

Minutes of Meeting

Granite Hills Wind Farm Community Consultative Committee

Monday 22 May 2018

Date circulated 14 June 2018

**Attendance – CCC Committee and Project Team**

Peter Gordon Independent Chair

Vickie Pollard Community Representative

Maria Linkenbagh Community Representative

David Williams Community Representative

Aidan Dalgliesh Community Representative

Keith Tull Bega Valley Shire Council

Adam Wood Cooma Monaro Regional Council

Jean Ballandras Project Representative GHWF

Shane Quinnell Project Representative GHWF

**In attendance**

Kit Bryce

Michael Daniels

Sophie Olsen, Project Manager SMEC

**Apologies**

Tracey Lineham Community Representative

John Cook Community Representative

Will Jardine Community Representative

**Introduction and welcome by the Chair**

The Chair welcomed the committee members and especially acknowledged the SMEC consultant Sophie Olsen who is attending the meeting at the request of the committee following the well-received presentation by Dr Rob Jessop at the previous meeting. Jean Ballandras CEO of Akuo Energy his colleague Shane Quinnell explained how company representation at future meetings would be reflected.

The Chair again thanked Vickie for her outstanding catering.

### **Declaration of pecuniary or other interests**

No changes were recorded to previous declarations.

### **Minutes**

The minutes will include a schedule of agreed actions. The schedule is attached and will be updated after each meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed out of session.

**Business arising from previous minutes** — response to issues raised or provision of additional information requested:

The company representatives noted that the Environmental Impact Statement is currently being prepared and scheduled to be lodged with the authorities later in the year. The company also noted that a critical works plan was included as part of the presentation and a stakeholder engagement plan was in progress. It was confirmed this was a high priority and would be provided to the community as soon as it was complete.

### **Correspondence**

Nil

### **Issues identified by the community or local government representatives**

Held over until after the SMEC facilitated issues session.

All issues important to the community representatives were covered in the SMEC presentation and discussion.

### **Company reports:**

Shane again confirmed that landholder agreements were the company priority, and that effective community engagement was a high priority. In reference to community engagement Jean and Shane presented and noted that Shane was to increase the local engagement process and that the Willy Willy officials were no longer part of the local engagement strategy.

It was confirmed that 5 landholder agreements are concluded, 2 are owners of the project site, 3 associated, and 6 remaining outstanding. All outstanding are associated landowners. All owners of the land on which the project is being developed have signed.

Shane went into great detail as to the process which impacted decisions as to turbine location. This level of detail was appreciated by the committee. Much discussion was held as to the actual finalising of the precise location of the turbines. Shane confirmed that information from the ongoing EIS studies was being reviewed and the current layout being

reviewed to check the impacts on current locations. It was confirmed that a referral to the Commonwealth had been made the previous week and the project was awaiting information from the Commonwealth on their requirements, if any.

At this stage Akuo noted that two of the key items they are working on are telecommunications and water.

A comprehensive layout will be provided in the EIS.

Sophie Olsen from SMEC facilitated a community issues discussion. These notes are provided by Sophie:

*Granite Hills Wind Farm - Community Consultation Session - 22 May 2018  
Local Impacts Brainstorming Session*

*Questions posed to the CCC committee and attendees:*

- *What are the perceived local impacts arising from the construction and operation of the Granite Hills wind farm?*
- *What do you specifically think is important about the area near the proposed development and what specific impacts are you concerned about in that vicinity?*

*CCC Responses:*

- *Visual impacts and associated effects:*
  - *Visual impact from Bemboka*
  - *Shadow flicker on Snowy Mountains Highway*
  - *Visual Proximity to Brown Mountain and impact of tree clearing*
  - *Cooma > Merimbula new regular flight route > would this require safety lights on turbines? General reservations about safety lights and the night time impact on residents.*
- *Telecommunication signal strength and mitigation methods for locals. Ensuring telecommunications reception is maintained for emergency calls/safety impact of reduced signal strength*
- *Bushfire risk noted as a particular concern for local residents. Specific bushfire concerns:*
  - *Brown mountain noted as an area which, from the local's opinions, possesses increased risk due to vegetation;*
  - *Boggy tracks restricting bushfire access;*
  - *Concerns about not only the fuel content on the project properties but surrounding properties;*
- *RFS prioritising critical infrastructure before dwellings > flow on effect for nearby properties > cumulative impact Traffic impacts noted as concern for some residents, specifics include:*
  - *Safety of livestock when moving between properties due to increase of traffic during construction*
  - *Visibility of turbines from passing cars on Snowy Mountain Highway. Suggestion for possible plantings along road reserve in foreground of highway to reduce immediate view;*

- *Question on widening certain sections or building stop off areas;*
- *Concern about traffic management in the area entering Steeple Flat;*
- *Dilapidation of local roads and upgrading to accommodate turbine delivery*
- *Impact on road safety due to distraction of turbines along Snowy Mountains Highway, access to driveways*
  
- *Pests and weeds with a few sub issues:*
  - *Pest animals dispersing from GHWF onto nearby properties as a result of increased activity during construction*
  - *Weed management – previous Lovegrass issues and other noxious weeds*
  - *Sand for concrete bringing in coastal weeds*
- *Tourism impacts (positive/negative), how to harness positive flow on effects for education, tourism and local economy*
- *Wombat burrows – location and management during construction*
- *Clearance area including access roads and offsite works (PEIA indicates 7% of the site to be cleared)*
- *Aboriginal heritage – locals indicated lots of heritage in the area, queried the interaction with local heritage committees.*
- *Water Issues/concerns:*
  - *Impacts on water table*
  - *Consideration of Brown Mountain > Creeks and regional hydrology impacts*
- *Location of turbines and roads in ecologically valuable areas*

The meeting then opened for questions.

Visual modelling: it was agreed that a representative of the consultant expert in visual impact modelling be invited to a subsequent meeting.

SMEC confirmed that any heritage reference covered both Aboriginal and European heritage.

Bushfire Risk: SMEC indicated that the bushfire consultant had attended the site and a report was being prepared. Issues raised by the community would be considered in the Bushfire Report.

Telecoms: in reiterating a previous commitment to reinstate any telecoms affected by the wind farm, GHWF confirmed that DNV has a contract to undertake the telecoms assessment, this is also part of the EIS.

Traffic management: to be described in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan

Location of the Substation: GHWF noted that this matter is unresolved at this time. This matter will be considered as part of the design process.

The community representatives were very appreciative of the presentation.

**Next meeting:**

The next meeting is

Tuesday 4 September at 4pm in Nimmitabel.

An email update on the project is to be provided by 31 July, 2018.

A future meeting will consider how the next site visit can be arranged, including looking at some specific turbine locations.

**Action Schedule**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timing and completion date</b>
Jim Williams to be sent new plans showing exact turbine locations and distances	GHWF/Antony	Large A1 size plans posted by Express Post, 5 <sup>th</sup> March
Stakeholder Engagement plan to be presented to CCC. Members are particularly interested in the process of stakeholder identification	GHWF	Urgent and outstanding
Material to be sent to Vickie and the two council reps for a public display of the wind farm plans.	GHWF/Antony	Several large A1 size layout plans left for Vickie - NAG. Several A1 plans sent by Express post to Snowy Monaro and Bega Valley Councils 19 March.
A work plan with critical dates and sequences of work to be presented	GHWF	Presented 22 May
Visual consultants –to be invited to present on visual impact study details and results  Consideration to get heritage consultants invited to a subsequent meeting	GHWF	Clouston consultants to attend a future meeting if available and appropriate
Department of Planning and Environment to be invited to a CCC meeting	Chair	2018
Windfarm website update – correct information	GHWF	

