



APPENDIX C STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



C.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Hills of Gold Energy Project Community Consultation Report



About Inclusive Engagement

Inclusive Engagement are a husband and wife team who live 15km north of Nundle and have a 30 year history of community consultation for large multinational energy companies with interests in renewable energy, mineral exploration and oil and gas. IE specialise in bringing local stakeholders closure to project developers and ensuring information about potential projects is correctly communicated to all those who may be impacted or have an interest in the development.

Project ID	Hills of Gold Energy Project (HGEP)
Document Name	Community Consultation Strategy and Results
Submission Date	11 May 2018
Lead Author	John and Christine Willcox
Client	Wind Energy Partners
Scope of Report	Summary of Community Consultation Strategy and Results

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1. Background

Inclusive Engagement (IE) were engaged by Wind Energy Partners (WEP) to support initial community consultation and gain a greater understanding of local interests in a proposed wind farm in the area in accordance with the Wind Farm Guidelines 2016 issued by the Department of Planning and Environment and using best practise for community consultation for wind farms.

2. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

IE initially advised WEP on a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. The aim of the strategy was to identify and engage stakeholders of the project in 3 categories depending on their proximity and potential interest in the project.

- **Category 1** Those landholders directly or with the potential to host wind turbines, substations, site access and transmission line infrastructure.
- **Category 2** Adjacent landholders to the supplied development corridor generally within the 3km as per the NSW wind farm guidelines. It is important for those who are closest to the proposed project to be given information regarding potential impacts, the project benefits and timelines for development, construction and operation.
- **Category 3** Broader surrounding community, community groups, Tamworth Council, business groups, community groups, planning authorities, relevant government departments and local media.

The purpose of categorising stakeholders is to ensure they are consulted in an appropriate forum to encourage open discussion and share information most efficiently.

Each stakeholder group has been approached based on different forums to ensure information is used to guide the project design and areas of interest that require further investigation.

Category 1 and Category 2 stakeholders were met one on one at their homes. Meetings were held by IE and in some cases WEP was requested for follow up meetings where further detail was required. This allowed WEP to understand the proximity and specific setting of the stakeholder and also allow concerns to be voiced in a flexible and two way manner. The intent was to build relationships that could last during development and construction such that stakeholders could feel comfortable communicating directly with WEP as the project progresses. This also better allowed WEP and IE to understand the context to local concerns. As the project progresses these key stakeholders will continue to be informed, consulted and collaborated with to ensure any impacts of detailed assessments are discussed directly. In certain circumstances mitigation strategies may be required to the project design or specific plans of management to mitigate or minimise to acceptable levels the impact to nearby residents.

Attitude to co-operating with the proposed development, areas of “No Go” on the affected land, input into suitable access corridors, specific terms of access that address individual landholder concerns including biosecurity and any areas of ecological significance with regard to vegetation mapping were included in discussions. A community survey was also provided as part of these meetings for submission to WEP. Where a response was not provided from the survey, all issues, comments and concerns were captured in the form of contemporaneous notes. These notes were then added to the Stakeholder Register.

Category 3 stakeholders were also met prior to the lodgement of the PEA. Larger special interest group meetings took place to understand how these interests might be impacted and specific community values and opinions can be understood. It should be noted that the community requested a number of additional meetings for which WEP organised to provide more information.

3. Broader Community Engagement Strategy

In order to engage with the community in the Tamworth region an above the line strategy was taken to provide high level information about the project.

In order to promote attendance at the public meetings and interaction with broader community interests the following was undertaken:

- Media release and interviews with local papers, a local TV station and a local radio station
- Flyers were dropped in letter boxes and a notices put up in public places
- Community leaders were engaged and provided advice on the nature and timing of the community forums.
- High profiles clubs such as Rotary, Lions and Country Womens Association were engaged to support the hosting of public meetings

The result of this strategy ensured strong participation in public meetings and better knowledge of the project in the region. Please see attached appendix for examples of media attention.

4. Summary of Results

Key meetings were held with the following groups:

- Over 50 one on one meetings were held with families in close proximity to the proposed wind farm including along the proposed transmission line route.
- A community forum was held at the Nundle Memorial Hall at which an estimated 250 people were present
- A community forum was held at the Hanging Rock Memorial Hall in which an estimated 80 people were present
- Three meetings were held with the Nundle Business and Tourism Group
- The Nundle Business and Tourism Group hosted a meeting prior to the community meeting and provided WEP with information the community specifically wanted addressed in the community forums. This information is summarised below.

- Council was engaged twice, initially to introduce the project, and a follow up meeting was held to brief Councillors, planning and the communication team on the project.
- Regular meetings and communication with Tamworth Council Nundle and Hanging Rock representative.
- Over 200 phone calls were received by IE and WEP from interested community members during the time of the public meetings and subsequent to these.

At all meetings with all interested parties, a full stakeholder register has been maintained including full property descriptions, names of owners and occupiers, details of topics discussed and any concerns. All communications records have been stored.

Surveys and category 3 stakeholder meetings were also helpful to determining potentially interested candidates for a broad representation of community members for a community consultative committee to represent wider community concerns ,and communication plans to address these

A summary of feedback through the following mediums has been compiled to present a summary of community interest in the project:

- One on one meetings
- Surveys returned from one on one meetings
- Input from special interest groups
- Public meeting questions asked
- Direct communication including calls and emails received

A summary of the feedback is categorised into areas of interest:

Economic Opportunity

- There is interest in the opportunities the wind farm would create for local businesses however concern within the existing tourism businesses as to the impact of the project on regular and existing visitors. This was a mixed opinion with some expecting an increase in tourism and others not. Overall the majority of respondents agreed there would be increased economic opportunities.
- There was interest from the community in ensuring jobs were provided to local community members
- There is interest from the community in how those without businesses or supporting the project would benefit through a community fund.
- There is concern that the mountain range is an important tourism attraction adding to the appeal of Nundle additional to the heritage of the town.
- There was concern the town could not support accommodating the staff required to construct the project
- It was suggested WEP work with the community to promote eco-tourism through open days of the wind farm, walking and mountain bike routes, potential tourism operators to access parts of the wind site and look outs to be established at key vantage points in the development corridors.

Sustainability and Environment

- Interest was expressed in how towns such as Nundle and Hanging Rock could become 100% renewable and could this allow businesses and individuals to benefit from lower cost and renewable energy.
- There was significant interest in renewable energy and how sustainable the generating type is when considering embodied energy in the manufacturing vs the efficiency.
- Overall strong support for renewable energy however there were also concerns as to why the specific project site had been chosen. A strong focus on presentations and discussions was on the project justifications. A specific question was raised during a public meeting suggesting the community would be more supportive of the Project if it were moved further East into the heavily forested area and further from the transmission line.
- There is no private access to the Ben Halls Gap National Park and local residents and business operators suggested that improved access would provide better utility of the national park.
- However it was also stated impacts of native and virgin bushland, native animals, birds, peace and quiet of the area should be assessed as to the construction and operational impacts.
- Sheba Dams are an important tourism destination and historically significant area.
- The community wanted to know whether there were any endangered species in the National Park or on the project site.
- Concern for affects on micro-climates on the site
- Interest in how much vegetation removal would be required to host the project
- The project site is the start of watersheds feeding several downstream rivers. Concern was raised on the impact the project would have on these watercourses.
- Concern for potential erosion on the site and the impact habitat and watercourses on the site
- How much water is required and where would the water be sourced for construction
- How many full time jobs would be created in the project?
- Where would construction staff be housed and would this impact existing tourism businesses such as the Woollen Mill
-

Visual Amenity

- The community seeks a greater understanding of the visual impact of the project based on the likely turbine models, size and layout of the project.
- Specific areas of significance to the community from which the visual amenity was requested to be assessed included:
 - o Visual assessment was requested to be assessed from further distances than 3km from the proposed site
 - o The Hanging Rock lookout and descending the road from Hanging Rock

- From within the town of Nundle (specifically from Jenkins St, Oakenville St, and the cemetery)
- From Hanging Rock
- From residences along Morrisons Gap Road
- From the New England Highway and Lindsays Gap Road near the New England Highway
- From the Golf Course and Bowling Club in Nundle
- Historic homesteads including Woombramurra, Koobah, the DAG Sheepstation and Cottage on the Hill.
- The road over Crawney looking North towards the ridge
- Properties along Morrisons Gap Rd
- The homestead on Head of the Peel Rd
- Homesteads on the other side of the Crawney Pass near Timor.
- It was requested that visual photomontages be used to express the visual impact from area of significance
- There were misconceptions to the location of the wind farm above Nundle and the visual impact if in that location.
- Comments were received that the forestry plantation along the ridge further to the North of the development corridors had already altered the visual amenity of the ridge in parts.
- A number of people living with views of the area of the site expressed it be a priority to minimise visual impact
- The colour of the turbines should be such that they minimise the visual impact. It was also stated that those hills are often shrouded in clouds, particularly in the morning.
- Detail was requested by those living closer to the project on how shadow flicker will be assessed on residents.

Health Impacts

- There were concerns for whether there could be health impacts for those living nearby caused by powerlines, wind turbines or construction related activities.

Transport and Access

- Concern was raised over the impact of dust on nearby residents on the unsealed Head of the Peel Rd and Morrisons Gap Rd if either are used for access to the site as currently proposed. It was suggested to prioritize upgrade of Morrisons Gap Road to a tarred road due to increased traffic from trucks etc, and a speed limit imposed.
- Concern was raised by residents in Nundle and Hanging Rock as to construction traffic volumes and timings. Members of Hanging Rock community suggested WEP look at overtaking bays on the Barry Rd on route to Hanging Rock. Nundle community members mentioned specific concern to the location of the primary school and school bus routes.
- Further detail was requested on where roads would need to be upgraded and the size of equipment being transported.

- There is an expectation that construction jobs during two years initially would increase income in hotels/general store/service station/takeaway.
- Creation of 34 jobs during project lifetime potentially increasing pre/primary school sustainability and participation in community groups, injected income from the project into community projects.

General Interest:

- Residents along Morrisons Gap road and Shearers road complained about the poor telecommunications in the area and requested installation of a mobile phone tower to service the area
- More information was requested on layout, turbine types and sizes and transmission line route and structures required.
- Regular community updates were requested and representation by certain community members in a community consultative committee.
- Was there a greater risk of fires during construction and operation
- Neighbouring landowners to the project current use aerial methods for fertilising their land. Concern was raised as to whether this practise can continue and if not the impact on the value of their land
- Certain residents with a greater viewshed of the proposed development corridor raised concerns of reduced property values
- Suggestions to reduce the size of the project to just provide power to Nundle and surrounds rather than the whole state.
- Further information on whether turbines will require aviation lighting.
- It was suggested we include Solar in the project is it was not as significant visual impact.
- Concern the technology would be outdated in 5-10 years
- Concern wind power is more expensive than traditional power
- Interest from some of the community in how they can benefit from being allowed to invest in the project.
- There was concern raised of the potential proximity of turbines to lifestyle blocks on Morrisons gap road in the north of the site, particularly with regard to dust during construction and operational transport routes, visual impact, noise and shadow flicker. It was requested that turbines are located further down the ridge given the extent of ridgeline available.
- How can the community benefits offered through the community enhancement fund be ensured to be paid by the company

5. Community Communication Plan

It has been advised to maintain several mediums of communication to continue to provide information to the community. The following was recommended by IE to WEP to maintain information flow regarding the project to the community.



During meeting contact details were collected in order to provide the community with regular updates in their preferred medium. It is understood that WEP will be using these channels to continue to communicate updates on the project.

Further to formal communication channels as discussed above, Inclusive Engagement continue to maintain ongoing contact with the community as key contacts. It is estimated that we have received over 200 phone calls from communities members in the lead up and following the public meetings.

6. Ongoing Community Engagement Strategy by Project Development Period

The following ongoing engagement strategies have been advised to Wind Energy Partners based on key milestones of the project:

Category of Stakeholder and Sub-Group	Objective	Medium
1. Pre-Submission of Preliminary Environmental Assessment		
Category 1 - landholders directly or with the potential to host wind turbines, substations, site access and transmission line infrastructure	As discussed in the body of this document above	
Category 2 - Adjacent landholders to the supplied development corridor generally within the 3km as per the NSW wind farm guidelines		
Category 3 – Local Community around Hanging Rock and Nundle		
Category 3 – Tamworth Council, Nundle Business and Tourism Marketing Group, Lions, CWA, Rotary, relevant government departments		
Category 3 – Media and broader community around Tamworth Local Government Area.		
2. Following receipt of State Environmental Assessment Requirements		
Category 1 - landholders directly or with the potential to host wind turbines, substations, site access and transmission line infrastructure	Ensure timely updates are received that might directly affect property Ensure there is consultation during the scoping and execution of impact assessment work where this is relevant to potentially affected properties Provide an opportunity to guide the project design such that concerns are understood and assessed by WEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One on one meetings - Newsletters, - Website updates - CCC Membership
Category 2 - Adjacent landholders to the supplied development corridor generally within the 3km as per the NSW wind farm guidelines		
Category 3 – Local Community around Hanging Rock and Nundle	Ensure factual information is available at all times for the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newsletters, - Website updates - CCC Membership

	Provide this in forums that suit a range of stakeholders where internet is not always the most convenient way to receive.	
Category 3 – Tamworth Council, Nundle Business and Tourism Marketing Group, Lions, CWA, Rotary, relevant government departments	Maintain regular contact based on major project milestones being achieved and communicating progress towards milestones. Ensuring that project information is shared early Collaboration to ensure existing interests are understood and the impact and opportunities and impacts for these groups are discussed regularly Provide an opportunity to guide the project design such that concerns are understood by WEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One on one meetings - Website
Category 3 – Media and broader community around Tamworth Local Government Area.	Provide regular updates of the project progress and relevant opportunities that may be available for the broader community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website and press releases
3. Prior to submission of Environmental Impact Assessment as further assessment on layout and suitable turbine is assessed		
Category 1 - Landholders directly or with the potential to host wind turbines, substations, site access and transmission line infrastructure	Ensure timely updates are received that might directly affect property Provide an opportunity to guide the project design such that concerns are understood and assessed by WEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One on one meetings - Newsletters, - Website updates - CCC Membership
Category 2 - Adjacent landholders to the supplied development corridor generally within the 3km as per the NSW wind farm guidelines		

Category 3 – Local Community around Hanging Rock and Nundle	Ensure factual information is available at all times for the community Provide this in forums that suit a range of stakeholders where internet is not always the most convenient way to receive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newsletters, - Website updates - CCC Membership
Category 3 – Tamworth Council, Nundle Business and Tourism Marketing Group, Lions, CWA, Rotary, relevant government departments	Collaboration to ensure detailed impact assessments are clearly communicated to specific groups Provide opportunities for two-way communication and discussion on areas of the impact assessment that cause concern or require further explanation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One on one meetings - Website
Category 3 – Media and broader community around Tamworth Local Government Area.	Provide regular updates of the project progress and relevant opportunities that may be available for the broader community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website and press releases
Following Submission of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) and during public exhibition of EIS		
Category 1 - landholders directly or with the potential to host wind turbines, substations, site access and transmission line infrastructure	Provide an opportunity for questions to be asked directly about the details in the EIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One on one meetings
Category 2 - Adjacent landholders to the supplied development corridor generally within the 3km as per the NSW wind farm guidelines		
Category 3 – Local Community around Hanging Rock and Nundle	Ensure the broader community is aware the detailed assessment is available and how they can learn more about this and ask questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Forums - Website - Media
Category 3 – Tamworth Council, Nundle Business and Tourism Marketing Group, Lions, CWA, Rotary, relevant government departments	Provide a link to the Major Projects website and an opportunity to discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One on one meetings - Newsletters

	any queries before lodging any responses.	
Category 3 – Media and broader community around Tamworth Local Government Area.	Provide information to the broader community that detailed assessments are available for review on the Major Projects website	- Website and press releases
Following determination by the Department of Planning and Environment		
To be determined through project evaluation period and responses from key stakeholders through the assessment of state environmental assessment requirements.		

7. Sample Community Survey

The following surveys was shared with members of the community living within 3km of the project and in some cases outside of this region.

Hills of Gold Energy

Local Community Consultation Survey

Survey

Purpose:

The region of Nundle is rich in natural resources presenting a high potential for renewable energies. These include solar PV and wind turbines.

The purpose of this survey is to understand the attitudes towards renewable energy in the Nundle community.

Introduction:

The number of renewable energy projects in Australia is increasing on account of state and federal policies encouraging the uptake of renewable technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and now because it is cheaper than alternate coal and gas projects. Renewable energy facilities are designed and located to take advantage of the available resources. The facilities also need to be reasonably close to existing electrical grid infrastructure in order to economically deliver to consumers the electricity they generate.

There are many different types of renewable facilities that can produce green electricity. Solar farms, wind farms, hydroelectric power plants or biomass power plants are the most common.

The development of renewable energy projects can take 5-10 years given the importance of studying the available resources and the suitability of different technologies over their long lives. These types of projects are designed for 35 years with the potential for longer in some circumstances.

It is important to understand values within the community and ensure that these are taken into consideration in the concept design, construction and operational phase of projects.



This questionnaire has been made to group information on the Nundle community opinions on renewables.

Survey

About the survey:

The survey comprises multiple choice and open-ended questions and should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Who should complete it:

The survey is designed for a wide range of persons from the community to assess views and opportunities that might be created by a renewable energy park in the region. Key participants should include residents, local landowners, local businesses with or without the skills to contribute, elected and community leaders, local interest groups who perhaps have an interest in tourism, the environment or sustainability.

What's next

Results of the survey will be taken into consideration for preliminary concept design of a renewable energy project and allow Someva to directly feed information to the project developer and investors. It will create a preliminary understanding of the community concerns and help provide us and the government form a view as to how to proceed with a minimum impact.

Questions about the Nundle Wind Farm

Note: Some of the survey's questions can expect more than one answer

Question 1:

What is your relationship with the Nundle community?

- You own a business in Nundle, Hanging Rock or Crawney
- You are an employee of a business in Nundle, Hanging Rock or Crawney
- You are a locally elected
- You are a local landowner

- You are a resident of Nundle
- You are a resident of Hanging Rock
- You are resident of Crawney
- You are planning to acquire a property in Nundle, Hanging Rock or Crawney
- Other: _____

Question 2:

Have you ever seen a renewable energy facility?

- Yes
- No

Question 3:

What kind of facility was it?

- A Solar Farm (Thermal or Photovoltaic)
- A Hydroelectric Dam
- A Wind Farm
- A Biomass Power Plant
- Other, it was _____
- I have never seen a renewable energy facility

Question 4:

What did you like about that/these energy facility(ies)

- _____

- I have never seen any

Question 5:

What did you dislike about that/these energy facility(ies)

- _____

- I have never seen any

Question 6:

The Australian Government is committed in environmental objectives including the Renewable Energy Target which is designed to require 23% of all electricity from renewables and the Paris agreement which is global commitment to carbon dioxide reduction.

Do you think Australia should have entered into these agreements?

- Yes
- No because _____

Question 7:

In addition, with these engagements, traditional Australian electricity power plants like coal facilities are aging and scheduled for retirement. This decommissioning of thermal generation capacity will create a need for new energy. Do you think renewable installation combined with battery storage or pumped hydro storage facilities can replace traditional types of coal and gas generation?

- Yes
- I am not sure
- Not at all, this type of production can't be reliable

Question 8:

Do you think renewable energy facility is economically an opportunity for Nundle and that new opportunities will be created?

- An Opportunity
- A threat to existing business
- I'm indifferent

Question 9:

Please expand on your comments in question 8 if you would like to add more information

- I believe that _____

- I'm indifferent

Question 10:

If you were a member of the authority giving approval for a renewable energy power plant installation, what would be the most important request(s) you would ask to the developer to undertake?

- I would ask the developer to prioritise _____

- I don't really know

Question 11:

As a member of the Nundle Community or around, would you be in favour of a renewable energy power plant installation in the area?

Yes

No

Question 12:

What kind of benefits would you expect the Nundle region from a renewable energy installation?

I would expect _____

Question 13:

Are you aware of any endangered or threatened species of flora and fauna in the vicinity? If Yes please specific species and any information to help us assess.

Question 14:

Do you visit any particular landscape features regularly or are there any features of the landscape you value highly?

Question 15:

Are you aware of any aboriginal or European cultural heritage sites? If 'yes' please provide us information to identify areas of significance.

Question 16:

If a community consultation committee would be formed to discuss about any project, would you be interested in being a community representative to represent the local community interests?

Yes

No

If yes, please enter your contact details bellow to let us contact you to move forward.

Name:

First Name:

Address

Phone Number:

email address

Question 17:

Do you think this survey was useful and its questions were relevant for a first community approach to understand public opinion on renewables?

Yes

No, I believe you should have _____

Thank you for your time in considering our questionnaire, we are looking forward to learning more about how we can collaborate with you. We will focus on trying to find the best way to create benefits for the Nundle community in any future renewable energy project.

If you are interested in staying informed about any potential renewable energy project updates and opportunities please either complete your details on this form or alternatively email jamie.c@someva.com.au with your contact details.

Name:

First Name:

Address

Phone Number:

email address:

Property Description DP/Lot Number (if known)

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jamie Chivers
Development Manager
0423 336 345
Someva Pty Limited

The Northern Daily Leader, 4th April 2018

Hanging Rock urges Nundle to consider wind farm jobs by Jamieson Murphy



WHILE businesses in Nundle are concerned about the impact the proposed \$600-million wind farm will have on tourism, the Hanging Rock community is weighing up the potential jobs.

The development would create 270 jobs during its 18 to 24 month construction phase, with a further 34 ongoing jobs to operate and maintain the wind farm.

Fifth-generation Hanging Rock resident Luke Brand is an engineer by trade and only gets to spend weekends in the town, because he commutes to Sydney for work.

"It's difficult to find good, steady, ongoing work in this area and its surrounds," he said.

"It's not every day that a \$600 million development lands on your back door.

"It'll bring a lot of construction work, along with a lot of long-term well-paying jobs – 32 jobs spread across Nundle and Hanging Rock would be an extraordinary opportunity for our two towns."

Mr Brand urged Nundle businesses to consider more than just the potential tourism impacts.

"I would welcome the long-term economic benefits of substantial employment – tourism ebbs and flows, but the stable employment will be around for decades," he said.

Bruce Moore lives on a property 20km out of Hanging Rock, and installed his own 50m-tall wind turbine nine years ago.

He sought to ease some of the common concerns being raised.

"In nine years, we've not found one dead bird or bat," Mr Moore said.

"It's 80 metres from my bedroom window, and it has no noise impact."

Mr Moore said while a "small nucleus" of Nundle residents had already voted against the project, the community had a responsibility to closely consider it from both sides.

"I would encourage people to look at the positives, rather than just the negatives," he said.

"The traffic flow through Hanging Rock will change the daily routine of the community, but if the road gets upgraded as a result, there's the positive.

"Nundle businesses are worried about tourism, but if they get on the front foot and explore all the avenues, it could have a positive tourism impact."

Gerry Chan has lived in Hanging Rock with his wife for 17 years.

"It's God's country – but we don't want everyone to know that," he said, laughing.

"For myself personally, I see the wind farm's positives outweighing the negatives."

"With renewable energy, we're doing our little bit to leave this planet a bit cleaner than it is at the moment."

Weblink: <http://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/5314760/hanging-rock-urges-nundle-to-consider-wind-farm-jobs-over-tourism-impact/>

Last Accessed: 11th April 2018

The Northern Daily Leader, 6th March 2018

Nundle says \$600m wind farm won't divide community, by Jamieson Murphy



FULL HOUSE: Nundle resident Shawn Stone speak to the audience. To the left, some of the turbines at White Rock Wind Farm near Glen Innes, which are similar to the Nundle proposal. Photos: Megan Trousdale /Peter Hardin

A \$600-million wind farm on the picturesque hills above Nundle is bound to stir up emotions, but the town has vowed not to let the issue divide it.

More than one-third of the town's population turned out to a public meeting about the proposed development, which would see up to 98 wind turbines, each standing at 220-metres-tall, stretch along 20 kilometres of ridgeline from Hanging Rock to Crawney, south east of Nundle.

Nundle Business Tourism and Marketing Group chair Nick Bradford said for many residents it was their first time hearing about the Wind Energy Partners proposal.

"For a town of less than 300 people to get 110 people turn up to a meeting, it obviously means it's sparked people's attention," Mr Bradford said.

He stressed that despite the emotive nature of the proposal, the "brilliant meeting" was "very respectful of people's differing opinions".

"This is a community who cares," Mr Bradford said.

"You cant buy that, you can't engineer that. It's just something that is inherently in the people who live here."

Advocates on both sides of the debate spoke to the crowd, touching on the common theme of the economic benefits to the region and the proposal's visual impact on the town.

"The Nundle township does not finish where the houses finish, our brand and our identity are our hills of gold that extend to the ridge," Mr Bradford said.

"Some people may think that 98 wind turbines up there may not look attractive. Some may think differently."

Mr Bradford described himself as a "fence sitter", and hoped the community maintained an open mind to the project.

"We'll find out a lot more information during two community meetings with the developer at the end of the month," he said.

The meetings will be held on March 22 and 23.

The Leader understands Wind Energy Partners takes the first step in getting the project off the ground at the end of the month, applying to the state government for its Standard Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs). Environmental studies are also expected to take place this year.

Wind Energy Partners spokesman Jamie Chivers said the company looked forward to continuing its discussions with the community.

"The Hanging Rock and Nundle area has a rich history and could have an exciting future," Mr Chivers said.

"We are proposing to develop a wind farm following a feasibility study that proves the hills of gold are windy too."

Weblink: <http://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/5267690/nundles-hills-of-gold-scouted-for-600m-wind-farm/>

Last Accessed: 11th March 2018

The Northern Daily Leader, 8th March 2018

Nundle mulls wind farm benefits, jobs and visual impact, by Jamieson Murphy



PICTURESQUE: The main concern about the proposal is about the visual impact it will have on Nundle's hills of gold. Photo: Megan Trousdale

THE proposed \$600-million wind farm near Nundle would bring more than 300 jobs to the region, the project's developer says.

[The 98-wind turbine proposal from Wind Energy Partners](#) would need a workforce of 272 during its 18 to 24 month construction phase.

Once completed, there would be up to 34 ongoing jobs to operate and maintain the wind farm over its 25-year lifetime.

There is also the potential for the project to include a solar farm, located on Lindsays Gap Rd, near Old Wallabadah Rd, towards the New England Hwy.

Wind Energy Partners have suggested it would create a community investment fund, to give back to the region around the wind farm.

"Discussions have been held with special interests groups to understand how the project could enhance the existing local heritage and tourism industry," a Wind Energy Partners' spokesperson said.

"Furthermore, Wind Energy Partners will engage with community leaders in Nundle and Hanging Rock to discuss how a dedicated community fund could support local initiatives such as education, tourism, health of other community special interests."

The Nundle community is still weighing up the pros and cons of the development. The major point of contention is the visual impacts of the project.

The wind turbines would stand at 220-metres-tall, stretching along 20 kilometres of ridgeline from Hanging Rock to Crawney, south east of Nundle.

More than one-third of the town's 300 people turned up to a community meeting about the development on Monday. Two more community meetings will be held in the town on March 22 and 23.

QUICK FACTS

- \$600 million project
- 272 jobs during construction
- 34 ongoing jobs
- 18-24 months to build
- 25-year lifetime
- Could include solar farm
- Possible community investment fund

Weblink: <http://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/5272578/nundle-wind-farm-would-bring-more-than-300-jobs-to-region/>

Last Accessed: 11th March 2018

About Inclusive Engagement

John Willcox – Principal Consultant

John was raised on a small crops farm in Bowen NQ (and supports the NQ Cowboys!). He has spent his professional career as an agronomist, change management consultant and a CEO for two large agribusinesses.

John and his wife Christine began their careers in the Emerald Irrigation Area solving problems with a new Irrigation Scheme on a daily basis associated– understanding Irrigation Scheduling and Pest Management , salinity and farming systems.

In addition to expertise in agronomy, irrigation and extension and adoption practices, John developed his commercial and business skills running a consulting business, then as Regional Manager of CottCo Ag Sales, and more recently as CEO of two large agribusinesses. Both of these CEO positions involved substantial restructuring and repositioning of the companies.

John is an expert in stakeholder engagement and change management. This is evidenced by the success of the several initiatives he has been involved with - the Water Use Efficiency Initiative, the “Target 10 Tonne’ change management program for Indonesia’s largest sugar producer, and the success of the Landholder Relations Team he managed for a major gas company. His philosophy is to achieve inclusion, empowerment and ownership of all stakeholders. This involves creating a clear understanding of agendas through honest, open discussion and the dovetailing of outcomes to achieve common ground.



Christine Willcox – Consultant

Christine has had a long and successful career as an agricultural and change management consultant. She is a qualified Irrigation Agronomist and was the first female cotton consultant in Queensland. She spearheaded the adoption and implementation of integrated pest management strategies and pioneered irrigation scheduling based on crop water use models, neutron probes and, more recently, capacitance probes.

She has extensive experience in project design, management, implementation and review. Christine was a key member of the initial Rural Water Use Efficiency Initiative - a highly successful change management program on water reform for the Australian Sugar Industry. She was part of the McKinsey & Co Sugar Team that restructured Indonesia's largest sugar producer, taking it to World Best Practice in two years. As part of this initiative Christine was solely responsible for designing, managing, negotiating and implementing a pest management program across 65,000 ha – a world first.

In addition to driving change management and capacity-building programs, Christine has great organisational and administrative skills. She recently completed a contract as Business Coordinator for a major CSG company, setting up systems and procedures to handle the rapid growth of the CSG industry.

On top of her professional career, Chris is the founder and manager of one of Australia's significant Arabian Performance Horse Studs – Aqaba Arabians. She enjoys passing on her skills and knowledge to the new custodians of her lifelong passion for horses – her three grandchildren!





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