

## Willatook Wind Farm Proposal Community Engagement Committee

Meeting date Thursday 20 May 2021  
Meeting time and location 3pm, Council office, Port Fairy

### 1. Welcome

### 2. Present

Cr Jim Doukas  
Paul Lewis  
Graham Keane  
Ken Johnston (via phone)  
Michael Sale, Development Manager, Wind Prospect  
Tanya Waterson, Wind Prospect

Vicki Askew-Thornton, Moyne Shire

### 3. Apologies

Cr James Purcell

### 4. Declarations of Interest

Nil.

### 5. Confirmation of Minutes of previous meeting

Moved by Michael Sale, seconded by Paul Lewis that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2021 be confirmed. **CARRIED**

### 6. Business arising from previous Minutes

- 6.1 Question on notice for Council from Paul Lewis: *Does Moyne Shire Council's submission on the draft broлга assessment and mitigation standards clearly state what it considers to be a minimum acceptable distance between turbine and broлга nesting sites? If the submission doesn't state what it considers to be a minimum distance, can Moyne Shire now update the Willatook WF CEC what it considers this minimum distance between broлга nesting sites and Willatook WF turbines should be?*

Response:

Council's submission to the draft broлга guidelines is available for the public to view on Council's website. The submission did not put forward a position on what the broлга setback distance should be. Extract: *The design approach using No-Go Flocking Areas and Breeding Habitat Buffers will provide a transparent decision making process during the permit application process. Community concern about the*

*present approach to Brolga monitoring, mitigation and compensation may be overcome by these Standards.*

<https://www.moyne.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/our-services/advocacy/brolga-standards-submission-18-dec-2020.pdf>

6.2 WP took on notice the following questions received from Ken Johnston:

*a) Plan of updated turbine layout.*

Response: Once technical studies have been reviewed by TRG, the project layout will be provided to the CEC.

*b) Updated noise prediction plot.*

Response: Once the noise study has been reviewed by TRG and the assessment updated (if required), the predicted noise contours will be provided.

*c) Map of updated site constraints and the revised Brolga habitat buffers. Some further questions:*

Response: Once the Brolga assessment has been reviewed by TRG and the assessment updated by the ecological specialists (if required), a map of the buffers can be provided.

*Q1: Does your term Brolga habitat buffer equate to my expectation that this is the minimum allowable distance between turbines and Brolga nests?*

Response: The method used to develop turbine free buffers is currently being reviewed by the TRG. Once we have received feedback and the specialists have updated their assessment, we will discuss in detail the buffering method.

*Q2: What has caused Wind Prospect to "increase substantially" the Brolga habitat buffers proposed for Willatook?*

Response: Detailed ecological and hydrological investigations.

*Q3: Will the "substantially increased" (your words) Brolga habitat buffer for Willatook be 5km given that Wind Prospect have previously been made aware that Brolga have not nested within 5km of wind turbines?*

Response: See Q1.

*Q4: Will (WP) be providing the usual Willatook proposal update before tomorrow's meeting?*

Response: No. Questions will be answered in the meeting and in the minutes.

*Q5: Who will be the primary contact for future communication on the Willatook proposal?*

Response: Michael and Tanya.

6.3 Council will ask DELWP how long an entry to the Victorian Brolga Atlas (VBA) usually takes to appear on the VBA map.

Response:

The VBA administration has advised that when a person submits/uploads a record for review, the VBA's overnight processes add it to the report tables. This means it is

visible the next day if someone searches directly in the VBA, but the record will be listed as 'Unverified' until it has been through expert review. This means someone searching the VBA knows that a potential record exists and can contact the VBA if they need more information. Records don't appear in Naturekit or the public datasets until they have been verified. Expert Review is dependent on the availability of DELWP's experts and on the species (The review tends to be done by species, not surveys). If a person has submitted a record that has urgent implications, please let the VBA Administration know so they can let the reviewers know.

6.4 Members are encouraged to share documents of interest between meetings. Such documents are not generally attached to CEC minutes. In regard to the broilga setback maps that were discussed at the March 2021 meeting, refer to the response to *Q9 Questions on notice for Council* on page 8.

## 7. Correspondence Incoming

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 10 May        | Questions on notice to Wind Prospect from Ken Johnston - Held over to General Business. |
| 10 and 16 May | Questions on notice to Council from Ken Johnston - Held over to General Business.       |

## 8. Correspondence Outgoing

Nil.

## 9. Reports:

### 9.1 Wind Prospect (WP):

- Technical supporting studies for the Willatook project have progressed. Since the last CEC Meeting there has been further field surveys for the traffic, visual, ecology and cultural heritage reports.
- Once a technical study report has been drafted it is provided to the TRG for their feedback. Feedback from the TRG is then considered by the specialist, which involves updating the study report.
- The Environment Effects Statement has a main report made up of a series of chapters that provide a concise overview of the technical supporting studies, which are included as appendices.
- Since the last CEC meeting, our team has commenced drafting EES chapters and eight draft chapters have been provided to the TRG for their review. We plan on drafting another 15 chapters.
- Finalising the project design is a time-consuming process, whereby the findings from technical studies are repeatedly reviewed in conjunction with revised project designs. This can lead to further design changes, which means the technical studies are reviewed again. We still have further studies to review and require further feedback from the TRG before the design can be finalised.

- We understand that members of the community would like to see a new design and we will engage broadly with stakeholders once these outstanding items have been resolved.
- We are planning to hold community information sessions once the project design has been finalised. Details of the sessions will be published in a mail-out. We also recently shared a project update newsletter.
- Since our last CEC meeting there have been two TRG meetings (#7 and #8). Two more TRG meetings are planned for the coming months.
- Once the TRG have reviewed all EES chapters and technical reports and are comfortable that their feedback has been considered and addressed, the EES main report and technical supporting studies will be released publicly. This is planned to occur late this year. There will be a period of at least one month that the EES is on public exhibition in which time submissions on the project are sought.

## 9.2 Community Members:

Graeme Keane asked the following questions:

1. If a neighbour accepted money via a neighbour agreement, would it take away that neighbour's right to complain?  
WP response: No. The scheme is a no-obligation agreement, not a contract. There are no such conditions in it.
2. Could money that was not accepted by a neighbour be put into WP's community sponsorship fund?  
WP took this question on notice.
3. Is there any way a host landholder could get left with the responsibility and cost of decommissioning?  
WP response: The owner of the wind farm must decommission the wind farm.

## 9.3 Council:

## 10. General business

### 10.1 Questions for Wind Prospect from Ken Johnston:

Q1: *What Moyne Shire community, etc, organisations are Wind Prospect currently funding?*

Response: Wind Prospect has sponsorship funds for the Willatook Wind Farm and Hexham Wind Farm. There are currently no other funding streams available through Wind Prospect. The Willatook Wind Farm sponsorships to date are listed in question 2. All successful funding applications are announced on our website once funds have been provided and documented in our newsletters.

Q2: *What Moyne Shire community, etc, organisations have Wind Prospect funded in the past?*

Response:

| DATE | GROUP   | AMOUNT  | DESCRIPTION   |
|------|---|---------|---|
| 2020 | <b>Orford Table Tennis Association</b>              | \$1,620 | Used to help offset an increase in the Victorian Table Tennis Association affiliation fees, reducing fees payable by group members. |
| 2020 | <b>Koroit Irish Festival</b>                        | \$5,000 | Purchase of portable tables and chairs.   |
| 2020 | <b>Koroit &amp; District Basketball Association</b> | \$4,500 | New basketball tops.  |
| 2020 | <b>Willatook Hall Committee</b>                     | \$2,500 | Removal of leaning trees and pruning of those that remain.  |
| 2020 | <b>Koroit Cricket Club</b>                          | \$4,000 | Partial funding of a recycled PVC picket boundary fence to the Jack Keane Oval.   |
| 2021 | <b>Local family in need</b>                         | \$5,000 | Assistance to a local family who lost their home and belongings in a house fire.  |

Q3: *Does Wind Prospect have dealings with RE-Alliance (formerly the Australian Wind Alliance (AWA))?*

Response: Yes. Re-Alliance is a not-for-profit advocacy body for renewable energy that supports project communities and proponents alike.

Q4: *Does RE-Alliance, or had the previous AWA, have involvement in the allocation of community grants funded by Wind Prospect?*

Response: No.

*Q5: What criteria does Wind Prospect apply and what process does it follow in the allocation of community funding grants?*

Response: The sponsorship fund was established in 2019 and promoted in the following newsletters: November 2019, June 2020 and April 2021. The application is available on the website and has been promoted in the following newsletters: June 2020, April 2021.

The sponsorship fund is open year-round and applications are welcome at any time. The guidelines are:

- Fund of \$20,000 per calendar year, beginning 2019;
- Fund finishes when Community Benefit Fund begins OR work on developing the project ceases;
- Any unused funds will be rolled over to the following year or into the Community Benefit Fund;
- Successful applicants will be decided by Wind Prospect;
- Preference will usually be given to applications within geographic proximity to the project;
- Applications can be received at any time;
- Initially, funding totalling \$5000 will be granted each quarter (to a total of \$20,000 per calendar year);
- Grants greater than \$5000 may be awarded, at the discretion of Wind Prospect.

Applications are considered by the Wind Prospect team and to date all applications have received some funding.

*Q6: How does Wind Prospect identify organisations for community funding grants?*

Response: The sponsorship fund is advertised in newsletters and online, and accordingly most times Wind Prospect receives applications from community groups. However, we have encouraged groups to apply in the past, such as the Orford Table Tennis Association. Any community group is welcome to apply for funding.

*Q7: Does Wind Prospect have an association with RE-Alliance and if so what is the nature of it?*

Response: Yes, Wind Prospect is a member of Re-Alliance.

*Q8: Is Wind Prospect a member of RE-Alliance?*

Answered in Q7.

*Q9: Has Wind Prospect provided funds to RE-Alliance and if so what have they been used for?*

Response: Wind Prospect pays an annual membership donation of about \$1000 per year. A break-down of Re-Alliance's financials can be found in the annual report on their website.

*Q10: When will Wind Prospect provide the CEC with the revised turbine layout which it indicated by Feb email and at the subsequent March CEC meeting, would be available during March/April '21?*

Response: When the various technical studies have been reviewed and a new design is completed.

Q11: *When will Wind Prospect provide the CEC with the updated predicted noise contours which it indicated would be available during March/April '21?*

Response: Wind Prospect will provide updated predicted noise contours when the new layout is finalised.

Q12: *Given WP's reduction in turbine numbers to up to 75 and the increased site capacity to up to 450MW, has the rated output (MW) of the proposed turbines been increased (450MW/75 turbines = 6MW/turbine) and if so what turbine capacity and model is proposed?*

Response: Yes, Wind Prospect is exploring the use of a larger turbine. While a turbine model will not be selected until post approval, the project is currently undertaking noise modelling on a Vestas 6MW turbine.

Q13: *Can WP advise the CEC of the "substantially increased" Brolga setback distance to which it has previously referred?*

Response: The Brolga report is currently with the TRG for review. Once this has been finalised Wind Prospect will share the proposed brolga buffers.

Q14: *Has WP had discussions with RE-Alliance in relation to RE-A's proposed Moyne-Community - Joint Controlled Fund?*

Response: Yes, Wind Prospect has been involved in industry discussions about the fund, facilitated by Re-Alliance.

Q15: *If the answer to Q14 is yes, why would WP bother since it is not a wind farm developer but simply a proponent and would not be involved with any community benefit fund at Willatook should the wind farm ever be developed?*

Response: As a wind farm developer, Wind Prospect develops benefit sharing and other community initiatives for its projects, such as the benefit sharing program under development for Willatook Wind Farm. A broader fund, such as that proposed by RE-Alliance across multiple wind farms has the potential to fund larger, more strategic items. But this is not intended to replace project-specific benefit sharing programs that Wind Prospect develop.

## **10.2 Questions for Council from Ken Johnston:**

Q1: *Did Council have meetings with or have presentations made by RE-Alliance prior to its recent 30 March '21 presentation to Council?*

Response: No.

Q2: *Was RE-Alliance invited by Council to make its 30 March presentation or did RE-Alliance make a request to Council for a meeting and to make a presentation?*

Response: Council.

Q3: *Is Council planning to hold further meetings with or have presentations made by RE-Alliance and if so when?*

Response: Not in the foreseeable future.

Q4: *In view of Council's objection to community groups using the phrase Moyne Shire by claiming it causes confusion for recipients (see Mayor's answer to questions dated 16 April '21), does RE-Alliance have Council's agreement for the use of terms such as Moyne Community, Moyne Joint Fund, Moyne Shire Council, etc, in its document, see link below, Moyne Community - Controlled Joint Fund publicising its proposed Joint Fund and draft charter, since this might also cause similar public confusion and imply Moyne Shire's support of and partnership in the Joint Fund?*  
[https://www.re-alliance.org.au/moyne\\_community\\_controlled\\_joint\\_fund](https://www.re-alliance.org.au/moyne_community_controlled_joint_fund)

Response: No.

Q5: *Is Moyne Shire involved with the development of RE-Alliance's Joint Fund draft charter and what is Council's position in relation to the proposed Joint Fund since it is proposed that Council would be a member of the Joint Fund committee?*

Response: Council has no interest in being a partner of Re-Alliance.

Q6: *As recommended in the April '21 letter to Council from DST Legal, has Council requested that RE-Alliance provide a breakdown of its revenue and expenditure over the past 6 years, so that the charity can be audited and properly scrutinised by the community to determine whether this is a suitable organisation with whom to partner before any decision is made?*

Response: No.

Q7: *Will Council disassociate itself from organisations who offend people in their community, or who do not have the community's trust?*

Response: Refer to response to Q5.

Q8: *RE-Alliance in an email to the Moyne Community claims that the proposed Moyne Controlled Joint Fund was an initiative of Moyne Shire. Was this the case?*

Response: On 23 July 2019 Council resolved to 'Assist in the facilitation of joint discussions between wind farm proponents, Global Power Generation, Woolnorth Wind Farms, and Wind Prospect in regard to a more strategic approach to community funding and benefits from wind farms in the Moyne Shire'.

Q9: *Council to advise on the forwarding to the Willatook WF TRG of detailed information from Hamish Cumming supporting 5km setbacks between Brolga nesting sites and turbines and whether the TRG has provided proof to Council of receipt of the documents.*

Response: At the 6 April 2021 Council meeting, Council resolved that 'Moyne Shire, as a member of the Willatook Wind Farm Technical Reference Group (TRG) and having oversight of the Willatook Wind Farm Community Engagement Committee (CEC), forward the information [detailed in the Agenda] from Hamish Cumming who is supporting 5km setbacks between Brolga nest sites and wind turbines to the Willatook Wind Farm TRG, and provide TRG proof of receipt of the documents to the next Willatook Wind Farm CEC meeting. This is not to be regarded as Council support for the information provided in any of the reports'.

The TRG Chair confirmed via email to Council on 13 of April that he had received the maps, and they had been provided to Wind Prospect.

Q10: Council to provide a summary of TRG discussions on the documents provided by Mr Cumming.

Response: TRG discussions are confidential.

Q11: Moyne Shire to provide a summary of the RE-Alliance presentation at the Moyne Shire Council Workshop at the end of March 2021 in relation to the pooling of Local Community Benefit Funds.

Response: No.

Cr Doukas noted that Re-Alliance briefed Council on 30 March 2021. It was the information in Re-Alliances press release after the presentation that Council was not happy with.

Cr Doukas added that Re-Alliance had asked to attend a recent CEC meeting, which Council declined.

Q12: Will Council agree to inclusion in the minutes of the site constraints map with 5km Brolga exclusion zones?

Response: The direction from the Chair following the March CEC meeting was to not include the maps in the March minutes, as Councillors would discuss this at a workshop. At the April Council meeting, Council resolved to forward the maps to the TRG.

**10.3** Graeme Keane did not know of any brolga deaths recorded from wind farm blade-strike. Graeme noted that foxes and the draining of wetlands have the most impact on brolga numbers, and that brolga had been recorded nesting near the Macarthur Wind Farm.

**Next meeting – Thursday 5 August 2021 at 3pm in Port Fairy - venue to be advised.**

Confirmed this ..... / ..... / .....

Chair .....

**Minutes are to be registered in Moyne Shire's electronic document management system by the committee reporting officer immediately following the Minutes' confirmation and signing**