MINUTES OF SAPPHIRE WIND FARM COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

10am, Tuesday 21 July 2026
Inverell Shire Council (Committee Rooms)
144 Otho St, Inverell

Attendees:

Michael J. Silver OAM (MJS)	Independent Chairperson
David Williamson (DW)	Sapphire Wind Farm Representative
Cr Carol Sparks (CS)	Glenn Innes Severn Council delegate
Ben Swan (BS)	Host Landholder
Greg Doman (GD)	Inverell Shire Council
Dane O'Connor (DO'C)	Regional Economic Development Manager, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Apologies: Chris Voll (CV) - Community Representative (Church Communities Australia & Inverell Chamber of Commerce & Industry)

ITEM	ACTION/COMMENTS
1.0 Welcome and Introductions CCC meeting opened at 9.10 am by MJS who welcomed all attendees and noted the apology.	
2.0 Acknowledgement of Country The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting is being held and their continuing connection to land, water, and culture, paying respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging.	
3.0 Previous Minutes It was noted that the minutes from the meeting of 8 May 2025 were approved on 19 May 2025 and placed on the Proponent's website.	
4.0 Declaration of Interests BS advised that he has a pecuniary interest as he is a host landholder for the development. MS advised that his expenses as Independent Chairperson are borne by Squadron Energy.	
5.0 Business Arising **5.1 Solar & Battery Projects** CS enquired whether the decision not to proceed with the solar projects will change and will installation of battery storage be further considered. DW advised that there is no intention to change the decision on the solar and battery projects at this point.	
6.0 Actions **6.1 Discuss future operations of CCC with DPHI** Refer to 7.0 Chair's Minute	
7.0 Chair's Minute – Future Operation of the CCC MJS noted the action to discuss the future of the CCC with the Department. However, given the low attendance at the previous meeting	

he determined that it should be considered by all members prior to discussion with DPHI. MJS provided an overview of the recent operation of the CCC and its functionality, given it meets once annually. He noted attendance at CCC meetings has been mixed over recent years. He also noted that the Sapphire Wind Farm has been operational since late 2018 and issues have diminished in recent times. This has highlighted a need to consider how the CCC operates moving forward. MJS suggested that there may be two options: • Continue to operate the CCC on a one meeting (in-person) per year basis. • Operate the CCC through an annual report from the Proponent to the CCC, in lieu of an in-person meeting. General discussion proceeded on the two options. It was acknowledged that the demand for an in-person meeting on an annual basis had reduced, however there was still a need to ensure the community and local government had the ability to interact with the Proponent on any areas of concern and be kept informed of any issues associated with the operation of the wind farm. It was noted that the distribution of the Community Benefit Fund now occurs as a matter of course and is effectively managed by Inverell Shire Council and Glen Innes Severn Council. It was considered that an annual report by the Proponent to the CCC in lieu of an in-person meeting was the preferred option. MJS indicated that any change in meeting arrangements would require a review and amendment of the CCC Terms of Reference. MJS suggested the amended Terms of Reference be agreed by the CCC prior to discussing matter with DPHI.	
8.0 Terms of Reference (ToR) MJS advised that the Terms of Reference for the Committee had not been reviewed for twelve months – as such it is appropriate that a review be undertaken now, given the previous deliberations on future meeting arrangements. It was resolved that: 1. The Terms of Reference be amended to provide for the presentation by the Proponent of an Annual Report to be delivered to the Independent Chair by 31 May each year for subsequent distribution to the members of the CCC for consideration, with members to provide comment and feedback to the Independent Chair in order that the Report Minutes are finalised by 30 June. 2. The Independent Chair be authorised to redraft the Terms of Reference for distribution and review by the CCC. Moved BS Seconded DO'C. ***Chair's note:*** *Following distribution of the draft ToR to the CCC members for review and comment all members indicate support for the amendments with CV making a submission with the following comments:*	**Chair's Advice: The draft ToR was forwarded to CCC members and proposes that the Proponent's Annual Report shall be delivered in May of each year - any matters to be specifically addressed by the Proponent shall be provided by the CCC members to the Chairperson in April. Following receipt of the Proponent's Annual Report, the CCC members will have two weeks in**

- *"Extraordinary Meetings" suggests there are Ordinary Meetings, but since "Reporting" is replacing ordinary meetings, perhaps we should go with in-person (or face-to-face) meetings here?* - *Since we are eliminating an annual face-to-face meeting, it seems important to give committee members some ability to force an in-person meeting. The rule allowing the chair to solely determine whether an extraordinary meeting is warranted seems a bit out of balance, now that there is no annual meeting. I am suggesting committee members by agreement could "force" a meeting. If necessary, we could include language to limit to one in-person meeting per year?* *The comments from CV have been reviewed and amendments made in relation to 'in-person' meetings where required. In terms of the calling of 'in-person' meetings, the suggestion that CCC members should be able to 'force' a meeting is inconsistent with the CCC Guidelines and the role of the Chairperson. Notwithstanding this, an amendment has been included requiring the Chairperson to 'consult with all committee members regarding the calling of an in-person meeting.'* *It is noted that the consent for the Sapphire Wind Farm provides as follows:* o *"Community Consultative Committee* *D1. The Proponent shall establish and operate a CCC for the project to the satisfaction of the Secretary. This CCC must be established and operated in accordance with any applicable CCC guideline.* *Given the consent condition, any change in operation of the CCC meeting procedure will be a matter to which the Secretary of DPHI will need to be 'satisfied'.*	**early June to provide comment, and the Chairperson shall prepare a Report Minutes for distribution and CCC review. The CCC members will have one week to provide any comment before the Report Minutes are confirmed by the Chairperson. The Report Minutes shall be finalised by 30 June each year.**
7.0 Correspondence: - ***NSW Department Planning Housing and Infrastructure:*** Providing an update on the roles and responsibilities of the chairperson, community members, and the Proponents of Community Consultative Committees (CCC). The Chair stepped the Committee through the major points in the correspondence, noting that representations had been made by community members to the Planning Secretary regarding the operation of certain CCCs. MJS highlighted the comments regarding the recording of minutes, and the potential to engage a minute taker. He advised that due to previous difficulties in the recording of minutes by a minute taker at other CCC meetings he chairs, he has over the last six years assumed this role to ensure the content of the minutes are an accurate reflection of the intent and context of discussions at the CCC meeting. He noted that the roles and responsibilities of the CCC Chair were outlined in an attachment to the correspondence. Mr Silver advised the correspondence would be distributed to the CCC.	
8.0 Project Update DW provided the project update: Ongoing annual maintenance of the wind turbines, site roads and weed management continue.	

Continued Improvement Modifications (CIM) are ongoing. Monitoring and inspections are ongoing. Following DPHI's approval, BBAMP inspections have been moved to bi-annually. One in summer and one in winter. There has been no significant changes and no significant concerns since implementing this process. Bird strikes remain low, being less than 20 annually. There have been no formal complaints during the period. Power generation for 2025 was 2% over budget due to good wind resource. The 2026 period is on track to meet the generation budget.	
9.0 Community Benefit Fund DW advised there has been over $1.35M allocated to the community since commencement. The Community Benefit Fund is operating under two rounds – winter and summer. During the 2026 financial year twenty (20) organisations were funded, totalling $153,000. Glen Innes continues to receive an annual allocation of $5000.	
11.0 General Business • Nil	
12.0 Next Meeting Subject to confirmation following discussion with DPHI.	

Meeting closed at 10.45am

Approved: 31 August 2026

Michael J. Silver OAM
Independent Chairperson