



BANGO WIND FARM COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held on site, Boorowa on Tuesday 30 July 2024

Attendees:

Lisa Andrews (LA)	Independent Chairperson
Grant Stepien (GS)	Squadron Energy (Operations Manager (Bango Wind Farm))
Thomas McGrath (TM)	Host Landholder
Terry Sellwood (TS)	Community Representative
Geoff Frost (GF)	Community Representative

Apologies:

Cr John Piper – Hilltops Council delegate
Cr Jim Abbey – Yass Valley Council delegate
Jayne Apps – Boorowa District Landscape Guardians

Absent:

Jack Walker
Yass Valley Business Chamber delegate

Meeting commenced at 10.09am with the Acknowledgement of Country:

Squadron Energy acknowledges the Traditional Owners and ongoing Custodians of the lands and waters on which it operates. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the annual meeting of the Bango Wind Farm (BWF) Community Consultative Committee.

Apologies

Cr Jim Abbey, Cr John Piper & Jayne Apps.

Declaration of Interest

The Chair declared her interest as Independent Chairperson of the BWF CCC, approved by the Department of Planning and engaged by Squadron Energy to chair the meeting.

No changes to previous declarations by members.

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Minutes of CCC held on 12th December 2023, were finalised and emailed to members on 5th January 2024.

Action Items from Previous Meeting

Item	Issue	Responsibility
1	How many solar panels equal one turbine. Following discussions it was agreed that it is difficult to calculate, due to varying sizes in solar panels and turbines, however, a guesstimate that 5,000 panels may be approximately equivalent to 5 turbines. Closed.	BJ/GS
2	Investigate whether the Biala Wind Farm initiative to supply residents with roof top solar panels is a condition if its consent. Not a condition of consent. Negotiated with neighbours. Closed	BJ/GS
3	BJ to clarify reporting requirements for bird and bat monitoring. See below:	BJ/GS

ITEM 3:

Condition 21 of the SSD Development Consent 6686 required:

Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan

21. Prior to the commissioning of any wind turbines, the Applicant must prepare a Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan for the development in consultation with OEH, and to the satisfaction of the Secretary. This plan must include:
- at least 12 months' worth of baseline data on threatened and 'at risk' bird and bat species and populations in the locality that could be affected by the development;
 - a detailed description of the measures that would be implemented on site for minimising bird and bat strike during operation of the development, including:
 - minimising the availability of raptor perches on wind turbines;
 - prompt carcass removal;
 - controlling pests; and
 - using best practice methods for bat deterrence, including managing potential lighting impacts;
 - trigger levels for further investigation of the potential impacts of the project on particular bird or bat species or populations;
 - an adaptive management program that would be implemented if the development is having an adverse impact on a particular threatened or 'at risk' bird and/or bat species or populations; including the implementation of measures to:
 - reduce the mortality of those species or populations; or
 - enhance and propagate those species or populations in the locality; and
 - a detailed program to monitor and report on:
 - the effectiveness of these measures; and
 - any bird and bat strikes on site;
 - provisions for a copy of all raw data collected as part of the monitoring program to be submitted to OEH and the Secretary.

Following the Secretary's approval, the Applicant must implement the Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan.

Accordingly a Bird & Bat Adaptive Management Plan was prepared and approved: [LINK: Report-18173-1.25-Bango-Wind-Farm-BBAMP-211229.pdf \(spicyweb.net.au\)](https://spicyweb.net.au/Report-18173-1.25-Bango-Wind-Farm-BBAMP-211229.pdf)

The project's EPBC Compliance Report 2023 can be found, via [LINK: BWF-02-RPT-EPBCCompliance-20231020-000.pdf \(spicyweb.net.au\)](https://spicyweb.net.au/BWF-02-RPT-EPBCCompliance-20231020-000.pdf)

GS noted that scent dogs are used for detection as they are more effective than humans.

TS commented that there doesn't seem to be as many eagles around. There used to be a family, now only one eagle is seen.

GS advised that there has not been an "impact trigger" in relation to eagles.

GS confirmed there has been impact triggers events involving

- The white throated needle tail and
- The white stripped free tailed bat.

This has been reported to the Department of Planning and additional monitoring will be carried out.

Discussions on what instigates a “trigger” event. GS explained that trigger events are defined in the BBAMP. LA stated that she would review the project documentation to find the definition. **Action:**

See Section 4 (Page 25-) of the Bird & Bat Adaptive Management Plan (link above), which defines Impact Triggers, Decision Making Framework and Mitigation for Threatened Species, Superb Parrot and shutdown requirements.

No other business arising.

Correspondence Report

Correspondence as sent out with the meeting notice on 11th July 2024 with one additional item on 26th July 2024, which was the reminder for this meeting.

- 15/12/23 – Email to members advising of the project commencement date (14/12/23 – 23/12/23).
- 22/12/23 – Email to members confirming the Final Notification of Commencement of Operations for Bango Wind Farm project.
- 22/12/23– Email to members with the draft minutes for review.
- 5/1/23 - Email to members with the finalised minutes.
- 27/6/24 – Email to members with a survey from a student at the University of Sydney.
- 11/7/24 - Email to members with the meeting notice & agenda for this CCC.
- 14/6/23 – Email to members with confirmation of the venue for this CCC.
- 26/7/24 - Email to members with reminder for this meeting.

Accepted.

Project Update – Squadron Energy

GS presented the project update.

Community Enhancement Fund (CEF)

The second round of the CEF has been open for both Hilltops Council & Yass Valley Council. Applications for Hilltops 1/7/24 to 28/7/24 with advertising occurring on the Council and Squadron websites. A meeting of the CEF committee will be held on 6 August 2024 to review and consider the applications for funding.

Applications for Yass are still pending, with a date for review to be determined.

GS advised that the first round of the CEF program was late and it was agreed the future CEF programs would occur shortly after the commencement of the new financial year, which has occurred for Round 2.

GF noted that it will be necessary for the applications to be approved by Council in August, prior to it going into caretaker mode for the upcoming LG elections in September; otherwise it may need to wait until February 2025.

TM noted that it was pleasing to see the advertising for the CEF occurring in the local papers and social media to enable broader community knowledge of the fund. It is worth noting that this will be an ongoing fund for the life of the project (the next 20 years), putting back at least \$75,000 annually into the community.

GS advised that there is also opportunity for community sponsorship applications to be submitted throughout the year via Squadron's corporate sponsorship program (available on the website). This is above and beyond the CEF. Already the following funding/sponsorship has been approved:

Wee Jasper 150yr anniversary dinner
Rye Park Ute Show
Boorowa Wool Festival
Binalong Golf Tournament

TM commented that he felt that Hilltops Council are pushing back some community organisations/events to find alternate funding, especially with a number of renewable energy projects in the region offering CEF opportunities. Noted.

GF commented that Bango WF would be looking at promoting their name when sponsoring events? GS agreed, suggested that it would be better for Bango WF to have good quality portable shelters, with appropriate branding and then lend these out to community groups for events, rather than buy individual, less quality shelters for each group. Agreed.

GS advised that it is business as usual on site, with 43-46 turbines under normal operations. Three turbines are currently offline for a couple of months whilst they undergo warranty repairs.

Annual maintenance is occurring, with 50% complete. The second annual maintenance program will take place from August.

Outages to date – Bango 1 was out for a few hours due to a Transgrid requested outage.

Civil maintenance completed in April/May with continued monitoring of roads during wet weather events.

Weed maintenance will commence in August in conjunction & cooperation with the host owners

Bush fire management – the local RFS will come out to look at access off the access tracks, to ensure they can enter when needed. A fire trailer has been purchased and sits outside the administration building. It can also be used for watering of roads, but more importantly, will be available for the RFS.

It was confirmed that the RFS is the appropriate authority to manage any fires on the site.

GS advised that emergency services will be invited on site in September/October to view the site and familiarise themselves should they be called for an emergency.

GS advised that apart from the workers undertaking the warranty repairs, there are 6 full time people on site.

TM enquired whether all the landholders have been sorted and signed the necessary paperwork. GS advised that he is unaware of any issues, however, encourages them to contact him if there are any concerns.

GF suggested that Bango Wind Farm hold an "Open Day" for the public, especially the local community to come to the site to view the turbines. GS agreed that this would be a good idea, however, it would need to be raised internally. He confirmed that Squadron Energy is committed to community engagement.

Discussions on possible tours via mini-buses for schools, community groups (Lions, Mens Shed, etc). GS explained that potential arrangements would need to consider risk assessments, WH&S, toilet facilities, catering, etc, however, it is certainly worth considering.

TM asked if there is a replacement community engagement officer (from Lyn). GS advised that no local replacement and that all enquiries for the wind farms go through to Squadron. Suggesting that any enquiries should be directed to: info@bangowind@squadronenergy.com

TM suggested that photographs of "cheques" being presented to successful recipients of CEF would be positive advertising for the company.

GF enquired whether Bango WF would be sponsoring the Yass Christmas Light competition this year. GS advised that they would be happy to continue with sponsoring this event.

General Business

LA provided members with a briefing on the Department of Planning's revised guidelines for State Significant Development Community Consultative Committees, which included amendments, Terms of Reference and governance forms.

Hard copies of Code of Conduct & Pecuniary Interest forms were distributed to those present, were completed and handed to the chair.

TS commented that it was interesting how noisy the turbines were when wind is blowing from a south westerly direction. More of a rumbling noise.

TM agreed and asked GS whether noise monitoring was still a requirement. GS confirmed that noise monitoring was carried out 'post construction', in accordance with the consent conditions and Bango Wind Farm demonstrated compliance. See Link for "Noise Compliance Testing Report 2024" – [S3958.1C9-BWF-Noise-Monitoring-Report-Post-Construction-June-2024.pdf \(spicyweb.net.au\)](#)

Next Meeting

LA announced to members that this would be her last meeting as she has resigned as chair of this CCC. LA advised that DPHI will appoint a new Independent Chair and she would work with them to ensure a smooth transition. LA thanked members for their support since she established the CCC in 2013 and for their contribution to the meetings and commitment to their communities.

Meeting closed at 11.17am

Action Items

Item	Issue	Responsibility
1	Provide information on Bird & Bat Monitoring requirements. Complete - Included in minutes of this meeting.	LA