



Biala Wind Farm

Community Information Plan

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1 Introduction

Biala Wind Farm comprises 31 turbines and is located approximately 6km south of Grabben Gullen off Grabben Gullen Road, 8km east of Biala and 14.5km south-west of Crookwell in the Southern Tablelands of NSW.

The wind farm is expected to generate clean power for up to 30 years following commissioning.

Communication with stakeholders will continue throughout the wind farm's operational life.

This Community Information Plan (CIP) is intended to provide a framework for engagement with local stakeholders during Biala Wind Farm's operational phase. It is designed to ensure compliance with the project's Development Approval conditions.

This plan will be updated as required to ensure effective two-way communication between the project and local stakeholders is maintained.

2 Objectives

- To ensure open, factual, and timely communications between the wind farm and the community.
- To provide processes for the community to communicate with the wind farm, including ensuring an effective complaints management system.
- To identify methods of communicating with stakeholders and enable feedback to be received and acted on.
- To inform community members of wind farm initiatives and opportunities to ensure benefits are widely understood and accessible.
- To enable the project to satisfy all relevant conditions of the Development Approval
- To keep the community informed about the operational and environmental performance of the wind farm.

3 Stakeholders

- Host landowners
- Adjacent neighbours (up to 2km from wind farm)
- Near neighbours (up to 5km from wind farm)
- Wider community
- Established community groups
- Federal and State MP
- Upper Lachlan Shire Council elected representatives
- Community Consultative Committee (CCC) members
- Local media

4 Community Initiatives

4.1 TV Reception Program

The TV Reception Program was designed to comply with a Development Approval condition relating to radiocommunications and has been extended until June 2023.

Information regarding eligibility for the program and how to apply will continue to be posted to the project website - <https://bialawindfarm.com/tv-reception-program/>.

The program will be promoted in project newsletters and via media relations activity.

Any amendments made to the Program will be discussed with the CCC.

4.2 Landscaping Program

The Landscaping Program will run until August 2024. Information on the options available to eligible residents and how to apply will be posted to the project website - <https://bialawindfarm.com/landscaping-program/>.

The program will also be promoted via regular project newsletters.

Any changes to the program, including eligibility, will be discussed with the CCC.

4.3 Community Fund

A Community Fund will be in place throughout the wind farm's operational life to support local projects, initiatives, and events.

The fund will be administered by Upper Lachlan Shire Council and is governed by a Voluntary Planning Agreement.

In accordance with this agreement, the fund will comprise payments of \$2,500 per turbine, indexed to rise with inflation, with an administration fee payable to Upper Lachlan Shire Council.

In the first three years of the fund's operation, priority for funding will be given to applications located within 5km of the project. In subsequent years the fund will be open to applications from a 20km radius.

Upper Lachlan Shire Council is responsible for advertising the opening of the application period, collating applications, recruiting members, and calling meetings of an advisory committee which makes recommendations about projects to be funded and distributing grants.

Biala Wind Farm will assist in the promotion of the fund via project newsletters, media relations activity and the project website - <https://bialawindfarm.com/community/community-fund/>.

5 Communication channels

5.1 Community Consultative Committee

The Community Consultative Committee (CCC) was established in July 2015. It comprises representatives of Upper Lachlan Shire Council, the proponent, and members of the community, overseen by an independent chair appointed by the NSW Government.

The purpose of the CCC is to act as a forum for two-way dialogue, allowing community interests to be heard as well as disseminate information about the project.

Guidelines governing the operation of CCCs are published by the NSW Government and the Biala Wind Farm CCC will be run in accordance with the guidelines for the lifetime of the project, as required by Conditions of Consent (CoC) Schedule 4 Condition 3.

During the first year of the wind farm's fully commissioned life, there are a number of tests required to ensure the facility operates in accordance with the conditions of the Development Approval. Therefore, it is recommended that the committee continues to meet at the same frequency as during the construction phase.

The frequency of meetings in subsequent years will be determined by the committee.

The guidelines also refer to the possibility of combining adjacent projects into a single CCC. As Gullen Range Wind Farm is also owned by Beijing Jingneng Clean Energy (Australia) Holding Pty Ltd (BJCE Australia) and shares a community of interest with Biala Wind Farm, this may be a logical step in the future.

Regardless of the frequency of meetings, if there is important news to be shared with the community, the CCC membership will be informed.

5.2 Website

The project website at www.bialawindfarm.com will be regularly updated, including updates required by the Development Approval. It is a requirement of the Development Approval that documents including management plans, audit reports, results of monitoring on the wind farm's operational and environmental performance and a complaints register are displayed, in accordance with CoC Schedule 4, Condition 9.

The website will continue to serve as a repository for information about the project and its associated programs and provide contact details.

Relevant news will continue to be posted to the site to assist with the promotion of programs associated with the project.

5.3 Newsletters

Newsletters will continue to be produced and distributed during the project's operation. As the community of interest is broadly similar, they will cover Gullen Range Wind Farm, Gullen Solar Farm and Biala Wind Farm. They will be used to promote the programs associated with all projects, provide up-to-date contact details, and notice of any events.

They will primarily be distributed via email, with printed copies available on request, and posted to the project websites.

5.4 Sponsorship

A sponsorship budget will be maintained during the project's operational phase.

As the Community Fund will be available for community groups to access throughout the wind farm's working life, sponsorships can be targeted at events, organisations to initiatives that fall outside the scope of the fund while still offering a benefit to local residents.

5.5 Face-to-face meetings

Where appropriate, face-to-face meetings will be arranged to enable residents or organised groups to discuss relevant matters in depth with members of the project team.

5.6 Social media

Biala Wind Farm does not currently use social media channels. While there are no immediate plans to operate social media accounts this will remain under review as a means of communicating with local residents.

5.7 Information sessions

Information sessions can be held to communicate significant information about changes to the project's operation or associated programs. These would typically be staged over a period of hours, running into the evening or weekend to enable as wide an audience as possible and held at a suitably accessible location.

Any information sessions will be advertised in advance and operate as drop-in events, enabling residents to ask questions and give feedback at a time convenient to them.

5.8 Direct communications channels

The following channels will be maintained to enable direct communication between members of the community and the project:

- 1800 number – included in all newsletters and project website
- Project specific email address – included in all newsletters and project website
- Contact form - hosted on project website and linked to project email account

5.9 Media relations

Media releases and media advertising will continue to be used to disseminate information about the project and associated programs. The project team will continue to monitor local titles and seek to make use of alternatives where greater local coverage is provided.

Current relevant outlets include:

- Crookwell Gazette
- Goulburn Post
- Upper Lachlan Gazette
- Gunning Lions Noticeboard
- 2GCR
- 2GN
- ABC Central West

6 Complaint management

Complaints will be handled in accordance with the complaints handling procedure appended to this plan.

The procedure sets out how complaints will be received, handled, responded to, and recorded, in accordance with CoC Schedule 4, Condition 1 managed and establishes timescales for responses to complainants. The procedure will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains effective in addressing complaints in a respectful way.

Changes to the procedure will be discussed with the CCC.

A register of complaints will continue to be posted to the project website in line with CoC Schedule 4, Condition 9

7 Indicative frequency of communications activity

Engagement method	Audience	Frequency
Community Consultative Committee	CCC members in first instance	Quarterly
Newsletters	Community	Quarterly
Website	Community	Updated at least monthly
Media relations	Community	Approx. quarterly
Face-to-face meetings	Individuals/groups	As required
Information sessions	Community	As required
Advertising	Local media, community	As required

1800 number (1800 370045) Project email (info@bialawindfarm.com) Website contact form (https://bialawindfarm.com/contact-us/)	Community	Available throughout operations
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8 Evaluation

This plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and will be updated to ensure effective two-way communication with stakeholders is maintained throughout the wind farm’s operational life.

This will be achieved through review of engagement with stakeholders through the channels described above. The CCC will act as a key consultee to assist in shaping the CIP throughout the project’s operation.

Appendix A – Complaints Handling Procedure

Overview

Biala Wind Farm takes all complaints very seriously and aims to acknowledge and resolve complaints in a timely manner.

This document sets out our commitment to the public regarding the management and resolution of complaints. It is made available on our website.

What is a complaint and who can make a complaint?

We define a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Biala Wind Farm, related to its services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

It is helpful to us if complainants clarify that they are lodging a complaint rather than an enquiry.

We acknowledge that anyone has a right to lodge a complaint and we will ensure that all the complaints we receive will be managed respectfully, objectively and efficiently.

Complainants can assist our complaints handling by:

- communicating with us in a respectful and non-threatening manner
- providing sufficient detail of the complaint
- being clear about the problem giving rise to the complaint
- being clear about the outcome they are seeking from making the complaint
- understanding that complex complaints can take time to investigate.

How to make a complaint

You can lodge a complaint by contacting us via:

- Toll-free phone: 1800 370 045. Please note this is an answering service and we will call you back after we receive your message
- Online form: <https://bialawindfarm.com/contact-us/>
- Email: info@bialawindfarm.com
- Post: Biala Wind Farm, Suite 3, level 21, 1 York Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
- In person: by contacting us and making an appointment

If you believe your complaint is urgent, please lodge your complaint by calling the toll-free phone number on 1800 370 045.

The more detail you can include in your complaint, the easier it is for us to try and find a resolution. For instance, if your complaint is about noise from the wind turbines, it is helpful for us if you can provide:

1. a description of the noise which was causing an impact
2. time and date when the noise occurred
3. the duration of time you could hear the noise for
4. the weather conditions at the time you could hear the noise.

What we do when you make a complaint

Where your complaint is made by phone, email or via the website, we'll ensure we provide an initial response by the following working day.

If your complaint is received by post with no email or phone contact details supplied, we will provide a written response within five working days.

If we are unable to resolve your complaint in our initial response, we will provide a proposed resolution or progress update within five working days. You can also contact us to check how your complaint is progressing at any time.

We are committed to resolving all complaints promptly. However, some complaints are complex and may take longer than five days to resolve. We will contact you if further investigation is needed and we will keep you informed regarding the progress of your complaint.

The way in which we respond to your complaint and the time taken for our response may vary. For example, if you engage legal representation to handle your complaint, we may need to do the same prior to sending our response.

In all instances, we will let you know the results of our investigations and how we propose to resolve your complaint. We will aim to include the following in our response:

1. What actions we have taken.
2. A summary of the outcome.
3. The reasons behind any decisions made.
4. Any remedy or resolutions offered.

We will request feedback from you on whether you consider your complaint closed. Depending on your feedback we will close your complaint. If no response is received from you within 10 working days, or we deem there is nothing further we can do to resolve the complaint, the complaint will be closed.

Respectful communication

We expect all parties involved in a complaint to communicate with courtesy and respect. Communication that contains offensive, rude, abusive or threatening material will not be tolerated. In these cases, Biala Wind Farm may take a number of steps, including:

- suggest the complainant only communicate with our team members in writing
- edit information we have received to remove offensive or abusive comments
- stop responding to communications that include rude, offensive or abusive comments

- stop handling the complaint, or
- report offensive, abusive or threatening communications to a higher level of management or to an external agency such as the National Wind Farm Commissioner, the police or other law enforcement agencies.

If you would like your complaint further investigated

If you feel we have not resolved your complaint to your satisfaction, then you can escalate your complaint by contacting the following offices:

- Office of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner
 - Website: <https://www.aeic.gov.au/>
 - Email: aeic@aeic.gov.au
 - Post: Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner, PO Box 24434, Melbourne VIC 3001
 - Telephone: 1800 656 395
- NSW Department of Planning and Environment Compliance Team
 - Phone: 1300 305 695
 - Email: information@planning.nsw.gov.au
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
 - Website: <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/>
 - Environment Line phone: 131555

Complaints Register

In accordance with CoC Schedule 4 Condition 9 of the wind farm's Development Approval, it is a requirement for us to record all complaints in a Complaints Register. Your privacy is very important to us and your information will be kept confidential. An anonymous version of this Complaints Register is available on our website. It is updated monthly.