

**Minutes of Uungula Windfarm  
Community Consultative Committee (CCC)**

**Wednesday 9.30am, 29 November 2023**

**Maliyan Cultural Centre 13A Namina Crescent, Wellington.**

| <b>Attendees</b> | <b>Initials</b> | <b>Position</b>                                 |
|------------------|-----------------|---|
| Garry West       | GW              | Independent Chairperson                         |
| Lindsay Hough    | LH              | Community Representative                        |
| John Xuereb      | JX              | Community Representative                        |
| John Goodworth   | JG              | Community representative                        |
| John Southwell   | JS              | Chamber of Commerce representative              |
| Brad Bliss       | BB              | Community representative                        |
| Cr Richard Ivey  | RI              | Dubbo Regional Council Representative           |
| Matt Flower      | MF              | Head of Development Services, Squadron Energy   |
| Daniel Banovic   | DB              | Head of Delivery, Squadron Energy               |
| Darran Reeves    | DR              | Civil Supervisor, Squadron Energy               |
| Malcolm Moore    | MM              | Uungula WF Site Representative, Squadron Energy |
| Kath Elliott     | KE              | Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Squadron Energy |
| Sheree Kidziak   | SK              | Environmental Adviser, Squadron Energy          |
| Courtney Urdarov | CU              | Stakeholder Engagement Adviser, Squadron Energy |

**Apologies**

|           |    |                          |
|-----------|----|--------------------------|
| Pip Smith | PS | Community representative |
|-----------|----|--------------------------|

**Introduction and Welcome**

GW welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged the traditional custodians of the country on which the meeting is being held and also acknowledged Elders past, present and future and all First Nations persons present.

GW advised that Heather Gough-Fuller had resigned as they had sold their block of land in the district.

**Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

No new declarations

**Previous Minutes**

GW confirmed the minutes of the CCC meeting of 14 September 2023 had been circulated and have been uploaded to the project website.

Action Items 1 & 3 superseded. Action 2: No action has been undertaken to formally facilitate Twelve Mile Road as a cycle route by Squadron Energy. This will be discussed further as part of the Traffic Management Plan review.

### **Project Update**

MF introduced the Squadron Energy (SQE) team members present and their role as the project proceeds to the commencement of construction. Financial arrangements and a Notice to Proceed are imminent. The next phase for the project is the 'Delivery Phase' and Matt thanked the CCC members for their contribution over the course of the development phase and he handed over to Daniel Banovic who will lead the delivery phase.

### **Early Works**

DB provide the meeting with an overview of his work history in infrastructure delivery. The preferred contractor / Joint Venture is GE Renewable Energy Australia Pty Ltd, Consolidated Power Projects Australia & Nacap Pty Ltd known as GECNJV. The contractor commenced early works on 11 August 2023 which included early design for civil and electrical packages and investigative works commenced onsite on 19 September 2023.

Currently working with TfNSW to finalise the Twelve Mile Road & Goolma Road intersection. The Project Traffic Management Plan (V4) is being review with local stakeholders and will then be sent to DPE for their review.

The Notice to Proceed is scheduled for 18 December 2023. The Christmas / New Year closure period will be 22 December 2023 to 8 January 2024.

Public Road works for Twelve Mile Road will commence mid-January 2024 which includes the Uungula Rd intersection and Ilgingery Rd, and is scheduled for completion Q3 2024.

A Project Manager and a Site Environmental Manager will be appointed. Announcement of details will be made shortly. This team will be based locally.

RI asked if the project team would be based in Wellington or Dubbo indicating this was a Wellington project and the benefits were needed in Wellington.

DB confirmed SQE will continue to maintain their office in Dubbo however they will take on board the message for a need for a local shopfront presence in Wellington as they intend to target local benefits.

### **Current Layout**

DB confirmed the project will consist of 69 6MW wind turbines with an output of 414MW. The project will have a central collector substation as well as a switching station north of Twelve Mile Rd on an existing transmission line. The decision whether battery storage is included has been deferred to a later stage.

The main access will be off Twelve Mile Road and the secondary intersections will be for crossovers only. A batching plant will be developed on site and 80 kms of tracks to access the WTs.

## Wind Farm Works

DB presented the following schedule of works:

- Public Road Upgrades (Q1 - Q3 2024)
- Wind Farm Civil Works (Q3 – Q2 2025)
- WTG Installation (Q4 2025 – Q4 2026)
- WTG Energisation & Handover (Q3 2026 – Q1 2027)
- Anticipated Practical Completion (Q1 2027)
- SQE Operations Team operate the Wind Farm – 30 years

It was noted oversize arrivals will commence in Q4 2025.

JG expressed concern that the speed limit on Twelve Mile Rd is 100 km per hour which is excessive for the volume of traffic that is likely to be generated.

DB confirmed the road will have a 8m width and designed for design speed limit of 110kmph and a posted speed limit of 100kmph which is the NSW standard. DRC Traffic Management Committee would be the body to consult to seek modifications to speed limits if necessary.

JG asked about dust suppression and road use by contractors.

DB advised this is regulated by the consent conditions and the regular independent audits that will be conducted. A Driver Code of Conduct will also be introduced and all contractors and their employees will have to abide by these rules.

JS questioned what the staffing levels will be.

DR advised the early stages will see 100 staff and peak numbers in 2025-26 will be about 300 – 350 before tapering off.

LH questioned what the approved work times will be as his residence is within close proximity to the central works site.

DB explained the project conditions of consent detail the approved hours of work, (7am-6pm Mon-Fri and 8am-1pm Sat) however with all projects of this nature contractors are likely to request permission to work outside these hours. There is a strict environmental process for this to proceed and regulatory authorities normally only approve work that has minimal impact and does not exceed the background noise limits.

RI asked if the central west cycle track that currently uses Twelve Mile Road as part of its trail could be formalised so as to mitigate any impacts that arise due to the increased traffic movements as they are part of local tourism activities.

MF indicated that the road is being upgraded as advised but there are no plans to specifically accommodate the cycle riders however regular conversations are held with them.

LH asked what time over mass vehicles are likely to arrive to use Twelve Mile Road as he has concerns about impacts with local stock carrier movements particularly on sale days.

DB indicated that it is anticipated the use times are likely to be between 1230pm and 2pm. The consent conditions specifically prohibit movements during school bus hours. Also undertook to

obtain the schedule of sale days and communicate with stock carrier operators to avoid conflicting times as much as possible.

### **Terms Of Reference (TOR)**

GW explained the Department of Planning as part of their review of governance of CCCs believe it is important to require Terms of Reference for CCs to ensure consistency and provided a template for committees to use.

GW had circulated a draft TOR for members to consider and there is no objection. The membership of the CCC for the Proponent's representatives will need to be clarified before final signature by the Chair. [ACTION] GW & DB to resolve CCC membership for the Delivery Phase.

### **Environmental Approval Conditions**

SK confirmed the project is State Significant Development that is now governed by the Conditions of Approval from both the NSW Government and the Commonwealth EPBC Act. All conditions can be found on the project website.

SK explained that numerous management plans have been developed and approved covering the Final Layout Plan; Environmental Management Strategy; Traffic management plan; Biodiversity Management Plan; Heritage Plan; Emergency Plan and Accommodation and Employment Strategy. These management plans are all available on the website and are modified as necessary with DPE approval.

GW requested members be provided with a link to these management plans and advised through the Chair when updates are approved. [ACTION] SK & GW to provide link to Management Plans and updates as approved.

SK indicated independent compliance audits are required through the delivery phase with the first due 12 weeks after work commences and then every 26 weeks. The results of these audits will be communicated to CCC members at CCC meetings. A pre-construction dilapidation survey report was completed in November 2022 and the EPBC Annual compliance report for 2022 and 2023 has been completed.

MF advised as part of the Accommodation and Employment Strategy a lease agreement has been entered with "Bellhaven" and approved by DRC for 44 rooms to be used as workers accommodation. These workers will be bused to site and return each day. Investigations are underway for up to an additional 50 rooms to be developed. The Wellington Valley Caravan Park is also being considered for temporary workers accommodation.

RI welcomed these initiatives as it will result in consumables by these workers staying in Wellington.

### **Community Engagement Update**

KE advised that Project will have a dedicated community engagement resource for next year to ensure SQE meet their social licence obligation. A community sponsorship provides support to the Wellington community and a co-investment program will be implemented to allow local people to invest in the project with guaranteed returns and some matching seed funding similar to the Sapphire Wind Farm project. The details are still be developed and an announcement will be made by a licenced financial adviser.

SQE are also launching a fixed wireless network – Squadron Link – which will provide landholders within a 15 km radius city speed wifi. A similar scheme has been trialled at the Spicers Creek Wind Farm.

MF indicated SQE will be approaching landowners seeking interest before Christmas. If there are insufficient subscribers, the project will not be able to proceed. The scheme involves up to \$2,500 worth of agtech to qualifying farmers for the deployment of agtech solutions on their land. Once the network is deployed SQE will subsidise, leading to a fully supported network at an anticipated cost of \$40/month. SQE will provide the service free for the first 2 years while establishing the network.

JS asked if the 15km radius was fixed or could it be expanded?

MF advised that at this stage the area will remain at approx. 15kms as its primarily for the benefit of landowners who host or neighbour the windfarm.

**General Business**

RI queried whether the Planning Agreement in place with DRC restricted funding to Wellington?

MF advised the Planning Agreement with DRC has four streams of funding, some to eligible programs across the LGA, some specifically for road maintenance.

Discussion ensued indicating members would like to be involved in advising on eligible projects. [ACTION] GW to circulate copy of the agreement to members and RI to investigate potential for local input.

Squadron Energy has a regional Economic Manager for SQE located in Dubbo office. Request for briefing at the next CCC meeting.

LH raised concern about firefighting capacity on site.

MM advised that SQE will be working with the RFS at both a regional and local level to coordinate effective response capacity. The track network being installed will be a future asset for firefighting in the locality.

GW expressed appreciation to Matt Flower for his contribution to the workings of the CCC.

**Meeting Frequency and Next meeting**

It was agreed to aim for quarterly meetings but if issues arose, they could be covered by an extraordinary meeting.

Next meeting – Friday 23 February 2024 at 9.30am

**Actions**

|   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| 1 | Resolve Proponent Membership of CCC for Delivery Phase of the Project | GW & DB |
| 2 | Provide link to management plans and updates                          | GW & SK |
| 3 | Circulate copy of Planning Agreement with DRC                         | GW      |