equipment for hire to info@epuron.com.au

Renewable Energy Target Review

In February 2014 the Abbott government appointed a review panel to examine the operation, costs and benefits of the Renewable Energy Target (RET).

The review panel, led by Dick Warburton, is to report to the government by mid 2014.

Many commentators see this review as the catalyst for the government reducing the size of the RET or eliminate it entirely. This would prevent wind farms being built in the current environment.

The Palmer United Party has recently announced its support for the RET and stated that it will vote against any change until after the next election in 2016.

This is welcome news and will hopefully provide sufficient market certainty to enable wind farm development to proceed, wind farms to be built and landowners and communities to receive the associated economic and environmental benefits.

See overleaf for a brief summary of the RET and recent research on its impacts.

The RET reduces power bills!

The Renewable Energy Target (RET) is not well understood. Some people, even politicians, think and claim it is a big subsidy for wind farms. Some ask 'when do the wind farm companies get the cash?' Others blame the RET for recent increases in electricity prices.

The RET is a policy mechanism which requires a percentage of our electricity to come from renewable energy. There is no government subsidy and no sack of cash provided to wind farm operators. Electricity retailers are required to purchase a certain percentage of the power they sell from renewable energy generators or pay a penalty.

The cost of this obligation is passed through by the retailer to customers. In NSW the average annual household electricity bill is \$2100. The RET makes up just \$40 or <2% of that. By comparison 'poles and wires' make up 50% of the average annual bill at over \$1,050, and savings from switching retailer are often greater than 10%.

In comparison, recent modelling by ACIL Allens Consulting for the RET Review shows the RET actually leads to a significant **reduction** in household power bills. In comparing various scenarios, ACIL Allens found that in the long-term the highest cost case was the no-RET case, and the lowest cost case was the case with the highest RET. A target of 30% renewables by 2030 saves households \$150 per year by 2030 over the no-RET case.

This is because of the increase in competition at the wholesale level is reducing the overall cost of power in the wholesale markets. So households actually save money overall because of the RET.

The Howard government, in introducing the Renewable Energy Target understood that as long as we need to address rising carbon emissions we will need to tackle the problem at the source by moving our power generation towards renewable energy. This was supported by the subsequent Rudd and Gillard governments which increased the size of the RET.

EPBC Act

In addition to the State Government's development application process, wind farms are also generally assessed under the Federal Government's Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC).

The EPBC referrals for the project were made in two parts in September 2013: Yass Valley (north of the Hume Highway) Reference 2013/7002 and Conroys Gap Stage 2 (south of the Hume Highway) Reference 2013/6989. Details of the referrals can be found on the Department of Environment website <http://www.environment.gov.au/topics/about-us/legislation/environment-protection-and-biodiversity-conservation-act-1999/public>

Both of the referred projects are controlled actions under the EPBC Act and further documentation has been prepared to progress both through the EPBC Act process.

The EPBC Additional Information reports are on public exhibition from the 2nd to the 29th of July and copies can be viewed at Yass Valley Council and Harden Shire Council offices and on the Epuron website.

Any comments on the Matters of National Environmental Significance in these reports should be mailed to Epuron at the address below or emailed to info@epuron.com.au by the 29th July 2014.

Please send us your feedback



Write to us:

Epuron
Level 11, 75 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060



Email or Phone:

a.wilson@epuron.com.au
www.epuron.com.au
02 8456 7400



Recent field inspection with NSW OEH