
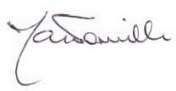



## Upper Hunter Energy Park Community Forum Charter

Version	Date	Prepared by (name)	Reviewed by (name)	Approved by (name)
A	01/06/17	Alan Wong	James North	Mark Sydney
1	26/02/18	James North	Mark Sydney	Mark Sydney
2	10/07/18	James North	Mark Norville	Mark Sydney
Signatures				

### Overview

The Upper Hunter Energy Park Community Forum (**UHEPCF**) has been established by the proponent of the Upper Hunter Energy Park (situated west of Scone in New South Wales). This Charter sets out the general principles on which the UHEPCF is created and by which it will be guided.

The Forum was originally constituted in 2014 as the Kyoto Energy Park Community Forum (KEPCF) to meet Section 5.5(e) of the project Conditions of Approval and generally adopted components of the Draft NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms 2011 – Appendix C: Guidelines for Wind Farm Community Consultative Committees issued by the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure (Guidelines). A new set of Guidelines for State Significant Projects were released by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment in November 2016 (Appendix A).

In March 2017, the KEPCF agreed to rename the Forum as the Upper Hunter Energy Park Community Forum (UHEPCF) and to review the Guidelines as input to this Charter.

This Charter is based on and has generally adopted components of the reissued Guidelines (Appendix A).

Any Appendix A content which is not addressed in this Charter is taken to be generally accepted and adopted by the UHEPCF, though this Charter takes precedence to the extent of any inconsistencies between the documents.

This Charter has been reviewed, accepted and implemented by the members of the UHEPCF community consultative committee (**CCC**) on the basis that CCC members retain final determination and carriage of the UHEPCF mechanics and any changes to this Charter may be undertaken by unanimous agreement of CCC members.

### Forum Purpose

The purpose of the UHEPCF is to provide a forum for open discussion between representatives of the proponent, the community, the Council and other stakeholders on issues directly relating to the assessment of the energy park, its environmental performance, community relations and to keep the community informed on these matters.

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In general terms, the UHEPCF provides a forum to:

- establish good working relationships between the proponent, the community and other stakeholders in relation to the energy park;
- provide for the ongoing communication of information on the assessment, operation and environmental performance of the energy park, including:
  - on project assessment including scoping of issues for assessment and comment on the implementation of conditions of approval, the management plan and any other plans;
  - the results of environmental monitoring;
  - annual environmental management reports; and
  - outcomes of audit reports (including audits required as a condition of approval);
- discuss community concerns and review the resolution of community complaints;
- discuss how best to communicate relevant information on the energy park to the broader community, and
- work together towards outcomes of benefit to the energy park, immediate neighbours and the local and regional community.

## Membership

The membership of the CCC should (at a minimum) comprise:

- a committee approved chairperson;
- representatives of the local community and other stakeholders;
- at least one representative of the Council; and
- representatives of the proponent, including the person with direct responsibility for environmental management at the energy park.

The CCC members must attend the UHEPCF personally and should not nominate or cause an alternative representative to attend the meetings on their behalf.

## Appointing Community Representatives

The proponent is to seek expressions of interest for the community representatives by placing at least two advertisements in local or regional media publications (i.e. newspapers) and advertising through one or more of the following venues: local businesses, community or sporting centres and Council websites.

The advertising period should be no less than 28 days.

Applications must be mailed directly to the proponent. The applications are to be reviewed and voted on by the CCC. The proponent is to advise the candidates of the success/refusal of their applications.

This procedure also applies when community representatives resign from the CCC or are to be replaced.

## Attendance by Non-Committee Members

The CCC may agree to any person acting as an observer to any meeting of the committee. Observers cannot participate in the business of the committee unless invited to do so by the chairperson.

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State government agencies will not generally be represented on the membership of the committee. State government agencies may, however, attend committee meetings at the request of the CCC and at the discretion of the agency.

## Forum Participation

The CCC will:

- provide feedback to the proponent and/or relevant State agencies regarding environmental management and community relations outcomes relating to the energy park;
- undertake visits of the energy park's operations, as necessary;
- review the energy park's complaints-handling procedures and the handling of concerns from the community regarding the energy park environmental management or community relations;
- provide advice to the proponent on how to address community relationships, including on:
  - how the proponent can provide information to the community; and
  - community initiatives to which the proponent could contribute; and
- liaise with community consultative committees of other renewable energy projects where there are common issues or where there is the potential for cumulative impacts, with a view to information sharing and joint meetings on matters of common interest.

Responsibility for oversight of the energy park's compliance with the project approval and all other government approvals remains with the relevant consent authority, not with the UHEPCF.

## Forum Content

The UHEPCF meeting will consist of two components:

1. The formal session (which is minuted) outlining and reporting on community impact related matters; and
2. The Q&A session (which is not minuted) where interested CCC members are provided with a general update on the project by the proponent as well as an opportunity to ask any project or energy market related questions.

The formal component of the meeting will include the following agenda items:

- Apologies;
- Declaration of pecuniary or other interests;
- Confirmation of the previous meeting minutes;
- Business arising from previous minutes;
- Correspondence;
- Proponent reports and overview of activities such as:
  - progress update on the energy park project;
  - general energy market updates;
  - issues arising from site inspections;
  - management plan(s) progress and issues and other matters required under the Conditions of Approval;
  - monitoring and environmental performance;

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- community complaints and response;
- information provided to the community and any feedback; and
- any other community impact related topics raised;
- General matters; and
- Next meeting.

The Q&A component of the meeting will allow discussion on items of interest to CCC members not covered during the formal component of the meeting.

## Minutes of Meetings

The proponent will distribute a draft of the minutes to the CCC members within 7 days after the meeting. The CCC members will respond with any queries or changes within a further 7 days.

Final minutes will be distributed to CCC members and placed on the project website within 28 days after the meeting.

## Code of Conduct

In meetings of the UHEPCF and when otherwise involved in the business and activities of the CCC, members shall, to the best of their abilities:

- act properly, honestly and in accordance with an open and transparent process;
- perform their functions impartially and in the best interests of the local and broader communities;
- be respectful to fellow members and not engage in unconstructive, threatening, intimidating or disorderly behaviour; and
- refrain from any form of conduct which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment.

The chairperson should bring any breach of these requirements to the attention of the persons concerned. Following three such breaches, the chairperson may request:

1. (in the case of a proponent or Council representative) the organisation which appointed the offending member to replace the member; or
2. (in the case of a community member) remove the offending member with no replacement or replace the offending member with a CCC nominated alternative community member or request the proponent to advertise for a new member.

The chairperson may similarly request the replacement of any member who fails to attend committee meetings for more than four official UHEPCF meetings.

## Confidentiality

CCC members and UHEPCF participants or observers, through their involvement, may come into possession of confidential or personal information. All such persons are required to keep such

information confidential and must not disclose or use such information without the prior consent of the disclosing party.

## Media Protocol

Individual CCC members may make comments to the media or in public forums on behalf of themselves or the stakeholders that they represent, but not on behalf of the UHEPCF.

However, the CCC may agree to release statements or other information to the media or to adopt other approaches to public dissemination of information on unanimous agreement of the CCC. However, only the chairperson may speak publicly on behalf of the CCC.

The proponent will be responsible for distribution of newsletters and other formal media announcements related to the project.

**For further information, contact:**

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