



<b>Project:</b>	Coopers Gap Wind Farm	
<b>Meeting No:</b>	Sixth Community Consultative Committee meeting	
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 18 October 2012	
<b>Venue and Time:</b>	Boardroom, Western Downs Regional Council, Dalby 1pm – 4.00pm	
<b>Document:</b>	Meeting notes and actions	
<b>Chair/Facilitator:</b>	Kath Elliott (KE), GHD	
<b>Minutes:</b>	Sara van der Schatte Olivier (SO), GHD	
<b>AGL representatives:</b>	Nigel Bean (NB) Project Director and Adam Mackett (AM)	
<b>Committee Members:</b>	Ian Schafferis	Participating landowner
	Sue Sinammon	Participating landowner
	Tom Hoare	Coopers Gap Wind Farm Supporters
	Cyril Stewart	Coopers Gap Wind Farm Supporters
	Jane Holdsworth	Western Downs Regional Council
	Megan Nilon	South Burnett Regional Council (attending in place of Chris Du Plessis)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mal Collinge	Local Aboriginal Elder
	Chris Du Plessis	South Burnett Regional Council
	Evan Carless	AGL
	Amanda Shaw	AGL
<b>Community observers in attendance:</b>	Approximately 9	

- > Being Australia's largest private owner and operator of renewable energy assets
- > Gaining accreditation under the National GreenPower Accreditation Program for AGL Green Energy®, AGL Green Living® and AGL Green Spirit
- > Being selected as a constituent of the FTSE4Good Index Series



## Meeting Minutes

Item	Action
<p>1. Welcome</p> <p>Kath Elliott (KE) welcomed the CCC members and observers in attendance and provided an overview of the agenda. It was advised that due to the technology involved in having Professor Simon Chapman presenting to the group via web conference the agenda was being slightly amended, starting with Prof Chapman and returning to the agenda.</p>	
<p>2. Presentation by Professor Simon Chapman and facilitated question and answer session</p> <p>KE introduced Professor Simon Chapman who then presented on health and wind farms.</p> <p>(Presentation and discussion with Professor Chapman is available via AGL's project website.)</p>	
<p>3. Question and answer session with Professor Simon Chapman</p> <p>The health presentation was followed by a question and answer session with CCC members and the community observers.</p> <p>The questions and answers have been summarised below.</p> <p>Q1. It is important that as representatives of the community we listen to both sides of the argument before making decisions. In your field of expertise do you believe there is enough recent evidence that continues to prove there are no ill effects from wind farms? Or do you see the situation as there being no evidence now that could be there in the future or do you think this is a situation that needs to be closely monitored?</p> <p>A1. In science and medicine there is no such thing as no risk. I would rule out questions of high risk because of the sheer longevity of the existence of wind turbines in multiple countries across the world for 20 or so years. There does not appear to be any evidence from the natural experiment of wind farms being in a number of communities. Issues are only being raised in some of the communities.</p>	

<p>In response to the question about whether it is too soon to know if there is a risk I would argue that there is not a high risk due to wind farms being around for so long, being located in so many countries and due to the nature of illnesses being of psychogenic origin.</p> <p>I believe people are annoyed by wind farms and they may feel sick because of the thought of them. I can't produce a paper that shows any evidence that is really worrying about wind farms relating to health.</p> <p>There is one paper by Alex Salt, an audiologist who has shown that hair in the ears of rodents can be measured to be waving around when exposed to infrasound. Some opponents to wind farms have used this paper to argue that infrasound has measurable physiological changes to the hair in the ears of rodents. Nobody disputes that the hairs move, however the clinical significance of the hairs moving is in question.</p>	
<p>Q2. What length of time would be reasonable to take a study over?</p> <p>A2. This comes down to the acute and chronic affects being claimed. Acute affects could be studied quite quickly. For example, you could take residents within 5kms of a wind farm and test the impacts on residents by randomly turning off the turbines on particular nights. It may be challenging to control and accurately measure the results of these studies as some participants could skew results by notifying others if they notice the turbines have been turned off. 20 years should be ample time to measure chronic illnesses. As discussed, the 17 reviews undertaken by both governments and independent experts have consistent findings and none have produced evidence of wind farms causing people to be sick.</p> <p>Q3. As far as you know is there any scientific evidence that wind farms cause adverse health impacts.</p> <p>A3. No. There may be people who provide you with documents that report claims by people who say they had no health problems until the wind turbines were constructed. The trouble with these reports is that there are a number of factors that could have caused the health problems.</p>	
<p>Q4. When people claim that they are getting sick because of wind turbines are people really sick?</p> <p>A4. Yes. If someone says they have been throwing up, or say they can't sleep, or have been feeling depressed they probably have been. The point is not to deny the symptoms people are experiencing. The issue and question to ask is, what is causing them to be sick? Is it the wind turbines themselves physically or is it the thought of the wind turbines that is making them sick. I believe the biggest factor making people feel ill is people spreading concerns about the health impacts of wind farms.</p>	

<p>A comment was made by one member of the CCC that in effect wind turbines are causing people to be sick but it is more mental than physical. The group discussed that the worry, stress and fear of wind turbines not the wind turbines themselves might be causing people to be sick.</p>	
<p>KE thanked Prof Chapman for his time and presentation to the CCC and community.</p>	
<p>4. Meeting minutes and other business</p> <p>The September meeting minutes were discussed and the importance of having accurate notes was reiterated by members of the CCC. One change was discussed regarding the resignations from some members of the CCC. A change was asked to be made to reflect discussion that letters from AGL would be sent to those members who resigned from the committee accepting their resignation.</p>	<p>AGL to update September minutes and to ensure letters are sent to those members who have resigned from the committee</p>
<p>The CCC then discussed the resignations of four members from the CCC. It was explained that Evan Carless had spoken with Byran Lyons, the representative from the Cooranga North Concerned Citizens Group and had discussed his concerns as outlined in his letter to Mayor Kratzmann in September. KE explained that she had spoken to Jacqui Castle, Bruce Gooderham and Rod Kane by telephone, and each of them tendered their verbal resignations from CGCCC for various reasons.</p>	
<p>It was discussed that all four resignations had been accepted by AGL and letters have either been sent or are in the process of being sent to these members acknowledging their resignation.</p>	
<p>The CCC then discussed the importance of having fair and equitable representation on the committee. The group discussed extending an invitation to other neighbours of the proposed wind farm and ensuring the four available seats are not filled by turbine hosts or members of the community that are part of the wind farm supporters group. Some members of the committee outlined that there had been some interest in the community to participate in this group. It was also discussed that the community does not only include those people within a 3km radius of the proposed development and that community members further away from the development are also encouraged to nominate their interest in participating.</p>	



<p>AGL outlined that they will advertise the four available positions in local print media. It was felt that completing nomination forms was still an important process as members were required to make a commitment of time and were often asked to review documentation before attending each meeting. By seeking nominations the committee and AGL can better understand why a community member wants to be on the committee and ensure each representative is happy to make the time commitment. It will also assist to ensure a broad range of views are represented on the committee.</p>	<p>AGL to advertise the four positions on the CCC and make nominations forms available.</p>
<p>The committee also discussed advertising the available positions on the radio and on notice boards in both Councils. AGL also committed to preparing an open letter of invitation that could be used by existing committee members to send to anyone they feel might be interested in nominating themselves.</p> <p>Potential members were discussed including representatives from the Chamber of Commerce in both Dalby and Kingaroy. Cr Tony Brame was in attendance and said he would be interested in nominating himself as the spokesperson of the South Queensland Tourism Board.</p>	<p>AGL to prepare an open letter of invitation to participate on the CCC.</p>
<p>It was discussed that a seat will be kept available for a representative of the Cooranga North Concerned Citizens group. However, it was also discussed that just because those members who have resigned are no longer formal members of the CCC, they can always approach CCC members or AGL for information or to have their questions answered. It was reiterated that they, nor anyone else, is excluded from the process.</p>	
<p>AGL outlined that one issue which had been raised by the Cooranga North Citizens Group was the appointment of an independent chair, which AGL was comfortable with. The members then discussed whether they would like a local independent chair. AGL outlined that they had been happy with the professional service GHD had provided but wanted it to be discussed at the committee. Views expressed by committee members included that they felt the meetings had been run well by Barbara and Kath, that the process was running well so there is no need to change anything.</p> <p>One member outlined that it was important to consider and discuss this issue as it had been raised as a concern about the process. If a local facilitator was used it may take away an issue for some community members and improve perceptions of equity.</p>	

<p>Discussions included that a local facilitator could be better at raising local issues, the process may benefit from a local voice and it may improve credibility.</p> <p>The group then discussed that by changing the facilitator it would send the wrong message to the community and would delegitimise the process to date. It was discussed that the facilitator has very little input into different sides or views and the main role is to direct the meeting. Some members felt they had a better opportunity to have a say now.</p> <p>The group commented that there would be some uncertainty about the process if the facilitator was changed and the process was currently working well. The members discussed that they are learning a lot from the information being discussed and presented.</p> <p>Each committee member had the opportunity to discuss their views on an independent chair. It was decided that GHD would continue to facilitate the CCC meetings.</p>	
<p>AGL outlined that they were committed to getting information out to the broader community, including filming presentations at CCC meetings and uploading onto AGL's website. Amanda Shaw, AGL's Community Engagement Manager will be using a range of communication tools to consult with the broader community in addition to the CCC.</p>	
<p>The meeting time for the CCC was discussed due to day light savings changes. The members indicated that holding the meeting in the afternoon would be more convenient. The committee agreed to changing the timing of the meeting to between 3.30pm and 6.30pm. It was discussed that this may also encourage more community observers to the meetings.</p>	
<p>Sue Sinnamon explained that Bill Spakes will stand in for her as a turbine host at the November meeting as she will be away.</p>	
<p>The November meeting was discussed and it was agreed that the meeting will be held in the Cooranga North Community Hall. The agenda for November was discussed and it was agreed that fire risk management, a presentation from the Clean Energy Council and discussing new membership would be the key topics.</p>	<p>AGL to confirm with Val Stewart that the hall is available.</p>
<p>The committee would like one CCC meeting to be held in Kingaroy and this should be scheduled for a later date.</p>	
<p>There will be no CCC meeting in December due to Christmas. The CCC will reconvene on 17 January 2013.</p>	



<p>Questions from the community observers were then asked.</p> <p>One concern was raised that there would be a perception in the community that the CCC was unrepresentative or one sided.</p> <p>AGL responded that one of the main purposes of the CCC was to communicate information with the community and this can still be achieved. AGL is making the information presented at the CCC widely available. AGL regrets that a group has chosen to resign from the committee as they are foregoing an opportunity to try and influence the project and work towards better outcomes.</p> <p>KE commented that it is good to have a range of views to encourage debate and discussion during meetings. It is good for views to be challenged and to see alternative perspectives. By having a broad range of views companies can develop a better understanding of concerns and try to minimise their impacts. Even if people oppose a development, by sitting at the table they can challenge the process and drive for better outcomes for the community. It was explained that this process can sometimes take time to evolve.</p>	
<p>The member from Western Downs Regional Council said her role was to be an impartial and transparent community representative and bring forward any questions or concerns the community may have.</p> <p>Another member commented that they joined the committee with an open mind and had some doubts about the process however now felt more comfortable and informed about the development.</p>	
<p>Meeting closed at 3.45pm</p>	