

# APPENDIX A

Enhancing Positive Social Outcomes from Wind Development in Australia:  
Evaluating Community Engagement & Benefit-sharing

## **WIND INDUSTRY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & BENEFIT-SHARING SURVEY RESULTS**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Industry Community Engagement and Benefit-sharing Survey (“the survey”) invited industry perspectives and practice on community engagement and benefit-sharing in the process of wind development and operation. The survey was distributed to both corporate and community wind energy developers and received 26 responses. It included a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions covering aspects such as the resourcing, staffing, timing, purpose, activities and outcomes of engagement and benefit-sharing. The first section of the survey sought general perspectives and experience of community engagement and benefit-sharing, whereas the second section asked respondents to reflect on the delivery of a particular wind project.

Survey respondents held a range of roles within their companies, though most were in community engagement (43 %) or leadership roles (e.g. CEO) (25 %). A majority had worked in the wind industry for seven years or more and had on the ground experience with community engagement. While 35 % had some form of relevant training or qualification, it was more common for people to have specific training in communications than in community engagement. In addition, only 25 % of staff in community engagement roles had relevant training or qualifications. Staff generally look after two to three wind developments each.

Respondents came from companies with operations across all states and territories of Australia. Half of these were large companies, with 20 or more full time equivalent (FTE) staff, and most these had dedicated community engagement staff. Six responses were from community-owned wind developments, and two from community-developer partnerships involving some form of community co-investment or co-ownership. As such, results cover a strong range of current wind development practice present in the Australian context.

Results of the survey indicate that a range of approaches to community engagement are currently being used across the Australian wind industry. Benefit-sharing is currently less common, less diverse and less understood.

Results indicate that respondents understand the primary purpose of community engagement is to build relationships (26 %), followed by a need to inform and educate (17 %). It is clear that some see community engagement as a short-term activity, fulfilling utilitarian purposes required to achieve planning approval, whereas others see it as an activity that is integral over the life of the project and which adds value to both the project and the company.

Analysis of the preferred community engagement practices of respondents, both in a general sense and in relation to specific developments, show significant inconsistencies between the purpose and the practice of engagement. While building relationships was the most commonly referenced purpose, the leading community engagement practices used by respondents are all one-way information provision mechanisms (e.g. websites, written materials and newsletters), which are unlikely to contribute to relationship building.

Opportunities for one-on-one engagement throughout the wind farm develop cycle are generally restricted to project hosts and neighbours. Opportunities for one-on-one engagement with the broader community focused on planning and approval phase. The most common mechanism for the latter is drop-in information sessions held to receive feedback on plans prior to submitting planning applications. Much less used are opportunities for community dialogue, especially in group settings (e.g. facilitated workshops or forums, public or neighbourhood meetings). Education and experiential opportunities such as wind farm tours, open days and advocate training, were ranked as not being very useful (10th out of 10) and least used, whereas passive forms of education via written information provision was ranked as most useful (1st out of 10) and most often used. There is little use of feedback mechanisms such as polling or voting.

Overall this indicates an engagement approach based predominantly on information provision and one-on-one contexts. While this includes opportunities for dialogue, it does not emphasise public/ community level dialogue or feedback loops. This emphasis contradicts sharply with respondent's own reflections that the most effective community engagement practices involve collaboration, a 'community-wide' approach and genuine opportunities for feedback and suggestions to be considered.

In terms of engagement practices that are ineffective, respondents raised concerns over inflexible or one-size-fits-all approaches and highlighted the need to tailor the approach to the local context. Respondents were wary of public meetings (e.g. 'town hall' meetings) and use of surveys, feeling that these can easily misrepresent local sentiments (i.e. be hijacked) and can tend to result in creating 'for and against' divides. It was also common for respondents to raise that token efforts at engagement, that do not provide real opportunities to influence outcomes, are damaging. To be successful, engagement needs to go beyond information provision to include opportunities for community influence in aspects of project design or a role in decision-making (e.g. grant fund distribution, turbine placement, community engagement plan). Lack of transparency is also particularly damaging and contributed to by a heavy reliance on one-on-one engagement over group settings.

The survey reveals remarkably little benefit-sharing in the 19 project examples provided by respondents. For those that do benefit-sharing, the most common forms are sponsorship (25%) and community grant funds (34%); 17% of respondents are also using (or plan to implement) community co-investment or co-ownership. However, it is worth noting that the response rate to this question was the lowest of all questions in the survey (15 responses), possibly reflecting a level of unfamiliarity and inexperience with among respondents.

A small number of respondents warned of the damaging impact of benefit-sharing mechanisms that are seen to be unfair or that emphasise a compensation rationale (over a benefit-sharing rationale). People also commented on the importance that the distribution of benefits in the community is something that the community has decision-making power in, is appropriate to the local context, and connects the community with the ongoing operation of the wind farm.

Overall, 95% of all respondents agreed that successful community engagement is financially beneficial for their companies, as well as adding value to specific developments.

In general, there is strong use of resources such as the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry, the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation and the ACT's Best Practice Community Engagement in Wind Development guide. The use of these tools is promising as they provide a pathway to improve industry practices.

The mixed and sometimes conflicting results present in the survey indicates the complex operating environment for wind development - one that is highly contingent on local and policy context, resourcing, and individual and company capacities and attitudes to engagement. In this context it is likely that staff on the ground are seeking to undertake meaningful engagement within a constantly changing context, while needing to meet a range of requirements associated with the commercial realities of developing large infrastructure.

# INTRODUCTION

An online survey was designed to elicit information about current community engagement and benefit-sharing practices in the wind industry across the country. The survey was sent via email to people in leadership and community engagement roles in a diverse range of wind development companies, including: large, vertically integrated companies; small wind developer companies; and, community wind energy projects. The circulation list for the survey was compiled from the Clean Energy Council (CEC) membership database and supplemented to include key developer types (e.g. community wind projects) who are not CEC members. The survey included 50 questions: 19 quantitative and 31 qualitative. The survey received 26 responses.

Survey questions are available on request.

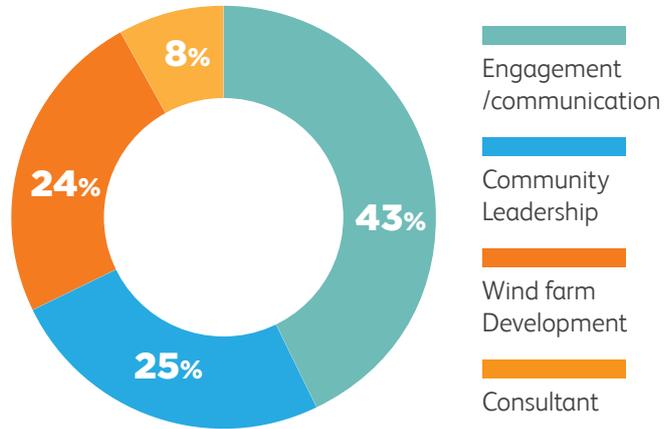
# QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

**QUESTION 1:**

Do you consent to participate in the survey (n=22)  
 Number of people giving consent to use content: 22  
 (4 did not answer this question but went on to complete the survey, which was taken as consent).

**QUESTION 2:**

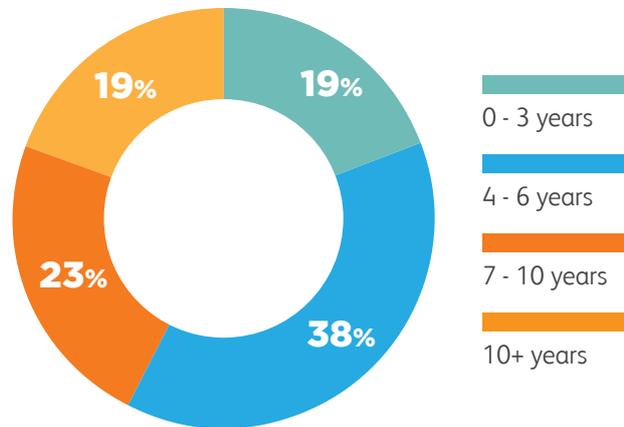
Respondent's role in wind development (% , n=26)  
 Most respondents (43 %) have a role in engagement and/or communications, a quarter are in leadership roles (e.g. CEO), a quarter in wind farm development (technical) roles. Consultants were the least represented (8 %), as shown in the pie chart below.



**QUESTION 3:**

Length of time working in the wind industry (% , n=26)

The responses show a good distribution of time of involvement in the sector; a majority (39 %) of respondents have been working in the industry for 4-6 years; 42 % have worked in the sector for 7 years or more, shown in the chart below.



**QUESTION 4:**

Staff qualifications or experience in community engagement (#, n=26)

The majority of respondents have on the ground experience (24 of 26), and 8 of these have received specific training or qualifications related to community engagement. Only 1 person had training but no on the ground experience, and one had no experience and no training.



When Q.2 and Q.4 were cross analysed to reveal that a majority of respondents, regardless of their role in the company, have on the ground experience in community engagement. However, fewer than 35% of all respondents across all roles have community engagement training or qualifications. Curiously, respondents in specific community engagement roles have the lowest levels of community engagement training or qualifications, with only 25% of respondents having had relevant training. Consultants have the highest rate of training and specific qualifications in community engagement, but this is still concerningly low, at only 44%.

**QUESTION 5:**

Open-ended question describing respondents' experience or qualification (n=23)

Responses indicated the most common form of community engagement experience is on-the-ground experience through the course of wind farm development. However, a range of other experience included community engagement roles in other sectors such as corporate (non-wind energy), government and not-for-profit sectors in Australia and overseas. Interestingly, it was more common for respondents to have formal qualifications in communications than community engagement, indicating the common overlap, or confluence, of the two areas of work. Some respondents have completed short courses (e.g. industry seminars) in media, community engagement, negotiation, complaints management or conflict resolution.

**Table 1:** Cross-analysis of Questions 2 and 4.

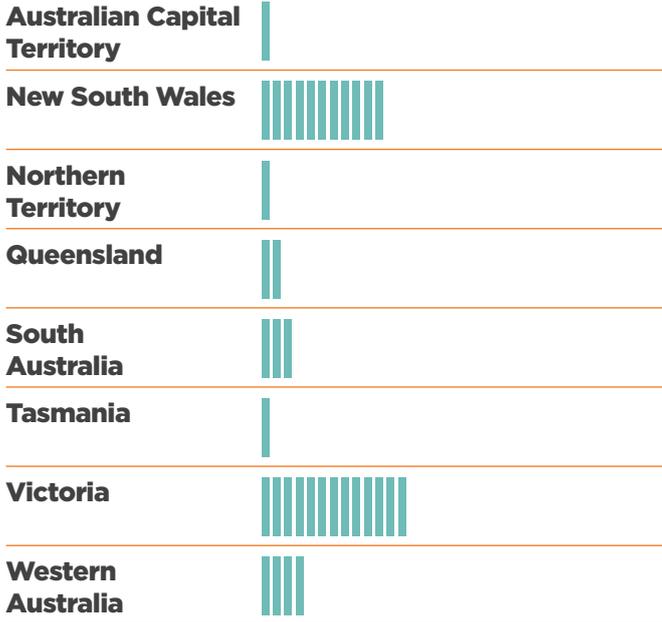
| <b>QUESTION 1</b> → |                       | Yes I have training /qualifications | I have on the ground experience | I have no training /qualifications or experience | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------|
| <b>QUESTION 4</b> ↓ | Engagement            | 25.81% (8)                          | 74.19% (23)                     | 0% (0)   | 31    |
|                     | Leadership            | 35% (7)                             | 60% (12)                        | 5% (0)   | 20    |
|                     | Communications        | 28.12% (9)                          | 71.88% (23)                     | 0% (0)   | 32    |
|                     | Wind farm Development | 27.78% (8)                          | 72.22% (13)                     | 0% (0)   | 18    |
|                     | Consultant            | 44.44% (4)                          | 55.56% (5)                      | 0% (0)   | 9     |
|                     | Total                 | 33                                  | 76                              | 1  | 110   |

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### QUESTION 6:

Location of offices across Australia (#, n=26)

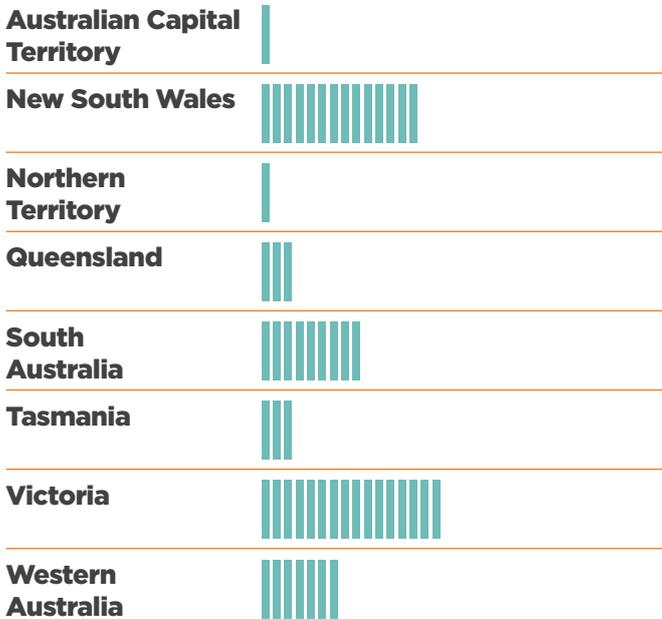
The majority of respondents have offices in NSW and VIC, with 11 and 13 of respondents respectively. Although other states and territories were far less represented, there was at least one respondent from each. Some respondents have offices in several states and territories.



### QUESTION 7:

Location of projects in development or operation (% , n=26)

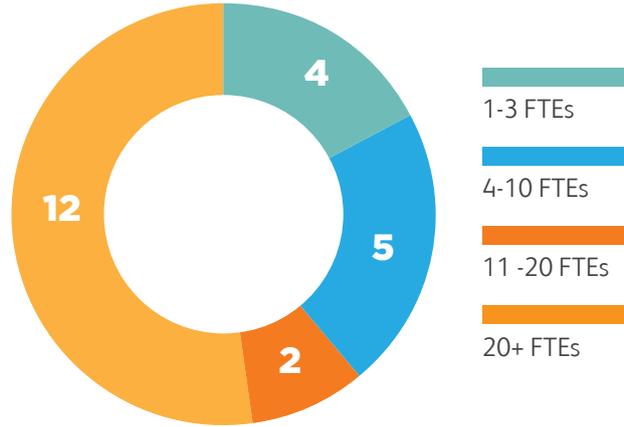
The majority of respondents have projects in Vic (16%) and NSW (14%), though SA and WA were also well represented in this regard, with 9% and 7% projects respectively. Cross analysis between Q6 and Q7 reveals that developers do not necessarily have offices in the states and territories they operate wind farms in; this is especially the case with WA and SA.



### QUESTION 8:

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTEs) work at the company (#, n=23)

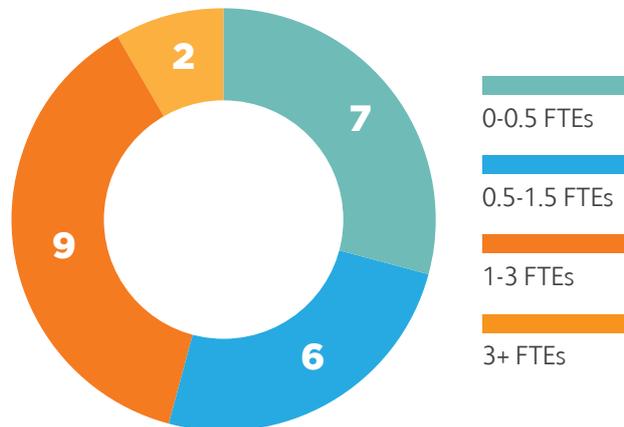
The majority (12 of 23) of respondents work for a wind developer with more than 20 FTEs. Only 4 respondents have only 1-3 full time equivalent employees. The chart below shows the number of companies that reported certain FTE brackets.



### QUESTION 9:

FTEs dedicated to community engagement (#, n=24)

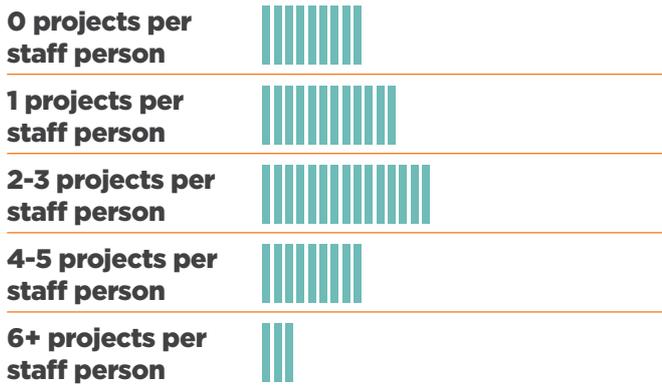
More than half of the respondents indicated that their company has dedicated community engagement staff. However, this is usually less than 1 FTE – a surprising result given that more than half of the respondents are companies with more than 20 FTEs in total. Nine respondents indicated having 1-3 FTEs employed specifically in community engagement roles. Open-ended responses for other survey questions revealed that some community-owned wind developments also draw significantly on volunteers in addition to, or instead of, staff.



**QUESTION 10:**

Number of projects covered per community engagement staff (#, n=24)

In most cases (50%) staff responsible for community engagement look after three to four projects each; 37% of respondents indicated that they have one community engagement staff per project.



**QUESTION 11:**

What is the purpose of community engagement in your company's wind farms? (% , n=25)

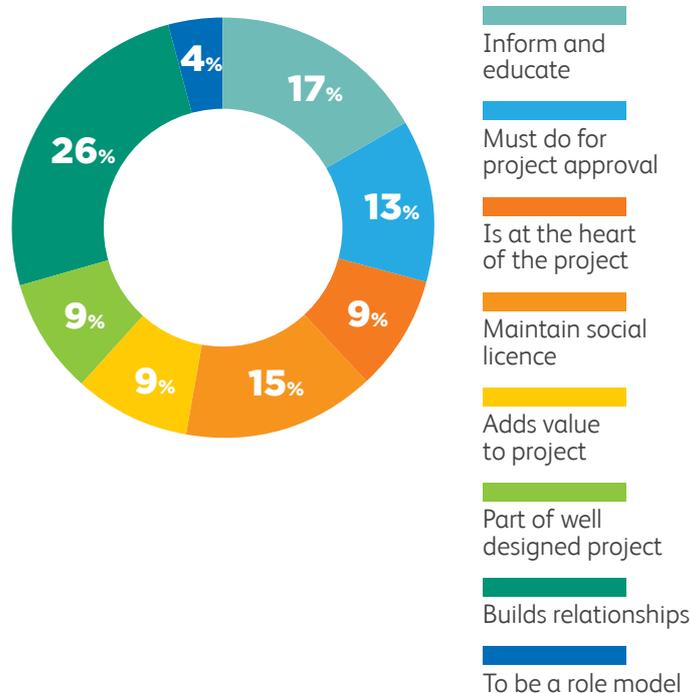
Responses to this question indicate that community engagement fulfils a range of different purposes for wind developers. This open-ended question was themed into common responses, with the leading purpose being to build relationships (referenced by 26% of respondents). The next most common motivators of community engagement were to 'inform and educate' (17%); build and maintain a social licence to operate (15%); and that it is a 'must do for project approval' (13%). Some (9%) say community engagement as part of creating a well-designed development that is well integrated into the local area, adding value to the project as a whole. Only 8% saw community engagement activity as being as being 'at the heart' of wind development; these are likely to be responses of people involved in community wind energy project. Hence, it is clear that some see community engagement as a short-term activity for the utilitarian purpose of gaining adequate levels of support to be able to get planning approval for the development, whereas others see it as an activity that is integral over the life of the project. It is likely that the purpose of engagement is seen differently by people with different roles in the organisation. Responses to this question indicates some lack of understanding of the critical role that community engagement can play beyond informing people to the minimum degree required to gain support for planning approval.

*"Community engagement will enhance the development aspect of the project as both positive and negative feedback can be used to improve a project. As well as the community feeling more involved."*

*"Fostering enduring, respectful, responsive relationships is [the] primary objective"*

*"We are an entirely volunteer group with deep roots in the community. We began with extensive community meetings to determine if there was backing for a community wind farm and if so, the guidelines that should be followed."*

*"To gain a long term social licence to operate the project. Done well this is a win-win which reduces development costs and increases demand for the clean energy produced."*

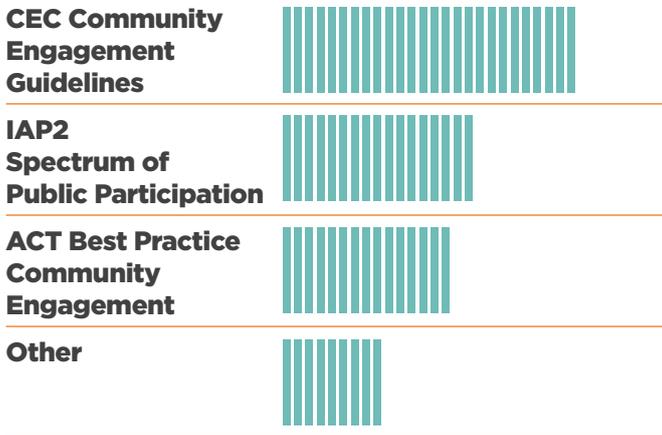


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### QUESTION 12:

Use of community engagement references or tools (#, n=18)

The CEC's Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry is the most widely used community engagement reference tool, with 78% of the respondents having used it. However more than half (56%) also use the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation and 44% use the ACT's Best Practice Community Engagement in Wind Development. It is important to note that the response rate dropped by 31% for this question. It can be assumed that some respondents either do not use references or guides at all, or are not aware of them.



### QUESTION 13 & 14:

Allocation of funding to community engagement (n=26)

Respondents indicated that 85% allocate funding specifically to community engagement activities. 60% of these felt that the level of funding they receive is adequate, where as 40% did not.

| Allocation of specific funding to community engagement | #  | %  |
|--|----|----|
| Yes  | 22 | 85 |
| No   | 4  | 15 |

| If yes, is it enough? | #  | %  |
|-----------------------|----|----|
| Yes                   | 15 | 60 |
| No                    | 10 | 40 |

### QUESTION 15:

Who decides and how is the budget decided for community engagement? (% , n=26)

This open-ended question asked who determines the budget for community engagement and how. It was most common for company executive/s or the board to determine the budget allocation to community engagement (12 of 26). As such, at times, community engagement budgets are pre-set and decisions are based on resource availability. In ten cases, the team leading project development (including dedicated community engagement staff) were the ones that determined the community engagement budget. Often this was then approved by the executive or the board. In these cases, community engagement budgets were tailored to specific projects. One company indicated they were not in a financial position to allocate funding to community engagement. One respondent indicated that community engagement is done voluntarily by community members of the community wind project.

### QUESTION 16:

Presence of local engagement staff (n=26)

The majority of respondents (58%) indicated that staff involved in community engagement roles live in the wind farm development area. However, we did not ask them to define what they saw as being 'local'.

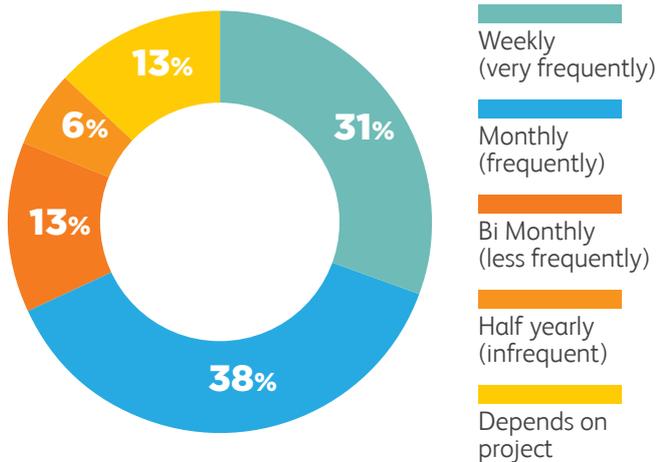
| Companies who have staff living in the wind farm development area to carry out community engagement | #  | %  |
|---|----|----|
| Yes   | 15 | 58 |
| No  | 11 | 42 |

**QUESTION 17 & 18 (N=25, COMBINED):**

For those with staff living local to the wind farm, 36% worked full time and 29% worked voluntarily or very part time (0-0.2 FTE); the rest worked roughly half-time. Where there is not a local staff person, most (37%) would visit the site monthly and 12% visit weekly. Some (13%) noted that it depended on the nature and phase of the project how often they would visit.

| <b>FTE of Community Engagement Staff Living in Close Proximity to the Wind Farm</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|----------|
| 0-0.2   | 29       |
| 0.2-0.4   | 14       |
| 0.4-0.6   | 7        |
| 0.6-0.8   | 14       |
| 0.8-1   | 36       |

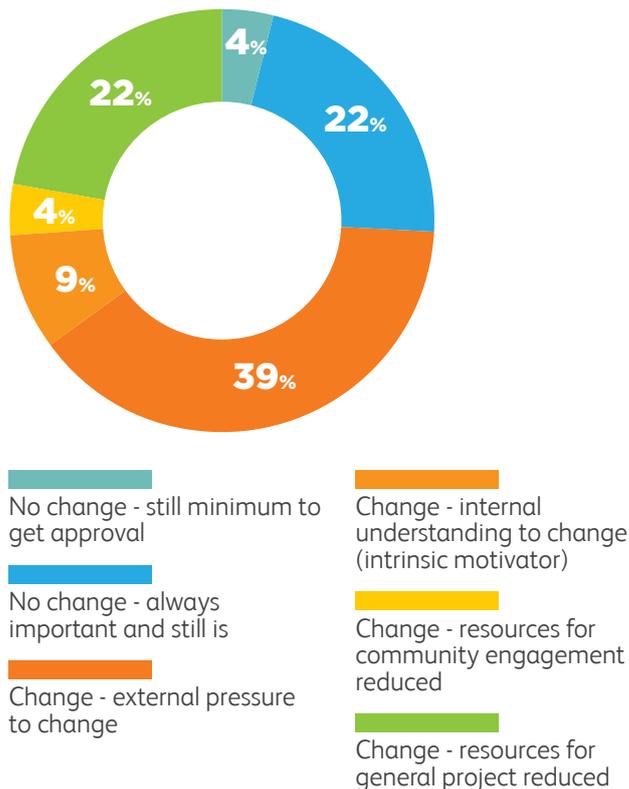
The pie chart above indicates the frequency that company representative visit the area to engage community members.



**QUESTION 19:**

How have political and market pressures over the past 4 years (2012-2016) impacted how your organisation perceives and funds community engagement? (% , n=24)

This open-ended question explored the impact of political and market pressures on organisation’s community engagement. Responses indicate that external pressures cause changes in community engagement. The biggest proportion of respondents (39%) identified that changes to policy environment or market pressures resulted in new requirements that mandated changes in the community engagement approach. A further 9% identified that external context changes led them to realise that a new (improved, more rigorous) approach to community engagement is necessary and led them to change their approach voluntarily. For 22%, community engagement has always been important and has been maintained as is. For 26% external pressures have led to more difficult operating environment in which there are less available resources for community engagement. In some cases this had led to needing to reduce staffing and funding levels for community engagement activities.

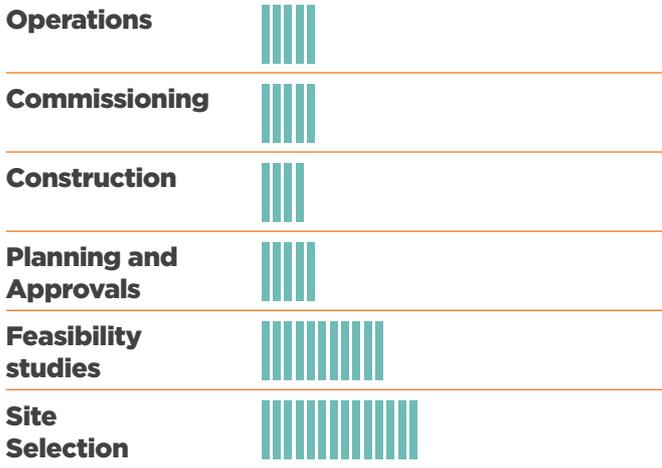


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### QUESTION 20:

When community engagement begins in project lifecycle (#, n=24)

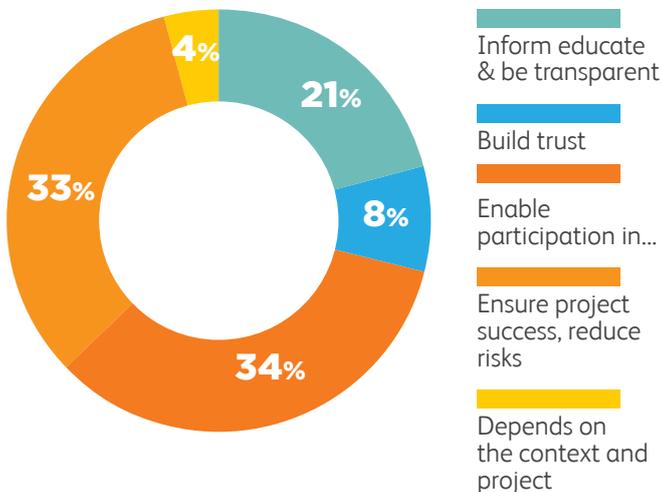
Responses indicate that community engagement activities start early in the project lifecycle, upon site selection (58%) or by feasibility studies (96%). Only one respondent indicated waiting until the Planning and Approvals process to start engagement. Due to the possibility of multiple answers, the results from the later stages are somewhat distracting. It can be assumed that interviewees wanted to indicate that CE activities continued throughout the project lifecycle.



### QUESTION 21:

Reasons for starting engagement at the stage nominated in Q.20

Reasons for beginning community engagement in a specific project phase. This was an open-ended question that was analysed into dominant themes. The predominant reason for engagement was to enable community participation in project design and to “bring them along on the journey”.



### QUESTION 22:

Ranking of community engagement tools in order of their perceived usefulness (% , n=25)

Respondents were asked to rank a selection of 10 community engagement tools according to their perception of usefulness, where 1 is very useful and 10 is not useful at all. There was broad agreement that websites, written materials and public meetings are very useful. ‘Focus groups and facilitated discussions’ and ‘community consultative committees’ received low levels of support, with most respondents feeling that they are only a little useful. Interestingly, there was broad agreement that wind farm tours and participation in local events are not useful engagement strategies. There was polarisation around the usefulness of one-on-one meetings, with equal numbers thinking they were very useful and not at all useful. Similarly, ‘surveys, voting and polling’ received strongly divergent views, with 10 respondents thinking they are useful or very useful and 11 thinking they are not useful at all.

The table below shows the tools in order of usefulness, with the % indicating the number of respondents who felt that tool was “very useful”. As can be seen, while some tools are more valued than others, there are no tools that stand out as overwhelmingly useful. This might reflect the context dependent nature of whether a given tool is effective or not. Of concern, however, is that certain legislated community engagement practices, such as Community Consultative Committees, have been found to be useful by only 9% of respondents.

| Rank | Tools                               | %  |
|------|-------------------------------------|----|
| 1    | Website                             | 14 |
| 2    | Public meetings                     | 13 |
| 3    | Written materials                   | 12 |
| 4    | Drop in style information sessions  | 11 |
| 5    | One on one meetings                 | 11 |
| 6    | Community Consultative Committees   | 9  |
| 7    | Focus groups, facilitated workshops | 9  |
| 8    | Survey, voting or polling           | 8  |
| 9    | Participation in local events       | 7  |
| 10   | Wind farm tours                     | 6  |

**QUESTION 23:**

**Community engagement and/or benefit-sharing techniques that are NOT beneficial (n=21)**

This question asked people to identify community engagement or benefit-sharing techniques they felt are NOT useful. This was an open-ended question, analysed into main themes. Several dominant themes emerged, including public meetings (e.g. town hall meetings), private negotiations, use of one-way methods only, inflexible or one-size-fits-all approaches and token engagement that does not provide genuine opportunities for influence or participation. Of these, town hall meetings were the most common technique (referenced by 33% of respondents) that people identified as not being useful:

*‘Public meetings are a recipe for disaster. They can often create a tense atmosphere, only allow the loudest voices to be heard and are not a useful forum for the dissemination of information or open dialogue.’*

*‘Open forum public meetings do not work in a productive manner and will almost certainly be hijacked by highly vocal opponents who represent a small minority of the community in most cases. People are easily intimidated in these forums and feel they can not openly share their thoughts, ideas and feelings on the subject’.*

When cross-referenced with the question above, there appears to be contradictory attitudes to public meetings, which may come down to differences in understandings of what a public meeting is and how they are run. It appears that open-forum, public meeting are problematic, but that other forms of group meetings (e.g. with a more defined public, such as the neighbourhood?) might be more useful.

Respondents commented that to be successful, engagement needs to go beyond information provision to include opportunities for community influence in project design or role in decision-making. Token efforts at engagement were found to be damaging.

*Generally, I believe that community engagement/benefit-sharing techniques are not beneficial when they are undertaken using a model that focuses only on one-way information flow only rather than collaboration between interested parties.*

*Community ‘engagement’ in which final decisions are presented as though open for discussion. Engagement must be open to genuine consideration of suggestions.*

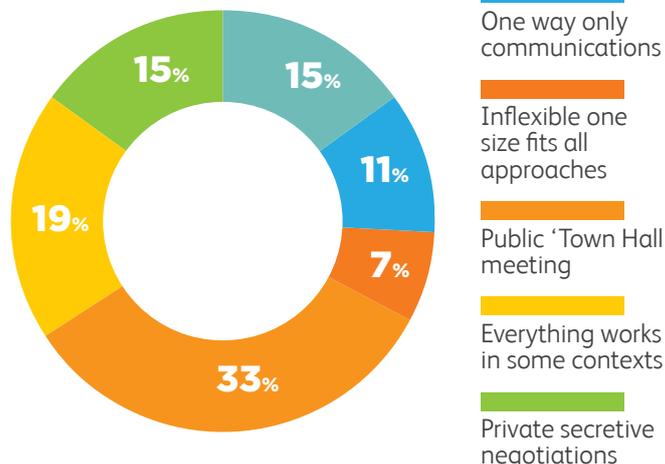
*Any public engagement that appears to be open but actually all decisions have already been made.*

When compared with the results from other questions these answers reveal potentially divergent attitudes towards information provision. Question 22 identified websites and written material as two of the three most useful techniques used by respondents, whereas the responses above identify one-way information provision as a risky minimum-level of engagement.

However, there was also recognition that including the community in design and decision-making is sometimes impractical or is limited by commercial/ technical viability and that these boundaries need to be clearly defined and managed:

*There are instances, in which there may be limited opportunity for collaboration and these should be managed accordingly.*

**FORMS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOUND TO NOT BE BENEFICIAL**



Respondents warned against one-on-one engagement that could be seen as secretive, for example if used as the main means of engagement (not supplemented with group processes). Experience reveals that private negotiations can lead to conflict between neighbours and feelings of mistrust:

*[There is] danger in secret one-on-one meetings that can lead to gossip and distrust, particularly if people ‘hear’ different things.*

It is important to note that a significant portion of respondents (22%) felt that every community is different and that everything works in some contexts and that there is no one size fits all approach.

Four respondents raised negative experiences with Community Consultative Committees (CCC), having found them to be counterproductive to good engagement. The issues revolved around the difficulties of forming a CCC that was genuinely representative of the community and not overrun by personal or political agendas; effective as a conduit of information between the community and the developer and vice versa; and, that had a clear role within the project development process. Where CCCs exist, there was a view that they should be used in combination with other engagement strategies.

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### QUESTION 24:

Community engagement and/or benefit-sharing techniques that you have found to be consistently beneficial (n=20)

Answers to this question were more diverse, with less agreement around common practices that are consistently beneficial than those which are not. This indicates there is a diverse range of practices that developers feel work well. The two most common themes that emerged from this open-ended question were face-to-face engagement (both one-on-one and small group) and having a presence in local community (e.g. local staff or participating in existing community activities).

Holding drop-in information sessions during planning and approvals phase were commonly referenced as working well:

*drop in events are the most effective form of community engagement . . . Information about the project can be displayed in written form and as images, members of the project team are on hand for one to one discussions, the informal setting is less daunting to members of the community and encourage meaningful participation, offers flexibility for community to drop in for 5 minutes of 30 minutes, very interactive and engaging, allows community members to leave written feedback forms and meet the project team face to face.*

Beyond this, other means of facilitating face-to-face interactions and, importantly, opportunities for dialogue and discussion were seen to work well. These included group contexts and opportunistic interactions (e.g. through participating in local events, having local staff):

*face-to-face interactions, whether one-on-one meetings, small group workshops, stalls, participation at local events all work well. It is also really important to try to reach people in contexts where they feel relaxed, at ease, open and, ideally, having fun. Participating in local events and hosting fun/ creative/ celebratory events is good.*

One on one conversations in voluntary circumstances like markets, tours, open community meetings.

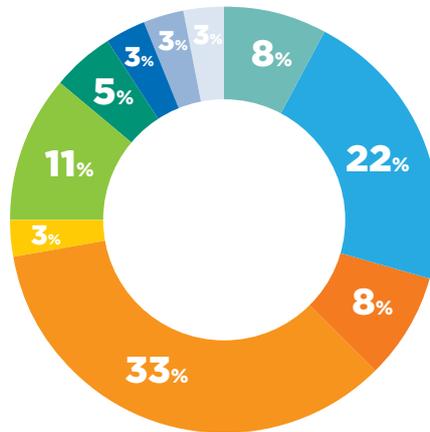
*Open discussion in many settings--public meetings, Facebook, information stalls, engagement with stakeholders that respects the views of the participants*

Other techniques respondents have found to work well include community input into decision-making over community benefit grants and sponsorship; gift of shares in the wind farm to the neighbourhood; contributions to energy bills for the neighbourhood; use of social media and online tools, and wind farm tours. As one respondent explained, “making the wind farm accessible” through tours and events helps to build positive engagement by “demystifying it” through personal experience.

Other techniques respondents have found to work well include community input into decision-making over community benefit grants and sponsorship; gift of shares in the wind farm to the neighbourhood; contributions to energy bills for the neighbourhood; use of social media and online tools, and wind farm tours. As one respondent explained, “making the wind farm accessible” through tours and events helps to build positive engagement by “demystifying it” through personal experience.

One respondent commented that “diverse engagement sustained over time is key” and this was reflected in other responses, where respondents listed a range of methods and, again, made reference to the need to tailor the approach to the local community.

### FORMS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOUND TO CONSISTENTLY YIELD POSITIVE RESULTS



**QUESTION 25:**

Are there community engagement and/or benefit-sharing techniques you have found to be damaging to a project or community? (n=19)

Answers to this question were very similar to Q.23: it was common for people to reference public meetings, lack of transparency/ secretiveness and not taking feedback on board (token engagement).

*Being secretive and playing people off each other (e.g. neighbours) does a lot of damage. Transparency about how benefits are being shared is key. Not engaging directly with people with concerns only makes it worse.*

*Any pretext to engage community members that isn't interested in taking the responses seriously.*

*Box ticking, emailed responses to complaints, hiding behind guidelines or laws, minimising or ridiculing opponents*

However, certain forms of benefit-sharing were also raised. People commented on the damaging impact of benefit-sharing mechanisms that are seen to be unfair or that emphasise a compensation rationale (over a benefit-sharing rationale). People also commented in the importance that the distribution of benefits in the community is something that the community has decision making power in, is appropriate to the local context, and connects the community with the ongoing operation of the wind farm.

*It is important to let the community decide how they want to spend or distribute any community benefit funds, this has to be a bottom up approach where the community take ownership and are not 'told' by the developer what or how to spend the funds.*

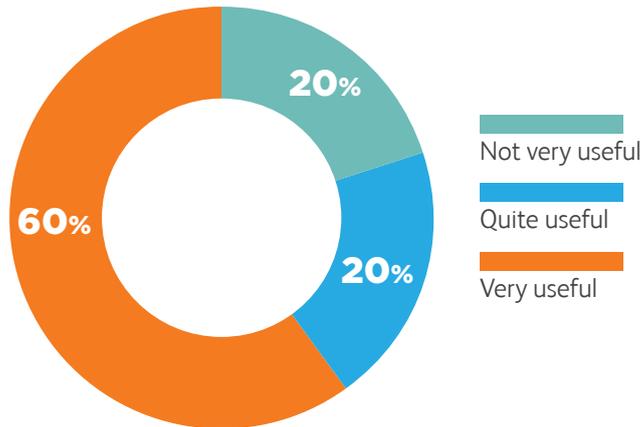
*I would caution against benefit-sharing activities that favour some rather than others and are unfair in their approach.*

*I particularly dislike lump sum handouts, which do not align the neighbour with the ongoing health of the project.*

**QUESTION 26:**

Usefulness of the CEC Guidelines (% , n=15)

The majority of respondents considered the CEC Guide to be very useful. It must be noted, however, that the response rate dropped by over 40% for this question. This might indicate that respondents do not use the guide, are not aware of it, or that they felt uncomfortable making comment on this, given the survey was sent out by the CEC.



**QUESTION 27:**

Which parts of the guideline or other references have you found most useful, if any? (n=11)

Respondents commented on the usefulness of several parts of the CEC's Guide:

- > Clear steps for each phase of project life-cycle
- > Engagement spectrum
- > Stakeholder mapping exercise
- > Case studies
- > How & why to do certain activities
- > Detail of how to do certain techniques

People also referenced using the ACT Guide by Lane and Hicks 2014, as well as being strongly influenced by state regulatory requirements.

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTION 28:

Are there any activities listed in the guideline or other references that carry risks that you are wary of and so avoid? If so, please detail these activities and the risks. (n=8)

*Depending on the site/region each project will vary. Some approaches in the guidelines will be more applicable for some projects but may not be necessarily used by the same proponent for another project.*

*Survey, voting and polling can give you a skewed view of people's perceptions, so I would avoid.*

*All the tools are fine. It is the respect with which they are employed and whether there is genuine interest in community views or just window dressing to get a project accepted.*

*Engaging with community too early in the process - i.e. when still doing site selection to determine if site even viable for a wind farm - counterproductive if you don't have at least preliminary studies and layouts to answer questions - otherwise get community nervous and suspicious. Need to build trust.*

### QUESTION 29:

Are there instances where input or feedback from the local community has changed the plans for a wind farm or its operations? Please give a specific example of what feedback was received, what changed and how this was then communicated back to the community. (n=18)

It was most common for developers to have changed the siting of individual turbines (39%) or to have removed turbines from the project (22%). One respondent reported community feedback affecting the size of turbines. Community input had informed the design and/or distribution of benefits from the development in three cases (16%). Other aspects mentioned by respondents as having changed in response to community feedback include: location of access road and transmission lines; landscaping and vegetation screening; informing flora and fauna studies, or doing more studies; and agreement to turn off turbines during aerial spraying, if required.

In two cases, both representing community wind projects, respondents indicated the depth of impact that community input and feedback have on the project:

*Feedback from surveys and a series of public workshops was fed into project planning to help determine things such as the planned benefit-sharing model, community ownership structure, and community investment offer. The sites we investigated were by invitation from the members of the community expressing interest.*

*[community input affected] the benefit-sharing scheme and community fund, through to decisions around returns on investment, we always engage and communicate transparently. Also when there is risk - we campaign and enable our supporters to have a voice.*

One respondent reported using community feedback as a means to improve the design of the project, build a sense of ownership and respond to concerns:

*There was an active anti-wind lobby group in the area [as result of another project] before we commenced our project and so we implemented specific targeted invite only workshops with representatives of various viewpoints to demonstrate actively engaging with anti-wind individuals and to try and get them to identify their specific concerns and mitigation measures. We also implemented voluntary neighbour benefit agreements... to make neighbours feel part of the project.*

Respondents indicated that changes are reported back to relevant people (one-on-one), at public information displays or via newsletters and media. Others indicated that changes have not always reported back well:

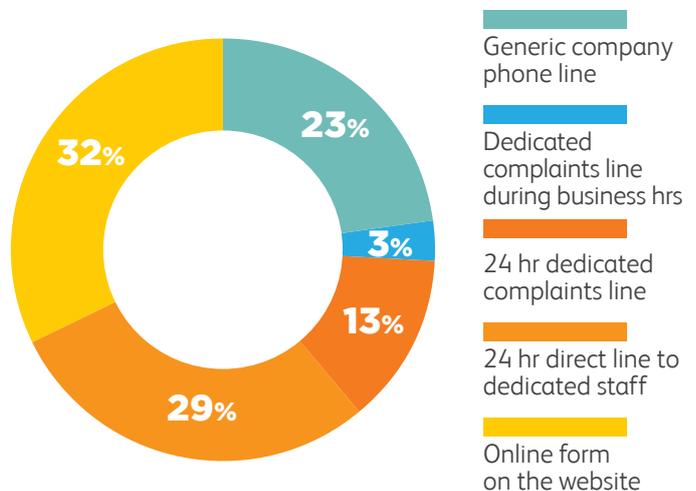
*Haven't been great at pointing out each case when and where a change to the project was made due to community feedback.*

This indicates a lack of visibility when things do change, which can be an issue if the community is unaware of the changes made, and would, therefore, be unaware of the level of responsiveness in the developer. Reasons given for lack of adequate reporting back to the community was being busy, staff juggling many tasks and focusing on other aspects of project development.

### QUESTION 30:

Management of complaints about your wind farm or development (#, n=15)  
*Please note the response rate dropped by 43% for this question.*

The most frequently used tools for complaints management are online forms and a 24hr direct phone line to dedicated staff, with several respondents using both. A significant portion (33%) used only a generic company



**QUESTION 31:**

preferred method of responding to complaints (n=23)

A majority of respondents seek to respond to new complainants with a face-to-face meeting or visit. Several respondents reported a preference for doing all three. Few respondents preference using email alone as the means to respond to new complainants.

| <b>Preferred method of responding to new complainants</b> | <b>#</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|----------|----------|
| Email   | 8        | 35       |
| Phone call  | 11       | 48       |
| Organise a face to face meeting/visit                     | 16       | 70       |

**QUESTION 32:**

What does successful community engagement and benefit-sharing look like to you or your company? [essay] (n=21)

Responses were open-ended and themed into aspects of three key categories:

**Engagement**

- > Active local support and advocacy from community
- > Social licence to operate – happy community
- > Community awareness of project: can access information, provide feedback, understands local benefits and employment
- > Trust and good working relationships with community
- > Community sentiment is empowered and proud
- > Being present in local community
- > Positive media and social media about the project
- > Community events and celebrations
- > Presence of champions in the community

**Project development**

- > Project development progress is timely and easy
- > Delivering a well designed project
- > Few objections to planning process
- > Complaints mechanism and issues are addressed in timely manner
- > No complaints during operations
- > Development of more renewable energy projects

**Benefit-sharing & innovative financing**

- > Presence of a community enhancement fund and local sponsorship
- > Community benefiting from tailored benefit-sharing program
- > Community connected in an on-going way through ownership/investment

One respondent referenced using the United Nations Brisbane Declaration 2005: Community Engagement Evaluation Framework principles and indicators as a framework to guide evaluation.

**QUESTION 33:**

What are the indicators that you use to demonstrate that your community engagement and benefit-sharing have been successful? (n=20)

Responses were open-ended and themes into aspects of four key categories:

**Engagement**

- > Number of people who attended tours, open days, events
- > Number of people involved in decision making / feedback processes: surveys, votes,
- > Number of local partnerships with business and organisations
- > Number of active local advocates
- > Open rates for newsletter and social media
- > Viewing rates for website
- > Number of positive / negative press
- > Good relationships with wind advocacy NGO's
- > Existence of local anti-wind farm lobby
- > On-going constructive and cordial relationships between proponent, landowners and all neighbours
- > Direct engagement with all people with concerns
- > Number of concerns resolved
- > Number of champions in the community

**Project development**

- > Number of neighbours within 3-5kms being in support of the project
- > Number of complaints
- > Number of concerns resolved
- > Local Government support
- > Community support at planning application stage
- > Achievement of planning approval
- > Achievement of financial close
- > Number of local employment opportunities and local business contracts during and after construction
- > Continued engagement after construction

**Benefit-sharing and innovative financing**

- > Forms of financial benefit flowing to local community
- > \$ per MW per year spend on local benefits
- > community participation in design/ decision around benefit-sharing
- > Percentage of neighbours who have taken up neighbourhood benefits
- > Number of community fund / sponsorship applications and those granted
- > Number of investors (for community investment model)
- > Scale of investment (for community investment model)
- > Actively engaged membership (for community investment model)

**Delivery and evaluation**

- > Existence of a stakeholder /community engagement plan per project
- > Internal evaluation process that is regularly reviewed
- > Community participation in evaluation of community engagement & benefit-sharing

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTION 34:

Is there financial benefit for successful community engagement and benefit-sharing? (n=21)

A vast majority (95%) see successful community engagement and benefit-sharing being of financial benefit to the company.

| Is there a financial benefit for successful community engagement and benefit-sharing | #  | %  |
|--|----|----|
| Yes  | 20 | 95 |
| No   | 1  | 5  |

### QUESTION 35:

Can you give an example of budget spend versus assumption of social benefit? (n=8)

This question received the lowest response rate of all in the survey, with only eight responses. One person said they did not understand the question. For others, it can be assumed it was not understood, is not relevant to them, that they were not easily able to quantify the information, or that they felt this information is commercially sensitive. Answers expressed social benefit of many times more than what it cost to deliver community engagement/ benefit-sharing. For example:

*Our Annual benefit-sharing program is \$30,000 [for a 2-turbine project] and the assumption of social benefit would be 5 x that.*

*Projects in development have annual community engagement funds of \$5,000-10,000, depending on project size. Project in construction or operations are typically in the order of \$500/turbine, but adjusted for project size as appropriate.*

Respondents generally thought that the spending on community engagement and benefit-sharing is negligible in the context of overall project budgets, but that it yielded “invaluable” results for both the community and the company:

*the costs for proper community engagement and building community support / trust is quickly negated compared to the costs where this is not done properly. The costs to company profile and reputation also not possible to quantify.*

### QUESTION 36:

What are the risks of community engagement not going to plan? (n=14)

#### Social risk

- > Losing existing social licence with broader

#### Community

- > Losing Local Government support
- > Tense and / or divided community
- > Non cooperative landholders
- > Poor relationships and communication
- > Managing community expectation

#### Risk to the project

- > Reactive rather than proactive engagement
- > Site abandonment - huge financial loss
- > Resource strain (staff time and money) to deal with opposition
- > High cost for consultants if project goes wrong
- > Staff stress and emotional impact
- > Impact to company reputation
- > Planning development approval rejection and associated costs
- > Onerous and costly approval conditions

### QUESTION 37:

Has your company had to engage external consultants to deal with reactive community issues? (n=20)

The responses show that the majority (65%) have not engaged external consultants to deal with negative community issues. However 30% of developers do engage external support (e.g. communications, public relations, or community engagement experts) in both proactive and reactive ways. For some, it seemed external advice on community issues is part of the course of their project development. For others, specialists are used as a means to try to remedy an already difficult social situation, in which cases it can be a significant project expense. Respondents reported costs of “\$200,000 per annum” and “between tens of thousands to over \$100k” per project. It was also noted that the use of external consultants needs to be carefully managed and complement in-house roles and expertise, with a preference for staff to remain the “front line” contact.

**QUESTION 38:**

Can you share some key lessons you have learned about community engagement and/or benefit-sharing?

Responses identified several key elements of community engagement and benefit-sharing:

- > Use many methods simultaneously
- > Engage early (before planning application) and for life of project
- > Ensure regular, consistent face-to-face contact with local people
- > Be open and honest, transparent
- > Be genuine, have integrity
- > Engagement must be tailored to local context, no “one-size fits all”
- > Be clear about what is up for negotiation and allow community to contribute (or even control) to some decisions (e.g. benefit-sharing, micro-siting)
- > Share the benefits broadly

For example, with regards to community engagement, people said:

*“Being open and honest about the purpose and scope of the engagement. This can help eliminate false expectations from the community that can potentially lead to frustration and disappointment”.*

*“It seems to work best if the community has genuine ways to participate and feel heard and respected. By genuine I mean the ability for the community to influence what decisions is made clear upfront and then reported back afterwards in a transparent way”.*

*“Allow ideas to flow from the bottom up, let the community decide what type of benefit-sharing they would like”.*

*“Use local networks to identify support to assist your efforts”.*

*“Need various methods for each project. Need to start at the right time - not too early but well before planning application lodged and ensure demonstrate taking input into consideration in final application layouts. Need to continue community engagement for life of project, need to be genuine”.*

*“Important to have people resources available to ensure a consistent approach”.*

For example, with regards to benefit-sharing, people said:

*“Increasing the benefits flowing to the local community increases levels of support received for the project as there is then a reason to accept the landscape change and any disruptions caused”.*

*“Providing opportunities for co-ownership and co-investment increased people’s connection with and support for a project”.*

*“The more holistic you can make your benefit-sharing model, the more you can ensure that most of your community sees how beneficial the project is”.*

**QUESTION 39:**

In a perfect world where there were no budgetary constraints, what new techniques would you like to try and why?

Out of the 17 responses to this narrative style question, 11 respondents had ideas for community engagement, 7 for benefit-sharing and 4 for innovative financing.

In regards to community engagement, time spent in community and the quality of engagement was popular with versions on this listing skilled local employee on the ground, tours to other wind farms, social events, education programs and stalls. Other comments listed citizen juries as a way to enhance participation, more access to resources to do effective social media and print ads locally and the desire to create a more accessible and interesting wind farm - such as making it a more public space and including art.

In regards to benefit-sharing, options included a priority for neighbours, but variations included proximity payments, cheaper electricity, needed services such as mobile towers or medical services. Innovative financing options included a desire to undertake co-investment with the community, but also how to involve local community banks in the process.

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTION 40:

What factors in a community determine the methodology for engagement? Or in what ways do you try to tailor your approach to community engagement to the specific characteristics of the community you are in?

From the 16 responses the following contextual factors and tools were gleaned.

#### Context:

- > population density
- > types of landuse in the local area
- > prior history with wind energy / existence of anti-wind farm lobby
- > the types and dynamic of community culture and subcultures: farmers, transient population, weekenders etc
- > landscape associations
- > local communication channels
- > what the economic and employment profile is of the area
- > local government level of support for wind
- > transport access and internet access
- > proximity of other wind farms in the area
- > local trusted advocates

#### Tools / activities:

- > stakeholder mapping
- > situational context analysis / community context review
- > benefit-sharing decision making process with the community to determine amount of money, to whom and how it should be allocated
- > tailored community engagement plans

Further, a respondent commented on being open to the community providing the best methodology. A different respondent discussed the interconnected and very locally specific factors that must be considered in order to create a strategy:

“The nature of the community overall (are they local - have been there for years and everybody knows everybody - or is it full of strangers), this determines the amount of resources (for stranger dominated communities getting on the radio is essential, for more local spirited communities the annual spring ball or country show is more important than anything.”

### QUESTION 41:

We are interested in better understanding the impact of community dynamics and how that might or might not impact your approach to community engagement. Thinking about the different communities that you engage with, can you explain how different community dynamics do or do not impact the techniques that you use and why.

The 16 respondents referred to the following dynamics and ideas for approaches.

#### Community dynamics:

- > How the community associates what is ‘local’ i.e. the village, local government area, or the broader region?
- > Land use conflicts, what is located nearby that may oppose it?
- > The political position of local, state and federal representatives.
- > Existing operational sites or development projects - have they done a good job or managed to get the local community off side?

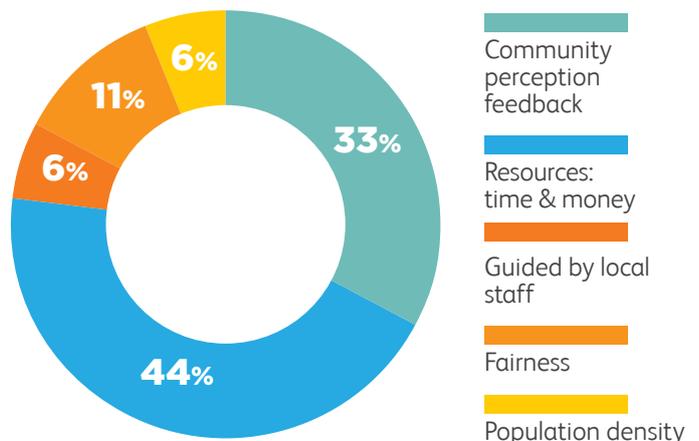
#### Approaches:

- > Prioritise developing relationships with those closest to the development, one on one and in small groups.
- > Never prejudice a community - learn their unique dynamic.
- > “The key principles of engagement apply in any community: consult early and often and provide as much information as possible”.
- > Being real about assessing the level of difficulty of each project “A degree of difficulty 10 out of 10 takes a expert team. And a failure impacts the whole industry”.
- > Providing moral and media support for wind farm hosts

### QUESTION 42:

In your experience, what is the single biggest influencing factor for your chosen approaches to community engagement?

The following pie chart represents the main factors influencing a developer’s approach to community engagement: resources and community perceptions are reported as the key drivers.



## CROSS QUESTION ANALYSIS

This section cross analyses two of the questions above to reveal trends in data.

### QUESTIONS 8+12

**8.** Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTEs) work at the company?

**12.** Use of community engagement references or tools?

While the CEC Guide is the most frequently used tool, it is particularly often used by companies with 4 or more FTE. Smaller companies (1-3 FTE) relied more on other guides, such as the IAP2 Spectrum and the ACT Guide. Overall, companies with 20+ FTE drew on community engagement guides less than companies with 1-3 FTE.

This shows that higher staffing levels do not correlate with use of guides, despite possible assumptions that less staff could lead to time and resource constraint that would inhibit engaging with guides. Developers with 4-10 FTE engaged least with guides.

#### QUESTION 12

| QUESTION 8 |       | The Clean Energy Council's Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry | IAP2 spectrum of public participation | ACT Government's Best Practise Community engagement in wind guide | or other   | Total |
|------------|-------|---|---------------------------------------|---|------------|-------|
|            | 1-3   | 12.5% (1)   | 25% (2)                               | 37.5 (3)  | 25% (2)    | 8     |
|            | 4-10  | 50% (3)   | 33.33% (2)                            | 16.67% (1)  | 0% (0)     | 6     |
|            | 11-20 | 40% (2)   | 20% (1)                               | 20% (1)   | 20% (1)    | 5     |
|            | 20+   | 44.44% (8)  | 27.78% (5)                            | 16.67% (3)  | 11.11% (1) | 18    |
| Total      | 14    | 10  | 8                                     | 5   | 37         |       |

### QUESTIONS 8+13

**8.** Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTEs) work at the company?

**13.** Does your company direct specific money to community engagement?

The data shows that companies with 11+ FTE consistently direct specific funding to community engagement. Larger companies are also more likely to find the budget for community engagement to be sufficient, whereas the majority of smaller companies think it is not enough. As with the analysis of Q.8+12 above, companies with the lowest performance (least allocation of funding to community engagement) is developers with 4-10 FTE. Smaller companies with 1-3 FTE were less likely to direct funding to community engagement than the two larger brackets, presumably due to financial constraints. Still, 75% said they had dedicated community engagement budgets, remembering also that previous questions revealed small companies (likely community-owned wind developments) contribute voluntary time as well.

#### QUESTION 13

| QUESTION 8 |       | Yes       | No      | Total |
|------------|-------|-----------|---------|-------|
|            | 1-3   | 75% (3)   | 25% (1) | 4     |
|            | 4-10  | 40% (2)   | 60% (3) | 5     |
|            | 11-20 | 100% (2)  | 0% (0)  | 5     |
|            | 20+   | 100% (12) | 0% (0)  | 18    |
| Total      | 19    | 4         | 23      |       |

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONS 8+20

**8.** Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTEs) work at the company?

**20.** When community engagement begins in project lifecycle?

This cross analysis indicates that, in particular, very small companies (1-3 FTE) start community engagement activities very early. This is likely because they are community-owned wind developments. Companies with 11-20 FTE also start engagement early, at site selection phase. The largest FTE bracket (20+ FTE) indicated starting engagement at various

phases throughout the project, although 52% start in either site selection and feasibility development. As with the two preceding cross-analyses, companies with 4-10 FTE lag behind the rest in their initiation of community engagement activities.

#### QUESTION 12

| QUESTION 8 |       | Site selection | Feasibility development | Planning and approvals | Constructions | Commissioning | Operations | Total |
|------------|-------|----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-------|
|            | 1-3   | 100% (3)       | 0% (0)                  | 0% (0)                 | 0% (0)        | 0% (0)        | 0% (0)     | 3     |
|            | 4-10  | 22.22% (2)     | 33.33% (3)              | 11.11% (1)             | 11.11% (1)    | 11.11% (1)    | 11.11% (1) | 9     |
|            | 11-20 | 100% (3)       | 0% (0)                  | 0% (0)                 | 0% (0)        | 0% (0)        | 0% (0)     | 1     |
|            | 20+   | 32% (8)        | 20% (5)                 | 12% (3)                | 12% (3)       | 12% (3)       | 12% (3)    | 25    |
|            | Total | 14             | 18                      | 4                      | 4             | 4             | 4          | 38    |

### QUESTIONS 8+13

**8.** Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTEs) work at the company?

**13.** Is there financial benefit for successful community engagement and benefit-sharing?

The data shows that companies with 11+ FTE consistently direct specific funding to community engagement. Larger companies are also more likely to find the budget for community engagement to be sufficient, whereas the majority of smaller companies think it is not enough. As with the analysis of Q.8+12 above, companies with the lowest performance (least allocation of funding to community engagement) is developers with 4-10 FTE. Smaller companies with 1-3 FTE were less likely to direct funding to community engagement than the two larger brackets, presumably due to financial constraints. Still, 75% said they had dedicated community engagement budgets, remembering also that previous questions revealed small companies (likely community-owned wind developments) contribute voluntary time as well.

#### QUESTION 13

| QUESTION 8 |       | Yes      | No      | Total |
|------------|-------|----------|---------|-------|
|            | 1-3   | 100% (4) | 0% (0)  | 4     |
|            | 4-10  | 100% (4) | 0% (0)  | 4     |
|            | 11-20 | 100% (4) | 0% (0)  | 4     |
|            | 20+   | 90% (9)  | 10% (9) | 10    |
|            | Total | 18       | 1       | 23    |

**QUESTIONS 6+9**

6. Location of offices across Australia

9. Use of community engagement references or tools?

The most FTEs dedicated to community engagement for CE are based in the ACT, NT and QLD offices. This indicates an overall lack of community FTEs based in NSW and VIC, despite these being the states with the highest number of wind developments by respondents (see Q.7).

**QUESTION 12**

QUESTION 8

|       | 0 - 0.5    | 0.5 - 1    | 0 - 1      | 1-3        | 3+         | Total |
|-------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|
| ACT   | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 50% (1)    | 50% (1)    | 2     |
| NSW   | 33.33% (3) | 11.11% (1) | 11.11% (1) | 22.22% (2) | 22.22% (2) | 9     |
| NT    | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 100% (1)   | 1     |
| QLD   | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 100% (2)   | 2     |
| SA    | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 66.67% (2) | 33.33% (1) | 3     |
| TAS   | 100% (1)   | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 0% (0)     | 1     |
| VIC   | 7.69% (1)  | 15.38% (2) | 7.69% (1)  | 53.85% (7) | 15.38% (2) | 13    |
| WA    | 50% (1)    | 0% (0)     | 25% (1)    | 0% (0)     | 25% (1)    | 4     |
| Total | 7          | 3          | 3          | 12         | 10         | 35    |

**QUESTIONS 6+12**

6. Location of offices across Australia

12. Use of community engagement references or tools?

In general, developers from the ACT draw on guides more than developers from any other state or territory. Developers in NSW, VIC, NT, and SA draw on guides a similar amount, but less than the ACT. The CEC and ACT guides are the most consistently used resources across all states. The IAP2 and/or other resources are either not known or not used in NT, ACT, TAS, WA, SA and QLD.

**QUESTION 12**

QUESTION 8

|       | The Clean Energy Council's Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry | IAP2 spectrum of public participation | ACT Government's Best Practise Community engagement in wind guide | or other   | Total |
|-------|---|---------------------------------------|---|------------|-------|
| ACT   | 40% (2)   | 0% (0)                                | 40% (2)   | 20% (1)    | 5     |
| NSW   | 38.39% (7)  | 27.78% (5)                            | 27.78% (5)  | 5.56% (1)  | 18    |
| NT    | 50% (1)   | 0% (0)                                | 50% (1)   | 0% (0)     | 2     |
| QLD   | 50% (1)   | 0% (0)                                | 50% (1)   | 0% (0)     | 2     |
| SA    | 40% (2)   | 0% (0)                                | 20% (1)   | 40% (2)    | 5     |
| TAS   | 100% (2)  | 0% (0)                                | 0% (0)  | 0% (0)     | 5     |
| VIC   | 36.84% (7)  | 31.58% (6)                            | 15.79% (3)  | 15.79% (3) | 19    |
| WA    | 50% (1)   | 0% (0)                                | 50% (1)   | 0% (0)     | 2     |
| Total | 22  | 11                                    | 14  | 7          | 54    |

**APPENDIX A**

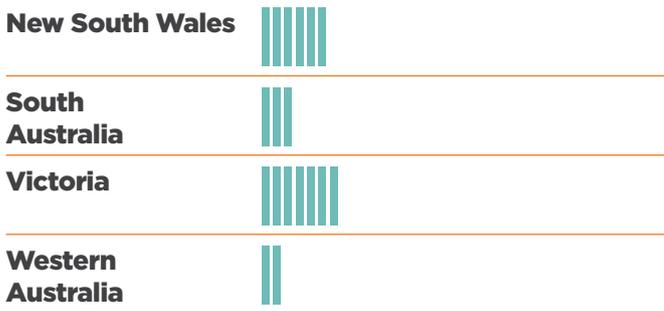
**PROJECT EXAMPLES**

This section of the survey asked respondents to provide details on specific wind developments, in order to get project-specific insight into community-engagement and benefit-sharing practices. Questions in this section received less responses (18 on average) than the first section of the survey (26 on average).

**QUESTION 43**

Wind farm location (n=18)

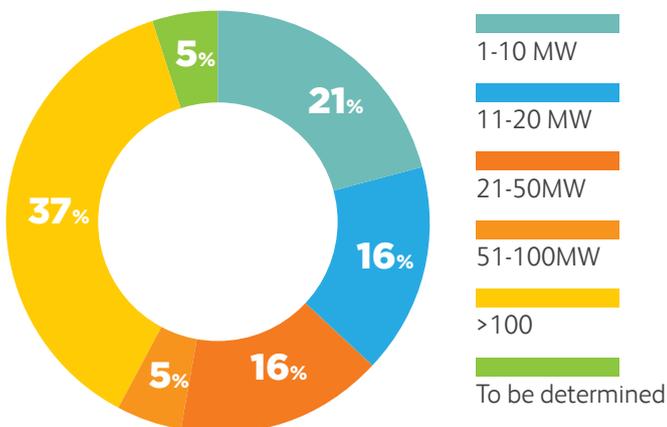
Location of the wind developments used as examples, dominated by VIC and NSW.



**QUESTION 44**

Wind farm size (n=18)

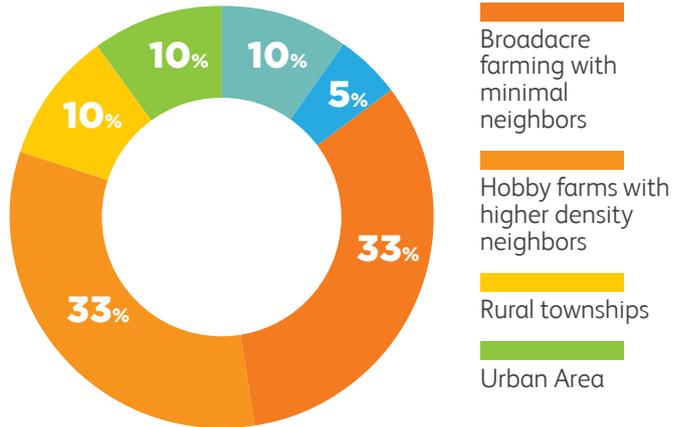
Size of the wind farms given as examples, showing a good spread of small, medium and large projects. Five (26%) of the examples provided are community-owned and community-led developments and one is a partnership between a corporate developer and a community group.



**QUESTION 45**

Characteristics of the wind farm location and the type of surrounding land (n=17)

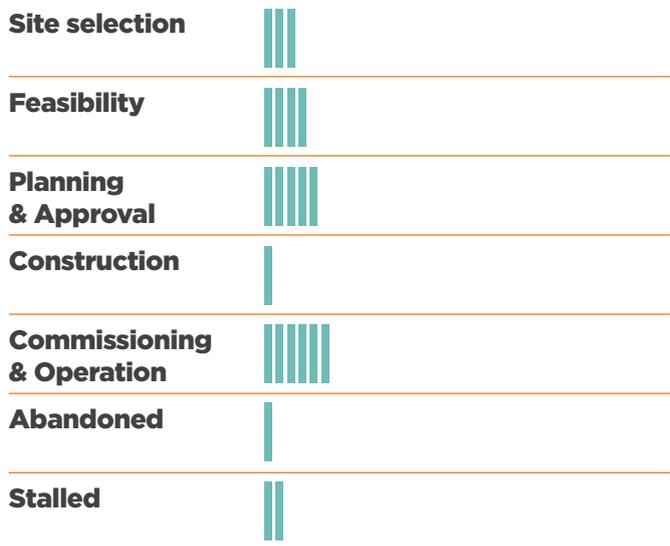
Most examples provided come from areas of broadacre farming (low density of neighbours) or hobby farming (higher density of neighbours).



**QUESTION 46**

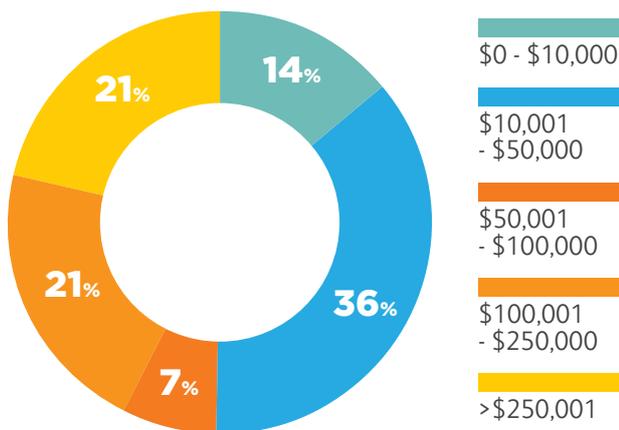
Stage of wind farm development (n=19)

Most of the examples provided are in operation (6). A majority of the others are in various stages of site selection (4), feasibility studies (5) or planning and approval (6) phase. Two projects are stalled, one project is abandoned. Reasons for stalling were to do with state government decisions. Reason for abandonment was political uncertainty over NSW guidelines and resultant changes in company priorities.



**QUESTION 47**

Approximate budget spent on community engagement to date (not including salaries) (n=17)



**QUESTION 48** (n=19)

Use of specific wind farm development engagement activities through the different stages of wind farm development. (n=19)

Please note the response rate dropped by 27% for this question.

This question maps what engagement activities are favoured at what stage by asking responding to mark if they have (or plan to) use a given community engagement or benefit-sharing tool in given phases of their wind development example. It is clear that most engagement happens in the feasibility and planning and approvals phases, followed by site selection and markedly little in commissioning, operations and decommissioning. It is encouraging to note, however, that almost half of respondents used neighbourhood meetings as well as one-on-one meetings from the outset (site selection). Unfortunately, from our wording of the question, it is unclear whether ‘neighbourhood meetings’ infers one-on-one or group meetings.

As with Q.22 (which asked respondents to rank community engagement methods by their usefulness), wind farm tours, participation at local events, and polling/voting are least used. A point of difference, however, is the sentiment toward public meetings: while being ranked as the second most useful community engagement tool in Q.22, here they are used by less than a third of respondents in any phase of development. Very few respondents use invite-only workshops or forums. Disappointingly, less than a quarter indicated use of community grant funds or sponsorship at any stage of the wind farm. Only a quarter are planning to hold wind farm tours or open days at commissioning stage.

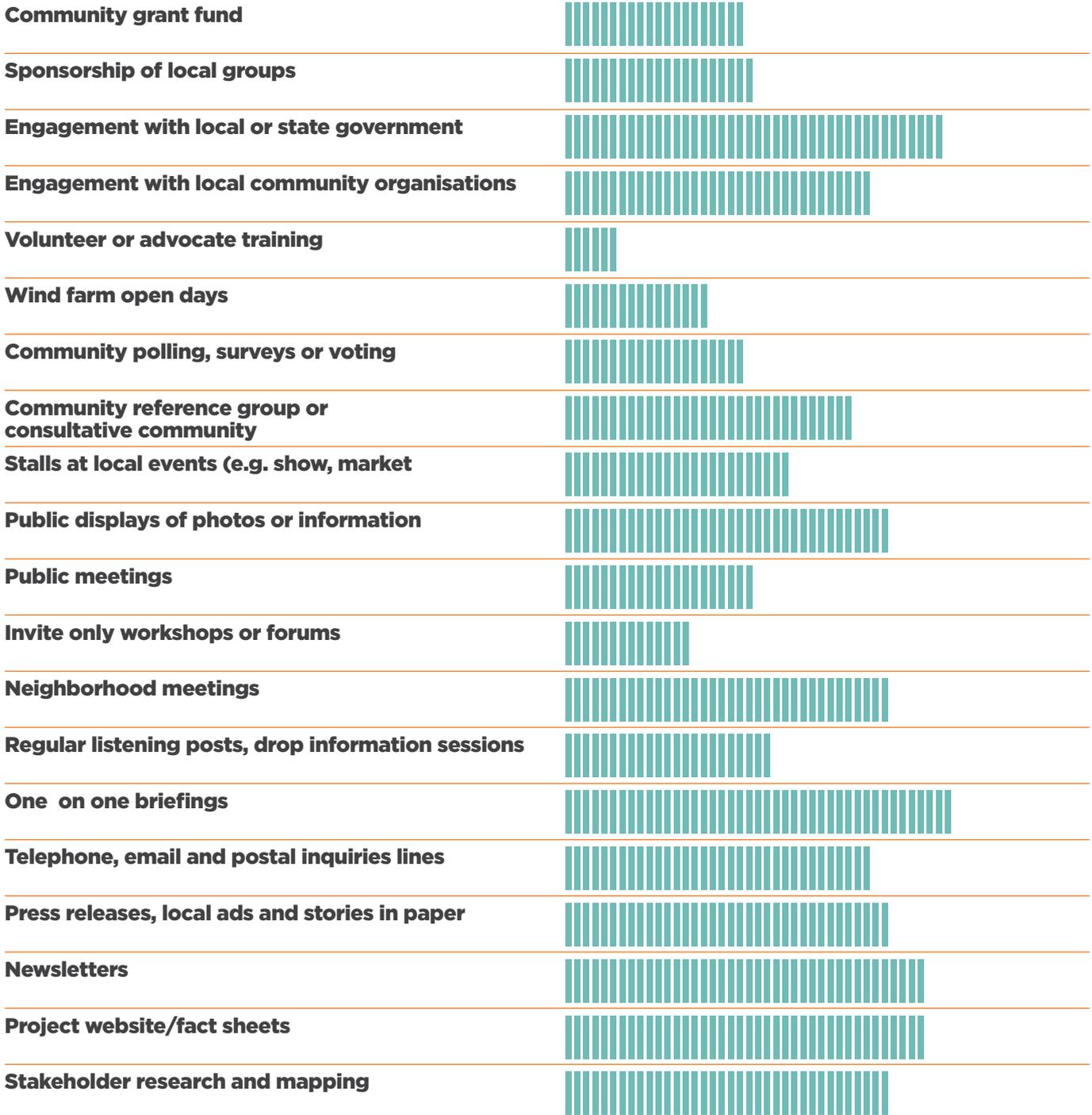
|   | Site Selection | Feasibility | Planning & approval | Construction | Commissioning & Operations | Decommissioning |
|---|----------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Stakeholder research and mapping                      | 11             | 12          | 7                   | 4            | 1                          | 0               |
| Project website / fact sheets                         | 9              | 11          | 10                  | 5            | 4                          | 1               |
| Newsletters   | 6              | 12          | 9                   | 6            | 6                          | 1               |
| Press releases, locals ads and stories in paper       | 5              | 10          | 8                   | 6            | 6                          | 1               |
| Telephone, email and postal inquiries lines           | 6              | 8           | 7                   | 6            | 6                          | 1               |
| One on one briefings                                  | 9              | 14          | 9                   | 6            | 4                          | 1               |
| Regular listening posts, drop in information sessions | 3              | 4           | 10                  | 3            | 2                          | 1               |
| Neighbourhood meetings                                | 8              | 10          | 8                   | 5            | 4                          | 1               |
| Invite only workshops or forums                       | 4              | 3           | 4                   | 2            | 1                          | 0               |
| Public meetings                                       | 6              | 6           | 5                   | 2            | 2                          | 0               |
| Public displays of photos and information             | 4              | 10          | 10                  | 6            | 5                          | 1               |
| Stalls at local events (e.g. show, market)            | 4              | 5           | 8                   | 4            | 4                          | 0               |
| Community reference group or consultative committee   | 3              | 8           | 8                   | 6            | 6                          | 1               |
| Community polling, surveys or voting                  | 3              | 6           | 7                   | 2            | 1                          | 0               |
| Wind farm tours or open days                          | 3              | 3           | 2                   | 3            | 4                          | 0               |
| Volunteer or advocate training                        | 2              | 1           | 1                   | 1            | 1                          | 0               |
| Engagement with local community organisations         | 3              | 8           | 11                  | 5            | 6                          | 1               |
| Engagement with local or state government             | 9              | 11          | 9                   | 6            | 6                          | 1               |
| Sponsorship of local groups                           | 2              | 5           | 5                   | 5            | 4                          | 0               |
| Community grant fund                                  | 1              | 4           | 4                   | 4            | 6                          | 1               |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>101</b>     | <b>151</b>  | <b>142</b>          | <b>87</b>    | <b>79</b>                  | <b>12</b>       |

## APPENDIX A

### FREQUENCY OF USE OF CERTAIN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND BENEFIT-SHARING TOOLS

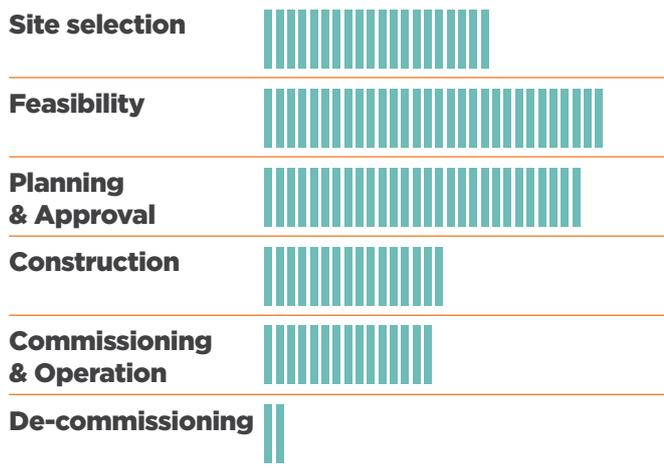
This graph indicates which engagement tools were marked as being most used across all stages of wind farm development. What is particularly pertinent here is the performance of each tool relative to the others. What we are seeing is a heavy reliance on one-on-one engagement and one-way information flows, along side engagement with local and state government stakeholders. Much less used are opportunities for two-way dialogue, such as conversation or workshopping, in a public or group setting (e.g. facilitated workshop, public meeting or neighbourhood

meeting). Education and experiential opportunities are also little used (e.g. wind farm tours, open days, advocate training), apart from drop-in information sessions during the planning and approvals phase. There is little use of feedback mechanisms such as polling or voting. Overall this indicates an engagement approach based predominantly on information provision in face-to-face, one-on-one contexts. While this includes opportunities for dialogue, it does not emphasise public/ community level dialogue or feedback loops. There is remarkably little benefit-sharing in the form of community grants or sponsorship, each being used 50% less than leading tools.



### SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES ACROSS WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT PHASES

When analysed according to project phase, it is clear that most engagement activities take place during the feasibility and planning and approval stages. There is also a significant amount of engagement happening in site selection phase, although this is generally limited to stakeholder mapping, one-on-one meetings and information provision, as well as engagement with local and state government. The shift from feasibility to planning and approvals stages is accompanied by different community engagement activities. The planning and approvals phase uses a greater range of engagement tools, with less focus on information provision and one-on-one meetings. Instead, activities that enable broader local public engagement are taken up, such as listening posts, drop-in information sessions, stalls at local events and reaching out to community organisations. Still noticeably lacking, however, is the use of opportunities for group discussion and feedback. The concentration of engagement activities that reach out to the local public during this phase reflects the regulatory need to publicly display wind farm plans and prove opportunities have been available for feedback. Responses indicate a significant drop in engagement activities once planning approval is received, with a 42% drop in engagement activities reported during the construction phase. This is likely to reflect different perspectives on construction phase from developer and community perspectives. For developers, construction and all future phases are lower-risk, as planning approval has already been secured. For the local community, however, it is the phase of most local disruption and change.

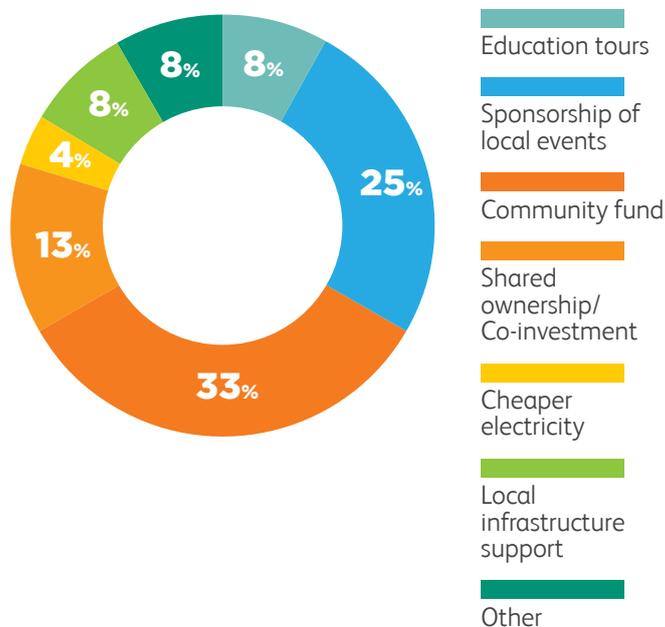


### QUESTION 49:

What benefit-sharing activities were undertaken in the local community?

This was an open-ended question in which answers were analysed into themes.

This question received the lowest response rate of all questions in the survey. This may reflect the fact that many of the examples used are not yet operational (15 of 19) and that it is uncommon for developers to begin to offer benefit-sharing until a project is operational. It may also be due to an unfamiliarity with benefit-sharing practice and that such practices are not yet the industry norm. Results also indicate that there are some misconceptions about the nature of what benefit-sharing constitutes, with a small number of respondents (8%) indicating that educational tours form part of their benefit-sharing. While educational tours may have a beneficial impact in the local community, they do not contribute to sharing the direct, flow-on or in-kind financial benefits of the wind farm.





## **APPENDIX B**

Enhancing Positive Social Outcomes from Wind Development in Australia:  
Evaluating Community Engagement & Benefit-sharing

# **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW ANALYSIS**

May 2017

Jarra Hicks, Taryn Lane, Emily Wood, Alicia Webb and Franziska Mey

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Interviews provided an integral source of information for the ‘Enhancing Social Outcomes in Wind Development’ research. The 22 interviewees were selected as they have all had interaction and/or direct involvement in wind energy development/s and represent a diverse group of stakeholders that play an important role in across the spectrum of wind energy deployment in Australia. The group of interviewees broadly fit into the following categories: developers, community, regulators and government, academics and experts, and non-government organisations.

Despite the varied backgrounds of the interviewees, analysis demonstrates common themes in people’s understandings of community engagement and benefit-sharing principles and practice. However, there are also evident points of divergence, reflecting the fact that industry practice and understanding of community engagement and benefit-sharing is varied. This indicates that wind development is a dynamic process in which practices are currently evolving.

Results indicate that the relationship between wind development and local communities is complex and highly nuanced. While many practices are collated here as suggestions, based on experiences of socially successful projects raised by interviewees, there is also a recognition that community engagement and benefit-sharing must be context specific and emerge in response to local conditions.

Interview questions are available on request.

## A SUMMARY OF THE KEY THEMES AND FINDINGS ARE OUTLINED BELOW

### **Developing trust**

Factors seen to influence trust include: regular and consistent contact; having staff available to the community; conducting engagement and consultation via individual and group settings; starting engagement with local people (beyond hosts) during feasibility stage; providing formal (e.g. meetings, information sessions) and informal (e.g. casual encounters in the street, BBQs) opportunities; and, being honest about potential negative and positive impacts. Appropriateness of staff in community-facing roles is also a contributing factor.

### **Appropriateness of staff**

Appropriateness of community-facing staff and consistency of staff over time, as well as their willingness to engage with local people face-to-face and in one-on-one as well as group setting was identified as being of fundamental importance. Having appropriate people in community-facing roles came up as a recurrent theme in interviews, many interviewees quoted having a local person with particular training and personality characteristics as an ideal representative.

### **Role of information & knowledge**

Information provision forms a basis for transparency and ensuring local people are knowledgeable about the project and wind energy. However, while information is important, there are conflicting views on the primacy of information provision and knowledge in developing positive social responses to development. The importance of attention to who conveys information, when and how is crucial, as is pairing information provision with a range of other means of engagement.

### **Fairness of process**

To be well supported, interviewees identified it is essential that the local community views the development process as fair. Several factors contribute to this, including alignment between engagement processes and benefit-sharing offers.

### **Contextual influence**

Local contexts vary significantly, as influenced by a number of cultural, historical, demographic and geographic factors. This makes “different community dynamics very complex and context specific” (E2). People’s relationships with landscapes are often “emotionally loaded” (R2). Successful approaches are integrated within detailed understandings of the local community and founded on local knowledge.

### **Flexibility in design**

Interviewees commented that developer responsiveness to community feedback works best when engagement starts early and there is room for local input influence aspects of wind farm design, including the community engagement and benefit-sharing approach.

### Policy, politics and regulation

Divergent views emerged around the role and impact of policy. Some interviewees were highly critical of regulation, claiming that it has “put a huge hand brake on wind” (C2) through activities like the reviews of the Renewable Energy Target, the VC82 regulations in Victoria and the draft NSW Planning Guidelines. There was significant concern that an overly prescriptive approach to community engagement and benefit-sharing in planning approvals process would remove developer’s ability to be “flexible and adaptable” (D1) to the specific context of each development. Many interviewees valued the “carrot” approach taken by the ACT renewable energy auctions through rewarding quality community engagement and benefit-sharing practice.

### Fairness of outcomes

This was framed in terms of “being a good neighbour” (E2) and providing benefits that are seen to be proportionate to the changes taking place and which are distributed equitably. One developer described the rationale behind benefit-sharing: “It’s about recognising that you are going to change the face of a community or an area and that you are going to be making money out of that so you want to share the income and the benefits from that” (D4).

### Better practice

Interviewee reports of better practice center around increasing the interface between: developer staff and the community; the community and wind technology; and, the community with each other in relation to the project. In addition, better practice involves including local people in more specific and tangible ways in wind development (e.g. co-investment, co-ownership) and sharing the benefits more broadly and fairly, particularly with neighbours.

### Challenges of timing

Interviewees recognised the difficulties associated with long timelines and unpredictable planning processes associated with wind development. These issues are compounded by policy uncertainty and lack of resources (e.g. staff, cash flow).

Despite the challenges and imperfect practice raised in interviews, the analysis reveals some positive trends taking place across the industry. These include an increasing recognition of the value of community engagement in project development among all stakeholder types. This is a positive culture shift that is likely to have long-term benefits for the industry and communities. Key to this will be an increasing need for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing to lift the standard within the wind sector.

## METHOD

As part of the ‘Enhancing Social Outcomes in Wind Development’ study, 22 semi-structured interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders involved in wind energy development in Australia. This included: wind developers (community engagement personnel, project managers and CEOs); government representatives (from all levels of government); non-government organisations active on wind and renewable energy issues; academics who research aspects of the relationship between people and wind turbines (‘experts’); and, community members who have been active around a proposed wind farm.

**Table 1:** summary of number of interviewees by stakeholder type

| Stakeholder type                 | Number of Interviewees |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Wind developers (D)              | 7                      |
| Regulators and government (R)    | 3                      |
| Non-government organisations (N) | 2                      |
| Academics & experts (E)          | 6                      |
| Community members (C)            | 4                      |
| TOTAL Number of Interviewees     | 22                     |

Confidentiality of interviewees was essential for interviewees to feel confident and safe to speak freely. As such, interviewees are identified only by their stakeholder type and interview number: developers with ‘D’; community members with ‘C’; regulators with ‘R’; experts and academics with ‘E’; and, ‘N’ for non-government organisation representatives. A number of interviewees were representative of more than one stakeholder group: for example, a community member and a NGO staff, or a regulator and a community member. All direct references to specific wind companies or wind farms have been removed to void the ability to identify interviewees by their role and context.

There was no obligation or reward for participating in interviews. All interviewees were approached and briefed as per the approved process approved by UQ Human Ethics Research Committee, approval number #2016000866. Interviewees signed a consent form before the interview proceeded.

Interviews were conducted between July and August 2016, were held at a location of the interviewees choosing and went for 60-120 minutes. Two members of the research team conducted twelve interviews, although nine were conducted by only one person. Interview questions were semi-structured and varied slightly by stakeholder type, being tailored to different roles that they represented. Interview questions are included in Appendix C. Interviews were partially transcribed and coded according to themes.

## APPENDIX B

Developing the coding themes was an iterative process informed by the dominant emerging themes from the multiple sources of data informing the research (e.g. interviews, literature review, community engagement plans, survey of developers, etc.). The final themes and sub-themes are summarised in the table below.

**Table 2:** Themes and sub-themes used to code interviews

| Theme            | Sub-themes   |
|------------------|--|
| Social           | Developing trust; appropriateness of staff; role of knowledge; fairness of process.  |
| Contextual       | Flexibility in design; contextual influence; role and impact of regulation.  |
| Economic         | Fairness of outcomes.  |
| Praxis           | Better practice; ineffective practice; what's changing the game?; social licence to operate; pathways to valuing community engagement; role of guides. |
| Research Outputs | Desired products and outputs.  |

## INTERVIEW RESULTS

From a high level overview, community engagement and benefit-sharing were understood as integral to building relationships, and that relationships are the key to a range of positive social outcomes, including social licence to operate, trust, cooperation and active support. All stakeholder types identified the importance of building relationships over the full life cycle of wind development.

*“Good community engagement is about managing relationships” (D4).*

*“Good community engagement limits opposition so everyone doesn't end up opposed. Mitigates the contagious effect” (E1).*

Overall, there was an emphasis on the importance of engagement being recognised as *“a proper job [that] needs to be taken seriously by the company” (E3)*. This involves taking community engagement and benefit-sharing into account in decisions about project budgets, staffing and training.

In general, engagement was described as an opportunity for developers and community stakeholders to co-develop an appropriate, well-designed project with the strongest chances of success and high levels of support.

The following sections present the results from interviews, including aspects that were identified to work well and those that are ineffective in producing positive social outcomes from wind development.

### SOCIAL

#### Developing trust

Trust is identified as a keystone of developing positive social outcomes. Factors that were seen to influence trust include:

- > Regular and consistent contact with the local community, particularly hosts and neighbours (e.g. one developer (D1) described this as being two staff spending a few days every 6 months throughout the entire life of the project and more at key times).

*“We took the relationship between the neighbours and the project really seriously. Instead of having only one group meeting before planning submission, we took the time to meet face-to-face every 6 months and that made them trust us a lot more” (D1).*

*“You can change someone's mind by meeting with them regularly and building up trust. Getting them to understand the process and what is happening. They get to know you and they realise you aren't there to harm them. When they start to trust you as an individual then they can start to open up to the project” (D3).*

- > Having staff available to the community and able to commit time to developing relationships and being responsive to community interest and concern. Ensuring community-facing staff have some delegation of authority to be able to address people's questions or concerns, rather than always having to defer to someone with more seniority. People want to know they are talking to someone with power who will take them seriously.

*"Be present and available so that if people have a problem, that people would talk to the company, not anyone else. If you give real answers to questions, and take them seriously – they might not feel the need to reach out to Stop These things, members of parliaments, newspaper. Keep everyone 'in the tent'" (D1).*

- > Conducting engagement and consultation via individual and group settings. This includes convening meetings involving hosts and neighbours from early in the project design process.

*"Leave nobody behind, don't separate out the positive people from the negative people. Don't make it 'us and them'" (D3).*

- > Start engaging with local people (beyond hosts) during feasibility stage.
- > Providing formal (e.g. meetings, information sessions) and informal (e.g. casual encounters in the street, BBQs) opportunities for interaction. This relates to having staff based locally and making an effort to integrate into the local community.

*"When things weren't going well we would have a community barbeque. They wouldn't necessarily come and tell but we would hear whispers" (D2).*

- > Being honest about potential negative and positive impacts, and what to expect during all phases of project development including the difficulties of uncertain or changing timelines.

*"Community expects spin, they expect that you are going to sell it to them as the best thing ever. If you're honest and you tell it straight - you tell them what to expect through the steps and then you deliver (on expectations) – that's what builds up trust" (D3).*

A feature that contributes to building trust is the appropriateness of community-facing staff and consistency of staff over time.

## Appropriateness of staff

Having appropriate people in community-facing roles came up as a recurrent theme in interviews. The right person can help to build lasting relationships and trust, which are an asset for the project in building support, negotiating acceptable solutions, and discussing concerns. The importance of being able to listen and ensure people feel heard is fundamental to community perceptions that a development process has been fair.

*"Success for me was when an opponent would call me up and demand that we speak. We never resolved anything but we had lots of conversations. It kept them from running off to the media" (D2).*

Important staff characteristics raised by a majority of interviewees include:

- > Good listener
- > Empathetic
- > Patient
- > Humble
- > Honest and upfront
- > Proactive
- > Dependable
- > Trustworthy

There was a recognition that many of these traits come down to personality, but that they can also be developed overtime through mentoring and training. *"Community engagement skills can be learnt, e.g. conflict resolution, active listening. I learnt how to be organised and how to talk to people better" (D1).* Another approach was to pair staff during community engagement, so a range of skill-sets and knowledge are present: *"A lot of the time, we go as a team – it's normally 1 for personality and 1 for technical. They are equally important".* Another stated: *"What tends to happen, is that they send out the engineer! They are clinically correct in their answer but emotionally wrong" E4.*

*"The individual delivering the engagement needs to have high level of emotional intelligence . . . to be able to put themselves in the shoes of the stakeholder, then in a business. That individual needs to be empowered to make decisions . . . be able to build respect and seniority within the company to make decisions...and be able to interpret complex information from both sides of the equation" D7.*

## APPENDIX B

The importance of “*having hard conversations*” (D2) and of being honest over a desire to get people to like you or like the project is seen as essential. Several people commented on the damage that can be done through early engagement by someone who is more concerned with winning people over, than being authentic and honest. In particular, people commented on the need to be upfront about potential negative impacts (e.g. sound, visual), alongside the potential positive impacts.

*“The world’s best salesman who becomes mates with everyone can get you in trouble – people who sell something as opposed to learning or listening, or who convince but don’t give enough detail about what to expect” (D3).*

Although a majority of interviewees emphasised the importance of having staff that were based locally and able to engage face-to-face as much as possible, there were some divergent views on whether this should be a local person or not. For example, it was raised by a community representative that “*there are benefits to being an outsider . . . you can be an independent, honest broker*” (C3).

A majority of interviewees felt that having a respected local person in a community liaison role is a strong success factor: “*A farmer who isn’t a perfect communicator but from the actual community and is well respected is better than a great communicator who is from a nearby community*” (E2). Regardless of whether they are a local person or not, it is beneficial to integrate into the local community both through their role and as a community member:

*“It’s very much about merging yourself into the community. So you’re not dictating to them. My kids went to the local kindy” (D2).* Others commented on the city-rural divide: “*People love to use the stereotype about ‘suits’ flying in. The insider-outsider stereotype. It’s obviously happened enough that there is some truth to it. That phrase embodies a lot of things about what’s happening, not feeling empowered, maybe feeling characterised as country bumpkins by slick city people. There’s money on the table but only for some, city people decide where the money lands, or so it seems.*” (E5). Having a rural background was another option: “*The people who do it are critical – their background. One thing that is useful – is when someone has a rural background – experience in rural Australia. That can be really important*” (N1).

The ability of the staff member to have decision making power was also raised (E5, D7, E4), so that the community felt like they were talking to the right level within the company.

Consistency of staff over time was raised as a beneficial factor, enabling familiarity and the possibility of developing trusted long-term relationships.

Specific strategies included:

- > “*We take a group of staff to (community) meetings, so it’s not all on one person’s shoulders. Then, when you ring (people in community) up, they know who you are*” (D1).
- > Getting back to people quickly.
- > Being available and accessible, able to spend time with people.
- > Face-to-face meetings in homes or cafes.
- > Make an effort to “*understand their needs and what matters to them*” (R1).
- > Having the neighbours be the eyes and ears of a project (E4)

### Role of information & knowledge

Some interviewees saw information provision as the main role of community engagement, and that information in and of itself is enough to develop support or change people’s minds if they are opposed.

*“The purpose (of community engagement) is to make sure you’ve informed people” (D1).*

Others, however, identified that while access to quality, detailed and accurate information is essential, its success in terms of building support is determined by how it is delivered. In essence, knowledge is needed for positive social outcomes but that it is not the only, or even, the primary factor. Important factors raised in how information is delivered include:

- > Who delivers the information and the role of trusted messengers. This speaks to the importance of having appropriate staff and the presence of trusted local advocates.

*“Community members want to know the technical stuff – but they’ll only ask if they are comfortable first (and have gotten to know you)” (D6).*

*“(It works well) where you have respected community members showing their support and saying that they do not have concerns publicly. Social norms need to be developed” (E2).*

- > When information is provided, early provision is far more effective than reactive information provision that can be seen as ‘too little, too late’. The importance of early engagement was expressed by community, expert and regulator representatives strongly, whereas developers were noticeably absent on this point. Early provision of information in tandem with engagement can also help to reduce the influence of misinformation or anti-wind campaigning.

*“Important to inform right from the start, so they don’t get (influenced by) misinformation” (C2).*

*“Go in early and be asked questions you don’t know the answer to rather than going in late. Don’t give the fear factor momentum” (C1).*

- > The means with which it is delivered: interviewees particularly highlighted the effectiveness of experiential learning and opportunities for peer-to-peer information sharing. Both of these strategies help to normalise the idea of a wind farm and allow people to form their own ideas, rather than simply being told information.

*“We get landholders to talk to landholders. We left the room, said ‘it’s your conversation’. Then we can be judged by our honesty” (D2).*

*“Helping people to see most people aren’t concerned about it therefore they don’t need to worry” (E2).*

Demystifying the technology by “letting them see it for themselves” (D4).

- > How information is framed: knowing your audience and making sure the information is accessible in its format and language, as well as speaking in a balanced way to their concerns and interests. *“It’s about taking a step out of your shoes and thinking about how other people will interpret the information you are sharing and letting that influence how you share and what you share” (D4).*

This includes a need to be empathetic in how information is delivered while also understanding the psychology of how individuals process and receive information, and listening deeply and then being responsive to all questions no matter what they might be.

*“One of the biggest harms we have done in recent years is the ‘Act on Facts’ campaigns, acting on facts and trying to prove people wrong and giving them scientific evidence to prove them wrong or unreasonable is the worst thing you can do. If they want information, I’ll give it to them, but that’s not enough” (D3).*

*“Community concerns answered rather than dismissed as being not legitimate. Where the concerns are directly addressed right from the outset there are better outcomes for the community” (E1).*

*“It’s not enough to say you won’t get sick. Explain why people are sick. Give information about anxiety. Blanket denial is not enough for some people” (E1).*

Giving people factual information without empathy does more harm than good. Telling someone they have nothing to be concerned about is not helpful.” (E1)

Interviewees also raised the negative effect of ‘fear of the unknown’. This related both to the lifecycle of a project: that concerns are often greatest before operations and diminished after the wind farm is operating. *“If you look at Commissioner complaints - it’s mostly about wind farms that are not built yet ...once projects are operating, some of the opposition goes away or gets much more quiet – they realise it’s not that bad” (D1).* Fear of the unknown was also raised in relation to the need to be as honest and comprehensive as possible about various aspects of a project, such as:

- > Uncertain aspects of the plans and what might change;
- > Uncertainties of timelines and things that can affect timelines changing;
- > Likely possible impacts and what they will look and sound like.

*“There’s a lot of information that you can’t share with the community. But being honest about how the project is developing and what is influencing it helps. So for example, being honest about the fact that you don’t know when it will get built because there’s these 5 factors that we’re waiting on. Being upfront about the impact of federal policy and of the status and influence of relationships with council. That builds long-term relationships” (E4).*

*“The more people know, the less scary it is” (R1).*

A common technique being used in many wind developments at present is ‘drop-in information sessions’:

*“We held a community information day at the local town hall, the idea was an open format so anyone can drop in. We had maps up and could talk to people and we had a timeline for the project, etc.. We had 5-6 of us there walking around” (D6).*

These are seen to be more effective than open-invite public (‘town hall’) meetings, which can tend to get overrun by the loudest voices and leave most people disenfranchised and risk the community feeling polarised.

## APPENDIX B

### Fairness of process

A perception among the local community that the development process has been fair was identified as integral to achieving support for a wind development.

*“One neighbour wrote council a strong letter of objection. The company went to meet with him and spoke in detail with him over a few conversations. He ended up withdrawing his letter. He still hates turbines in general, but he could see that the way we were going about the project was fair and good for the local community” (D1).*

Many of the other aspects addressed in other sections also contribute to a sense of fair process, along with:

Proximity principle: engage most closely with those who will be most affected (e.g. by traffic, noise, visual change, flicker) (C1, D2).

### Group engagement

Engage with people as a group so that there is a sense of transparency and openness, rather than secrecy and suspicion. As many people noted, people in a community will talk to each other anyway, it's better if there is transparency up front.

Community, expert and some developer interviewees identified that it is particularly important for hosts and neighbours to be engaged as a group. This was seen as being different from public meetings through being a smaller, defined group of people with clear logics for who should attend.

*“Community engagement works well when companies are open to having community meetings, explaining the project” (E3).*

*“Managing the process as a community, whole of community approach” (C1).*

*“Key to success is how are we going to divvy up the spoils, not behind anyone's back, not talking to only one person but not the other” (N1).*

*“If you want a workable deal, deal with them collectively. Developers get into trouble with individual deals. They [the community] talk to each other before you're out the gate. Get them together. Tell them the deal. if a turbine moves out of your paddock onto another, we'll pay you anyway . . . if you are offering money at the back end of an engagement process, it's an indicator of failed processes” (E4).*

### Sense of having some power and control

Having a sense of control over one's own life and decisions that affect them is seen as important to a sense of fairness. This was seen to be fostered through being involved in decision-making, project design and feeling genuinely heard and consulted. It does not necessarily require that the person have their demands met, but does need them to feel their demands have been heard, that there has been a respectful interaction, and that they can understand why their demands are/are not able to be acted on. This point was not mentioned by any developer representatives.

*“If people feel heard they also feel like they have control. Control is important. The role is one of creating good community feeling right from the beginning. If you have community buy-in you'll have less problems down the track from people feeling not listened to and feeling a lack of control” (E1).*

*“Some control to the community of how the project looks like or how the benefits get shared, placement of turbines would be great but might be too hard” (E2).*

*“Each individual has control over lives but if they worked collaboratively they would get a better outcome. It is about empowering the communities to have the strength and knowledge that they are in a powerful position” (C1).*

It is the same with other parts of life – people feeling loved and included, this is just another manifestation of that” (R2).

*“It comes down to education. The feeling of agency that people have to make a difference. When you don't understand regulation, politics, the media, people feel a lack of agency, even though they wouldn't say it that way” (E5).*

### Clear scope for community feedback

Understand that if a developer asks for feedback and input, this sends a message that they are open to incorporating feedback into their plans. This requires the developer to be clear about what the scope is for the community to have input into the project. It also requires that decisions or changes are reported back to community, including what feedback was received and how it was addressed. If these things are not done, there is a risk that engagement will not be seen as genuine, which can erode trust and contribute to opposition.

*“If you are asking to hear people's views, you have to be accepting of their views. You have to be clear about what the community can make decisions on and what you will listen to and consider. That will help in making people see that you are serious and be taken seriously. Be genuine about what's up for negotiation” (E3, also D3).*

*“It needs to be genuine. That doesn't mean that you have to accept everything that the community says. Be clear and firm about the limits about what can change” (E3).*

### Questions to consider include

What decisions are genuinely open to change based on community feedback? Where will ideas be considered? What isn't open to change?

Part of this includes ensuring that community-facing staff “understand the boundaries about what can be accepted and what cannot” (E3), and that they have some delegation of authority to negotiate with the community (D1).

*“The purpose of it is to be clear about what is negotiable vs non-negotiable from the outset and to identify areas where decision making can be placed in the hands of the public . . . Benefit-sharing . . . should only be implemented if it is the consensus or result of a specific community engagement exercise” (D7).*

## CONTEXTUAL

### Contextual influence

*“Fairness and transparency are the most important things, but that looks different in different places” (D1).*

*“I don't think what we did at (wind farm) is always going to be appropriate, it'd be really hard for bigger projects or for a project with less people living close by (to make their model of engagement work). The design of a community engagement plan depends on type of project, type of community and type of environment. It needs to be flexible” (D1).*

Local contexts vary significantly, as influenced by a number of cultural, historical, demographic and geographic factors. This makes “different community dynamics very complex and context specific” (E2). People's relationships with landscapes are often “emotionally loaded” (R2).

*“Place identity has a huge impact on how a community will perceive a wind farm” (E2).*

*“We need precedents that are of relevance to others. They need to be comparable, like-for-like. I don't think we should underestimate the difference (between large and small projects). If you could make more money from each turbines and each kWh, then the company might pursue less turbines. And the impact of that [in the community] is really different” (E5).*

Making a wind development appropriate involves considering how to tailor the development to the local community including the existing local identity. Respectfully navigating people's existing relationships with the local landscape and how the development can best compliment or (at least) have a benign impact. This includes the design of the wind farm, as well as the approach to community engagement and benefit-sharing.

*“Context is really important, it's not a one size fits all approach. Our projects are a perfect example. Windfarm1 is going to be pretty light on, because the community is on board with it, whereas Windfarm2 requires more active engagement and careful consideration because of the history in the area - perhaps a not-so-good developer has operated in the area and its established poor precedents. Incredibly different community responses to the proposals” (D4).*

Factors to consider include:

- > Topography
- > Scale and layout of the wind farm
- > Number of people living close by
- > Distance to nearest town
- > Distance to other wind developments
- > Presence or history of organised anti-wind farm sentiment
- > Whether the community is in need of new industries / jobs

Type of context, based mainly on surrounding land use practices:

- > Broad-acre farming
- > Hobby farming/ lifestyle properties
- > Existing industrialised landscape

Understand what the community wants for their future and how the wind farm can contribute to that. Ideally, involve people in a process to understand and define what they want for their future, and what form the benefit-sharing package could take so as to be most appropriate and impactful.

*“Understand people's needs and drivers and target the approach to the circumstances” (R1).*

*I don't know why some (communities) are more accepting, but I suspect it is linked to whether the community has a need for what the wind farm could bring – could they leave the benefits and just stick with the view? Others might have a different order of priorities” (R2).*

*“Benefit-sharing requires matching it to what the local community would like. It's not something that you necessarily have to do, but it's something you should always be willing to do” (D3).*

*“You need to understand what the local community wants and what they want for their future. You need to make sure the proposal, as much as possible, is something that is going to be positive in the community and lead to long term acceptance” (D3).*

*“It comes back to what the community wants and needs and what's relevant. Understanding the local community is critical. Where possible empower them to decide on things like benefit-sharing etc.” (D5).*

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*“Techniques used for a project like that [a wind farm roughly 10kms from nearest town] are very different from a project in a lifestyle area. It’s going to be tough going if you’ve got 150 people in the area” (E4).*

People also raised potentially unforeseen local dynamics that are important to be mindful of and responsive to, such as:

*“In farming regions, traditionally the wealthy families have had the valleys, the most fertile land. Wind farms come in and tip the social structure and hierarchy on its head (by installing wind turbines on the ridges to the benefit of the poorer farmers). So there’s cultural dimensions and jealousy” (C3).*

### Flexibility in design

*“Take them on the process with you. If you say you are going to build a wind farm and you ask them: What would be acceptable for you? At what stage do you want input? Do you have ideas about placement? What are the special landscape features? If you do that, and the project is what everyone expects, then there is no issue with acceptance” (D3).*

Flexibility in design refers to the ability of developer to be responsive to local feedback and sensitive to local context in order to develop a project that is appropriate for the local environment and community. This relates directly to issues already discussed above, particularly contextual influences and fairness of process. Basically, it involves being willing to “develop a plan with the community” (D2).

There was a recognition that many aspects of a project will not be open for negotiation with the community, as developing a viable wind farm requires careful negotiation of many technical and financial aspects. However, there was also a recognition that many individual aspects can be open for community input or co-design.

The interviewees commented that this level of responsiveness works best when engagement starts early and there is room for local input and the developer’s knowledge of the local context to be fed into the early feasibility and design process. *“There was one turbine that was particularly problematic for a few people and we were able to move that one well before planning application, so that saved us a lot of hassle” (D1).*

However, this form of flexibility and responsiveness applied throughout the life of a development requires being able to admit that *“we don’t always get it right” (D4)*. One interviewee reported a situation where the developer worked closely with the neighbourhood to co-develop solutions to an emergent issue that occurred during operations.

Examples raised as areas where responsiveness to community feedback led to changes:

- > Diversifying the footprint of the wind farm to include more hosts
- > Local upgrades to roads and other infrastructure
- > Creating wildlife refuges or habitat
- > Micro-siting of turbines
- > Removal of certain turbines
- > Scale & location of the wind farm
- > Approach to community engagement and/or project evaluation
- > Approach to managing construction logistics
- > Nature of benefit-sharing offer
- > Nature of response to deal with visual, sound or radio/TV interference.

Importantly, such changes are not always desired or required: what is imperative is responsiveness to local context and local feedback.

Negotiating such changes requires someone who *“understands the boundaries about what can be accepted and what cannot” (E3)* and being upfront about what is open for feedback and what is non-negotiable. As above, to get the full benefit of this level of participation, the changes must be communicated back to relevant local stakeholders, and thereby can contribute to building trust and goodwill (R3). It also requires empathy and a willingness to co-develop solutions:

*“I try to put myself in their shoes as much as I can and try to understand what we are asking of them. Give them a chance to share openly as much as we can. I try to go in with an open mind each time – you can talk about what’s worked in the past but there is no point in putting something to them straight away” (D3).*

*“Flexibility at the project design phase. By changing the project or what you might do for the community at this stage, you might be able to address issues early – it could be planting screening early so that they are grown by the time the project is built” (E6).*

## Policy, politics and regulation

Interviewees had mixed views on the role of regulation in ensuring minimum standards of community engagement and benefit-sharing. On the one hand, interviewees were highly critical of regulation, claiming that it has “put a huge hand brake on wind” (C2) through activities such as the reviews of the Renewable Energy Target, the VC82 regulations in Victoria and the draft NSW Planning Guidelines. In addition, there was significant concern that an overly prescriptive approach to community engagement and benefit-sharing in planning approvals process would remove developer’s ability to be “flexible and adaptable” (D1).

*“You can’t have a one-size-fits-all approach to engagement, it doesn’t work. Different things are going to be appropriate in different contexts” (D1).*

*“If regulations are too rigid it could inhibit smart engagement. They need to allow some flexibility for companies to adjust their practices to suit the community” (C3).*

*“It stifles genuine engagement, because it becomes prescriptive. People focus on [meeting certain policy] conditions, not what could be best for the community. Government should be cautious about being prescriptive. . . It is industry’s responsibility to ensure that they do a good enough job to keep government and regulators at bay. Industry-wide standard is a good thing but not dictated by government” (D7).*

On the other hand, interviewees argued that regulation is necessary, since incentives are often not enough to create a strong community engagement and benefit-sharing baseline. “Some developers need a stick rather than a carrot” (D4).

*“Government has a role to play in encouraging engagement and having mechanisms to force where need be, like planning permits requiring complaint handling processes is a good stick. Needs to be done carefully because the developer could be held hostage. But it should say these things could be offered or considered. Needs to be flexibility for the context/ scenario – it’s hard to regulate that nuance (E4).”*

Interviewees had differing opinions on the role, or desired extent, of regulation with regards to community engagement and benefit-sharing. Some interviewees recognised a role for regulation requiring minimum standards for complaints handling, benefit-sharing and community engagement, for example requiring community consultative committees, mandatory local share-offerings and minimum community fund contributions. They also identified the imperative to clearly explain the rationale behind regulation through a researched evidence base. However, other interviewees were very cautious of such regulation.

Who should regulate was also a topic for discussion, with onus generally being on State and Federal Government. One interviewee stated “Local councils are locally elected so they have a lot to lose if it goes wrong. They see wind farms as too risky. They want to live there long term. They don’t want the responsibility hanging off them, they want to hand it over to a faceless tribunal. They are too embedded in the local community to make an unbiased decision” (E5).

It was clear on a number of accounts that policies that have been introduced without a clear evidence base have been interpreted in damaging ways by both industry and communities. For example, the Victorian Government’s VC82 requirement for all residents within 2km of a proposed turbine to give their consent to the planning application has led to a widespread mistrust of wind and a “perception that 2km is a danger zone” (E2). One developer described the law as trying to “force developers to cut deals with neighbours”, indicating that the law led some developers to attempt to buy support from neighbours, often with ‘gag’ clauses included in the agreements. As covered in the Ineffective Practice below, both these tactics have significant negative repercussions.

There was a common perspective that “community engagement is the first thing to go” (D4) when company budgets need to be tightened. The changeable policy and market environment for renewable energy and wind energy has caused significant uncertainty and financial hardship for developers and this has had ramifications for community engagement and benefit-sharing. Thus, changeable and unstable policy environments for renewable energy have had an indirect negative impact on community engagement practice and outcomes.

*“The policy environment (RET review at Federal level and the State draft guidelines) have made it really hard to be able to fund community engagement” (C2).*

Interviewees identified several specific roles for government, beyond regulation, that help to deliver better practice in wind development. These include:

- > Research, reports and guides that help to set norms and expectations;
- > Education, training and support programs for industry, council and relevant trades;
- > Support industry peer-to-peer learning (e.g. roundtables, international speakers);
- > Support community and local government interaction with developers (e.g. NSW Regional Renewable Energy Precinct Coordinators);
- > Prioritising social outcomes in government procurement processes; and,
- > Setting a vision for renewable energy (e.g. targets) and communicating a strong and consistent message in support of wind energy.

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Interviewees commented further on the following roles of Government:

*“Showing strong leadership and telling the right stories – that’s the role of government” (D2).*

*“It’s hard for renewables. It would be great if politicians didn’t spout nonsense about climate change and wind turbines” (E1).*

*“The mood of the nation is very important. High profile NSW politicians weighing in to the debate was very problematic. A lot of the views are socially constructed, the asymmetry between a developer trying to talk to community and politicians slagging wind farms off, that’s not fair” (R2).*

*“Politicians speaking [negatively] about again wind have affected local perception in a very negative way. It’s really unhelpful” (C2).*

*“Government can help to dispel myths” (R1).*

*“Government needs to set the renewable energy trajectory. . . set the vision and help to manage the antics” (R1).*

*“I think that education could really happen at local government level. I think local government has the opportunity to influence these things but they probably don’t know about good practice. Council is the front line, in terms of permitting they are the people that the local community will turn to” (D3).*

*“Local governments have to step up . . . They have an opportunity to set it right and maximize the impact” (C1).*

Overall, there was agreement that ‘carrots’ (such as Power Purchase Agreements, Renewable Energy auctions – covered in the ‘What’s Changing the Game’ section below) are working to encourage better practice, when they include attention to social outcomes. There was also agreement that a stable policy environment, coupled with positive messaging and evidence-based policies, creates conditions for developers to feel confident investing time and money in engagement and benefit-sharing.

*“The ACT’s auction is a good example of a carrot. Heavy weighting on community engagement” (E4).*

## ECONOMIC

### Fairness of outcomes

Interviewees spoke about the fairness of outcomes mostly in terms of sharing the benefits that come from wind development with those who live locally. This was framed in terms of “being a good neighbour” (E2) and providing benefits that are seen to be proportionate to the changes taking place and distributed equitably. One developer described the rationale behind benefit-sharing: “It’s about recognising that you are going to change the face of a community or an area and that you are going to be making money out of that, so you want to share the income and the benefits from that” (D4). From a community member perspective, benefit-sharing involves: “Acknowledgment that communities should benefit from something big in their community. It does have an impact. Being mindful of different community members and that they will all have different impacts” (C3).

*“It has to make sense for them – it has to pay its way. It has to do it in an equitable fashion. So that people see that it isn’t just a benefit for landowner and developer but also for community (N1).”*

People raised fairness of outcomes in three respects:

- > That local benefits are proportionate and commensurate to the nature of change, recognising that local people will experience and perceive this change differently from each other and the developer. This is about people’s ability to accept change when they feel it is going to have a net positive impact for themselves, their community and/or the environment.

*“Neighbours want to feel that outcomes are fair and that they’re getting something for the change to their environment.” (D1).*

This can inform an approach to benefit-sharing that prioritises benefits to those people closest to the development, by a “proximity principle” (D3).

*“Best benefit-sharing provides people closest to turbines with the greatest financial benefit” (E2).*

- > That benefits are distributed amongst local people in a way that is understood to be fair. This includes financial and non-financial benefits going to hosts, neighbours, council and the broader local community.

*“We have found that the amount of money you give isn’t as important as the how you distribute it and if local people think that it’s been shared fairly” (D3).*

- > That the benefit-sharing is matched with a fair process, or else it will be at risk of being seen as tokenism or bribery.

*“You have to be careful not to appear like a bribe . . . Community input into benefit-sharing model important” (E2).*

Several interviewees reported experiences of involving local people in the process of determining the ways in which benefits would be shared locally. In some cases, this includes an ongoing role for a community committee in deciding how grants from the wind farm will be distributed. Many interviewees commented that, to be seen as fair, it is essential for benefit-sharing not involve 'gag' clauses or take away people's rights to raise issues or concerns later.

Other important aspects that contribute to positive social outcomes from benefit-sharing include:

- > Transparency is essential to people feeling the outcomes are fair: *"you must have transparency in what payments who's getting" (R1)*. For example, a community member and host of turbines recommended: *"Proximity payment needs to be transparent. You can work out mathematical formula, all people involved should know" (C1)* and also E5). Even if specific amounts are not able to be released, the rationale and method for calculating them should be.
- > Telling the good stories (D2) and *"getting everyone together and seeing the benefits" (C4)* is important both for transparency, but also for building a sense of local pride and connection with a wind farm which contribute to increasing active community support. Make the benefits visible and experienced by local people. Things such as stories in the newspaper and newsletters, as well as community bbq's, dinners and awards nights were raised as options for this.
- > Enabling long-term participation that *"builds a connection to the project" (D1)*. This was raised particularly in reference to opportunities for co-investment or co-ownership in a development.
 

*"To enable people to get involved and be a part of it – be able to invest in it, local infrastructure that is meaningful – that's not an opportunity that a community has very much" (C2).*
- > It must be context-specific. As introduced above, it is important to tailor the benefit-sharing approach to the local context. This requires first knowing about the local context: *"that's why you go listen first, to hear if benefit-sharing is a good idea for this project or not and how you might go about it" (D3)*.
 

*"If there is only one landowner within 15km, what do you do? Sharing benefits and doing community engagement is very different. So in that instance, the local townships are really struggling, so we might share the benefits there instead" (D1).*
- > Timing: ideally benefit-sharing will begin before construction, when the community will experience the most significant change and disturbance:
 

*"it has to be done pre-construction, not post" (R1).*

Options for benefit-sharing raised by interviewees included:

- > Scholarships.
- > Gift of solar PV/ solar hot water to neighbours.
- > Energy efficiency programs for neighbourhood.
- > Proximity payments (developers had implements such payments with and some without clauses negating their rights to make comment or claims against the wind farm).
- > Grant funds (controlled by the developer, local council and/or local community).
- > Revolving low or no-interest loan funds for local sustainability initiatives (for households and organisations).
- > Offering cheaper electricity or making a contribution to electricity bills.
- > Installing or upgrading infrastructure in the course of development (e.g. roads, telephone towers).
- > Prioritising local contractors and creating local jobs.
- > Gift of shares in the project or offer to invest to neighbours.
- > Offering the broader community the opportunity for co-investment or co-ownership in the development.
- > Programs and partnerships with local organisations (e.g. conservation, sporting, indigenous)

Notably, benefit-sharing does not necessarily need to involve annual financial payments. For example, working with neighbours to improve their houses for energy efficiency and install solar was seen to have *"a bigger impact than money" (D2)*.

Further, another interviewee stated "There's too much focus is on the financial aspect of community engagement. It seems like industry response is 'do we give them enough money?' 'How do we give them money?' But if people feel disengaged and disenfranchised, they don't necessarily want money" (E4).

Similarly, one developer noted recent trends in industry practice: *"There is evidence to suggest that benefit-sharing has been perceived as a fix all and there is anecdotal evidence that these are being focused on neighbours without due diligence in the engagement process. It could be seen as buying consent" (D7)*.

Most developers were interested to try new forms of benefit-sharing, but had not yet implemented any and were wary to do so. This wariness seemed to come from unfamiliarity and inexperience with new forms. It was clear that there is not much sharing of ideas and experience between developers. What information developers do have is not detailed enough to instill confidence to try it themselves.

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There was a desire to have benefit-sharing contribute to strategic initiatives that will deliver on-going benefit in the community. This involved matching benefit-sharing plans with local development agendas, as identified and defined by local people, in some cases through the Council plans. It also involved thinking about how funds can be leveraged for greatest possible impact.

*“I wish funds could be spent in a more forward-looking visionary way rather than on yoga mats etc. - something like a scholarship” (D4).*

*“This is a huge opportunity to restructure the whole economic base and structure of regional Australia . . . the reason why industries locate where they are is for cheap energy – logically industry will move there. That is another step into the future. Cheap renewable energy can play a role in reinvigorating the bush, stopping the drift to the city” (C1).*

*“How do we leverage the money for more money? For example, no interest loans, or a revolving fund. There’s more innovation and community benefit than just fixing change rooms at a footy club” (D2).*

Opposition can also be largely related to fairness of outcomes: *“All the folks who expected turbines, who had their retirements planned (on the basis of rental income), missed out. They’re the most aggressive opponents. They were supportive until they lost the deal. Writing letters all the time” (E4).*

Another topic brought up was around buy-out options for neighbours, with one interviewee stating: *“if you are within a certain distance, if you are not happy within 5 years of the wind farm being built, then the wind farm has to buy you out. If you have the option to be bought out when you’re not happy, I think that will help. It will be interesting to see how that goes, how much it is taken up. It gives you confidence that if you can’t live with this thing, you have that up your sleeve” (E4).*

## PRAXIS

### Better practice

Better practice community engagement and benefit-sharing represents practices that are not yet the norm, but have been used in some wind farm developments and are seen to be enhancing social outcomes. Interviewee reports of better practice center around increasing the interface between: developer staff and the community; the community and wind technology; and, the community with each other in relation to the project. In addition, better practice involves including local people in more specific and tangible ways in wind development and sharing the benefits more broadly and fairly, particularly with neighbours.

The following are specific practices reported by interviewees around the themes of techniques, experiencing technology, internal (company) integration, local integration, community co-ownership, advocates and advocacy, and media.

Another emergent trend is the need to consider the cumulative impact of multiple wind farms in differing stages of development in high wind areas (E4).

### Techniques

In general, various face-to-face techniques featured heavily, such as door knocking, drop-in information sessions, having locally based staff, (short-term) shopfronts, tours, open days, group meetings and events. In a nutshell: *“spend a lot of time with the local community” (R1).* Specific recommended techniques are:

*“At (group) meetings (with hosts and neighbours) we made offers, rather than having totally undirected discussions. We came with proposals for people to give feedback on. After meetings, people often followed up with phone call feedback. We then integrated all the feedback and came back with new offer to whole group” (D1).*

*“A good practice is keeping a really good register of people and responses and discussions and follow up actions. If you don’t do that, you end up doing more damage than good” (D1).*

*“I’d like to start using technology more; including online discussion groups and surveys. But it’s important to keep in mind that not everyone is tech savvy and it’s important that everyone can participate” (D1).*

*“We hold an annual dinner. Initially it was just for landholders, but eventually extended to 200 people. We get really good catering, it’s really special. We provide entertainment - it’s the event of the town, to get an invitation to it . . . It was important to say thank you and bring them together” (D2).*

*“We ensure landholders are up to speed on what’s going on: official visits from the development team to say what stage the project is up to, understand where things*

are going. We always seek feedback from them. That usually happens before any major thing happens with the project, and when decision points are made about placement, I'll call them all up or go out there" (D3).

"Once plans are more fully formed and they [a developer] are in position to confirm what they are to build, a shop front would be a good idea, people can drop in and ask questions (N1)."

### Experiencing technology

Tours and wind farm open days that give people first-hand experience of wind farms featured heavily. These opportunities help to demystify wind technology and help to integrate it into the local community.

"We encourage site visits to other wind farms to see the turbines and chat to people. We took wind farm hosts to another project while it was under construction, so they knew what it was about – what they were getting themselves into!" (D1).

"Personal experience of turbines is really important. Communities need to go and see and experience turbines. Lots of people reported really positive experiences from getting in a minibus and going on a fieldtrip. Meeting the monster - being there and being awed by it" (E5).

"We invited landholders to go into a turbine. Landholders hadn't even been in one. For a lady's 50th birthday we took her to the top. She said it was the best day of her life. We had flowers and champagne at the top" (D2).

"We really embraced education by bringing 2,000 school kiddies a year to the wind farm - we funded it" (D2).

"I organised a public event at the end of construction and a blade stop over in town as they first arrived - that was a great event, a great way to turn around conversation . . . There had been some concerns about local traffic impacts and that it would impact negatively on business. So I focused on being really visible in town and having conversations. I got the local schools involved" (D4).

"Build viewing platforms, or even a café. People come and have a cup of tea at our viewing platform" (E1).

### Internal (company) integration

Understanding, valuing and adequately resourcing community engagement and benefit-sharing practices requires integrating them into the company structure of the wind developer. Different developers had different insights about how this can be done effectively.

"Project managers do the community engagement, alongside coordinating studies, etc. I'd advise against having separate community relations team, because then the staff will always be having to pass on questions

(to the project manager) and the people on the other end of the phone won't feel like they are talking to the decision maker, or might think they aren't being taken seriously" (D1).

"We do Community Engagement Plans. We will do both formal and informal workshops within the company around what to do with projects and how we are going to engage the community. We formalise things as we go through the process. We have a meeting every Monday and we all talk about any issues that are coming up in the community . . . Community engagement is totally embedded in the organisation" (D3).

One wind farm integrated community engagement in the governance of the wind farm by "offering non-voting community representative on the project management committee or board" (C1). This representative was able to communicate local views and provide input into decisions (even though they cannot vote) and report back to the community on decisions made about the wind farm.

### Local integration

Finding ways to integrate the developer and the wind farm into the local community came in many forms, including having local staff, partnering with local organisations and having a local shop front.

"I find as many local people to employ as possible and train them up. I just focused on getting skills into the community and building the local industry . . . we employed so many local people that they all talked about it all with everyone in the community" (D3).

"Have a local presence in the community. That's expensive but really valuable. The message is that the company is prepared to put an office in the main street. People might not come in but they know it's a long term commitment" (R3).

"We have a community fund - and we take applications – they are varied, we have the Men's Shed, an indigenous group who are doing a hip hop program for youth. The funding is \$100k annually and receives 40-50 applications" (D6).

Community engagement is a chance to build lasting partnerships with local people, council, organisations and businesses. Specific ideas included partnering with interested local individuals or organisations to manage the grant fund, or supporting other smaller-scale renewable energy or community-owned projects.

"Community Funds where a panel of community members work out where the money will go" (C3).

"The use of local supplies for example (towers, maximising local content, groundworks). It requires leaders in the industry to communicate and hold others to account" (E6).

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### Community co-ownership / co-investment

Working with the community to create co-ownership or co-investment opportunities is something that several wind farms are considering but few have yet actioned. This includes options for local people to buy shares in a portion of the wind farm or invest money to have rights to a portion of the income from the wind farm. Regardless of whether this equates to a significant level of community ownership or control over the wind farm, it is seen to create a strong local connection with the wind farm and a sense of emotional ownership. Some participants felt that opening the wind farm to local ownership/ investment should be mandatory.

*“I’d like to see community investment – there’s nothing better than being an owner to have that psychological attachment” (D1).*

*“It should be a mandatory requirement for equity or cash flow to remain in community” (C1).*

*“Ownership. Not just financial, but ownership in terms of the identity of the place, can you still enjoy your view, even with turbines. Can you embrace that the turbine is part of the community?” (E5).*

### Advocates & advocacy

Identifying advocates in the local community and participating in advocacy for wind energy and renewable energy more generally was seen as an important part of community engagement and creating the broader conditions of social and political support needed for wind development to succeed. Specifically, developers raised the benefit of partnering with Yes2Renewables and the Australian Wind Alliance.

*“We were asked to host some government people who were writing policy about wind farms, and they had never been to a wind farm before! They came and said ‘wow you really can’t hear them, can you!’ Amazing” (D4).*

*“Need to have a range of stakeholders empowered with the message” (D5).*

### Media

Having a proactive engagement with local media was identified as a positive strategy. For example:

*“We took local newspaper and radio into a turbine for a day. They realised that I’m a real person, and our techs are real guys. It was a game changer for us. Then I got requests for good news stories” (D2).*

*“We had a column every week in the paper about what was going on” (D3).*

### Challenges of timing

Some interviewees raised the challenge of timing in wind development. Often, the development process can span years and project may sit dormant for a number of years, waiting for finance or power purchase agreements. This causes a number of challenges for community engagement and benefit-sharing. Interviewees expressed an ideal for engagement to begin during feasibility and continue throughout all stages of a project. This requires investment of staff time as well as funding for community engagement activities. People also expressed the importance for benefit-sharing to start before construction (when the most disturbance and change occurs in the community), and definitely before operations. This has monetary and pragmatic impacts on developers, which can be challenging.

*“Cash flow issues - community engagement and screening for example, all needs to happen before the company starts to make any money. Developers are not used to the idea of spending lots of money and investing in it (before the wind farm is operational)” (R1).*

*“When we fail, it’s probably not communicating enough with the landholder. And sometimes that comes down to the fact that we are frantically trying to get things done. So we maybe need to take more notice of how long it’s been since we last spoke to our landholders” (D3).*

*“Hard to solve what to do in the time between the wind farm being approved and it being built. A lot of the perceptions of feeling unwell start in time in between, when there are lots of unknowns and uncertainty, as a psychological response to stress. Once the turbines are up many people realise it’s all fine and stop being concerned or vocally opposed. That’s not just about wind farms [it occurs with other changes and developments too]. Once it’s a reality people find ways to live with it” (E5).*

*“Another thing that churns up the community is the longitudinal nature. A community in a traumatic holding pattern, for those who are worried about it, is an unfair imposition on the community. If you knew it was happening and you hate it that much you can move. If you’re unsure, you wait. But feel tense. Can start feeling sick” (E4).*

*“In some communities the stress to the community outweighs the benefit of the project” (E6).*

### Ineffective practice

There were a number of practices that interviewees raised as consistently leading to negative social outcomes, and thus, represented ineffective community engagement and benefit-sharing practices. These include:

- > Prospectors: it was seen as damaging to have the first engagement done by a company who has no long-term interest in the site or commitment to the community. Therefore, they have little incentive to form genuine, honest relationships. It also causes issues with continuity, familiarity and trust.

*"It's good when the whole process is done by the developers . . . Prospectors are cash poor, don't invest in time or shared benefits. They don't take time to get to know people, not even neighbours" (R1).*

*"There are companies that wreck everything. The cowboys. No long term interests, so a bit quick and dirty with their methods. The long term owner operator comes in and they've bought this wrecked community engagement process" (E6).*

- > Distant, automated responses: do not build trust and can erode the local community's sense that they are being taken seriously by the developer. *"A lack of being taken seriously by a developer can lead to strong (community) outbursts" (D1).* It was also seen to help when the voice on the end of the phone is familiar and trust, rather than unknown. Having locally based staff can shorten response time and allow for face-to-face discussion.

*"It's important to be a good responder. If a member of the community calls the wind farm and they get a technician on site, rather than a call centre in Sydney, it shows how much the company cares. It's really relevant (to good social outcomes)" (R1).*

- > Not taking people's issues seriously/ being dismissive was raised by a number of people. This might be linked to perception that some developers have an arrogant approach or sense of self-entitlement. Overcoming this is linked to the emphasis on empathy and being able to listen discussed above.

*"Sense of entitlement (is really damaging) - assuming they have a right to operate: they think they are green, friendly - think everyone is on board with (addressing) climate change. So they just assume they will be loved. Other industries start by thinking that they won't be loved, so they come in hard to compensate" (R1).*

- > Gag clauses and other conditions of agreements: placing requirements on land leases or benefit-sharing that require the signee to give up rights is highly damaging and is likely to be seen as bribery. *"Never try to enter into an agreement with a neighbour where they have to give away rights (e.g. to object). That just looks like buying support . . . Our strongest opposition was from shareholders, and we were ok with that. We felt that people still needed to feel free to have their opinions . . . If you try to stop people speaking out, it just looks like you are buying support" (D1).*

- > Special, secret deals: negotiating compensation or benefit-sharing in secret is likely to cause division and unrest in the community and a lack of trust in the developer.

*"In the past I'd say go find out what they want and give it to them. I won't do that now. We have a principle now that we won't give special deals. Anything we give with one landholder we have to roll out to the others" (D3).*

- > Applying benefit-sharing without community consultation or deliberation could be at the detriment of the industry and impact community expectations. *"The rise of benefit-sharing programs – they're seen as a quick fix. A way to reduce complaints and objections quickly" without being paired with genuine and responsive community engagement processes (D7).*
- > Public, open-invite 'town hall' meetings: can tend to get overrun by the loudest voices and leave most people disenfranchised and the community feeling polarised (D4, D1).

### WHAT'S CHANGING THE GAME?

A number of factors were identified as influencing a shift towards valuing and practicing better community engagement and benefit-sharing. As a result, there was a perception that *"community engagement is spoken about a lot more now" (E3).* The most cited factor was the ACT's recent renewable energy auction, which gave preference to companies that performed well on community engagement and benefit-sharing criteria.

Things identified as helping to 'change the game' include:

- > The ACT Government's renewable energy auction in which the assessment criteria gave a 20% weighting to community engagement, as well as use of local contractors and contribution to trades training and the accompanying Best Practice Guide in Community Engagement for Wind

*"The ACT did a good job in highlighting it was important to them. They said, here is our best practice, here is what we expect, show us how you do it and how you could do it better" (D3).*

*"When things get busy, community engagement is the first thing to go - because it's not critical path. We have to get planning, we have to get financial close. That's why the ACT thing worked so well, because it made engagement critical" (D4).*

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- > Clean Energy Council: The CEC's Community Engagement Guidelines and CEC's role in convening developers to share experiences was cited as influencing better practice. There was some suggestion of the CEC developing a community engagement accreditation scheme to provide competitive advantage to those doing better practice.

*"Sharing experiences. CEC does a pretty good job of bringing people together from time to time and I think it's good they have a focus on good engagement." (D3).*

- > Investor expectations: several developers commented that investors in wind farms are becoming more attuned to community acceptance and requiring evidence of good community outcomes before they invest.

*"(The CEO of a significant renewable energy investment firm) said 'it's one thing to have no complaints during planning approval, but we will go out and doorknock and if people aren't on board, we won't be investing in your projects . . . Investors are increasingly asking about community attitudes" (D1).*

- > Power Purchase Agreements: organisations, such as local councils, wanting to sign PPAs increasingly want evidence of good engagement and strong social outcomes.

*"There is a lot of value in branding and good will for them to make sure they support projects with good community relations. There's a need to educate people who are going to buy PPAs to ask for good community relations" (D3).*

- > The presence of industry leaders: Examples of innovative and effective community engagement and benefit-sharing are helping to raise the bar of what is expected and providing examples to learn from.

*"Building positive community relationships means that others will look to that project and learn from it and build on it - helps to establish new norms. . . the pressure builds for others to take it on" (C2).*

- > Shifting culture: some wind developers are beginning to value engagement as an integral part of the success of their business, making better practice a fundamental part of corporate culture (D1, D3).

## Pathways to valuing community engagement

The benefits of community engagement and benefit-sharing can be "difficult to quantify" (D2) and its value is often misunderstood within developer companies. Therefore, it is important to know what is working to help developers value quality community engagement. In addition to the 'game changers' covered above, there were a number of strategies identified:

- > **Financial arguments:** financial arguments for valuing community engagement and benefit-sharing came in a variety of forms:

- that it can reduce project costs overall, and hence should be included as part of the overall business model.

*"I'd like to say (good engagement) is to benefit the community – but there is also some strong benefits for company as well – easier for future developments or changes to the wind farm" (D6).*

*"One wind farm had to buy 5 properties (off objectors) and that must have cost so much, court cases and delays - so expensive! You could do so much with so little if you were to engage better early" (R1).*

*"Changing the cost-centred view of community engagement. When the job is done well it can be seen as a cost saving" (D7).*

- that community engagement and benefit-sharing doesn't have to cost a lot:

*"I think you can have excellent community relations with a small budget and terrible community relations with a big budget. Money is useful, it's a tool. Having no budget for community relations would be a big challenge. You need enough to engage properly, but it's not an ongoing correlation between how much you spend and better outcomes" (D3).*

- that it helps secure finance and PPAs (as per above):  
"We need to help people at high level in a company to be able to convince their management – use the argument that investors in projects and buyers are looking for projects with good community relationships" (D1).

*"good projects with good relations get more support from the boardroom and investors so that has a big effect" (D3).*

- that it contributes to a better operating environment for wind development generally (better social acceptance, less policy backlash), so will enhance likelihood of future projects being successful: "Bad engagement was costing money, jeopardising reputation of the whole industry" (D2).

> **Culture change and training at company and sector levels:**

Training in community engagement skills was recommended for all staff, not just those in community-facing roles, so that it contributes to a culture change across the organisation where community engagement becomes widely understood and valued.

*“Make it a belief of the organisation, not a token thing to do. The staff need to absolutely believe” (D2).*

*“Leadership is important. If Community engagement and benefit-sharing are not important to the CEO, then it won’t get attention or money” (E4).*

*“It needs to be just part of the company’s culture, from the top-down. Everyone needs to talk about it and agree with the principles. I have a poster at my desk with these principles and I’d have it there when I’m on the phone. It’s a pervasive thing . . . you have to actively make it” (D1).*

*“Adequate resourcing and long term commitment from senior management. Needs to reflect a new culture and commitment. Willingness to pre-invest in ongoing engagement before operations, in recognition of the benefits (shorter timelines, less legal battle)” (E5).*

*“It’s about getting all the members of a company to do a training session where they can learn about how to talk to people, how to listen to people, how to understand people who have never been to a wind farm - basic training in community engagement. Lots of the engineers have no idea and don’t care about it” (D4).*

At a sector level, there was evidence that one company’s practice can influence others – in both positive and negative ways. Changing the culture of the whole industry was seen as a valuable endeavour, which (as seen above) can be facilitated by Guides, training and sharing experiences.

*“If another company does something innovative with community relations I pay attention to that. So yes, there is a ripple effect” (D3).*

*“Those of us that are successful with doing innovative things, we need to promote it a bit more, get out and talk about it” (D3).*

*“Always has to come from the top of a company. Board should be leading the philosophy or guidelines. Board should sign off the community strategy and it must be aligned through the organisation. If it’s not working very well you might need to revisit from the board down. . . the key is industry peer pressure. When industry players see others not doing the right thing, they should speak up” (E6).*

However, there were seen to be barriers to information sharing of this nature, namely:

*“Competition between companies may prevent learnings from being shared. Do they derive a competitive advantage for keeping it secret? All companies need to learn from what works and what doesn’t work” (C3).*

- > **Crisis:** sometimes it is only when things do not go to plan that people learn the value of good, early engagement.

*“Until there’s a crisis they (the management/board) don’t see the value in it. In good community consultation all the little crises are stopped before they happen, so it’s difficult to quantify. But if you can bring communities together at development stage - you can’t buy (the value of) that” (D2).*

- > **Codes of conduct** for staff and contractors in community-facing roles. Set protocols and expectations for how staff and contractors will behave on site and in the local community, as they are the face of the company.

*“the construction companies need that training as well, once we go to construction we lose a lot of power because all these other people are on the ground . . . Expecting certain codes of conduct and getting that enforced from top down. Training and explaining to staff what the value is to them of doing the right thing” (D4).*

### **Social licence to operate**

The language of ‘social licence to operate’ (SLO) did not come up very much in interviews. Only five interviewees referred to directly to SLO. Those who did, appear to understand the concept and find it useful. Where raised, it is seen as a critical element for business practices and something that can be a particular destructive force in case of absence. A community member commented that they felt wind developers “often don’t realise it needs to be an ongoing process” (C2).

*“The industry understands it needs to maintain its social licence. We have seen what happens when you lose that - CSG (coal seam gas), timber in Tassie . . . Community buy-in is critical. Front and centre these days” (E3).*

*“Too much focus on social licence to operate to operate jargon without understanding what that means to a community and the purpose and place in those people’s lives” (D7).*

The content of interviews, however, indicates a widespread awareness of the concept that local support is integral to successful development, approval and operation of a wind farm.

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### Role of guides

Wind developers, experts and regulators generally felt that Guides on community engagement and benefit-sharing were useful. Despite brief responses to this question, interviewees had made use of the guides (e.g. “*picked stuff from it*” (D3)). They are seen as a useful tool that can help to inform practice and set a standard. Given the presence of some on-going substandard community engagement and benefit-sharing in the Australian wind industry, interviewees felt guides were a good ‘carrot’ to encourage better norms without resorting to rigid requirements of regulation.

Interviewees commented on the role the ACT Renewable Energy Auction played in encouraging better community engagement and benefit-sharing practice, and this was partially achieved through the presence of a Guide. However, it was unclear whether or not guides helped to change community engagement and benefit-sharing practices, or simply gave people the means to talk about things in a more detailed manner.

*“The reverse auction requirements for community engagement stretched people (wind developers), it’s very hard to retrofit good practice . . . but at least the language was implemented even if the practice wasn’t quite there” (R2).*

*“(Guides are) Really important. They are a pivotal point that can direct the course of just engagement but also policy. I see them as an umbrella to guide the process” (D7).*

## RESEARCH OUTPUTS

### Desired outputs from this research

Interviewees were keen to contribute to “raising the bar” and encourage a culture of learning and better practice in the Australian wind industry. In the absence of other avenues to share learnings, in part due to an existing culture of commercial-in-confidence, interviewees would like to see and be able to share information about ‘what works’: in regards to community engagement and benefit-sharing practices that are consistently well-received and generate positive results.

A national communication strategy or campaign on best/better practice was suggested. Specific avenues to inform developers and the wider community include: trainings, an accreditation scheme, code of conduct (incl. safety and health practice) and a website which represents a trusted source of information for developers as well as the community.

A number of interviewees raised the unique role of local councils in the wind development process and their common lack of familiarity with wind development processes, opportunities and challenges and how to best manage these. As such, a targeted information, training and/or support role to help councils know how to best engage with wind developers, while not contravening their role as an approval body, would be very beneficial.

*“I think that education could really happen at local government level. I think local government has the opportunity to influence these things but they probably don’t know about good practice. Council is the front line, in terms of permitting they are the people that the local community will turn to” (D3).*

# APPENDIX C

Enhancing Positive Social Outcomes from Wind Development in Australia:  
Evaluating Community Engagement & Benefit-sharing

## LITERATURE REVIEW

April 2017

Jarra Hicks and Taryn Lane

# INTRODUCTION

Technology is always situated in a social context and, as a result, the transition to renewable energy requires ongoing negotiation between social, environmental, political, economic and technical factors (Bridge et al. 2013; Ellis et al. 2009). Successful uptake of wind technology requires a “social re-composition” (social innovation) that finds ways to positively integrate the technology into people’s worldviews, identity and sense of place (Ellis et al. 2009, p.545).

Social acceptance is considered crucial to the expansion of renewable energy and the ongoing viability of the wind industry in Australia (Howard 2015; D’Souza and Yiridoe 2014) and overseas (Ellis et al. 2009; Devine-Wright 2011b). From the review of the literature, it is clear that wind energy development need not be and certainly is not always a contentious process. In the sections that follow we report on strong themes of alignment among researchers as to what consistently contributes to both positive and negative responses to wind development.

It is worth noting upfront, however, that perceived levels of public opposition are often a case of the ability of certain actors to frame the public acceptance debate, rather than being an accurate reflection of the majority of people’s views. Often the public debates (e.g. in the media or submissions to planning processes) are framed by those who express their views strongest, are most motivated to do so and/or who have the best access to resources, knowledge and connections (Ellis et al. 2009; Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012; Bell et al. 2013). In addition, the degree to which local opposition influences planning outcomes is contested: some say it is a key influencing factor (Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012; Ellis, Barry, and Robinson 2007, p.519) and others say it does not ultimately influence planning outcomes (Ellis et al. 2009). This is likely to reflect the different abilities of local opposition to access resource and leverage influence in different contexts, as well as the design of planning systems in different states and countries.

There remain significant and genuine conditions of public concern and opposition to wind development that call for better understanding of the conditions under which there is likely to be greater local support for wind development. In Australia, this is particularly pertinent given the unstable policy environment for renewable energy and the resulting need to build stronger and more active support for wind developments in particular and wind power more broadly. This research, therefore, aims to increase the understanding of what can be done to foster conditions of broad local support and benefit from wind development in a variety of contexts.

Research reveals that many factors play into people’s responses to and relationships with a wind farm development in their local area. Personal reactions to wind turbines in a landscape are mediated by a complex mix of historical, psychological, cultural and experiential factors (Devine-Wright 2011b; Devine-Wright 2011c). Similarly, Ellis et al (2007, p.519) found: “public perception of wind farms is a multi-dimensional phenomena constituted through a range of complex cultural, contextual, socio-economic, political and physical factors”. Thus we can see that a wide range of factors, including highly subjective and emotional aspects, mediate people’s responses to wind turbines.

These various social factors and their implications are not always well understood or (easily) considered in the wind development process. It is for these reasons that this research focuses on two key means through which wind developments interact with and contribute to local communities: through community engagement and benefit-sharing methods. In addition, it has been identified that there is not currently a strong dialogue between academia, policy makers and industry practitioners on issues of wind energy. Notably, there are significant differences between how academics and practitioners frame issues and how they “appreciate evidence, knowledge and the normative purpose of planning” (Ellis et al. 2009, p.522), which can make it difficult to translate between the two. On one hand, academic research can offer insight into trends across time and space and is able to bring a depth of understanding from established bodies of knowledge (e.g. sociology, psychology, human geography, politics, science and technology studies). On the other hand, academic recommendations can be difficult or impractical to translate into action, or simply inaccessible to practitioners. The research team and research design for this project bridges the academia and practitioner divide and, as such, hopes to translate important lessons between the two realms.

This review explores literature that deals specifically with the relationships between the public and wind turbines. Within this literature, there is a focus particularly on the attitudes and responses of people living in close proximity to the development – the public that comprises a specific geographic community. The borders of what is ‘local’ or ‘community’, however, are rarely defined as they can differ in each particular location and can be dependent on remoteness, population size, topography etc. Suffice to say the body of literature researches the public attitudes to particular wind farms, as distinct from wind power in general. It is beyond the scope of this review to consider scientific articles that study the particular qualities of wind turbines (e.g. sound quality, electromagnetic interference) or that investigate physiological responses to turbines. Rather, articles have been reviewed that have engaged with understanding the psycho-social aspects of wind development through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

In the sections that follow, firstly an overview is given of the nature of the literature and how it has been analysed. Then the current theoretical understandings of what informs the relationship between wind turbines and the public and, more specifically what contributes to positive or negative social outcomes are presented. Then an unpacking of the ways that community engagement and benefit-sharing practices are being deployed and to what effect, including innovative financing mechanisms. Finally, concepts and specific practices that might be useful in informing policy and practice for the wind energy context in Australia are presented.

## OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE & METHODOLOGY

The literature review involved a review of 57 academic texts, including peer-reviewed journal papers, edited books and research reports. In conducting this review, it was pertinent to identify the range of explanations for what influences social support or opposition to proposed wind developments. In particular, concepts, understandings and specific practices that could inform policy and practice around community engagement and benefit-sharing in the wind industry in Australia were sought. Part of the endeavour is to increase the interaction between academic findings in the field and practices on the ground, following the recognition above that there is currently a dearth of interaction between the two. In addition, there was a focus on reviewing research from the Australian context in reference to international experience to see if there are significant points of difference, or practices and perspectives that are not yet common in Australia that might be ripe for cross-fertilisation. The literature review thus provides a foundation for the broader study, which explicitly seeks to marry academic with practitioner and community knowledge and experience.

Articles reviewed covered the period between 2005 and 2016. Articles were sourced through keyword searches in academic search engines and via cross-referencing bibliographies until a point of saturation was reached. Literature covers a wide range of geographic contexts, but largely in the global 'north': Australia (9), US & Canada (4), United Kingdom (14) and Europe (24). Within the Europe category, Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark are most represented as well as France and Spain. Many studies referred both to the UK and one or more countries from mainland Europe. A small number (4) of articles were purely academic and involved no empirical data collection. The literature represents a broad range of methodologies, including both qualitative (16) and quantitative (11). Specific methods used included surveys, case studies, and Q methodology.

Articles were analysed according to their contribution to understanding 10 analysis questions (See end of document). This analysis framework was developed to contribute data to the questions of the broader research agenda.

The analysis framework for academic literature is available on request.

## THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF WHAT INFORMS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WIND TURBINES AND THE PUBLIC

In essence, research has found that people are more likely to support a nearby wind development when they have some influence and participation in the process of development as well as gaining some benefit from its presence (Devine-Wright 2011b; D'Souza and Yiridoe 2014; Haggett 2011; Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012). This is to say, people's attitudes to wind farms are mediated by their perceptions of fairness in the processes and outcomes of the wind development, and how well these things are seen to correlate with the perceived nature (and level) of change in the landscape (Devine-Wright 2011a; Wolsink 2007b; Warren and McFadyen 2010; Bell et al. 2013). These things are all influenced by subjective experience and interpretation, and hence, attention must be paid to identity, culture and relationships within a distinct community. In this section, theoretical understandings of what informs the relationship between wind turbines and the public are introduced.

### 'SOCIAL GAP'

Researchers have noted the presence of a 'social gap' wherein there is a difference between strong macro-level support for renewable energy and the presence of some negative reactions to specific project proposals at the micro-level (Bell et al. 2013; Devine-Wright 2005). In this sense, "attitudes towards wind power are fundamentally different from attitudes towards wind farms" (Wolsink 2007b, p.1189). As Devine-Wright (2011b, p.xxii) explains, the 'social gap' between "high levels of public support for renewable energy and frequent local hostility towards specific project proposals" is a common occurrence across many countries and is not adequately understood (or respected) by a simple NIMBY explanation. He goes on to describe how NIMBY explanations contribute to creating unhelpful us-them binaries that act to dismiss what might be legitimate and far more nuanced criticisms of a development. "NIMBY concept is a misleading, inaccurate and pejorative way of understanding local objections": public responses are complex and closely related to experiences (or lack thereof) genuine opportunities for participation (Devine-Wright 2011b, p.xxiii).

Although it is contested the extent to which the 'gap' occurs, it is a useful concept to apply in those situations where the local opposition is experienced to specific developments, despite being evidence that there is support for wind energy in general among the same population. The presence of a social gap indicates that something happens in between a hypothetical and a specific application. Many people have theorised the nature of this gap. The emerging consensus among researchers is that the NIMBY explanation is problematic and simplistic (as explored further below) and, instead, they point to the role of trust, perceptions of fairness (in process and outcomes) and associations with place and landscape change/values.

## APPENDIX C

### TIMING

Research by Maartin Wolsink (Wolsink 2007b; Wolsink 2007a; Ellis et al. 2009) across a number of countries in Europe found that there is a common trend in public attitudes to wind developments that can be seen to follow a pattern over course of a development process. He describes this as a “U-curve”: “attitudes range from very positive (that is when people are not confronted by a wind power scheme in their neighbourhood), to much more critical (when a project is announced), to positive again (some reasonable time [within a year] after the construction)” (Wolsink 2007b, p.1197).

He also found that attitudes are, on average, variations in the level of support rather than moving from support to opposition (Wolsink 2007b, p.1197). Further, others have found that “people’s fears about the prospect of wind farm development have proved to be largely unfounded, and that the reality is less visually intrusive, noisy and despoiling that they had expected” (Warren and McFadyen 2010, p.210; also Devine-Wright 2005; Ellis et al. 2009).

### LANDSCAPE

People have a rich and complex relationship with a landscape that is highly subjective. Research reveals that explaining people’s response to (proposed) turbines in a landscape is not as simple as visual impact alone. It is also influenced by perceptions of the development’s alignment or disjunct with what the local landscape means in local identity (at individual and community levels), history and culture.

In his study of several European countries, Wolsink (2007a, p.2692) found that “visual evaluation of the impact of wind power on the values of the landscape is by far the most dominant factor in explaining opposition or support. Type of landscape fully overshadows other attitudinal attributes, as well as other visual and scenic factors such as the design of wind turbines and wind farms, and the number and the size of turbine” (our emphasis). This indicates that there is discernment between landscapes being more or less appropriate for wind development based on the values that people associate with that landscape. The fundamental question, then, is what contributes to these perceptions of appropriateness?

In future research Wolsink (2009, p.540) goes on to find that while visual impact is the strongest determining feature of public attitudes to wind development, perceptions of visual impact are very subjective and are themselves mediated by emotional and value-based factors (rather than by cognitive or rational factors). As he explains: “The perception and the valuation of all aspects of landscape quality are strongly connected to historically and culturally rooted factors, which vary widely in significance amongst individuals. Attitudes to wind power are therefore very subjective and complex, but nevertheless contain strong elements of identity: cultural identity and identity of place”. From Wolsink’s various studies it can be concluded that landscape change is a significant mediator of people’s response (and particularly concern) to wind developments and that, rather than being a rational response, it is one based on people’s values and relationship with the particular landscape in question.

In attempting to understand this complex relationship between people, landscapes and wind turbines, Devine-Wright encourages us to turn attention to what is developed, how it is developed and where it is developed. By ‘where’, he means not so much technocratic spatial analysis (e.g. of distance between turbines and residences) but understanding locations as places with rich layers of meaning and connection (symbolic and emotional associations): “Locations of renewable energy projects are not merely sites with topographical, ecological or archaeological features; They are also places replete with memories, experiences, stories and myths” (Devine-Wright 2011a, p.59). In response to this, Devine-Wright encourages wind development processes that include local people in site selection to generate designs that respect (and ideally enhance) local identity and relationships to place.

It is important to note, that while some studies have found that it is those closest to a wind farm development who are most likely to oppose it, others have found that the “most strongly supportive attitudes towards onshore windfarms are held by those who live closest to them” (Warren & McFayden 2010, p.205 quoting Krohn and Damborg 1999, Dudleston 2000 and Braunholtz 2003). This indicates that it is possible for people to integrate wind turbines with their sense of place and place identity under the right circumstances.

### NIMBYISM

A large body of research evidence undermines ‘Not In My Backyard’ (NIMBY) as a credible explanation for opposition to wind developments, although it continues to be espoused in academia, policy and popular discourse. The NIMBY explanation “overlooks the complexity of why people may object to a wind farm proposal, fuels conflict because of its derogatory implications and contributes to poor responses to such disputes” (Ellis, Barry, and Robinson 2007, p.536). Using NIMBYism as an explanation for opposition rests on the assumption that the main cause for objections are selfish motivations of being unwilling to accept the proposed change in one’s local area, even if those same people might support wind power in general. Critiques of the NIMBY explanation include that it is simplistic and hides the deeper issues and dynamics that need to be understood if we are to overcome the impasse of the ‘social gap’. Rather than being interpreted simply as NIMBYism, Wolsink draws attention to the need to understand why local people express more concern once a specific development is announced, and thereby gain an understanding of the conditions under which they might come to support the development. His study (as with many others’) found that people’s perceptions of the equity and fairness of both the development process and its outcomes play an integral role in informing the people’s conditional support (Wolsink 2007, p.1188).

## FAIRNESS IN THE PROCESS

Research indicates that people's perceptions of fairness in the development process come down to them having the opportunity to have some power in decisions that affect the context of their everyday life, including potentially much-loved landscapes. Related to this, many researchers point to the role that community engagement and participation in decision-making processes plays in generating support for wind developments (Walker et al. 2011; Bell et al. 2013; Gross 2007; Wolsink 2007b; Hindmarsh 2010; Fast and Mabee 2015). Hindmarsh's (2010, p.541) research into community engagement practices around wind development in Australia found that inadequate or poor engagement is a primary issue "underpinning a host of issues that local communities faced with the prospect of hosting wind farms". Similarly, research in Scotland found that one of the most significant determining factors of local support for wind developments is "whether people have meaningful opportunities to engage in the decision-making process" (Haggett 2011, p.23; also Fast and Mabee 2015; Warren and McFadyen 2010; Devine-Wright 2005).

Gross (2007, p.2729–30) describes fairness in the process as including rights to participation, access to information and lack of bias in the decision making, which requires that decisions be "responsive to information and that are correctable in the face of new information". Fairness in the process, then, refers to people's perception that there have been meaningful opportunities to influence the design and outcomes of a wind development. Aspects that contribute to perceptions of fairness were the presence of opportunities for group deliberation, formal decision-making power as co-owners in the project (as in community ownership of or investment in projects) as well as genuine opportunities for participation and influence in the project design and planning through less formalised means (e.g. one-on-one negotiations, workshops, forums). Several articles found that 'decide-announce-defend' approaches, in which project planning is complete before community input are sought (usually through planning requirements for public display and comment), is not sufficient (Baxter, Morzaria, and Hirsch 2013; Haggett 2011; Hindmarsh 2010).

## FAIRNESS IN THE OUTCOMES

Perceptions of fairness in the outcomes of a wind development relate to how the range of benefits (financial and otherwise) are distributed in relation to perceptions of significant or adverse impacts stemming from the project (Devine-Wright 2011a; Bell et al. 2013; Gross 2007; Wolsink 2007b). In particular, it relates to perceptions of 'haves' and 'have-nots' as a result of how project outcomes are distributed (Fast and Mabee 2015; Gross 2007; Ernst & Young 2015). Perceptions of fairness in outcomes are enhanced through sharing the benefits of wind developments and thus being able to emphasise the potential positive impacts of having a wind development close by (Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012).

Studies have consistently shown that community ownership, or part ownership, of a wind farm contributes to building support for the development (Warren and McFadyen 2010; Haggett 2011; Haggett 2011; WWEA 2016).

It is evidenced that a fair process creates fair outcomes (Gross 2007, p.2730) and prevents benefit-sharing from being seen as a bribe, which can happen when it is at odds with people's experiences of the process. Gross (2007, p.2728) found that: "Perceptions of fairness do influence how people perceive the legitimacy of the outcomes, and that a fairer process will increase acceptance of the outcome" and will also be more likely to result in trust for the institution driving the development.

## TRUST

Trust is "part of the package of conditions which can help projects work" (Walker et al. 2010, p.2655; also Ellis, Barry, and Robinson 2007; Fast and Mabee 2015). It is a prerequisite for people to believe a wind developer is behaving with integrity and transparency and that the process is fair and open (Haggett 2011). If levels of trust are weak, this will compromise people's ability to believe the actions of a developer are genuine, particularly in the case of benefit-sharing.

Trust is a "social asset" developed through delivering on expectations (Fast and Mabee 2015, p.25; also Howard 2015; Walker et al. 2010; Walker et al. 2011). However, delivering on expectations in a timely manner can be challenging in the context of wind development as there are so many variables that affect the delivery of project stages: "The intersection between the principles (e.g. of engagement), the expectations they raise and the challenges of implementation" can be difficult to manage (Howard 2015, p.141). Wind development timelines can be extended, with sometimes unknown consequences, due to the regulatory environment, approvals processes, grid connection requirements, various site studies, financial markets, component order and delivery times amongst other factors. This influences the ability of developers to make clear commitments to communities and subsequently be able to deliver on them, with potentially challenging implications for trust building. In addition, how a community relates and responds to what is often a non-local and large development company adds complexity. Aitken notes that "a key challenge . . . concerns how large companies can foster positive relationships with local communities" (Aitken 2010, p.6066).

There are, however, some positive ways wind developers can build trust, despite these challenges. As summarised by Ernst and Young (2015, p.37): "Trust is developed between a developer and a community through an open and authentic process, which demonstrates understanding and provides communities with a role in making decisions which affect their lives". Issues of trust and fairness are "complex, ambiguous and interrelated" (Aitken 2010, p.6066). Hence, paying attention to fairness of process and outcomes, and communicating these well, will help to build trust.

Detailed recommendations from the literature for specific trust-building practices follows in sections below.

## APPENDIX C

# WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO POSITIVE SOCIAL OUTCOMES?

Within the literature, there is evident alignment around several key factors that research has found to consistently contribute to the realisation of positive social outcomes, including strong support for wind developments. Common factors include: community (especially local) participation in decision making and design; sharing the benefits from the development; trust and relationship building between stakeholders; the integration

of the development with local landscape values and local identity; and, the presence of local advocates.

The table below gives a summary of key factors found to contribute to positive social outcomes, the role (or purpose) they play in the creation of positive outcomes and the research in which it has been identified.

**Table 1:** Factors contributing to positive social outcomes from wind development.

| Factor   | Purpose  | Reference   |
|--|--|---|
| Benefit-sharing (of various types) within local neighbourhood and local community (beyond turbine hosts).  | Spreads economic benefit more widely and fairly; ameliorates ‘winners and losers’ dichotomies; helps to match scale of impact with scale of benefit; builds wider support.   | Howard 2015; Bidwell 2013; Fast and Mabee 2015; Walter 2014; Gross 2007; Hall, Ashworth and Shaw 2012; Musal and Kuik 2011; Munday et.a. 2011; Jobert et. al. 2007.   |
| Advocates from within the community.   | Trusted local voices to be able to speak to others and policy makers; having local people mobilised to publicly support the project.   | Howard 2015; Lane and Ewbank 2014; Maegaard 2013; Permsantithum and Ratbinnavelu 2010; Musal and Kuik 2011; Jobert et. al. 2007.  |
| The community as (co)owners of the wind farm (implies that community has both investment and decision-making control).                             | Increases community participation, influence and support as well as facilitating broader local sharing of benefits; increases likelihood that the development is seen as appropriate and complementary to local identity and sense of place. | Warren and McFyden 2010; Hindmarsh 2010; WWEA 2016; WISEPower 2016; Devine-Wright 2011; Bell et. al. 2013; Bridge et. al. 2013; Walter 2014; Haggett 2011; Munday, Bristow and Cowell 2011; Ernst and Young 2015; Soerensen et.al. 2003; Maegaard 2013. |
| The community as co-investors or partners in larger development (implies investment opportunities and decision making influence, but not control). | Increases community participation, influence and support as well as facilitating broader local sharing of benefits.  | WISEPower 2015; Walter 2014; Soerensen et.al. 2003; Jobert et. al. 2007.  |
| Community participation in decisions around siting of the wind farm and/or individual turbines.  | Increases likelihood that siting of the wind farm is seen as appropriate and complementary to local identity and sense of place.   | Wolsink 2007a, Wolsink 2007b, Devine-Wright 2011; WWEA 2016; Baxter, Morzaria and Hirst 2013; Walter 2014; Haggett 2011; Gross 2007; Soerensen et.al. 2003; Jobert et. al. 2007.  |
| Opportunities for public input and discussion leading to co-developed solutions and influence over wind farm design.                               | Sense of fair processes; local influence over project design (e.g. benefit-sharing package, turbine locations; engagement approach as well as siting).   | Barry and Ellis 2011, Wolsink 2007a; Hindmarsh 2010; WWEA 2016; Devine-Wright 2011; Walter 2014; Haggett 2011; Gross 2007; Soerensen et.al. 2003; Ellis et al 2009.   |
| Community engagement that starts early, is sustained over time and is participatory.   | Allows for many points of interaction and sources of information over time; facilitates long-term relationship building and trust; allows for feedback loops.  | Hindmarsh 2010; Devine-Wright 2011; Gross 2007.   |
| Building trust and long-term relationships.  | Is the basis for productive (open, honest, constructive) relationships between wind developer and community.   | Hall, Ashworth and Shaw 2012; Ernst and Young 2015; Wolsink 2007; Jobert et. al. 2007.  |
| Best practice guidelines / guidance (both industry and government)   | Establish clear and shared expectations; sets standards and norms; can help to build trust.  | Howard 2015; Aitken 2010.   |

## BENEFIT-SHARING

The use of multiple and contextually appropriate means of benefit-sharing has been shown by many researchers to have a positive impact on people's support for nearby wind farms (Howard 2015; Bidwell 2013; Fast and Mabee 2015; Walter 2014; Gross 2007; Aitken 2010; Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012; Ernst & Young 2015; Baxter, Morzaria, and Hirsch 2013; WWEA 2016; WISEPower 2015). Importantly, community benefits "create legacy projects which affect the long-term daily associations residents have with the wind farm" (Fast and Mabee 2015, p.34). Being able to focus on the potential positive impacts from a wind development has been found to help build support for proposals where benefit-sharing is seen to be genuine and fair (Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012). Fair process must accompany benefit-sharing in order for it to be well received, otherwise, it will risk being seen as an attempt to buy support (Baxter, Morzaria, and Hirsch 2013; Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012; Fast and Mabee 2015). Benefit-sharing also needs to be tailored to local circumstance, culture and need, helping to address (not create or reinforce) patterns of conflict or inequality (Baxter, Morzaria, and Hirsch 2013; Barry and Ellis 2011). Potential positive benefits include significant benefits to turbine hosts, neighbours, local communities and local governments, as well as flow on benefits (e.g. attracting tourism, ability to coexist with farming, contribute to regional economies). Benefit-sharing can come in a variety of forms, including grants, sponsorship, leases, in-kind contributions, education and training programs, investment opportunities, gift of shares, neighbour payments, road upgrades, landscaping, free installation of solar panels and more. It is also important that benefits are perceived as being proportionate to the level of change or disturbance experienced by local people, which often relates to the scale of wind farm development.

## DECISION-MAKING

A successful and locally supported wind farm appears to require a combination of top-down and bottom-up design processes which allow for genuine participation, consideration and feedback on local input. Adequate community engagement that enables some level of group participation in decision-making was identified by many researchers as being fundamental to social support for wind developments. It is common for articles to speak about a need for increased "deliberation", "participation" or "engagement". However, authors are often vague in their use of these terms, rather than describing in detail how this might work in reality and be operationalised. For example, Wolsink (2007) outlines that participation in planning includes opportunities for deliberation, collaboration and negotiation between developers, communities, local regulators and other stakeholders. While being a useful and important point, this does not help us to understand what this really means in terms of community engagement practice. Likewise, Barry and Ellis (2011) encourage community-wide deliberation, but without expanding what they mean by this or how it might be

practically achieved. Nonetheless, they found that discussion and decision-making among people with different viewpoints are important for not polarising the debate or enforcing pre-determined solutions (Barry and Ellis 2011). Similarly, Gross (2007, p.2729) found that: "A community with members who can work together to discuss and accept different viewpoints regarding potential impacts will be in a better position to generate outcomes which will be broadly accepted". Many researchers recognised the value of encouraging respectful discussion of issues and using this as the basis for generating solutions tailored to the local context.

## COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

As seen in Table 1 above, many researchers point to the role of community-ownership in increasing social support for wind development. This is largely because community ownership is a meta-category that includes many elements of fairness of process and outcome within it, including long-term relationship building and trust, community input into design and decision-making, participatory engagement practices and broad local benefit-sharing. For example, Warren and McFayden (2010, p.209) found that community ownership "amplified" support and "suppresses" negative attitudes as a result of the confluence of community participation, local decision-making, and benefit-sharing facilitated through community ownership. Importantly, they also found that local ownership facilitated a design-process that integrated the wind farm, its purpose and design, along with local landscape, identity and cultural values.

Others have found that local ownership "eases the planning process" (Edge 2006 in Warren and McFayden 2010, p.206) by creating "more active patterns of local support. . . as well as being more equitable". Thus, community ownership can be seen to increase the presence of local advocates and benefit-sharing. Further, Walter (2014) draws our attention to the importance of the "identity of the protagonists" and that local people driving community-owned wind farms have established and on-going relationships in local communities, which is often also accompanied by established trust. Several researchers, however, also noted that it that no form of development, including community ownership, is still likely to achieve unanimous support (Bell et al. 2013; Wolsink 2007b).

Detailed recommendations for specific benefit-sharing and community engagement practices will follow in sections below.

## APPENDIX C

### WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO NEGATIVE SOCIAL OUTCOMES?

Factors that contribute to negative social outcomes are more diverse and divergent in the literature, with different parties pointing to many different influencers. However, there is still a level of discernable agreement on common features that consistently result in negative outcomes. Many of these are the converse of factors that lead to positive outcomes presented above.

As summarised by Devine-Wright (2011a, p.57–58): “Public opposition arises due to a lack of meaningful opportunities for local residents to participate in, or benefit from, renewable energy projects (for example, by becoming financial stakeholders in cooperative ventures, by contributing to decision-making in land use planning, or by receiving tangible rewards from community benefit packages)”. Opposition is influenced by “context-sensitive and time-dependent” factors such as “local perceptions of economic impact, the national political environment, social influences, and institutional factors such as the perceived inclusiveness and fairness of the planning and development process” (Warren and McFayden 2010, p.205). Common factors identified in the research to contribute to negative social responses to wind developments include uncertainty, landscape change, top-down decision-making processes, media, inequitable benefit-sharing and poor community engagement.

#### UNCERTAINTY

Uncertainties around what it will be like to live near wind turbines and what their impact will be on the landscape can lead to concerns about and/or opposition to proposed developments. Groth and Vogt (2014, p.7) found that “turbine placement close to residents may heighten their uncertainty and concern of the wind turbines and overshadow any positive inclinations towards the development”. This is particularly the case if uncertainties are exacerbated by a lack of influence over decision-making, lack of detailed information or insensitive reactions to questions and concerns raised with the developer.

As explored above, if people feel they have been genuinely heard and have had an opportunity to provide input into project design, they are more likely to support a development. This can in part be explained by an increased sense of power and control in decisions that affect the context of their daily lives. Also explored above, situations where there is strong trust between the developer and the local community will increase the scope to accept uncertainties. Being transparent about what aspects are uncertain, what possible contingencies are and the processes and timelines for decision-making will help local people deal with uncertainties.

#### LANDSCAPE CHANGE

Landscape change has been found to be a dominant factor in explaining social concerns around wind development. In Australia, researchers found that perceptions of “spoiling a sense of place is a primary cause of enduring social conflict” (Hindmarsh 2014, p.194). As introduced in the discussion of landscape above, this is not simply a response to visual impact, but to how well or poorly the wind farm integrates or augments local perceptions and values of the local landscape. As understood by Gross (2007, p.2728): “Divisions in communities frequently happen where there are conflicting perspectives of values and rights and conflicting interests for land use and natural resource management”.

For example, wind turbines might be more easily integrated into areas where the landscape is seen as one where people and the natural environment interact to create livelihoods and that this is not static, but changes over time (e.g. many generations) in response to new opportunities to sustain the local population. Here, the physical impact of turbines on the landscape can be integrated within cultural values and relationships to landscape. Turbines might be more difficult to integrate into a landscape where the predominant relationship is based on natural beauty and scenic attributes that are seen as static (e.g. to people who move there for specific attributes and what them to be maintained in perpetuity).

Opposition, then, emerges in contexts where “pre-existing place attachments and place identifications become ‘disrupted’” (Devine-Wright 2011a, p.63). That is to say, where the wind farm is at odds with local people’s sense of identity and place, and where the process of development does not respect people’s desire to have some degree of control and influence over their place and the context of their daily lives.

Encouragingly, research has found that landscape change associated with wind development need not be negatively received. In his research in Northern Wales, Devine-Wright (2011a, p.65) found that conflict between communities and wind farms is not inevitable and could be influenced by creating “alternative ways of constructing a narrative about the ‘fit’ between place and project and might maintain, or even enhance, the historic [or other] nature of the place”. Thus, involving local people in the development process offers opportunities to identify and encourage a wind farm design and an associated narrative that is well aligned with local identity and perceptions of place.

#### TOP-DOWN DECISION MAKING

One of the most commonly referenced causes of negative attitudes to wind farms is a lack of community involvement in decision-making processes, particularly through common use of ‘decide-announce-defend’ (DAD) approaches to wind farm development (Baxter, Morzaria, and Hirsch 2013; Howard 2015; Haggett 2011; Wolsink 2007; WWEA 2016). The World Wind Energy Association found that: “A lack of meaningful and timely opportunity to have a say in decision-making can contribute to public scepticism, mistrust and opposition” (WWEA 2016, p.xxiii). Engagement via information provision, where decisions have already been made, is “unlikely to be

effective in terms of encouraging public support and trust” (Haggett 2011, p.17). In fact, consultation, after a decision has been made, can act as a trigger for opposition, rather than a constructive opportunity for feedback (Wolsink 2007; Hindmarsh 2010). The fundamental issues come back to inadequate opportunities to influence project design, or a perception that such opportunities are not genuine. In particular, research points to the negative consequences when community outreach is framed as consultation but is in fact only information provision. For example, this is common with processes associated with planning approval, where a wind farm plan is presented for comment, with no real opportunities for deliberation or ability to affect the outcome (Gross 2007). In an Australian study, only 15% of survey respondents “agreed that they had the opportunity to participate or contribute in wind energy development and planning” and almost all “agreed that the views of the local residents for public consultation have consistently been ignored” (D’Souza and Yiridoe 2014, p.268). These findings indicate a grave situation in terms of public perceptions of community involvement and influence in wind farm design and planning processes.

Another major cause of opposition is concerns about “procedural fairness” of the decision-making process. Issues of procedural fairness include concerns that people are not consulted at an early stage, that people feel excluded or that certain people have more influence in the process than others (Bell 2013, p.126). For example, Devine-Wright (2011a) identifies a “democratic deficit” where planning decisions are influenced by a noisy minority who are best resourced to have their voice heard.

The prevalence of top-down decision-making processes seems to stem both from the planning system and the culture and realities of developers. A study from several countries in Europe and the UK found that the “planning systems in most countries do not encourage open, collaborative planning processes or community involvement in wind power developments” (Wolsink 2007a, p.2702). Similarly, NSW Inquiry chair Ian Cohen (2009) stressed:

*the development of wind farms needs to better balance the needs of all stakeholders. Local communities feel disenfranchised and uncertain about what they can expect from a wind farm development in their area. Local communities have expressed a particular concern that the current community consultation process for wind farms is not adequate (in Hindmarsh 2010, p.546).*

A culture within the industry is to pursue minimum compliance-level engagement and consultation and this is identified by several researchers as driving DAD approaches (Baxter, Morzaria, and Hirsch 2013; Howard 2015; Haggett 2011;). This culture creates a reluctance to trial more inclusive and participatory decision-making. However, it is also clear that developers choose to engage in minimum compliance engagement because it is seen as adequate, cost-effective and less risky than other, less common and more involved approaches. Sorensen (2007, p.1) explains:

The most common approach (to wind farm planning) is to quite passively inform people and carry out the minimum requirements regarding consultation. People are almost never offered a direct influence on the decision making. This is due to imagined disadvantages and misconceptions, mainly such as: public participation may worsen the situation, public participation might be inefficient, it is impossible to satisfy all interests so you might as well not try, public participation may expand the scope of the conflict.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICE

There is a general sense within the literature reviewed that mainstream community engagement practices in the wind industry are currently inadequate to foster positive social outcomes and that deficiencies lead to negative social outcomes. As above, this is linked with a lack of genuine opportunities to influence outcomes, but other criticisms include that engagement does not start early enough, does not employ place-appropriate or two-way methods, does not reach the right people and generally is not done enough (Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012; Hindmarsh 2014; Ernst & Young 2015; Hindmarsh and Matthews 2008; Haggett 2011; Gray et al).

For example, Hindmarsh and Matthews (2008) found that most Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal reports on wind farms found that inadequate community consultation and communications were contributing factors to conflict. “At the core of such failure for many are weak consultative practices of ‘passive’ (one way) participation, for example, town hall meetings, information sessions, surveys and submissions” (Hindmarsh 2010, p.549). Not only are there different layers of the community to involve, but they may prefer or need different forms of involvement (Haggett 2011). In a study of the engagement between offshore wind power developers and fishing communities, Gray et al (p.205) discuss how both of these groups had a very different view of the process. The developers had held a series of public meetings and felt they had made every feasible effort to consult with the fragmented fishing industry. However, large open meetings were not an appropriate form of communication for the informal, non-hierarchical culture of the fishing communities, and were consequently not attended by the fishers. These issues compounded the distance between the two groups, and led to scepticism, distrust and a seemingly entrenched divide. This example demonstrates the difficulties of achieving appropriate forms of engagement which mean that all of those with an interest in the outcomes are able to participate (Haggett 2011, p.18). It can also be difficult for developers to identify and constructively engage the legitimate ‘voice’ of a local community (Ellis et al. 2009, p.522-3).

## APPENDIX C

### MEDIA

Media reporting has been found to establish adversarial impressions of public attitudes to wind farms, acting to polarise views rather than being reflective of a range of attitudes and nuance present within the public (Barry and Ellis, 2011; Hall et al. 2012). In a review of media reports on wind farms in Australia, Hindmarsh (2014) found that the media articles most often focus on perceived negative and unfair visual impacts. Other studies (Hall et al. 2012) have found that media reporting on wind farms is not reflective of dominant community views, as they favour giving voice to issues of contention. Concerningly, Barry and Ellis (2011, p.32) report that both media and academia often polarise positions of opposition and support and portray them as homogenous extremes when in fact there is a whole range of positions and nuance between “outright rejection and uncritical acceptance”. This indicates that to overcome negative social outcomes, more emphasis must be placed on a diversity of views, rather than seeking only ‘two sides to the story’, as well as an exploration of conditions of qualification that would build support for a development.

### INFORMATION PROVISION

Opposition is not a case of being misinformed. While adequate information and knowledge is a prerequisite for supportive attitudes to wind development and can enhance support for wind power in general, it has not been found to have significant bearing on opposition. Research has found that “there is not necessarily a direct correlation between information and attitudes, it is not sufficient or accurate to say that people who oppose a development are uneducated or misinformed” (Haggett 2011, p.22). In fact, “many objectors appear extremely well informed” on wind energy and climate change (Ellis, Barry, and Robinson 2007, p.520). While it might be tempting to dismiss objections as not understanding the way wind power works or its contribution to addressing broader issues, such as climate change, research indicates that information provision alone will not eliminate opposition to a proposed development.

However, other research has found that a lack of information and transparency from the outset of a proposed wind farm can contribute to opposition. For example, Gross (2007, p.2732) found that “the lack of clear notification and information at the outset . . . was directly responsible for the formation of the Taralga Landscape Guardians”.

### INADEQUATE BENEFIT-SHARING

Research has found that people are more supportive of wind developments where they feel the likely benefits coming to them and their community are proportionate to the level of local perceived impact. That is to say, that the level of benefit-sharing from the wind development feels fair in terms of the overall level of benefit (monetary & otherwise) and its distribution. Where this is not the case, it is a leading cause of negative social outcomes for the community and the developer. For example, Fast and Mabee (2015, p.29) found that mistrust is bred when residents cannot identify a tangible local benefit.

Inadequate benefit-sharing can affect public attitudes in multiple ways. Several researchers point to the challenge that the positive gains made through greenhouse gas reduction occur on a national and international scale, while the impacts, including noise and aesthetic changes, are obvious to the local community – and that benefit-sharing can help to acknowledge and overcome this disjunct (Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012; Haggett 2011). Munday, Bristow and Cowell (2011, p.4) found that a “relative lack of direct economic benefits (eg. local jobs, local content, local ownership) for local, rural publics is widely cited as a factor contributing to planning conflicts”. Gross (2007, p.2727) expands on this in her Australian study, which found that: “Outcomes that are perceived to be unfair can result in protests, damaged relationships and divided communities particularly when decisions are made which benefit some sections of the community at the perceived expense of other”. Of particular concern is the creation of local perceptions of ‘winners and losers’ created by payment of turbine hosts but not nearby neighbours; this can put strain on the relationship between neighbours, which are often crucial relationships in rural life (Ernst & Young 2015; Hall, Ashworth, and Shaw 2012; Gross 2007; Fast and Mabee 2015).

A delicate differentiation is the discernment between sharing benefit from the development and offers that are seen (or explicitly presented as) bribery or compensation. Aitken (2010, p.6068) explains “a compensation strategy may run a particular risk of alienating people if either they are not offered what they consider to be enough or if their principles are not for sale” (Aitken 2010). Similarly, Fast and Mabee found that benefit-sharing is not necessarily well received if it is seen as bribery or “admitting an impact that requires compensation” (Fast and Mabee 2015, p. 29). This indicates an imperative to:

- > combine benefit-sharing with quality community engagement and offering benefits early in the development process with ‘no strings attached’; and,
- > frame benefit-sharing as being a valued part of the community and a responsible neighbour, rather than a form of compensation.

## PRACTICAL FINDINGS

### WHAT IMPACT DO DIFFERENT POLICIES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES, BENEFIT-SHARING MECHANISMS AND INNOVATIVE FINANCING HAVE ON SOCIAL OUTCOMES?

The next phase of inquiry relates to the influence of policy, community engagement practices and benefit-sharing mechanisms on social outcomes from wind development.

The following themes emerged as being relevant across multiple sources and as a way of understanding and mapping current practices within the literature.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF POLICY

##### Australian context

How social outcomes, social acceptance and policies influence one another is a dynamic and fluid space. The literature from within Australia has a clear distinction to international literature. In particular, it refers to the “hostile policy context” (Howard, p.137) within Australia which exacerbates the need for greater community support. This is coupled with “community dissatisfaction with the performance of developers” (Howard, p.144) and in many cases, good practice is not stimulated by regulators. Howard states, “Despite evidence that spreading the economic benefits of wind farm development beyond individual landholders to the wider community can improve community acceptance of projects and the industry more generally, the (NSW Wind Development) Guidelines leave this to the discretion of the proponent” (Howard, p.141). There is a need to better integrate and push best practice community engagement norms in order to help foster consistency and shared norms and expectations between regulators, community and developers. However, it is important to simultaneously ensure an over-regulation of the industry doesn’t occur.

The significance of the public and politicians in being vocal around health and other wind farm concerns was also highlighted. Howard comments to say “The current murky intersection of community opposition and vested political interests suggests that the increasing focus on regulation in wind farm development could be driven by antipathy to renewable energy, rather than the best interests of the community” (Howard, p.145).

Within the Australian context thus far, it can be seen that many of the policies and market mechanisms that have been developed favour large-scale wind farms with big turbines, rather than small to mid-scale turbines and farms. Devine- Wright (2005) describes this as following on from our traditional approach of centralized electricity production and efficiencies which is a ‘hard energy path’ rather than a ‘people- or community-centred approach’.

Hindmarsh (2014) in his 2010 review of federal and state regulation of wind energy development in regards to community engagement, critiqued the current ‘inform’ approach to engagement, calling for a stronger approach from government. In particular, he references community desire for decision making power over wind farm locations and the lack of policy to deliver this. He questions both the Victorian and NSW governments on their rhetoric without delivering adequate processes on a planning level.

Hindmarsh further claims “The absence of good governance in regard to wind farm development systems tends to reflect closed policy styles that display exclusivity, competition, centralization, rigidity, and narrowness, and that are connected to political priorities and market forces”, over a commitment to community interests (2014, p.195).

##### International context

International literature refers to how the locus of decision making makes a big difference, whether it is decided nationally or by states, versus by local authorities. When locals feel able to influence decisions, this translates to better success in regards to social acceptance and wind farm delivery. Wolsink states “The best way to facilitate the development of appropriate wind farms is to build institutional capital (knowledge resources, relational resources and the capacity for mobilisation) through collaborative approaches to planning” (2007, p.1204).

Internationally, it is critiqued that policy hasn’t adequately sought to understand or address issues behind social conflict around wind farms. It can be seen in European countries there is now a trend to develop offshore wind farms, which are seen as being less controversial. Further Ellis et al. in reference to the UK system states:

The planning system deals with the environmental, technical and policy acceptability of a wind farm proposal in a structured and thorough manner, but the social acceptance of a particular scheme is left to a random, uncontrolled and chaotic external process. The lack of any formal process for dealing with social acceptance is not only a huge gap in the proper development of a scheme, it creates a void from which a biased and misrepresentative view of public opinion emerges (2009, p.533).

There is some discussion in the global literature on how to develop policy to encourage local deliberation and the ability for local levels to decide how (rather than whether) to meet goals like renewable energy development and carbon reduction. Visual impact, and the range of complex social factors that influence visual evaluation, is considered to need more consideration “Although visual impact is the most common cause of opposition, it is given a low priority in the planning process” (Barry, John, and Ellis 2011, p.31).

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The impact of renewable energy targets also has an impact on what scale of project is developed. In particular, within the EU, policy decisions and resulting market instruments such as feed-in tariffs or auctions that favour different project scales, necessarily drives centralised or distributed projects dependent on the criteria (Walker and Cass, 2007).

In regards to enabling community wind in the EU, the WWEA (2016) refers to the German example, with a guaranteed feed-in tariff supporting a range of scales of development introduced on the federal level by the Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG). On a state level, there has also been regional initiatives and voluntary community wind standards developed by local governments and guidelines to simplify the process. The strong sector of smaller wind farm and turbine development is now being impacted by current reverse auction mechanisms which place small to mid-scale development at an economic disadvantage.

Within Canada, the power has been taken away from the municipalities in regards to wind farm approvals. This has had complex outcomes, opposition groups can no longer have so much of an impact locally in regards to siting of wind farms, however, there are also issues for the municipalities who have lost some of their autonomy (Baxter, Rakhee, Hirsch 2013).

The research shows that partnerships with local government can be very beneficial. Showing commitment to the project and helping bring partners together can bring credibility to a project both in the community as well as politically and through the media (Soerensen et al. 2003).

## How policy shapes practice

The articles reviewed showed the impact of policy on practice and the relevance of engagement and advocacy with political stakeholders.

From within the Australian context, renewable energy policy uncertainty has further complicated the operating environment and Howard states “in this context, community acceptance alone is insufficient, and the industry requires an active community lobby to drive policy support at the Federal level” (2015, p.145).

Lane and Ewbank (2014) describe the importance of advocacy from independent or high-credibility groups stating: “Advocates can do the work that developers can’t. There is a clear need for advocates who are independent of the proponent, or who are highly credible”). The spectrum of advocates can be community groups or ENGO’s that are mobilised around the wind issue.

From the European perspective, the WISEPower project (2015) describes the role of socio-political acceptance inclusive of policy makers as a core aspect alongside market acceptance and community acceptance.

## SOCIETAL LEVEL

### SOCIO-POLITICAL ACCEPTANCE

Of technologies and policies

By the public

By key stakeholders

By policy-makers

### MARKET ACCEPTANCE

Consumers

Investors

Intra-firm

## PROJECT LEVEL

### COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE

Procedural justice

Distributional justice

-Trust

Van der Horst (2014) refers to the reactive model of wind farm planning policies in the UK that began by designing policies to suit the commercial sector rather than communities. Social outrage has been a response to that and the policy movement since then has been a reaction to that outrage. Further, Haggett (2011) refers to the UK New Planning Act (2008) which emphasises “persuasion”. It includes a process of “early abstract agenda setting” where the developer must articulate the value of the development (e.g. to addressing climate change) and then two later cycles of consultation on draft plans (once before and once during planning application).

Knapen et al. (2015) refer to the mandated 20% share option for community investment in Denmark as an effective measure. A policy since 2008 and still continuing today, it was a response to the ‘repowering’ movement in Denmark whereby large developers were buying out community co-operatives and opposition was growing.

Van der horst discusses the idea of creating technology-specific targets and applying them to resource maps in order to ascertain which parts of the country (UK) should be responsible for what level of development (2014).

Within the German policy environment, wind farms are labelled as privileged developments and local governments are required to assign land for development under the Federal Building Code (Jobert et al. 2007). An example is the County of Steinfurt, which can be seen as an example of best practice local wind development. The Community Wind guidelines of Steinfurt County include the following criteria:

- > Inclusive stakeholder process/consultation: landowners, local residents, farmers, citizens, municipalities.
- > Participation opportunities and payments for indirectly affected landowners, residents and other stakeholders.
- > Guarantee of a financial and conceptual participation of citizens: minimum equity share of 25% in the hands of individual, local residents (not from the group of landowners).
- > Avoidance of majority shares of individual/institutional owners.
- > Low minimum shares of roughly 1,000 Euros.
- > Inclusion of local/regional municipal public utilities as marketing partners.
- > Inclusion of regional banks as financing partners for debt capital and investment shares (WWEA 2016).

The role of benefit-sharing is discussed by Aitken (2010) who proposes a national requirement for community benefits packages. A mandated minimum requirement would give developers clarity, confidence and enable them to discuss the benefit-sharing package early in the development and help to remove community scepticism from the discussion.

A reverse opinion is that not having policy requirements (e.g. UK & Australia) around benefit-sharing packages creates a key advantage which “is the flexibility it enables developers and communities to co-create [benefit-sharing mechanisms] which best meet their needs” (Ernst & Young 2015, p.36).

## THE INFLUENCE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES

### Language versus the reality of practice

The article ‘Olive branches and Idiot’s Guides: Frameworks for community engagement in Australian wind farm development’ (Howard 2015) explores the confusion between the language and actual practice, particularly referencing the importance of how ‘community’ is defined.

The article describes how:

- > community engagement is difficult to design, implement and evaluate;
- > community expectations are important to manage in regards to the development phases and associated benefits;
- > participation is a more appropriate description than engagement within the wind farm development process; and,
- > principles of engagement should be a part of how engagement is done.

Engagement, participation and consultation are the terms generally deployed in the wind engagement context within Australia, however, there is often confusion around the meaning and use in practical terms.

An example of how language, concept and practice may be mismatched is further alluded to by Howard (2015), who comments on the NSW planning policy framework for wind development, in which the Community Consultative Committee (CCC) is the key mechanism for community engagement. Howard reports the CCC as ‘dysfunctional’ and dominated by vested interests.

### Communities and transitional justice

Community engagement activities are highly impacted by the unique context of the communities in which they are delivered. What is possible, in regards to social acceptance and participation is largely linked with how engaged and supportive the community is around a broader range of issues. This is especially pertinent for community-owned renewable energy which can be seen to be dependent on the uneven availability of “an integrated, communitarian solidarity” (Edwards 1998, p.66) and “situated knowledge of a few key actors” (p.74) as with any other form of locally-driven rural development.

Ethics of the transition, how the energy transition relates to the common good, our changing landscape, and what ‘doing our bit’ means, is explored by van der Horst (2014) who comments on how renewable energy will change the landscape is unavoidable, areas that were once only consumers will likely become exporters of energy into the near future.

## APPENDIX C

As more and more distributed energy is delivered in a landscape, there is an increasing need for community acceptance of the energy transition, van der Horst considers the importance of acceptance so that local people desire local renewable energy projects rather than feeling a sense of injustice around their delivery. There is an observation in the literature, that the rejection of wind farm proposals correlates positively with high voter turn-out at the local level (van der Horst and Toke 2010) showing that active citizenship and care for the local environment go hand in hand.

Throughout the literature, there is the recurring idea of genuine collaboration through the engagement process rather than simply information sharing. “The success of wind power depends on how well the wind industry learns to include the public in decisions, both for the opportunities this allows for broader dissemination of information about wind power and for the suggestions the public can contribute to the discussion of their concerns and how to accommodate them” (Pasqualetti 2002, p.169).

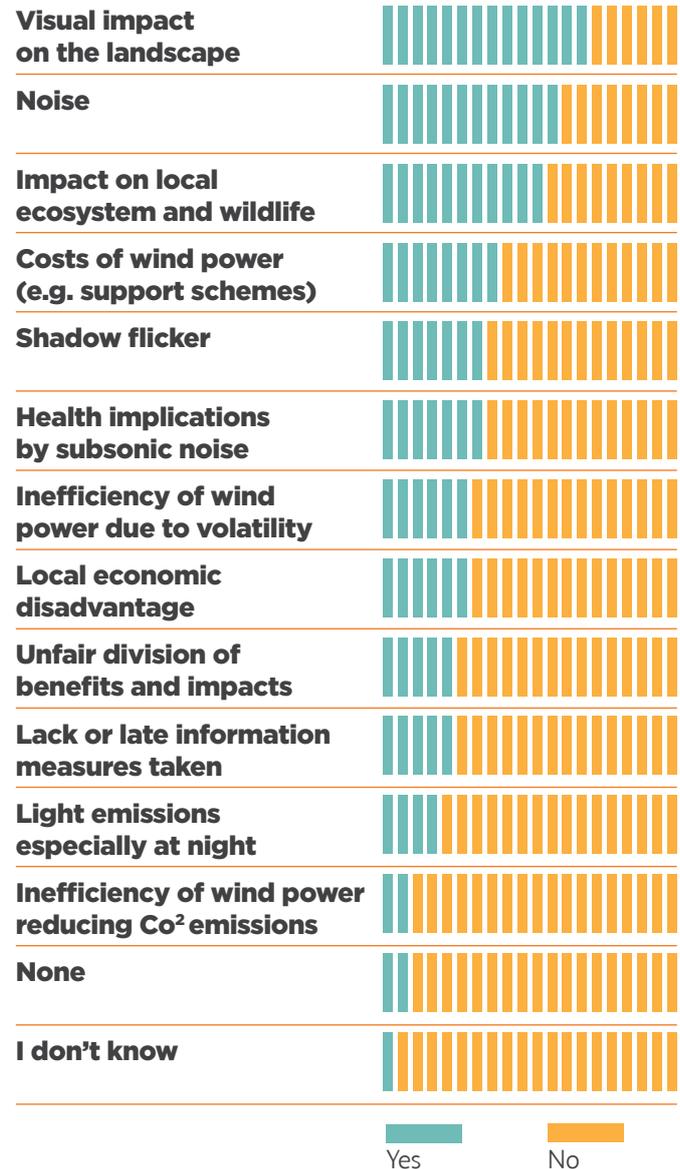
Concepts around collective problem solving and social learning are touched upon, as is transitional justice and how it relates to future suffering of generations exposed to the outcomes of climate change. Van der Horst, in particular, proposes language and actions for a ‘Collective Transitional Climate Justice’ (2014).

Different techniques around collaborative planning, as opposed to rationalist planning, were also explored in the literature (Haggett 2011). Rationalist planning is based on technocratic processes, where planners are assumed to have objective knowledge and, therefore, able to best make a decision for the benefit of the public good. Collaborative planning is “socially situated, not somehow objective or solely the preserve of the scientific or technical domain”, i.e. it values tacit/ lived knowledge and experience (Haggett 2011, p.17).

Haggett (2011) further refers to stages and styles of engagement such as informing, consultation, deliberation and full participation. “Consultation proves the opportunity to discuss with people what their reasons for ‘qualified support’ are”, i.e. under what conditions would they support the development? Deliberative style engagement occurs where “the public are not just permitted to discuss plans, but are more thoroughly involved in developing them” (p.18).

## Opposition and the development process

Key to understanding the influence of community engagement is understanding how opposition influences the development process. Opposition greatly impacts the development process (Wolsink 2007) as well as the operation of wind farms. Siting is seen to be especially sensitive, as it is tied to values, perceptions and emotional connection to landscape (Hindmarsh 2014). The following table outlines common complaints:



Van Der Horst writes of the UK experience: “Media headlines about local responses to the proposed siting of a wind farm or a fracking rig have become remarkably similar in terms of local protests, distinguished mainly by the higher rates which shale gas developers may be offering, whilst wind farm payments are now often labelled a ‘bribe’” (2014). It is important to weigh up the costs and benefits in consideration of the influence of community engagement.

The literature also revealed the impact of opposition in delaying projects (Baur et al. 2015), who reports that in the UK over 20% of projects are delayed and nearly 20% seriously threatened due to appeals (Windbarriers 2010). Social acceptance, therefore, becomes an imperative, however, it is utopian to consider that all individuals in a community can be convinced. Localising a project and its benefits is a helpful approach and councils can also play a role in guiding the community discussions.

**Community engagement standards**

Whilst each project will have its own unique conditions by which to apply a community engagement strategy, how practice is or isn't standardised and evaluated is also referred to in the literature, both from a single project perspective as well as more broadly. For the WISEPower study (2015), only a third of the respondents reported that activities for public participation follow a standard procedure in their organisation. Another 11% quote that such a procedure exists in their organisation, but that it is not regularly used and another 39% of the respondents state that it does not exist at all. This has an impact on perceived professionalism and knowledge management.

The lack of whole of project lifecycle approaches is also of a concern in the literature (WISEPower 2015) – whereby there are likely to be future issues, such as in the repowering or decommissioning phases. This indicates that more knowledge is needed on how to deal with social acceptance when repowering or decommissioning is intended.

Devine-Wright (2008) writes on the social processes that impact the outcomes of wind development and the need for community engagement to increase over the construction phase, as this is where there is a general decline in community acceptance.

**THE INFLUENCE OF BENEFIT SHARING METHODS**

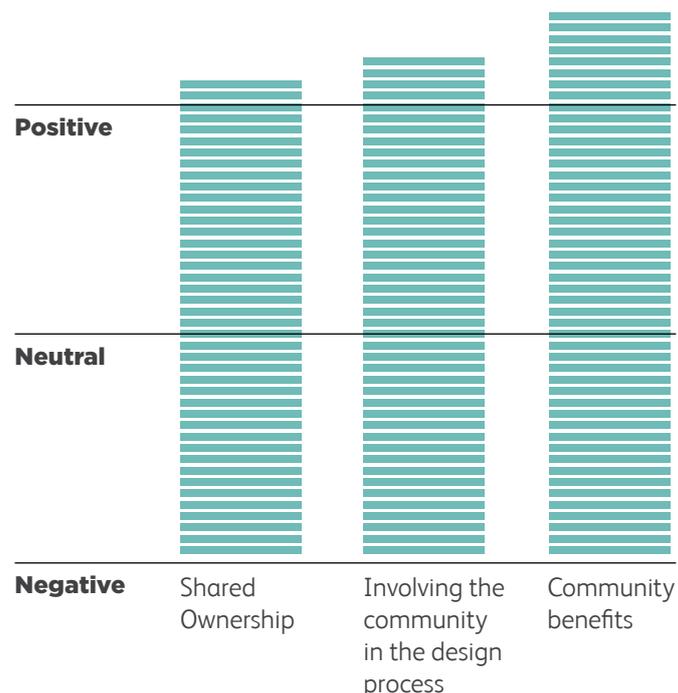
The literature shows that benefit-sharing methods can increase support but only where it is genuinely addressing distributive fairness rather than as a means to quieten opposition (Bell et al. 2013; Haggett 2011).

In some European countries benefit-sharing is “built into the fabric of wind power development” (Aitken 2010), however, in other countries, it can be a contentious topic. This lack of consistency across wind farm developments, even within the same region is problematic (Munday et al. 2011).

Devine-Wright (2014) writes on an empirical study in South Wales in which the following statistics emerged:

- > 88% consider that wind farms should be developed in partnership with local people.
- > Over 80% of respondents want energy from wind farms to be used locally and share the profits with local people.
- > 52% considered that wind farms should only be developed if owned by the local community.

The following table outlines evidence from the European context (WISEPower 2015)



Benefit-sharing can be seen as very positive and much needed within local communities and as a way to increase the long-term viability, or, it can be seen as compensation or buying support. Walker et al. (2014) found evidence that collective outcome favourability is more important than individual outcome favourability.

**Types of benefit-sharing mechanisms**

Ernst and Young (2015) summarise benefit-sharing mechanisms under the following categories:

Payments to communities:

- > voluntary payments which include community enhancement funds,
- > discounted electricity,
- > local employment and procurement,
- > compensation.

Payments to landowners:

- > voluntary payments negotiated between the developer and landowners who either host turbines (landowner lease payments) or are within a set proximity of them (proximity rent model).

Community (co)ownership:

- > community members have a direct financial stake in the project,
- > community members may have a seat at the table in the decision making process of the wind development.

The later – community co-investment, (co) ownership or innovative financing will be discussed in the following section

## APPENDIX C

### Issues in implementation

The literature, whilst supporting the implementation of benefit-sharing mechanisms, also critiqued the issues with implementation. Some common issues cited were: a lack of consistency in how the implementation is approached which can create further issues in community; issues with transparency in the calculations; lack of participation by the community in the benefit-sharing model development; the value is seen as tokenistic; governance of funds is criticised; and a lack of focus on impacted areas of the community (Ernst and Young 2015). Managing community expectations is fundamental to designing and implementing a benefit-sharing mechanism.

Within the UK for example, there is no mandate for community benefits, however, they have become a 'common adjunct' (Munday et al. 2011). The competing reality of benefit-sharing is that it directly impacts the profitability of the wind farm. Often the designated amounts are allocated rather than being tied to the annual wind farm performance.

### THE INFLUENCE OF INNOVATIVE FINANCING

Innovative financing, community (co) ownership or community (co) investment as it is referred to across the literature, refers to the financial participation of individual community members in a wind farm development.

The literature commends the added value of ownership of local wind energy projects in regards to enhancing social outcomes and acceptance (Ernst and Young 2015; WWEA 2016; Devine-Wright 2005; WISEPower 2015; Walter 2014; Munday 2011; Musall et al. 2011; Baur et al. 2015; Jobert 2007; Knäpen et al. 2015).

The WISEPower enquiry, which delved into financing models, found that the "majority of respondents (82%) see partnerships, either with at least one cooperative (49%) or with a public body (33%), as most promising to support social acceptance" (2015).

Devine-Wright (2014) writes on the Danish experience whereby over one-third of the population are either directly engaged or familiar with people who are engaged in wind farm ownership. The study found that the owners were more willing to accept more wind development in their local area than those who weren't owners.

Further, there is an amplification of regional economic benefits that can be channelled through ownership. Such factors ease the wind farm development process and improve the connection with the local community. "The decision to open a project for financial participation has an immediate impact on the development of the project. As the value of the long-term viability and quality of life of the local community become part of the picture, the focus of the project shifts" (WISEPower 2015).

Between 2012 -2014 more than 114 wind farms were financed by innovative forms of funding in Europe. The types were (WISEPower 2015):

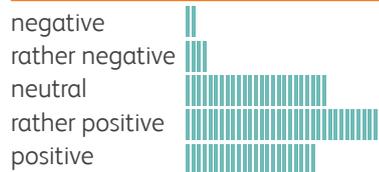
- > Private partnership
- > Public-private partnership
- > Crowdfunding
- > Bonds issued by the developer or cooperative
- > Investment funds (financed by citizens, cooperatives and/or the public sector)

The following table showcases innovative financing as a social acceptance pathway (WISEPower 2015).

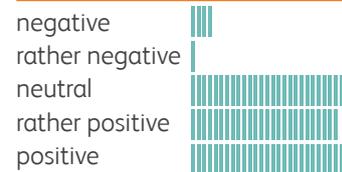
Globally private partnerships and public private partnerships are perceived to have the most positive impact on support for a successful implementation

Crowdfunding and bond issue are perceived to have a rather neutral effect on the implementation of wind farms

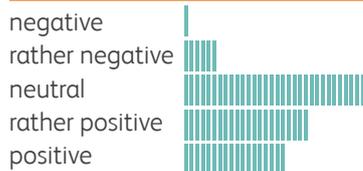
#### Private partnership



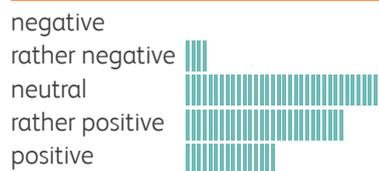
#### Public private partnership



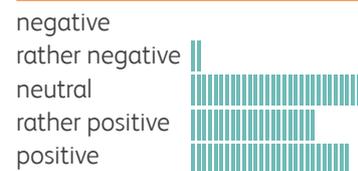
#### Crowdfunding



#### Bond issue



#### Investment fund



### Implementing innovative financing

The literature touches on who is actually doing it and under what conditions. Further, it discusses ‘dimensions of social acceptance’ (WISEPower 2015) in which innovative financing can both be a barrier or a value-add dependent on the context.

For Germany, it is commonplace for a developer to voluntarily offer the possibility of community investment (WWEA 2016), whereas in Denmark it has been mandated. As the WWEA reports, the spectrum of business models currently being deployed are ranging from energy co-operatives, public companies or trusts. In general, they are joint investments with a strong local investor profile.

A community-owned wind farm is one variation, whereby a “group of local stakeholders, whether they are farmers, cooperatives, independent power producers, financial institutions, municipalities, schools, etc., own, immediately or eventually, the majority or all of a project” (WWEA 2016). Community wind projects may be smaller in scale and therefore with a lower return on investment than many large-scale projects (Ernst and Young 2015).

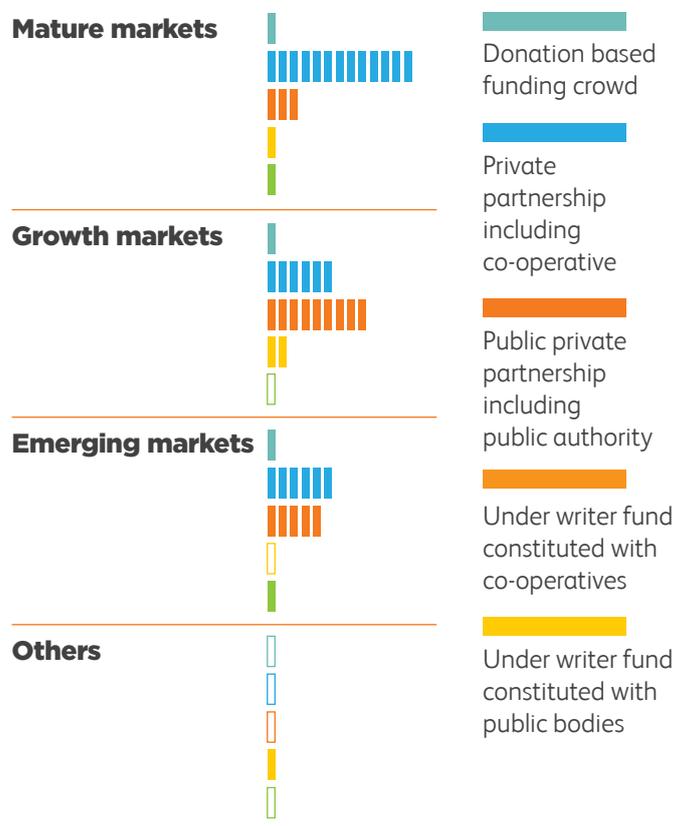
Community investment or community-developer partnerships refers to an investment in large-scale projects, whereby there is a public offering for a small portion of equity in a project. This form of investment is less risky for a community. The literature refers to the Fintry Wind Farm, whereby the community investment vehicle effectively receives 1/15 of the income from the whole wind farm development and is not involved in the operations or management of the wind farm (Ernst and Young 2015).

The table opposite from the WISEPower (2015) report, shows the popularity in Europe in regards to implementation of community investment financial models across the different market segments.

The report also discussed the length of time it takes to develop the models in each country, then once there are examples, the barriers become more around the legislation and regulation adjustments needed to unlock them more broadly (WISEPower 2015).

For emergent wind markets, it is reported as more difficult (and expensive) to implement the models. Representatives of the wind energy industry in Greece and Spain commented: “In Greece, there is hardly any experience with alternative financing and cooperatives just started to come up. The impact of innovative financing modes could be positive, but participation would need to be enforced. If not, project developers would avoid working with partners as this would change their business models” (WISEPower 2015).

The complexity, but also the ability for flexibility is discussed in the literature. For example, through partnerships and use of multiple funding models, a single wind farm could be financed by a community co-operative, the wind farm developer and the local council. Then, the way the share offer is financed could be approached by different methods – such as a combination of crowdfunding and community shareholding for the community investment portion. “Experience shows that local public authorities can bring a lot of credibility to a project. When they invest in a wind farm, municipalities increase trust in the project and mobilize citizen support. Many citizens, before buying a share of a cooperative, want to make sure that their municipality will play an active role in the project” (WISEPower 2015).



### Innovative financing as partnership

Innovative financing is seen to be a more genuine mark of a long-term partnership between the local community and the wind farm development. “The absence of [institutional] financial investors made the wind sector in Denmark unique compared to other countries. At the turn of the century, around 150,000 households were co-owners of a local windmill. The ownership model rather than the tariff scheme, therefore, was an integral part of the success of wind energy in Denmark. It was the key factor behind the high public acceptance that wind power projects enjoyed during that time. It also enabled a much faster deployment, since large numbers of people were involved in the sector that gave a tremendous goodwill” (Maegaard).

## APPENDIX C

The WISEPower (2015) report also surveyed which local stakeholders are expected to be supportive of wind developments incorporating innovative financing including:

1. Citizen associations
2. Local public
3. Media
4. Local political level
5. Regional political level
6. Environmental associations
7. Project developer
8. Regional administration
9. Permitting authority
10. Conventional financial institution

*“The data collected seems to show that the more stakeholders there are in the financing structure, the more positive the impact on social acceptance of the project. Lack of transparency in financing mechanisms will translate to reluctance from citizens towards the project” (WISEPower 2015).*

### The community - developer - financier dynamic

Even within Europe where innovative financing is commonplace, the research still shows that incorporating community investment can make financing a wind farm more difficult and complicated, despite the clear enhancement of social acceptance.

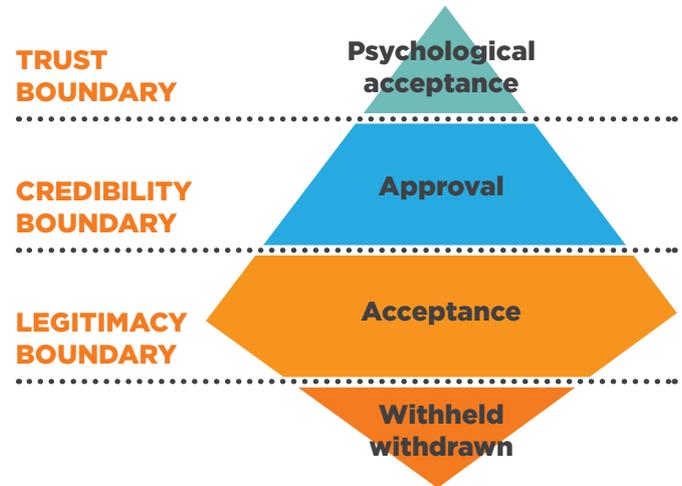
The WISEPower (2015) report states: “although perceptions are slowly changing, we still observe a lot of reluctance from private developers towards cooperatives. These are generally regarded as groups of citizens with little expertise in project development, who delay the development process and bring little added-value to the project”. Burghardt (2014) refers to the role that investment can play in securing wind development in places that may otherwise not allow it. In the case study, a 1,500ha land parcel that was owned by the community was opened up to wind development by all of the communities in view – 6 adjacent villages – through the establishment of co-operatives in each of the villages.

## TYPES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: IDEAS FOR PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA

The literature reveals the following key aspects as being important for enhancing community engagement practice.

### Local identity

Community engagement builds narrative and the literature shares the concept of ‘emplacement’ as a way to conceive of a new narrative for wind development. Emplacement means to “literally to put something into place” (Cresswell 2004), through efforts to link the narrative of the wind farm with local places (including aspects of local landscape, culture, history). This is further reiterated by Fast et al. (2015, p.34) who describe the usefulness of early workshops with local people to create “emplacement vision statements” that position the wind development within an understanding of local history and aspiration. This relates to a community’s ability to have psychological identification with the planned development such as is represented in the table below.



Walter (2014) furthers this discussion on “meaningful participation” (p.1839) with the development of communal energy concepts where citizens can take an active role and which serve as basis for regional planning authorities’ decisions.

### Understanding the context

There is reference in the literature to the importance of both mapping the social impact or risk as well as knowing the community in which the development will take place. Social impacts analysis should be a primary activity in the development process as well as “the social mapping of local community knowledge, perspectives, qualifications, and boundaries about wind farm siting alongside the technical mapping of wind resources.” (Hindmarsh 2010, p.212)

Understanding the context is a whole of place approach. Undertaking a sociological study could then inform the engagement and benefit-sharing, therefore it is important to do a social and community study in the early phase to establish ‘place identification’ (Devine-Wright 2011) alongside site selection that investigates social, cultural, historical landscape connections and identity. Some techniques from the literature are group discussions, questionnaires and free association tasks, which can be used to develop a narrative for the project (Devine-Wright 2011).

### Better engagement

In regards to the role of guidelines or toolkits in enhancing wind engagement, the WISEPower study found that often such documentation is not easily applicable on the ground. Rather they are abstract, when what is needed is contextually adaptable approaches (2015).

Hindmarsh (2010) refers to better engagement as being informed by ‘thick trust’. The qualities of this are “local appropriateness, consensual outcomes and collective benefits regarding new technologies and development” (Walker et al. 2010, p.2657). Community Wind is often heralded in the literature as better practice with examples such as Hepburn Wind (Lane et al. 2012; Hall et al. 2012) in Australia and numerous European examples. Community acceptance of wind farms could be increased by developers intentionally adopting a ‘Social Licence to Operate’ approach, or similar frameworks for transparent and well-structured community engagement (Hall et al. 2012).

The timing of when to engage was also discussed, with the recommendation of early with “active involvement, full information, transparency, inclusiveness, deliberation, participant diversity, partnership in agenda setting and decisional influence” (Hindmarsh 2010, p.549).

The following table depicts a recommended engagement cycle from the literature (Hall et al. 2012).



## APPENDIX C

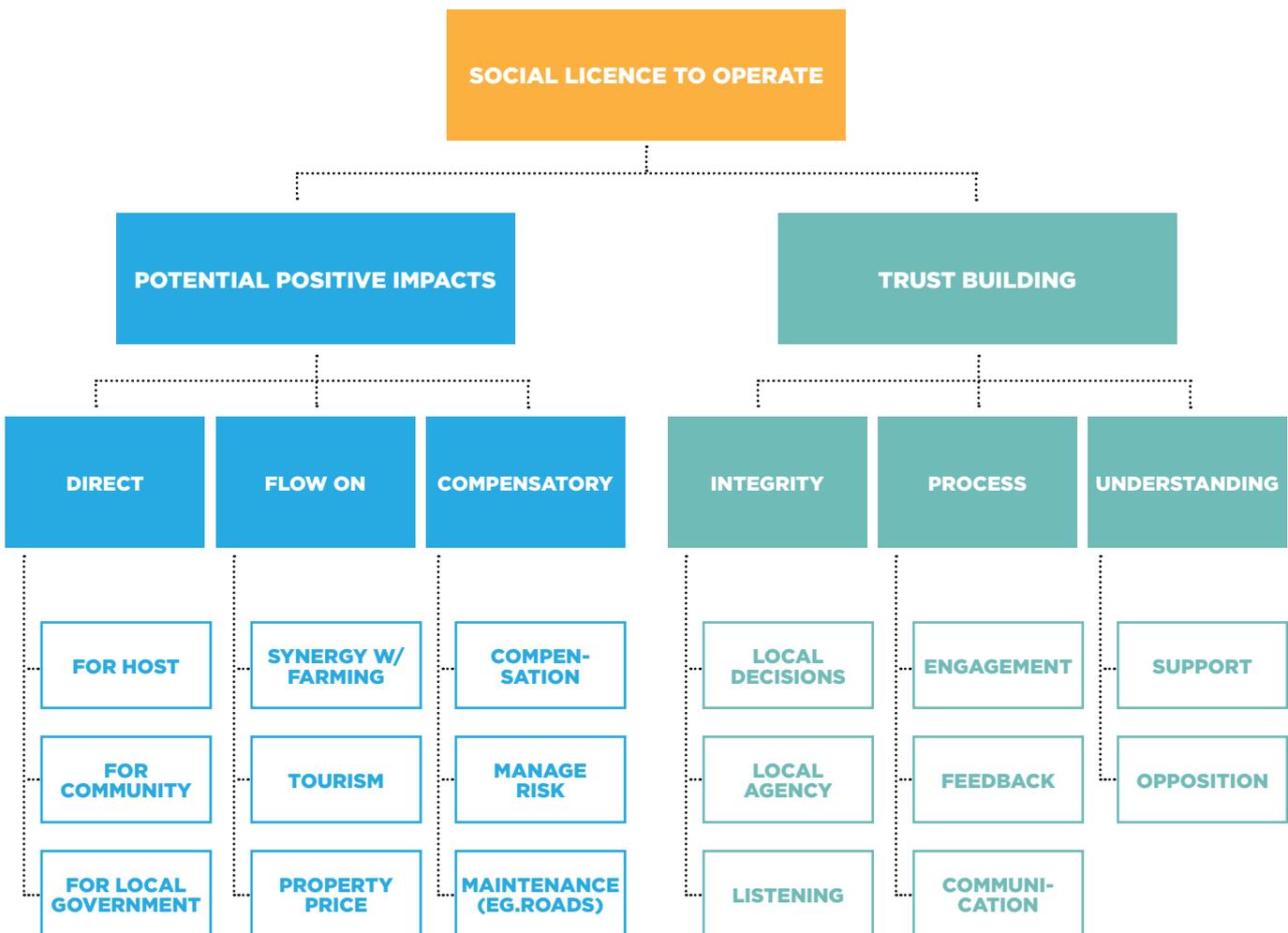
Engagement, timing and quality can take significant resourcing to be done well. For example, community-led processes for identifying suitable sites, undertaking social mapping of community, qualifications and boundaries for wind farm location all require significant inputs of staff time (Hindmarsh 2010).

The participants in the WWEA report (2016) recommended the following strategies:

- > Project transparency with fact sheets, consultations etc.
- > Direct financial contributions.
- > Indirect financial contributions.

Hall et al. (2012) refer to the following features for inclusion in a SLO framework.

## CONTEXT



### Authentic participation

The literature discusses levels of decision making for a project. One level is public participation in regards to benefit-sharing, another level is around decision making for proposed developments in regards to siting and scale of development.

Ellis et al. (2011) recommend a holistic approach to community engagement in viewing it as “collective problem solving” or “social learning” (p.33), by collectively creating solutions and allowing debate and argument to occur. “By allowing a greater range of options for communities to choose how (but not whether) they ‘do their bit’, changes their inventive structure to allow a greater range of low carbon options to be negotiated in each locality” (Ellis et al. 2011, p.39). This concept matches with Germany’s approach of requiring each local government area to decide (through a community process) where their wind energy zones are going to be. This can be the role of local government rather than a wind developer to facilitate (Musall et al. 2011).

Ellis et al. (2009) further explore the need to support councils to be able to better define and engage wind development for their area. Their research identified:

*Successful processes involve social innovation in the sense that they create new social networks, establish devices and social processes for the production of new aesthetic codes (e.g. a photographic observatory), and generate new landscape classifications or representations (e.g. new landscape categories and new graphic codes in planning documents). These processes also encourage direct links with community networks, as they try to go beyond existing institutions or norms in order to explore the local realm and invent new compatibilities. This allows them to establish a new and unexpected potential for wind power deployment. (Ellis et al. 2009, p.546)*

Participatory siting has multiple literature references (Devine-Wright 2011; Wolsink 2007; Soerensen et al. 2003; Ellis et al. 2009) which highlights it as one of the best avenues for community-based development and leveraging fairness. The Swedish offshore wind example involves the local public early in the planning and has a process for incorporating feedback. They hold two public inquiries about the siting and allow for issues to be raised. As Soerensen et al. (2003, p.4) explain:

*The purpose of this strategy is to give the local population a motivation to accept changes by for example giving them a say in the planning of the project. A large wind farm can be developed sequentially which makes adjustments easier if people express misgivings. Such adjustments manifest the flexibility and reversible quality of wind power developments.*

Understanding the local cultural and historical landscape attachments is key for developers (Ellis et al. 2009).

Many authors refer to deliberative processes which involve people in the development process, not just informing them once it has been decided. It can be defined as “a shift in focus from competitive interest-bargaining to collaborative consensus-building” (Haggett 2011). Some examples were: one-on-one conversations, local champions, citizen juries, interactive panels, workshops, and conferences. As well as approaches founded on respect and engagement of a diverse range of community members.

One article breaks down a process for a citizens panel (Ashworth et al. 2011):

- > panel make up that is representative of local population;
- > ran over three days in which the panel was presented with information from experts from different relevant fields;
- > different scenarios explored with the remit of choosing a preferred scenario; and then,
- > outcomes fed back to a forum of experts (community, education, project-specific, key decision-makers) for analysis and to action feedback from the panel

They also identified the following issues with this approach: costly to run (participants are paid a stipend; need to have experts on hand) and that it takes a lot of time.

### Navigating opposition

Normalising opposition rather than neutralizing it was also a theme in regards to allowing debate and deliberation (Ellis et al. 2011). The concept of “neutral umpires” (p.5370) was mentioned as was the allowance of dynamic debates without inflaming them. In this way, engagement can be an iterative process both for community and developers and regulators alike. Further ‘settling’ on an outcome may be a more appropriate goal than resolution or consensus. Criticism can be constructive and in some cases may lead to an enhanced project.

*If the different views are effectively engaged, it may lead to either constructive criticism and amendment of a scheme, or an onus on objectors to identify more locally acceptable means of addressing recognised problems, such as, for example, community ownership of renewable infrastructure, energy conservation initiatives or suggestions for other forms of renewable energy production locally (Ellis et al. 2011).*

The ‘other’ voices of community members were also noted as necessary to be nurtured and connected to media as often only opponents will be active in the media (Hindmarsh 2014).

## APPENDIX C

### Procedural fairness

Having a clearly defined and transparent process for engagement is recommended in the literature. Gross (2007) outlines key approaches:

- > Start engaging early with neighbours and community.
- > Avoid secrecy and only involving landowners in the early stages as this tends to create division.
- > Opportunities for community discussion and deliberation are essential and can help everyone accept the outcome as legitimate, whether or not it is the outcome they wanted.
- > Information provided needs to be: comprehensive, timely, objective, easily available.
- > Issues need to be responded to and plans need to be able to change in response to new information.

Furthering that, Twyford and Baldwin (2006) describe a range of criteria by which to test the quality of engagement.

#### Process criteria:

- the nature and extent of involvement by appropriate stakeholders;
- the existence and strength of rules supporting the effective sharing of views;
- the introduction of participation early in the decision-making process; and,
- commitment of the developer to the process and being responsive to public input.

#### Output criteria tend to include:

(sometimes referred to as 'short-term outcomes')

- the extent of agreement on some or all key issues;
- adequacy of the information stakeholders can understand and accept as accurate; and
- the making of feasible proposals.

#### Outcome criteria, include:

also referred to as second- and third-order effects, as direct and indirect,

- an agreement that serves the interests of all stakeholders;
- an agreement that is flexible enough to be adapted to new conditions;
- the success with which public values are incorporated into decision-making;
- resolution of conflict;
- improved working or personal relationships (e.g, increased trust in public agencies);
- the widespread perception that outcomes are just or serve the public interest.

### Impact (or influence) criteria might include:

- the degree to which the public influenced the final decision;
- the extent to which decision-making is delegated; and
- commitment to implementing the outcome.

In some literature a vast gap between the theory and what would be practical to be implemented on the ground and feasible for a project. For example, Wolsink (2007, p.2702) advocates that developers should pursue multiple sites and layouts in tandem and let the community decide which one they prefer, which would be a costly and impractical idea for most wind development locations.

### TYPES OF BENEFIT-SHARING: IDEAS FOR PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA

In addition to the list from Ernst and Young (2015) outlined earlier, the following items are examples of interesting variations. In regards to local content during the construction phase, it is important to ensure that the local industry is informed of the development ahead of time and consider breaking up large contracts to enable their participation. Industry may need to consider training/scholarships to meet the skills need (Munday et al. 2011).

For community funding, long-term strategic benefit programs are an increasing trend. These may be targeted to in-need or at-risk populations, or have a particular focus such as more local energy production. This can also be undertaken through rates payments to the local council. The town of Kisielice in Poland has an example whereby the local government payments from 87 wind turbines has enabled the council to finance a biogasification and district heating project (WISEPower 2015).

Other variations are around landscaping which at a compliance level can be screening and planting trees, however, a next step can be ecological offsetting or enhancement. Developing tourism or visitor facilities for the renewable energy projects such as viewing platforms and educational programs and tours are increasingly occurring (Munday et al. 2011).

Another emergent issue in the literature is how to mitigate housing market anxiety, most often from neighbours to projects. Some approaches have been for developers to buy the homes and then resell them or to offer a bond in order to guarantee the property value for when the owner wants to sell. If it is sold for less than market value the bond will subsidise the transaction (Fast et al. 2015, p.34). However, it is unclear how such approaches affect community perceptions of fairness.

## Timing

The literature references the benefits of discussing the planned benefit-sharing package early, especially where resistance may be likely (Aitken, 2010). This discussion can help to bring a sense of participation and ownership to the local stakeholders. Having flexibility is beneficial in regards to implementing the benefit-sharing package. For instance, it may be worthwhile starting the community fund payments during construction rather than during operation as this is when the most impact may occur (Aitken 2010).

Consideration of timing of implementing the benefit-sharing program is also important – when does a project need to be making a positive impact? An example is given of a wind farm development in the UK which was due to start making fixed payments of £2000/MW per annum of installed capacity at first generation. However, the community and wind farm decided that, as the construction phase was disruptive, the payments would start earlier (Aitken 2010).

## Community Funds

Community Funds / Community Benefit Funds / Community Grants are commonplace in many communities across many countries. However, as the literature shows, they vary vastly in focus, scale and governance.

In some communities, a community fund may not be an appropriate approach, perhaps due to the low local population or existing (or lack of) local foundations. Each community context is variable and further the desire for participation will be variable. This is particularly pertinent for community funds and local governance – the community will need to decide what level of commitment it has in the delivery of the fund (Ernst and Young 2015). Considering the community and institutional capacity is vital when considering how to govern what can be large sums of money.

Within Europe, there is a trend for the wind farm operators to pay an annual fee into a local development fund (WISEPower 2015). The community then decides how to spend this funding. Examples of how funding has been spent include mitigating the impacts of the development to those closest as well as improving community life by developing playgrounds or walkways etc.

Additional value for great wind conditions is another interesting idea in practice, described as a ‘variable’ or ‘bonus’ payment. This occurs on top of the fixed annual payment (Aitken 2010). Another approach is to develop an energy efficiency revolving fund (with a one-off payment from the developer) of a lesser amount rather than an annual fixed community fund (Aitken 2010).

## Designing the benefit-sharing program

Given there are no fixed amounts or set criteria for the shape of benefit-sharing programs in the literature, care must be given to managing community expectations. There is no one size fits all magic recipe (Ernst and Young 2015). However, a focus on what is equitable for those who are impacted and a collaborative design process is recommended.

Neighbours are perceived to be the most important stakeholder and also most likely to oppose a project. Neighbour payments which can be classified as a contribution, compensation or proximity rent model, generally look at applying a formula for rent per hectare or per title within a certain radius (2-3km) of wind turbines. Getting it right with neighbours is referenced as a vital step by many articles (Baxter 2013; Gross 2007; Aitken 2010). Some other approaches for neighbours, rather than cash payments, have been energy bill contributions (Lane and Ewbank 2014), free insulation, energy audits and subsidised solar hot water (Ernst and Young 2015).

## TYPES OF INNOVATIVE FINANCING: IDEAS FOR PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA

The practicalities of innovative financing vary widely, however, what is a clear outcome is the added economic value for the local community. This has a positive multiplier effect.

A study by Baur et al. (2015) describes the multiplier effect of community investment. In the case study a developer opened up its project for community investment, it was found that almost 60% of all costs and payments for the life of the project (20 years) would remain in the region. This would have an added value of 58 million euro.

Within the European example, there is a range of model variations as the landscape is more mature in regards to wind development and community investment. There are lessons that can be learnt from the European example, however the function and application of certain models in the Australian context will be impacted by the regulatory environment. The WISEPower report (2015) lists the current and most frequent partnerships operating as:

- > Private developer(s) + citizen cooperative
- > Private developer(s) + citizen cooperative + municipality
- > Private developer(s) + operating company (overseeing cooperative & municipality)
- > Private developer(s) + citizen cooperative + TSO or DSO
- > Private developer(s) + citizen cooperative + fund with permanent stake (constituted with private institutions and/or public institutions and/or cooperatives)

## APPENDIX C

An example of innovative financing and the interrelation between financing and local government in Denmark, where it is mandated to be integrated into all wind developments, comes from Knapen et al. (2015) representing the two models in the Western Isles:

- > a citizen's cooperative raises money from commercial banks (Santander, Triodos etc.) and builds between one and three turbines, producing 150K Euro + per annum for the local community; or,
- > a commercial generator builds a large wind farm and offers the community a 20% share to purchase - this purchase is facilitated by the Local Authority who may become joint owners on behalf of the community.

A UK based model example from Energy4All guarantees a minimum of 6.6% return, with an average return of 10.25%. They have over 2,500 investors who co-invest via local cooperatives (Ernst and Young 2015). Volunteer labour can also be reciprocated through sweat equity provisions in a wind farm development (Ernst and Young 2015).

### Levels of involvement

Participation depends on the model that is utilized. In Germany, most community projects are organised as limited partnerships with a limited liability company, energy cooperatives, or a combination of both. Equity, debt and mezzanine financing schemes within these models exist. Frequently, the developer manages the limited liability company and the participation of the community investors is financial. A closed-end fund will not include the community investors in the development or management decisions. They are commonly used when establishing a large wind farm which will then transfer a portion of its portfolio once the project is established (WWEA 2016).

The WISEPower (2015) report found some criticism in the sector about 'fake co-operatives' set up by developers, which do not allow for the democratic participation that is intended by co-operatives. Rather the co-operative lends the capital as subordinated loans.

The literature recommends that where possible it is important that community financing comes early, before other financing so that there is a feeling of genuine contribution and ownership (WISEPower 2015).

### Underwriting

In Europe, there has been a strong trend of underwriting facilities helping to secure community investment in wind farm developments. This can help to ease the pathway when dealing with complex projects with multiple partners who have diverse expectations and may be operating under different timelines. In particular, an underwriter fund complemented by other services such as technical, legal and administrative can enable community participation.

The WISEPower (2015) report states the benefits of this process, both from government and finance institutions, as providing:

- > comfort for community investors when negotiating with private developers;
- > funding and expertise to support communities to build 100% owned community projects;
- > market liquidity from the number of investors and the size of the fund, enabling flexibility of sale and purchase transactions (shares held by citizens could be sold and purchased rapidly);
- > high diversification of investment formulas thanks to the high number of projects financed;
- > competitive financial conditions: stable rate of return or dividends;
- > low risk of bankruptcy;
- > high bankability of projects: quality of projects validated by a committee of experts; and,
- > successful implementation of projects.

### Risk

The participation of community investors in innovative financing is complex and expensive and this is heightened for smaller projects (Ernst and Young 2015) as is the ongoing management of the community investment vehicle.

Defining one single innovative financing mechanism that, at the same time, contributes to enhancing social acceptance of wind energy, improves bankability of projects, ensures successful implementation of wind farms and offers attractive financial conditions is a complex exercise. Indeed, studying alternative financing mechanisms must integrate cultural, economic and institutional aspects. The variety of situations in each country and the differing expectations from one category of stakeholders to another leads us to conclude that the solution will originate from a mix of possibilities, existing and not existing. It is also important to integrate the advantages of each model and to consider which aspects can be reproduced elsewhere (WISEPower 2015).

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This literature review indicates the importance of moving beyond binaries of opposition and support. To engage constructively with public attitudes to wind developments, we must:

- > Recognise and value the nuance and complexity of public relationships with wind development;
- > Value negotiation and discussion as being able to get a better, but previously unidentified, outcomes;
- > Recognise the resources it takes to do constructive community engagement well; and,
- > Consider innovative means to share the benefits of the wind farm with local communities.

Many research and planning processes are founded on “static, deterministic causality of objectors’ motives (e.g. proximity to a proposal) that underplays the depth and subtleties of the process of opinion formation”(Ellis et al. 2009, p.526). In addition, conventional ‘wisdom’, media reporting and developer promotions tend to portray local opposition as “wrong”, thus establishing an adversarial climate from the beginning of the decision-making process (Ellis et al. 2009). Assumptions of binaries of support and opposition that view people as static in their attitudes one way or another are not only false, but actively counterproductive to finding positive social outcomes. In fact, research has found that “local opposition to wind farms is dynamic” (Barry and Ellis 2011, p.31; also Ellis, Barry and Robinson 2007): it changes over time and is able to be influenced by adapting the processes and outcomes of community engagement and benefit-sharing. Ellis et al (2009, p.523) suggests that “to influence the level of public acceptance of wind farms, (we) must engage in a sophisticated and carefully initiated deliberative process that takes cognisance of underlying worldviews and values of those involved”. Such an approach would enable better understanding of the “conditions and qualifications of support or opposition” to particular wind developments (Wolsink 2007a, p.2695), and thus feed into locally appropriate and responsive design processes.

## APPENDIX C

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## **APPENDIX D**

Enhancing Positive Social Outcomes from Wind Development in Australia:  
Evaluating Community Engagement & Benefit-sharing

# **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN: ANALYSIS**

Emily Wood, Taryn Lane, Jarra Hicks and Nina Hall

## APPENDIX D

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Engagement Plans (CEPs) for wind farms encompass a range of information including principles, objectives, stakeholder identification, methods for communications and engagement, and evaluation plans, although not all plans include all these aspects. This analysis examined 32 such CEPs, provided voluntarily by companies in the Australian wind industry. The CEPs were developed by a range of companies that differed in structure and size, to include vertically integrated companies, some with very large projects and some with very small projects. The CEPs cover almost all stages of the lifecycle of wind farms and developments across all states and territories.

The breadth of plans along with their objectives clearly indicate an intention to build positive relationships with communities and other stakeholders for the long-term. Many plans state that they are aiming for best practice community engagement.

State-based legislation and the Australian Capital Territory's (ACT) Wind Auction process has clearly influenced the structure and language prevalent in the CEPs. The Clean Energy Council's 'Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry' are often referenced, as well as the 'ACT Best Practice Community Engagement in Wind Development'. Clear trends towards using International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) 'Spectrum of Public Participation' and Community Consultative Committees (CCCs) are evident in most CEPs. While not all plans demonstrated an understanding or use of sophisticated models such as the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, there is a strong indication of developers seeking to respond to and meet, or exceed community expectations. In addition, there is evidence of new tools being trialled that include co-ownership, co-investment and neighbour benefits, particularly in projects that are located in the eastern states of Australia. This seems to represent, at least in text value, an attempt to improve community engagement practices with language such as collaboration and empowerment common.

There is no clear correlation between the sophistication in the structure of the CEPs and the outcomes in implementation. This could reflect that there are a variation of approaches 'on the ground', and the experience of the practitioner in working directly in and with communities. While there is evidence of a wide variety of opportunities for communities to have increasing decision-making abilities or influence on a project, the question remains as to the extent of how this is implemented and whether it is meeting the needs of communities. There is limited evidence of how the needs of the community have been collated and used to influence the CEPs nor what the community stakeholders' current perspective on the projects are. It is unclear in many plans what is historical, if they have been implemented, and if implemented, if this has been a complete implementation or just aspects of the written CEPs. Further, there is a distinct lack of metrics or process to evaluate and/or audit the delivery of the community engagement. However, in the plans that did provide evaluation or metrics around implementation there is evidence that, while a large suite of tools are being used across a range of projects of all different sizes, community engagement that focuses on face-to-face liaison achieves very good outcomes in terms of a less anxiety among community members, less objections to a project, and stronger community support. In these cases, the size and visibility of a project did not seem to have an impact.

While there are some examples where the use of more community-based approaches such as a CCC or plan for co-ownership has been part of the engagement program implemented in communities who have had strong support for the local project, there are other projects who have used none of these and still built strong support, resulting in few or no objections. Rather, what is common to projects where strong community support has been built, is a focus on face-to-face, in-person communication that is appropriately tailored to the community.

This leads to the conclusion that community engagement that is tailored to a community's needs and expectations is far more effective in building community support and/or reducing anxiety in communities, than using certain tools such as CCCs, co-ownership or neighbour payments.

## INTRODUCTION

The ‘Enhancing Social Outcomes in Wind Development’ research project aims to take a snapshot of current engagement practices in wind engagement in Australia in order to create a comprehensive understanding of what standard practices are occurring, consider what is going well, what is working for communities and also identify where approaches could transition to create better opportunities and partnerships between developers and communities for shared positive outcomes.

Community Engagement Plans (CEPs) provide a guide as to how, why and who will be engaging with community stakeholders in relation to specific wind farm proposals and reflect the intent is to develop strong positive links with the community, recognising the value brought through these relationships.

This analysis of CEPs involved a review of CEPs supplied voluntarily by wind industry companies (referred to here as ‘developers’). As such, it focuses on the plans that developers have for community engagement and benefit-sharing in specific wind farm developments. In some cases, CEPs included evidence of evaluation and/or community response to the plans, enabling an element of analysis between what was planned and what took place, and to what effect.

## METHOD

The 32 CEPs represent a significant range of companies and projects that include large and small developers, including some which are vertically integrated; some with multiple, large projects and some with just one small asset; some implementing community co-investment some with very large turbines; and some in isolated communities and others in populated communities.

While these plans provide a sufficient snapshot of current industry practice, unfortunately not all companies developing wind projects in Australia and are members of the Clean Energy Council provided CEPs for review and analysis, and therefore cannot be considered a comprehensive review.

## RESULTS

### TERMINOLOGY OF PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The language and structure of CEPs indicates that the industry is clearly interested in engaging meaningfully with communities and that they are seeking to learn and improve practice. The Clean Energy Council’s ‘Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry’ and the ‘ACT Best Practice Community Engagement in Wind Development’ (referred to as CEC and ACT Guidelines respectively) have been used by many companies. This includes three CEPs with a table of Guiding Principles that had been adapted from ACT Guidelines. While evident in a large number of CEPs, the use of the guiding principles provided a platform upon which all engagement was built and to create greater transparency with the community about developer actions and intent.

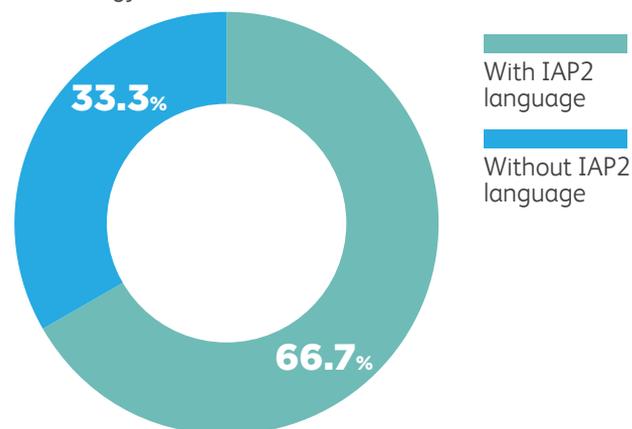
Many CEPs include language that infers an intention to involve stakeholders in decisions is positive. The majority (66.7%) of CEPs have also adopted the language from the IAP2 spectrum of public participation, as shown in Figure 1. IAP2 language is clearly prevalent across the vast majority of CEPs reviewed with words such as ‘inform’, ‘involve’, ‘collaborate’, ‘consult’, and ‘empower’ all appearing. Some of the phrases relating to IAP2 language used in the CEPs include:

*“The engagement activities delivered during Phase 3 of the project have sought to achieve a ‘consult’ level of engagement. However, different activities and scenarios as the project progresses may provide the opportunity for the ‘Involve’ and ‘collaborate’ level of engagement.”*

*“Empower neighbours to think creatively about mitigation strategies”*

It is difficult to gauge if this indicates a change in language within the existing structure of a plan or if it is evidence of a broader shift in thinking and values that empower communities and enable collaboration with a company to create a successful project. If it is a shift in language alone rather than an intention to adapt and evolve engagement practices it will not lead to better engagement outcomes.

**Figure 1:** Community Engagement Plans employing IAP2 terminology



## APPENDIX D

Structural change evident in at least one CEP is the embedding of community engagement within the business unit responsible for a development or the construction of a project, rather than the more common structure in which community engagement is a separate department was described as:

*“To ensure ... effectively meets its engagement objectives, accountability for their action has been delineated across the two teams operating on behalf of Business Development (responsible for new wind farm projects) and Operations (responsible for existing asset management).”*

This may address some of the practical issues that sometimes face community engagement practitioners - such as ensuring adequate budget and that community engagement is part of the process rather than perceived as an add-on and simply a cost. The practical impact of this structure change will presumably ensure that these business units will then carry responsibility for effective engagement, and critically, Key Performance Indicators and sufficient budget for engagement.

Some plans make reference to company values that underpin their engagement activities, along with the role of senior managers in assisting to deliver engagement on the ground. This active involvement of senior managers and the whole of company approach may serve two purposes: gaining whole of company buy-in for the engagement and its outcomes; and demonstrating the company to a community and the value they place on achieving a positive engagement outcome.

### DETAIL CONTAINED WITHIN CEPS

The CEPs vary significantly in both details and approach. At one end of the scale is a plan that contains few specific details. For example, it does not mention the company who owns the asset or the State in which the project is located. The engagement described is focused on informing stakeholders about changes through a few key tools with seemingly no opportunity for decision making at any level, or even any consideration given to concerns raised by stakeholders.

At the other end of the scale is an extremely detailed plan. The CEP includes comprehensive tables that detail the plan's objectives, a list of actions that will deliver the objectives, their corresponding IAP2 approach, the stakeholders that will be targeted and the timeframe in which the action/s will be delivered and the process and timeline for evaluation.

While a CEP alone does not dictate the quality of the resulting engagement or the appropriateness of that engagement for a specific community, a more comprehensive plan does allow for any person within the company who reads it to be able to clearly and easily understand what engagement activities are planned, by whom and when, and for what purpose. Such detail enables effective evaluation of community engagement, as well as increasing the likelihood of a continuous engagement approach in the case of staff turnover.

### CEP IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Some CEPs provided for analysis were written by company representatives, some by consultants. In some cases the CEPs read like a suggestion list of what could or should be undertaken. Evaluation of CEP implementation is often not detailed and there were few examples of how evaluation helped to shape future engagement.

One CEP included a risk analysis of what it would cost if community engagement did not well. The impact of poor engagement was estimated at around \$3.5m and carried the potential to delay the project by at least 36 months. This led the company to take a completely new approach to their engagement process, investing in significant face-to-face engagement with a very clear plan and strategy. The result was very positive, with both the community and company very pleased with the outcome. The project was approved with very little objection and a lot of support. This was described as:

*“The results of applying this Community Engagement Strategy at [x wind farm] are compelling. Support levels for [redacted] are almost unprecedented in the Australian wind industry. The extraordinary level of support for [redacted] is demonstrated through letters of support from community groups, the local council, and project neighbours: one-in-three neighbours have explicitly written in support of the project.”*

*“[x wind farm] has achieved an extraordinary level of support in the local community at [place]. All stakeholders, including host landholders, neighbours, community groups and council have written in support of the project, and it has received exclusively positive press. In addition [redacted] is proud that there is no active anti-wind farm group in the region: there have been no opposition meetings, no distribution of information by opposition groups and no disruptive presence at any meeting that [redacted] has organised.”*

## EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT GUIDANCE IN CEPs

A critical factor in providing effective engagement and bringing about successful outcomes is ensuring that the engagement is appropriate for the needs and expectations of the community. This is enormously difficult to determine through a desktop review and analysis of CEPs, especially given the absence of any evaluation of the CEP implementation.

The CEPs analysed provide evidence of a good understanding of the range of engagement tools available. They also demonstrate quality and intent to engage meaningfully.

The CEPs revealed the following tools are used regularly to engage with project stakeholders and/or inform their approach to engagement:

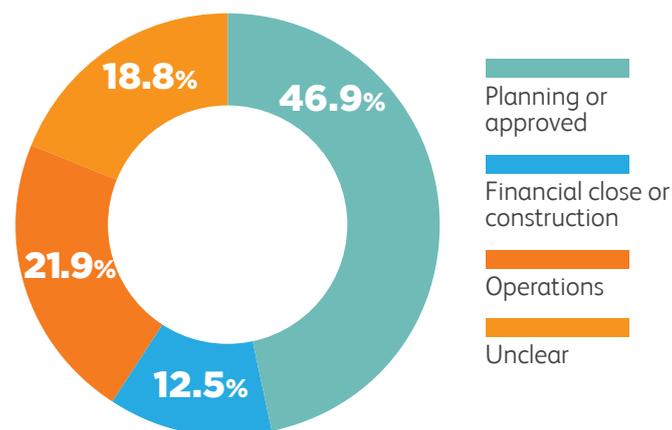
- > Surveys,
- > Stakeholder mapping,
- > information sessions,
- > Newsletters
- > Website
- > Videos (this was mentioned particularly to provide updates during construction),
- > Site visits,
- > Local community representative/liaison,
- > Face-to-face meetings and briefings (sometimes in groups and sometimes one on one),
- > Community Forums,
- > CCCs or similar groups, and
- > Informal engagement such as attending community events.

When considering the variation in plans and community expectations, it is worth noting that the CEPs written more recently (in the last five years) and located in the eastern states, or closer to the eastern states, generally demonstrate a more comprehensive set of engagement tools being deployed. These plans are more likely to include benefit-sharing options such as project co-ownership, neighbour payments, sponsorship and/or community grants. They are also more likely to include opportunities for greater community decision making. These are the CEPs where the language often includes more references to collaborate, involve and sometimes empower. This suggests that community expectations surrounding engagement is different depending on the location and community.

## CEP FOCUS IN THE WIND FARM LIFE CYCLE

CEPs define a strategy across the wind farm lifecycle. As shown in Figure 1, the majority of CEPs analysed either represent projects in a planning stage or those with an approval in place. A relatively large number (18.8%) did not specify which stage of the lifecycle they represented. No plans submitted detailed the decommissioning stage.

**Figure 2:** Focus of specific Community Engagement Plans



Within a wind farm lifecycle, a broad range of practices are taking place including developing specific websites for projects, fact sheets, running drop in information sessions, focus groups, consultative committees (although they sometimes have other names), opening shopfronts locally, and using media (including social media) to engage.

Stakeholder mapping is evident in almost all plans with neighbours to wind farms (usually out to 2 or 3km, but sometimes out to 5 or 10km) commonly mentioned as a critical stakeholder.

Recognising that there will be some impacts on near neighbours is evident in many CEPs with new approaches such as co-ownership/co-investment or neighbour payments being put in place by some companies as a way to increase benefit-sharing and reduce the deemed impact.

At least three CEPs detailed neighbour meetings to discuss specific neighbour issues. In one project, these meetings enabled the project to grow and wind turbine numbers to increase.

While these approaches are new in Australia for commercial wind farms (Hepburn Wind was an early mover in community ownership and neighbourhood benefits, but was not included in this review) and could be considered to be pushing the boundaries, there is little evidence given within the CEPs that they have been determined in response to community expectations and that they always result in a happy community. In one case, the opposite was the result, likely due to the way the program was implemented. However, the CEP lacked detail of implementation and evaluation to really assess the situation.

## APPENDIX D

Where there does seem to be some correlation between an engagement approach and positive and supportive communities, it is where face-to-face communication and time has been invested in by a company.

In CEPs that focus on face-to-face engagement (that included one on one, group meetings, neighbourhood meetings, a local representative and/or regular visits by a company representative) and that clearly define the avenues for individuals to make decisions, there seems to be evidence of less anxiety in communities and less objections/more support. The results are that these projects included very high community support which was shown through letters of support and or no opposition and no negative press. This result has been demonstrated not only in new projects where early engagement has taken place, but also in one example where this was the approach taken more than ten years after a permit had been granted. The result of this engagement approach was 100% satisfaction from the community members determined through an independent evaluation process.

### CEPS PROPOSING COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

Many CEPs reference the use of a Community Consultative Committee (CCC) although they sometimes use different names. This is the result of NSW legislation passed some years ago requiring them to be implemented.

CCCs aim to represent a cross section of the community and are being utilised to share information, for further dissemination into the wider community, and to make decisions about aspects of a project such as a community grant program.

However there is no evidence provided in the CEPs that there is a correlation between the implementation of a CCC and a successful community engagement outcome. In fact, at one project which achieved very positive community engagement outcomes the company specifically chose a variation on a CCC which was more inclusive but also more informal to influence the design. Once such CEP illustrates this:

“Since 2012, members of the [team] have visited the site almost once per month to carry out community engagement activities. At many of these meetings the community has been involved in making key decisions on wind turbine generator (WTG) positions, aviation lighting, traffic routes, allocation of community equity, and the operation of the community grant program... These meetings have focused on consulting directly with every community stakeholder instead of through intermediary groups such as community consultative committees.”

In this instance, all neighbours adjacent to the project as well as host landholders were invited to participate in the community meetings that formed the basis of the community engagement approach and allowed opportunities for community participation in on-going design and decision-making for the project. The outcomes of their community engagement has been applauded at many levels including government. This suggests that perhaps it is not the CCC itself that provides the outcomes, but other aspects of the way in which their engagement has been carried out. It leads to the question of how much should legislation dictate the way in which community engagement is carried out.

## CEP DETAILS ON BENEFIT-SHARING AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUNDS

Community benefit funds or community grant funds that provide some kind of financial support to community groups are commonplace across the industry and there have been a variety of structures implemented - including sponsorship of clubs, community grant funds and scholarships. Almost all CEPs (with a few exceptions where the plans were for an engagement event rather than the development of a wind farm) referenced some kind of community grant funds or sponsorship but most CEPs did not provide the amount. Of the handful of CEPs that did detail the amount of community benefit this figure was mostly in the vicinity of \$1,000/MW. Two plans detailed about 60% of this figure, and one detailed marginally higher than this figure.

There is also a variety of ways that the decision of how to disseminate the money is determined that includes part community decision making, full community decision making, or using a third party such as a respected local charity to determine the funding's dissemination.

A recent advance in this area that seems increasingly common is to make some money available to provide direct financial benefit to neighbours of a project, sometimes as determined by community members. These neighbourhood benefits are usually introduced with a rationale of sharing the benefits of a wind development more evenly amongst those nearest to it, in an attempt to increase the feeling of fairness in terms of how the financial benefits from the development are distributed.

The CEPs lack evaluation data to identify if there is a correlation between a community fund and more support for wind farms in the community, but it does seem to be responding to an expectation in communities of some broad benefits to the area hosting the project.

## LOCAL JOBS AND CONTRACTS IN CEPs

The other practice that is commonly mentioned in the CEPs is utilising the project to create job opportunities locally. Historically this has been an important opportunity for regional communities and one that has been of benefit to both the developer and the community.

Some CEPs are explicit in targeting local contractors through specific actions and creating an online database to collect contractor details. Some developers convene business round-tables to brief local contractors on their future needs and prepare them to be ready and able to make the most of tender opportunities. Some developers also take a step further to purchase Australian made products such as towers.

And in some cases, CEPs detailed ways that the company worked with local businesses to increase the skills and capacity of local staff to perform required services.

While there are different degrees of supporting 'local' business, normal behaviour across the industry seems to be one that aims to support local service business and materials supply. One company pushed the boundaries by announcing their major contractor very early in the planning process in an effort to reduce anxiety in the community and provide an opportunity for local subcontractors to liaise with them.

Technology is being used widely to provide information, but in the plans with the best outcomes in community engagement, it is the face-to-face focus of the engagement, and the lack of reliance on technology which is pushing the boundaries and creating strong relationships that seem to be delivering positive outcomes.

Looking for new ways to reduce the perceived impact on neighbours and creating other ways to provide a direct financial reward to community members (such as co-ownership) are also becoming more widespread.

If the sector is truly intending to improve the communication and respectful relationship between communities and companies, and to truly understand what it means to engage effectively we cannot take a 'one size fits all' approach. Learning from previous outcomes in community engagement means recognising that each community is its own entity with its own challenges and opportunities.

CEPs do not make any mention of the political environment and the impact if any that this has on projects or planned activity. But it can be assumed there is significant impact.

## APPENDIX D

### DISCUSSION

Common language is apparent across multiple plans suggesting a number of trends and intentions. For example, it is common to read that a company is, or is seeking to, conduct engagement 'early', however the definition of what this means is ambiguous. While in one case 'early' was after an initial group of landholder contracts were signed, early in other cases is before signing contracts and others is once there is a potential layout to discuss.

In the first case mentioned above, the 'early' consultation after an initial group of landholders were signed resulted in additions and subtractions from this group of landholders which ended up with a larger project than initially conceived. Other plans do not seem to indicate this amount of flexibility in project design - although this could be perhaps a site specific situation.

There is evidence of consultation through the full lifecycle of a project, barring decommissioning, that indicates an intention that companies are aiming to be open, transparent and present in the community.

The activities or tools of engagement are varied across the country but where engagement has resulted in few or no objections to a proposed developed there seems to have been a focus on personal engagement that is largely face-to-face and either with a small group of community members or one on one with wind farm neighbours, and less reliance on digital communication tools such as email, websites and social media. Building rapport with community members through a small but dedicated team seems to have also been important in these cases. In one case, a locally respected person employed has been extremely effective in ensuring appropriate and effective engagement.

It appears that engagement is being carried out largely by staff who are tasked with this specific role (both men and women) which could suggest that they bring experience and/or have undertaken specific training although this is hard to determine from the details in the CEPs.

CEP objectives strongly focus on being open and transparent, providing community with decision making opportunities, building successful and safe projects and bringing positive outcomes to communities. There is no evidence of short-term thinking.

It is not possible to determine if the change in language or how a CEP has been written changes how engagement is implemented on the ground. However, it does seem that there is broadly a recurring theme whereby companies are seeking to identify areas for the community to make decisions about projects. Given the stringent rules governing wind farm planning and operation, it is positive to see many companies actively looking for opportunities that communities can have more say in projects.

Examples of community involvement and influence include:

- > traffic routes for construction;
- > some influence of turbine numbers and location;
- > how benefit-sharing is developed (the design and type of program, how funds are split and who benefits); and
- > how engagement is conducted, with who and how often.

The extent to which companies have been able to provide communities with decision making opportunities varies. Enabling some level of decision about the wind farm layout and turbine numbers is likely to be determined by a number of factors that include the site specific elements such as presence of significant native species such as grasses, fauna or flora, grid connection and wind resource, but within the provided CEPs most companies have been able to find some opportunities to influence at least one aspect of a project.

While in general there seems to be recognition that every community is different and will have different expectations, there is still room for improvement to ensure that a CEP will be designed for and respond to that specific community.

Where companies are truly pushing the boundaries is in considering the cost of a bad engagement experience. As mentioned, there is one very clear example of this, where the cost of poor engagement has been detailed in ramifications such as the subsequent time it would take to gain an approval, the cost of the resulting energy from the project. This cost benefit analysis led both company to the engagement approach they took which resulted in a fantastic outcome for both the company and community.

Other CEPs hint at a top down approach or embedding community engagement staff in a range of teams within the company to ensure community engagement is no longer seen as a 'nice to have' but rather an extension of the company's values.

## CONCLUSIONS

The 32 CEPs analysed for this project provide a indicative, though not comprehensive, snapshot of wind industry practice across a range of lifecycle stages (except decommissioning). They demonstrate a clear understanding of engagement practice that includes a variety of opportunities for communities to become involved along the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation.

There are a broad range of tools that are being used to engage with communities with more tools being deployed in the eastern states compared to the west.

State based legislation has clearly influenced the structure of CEPs and the tools being deployed, such as Community Consultative Committees, which can be a useful tool and many companies are now using them. However, what is evident from this analysis is that there is no one tool that defines the difference between good and bad engagement outcomes, and the same tool can be used in many different ways depending on how it is implemented and how it fits with the broader community engagement and benefit-sharing approach.

While there is no 'one size fits all' approach, a common theme of face-to-face engagement and communication by an appropriate individual (such as a community leader or company employee). There was also evidence that opportunities for group-based discussion, leading to negotiation and transparency, is beneficial, particularly between neighbours and hosts.

In conclusion, to maximise community engagement and benefit-sharing the following factors should be present in CEPs:

- > A toolkit of approaches that includes positive communication, engagement and benefit-sharing options that are appropriate for that community and responds to the needs and expectations of a community.
- > The appropriate person conducting the community liaising is clearly identified in the plans.
- > A focus on face-to-face communication.
- > An understanding that the 'bar' for community benefits has been lifted, with neighbourhood benefits, community funds and co-investment all becoming benchmark activities rather than exceptions.

