

February 2021 Neighbour information sessions - Summary

Overview:

Wambo Wind Farm held a community forum on Tuesday 16 February 2020. In excess of 40 community members attended the information session. 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 forum. The meeting was attended by representatives of Cubico, REP, ERM, KJA and the Western Downs Regional Council (Council).

TOPIC	THEME	PROJECT RESPONSE
Project Update	Project configuration	110 turbine locations have been approved in the development approval received from the Queensland State Government. The project is now expected to be developed over two stages, each stage being approximately 40 turbines of approximately 6MW of generation capacity per turbine.
	Connection	<p>Connection of the project to the Powerlink network is progressing with multiple options being explored.</p> <p>The next round of approvals is being pursued with the Commonwealth, State and local governments.</p>
	Approvals	Noise and ecological surveys continue across the ~13,000ha project area to inform project design and operational constraints. Each pad is expected to be approximately 1ha with the total disturbance across the project area being approximately 250ha including roads and balance of plant.
	Surveys	Initial discussions have occurred with the Traditional Owners on cultural heritage matters.
	Traditional owners	Construction remains on-track to commence in Q4 2021. It is expected that construction will take less than two years for Stage 1. Stage 2 construction is expected to commence during 2022. Once operating, the

	How are we going to think outside the square to bring young working families to Jandowae?	Opportunities to bring new families to the area will be sought and considered by the project as they arise.
Tourism	What are we doing to encourage renewable energy tourism?	The Council acknowledges that tourism is the '5 th pillar' of the local economy. It is a small but developing opportunity that is actively being explored by the Council. This Council is currently developing a new Western Downs corporate plan and tourism will be considered.
Aviation	Some landholders have invested heavily in aerial spraying. How can we be confident that we can continue to spray with turbines creating wind?	The project is investigating the impact of generating turbines on spraying operations within the immediate vicinity of the project. An initial literature review suggests that there is no impact. As part of this investigation the project will also look at the impact on light aircraft operations. The literature review and other investigations with consultants to the project are continuing.
Communication	There have been a number of communications and events which have caused angst with parts of the community. What is the project going to do to rectify this?	The project will try and ensure consistent communication to all parties and to hold inclusive events. The project is committed to engaging in a transparent manner and seeking feedback on its approach on a regular basis. The project is expected to operate for 30 years and as such is endeavouring to establish good working relationships with all its neighbours and the greater Jandowae community, for the long term benefit of the community.
	The stock photo for the wind farm on the website are not representative of the Wambo area.	The project will seek more representative photos of the Wambo area for the website to replace the current photos.
		The project has established a Pre-construction Community Benefit Fund to provide grants for projects with local community benefits Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Fund have been established and a local advisory panel appointed to help assist the selection of the projects for funding. The fund has been seeded with an initial \$50,000 for projects identified and approved pre-construction. This initial funding is expected to be distributed in two tranches, the first in March 2021 and the second in

<p>Community Building</p>	<p>How is the community funding going to work?</p> <p>Is the community benefit fund only for groups / organisations?</p> <p>The project is creating a division between involved landholders and neighbours. How do you propose to address that?</p>	<p>September 2021. Once the project is in construction, the project will make a larger annual contribution to the fund for its 30 year operating life.</p> <p>The TOR and other information on the Fund are available at the Wambo Wind Farm website (www.wambowindfarm.com.au). Council is also assisting with the distribution of the Fund information through their network. The project is seeking feedback from the community on projects that will have a lasting impact.</p> <p>In addition to the community benefit fund, the project will provide compensation in the community through neighbour and landholder payments.</p> <p>The grants are restricted to activities that provide a community benefit rather than a benefit for an individual. There is no restriction on individuals applying as long as it is for something that provides a community benefit.</p> <p>The project has created a neighbour profit sharing program to provide compensation to neighbours landowners with pre-existing dwellings that are within 3km of a turbine within the project area, but not receiving rent from the project. These payments will share the benefits of the project with those who may be impacted by the project. The project will also continue to consult with all parts of the community.</p>
<p>Proponents</p>	<p>Who owns the project?</p>	<p>Cubico acquired the project from Renewable Energy Partners in 2020 and intends to be the project’s long-term owner operator.</p> <p>Cubico Sustainable Investments is a renewable energy generation asset developer, owner and operator with assets around the world. The company is headquartered in London, and Australian projects are managed by a locally-based team of Australian staff. Cubico is wholly owned by two Canadian pension funds. (www.cubicoinvest.com)</p>

Powerlines	What happened to the proposed decommissioning of the Tarong to Chinchilla power line?	The existing Tarong to Chinchilla 132kV line that traverses the project is charged but generally carries no electricity. Any future decommissioning (or upgrade) of that line is a matter for Powerlink, but would not impact the power supply to the region.
Coopers Gap	Coopers Gap wind farm is having issues with performance of turbines and excessive noise and they are still operating. The project did not employ a lot of locals and created issues for neighbouring landholders and the community. How can the community be confident that that Wambo Wind Farm will not have the same issues?	<p>The State government is responsible for enforcing compliance with the conditions of approval for any wind farm. The Wambo Wind Farm project is working with multiple turbine providers on newer generation turbines and the project expects limited noise issues from turbines that are selected.</p> <p>Wind farms can generate some local direct jobs but many come from secondary economic benefits to the community in areas such as accommodation and provision of services. The project has a goal of creating long term, permanent direct jobs in the community and is investigating local manufacturing opportunities with equipment suppliers to increase the direct and indirect economic benefits to the community.</p>
Noise / visual impact	The 1.5km setback does not seem to be sufficient. How does the noise monitoring work and is it independent?	<p>The State government, as part of their review of the development application, conducts an independent review of the noise and ecology activities undertaken by the developer. The 1.5km setback is only one of many criteria and constraints on the project's development (including noise levels), that influence the final location of the turbines. The project has chosen two turbine manufacturers and is currently running noise modelling to ensure they meet these requirements.</p> <p>As part of the approvals process, the project is completing noise monitoring with turbine specific information. The project is seeking and will receive commitments from the turbine manufacturers to these noise criteria. Noise monitoring involves collecting background noise information and then operational noise monitoring. Approval limits are set at 35dB at night or 37dB during the day or 5dB above the background noise level at a non-involved dwelling.</p>

		<p>Noise monitoring for the project is being conducted by ERM, a global environmental consultant. ERM is employed by the project but maintains independence in order to retain their insurance, reputation, to continue to perform work for the State government, to seek approvals from the government, and have a social license to operate in the community.</p>
<p>Project Approvals</p>	<p>How could the project be approved so quickly without consultation with those impacted?</p>	<p>The Queensland Government approves wind farms via State Code 23. A wind farm in Queensland is code assessable if it complies with the criteria in State Code 23 and the subsequent conditions of the approval. Code assessable approvals do not require public consultation. State Code 23 includes significant setbacks to dwellings and noise level restrictions which are greater than other approval frameworks in other Australian states.</p> <p>While there has been some delay in holding community meetings due to Covid 19, the project is undertaking to improve communications over time as allowed, including holding meetings and through its newsletter.</p> <p>The project has, and is attempting to have, authentic and transparent engagement with the local community.</p>
<p>Turbine location</p>	<p>Some turbines will be located closer to non-involved dwellings than involved dwellings. How do you propose to compensate neighbours for impacts?</p>	<p>The wind and constraints modelling for the project determines the preferred tower locations. Which towers then get built in which order is then determined by construction cost and performance.</p> <p>At this stage there are approximately 40 turbines proposed in Stage 1. There is a different wind regime in the east versus the west of the project area, which may require the use of different turbines.</p> <p>Final turbines and locations will be determined by civil works, connection, and the balance of plant. Turbines will most likely be clustered to optimise these costs.</p>

	<p>Within the next 2 months, a Stage 1 map should be available. Stage 2 is expected to be developed 12 months after Stage 1.</p> <p>The neighbour payments and community benefit fund are to share the benefits of the project with non-involved landholders.</p>
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