Pottinger Energy Park - Community Consultative Committee Minutes

Meeting date: Monday 30th March 2026
Location: Deniliquin RSL Club
Chaired by: Ian Colley

Chairperson	Ian Colley
Committee members	Alison McLean (Hay Shire Council) David Crew Ellie Danckert (Edward River Council) Simone Hughes Tertia Butcher
Pottinger Energy Park Representatives	Derek Powell (Someva) Felicity Stening (Someva) Han Tay (AGL)
Observing attendees	Andrew Garratt (AGL) Benjamin Wilson (AGL) Larissa Shashkof (Someva)
Apologies	David Sandow Tara Dixon

Agenda items

1. **Welcome and introduction** (All)

Members, representatives and observers introduced themselves and outlined their background, along with their connection to and interest in the project.

2. **Acknowledgement of Country** (Ian Colley)

A member noted that their community is currently in Sorry Business, which needs to be acknowledged and respected.

3. **CCC: Purpose, roles, responsibilities and process** (Ian Colley)

The Chair outlined that the purpose of the CCC was to:

- Provide an overview of the proposed wind project
- Explain the planning and approval processes
- Discuss community values and potential impacts
- Share feedback and updates with the wider community

Emphasis was placed on respectful listening, including where views may differ and a commitment to open, honest and transparent communication.

It was noted that the Committee is an advisory group, not a decision-making body, and will help guide the project.

4. **Overview of Pottinger Energy Park** (Derek Powell, Felicity Stening and Han Tay)

- The project has been named after the Manny Pottinger family, one of the first families to install and maintain windmills in the region.
- Pottinger Energy Park (PEP) is being jointly developed by Someva Renewables and AGL Energy.
- Located between Hay and Deniliquin, noting Project EnergyConnect (PEC) runs through the north of the project site.
- Planning approval was provided for up to 1,300 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy supported by a battery of up to 2000 MWh.
- Stage 1, which has been determined by EnergyCo access rights which provides 831 megawatts (MW) and 1,600MWh, which equates to around 118 turbines.
- One of four projects within the South West Renewable Energy Zone (SW REZ)

Timeframes (Derek Powell)

Current activities

- Procurement process being undertaken to select the project's main contractors, including wind turbines, battery system and Balance of Plant.
- Undertaking field work onsite, including cultural heritage and biodiversity surveys, which are required to prepare the managements plans and part of the development consents.
- Wind studies are continuing using met masts that have been installed on site to confirm wind conditions and support project design.
- Currently working toward a final investment decision by the end of 2026.

Indicative timeframe

- Construction is expected to begin in early 2027, starting with civil and electrical works.
- Wind turbine deliveries are expected around six months after construction begins, with peak construction occurring approximately 12 months from start.
- Overall, construction and commissioning are anticipated to take place over several years, from 2027 to 2029.

Port to Site Routes

- Continue to work with preferred contractors on transport routes and evaluating options.
- Noting Transport for NSW are also investigating transport routes for the SW REZ projects
- New routes will require a planning modification to the approved transport route, which is currently from Port of Adelaide through Broken Hill.

Community Engagement (Felicity Stening)

- The project includes a First Nations Fund of $130,000 per year, totalling $3.9 million over 30 years.

- A Community Benefit Fund is being established in partnership with Hay Shire Council and Edward River Council, with contributions of $370,000 per year per council, totalling $22 million over 30 years.
- PEP has committed $515,000 in pre-construction funding to support early community and project initiatives.
- In addition, EnergyCo will manage a separate fund, financed through project access fees of $2,300 per megawatt per annum, to support community and employment outcomes.
- The project has committed to a range of targets with EnergyCo relating to community benefits and employment, including engagement with local businesses, First Nations businesses and workers, and other under-represented groups.
- Expressions of Interest have been released for 25 work packages through the Industry Capability Network, with local businesses encouraged to participate. This information will also be shared with the main contractors.

5. Questions

Members raised questions throughout the presentation and responses have been summarised below.

Q: What happens when it is not windy?

A: Battery storage can help when wind is not blowing. Power can be stored and released when the grid needs it most. Improves electrical grid stability by managing peak load and reducing strain during high-demand periods. Outside of Pottinger, the intermittency of renewable energy is also being managed by improving interconnection of the electricity grid (so that energy can be moved around more efficiently), diversify the sources of renewable energy, such as having a combination of wind, solar and hyrdo on the electricity grid, increasing storage through installation of batteries and through demand side management.

Q: Who is responsible for decommissioning?

A: Under the NSW Government Wind Energy Guidelines developers are responsible for decommissioning, and this should be reflected in the agreement with the landholder hosting the project infrastructure.

Pottinger Energy Park has requirements in place as part of the project's approvals and landowner agreements, with decommissioning clauses that assign responsibility for removing turbines, infrastructure, and rehabilitating the site.

Learn more: Wind Energy Guideline

Q: What are the fire risks?

A Fire risks associated with battery storage are managed through approved fire safety studies approved by Fire and Rescue NSW and the Department of Planning. Battery systems include early fault detection and controls to minimise and manage incidents. The use of newer-generation lithium battery technology, along with spacing and system design, make it safer.

Q: Why didn't the project move into the EnergyConnect Cobb Highway camp at Booroorban

A The project currently holds approval for an onsite camp. However, a modification is being considered which would provide the option of using the Booroorban camp. The project team will continue to assess both camp options and will provide updates as planning progresses.

In the meantime, we understand Transgrid are removing the cabins from the site. Regardless of whether Pottinger uses the camp or not, this would have been required due to the length of time between EnergyConnect demobilising and Pottinger commencement.

Q: How are the wind turbines transported?

A: Wind turbine components will be transported from the port to the project site using heavy and oversized vehicles. This will involve specialist transport convoys moving large turbine parts such as blades and tower sections.

Transport routes are currently being assessed and detailed management plans will include measures such as restricted travel times, night-time movements, police escort vehicles, coordination with schools, and specific safety controls along the route.

6. Key issues (All)

Members raised their main areas of interest with the project, which have been summarised below:

- Roads and traffic impacts, including disruption from oversized turbine transport and impacts on local and regional roads.
- Farming and land access impacts, understanding how the site will be accessed
- Safety and environmental management, including how risks will be managed during construction and operation.
- Accommodation camp location, and potential impacts on nearby communities.
- Construction workforce size, peak workforce and how workers will travel to site
- Cultural heritage opportunities, including use of archaeological surveys for knowledge sharing and incorporation of First Nations storytelling.
- Broader cultural and spiritual impacts, relating to connections to Country.
- Community funding and benefits, including ensuring funds support long-term legacy projects.
- Local employment and workforce development, ensuring opportunities for local workers and businesses.
- Cumulative impacts, particularly where multiple projects overlap within the South West Renewable Energy Zone (SW REZ), including workforce and transport interactions.

The project team

- Raised the current development of management plans to support the construction phase. These plans are being prepared with input from principal contractors and will address key areas including Traffic Management, Accommodation Strategy, and Bushfire Management.
- Acknowledged that coordination across projects within the SW REZ will be required, particularly in relation to peak workforce periods and transport routes.

- Committed to share learnings and working with other REZ projects to streamline where practical.

7. Next steps and 2026 meeting schedule (Ian Colley)

- Discussion with members present on meeting times, preference for earlier meeting starting 2-3pm.
- Members confirmed they are happy for their name and email to be published.
- Meeting minutes would be published on the Pottinger Energy Park webpage when they are finalised.
- Next meeting is schedule for 25 May 2026.

8. Action Items

	Action Item	Responsible	Timing
1	Chair to reach out and confirm time preferences and publication of name/email for members who were not present.	Ian Colley	Prior to next meeting