




Communication and Engagement Plan 5MW Solar Farm, Myocum

Project name	<div data-bbox="533 316 1122 360">Dingo Lane Solar Farm, Myocum</div> <div data-bbox="1653 323 1944 459">  DINGO LANE SOLAR FARM </div>
Goals	<p>This Communication and Engagement Plan covers the feasibility stage of this project (Stage 1-3, up to submission of DA), specifically the engagement of local communities, and is intended to achieve the following goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inform the community and increase awareness of the Dingo Lane Solar Farm (DLSF) project and solar technology; 2. Engage stakeholders in the feasibility testing to reduce risk of impact and maximise potential for long term community support of the project through an ongoing positive relationship; and 3. Foster an inclusive and collaborative relationship between Council and key indigenous stakeholders by facilitating their input and providing relevant opportunities to share their culture via an innovative environmental project.
When	<p>STAGE 1: September – December 2019</p> <p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Working Group established, monthly meetings • Councillor brief • Customer service brief <p>Arakwal Corporation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Manager Community Development, Corporate and Community Services, Social and Cultural Development re Arakwal communication and consultation protocols • Invitation to attend meeting • Meeting at Council Chambers or on-site (traditional indigenous meeting or non-traditional tbc) • Follow up meeting

Myocum locals and neighbouring properties:

- Invitation letter to local Myocum or neighbouring residents to attend a meeting
- Development and production of Fact Sheet – how solar works, vision for Dingo Lane land
- Development and production of FAQs – how the development may impact residents, meeting details and format
- Door-to-door introduction and hand delivery of letter, fact sheet and FAQs
- Onsite meeting
- Follow up meeting

Farmers:

- Consultation with Farm Liaison Officer, Sustainability Environment and Economy, Economic Development
- Potential consultation with Farming Together (Southern Cross University)
- Invitation letter to local farmers to attend meeting
- Meeting at Council Chambers

Wider community, Byron Shire residents and all stakeholders:

- Consultation with stakeholders, select community members and business re knowledge, impacts and benefits of solar technology
- Development of branding (to be used in conjunction with Byron Shire Council and To Zero Together logos)
- Dedicated page on Council website
- Project page on Your Say website using comments from community (vox pops) to represent community opinion
- Draft letter of support template (for issue at follow up meetings)
- Media Release – project update, residents consulted, solutions for consideration, next steps

STAGE 2: December 2019 – March 2020

- Planning stage
- Councillor brief
- Consultation with local ambassadors and key influencers (ie Chambers of Commerce, Northern Rivers Regional Development Australia)
- Video production – advertising the DA and process

STAGE 3: March – June 2020

- Submission of Development Application
- Advertising of DA in local print media
- Video launch
- Media release – project update, DA submission, video launch
- News stories on project page, webpage, community newsletter and Council social media

	<p>STAGE 4: July 2020 - Tbc pending DA approval</p> <p>A new C&E Plan will be required at this stage.</p>
Background	<p>In May 2019, Byron Shire Council committed to planning, designing and undertaking a tender process for a 5-megawatt solar farm on buffer land next to the Resource Recovery Centre at Dingo Lane, Myocum.</p> <p>The DLSF is an opportunity for Council to invest in solar technology to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. generate enough electricity to offset Council's power usage; 2. send additional renewable power back into the grid; and 3. help Council achieve 100% net zero emissions by 2025. <p>The solar farm will be built on approximately 13 hectares of the 73.53 hectare property. The solar panels will occupy 6.3 hectares. Once built, DLSF will be the biggest solar farm this side of the Great Dividing Range in NSW. The 5 mega-watt capacity will generate enough electricity for around 1000 households.</p> <p>The project is a key component identified in the Net Zero Emissions Strategy for Council Operations 2025 and aims to reduce Council's reliance on fossil fuels to power Council's operations, with the aim of saving money for ratepayers in the long run.</p> <p>A budget of \$465,000 has been committed for site feasibility studies, planning, design and procurement process.</p> <p>Engagement with key stakeholders in the early planning stage is considered key to gaining 'social licence' for the construction stage and longer term community support for this project.</p> <p>The site studies will progress during the next six months and this information will enable Council to make an informed decision on whether to proceed later in 2019.</p> <p>A glare assessment process is currently underway to assess the level of impact on neighbouring properties.</p>
Governance	
Objectives	<p>INFORM</p> <p>Increase stakeholder and community awareness and understanding of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DLSF, solar technology and renewable energy; 2. How they can participate in the DLSF planning and coordination efforts; and 3. Potential benefits <p>through face-to-face discussions, printed and online educational material (developed from factual and scientific data) and local media news stories.</p>

CONSULT

Increase stakeholder participation in the DLSF planning and coordination efforts by:

4. Providing early, multiple and meaningful opportunities to provide input on the DLSF planning and coordination efforts;
5. Identifying and addressing potential impacts or barriers early in the process; and
6. Promoting support for the DLSF project

through face-to-face meetings. Byron Shire Council aims to build strong relationships through transparent communication with the community and stakeholders, while respecting the diverse cultures, views and needs of these communities.

INVOLVE

Increase stakeholder potential for long term support of the DLSF by:

7. Understanding, and as much as possible integrating the needs and expectations from multiple stakeholder groups into the DLSF planning efforts;
8. Providing opportunity to have input into alternative or customised solutions for screening and glare reduction to reduce potential impact; and
9. Providing stakeholders an opportunity to have input into the promotion of the DLSF into the wider community, (including the possibility of a rail trail linkage)

through follow-up face-to-face meetings, letter of support template, printed and online educational material and local media news stories.

COLLABORATE

Strengthen ongoing stakeholder relationships with Council by:

10. Providing key indigenous stakeholder, Arakwal Corporation, an opportunity for input into the planning in a culturally appropriate format; and
11. Providing Arakwal an opportunity for a collaborative approach to developing a key message to the wider community by sharing their connection to the Myocum land, as well as their culture and local history.

For example, as a clean energy, solar could be aligned with indigenous values of caring for country. Additionally, "Myocum" is an Aboriginal word meaning "sunrise" or "dawn". An opportunity may exist for the Arakwal people to share their cultural significance of the Myocum area with the wider community and create a more meaningful link to the planned usage.

Sensitivities, and challenges	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be an expectation that this project will reduce electricity costs for residents. • Small number of people do not trust Council to succeed in an investment opportunity. • Neighbouring properties may not be supportive of this project in their vicinity. • Privacy and visual issues (impact on view, aesthetics etc) may be raised by neighbouring properties. • Community members may want to have control over the solutions for screening properties from the aesthetics of the solar farm. • Small number of community experts may be insistent on other solutions, not within the project scope, or be critical of Council's efforts, placing community engagement at risk. • Issues of glare may be raised by neighbouring properties. • Impact on property value may be raised by neighbouring properties. • Community members may feel the solar farm will change the look and feel of the Myocum area and increase population or tourism growth. • Impact of construction (noise, damage to roads etc) may be raised by the local community. • Small number of people in the Shire are publicly and highly critical of Council over the management of its assets. • Possibility of competing solar projects may present risk regarding energy company agreements.
Key messages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council is undergoing a feasibility testing phase to consider a solar farm on buffer land next to the Resource Recovery Centre at Dingo Lane, Myocum. 2. Council will inform the community and consult with key stakeholders before making an informed decision later in 2019. 3. Solar farms traditionally have relatively low physical impact on community and environment. Council is committed to protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of our community and conservation of our natural environment and will work with stakeholders to reduce any risk of impact. 4. Council encourages the community and stakeholders to support their efforts to achieve 100% net zero emissions by 2025. 5. Solar makes sense. The community will see many benefits of a solar farm project. The DLSF Solar will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate clean energy and send additional renewable power back into the grid; • reduce reliance on the grid and increase energy security through a more diverse energy mix; • generate enough electricity to offset Council's power usage; • provide Council facilities and operations with renewable electricity; • deliver an estimated \$2.4 million in savings (after costs) for ratepayers from Council's lower electricity costs over

	<p>the next 25 years;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribute to the reduction of Australia's carbon emissions; • provide employment opportunities during construction including engagement of local contractors and materials and service providers; • assist in creating a sustainable region and present opportunities for stakeholders to co-benefit through a sustainable micro community at Myocum; • offer Council an attractive investment opportunity in an emerging and growth market that will see Council proactively take control of its electricity supply to combat rising electricity costs; and • bring education and training of contractors and local residents in solar technology. <p>* Indigenous stakeholder key message tbc.</p>
Media spokesperson	<p>Andrew Swan – Project Manager Dingo Lane Solar Farm Cameron Clark – Manager Utilities Phil Holloway – Director Infrastructure Services</p>
Work contact	<p>Cameron Clark – 6685 9306 Annie Lewis – 6626 7320 / 0419 609 189</p>
Potential level of impact	<p>Level 2 – 3 Low impact on Byron Shire High impact on local area or group</p>
Our promise IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum	<p>Inform and Consult We will keep informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p> <p>Involve (Stakeholders and DA) We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p> <p>Collaborate (Arakwal) We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</p>

Stakeholders	<p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff • Executive Team • Customer Service • Councillors • Project Working Group • Sustainability and Emissions Reduction Advisory Committee • Manager Community Development, Corporate and Community Services, Social and Cultural Development • Farm Liaison Officer, Sustainability Environment and Economy, Economic Development 	<p>External</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratepayers • Residents • Myocum residents • Farming Together, Southern Cross University • Farmers • Arakwal Corporation • Local media • Local businesses • ZEB (Zero Emissions Byron) • COREM • Community Roundtable
Evaluation	<p>Success will be measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General community and stakeholder understanding of, engagement in and support of the project, measured through meeting attendance and feedback. • Development of positive, constructive relationships with key stakeholders. 	
Internal staff	Staff to be made aware of the project and its timeframes. Customer Service staff to be briefed for any inquiries from the community.	
Submitted to Director or Manager	Phil Holloway / Mark Arnold	
Reported to ET		
Reported to Comms Panel/Council	5 September 2019	

Task	Audience	Details	Who is doing it?	Cost	Date to start/finish
Councillor Brief	Internal	The Communication Plan will be shared with Councillors to ensure they are aware of the plan, and the methods being used to promote the plan to the community and to staff.	Andrew Swan Cameron Clark	Contractor + Staff time	ASAP
Briefing of Communications Panel (Crs Richardson, Coorey, Ndiaye, Martin)	Internal	The Communication Plan will be shared with Council's Communications Panel to ensure they are aware of the plan, and the methods being used to promote the plan to the community and to staff.	Cameron Clark Annie Lewis	Staff time	ASAP
Notify Arakwal	Arakwal	Consult Manager Community Development re correct protocol. Notify Arakwal Corporation of the project and invite to a meeting.	Merran Davis Andrew Swan	Contractor	23-27 September
Development of information for the community including letters, fact sheet and FAQs	External	Personalised invitation letter with meeting details and contacts. Fact sheet and comprehensive FAQs and information for the community to be developed. How solar works, vision for Dingo Lane, how it may impact them, potential benefits. Note: A graphic designer may be required.	Merran Davis Andrew Swan	Contractor + external graphic designer 2x docs (fact sheet and FAQs) Printing Total: Approx \$1000	ASAP 1-2 weeks content development 1 week printing

Consult Farm Liaison Officer; and potentially Farming Together	Internal External	Consultation via phone to facilitate communication between local farming community and Farming Together.	Andrew Swan	Staff time + Contractor	23-27 September
Letter to local residents	External	Letter and fact sheet to be hand delivered to all residents in the Dingo Lane area inviting them to attend an information session and planning meeting. Face-to-face introduction to project team.	Andrew Swan Merran Davis Cameron Clark	Contractor + Staff time	1-7 October 2019
Letter to local farmers	External	Letter and fact sheet to be emailed to farmers in the Dingo Lane area inviting them to attend an information session at Council Chambers.	Andrew Swan Merran Davis	Contractor	1-7 October 2019
Information Sessions and follow up meetings	Arakwal	Tbc	Andrew Swan Cameron Clark Merran Davis	Contractor + Staff time	21-25 October 2019 18-22 November 2019
	Residents	Invite only information sessions held on-site.		Contractor + Staff time + BSC Tent + Hire of: Chairs \$2.50 each Microphone PA system? Approx \$150 Catering (morning tea) Approx \$5 per head	28 October – 1 November 2019 25-29 November 2019

				Total: Dependent on number attending	
	Farmers	Invite only information sessions held at Council Chambers. Booking of meeting rooms required.		Total: \$400 Contractor + Staff time + Tea and coffee/water/ light morning tea \$100 x 2 meetings Total: \$200	4-8 November 2019 2- 6 December 2019
Letter of support template	External	A letter of support template to be made available to community members and stakeholders.	Andrew Swan Merran Davis	Contractor	By mid November 2019
Interview process with community for use in editorial content, website, FAQs	External	Interviews (email, face-to-face with community members, stakeholders and business re their knowledge of solar technology, impacts and benefits of a solar farm project. Short quotes to be used in editorial, web and FAQs content (with signed permission).	Merran Davis	Contractor	ASAP
Editorial content	External	Community and industry newsletters	Merran Davis	Contractor	December 2019

Websites – Council + Your Say	All	Website to provide information, FAQs, contact details, project updates, comments from the community	Merran Davis	Contractor	ASAP
Media releases as required	All	Media Release 1 – project update, residents consulted, solutions for consideration, next steps. Media Release 2 – project update, DA submission, video launch Media Release 3 – tbc	COMMS Merran Davis	Staff time + Contractor	Late November – early December 2019 March 2020
Subscriber E-News	External	Promote media releases and project updates	COMMS Merran Davis	Staff time + Contractor	As required
BSC Facebook posts	External	Promoting media releases and other messages as required.	COMMS	Staff time + \$100 for boosted posts if required	As required
Video production	External	Short 1-2 minute video announcing the vision for Dingo Lane and submission of DA. Management of community expectation.	Merran Davis	Comms (Video + Editing) + Asset Management (Drone footage)	January 2020

Display advertising (print) (DA submission)	External	Advertisements in local print media, Stage 3 phase or later. DA.	Merran Davis	Contractor + Advertising Costs - \$1500 Design - \$200 2 x ¼ page ads	March 2020
Staff update and promotion of project	Internal	Promotion and explanation of project to all staff through all staff messages (when appropriate).	COMMS	Staff time	As required
Customer Service updates	Internal	Customer Service to be briefed.	Merran Davis	Contractor	1 day prior to letter delivery 1-7 October 2019