

Hawkesdale Wind Farm Community Engagement Committee

Meeting date Monday 23 October 2023
Meeting time and location 5.30pm at the Hawkesdale Memorial Hall

1. Welcome

2. Present

Cr Damian Gleeson (Chair)
Maxine Keane, Community Representative
John Bos, Community Representative
Anne-Maree Huglin, HADDAC Representative
Bruce Mirtschin, Community Representative
Debra Dumesny, GPG Community and Stakeholder Engagement Officer
Haridian Cabrera, GPG Community Stakeholder Engagement and Local Economic Development
Daniel Cullen, Environment and Safety, GPG (Guest)

Vicki Askew-Thornton, CEC Responsible Officer, Moyne Shire

3. Apologies

Liana Blake, Community Representative
George Swarbrick, Community Representative

4. Declarations of Interest

Nil.

5. Confirmation of Minutes of 4 September meeting

Moved by Anne-Maree Huglin, seconded by Maxine Keane that the minutes of the CEC meeting held on 4 September 2023 be accepted.

CARRIED

6. Actions arising from the previous Minutes

| Who | Action |
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| GPG | Provide the CEC with a copy of the endorsed BAMP when it has been endorsed by the Minister for Planning. Update: The BAMP is still being finalised and has not yet been endorsed by the Minister. |

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| | <div style="background-color: #004a7c; color: white; padding: 10px;"> <h2 style="margin: 0;">1. Actions arising</h2> <div style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">GPG</div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; font-weight: normal; margin-top: 5px;">Naturgy Group</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ BAM Plan – update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BAM plan is still under assessment by DTP and GPG have been in active consultation with DEECA. • To be undertaken once the site is operational: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brolga surveys: over two breeding seasons (two years) from July to December. • Southern Bent Wing Bat (SBWB) surveys: over two seven week periods, from February to March and October to November. • A further SBWB intensive monitoring program has been developed as instructed by Dr Lindy Lumsden (DEECA’s Arthur Rylah Research Institute). </div> |
| <p>GPG</p> | <p>Check that over-dimensional deliveries are abiding by local school bus avoidance measures as required.</p> <p>Outcome:</p> <div style="background-color: #004a7c; color: white; padding: 10px;"> <h2 style="margin: 0;">1. Actions arising</h2> <div style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">GPG</div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; font-weight: normal; margin-top: 5px;">Naturgy Group</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Over dimensional deliveries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The over dimensional deliveries are adhering to the school bus time avoidance. A system of notification has been put in place if an unavoidable situation arises. • The over-dimensional transport permits are the responsibility of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. The endorsed Traffic Management Plan is available on the web page. • The escort vehicles are meeting the requirements under their licenses. ✓ Internet and phone service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction on the transmission line – there has not been a problem reported during the construction of the Ryan Corner section of the transmission line. • The Hawkesdale wind farm uses Starlink satellite for communication. </div> |

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| | <p>Summary of further discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since the last meeting, GPG's process in the event that a school bus is held up behind an over-dimensional load has been successfully tested. - Regarding further reports that John had received as set out in Attachment 2 and his request for contact details for VicRoads, GPG and Council encouraged CEC members to pass on such reports to Debra as soon as they are received so that they can be investigated promptly, rather than waiting until the next CEC meeting. GPG asked that any reports contain as much detail as possible including a date, time and location. - Regarding the reports detailed in Attachment 2 about escort vehicles, GPG will ask the over-dimensional load contractor what traffic warning measures are set out in its procedure for escort vehicles. - It was agreed that some drivers are confused about what to do when they see an oncoming over-dimensional load, and this is exacerbated if there are minimal road shoulders and long grass on the roadside. |
| Council | <p>Submit the CEC recommendation at Section 9.1 (Page 3) of the 24 July CEC meeting to Council for consideration.</p> <p>Outcome: At its Ordinary Meeting held on 26 September 2023, Moyne Shire Council resolved that: <i>On behalf of the Hawkesdale Wind Farm Community Engagement Committee, Council write to the Minister for Planning requesting a new bat and avifauna survey for the Hawkesdale Wind Farm prior to commencement of operation.</i></p> <p>A letter was sent to the Minister for Planning on 5 October (Attachment 1). Council will report back to the CEC when a response is received.</p> <p>Summary of further discussion including reference to Attachment 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John asked for new letter to be sent from Council to the Minister, including the points he had provided to Councillors before the September Council meeting. Cr Gleeson noted that the letter from the Mayor to the Minister responded directly to the CEC's recommendation and the subsequent Council resolution. Individuals could choose to provide their own information separately to the Minister outside of the CEC process, which is set out in its Charter. |

7. Correspondence Incoming

| Date | Item | Attachment Number |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| 11 September | Unconfirmed minutes emailed to CEC members | |
| 7, 12, 18, 28 September & 3 October | HDWF construction updates from GPG | |
| 19 September | HDWF August newsletter from GPG | |
| 15 October | Email from John Bos | 2 |

8. Correspondence Outgoing

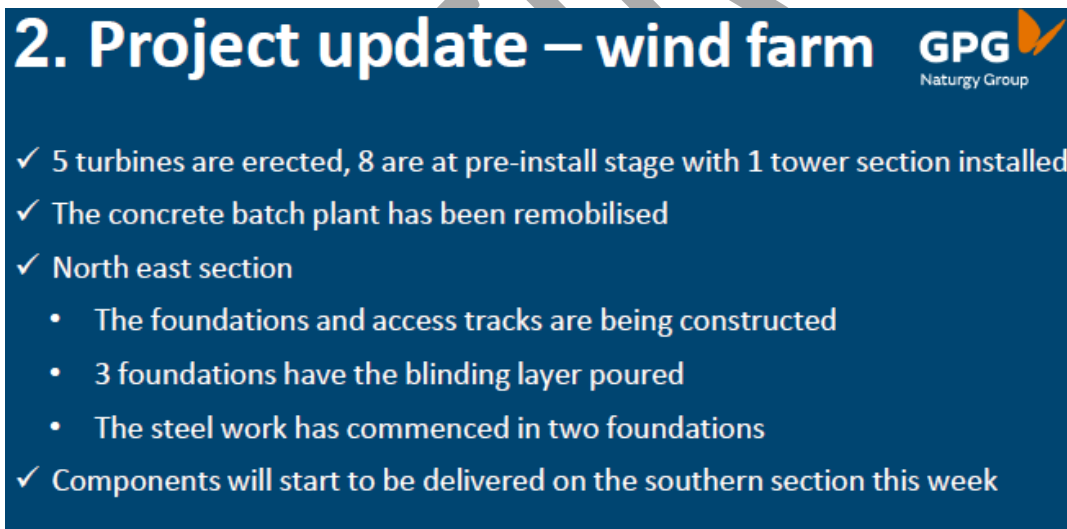
5 October: Letter from the Mayor, Cr Foster to the Minister for Planning (**Attachment 1**)


9. Reports:

9.1 Community Representatives

- On behalf of HADDAC, Anne-Maree noted:
 - Some community organisations found filling out the community fund application form harder than expected. GPG responded that all applications received were well done but noted that some organisations had filled out a project plan when it wasn't necessarily required for smaller items of equipment. This will not affect the applicant's chances of success. GPG will review the application guidelines and make it clearer for future applicants to understand.
 - The application form doesn't ask the applicant organisation if their project could proceed if the full amount was not granted.
- John wondered whether smaller organisations may be concerned about their chances of success. GPG responded that all eligible applications would be considered regardless of the size of the organisation.
- GPG noted that the 'What Will Not Be Funded' section in the guidelines is clear about it not being for projects for which the funding is the responsibility of governments.

9.2 GPG Project Update:



2. Project update – wind farm 

- ✓ 5 turbines are erected, 8 are at pre-install stage with 1 tower section installed
- ✓ The concrete batch plant has been remobilised
- ✓ North east section
 - The foundations and access tracks are being constructed
 - 3 foundations have the blinding layer poured
 - The steel work has commenced in two foundations
- ✓ Components will start to be delivered on the southern section this week

Summary of further discussion:

- Well over half of the over dimensional components have been delivered to site, and remaining deliveries should be finished in around 6 weeks.
- The roof is about to be fitted onto the Operations and Maintenance building.

2. Project update – grid connection



- ✓ Construction has commenced on the Hawkesdale section of the transmission line
- ✓ Finalising property and construction management plans with landowners
- ✓ The operations and maintenance building is being constructed at the sub station site
- ✓ AusNet has prepared an information pack to notify affected residents about power outages when stringing of the transmission line takes place

Summary of further discussion:

- AusNet undertakes all of the liaison with transmission line landholders.
- Power outages are required when construction of the new transmission line passes over an existing power distribution line.
As a result of an issue raised by the Ryan Corner Wind Farm CEC, GPG has liaised with Powercor and AusNet to have a power outage information pack developed to be distributed to local communities.
The length of time and geographical scope of the outages has been reduced, and an outage will not commence before 9am.
The information and a proposed outage schedule will be distributed to the community before stringing of the transmission line commences.
The CEC stressed the importance of prior warning for power outages particularly for farmers and other local businesses.
GPG will discuss this with AusNet and Powercor, provide information to the CEC on how many outages occurred during stringing of the Ryan Corner transmission line, and seek information on how many might be expected during stringing of the Hawkesdale transmission line.





Summary of further discussion:

- John asked if extended roadside vegetation screening could be planted. GPG responded that any screening would need to be on private property inside fencelines.
- Since the last CEC meeting the CFA has visited the site.

3. Work hours



- Civil construction earthworks have now commenced to construct the access tracks and hardstands. Generally, the civil contractor will be working:
 - ✓ Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm
 - ✓ Saturday 7am to 4pm (regular)
 - ✓ Sunday & Public holidays 7am to 4pm (occasional as required)
- Saturday afternoon (1pm to 4pm) and Sunday works will be restricted to “managed impact” and “low impact” works as defined by the EPA guidelines.
- The purpose of weekend work is to reduce the overall construction duration, and subsequently the duration of impact on the local community.

4. Community engagement & benefit sharing



- ✓ **Community engagement**
 - Weekly construction updates are being emailed and uploaded to the Hawkesdale wind farm web page
 - August newsletter available
 - No complaints received since the last meeting

4. Community engagement & benefit sharing **GPG** Naturgy Group

✓ **Benefit sharing**

- Community Benefit Fund
 - ✓ Hawkesdale Township Grant Program launched August 31
 - ✓ 11 applications have been received

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Applications open | 31/08/2023 |
| Information session | 12/09/2023 7:00 pm Hawkesdale Memorial Hall |
| Applications close | 16/10/2023 10:00 am |
| Meeting to discuss applications | 24/10/2023 |
| Meeting to discuss applications | 14/11/2023 |
| Announcement of successful applicants | 24/11/2023 |

Summary of further discussion:

- The fund committee's discussions regarding the assessment of grant applications will not be made public.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with feedback about their applications.
- Initially the Fund will be offered as one round per year.

9.3 Council:

Nothing further to report.

10. General business

Nil.

11. Summary of actions from the meeting

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|-----|---|
| GPG | Provide the CEC with a copy of the endorsed BAMP when it has been endorsed by the Minister for Planning. |
| GPG | Ask the over-dimensional load contractor what traffic warning measures are set out in its procedure for escort vehicles. |
| GPG | Discuss power outages with AusNet and Powercor, provide information to the CEC on how many outages occurred during stringing of the Ryan Corner transmission line, and seek information on how many might be expected during stringing of the Hawkesdale transmission line. |



Minutes

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| COUNCIL | Report back to the CEC when a response is received from the Minister for Planning to the letter from the Mayor regarding a further bird and bat study. |
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Next meeting – Monday 27 November 2023, 5.30pm at the Hawkesdale Memorial Hall – Supper Room

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

CONFIRMED

Attachment 1

Ref:531455
Contact: Michelle Grainger



5 October 2023

The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny MP
Minister for Planning
Level 16, 8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Email: sonya.kilkenny@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Kilkenny,

Hawkesdale Wind Farm – Bird and Bat Surveys

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 26 September 2023, Moyne Shire Council resolved that:

*On behalf of the Hawkesdale Wind Farm Community Engagement Committee,
Council write to the Minister for Planning requesting a new bat and avifauna survey
for the Hawkesdale Wind Farm prior to commencement of operation.*

The Hawkesdale Wind Farm Community Engagement Committee (CEC) is an Advisory Committee of Council. The CEC was established by Council in 2020 and is comprised of six Hawkesdale and district community representatives, two proponent (GPG) representatives and one Moyne Shire Councillor.

The CEC's Charter states that any recommendation from the CEC will be referred to Council for a decision.

Background

The most recent pre-construction bird and bat surveys undertaken by the proponent for the Hawkesdale Wind Farm were completed in 2010. The community representatives on the Hawkesdale Wind Farm CEC are concerned that 13 years have elapsed since the report from the most recent survey was completed. This concern led to the recommendation to Council.

The Hawkesdale Wind Farm proponent GPG reported at the July 2023 CEC meeting that it had submitted a Bat and Avifauna Management Plan (BAMP) to DEECA and is awaiting endorsement of that plan from the Minister for Planning. GPG also noted that in considering the draft BAMP, DEECA had not requested any further bat and avifauna surveys be done, nor any updates to previous surveys.

Timelines

Timeline of the planning process for the Hawkesdale Wind Farm:

Ref:531455
Contact: Michelle Grainger



- 2005 – 2006: Desktop and in-field flora and fauna surveys by the applicant.
- September 2006: Application lodged with the Minister for Planning for the Hawkesdale Wind Farm.
- June 2007: Hawkesdale Wind Farm Panel Hearing
- August 2008: Hawkesdale Wind Farm permit issued
- October 2009: Bird utilisation survey
- 2009 – 2010: Bat survey
- June 2010: Report issued: Hawkesdale Wind Farm Pre-Construction Bird and Bat Surveys BLA June 2010.
- November 2011: Permit amendment granted for extension of time.
- October 2013: Permit amendment granted for extension of time.
- April 2015: Permit amendment granted for extension of time.
- 2017: Application lodged to amend the permit, including to increase the height and reduce the number of turbines. The application relied on previous bat and avifauna studies and reports from between 2005 and 2010, as listed above.
- August 2017: Hawkesdale Wind Farm Panel Hearing.
One of the Panel recommendations was that the Bat and Avifauna Management Plan be revised to reflect the changes proposed.
- October 2022: Permit amendment granted, including for the removal of three turbines.
- 2023: GPG advised that a draft (revised) Bat and Avifauna Management Plan had been submitted to the Minister for Planning for assessment.

Planning Permit Conditions

Each permit listed above contained the following conditions:

Within 3 months of the issue of this amended permit, unless extended by the Minister for Planning, a methodology must be prepared for a targeted assessment to determine the utilisation of the site by the threatened bird and bat species identified in the report titled, Hawkesdale Wind Farm Application for Planning Permit by Gamesa Energy Australia/ TME Australia Volume 1 – Main Report and Volume 2 Annexes, September 2006. A methodology for the assessment shall be developed in consultation with (DSE/DELWP) to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning. - The assessment must be carried out, to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning,

Ref:531455
Contact: Michelle Grainger



during the period between the approval of the methodology and the commissioning of the last turbine.

DEECA has advised Council that it confirmed satisfaction with these conditions when the initial BAMP was endorsed in 2012.

It is Councils' understanding that a revised BAMP has been submitted to DTP and DEECA in 2019 for consideration and has not yet been endorsed.

The Hawkesdale Wind Farm is now under construction.

Council Request

On behalf of the Hawkesdale Wind Farm CEC, Council asks that due to the considerable amount of time since the most recent Hawkesdale Wind Farm bird and bat survey was completed in June 2010, you request GPG to undertake a further survey prior to the Wind Farm becoming operational.

Please contact Michelle Grainger, Manager Environment & Energy on 0408 987 357 or mgrainger@moyne.vic.gov.au if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,



Cr Karen Foster
Mayor

Attachment 2: Email from John Bos (15 October)

Notes pertaining to the next C.E.C meeting on 23rd October 2023

Since the last meeting, and after C.E.C. community representatives were finally able to view the Fauna study of the HWF by Brett Lane, it has become obvious this study has many flaws which in our opinion render it useless as a study of the actual birdlife in and around the HWF site. As such we (community representatives) requested through Councillor Gleeson for a new study to be conducted. This was presented to council at their last meeting where they voted to write to the state government (Minister Kilkenny) for a new study to be undertaken.

Councillor Gleeson was supplied with a dot point summary of the main reasons for the new study which he presented to council.

We followed up with the author of the letter to Minister Kilkenny (Michelle Grainger) and found this letter had been sent and that a copy would be made available at the October C.E.C. meeting.

As we have no idea of the content of this letter, we ask that time be made available at the start of the October meeting to view, discuss and if applicable request further action should the minister not be given a full indication of why the new study be undertaken.

The issue of oversized loads transporting large (particularly wide) loads to the wind farm has again been raised. Since the last meeting where the issue of bus travel been interrupted, this has continued to occur. We have been requested to follow up with GPG to find out who is responsible and as such we request a copy of a permit issued by Vic Roads to determine who should be named when making a complaint to Vic Roads.

It has also been mentioned by several persons that at one point an escort vehicle driver was veering to the wrong side of the road holding a small paddle out of the drivers' side window to usher drivers to pull over. There appears to be little communication between the escort vehicles and other large vehicle travelling in the opposite direction on VHF40 to warn of oncoming over width vehicles. One would have thought illuminated signage on the escort vehicle provide a far safer means of transporting these items.

Why don't the escort vehicles use more modern and safer indicators for warning oncoming traffic?

Three landowners near the transmission towers have raised concerns that their mobile and/or internet reception may be affected by contractors working on these lines or even usage at the wind farm site itself. I have spoken to Debra about this however feel it requires a written response for these individuals.

Several people have indicated that the compositions of persons on the grant committee is weighted towards females. Is there a reason for this?