

Willatook Wind Farm Proposal Community Engagement Committee

Meeting date Wednesday 10 March 2021

Meeting time and location 3pm, via Zoom

1. Welcome

2. Present

Cr James Purcell

Cr Jim Doukas

Paul Lewis

Ken Johnston

Jay Knight, Senior Development Manager, Wind Prospect (WP)

Michael Sale, Development Manager, Wind Prospect

Tanya Waterson, Wind Prospect

Vicki Askew-Thornton, Moyne Shire

3. Apologies

Graham Keane

4. Declarations of Interest

Nil.

5. Confirmation of Minutes of previous meeting

Moved by Cr Doukas, seconded by Jay Knight that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2020 be confirmed.

CARRIED

6. Business arising from previous Minutes

- 6.1 A) *Cr Doukas will raise the issue of disposal of turbine components with Councillors for discussion.*

This item has been discussed at Council and is part of the broader topic of decommissioning.

The blade that fell off a turbine at the Dundonnell Wind Farm in December 2020 was contained in covered waste bins and disposed of at Cleanaway's licenced landfill facility near Stawell.

- B) *Council will contact Pacific Hydro to ask how it would be required to dispose of turbine components if it were to dismantle the Codrington and Yambuk Wind Farms in coming years.*
Pacific Hydro has advised that it is currently considering options for the future of these wind farms. If decommissioning is to be pursued, a decommissioning plan will be developed.
- C) *Council will contact the EPA for information on where wind turbine components would currently be disposed of.*
The EPA responded that wind turbine components, like any other waste, would be subject to waste hierarchy and any materials that cannot be reused or recycled would be required to be disposed of at a premises licenced to accept that type of waste.

6.2 *Question from Ken Johnston - Will WP have its noise report independently peer reviewed?*
WP responded that the noise report would be peer reviewed, in addition to any required EPA audit. The EPA is represented on the Technical Reference Group.

6.3 WP took on notice the following question from Paul Lewis:
As you may have seen in windfarm living emails the acousticians Marshall Day are in court proceedings re noise compliance if these acousticians working for wind farm development companies are found to be negligent in their duties how does that affect the indemnities that are offered to turbine hosts and participating landholders?
In a broader industry-wide sense, this question will be forwarded to Council for further discussion.

7. Correspondence Incoming

- a) 25 January: Questions on notice from Paul Lewis, circulated to the CEC on 8 February.
- b) 21 February: Additional question from Paul Lewis, updated list circulated to the CEC on 1 March.
- c) 9 March: WP responses to questions on notice from Paul and Ken, circulated to the CEC on 9 March.

Paul Lewis's questions, and responses:

*What noise reports have been produced for the Willatook Wind Farm so far?
Can Wind Prospect provide copies of these documents to the next CEC?*

Response: A report was prepared in 2018 and provided as part of the EES referral (along with other early-stage reports). That report is now out of date and Sonus is revising the report based on a layout with fewer turbines.

https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0028/393652/Attachment-F-Environmental-Noise-Assessment.pdf

What dates was background noise testing done at the Willatook wind farm site?

Response: 30 September 2010 to 10 November 2010. See page 8 of the above report.

How many Willatook Wind Farm neighbour houses had background noise testing done?

Response: Twelve. See page 8 of the above report.

Can WP provide an updated site constraint layout map with broilga nesting sites buffered by the 3.2 km setbacks from turbines for the next CEC meeting please.

Response: WP is currently working on a revised site layout which will include revised Broilga buffers. It is expected that the buffers of Broilga habitat will increase substantially from the buffers previously proposed.

Ken Johnston's questions, and responses:

What is the setback distance between Broilga nests and turbines that Wind Prospect is currently proposing for Willatook?

Response: See response to Question D above.

Has the distance in Q1 been represented to the Willatook TRG and does the TRG concur with it?

Response: See response to Question D above.

What is the process by which the TRG assesses the various Assessments included in the Willatook EES submission?

Response: See response to Question D above.

What is the current position or status within the TRG as regards the various Assessments relating to Broilga, Eg, Biodiversity Assessment, Broilga Movements and Spatial Requirements, Broilga Flocking Surveys, Site Constraints relating to Broilga, etc? Or in other words, where are these assessments at within the TRG?

Response: We understand you're eager to see the results of assessments relating to Broilga and other matters, however these assessments need to be properly completed and reviewed before we can respond to detailed questions. This includes engaging with the TRG and with DELWP, which is ongoing.

Has the TRG completed its assessment of any of the EES Assessments submitted for Willatook and if so which ones?

Response: The TRG has reviewed some early-stage specialist assessment work but have not reviewed completed draft impact assessment reports. Their main contribution has been to guide the assessment methodologies and their reporting requirements/expectations.

Which EES Assessments submitted for Willatook have yet to have their assessments completed by the TRG and what are the expected completion dates?

Response: No assessments have been completed. All specialists are currently working on their impact assessments and associated reporting.

Have recent developments relating to Brolga at Willatook caused Wind Prospect to revise its setback distance between Brolga nests and turbines and if so what change has been made?

Response: See response to Question D above.

- d) 10 March: Question on notice for Council from Paul Lewis: *Can a copy of Moyne Shire's submission to the recent Draft Brolga assessment and mitigation standards process be provided to the Willatook WF CEC?*

Response: Council's submission on the Brolga Standards is located on Council's webpage, via the following link:

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

- e) 10 March: Question on notice for Council from Paul Lewis: *Does Moyne Shire Council's submission on the draft brolga assessment and mitigation standards clearly state what it considers to be a minimum acceptable distance between turbine and brolga 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 brolga nesting sites and Willatook WF turbines should be?*

Council took this question on notice.

8. Correspondence Outgoing

Nil.

9. Reports:

9.1 Wind Prospect (WP):

- WP has recruited a new Development Manager for the project, Michael Sale. Michael will be the key point of contact for the CEC moving forward.
- A meeting with the EES TRG was held on 16 December 2020 to provide an update on the project, but also for Nature Advisory to present a Brolga buffering methodology. DELWP Environment were unable to make the TRG meeting, therefore were presented to separately in late February 2021. WP is awaiting their feedback on the methodology.
- A TRG meeting is being held on 18 March. At that meeting WP is planning to present several technical studies.
- Additional TRG meetings are proposed for April, May and June. Those meetings will see draft reports and presentations by specialists covering the remaining technical investigations.
- Fifteen specialist assessments are underway and at various stages of completion.
- A number of peer reviews are planned for the ecological aspects, noise and landscape and visual assessments.
- Public exhibition of the EES report and supporting studies is planned for Q4 this year.

- Consultation with the community via information sessions will occur in the coming months (outside of holiday and event periods). Details of the sessions will be published in a mail-out.
- The project design has been updated and the layout will be shared publicly (including with the CEC) once the TRG has provided feedback and landowners have been informed of any resulting changes, if any.
- WP took on notice the following questions received from Ken Johnston:
 - a) Plan of updated turbine layout.
 - b) Updated noise prediction plot.
 - c) Map of updated site constraints and the revised Brolga habitat buffers.Some further questions:
 - Q1: Does your term Brolga habitat buffer equate to my expectation that this is the minimum allowable distance between turbines and Brolga nests?
 - Q2: What has caused Wind Prospect to "increase substantially" the Brolga habitat buffers proposed for Willatook?
 - 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?
 - Q4: Will you be providing the usual Willatook proposal update before tomorrow's meeting?
 - Q5: Will you or Michael be the primary contact for future communication on the Willatook proposal?
- Council will ask DELWP how long an entry to the Victorian Brolga Atlas (VBA) usually takes to appear on the VBA map.

9.2 Community Members:

Nothing further to add.

9.3 Council:

Wind Prospect made a presentation to last week's Council workshop.

10. General business

- 10.1 Members are encouraged to share documents of interest between meetings. Such documents are not generally attached to CEC minutes. Crs Purcell and Doukas will discuss this item with Council.

Next meeting – TBC Wednesday 19 May 2021 at 3pm. 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