

Responses to questions submitted to Epuron by Respect Stanley Peninsula - No Wind Turbines following a community meeting about the Western Plains Wind Farm proposal, held in Stanley on Sunday 11 July 2021.

Response date: 10 August 2021

Questions lodged after the meeting:

## Question 1

Is the connection asset going to be part of the shared network? (Epuron have stated the underground line will be built, owned and operated by TasNetworks – June 2020 newsletter).

*A: No, the proposed new underground powerline will be a dedicated line to connect the Western Plains Wind Farm to the Port Latta substation. It is part of the proposal and will not be part of a shared network, although ultimately it is likely to be owned and operated by TasNetworks.*

## Question 2

Has Epuron filed a connections application with TasNetworks?

*A: Connection studies in preparation for a connection application are well advanced and once these have been completed a connection application will be filed with TasNetworks.*

## Question 3

Is TasNetworks going to pay for the installation of the approx. 25km underground line? If not, who will pay for the installation?

*A: No. As per response to Q.1 the proposed underground powerline is part of the project and will be paid for by the owner of the project.*

#### Question 4

Has TasNetworks committed to delivering the connection asset underground and upgrading the Port Latta substation?

(It is our understanding that this would be determined by the Regulatory Investment Test and this would ensure that the connection asset would be delivered at cost that is in the long-term benefits of Tasmanian consumers. Approximately 25 km of underground cable, in challenging geology, in areas where seawater flooding may occur, will likely be far more expensive than an overhead connection asset).

*A: No. The proponent has committed to delivering the powerline underground as part of the planning approval. As per responses to Qs. 1 and 3, the proposed underground powerline is part of the project and will be paid for by the owner of the project.*

*We are not aware of any commitment by TasNetworks to upgrade Port Latta substation other than to accommodate the wind farm with the required connection works, however this is a question best directed to TasNetworks.*

*The RIT – Test is to identify investment options that maximise net economic benefits and is not applicable to privately funded assets.*

#### Question 5

Who will buy the power generated by the wind farm?

Is Epuron or the eventual operator of the wind farm planning to sign a PPA with a local company, or will the generated power be sold into the NEM via AEMO?

Will they sell it to Port Latta (local PPA) or will they be trying to get it to the NEM via Basslink (Marinus)?

*A: The electricity generated by the wind farm may bid into the market, may have a PPA, may be contracted to a third party and may involve a mix of some or all of these. At this point in time – when the project is in development and not yet lodged for planning assessment - it is too early to know.*

*Note that Tasmania has been part of the NEM since 2006 and buys and sells electricity as best suits its supply, demand and pricing needs.*

#### Question 6

Why has Epuron decided to underground the connection asset?

*A: The decision to run the powerline underground for its entire 25km length to the Port Latta substation is based on a combination of community consultation, discussion with involved landowners, practicality of going both over and underground and to reduce visual impact.*

### Question 7

Where is Epuron at with its discussions with TasNetworks and AEMO to connect to the shared network?

*A: Epuron is in ongoing discussions with TasNetworks and significant work has been done by both parties towards connection. As per response to Q. 2 connection studies for a connection application are advanced and when completed a connection application will be filed with TasNetworks. TasNetworks will review the connection application in due course, as will AEMO.*

### Question 8

What is the list of all wind farm development applications sold by Epuron and the name of the purchaser?

*A: A complete list of all the renewable energy projects sold by Epuron, including the acquiring company, is available in Epuron's corporate profile brochure which can be downloaded from the company website: [epuron.com.au](http://epuron.com.au).*

*Following is the full list of wind farms that have been sold by Epuron and the original purchaser:*

- *Cullerin Range Wind Farm, NSW - acquired by Origin Energy*
- *Gullen Range Wind Farm, NSW - acquired by Goldwind Australia*
- *White Rock Wind Farm, NSW - acquired by Goldwind Australia*
- *Silverton Wind Farm, NSW - acquired by AGL*
- *Coppabella Wind Farm, NSW - acquired by Goldwind Australia*
- *Rye Park Wind Farm, NSW - acquired by Tilt Renewables*
- *Liverpool Range Wind Farm, NSW - acquired by Tilt Renewables*

### Question 9

After Development Applications have been sold, what development application changes have been approved for the new purchaser (e.g., higher turbines, more turbines, less turbines, change to power lines etc). Please list for each project.

*A: Approved modifications to original development applications are generally available on the project owners' websites.*

*Based on desktop research following is a table outlining the approved modifications to projects sold by Epuron that have involved changes to turbine layout and dimensions or powerlines.*

Project	Details
<a href="#">Silverton Wind Farm</a> north-western NSW	<p><b>DA consent granted in 2009</b>  Project approval for Stage 1: 282 wind turbines and associated infrastructure including 24km powerline. Concept approval for the full project including Stage 2: remaining 316 wind turbines and associated infrastructure including approximately 300km powerline.</p> <p><b>Acquired by AGL in 2012</b></p> <p><b>Modifications granted in 2016:</b> Decrease in number of turbines, increase in dimensions and capacity of turbines and removal of infrastructure relevant to Concept Plan Approval (Stage 2)</p>
<a href="#">White Rock Wind Farm</a> New England Tablelands, NSW	<p><b>DA consent granted in 2012</b>  Project approval for up to 119 turbines to be constructed in two stages. Stage 1: 70 turbines and Stage 2: 48 turbines.</p> <p><b>Acquired by Goldwind Australia in 2014</b></p> <p><b>Modifications granted in 2017:</b> Stage 1 - additional 13km of 132kV transmission line.  <b>Modifications granted in 2019:</b> Stage 2 - decrease in number of turbines, increase in dimension and capacity of turbines.</p>
<a href="#">Coppabella Wind Farm</a> Southern Tablelands, NSW	<p><b>DA consent granted in 2016</b>  For Yass Valley Wind Farm; up to 124 turbines and associated infrastructure in four precincts including Coppabella (79 turbines).</p> <p><b>Acquired by Goldwind Australia in 2017</b></p> <p><b>Modifications granted in 2018:</b> Amended to Coppabella Wind Farm. Decrease in number of turbines (up to 75) and increase in dimension and capacity of turbines.</p>
<a href="#">Rye Park Wind Farm</a> Southern Tablelands, NSW	<p><b>DA consent granted 2017</b>  Up to 92 wind turbines and associated infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Acquired by Tilt Renewables in 2014</b></p> <p><b>Modifications granted in 2021:</b> Decrease in number of turbines (up to 80), increase in dimension and capacity of turbines, changes to underground cabling and transmission lines.</p>

### Question 10

Can Epuron clearly spell out what the two ongoing jobs will be and whether they will be fly in fly out?

*A: Ongoing jobs will be for operation and routine maintenance of the wind farm. There is also likely to be additional specialist work, such as for periodic maintenance, monitoring and ecology. At most wind farms in Australia the O&M people live locally and there is no reason why this would not be the case at this wind farm.*

### Question 11

If UPC get the Robbins Island wind farm up will Epuron explore using their line out instead of Port Latta?

A: No.

### Question 12

Has Epuron donated any funds in the last 5 years to the Liberal party or Labor Party in Tasmania or the Federal Liberal or Labor parties? If so, what quantity in each year?

A: No.

### Question 13

Is the Western Plains Project dependent on an offtake arrangement;

- a. If so, have any negotiations for offtake arrangements commenced; and
- b. If so, what stage has been reached?

A: A PPA or offtake agreement is generally preferred but not essential.

## Questions first lodged during the meeting:

### Question 14

Can you give a written guarantee that there will be no negative impacts for the community? Further detail was requested so Epuron could 'un-pack' that.

Examples of negative impacts provided:

- Can you guarantee that residents will not move away as a result of the wind farm and our community suffer a loss of cohesion as a result?
- Can you guarantee that the wind farm will not cause a noise nuisance for any resident?
- Can you guarantee that the visual change will not cause negative impacts to residents and their enjoyment of their homes?
- Can you guarantee that property prices will not go down?
- Can you guarantee that there will be no negative health impacts?
- Can you guarantee that tourism will not be impacted and that businesses who derive an income directly or indirectly from tourism will not suffer an economic loss?

A: *As it would be in the case of any development or business project, it is not possible for a company to make guarantees in relation to matters it has no control over. Many factors influence peoples' decisions about where they live, property prices, people's health and tourism operations. Perceived project impacts are also largely individual and subjective.*

*In relation to noise, noise is subject to rigorous assessment, strict limits and compliance. The purpose of this is intended to protect the amenity of residents from adverse noise impacts. In relation to the other matters current research and evidence does not show any correlation between wind farms and negative impacts on human health, property prices or tourism operations.*

#### **Question 15**

Can you please confirm the voltage of the underground powerline and the strength of the magnetic field from the wind farm to Port Latta?

(Note: Community members are concerned about potential health impacts of the high voltage line and would like more information about impacts of magnetic fields)

*A: The proposed underground powerline is 33kV.*

*The public exposure limit for Magnetic field is 200 micro-Teslas, the powerline will be significantly lower than this. The depth, cable configuration and cable layout of this 33kV powerline will ensure that electric and magnetic fields are within all required safety levels.*

*Leading health authorities worldwide, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) have found no evidence of any health consequences from exposure to low-level electromagnetic fields, the type emitted from transmission lines. WHO advises:*

*“...current evidence does not confirm the existence of any health consequence from exposure to low level electromagnetic fields.”*

*Further information on EMF is available at:*

- <https://www.nationalgrid.com/sites/default/files/documents/13791-Electric%20and%20Magnetic%20Fields%20-%20The%20facts.pdf>
- <https://www.tasnetworks.com.au/config/getattachment/0198e55a-2812-4041-88a8-e75850ae4fb9/NWTD-EMF-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

#### **Question 16**

Can Epuron guarantee that the proposed underground powerline will not devalue properties that it will be close to?

*A: The underground powerline will not be visible or have any above ground impacts. There is no cause to consider that it will devalue property prices.*

#### **Question 17**

Harmonic frequencies that these windmills work at is close to our human frequencies and may cause health impacts; are there any studies that Epuron can share about the harmonic frequencies?

*A: We are not aware of any studies on this.*

### Question 18

Will Epuron provide the underlying raw noise data to the community so that it can be independently verified, including where the noise measurements were taken from? (A number of community members raised their hand to request this data).

*A: Following lodgement of the Development Proposal and Environment Management Plan (DPEMP) including the formal noise assessment for the application we will discuss noise and any requirement for peer review with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).*

Further questions lodged after the meeting:

### Question 19

a) It is our understanding that the Western Plains wind farm will require a substation similar to this image (below).

*A: Not the case. The proposal does not include a substation.*



b) Can you please confirm if there will be a substation on western plains?

*A: There will not be a substation on the Western Plains Wind Farm site.*

c) If so, can you advise what will make up the substation (eg specifications and footprint)?

*A: N/a – see above.*

d) Where on land will the substation be situated (eg on the map)?

*A: N/a – see above.*

e) Has the noise data been included for this substation in the noise contour diagram presented?

*A: N/a - see above.*

f) If not, can the potential noise be modelled and raw data presented? And can the noise from the substation be included in the noise contour assessment?

*A: N/a - see above.*

g) How many substations will be required along the underground line through Stanley?

*A: None. The existing Port Latta substation is the only substation required for the project.*

h) What is the proposed size and location of these smaller substations?

*A: N/a – see above.*