

September 2020 Neighbour information sessions - Summary

Overview:

Wambo Wind Farm held information sessions for neighbours within 5km of the proposed Wambo Wind Farm on Friday 11 and Saturday 12 September 2020. The seven information sessions were attended by 21 residents. COVID management precautions were in place to manage the health and safety of presenters and participants. The following is a summary of the key themes and questions from the sessions.

TOPIC	THEME	PROJECT RESPONSE
Use of light aircraft	Concern about CASA requirements for flying light aircraft near turbines and the impact this may have on landing on nearby properties and historical aerial crop spraying.	The project will consult with CASA and Air Services Australia (ASA) to ensure the project meets their respective requirements for light aircraft.
Noise/Coopers Gap	Concern about the impact of noise on the local area, given it is more populated than Coopers Gap. Several shared concerns about the noise impacts from the Coopers Gap turbines.	The indicative turbine layout has been designed to ensure that it complies with State Code 23: Wind Farms from a noise impact perspective. The project will undertake further noise monitoring on dwellings within 3kms of an indicative turbine location to reaffirm this.
Council/Roads	Request to insure that any increase in rates to the Council will be spent within the local community.	The project will raise this issue with the Council, as the Council will require the project to maintain the local road network to the required standard both during construction and subsequent operation of the wind farm. This will be at the sole cost of the project. In addition, the project will be establishing a Community Benefit fund that will make financial contributions to the local communities of Jandowae, Bell and Ironpot. Further details of the Community Benefit Fund will be announced in due course, including a call for local resident to participate in the advisory board for the Fund.
Farming/land	Concern that the proposed wind farm may affect the value/productivity of surrounding properties. An additional concern about the impact of the wind on the use of land for agriculture/cropping. Concern about the impact of turbines on ground spraying.	The project will investigate the potential impact of the wind farm on agricultural/cropping operations further – as this is not a consideration under State Code 23; Wind Farms. In addition, the project will seek to enter into agreements with those residents with a dwelling within 3kms of an indicative turbine location to pay them compensation for the impacts of the wind farm, from a noise and visual amenity perspective.

Mobile phone coverage	Participants expressed concerns about the current lack of mobile phone coverage in the Diamondy area.	The project will raise this issue with Telstra as part of the assessment process for the wind farm.
Turbines and infrastructure	<p>What turbines will you be using?</p> <p>Does the wind start turbines or do they need power?</p> <p>Why do you need to decommission? <i>(after 30 years)?</i></p> <p>How deep are all the cabling and transmission lines buried?</p> <p>The wind farm will be able to power about 180,000 homes. Can you please quantify that?</p>	<p>The project is yet to determine which turbine manufacturer it will chose.</p> <p>Power is used to start the turbines and to keep them moving slowly on still days to protect the moving components of the turbines.</p> <p>Thirty years is the design life of the turbines and decommissioning is part of the approvals process.</p> <p>The cables are approximately 80mm underground.</p> <p>That is enough power for approximately 2.5 cities the size of Toowoomba.</p> <p>The Project would be pleased to undertake noise modelling at various properties.</p>
Location	<p>What was the reason for picking this area?</p> <p>Would you look at buying people out if they wanted to leave the area?</p>	<p>This area was originally part of the scope for Coopers Gap and has excellent wind resources and access to a strong, stable part of the national electricity grid.</p> <p>It is not the preference of the project to acquire land within the project area or in the general locality of the wind farm.</p>
Consultation	<p>Has there been any consultation with the Jandowae business group? <i>(with regards to securing local contractors)</i></p> <p>What are your timeframes on approval and further consultation?</p>	<p>The project is working closely with the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise (TSBE) and the Western Downs Regional Council to secure local contractors. The project has made a strong commitment to the State and local government to use local contractors.</p> <p>We expect to receive the State government approval under State Code 23: Wind Farms in October 2020. Based upon the current project development timeline, stage 1 of the project could commence construction in late 2021.</p>

		<p>We will hold a broader information evening with the local communities of Jandowae, Bell and Ironpot.</p>
Planning application process	<p>There are 50 homes within a 5km radius of the project. What say do the neighbouring landowners get?</p>	<p>The State government has determined that should a wind farm comply with the onerous noise and visual impact requirements of State Code 23: that the project will be determined as code assessable, which doesn't allow for community involvement in the assessment process. Under State Code 23: Wind Farms the project will be assessed by various Commonwealth, State and local government departments and regulators to ensure it complies with all applicable laws and standards. Notwithstanding this, the project has engaged with the participating landowners and will continue to engage with the neighbours to manage any impacts of the wind farm.</p>
	<p>What does it mean for landowners when you have a layout showing the potential 110 turbine locations?</p>	<p>The intent is not to construct all 110 turbines, but to show the participating landowners, neighbours and the regulators (Commonwealth, State and local government) where turbines could go, and to ensure that each potential turbine location complies with State Code 23: Wind Farms. At this stage, the project is being developed in 2 stages of approximately ~200-250MW each (or about 32-38 turbines). Which turbines will be constructed in each stage is still yet to be determined.</p>
	<p>How has the ecological assessment of the project assessed the concerns about the impact on koalas and other native species?</p>	<p>The layout of the project was been carefully designed to minimise any impact of potential fauna habitat and in particular, koala habitat. Of the approximately ~13,000ha within the project area, less than 20ha will be cleared.</p>
Community benefit	<p><i>General conversation</i></p>	<p>There will be compensation for people who live within 3kms of a turbine. Host landowners have not been confirmed. We will establish a Community Benefit Fund Commitment to come back in future for one on one sessions to discuss compensation for people who live within 3kms of a turbine.</p>