



RATCH-Australia Corporation

**MT EMERALD WIND FARM – COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
AGENDA/ MEETING MINUTES**

Date	28/02/2019	Time	4:00 – 5:40
Venue	Walkamin Community and Sports Club Hall 1 Kurrajong Road, Walkamin		

Attendees	Dr Steve Turton (Indep Chair)	Kim Forde
Sam Musumeci	John Hardy	Gerry Turpin (MBarbarrum)
David Reynolds	Ross Iraci	Don Lennox
Steve Lavis	Bronwyn Dwyer	John Parmenter
Invitees	Paul McDonald	Andrew Radke
Apologies	Terry Johannesen	Jim Carey

No.	Item / Discussion/ Action	Responsibility	Due date
1	Welcome, Introductions and apologies Apologies received from Jim Carey. No attendance by Steve Lavis and Gerry Turpin		
2	Pecuniary interests, minutes from last meeting • No pecuniary interests Previous meeting Nov 22 – no Minutes due to lack of Quorum. Meeting previous to that was site visit and no formal meeting held.		nil
3	Purpose of Group – Communication and Representation <i>Independent Chair Steve Turton remind CCC of the Charter. The key element is to respect everyone else’s view to enable the group to function better and for information to flow.</i>	Chair	
4	Roles, Rules, Responsibilities Ongoing Roles within the CCC – KF informed of ceasing contract as of this meeting and therefore of Secretariat role for CCC. Paul McDonald is new Site Manager for RAC MEWF. He will attend future CCC’s as RAC representative. His contact details are: Paul.McDonald@ratchaustralia.com Mob: 61 428 342 068 ST to liaise with PMc for future meetings Thanks to KF for assistance since establishment of CCC	Chair PM	
5	Project Update • <i>construction progress: Paul McDonald</i> 12 December 2018 – major project milestone of Practical Completion – triggered the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) – contract for delivery/sale of energy to the grid.	PM KF PM	

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	<p>Commercial Operations now – all other construction items (defects list) being worked through and finalised – roads, rehabilitation etc.</p> <p>Site is online and has been delivering power to the grid since turbines first commenced turning in August 2018.</p> <p>12 – 15 construction staff still on site. All permanent staff on-site.</p> <p>Turbines can be off at various times for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) breakdowns/teething issues – slight delays in getting replacement parts; 2) 3 month servicing – each day 3 turbines are off for service – bolt tightening, retensioning, lubrication etc. 3) 12 month servicing. 3 month servicing will roll into 12 month regime. <p>Grid testing to verify what goes into the grid needs higher winds than we are currently receiving (80% output). Needs a windy day (at least 3 – 4 hrs) to complete the remaining tests. April expected to be time to achieve this.</p> <p>Power output – all generated is immediately exported to the grid. Up to 180MW. Maximum achieved is 140 – 150MW to date.</p> <p>To end of January 2019 – exported 150GW/Hrs electricity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To check output – download: PocketNEM App or check http://www.nem-watch.info/widgets/reneweconomy/ • <i>outcomes of Andrew Dyer – Wind Farm Commissioner visit</i> <p>Andrew Dyer visit end of October 2018 – site visit and met with available members of CCC.</p> <p>KF - Andrew was very open in answering questions from those who attended, and his observations that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people’s concerns were based on ‘fear of the unknown’ • The number of complaints about a project tailed off significantly once operations commenced as the ‘actual’ replaced the unknown • That most concerns were able to be addressed in relation to operational issues by working with the wind farm operator, and had been successfully actioned out. <p>He had a couple of suggestions in relation to minimising public concerns moving forward, in regard to the post-construction noise monitoring that was passed onto Ratch’s management team for consideration.</p> <p>Provided a copy of his Annual Report to ST – link here: https://www.nwfc.gov.au/sites/default/files/nwfc-annual-report-2017.pdf?v=1523425280</p>	PM	

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	<p>ST – Request for comment from CCC JH – Good value – impressed with communications from Commissioner JP – no new concerns that AD had not addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Turbine configuration – SCADA setup</i> <p>RI – Turbines are noisy. At night need to have windows closed when wind is from the south-east. (Oak Creek) Sounds like a waterfall. Reported feedback someone who claims to hear them 4km away. JP – noise has increased over last 2 months (Channel Rd); when its windy at home you cannot hear the turbines, but when it is quiet, noise can be heard. PM – Complaint of sleep disturbance received from one residence since operations commenced. JP – wrist monitor of ‘sleep disturbance’ offered by J Disley. Hasn’t taken up offer.</p> <p>PM – Noise management is programmed into each turbine. Mark Loudon attended Nov CCC meeting to explain input of noise management data. Explained to all present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-commissioning - input data through the planning stage. Turbines are calibrated to true N. table of data generated for different time periods, wind directions and wind speeds. Noise management settings are input for specific turbines using these criteria. • At various levels, turbines will manage sound by curtailing itself to reduce noise. Downwind noise will be reduced. On each turbine, when the turbine enters the specified range, it will alter its operation to minimise noise. • Wind sector management – when one turbine is behind another at various wind directions • Noise management settings are stored locally in each turbines controller (computer) – set and locked in and will operate according to that program. <p>DH – Will the noise monitoring be able to detect the Audible Noise that has been discussed? PM – yes</p> <p>JH – WF Commissioner asked to consider Independent Noise Auditor. PM – Independent 3rd Party Auditor – no exactly the same as suggested by the WF Commissioner. Due to there being only 3 Noise Monitoring companies in Australia who specialise in wind farm assessments – 1 already contracted to Vestas; 1 already used by RAC and 1 other to be used for third-party auditing.</p> <p>RI – conflict of interest in Noise Monitoring? PM – Vestas are obliged to ensure compliance to DA Noise conditions. Penalties for non-performance to Contract. First round of noise monitoring in coming months – using previous contractor but audited by an independent company. Data currently being collated between development masts and operating masts, which is required for formal noise monitoring.</p>		

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	<p>DH – Checks and balances – Monitoring should have been done prior to commissioning. KF – explained that noise monitoring is undertaken at same time of year (and at the quietest time of the year in relation to external noises like rainfall and insect noise) to give like-for-like for background noise levels. Likely to be May-July. Winter is quietest time in this region.</p> <p>JH – will Oaky Valley area be monitored. PM – yes. KF – all previous monitored sites will be repeated to give comparative results.</p> <p>SM – so is liability for noise compliance with Vestas? PM – Vestas have some contractual obligations, but ultimate responsibility (and compliance testing) is with MEWF and RAC (DA application)</p> <p>RI – will noise monitoring be in Oaky Valley? Still awaiting noise monitoring data report from previous monitoring. Anticipate next monitoring will note a change/increase in noise in Oaky Valley.</p> <p>ST – could noise monitoring team come and make a presentation to the CCC. PM – request can be made – depends on timing/availability/willingness to speak publicly. Placement of monitoring equipment is a very specialist skill.</p> <p>JH – previously lived near irrigation channel and got used to the noise. Could hear drop structures. JP – notice irrigation noise when it stops. Same for wind farm noise.</p> <p>DH - Property Values drop KF – confirmed WF Commissioner feedback that drop may be very short term and localised, and other factors usually impact on rural property values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bird and Bat Monitoring</i> <p>PM – 4 Elements Consulting have started bird and bat monitoring. From 20 Aug commissioning to this week (27/2): 75 Bird and bat strikes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 protected species – Spectacled Flying Foxes • 9 other species recorded <p>Monitoring will comprise detailing strikes and identifying patterns fortnightly until 2021.</p> <p>DH – do they damage blades? PM – no.</p> <p>ST – very low rate of strikes. Especially when compared with cars and buildings.</p> <p>JH – any Magpie Geese? PM – No</p>		<p>PM – please pass on previous noise reports for Oaky Valley (RI property results) to RI. Contact TJ</p> <p>PM – confirm whether Marshall-Day rep could speak to CCC.</p>

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	General discussion re birds and fires		
6	Community meetings – briefings provided and planned KF has been directed to reduce her role. All requests for community briefings will be directed to PM in future, to action as appropriate. KF available as requested to assist.	KF	
7	<p>Community Benefit Fund - update</p> <p>Advisory Committee appointed: Chair – Tom Braes; Norma Moloney, Neil Setford, Don Geyer RAC MEWF Rep - Paul McDonald</p> <p>48 applications for more than \$700 000 of projects. This weekend (3 Mar) decisions on allocation of Round 1 funds. Ad in Tablelands newspapers when decided.</p> <p>MEWF website has application form for downloading. Lessons learned already on improving process. Any feedback from CCC / Community is welcomed.</p>	KF/PM	
8	<p>Guest Speaker: Andrew Radke – installation of radio towers on MEWF to improve access to NBN</p> <p>Tower installed – signal dishes on MEWF and on Howe Farming properties. 3 maps circulated to CCC. Data network will be established on wind farm site – to provide internet connectivity into areas where there is no NBN. Focus on properties along Channel Road then into Oaky Ck. Blue are covered now – Radios pointing out – commissioning /testing occurring now. To progress - needs radio licence from ACMA. Pink area is highest priority. Not NBN satellite – much better. Flexible options – internet where nothing else. All at 5GHz. All licenced spectrum.</p> <p>Ultimate coverage – Dimbulah to Atherton Price – cheaper than NBN. Monthly fee comparable to NBN/ADSL costs. Better than 3G /4G satellite. Install costs passed on. Speed: >300 MB/sec possible to achieve. Reality – speed dictated by Tablelands internet. Initially 5 – 10MB/sec and improving to 100 MB/sec. And managed services for Routers and security. Andrew Radke contact details: andrew@deepport.net mob: 041279-8593</p>	Andrew Radke	
9	Group Discussion – identify issues/ Requests for information/briefings	All	

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	<p>JP – Loud blasting approx 2 weeks ago? What’s happening? PM – not from MEWF SM – may have been from TERM Quarry</p> <p>JP – Permanent Erosion and Sediment Controls status PM – Installation / finalisation of drainage structures; repairing of ‘soft spots’ on roads. Still entails some rock breaking onsite. JH – Erosion from recent high events – same as last year? PM – No. After December/January rainfall events, sampling at permanent water monitoring points undertaken as required. All outputs within limits acceptable under the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).</p> <p>SM – What is duration of Contractors Maintenance Period? PM – 2yrs Defects Liability Period.</p> <p>JH – Status of Transplanting R+T Plants PM – All R+T have been relocated back to the site, of the 4000 plus plants that we had in our nursery. 200 – 300 of the general species are still to be planted out. Hydro-mulching of the large batters is complete. Seed collected from the site supplemented the seed mix for hydro-mulching.</p> <p>ST- Quolls status PM – none trapped for many months. USC team (Scott Burnett) has been on site recently, installing camera traps Quoll dogs finished onsite approx 2 weeks ago. Recent experience of Quoll found in engine bay of hire car on site – vehicle left there until quoll moved voluntarily.</p> <p>JH – UXO still on-site? PM – only as needed. Finished up in Aug 2018. December 2018, returned to site to look at new areas. Found 3” mortar – which was exploded just before Christmas by Dept of Defence staff</p> <p>JH – Indigenous program status? PM – Not much more to do with Mbarbarrum people. Inspection end Feb 2019 to close out scope of program and to decide what to do with found artefacts. Meeting at the end of rehab period to inspect the site – Disturbed area is being rehabilitated and reduced actively.</p> <p>RI – underground fire bunkers</p>		

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	<p>PM – 8 Fire bunkers installed across the site. Have capacity for 6 people for approx 1 hr. At the site emergency muster point are 2 bunkers, a helipad and a 50 000L water tank. The other 6 fire bunkers are spread around the site.</p> <p>RI request – details to Rural Fire Services of location and access details of Fire Bunkers.</p> <p>RI – Cold burn to be conducted over winter on MEWF and adjoining areas. Requesting site visit to establish communications and site famil for Rural Fires</p> <p>JH – WHS training for use of fire bunkers? PM – all site staff are informed during site induction.</p> <p>DH – When turbines turning. Will RAC/MEWF publish outputs – live data on website of generation? JH – for home and other solar generation, you can get a visual representation / live feed that says ‘this is how much is/has been generated’. PM – RAC/MEWF websites are to about to be updated to reflect change from Construction to Operation focus. Will feed comment into RAC Management / Communication Mgr for consideration of widget/app to give information.</p> <p>JH – Windy Hill burned out turbine – what is status/proposed? PM – Insurance claim being worked through. Options to refurbish nacelle or replace it. Still to be decided.</p> <p>ST – standard future Agenda Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction update • Operations update • Flora/Fauna monitoring results • Noise monitoring results <p>JH – ongoing Community CC requirement? ST – at least until Sept 2019. Community Committee will continue until they decide it is no longer needed/ wanted.</p> <p>PM – Grand Opening ceremony/ Open Day likely to be June/July</p>		<p>PM – Pass information on/liaise with Rural Fires re site visit – contact Ross Iraci – biraci@gmail.com Also Regional Councils Disaster Coordination Groups – TRC / MSC.</p>
10	<p>Information Sharing/ Information requests Any further requests</p>	KF	
11	<p>Next meeting – timing and location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May. • ST to send email to CCC / PM to determine suitable date/ time/ location closer to May. • Meeting closed at 1740 		