



13 February 2017

Dear Hepburn Shire Council,

Re: Request for whole of Shire zero-net energy target

Hepburn Wind thanks the Shire for the opportunity to receive Council endorsement for a whole of Shire Zero-net Energy Target by 2025 during the Council planning period.

The Hepburn Shire is home to an active sustainability movement and has an abundance of natural resources and community capacity to participate in delivering a zero-net energy target. There is a strong imperative for us to act now due to the impact of climate change.

Collectively, we would like to see our Shire benefit as much as possible from the upcoming energy transition that is set to be delivered through strong State Government targets.

In partnership with Hepburn Wind, this community request is made by the following Hepburn Shire sustainability groups:

- SHARE
- Trentham Sustainability Group
- Hepburn Relocalisation Network
- Transition Creswick
- *Clunes Sustainability Group (still in formation)*

Importantly, the participating groups perceive that a zero-net energy or 100% renewable target by 2025 is achievable. Reaching zero-net emissions which would take other industries into account (such as transport) will need further analysis and a longer timeline, however the community groups would like the Council to also take action with the community to identify an achievable target for emissions (carbon neutrality) in the near future.



Hepburn Wind

Hepburn Wind was one of the first movers in Australia to make its surrounding area zero-net energy.

Hepburn Wind is a community co-operative which has built Australia's first community-owned wind farm. 2000 people, the majority of whom are local, have pooled almost \$10m to build 'Gale and Gusto' the two 4.1MW turbines, at Leonards Hill, in Central Victoria. The wind farm produces more energy on average than the houses in nearby Daylesford and much of the surrounding area.

At the project's core is the shared desire to take constructive action against climate change and in the process directly benefit the community. The project has demonstrated that, under the right conditions, communities will overwhelmingly support renewable energy and the benefits can be spread widely throughout a community.

State Government and Shire targets

The Hepburn Shire Council has undertaken significant work on its Towards Zero Emissions strategy for Council infrastructure and services. The participants commend the work done on public lighting, biodiesel for fleet cars, bioenergy and the revolving fund. Further, resources have already been developed to guide our community such as the Energy Descent Action Plan in 2011 by Holmgren Design.

The Victorian Government has set a clear target of 25% renewable by 2020 and 40% by 2025 and is pursuing strategies including a reverse auction mechanism to attract greater renewable energy investment to Victoria that would deliver a better outcome higher than just relying on the Federal RET alone. Further the State Government has set a whole of state zero-net emissions target by 2050.

The State Government has a focus and prioritisation of community-owned renewable energy within Victoria. This has been represented through the development of a Guide for Community-owned Renewable Energy for Victorians, a discussion paper into community wind, a Parliamentary Inquiry into Community Energy and streams for community within the New Energy Jobs Fund. Given the coming energy transition we want to secure community benefits and community scale generation for our Shire.



Defining zero-net energy / 100% renewable by 2025

For the Shire to be zero-net energy or 100% renewable it must produce at least as much emissions-free renewable energy as it uses from emissions-producing energy sources. Zero-net energy refers to stationary energy - electricity and heating sources.

Having a distinct target will enable our Shire to build the story of our coming energy transition and ensure we attract renewable energy developments to our local area. We would also like to ensure that the developments that occur deliver as much local benefit as possible and where possible the community has an opportunity to participate in it.

Request for endorsement

The participating groups from across the Shire, with Hepburn Wind and the still forming Clunes Sustainability Group, request Council endorsement for a zero-net energy target by 2025 and for Council to work with the community to achieve this and develop an achievable zero-net emissions target and strategy.



Kind regards,

Taryn Lane
Hepburn Wind