

# Turitea wind farm Community Liaison Group



MARGARET KOUVELIS welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting it was being held at a new time (5pm) and the intention to hold meeting to one hour.

She noted that everyone should have signed in using the Golf Club's QR poster downstairs, and handed over to Dennis Radich.

Present from Mercury: Dennis Radich (Project Director), John Campbell (Project Manager), Duncan Annandale (Property Manager), Mark Henry (Environmental Resources Manager), Katy Scoullar (Communications Manager).

From Vestas: Kenn Wood (Project Manager)

## HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THESE MEETINGS?

We've been looking at what these meetings are for, and whether we achieve that

- Length of meetings
- What we use the time to talk about
- Room hire and catering



### 2 MEETING FORMAT RE-SET



DENNIS said that it is now a logical time to review this meeting format as in May it will be 2 years since our first meeting, and major construction work on the transmission line is largely complete.

We wanted to know how we could improve the way we hold these meetings to make them more useful and valuable. Attendance from people in the community has dwindled. Take away the project and contractor teams and there's actually a very small number who attend. We used our email mailing list to seek feedback on the meeting format, along with the other ways we share information with the community.

Our conclusions are that these meetings are too long, we hire a room too big for what we need and because the meetings are so long we need sustenance. We've had what in the project world is called "scope creep" - the content of the meetings has moved away from the remit that the meetings were set up for.

We will also be asking you to hold your questions until a dedicated session for Q&A at the end of the meeting, as often questions are answered by information in later slides.

We will also try to keep to one hour, and by moving the start time to 5pm our hope is that people can get here from work, have some useful discussion, and be home in time to cook dinner.

## **CONSENT POINT 16**

16. The function of the CLG shall be to:

16.1 Discuss the performance of the Consent Holder in terms of the following matters:

- a. Noise control including compliance with these consent conditions; and
- b. Construction traffic impact.

16.2 Consider the results of all ecological monitoring and research required in accordance with these consent conditions.

16.3 Make recommendations to and receive feedback from the Consent Holder, in respect of the above matters where considered necessary and appropriate.

16.4 Have input, as appropriate, via consultation with the Consent Holder with regard to the implementation of the:

- a. NMP; b. CEMP; and c. CTMP.



DENNIS said that the Consent is our rulebook on how we should be engaging with you. It tells us what would be the minimum actions to meet these conditions although doing the minimum is not our target and up until now, we've been doing considerably more.

The Consent tells us that, during the construction phase of the project, the CLG function should be to discuss our performance in terms of noise control and construction traffic management; to consider the results of ecological monitoring and research, and to have a two-way discussion about how the community feels it is being impacted by the project.

In addition, to give input as appropriate on the Noise Monitoring Plan (that will apply all the way through the construction and operation of the project), and the Construction Ecological Management Plan and the Construction Traffic Management Plan (that apply during the construction only). These plans have been socialised and feedback sought and incorporated earlier in the life of the CLG, and are now final.

Going forward, we'll be more transparently structuring these meetings reflecting this point of the Consent, with headings to reflect that: noise control, construction traffic, ecological monitoring.

## THE CLG TERMS OF REFERENCE

“Two-way flow of relevant project information”

- > Community is informed about construction and how it might impact them, and are able to suggest ways that any impacts might be avoided or minimised.
- > Mercury can hear and understand community concerns and consider how to avoid or minimise disruption from the construction.
- > The CLG can discuss practicable ways to avoid or minimise disruption or adverse construction related impacts on people’s daily lives.

4 CLICK TO ADD  
FOOTER



DENNIS reminded the meeting of the Terms of Reference for the Group that were sent out for feedback and agreed at the meeting. The full version of the terms are on our website and a link was emailed to you before Christmas for your info. The Terms are around a “two-way flow of relevant project information”, so that the community is able to feed back on construction and its impacts on them.

To date in these meetings we have received some, but not a great deal of, feedback about the construction impacts which we take as meaning that our contractors are performing well against the rules set out by the Consent. We’ve also discussed at times traffic movements and the condition of the roads and these points have been actioned. But we don’t want you to wait for a meeting to give us that feedback, the 0800 number and direct email can address these things in real time rather than waiting for a CLG meeting to raise them.

## THE CLG TERMS OF REFERENCE

It is not the CLG's function to;

- > propose or discuss any changes to the activities authorised by the Turitea Wind Farm Consents (for example, size and layout of turbines etc);
- > challenge or discuss the validity of the consents;
- > certify or approve management plans or procedures required by the consents.

5 CLICK TO ADD  
FOOTER



DENNIS said that the Terms of Reference also state what is not the function of the CLG. It is not the function of the CLG (and these meetings) to propose or discuss any changes that are authorised by the Consents, or challenge the validity of the consents. Where management plans or procedures are discussed this is to seek input and feedback to be incorporated, but not to approve the plans themselves.

We've strayed in to these areas often in past meetings, resulting in lengthy meetings that we feel might be offputting to some members of the community. We've realised that while we've been endeavouring to meet the intent and stated conditions of the Consent, we've provide extensive additional information and discussion in a comfortable setting, over and above what the Consent requires us to do. This is because we are starting to become a part of this community and we want to do the right thing.

Dennis also observed that there have been some low points in discussion at the meeting, including assertions of dishonesty and deceit reflecting on individuals in the Mercury team. Perhaps the Terms of Reference should have specified "respectful" two way communications. We don't believe that can continue. We want this meeting today to be a re-set of the tone and behaviour in these meetings. If discussion is framed in a disrespectful way, the meeting will be stopped if I feel a line is crossed.

At this stage Dennis addressed two questions put to Mercury at the last meeting: they were both outside of the meeting's scope so we don't expect them to come up again. The questions were about public health impacts from the wind farm, and low frequency noise from windfarms in general and whether these caused the slips in the Manawatū Gorge. Firstly, public health is addressed within the consenting process. The Consent has been thoroughly litigated, and we are following it. And all over the world, wind farms like ours are being constructed by highly functioning democracies like ours who also no doubt consider all scientifically known impacts. So, we don't believe that there

will be any systemic negative public health impact.

When it comes to the slips in the Manawatū Gorge, we don't believe that low frequency sound or vibration from wind turbines has anything to do with that. The noise standards and conditions in our Consent have been written with the input of experts with full regard to the effects of noise. There is a very robust noise monitoring program in our Consent and we are committed to fulfilling this as we are all conditions.

## WHAT OUR MEETINGS WILL LOOK LIKE NOW

- > One hour long (or less)
- > Standard headings each month following our Consent requirements:
  - > Project update
  - > Noise control & construction traffic
  - > Ecological monitoring
  - > Q&A
- > We'll be evaluating whether we continue with this venue, or look for somewhere smaller

6 CLICK TO ADD  
FOOTER



DENNIS explained that meetings will be structured now with standard headings reflecting our Consent requirements. They will be one hour or less, with the discussion being more on point. And the community are encouraged to fully use the 0800 number and email as well as discussion directly with our team – some are based in Palmerston North and others travel regularly to the area. We hope that by streamlining the content for a shorter meeting, and moving the time back slightly to 5pm, more of the community will be able to attend and engage and be home in time for dinner. We are considering a local school hall or similar venue that may be a better fit for the group, and could benefit from being hired for our meetings. Suggestions of possible venues are welcome.

## PROJECT UPDATE



Wind turbines installed to the nacelles stage aka "Hammerheads"



Base installed at wind turbine 10

7 CLICK TO ADD  
FOOTER



DENNIS gave the project update.

The fire at Napier Port on 18 December included a load of turbine components destined for Turitea South. In one hold, 12 nacelles and 11 hubs were damaged and will need to be replaced, the replacement process has commenced and is not expected to impact the timeline. Components in a second hold sustained no damage.

Progress in the North – as at today:

- Two foundations left to be dug
- 12 tower bases installed
- 5 hammerheads installed (i.e. turbines erected to the nacelle and drive train stage, with hub and blades remaining to be installed)
- The substation was taking shape

South – Works on the Reserve track are proceeding with a significant upgrade and some tricky civil construction. Environmental controls are being installed in the southern zone ahead of construction there.

Vestas has continued to address the difficulties around transporting the blades to site, and consents and landowner agreements are now largely secured for a route that makes its way through Tilt and NZ Windfarms' wind farms. This has been made possible through cooperation with Palmerston North City Council and Horizons Regional Councils along with Tilt and NZ Windfarms and their respective landowners. Blades will be delivered by a blade truck (over dimensional trailer) from New Plymouth and the Rangitikei Street or Keith Street yards in Palmerston North. The route from Palmerston North is via Ashhurst on SH3, crossing the Manawatū River, then SH57 Fitzherbert Road turning into Centre Road before transiting through the Tilt and NZ Windfarms and on to North

Range Road where it exits opposite the entrance to Turitea Wind Farm at the summit of the Pahiatua Track.

We'll let you know when deliveries are set to start.

## NOISE CONTROL & CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC



8



Picture: Drive train entering site - Components continue to be delivered to site on “as required” basis

Dennis said that this is one of the standard topics that will be discussed at each meeting. There’s not a lot to say at this stage, some trucks are on the road and noise control and monitoring continues on site. Helicopter work has finished on the transmission line but ground based traffic continues and the trucks, crane and trenching operation have noise operating constraints to work within. Dennis asked the meeting to let us know if there are any issues.

## ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING



Clean water in a sediment pond shows it is doing its job



Newly constructed sediment retention pond in the southern zone where the future spoil disposal site will be



Dennis said that we are proud of the ecological performance during this construction project, and the Council has also given positive feedback from their inspections. The devices in place to protect the environment are performing well, including during spectacular rainfall events.

Horizons Regional Council has a big job monitoring the site, and this has grown with monitoring in the South also now under way.

## TRANSMISSION LINE CONSTRUCTION



DENNIS said that work on the transmission line had largely finished, and Electrix would return to site to link the lines to the substations once these are built and commissioned.

The pictures show:

- Clockwise from top left – precise instruments to assist with accurate installation of line including sagging
- Instrument view showing crew on cross-arm
- Instrument view showing crew on tower with helicopter near tower
- Helicopter assisting with line installation

*“End of the Line”*

*T38 showing bonding of two circuits, with North substation site in background*



This picture shows Tower 38 where two circuits are bonded together. If and when Mercury's Puketoi wind farm is connected to the Plantation substation the circuits will be returned to individual independent circuits.

The Turitea North substation site is in the background showing civil earthworks to create the substation platform. Here the final span of the transmission line (from this tower) will terminate to a gantry which will permit generated power to be exported to the national grid via Transpower's Linton substation.

## Construction progress

As at 10 January 2021	Complete	Total	%Comp
<b>Foundations</b>			
Pole	20	20	100%
Tower - road	12	12	100%
Tower - heli	6	6	100%
<b>Structure</b>			
Pole	20	20	100%
Tower - road	12	12	100%
Tower - heli	6	6	100%
<b>Stringing</b>			
LTN-P1 Span	1	1	100%
P1-P8	1	1	100%
P8-P20	1	1	100%
P20-T21 Span	1	1	100%
T21-T38	1	1	100%
T38-PLN Span	0	1	0%
<b>Protection</b>			
Linton (LTN)	0.8	1	80%
Plantation (PLN)	0	1	0%



Weather very changeable on hills even in December – picture of South Range Rd / Reserve Rd with Moxy dump truck in centre of image

2020/12/11 08:12

This table summarises construction progress on the transmission infrastructure to date. The green “completed” column indicates that the community can expect far fewer trucks associated with this part of the build, as the construction is largely complete.

## QUESTIONS?



Works underway on Plantation substation



Questions were invited from the meeting.

**QUESTION:** A question was asked about a proposal to construct a new road that is not part of the original Consent, to avoid truck traffic on Greens Road.

Dennis said that this proposal would be for an off-road access way under a separate consent and would follow its own consent process including appropriate community engagement. Vestas was currently considering the technical feasibility of this as part of the project, and would follow their own consent process. The resident who asked the question said that noise and dust from trucks would be an issue if a road was built near the current road, and this would impact his property. Mark Henry said that the Consents provided an envelope within which works must take place. Now Vestas sees a way to undertake the work more efficiently, but they need apply for a new consent for this undertaking. Dennis said that Vestas would work with the appropriate Councils and follow their processes.

**QUESTION:** Did the traffic management plan apply to the whole construction period, as speed limit signs had been taken down from Kahuterawa Road.

John Campbell said that previous signs had belonged to Electrix, and a handover of the area was under way to Vestas who had been instructed to put up their own speed limit signs. The resident said that he had observed a construction ute travelling at 80km, well above the 50km limit for construction traffic. John asked the resident to call the 0800 number next time he observed poor traffic behaviour, and said that all contractors would be spoken to and reminded of the 50km limit.

**QUESTION:** What are the masts that have been put up on the range, some with areas of bare earth next to them?

Dennis said that three wind monitoring masts had been put up in the last few weeks. Two are temporary to calibrate wind conditions in order to test the performance of the wind turbines. The bare earth is either environmental controls or construction area (that would be rehabilitated).

QUESTION: Was sound monitoring taking place on Pahiatua Track?

Dennis said that wind monitoring was taking place on a farm near Pahiatua Track for noise monitoring, so that wind speed and direction can be correlated to noise recording. Noise was also being monitored at one Pahiatua Track location on the western side of the ridge, another location east of the ridge where Pahiatua Track meets Makomako Road, and a third location further along Makomako Road. Mark Henry said that although there were three 'permanent' noise monitors, once the turbines were operating there was a window of time in which to reposition the monitors according to advice by experts and Council. Dennis said that they would be put where there was the most possibility that there could be an issue, and residents could advise Council if they felt they had a noise issue. Noise had been extensively modelled by consultants for Vestas and for Mercury, including cumulative noise with Te Rere Hau wind farm. A breach of noise conditions would be dealt with by the regulator (Council) who could ask for the turbine generation to be reduced until they were noise compliant.

QUESTION: With transmission line construction traffic nearing a close on Kahuterawa Road, when would the road be remediated?

Dennis said that there was still some remediation to be done, but residents should advise the Council of anything potentially impacting safe use of the road. John said that a second spray seal would be applied to Greens Road before handover of the area to Vestas, and then Vestas would maintain the road until they are finished construction works. A resident said that traffic for the South seemed to have increased. Dennis said that the Consent has a cap on traffic movements on the road, and this would be used until it is capped out, but he wouldn't expect traffic to be more intense. A resident said that although subdivision of property was not allowed on Kahuterawa Road (by the Council) the idea of a new road in the valley seemed strange. Kenn Wood said that the proposed off-road access way was being conceptualised as only for the duration of construction, after that time the landowners could either keep their part of the road for farm use, or Vestas would return it to pasture. There would be a 24 month maximum period it would be needed for access for the construction phase.

QUESTION: Concerns were raised about a road user who crossed the centre line, and it was agreed that this would be reported to the Council.

QUESTION: What was the timeframe for first blades to site?

Dennis said that the current view from Vestas was April.

QUESTION: Is significant road construction required to bring the blade route through the other wind farms?

Kenn said that some improvements were needed to the route, both on public roads and on the wind farm, realigning corners and smoothing bumps and hollows, but no significant widening or other civic works.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION > [TURITEAWINDFARM@MERCURY.CO.NZ](mailto:TURITEAWINDFARM@MERCURY.CO.NZ)

MARGARET asked the group how often they wanted to meet in future. The Consent says that the meetings are to be held six-monthly. Mercury is going above and beyond that currently with two-monthly meetings, is the group happy to move this back to quarterly, so the next meeting would be held in May? After some discussion, the group AGREED that meetings would be held quarterly, with the next one in May.

Margaret said that the venue for the meetings was a Mercury decision. Dennis said that Mercury would look for a venue such as a local school or similar and see whether a suitable and available venue could be found for the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 6pm.