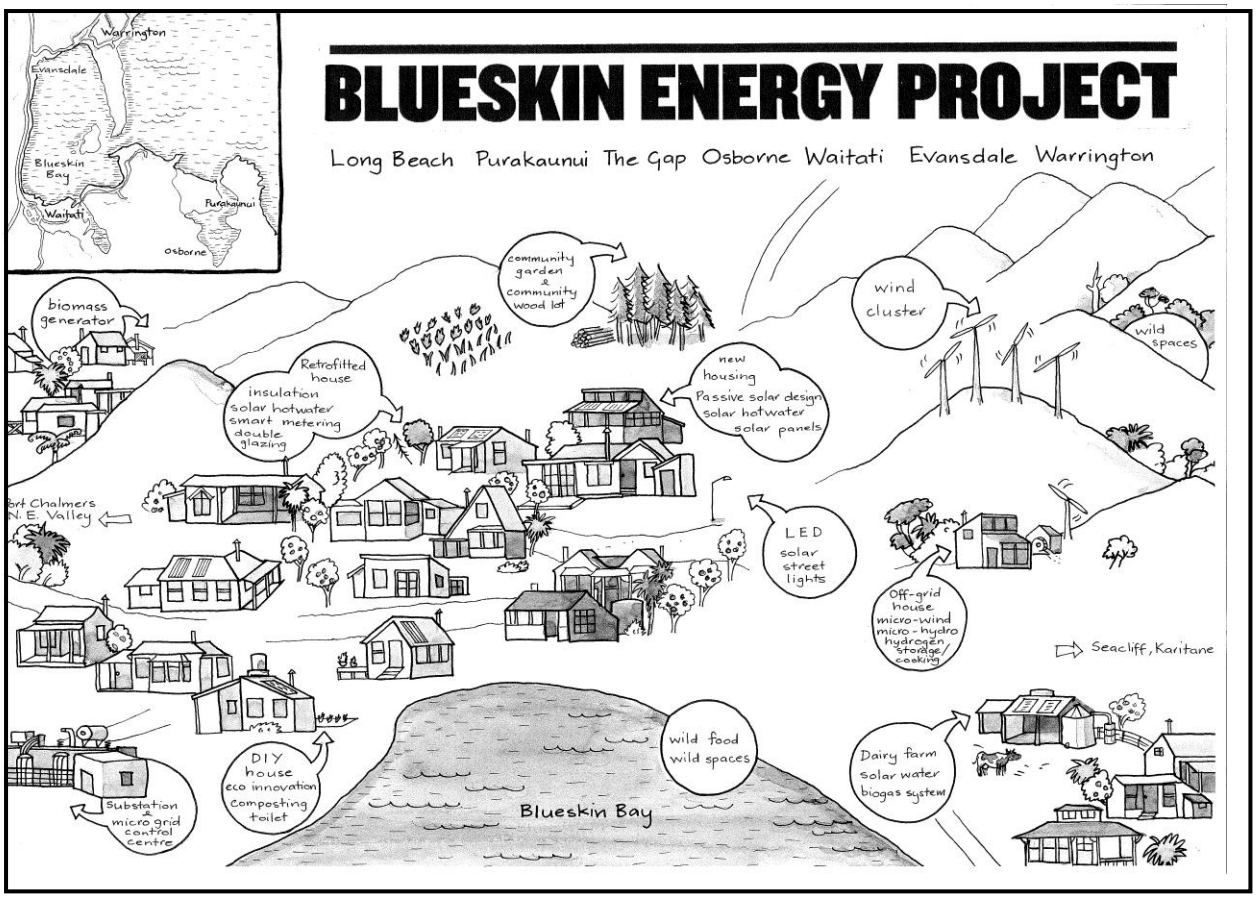
BLUESKIN RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TRUST

Blueskin People Power:

A toolkit for community engagement



A report to the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority

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The primary purpose of this report is to inform the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) of the outcomes of and insights from a community engagement process which was partially funded by an EECA grant. The engagement process related to the BRCT's plans to establish a small wind turbine cluster, which was part of its broader vision of establishing an integrated energy community in the Blueskin area. We thank EECA for its support for trialling a specific set of community engagement processes in 2011-12 (as outlined in Section 3), and hope that the report will be useful to guide other communities as they seek to follow a similar path. Writing the report also provided an opportunity to capture the community's journey over the past five years, over which time the idea of a resilient community has grown from a small seed to a well-established sapling.

This report, and the activities it outlines, would not have been possible without significant support from individuals, organisations and funding bodies. We acknowledge the generous funding from EECA, DIA Lotteries, Hikurangi Foundation and the Otago Community Trust, as well as countless hours of effort from those mentioned below.

The lead authors were Scott Willis, project manager at the Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust, independent planner Ros Day, and Dr Janet Stephenson from the Centre for Sustainability at Otago University. Senior planning consultant Andrew Henderson, at Boulder Planning (Otago) Ltd, provided review of key sections of the report. Intern Seth Gorrie from the Centre for Sustainability is author of a pre-feasibility report which provided valuable insights for this report. Staff at EECA, and particularly Hamish Trolove, gave invaluable support. Community officer Taryn Lane and executive officer Jack Gilding, both of Hepburn Wind (Australia), and Mary Dougherty, a director at Embark (Australia), were generous with information about the Hepburn experience. Past and present BRCT trustees and officers Lynnaire Johnston, PJ Clarke, Antony Deaker, Ross Johnston, Tony Wilson, Gerry Carrington, Chris Skellett and Katie Parker gave essential governance support. Janie Walker, of Janie Walker Communications, along with the Hikurangi Foundation gave helpful communications advice. Greatly appreciated assistance from Julie Cook, Jenna Packer, Antony Deaker and Luke Johnston contributed to the high standard of this publication.

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As always there have been many more contributions and we apologise if we have neglected to mention anyone in person.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unlike other parts of the world, New Zealand does not yet have any established community-initiated and community-owned renewable energy developments. Yet there is significant potential for such developments to contribute to community resilience, as well as helping contribute to New Zealand's target of 90% renewable generation by 2025.

The Blueskin Energy Project (BEP) had its beginnings in 2006 with the Waitati community's vision to build its resilience in response to the upcoming challenges of climate change and energy insecurity. Part of that vision was to become an 'integrated energy community' - that is, to improve household energy efficiency as well as looking at all options to generate energy locally. A small but growing group of community members began to take action to make this a reality.

Investigations into various options for energy supply crystallised around wind generation after wind testing and historical data indicated sufficient wind resource. (This does not rule out other energy supply options and in fact a number of individual homes already have small generation systems.) A subsequent independent feasibility report confirmed the feasibility of a small wind turbine cluster. Since then the technical aspects of the project have continued to be progressed as well as establishing key relationships in the industry and local government. To date the project appears to be realistic and fundable.

This report however is not about the project itself, but about the community engagement processes used over the past six years which have led to the project being strongly embedded in and supported by the community. While the project was initiated in Waitati, it grew to encompass the Blueskin area firstly because the electricity lines supplying settlements all connect to a single substation at Waitati, and secondly because any turbine development is likely to be visible to at least some of the settlements. In addition, the communities share common interests and friendships.

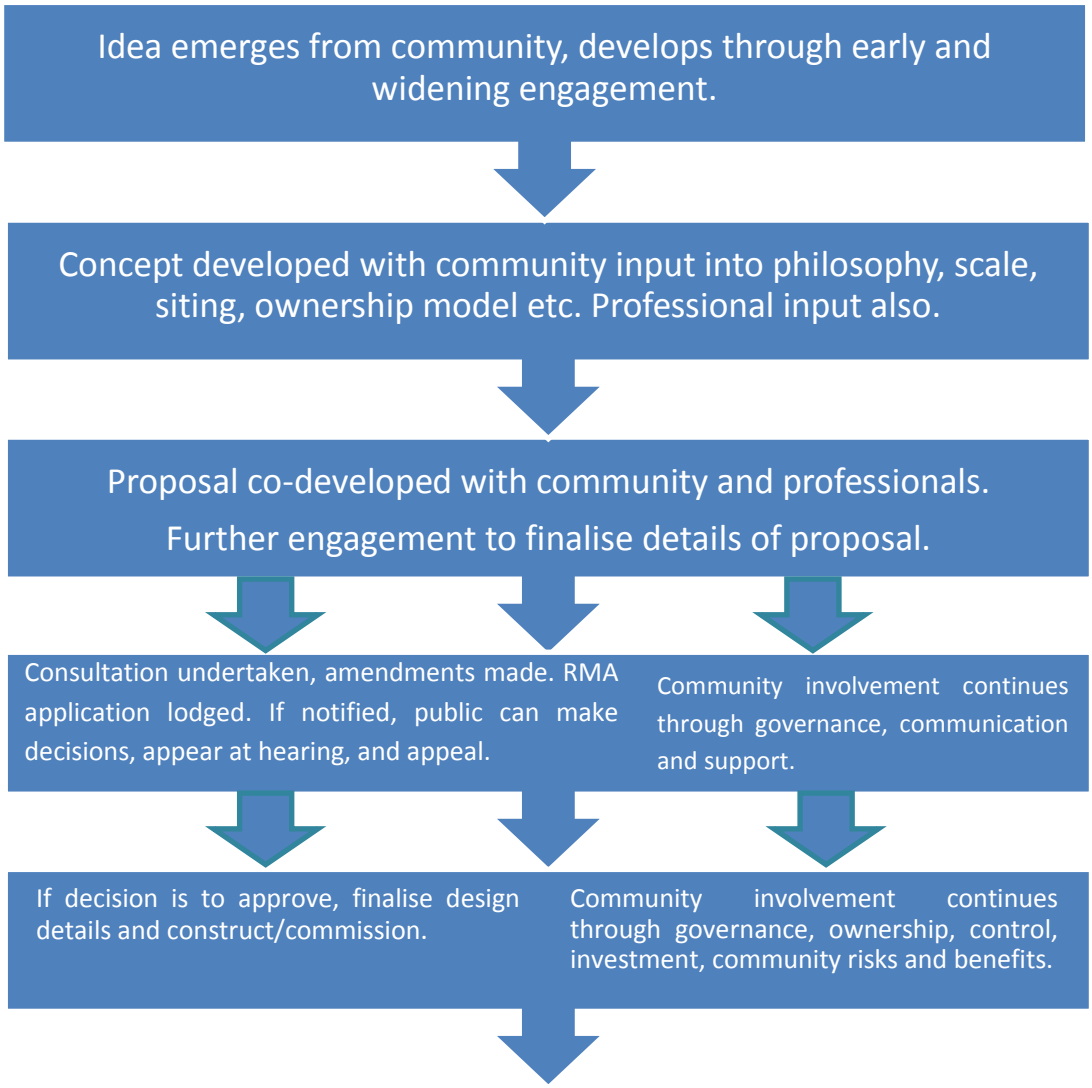
The Blueskin Energy Project is the flagship project of the Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust (BRCT), set up to support this and other community resilience initiatives. The Trust employs a project co-ordinator (and at times more people depending on available funding), and many volunteers also support the project in many ways.

Community engagement has been a key element of the Blueskin Energy Project from the outset. Section 2 of this report details the key achievements year by year, and much of this involved broadening ripples of engagement with the Blueskin community, sharing ideas, building energy literacy, developing interest in the project, gaining feedback and moving forwards at a rate and direction that the community was comfortable with.

A more structured community engagement process was rolled out over 2011-2012, partly funded by EECA. As detailed in section 3, two professional planners, a design company and an Otago University researcher assisted in developing and implementing the engagement with the help of numerous community volunteers. Over 95 people attended the three open days and feedback from these and the online survey showed general support for the project as well as identifying areas that required more work. Feedback was also received on preferred options for organisational structure, and preferences for personal investment.

Another strength of the BRCT is the wide range of relationships that have been forged and maintained. As outlined in section 4, these relationships are with community groups within Blueskin, iwi, industry, research groups, NGOs, councils, government agencies, landowners (for wind testing) and funders.

The engagement undertaken by BRCT, including the intention that it be a community-owned development (albeit that co-investment will be required), is very different to the standard RMA consultation model. As described in section 5, it goes much further than merely consulting with the community by seeking to involve, collaborate and empower. BRCT's approach overall is outlined in the diagram below:



The community engagement toolkit emerging from the Blueskin experience consists of four 'trays' of tools described in section 6. Tray 1, *Initiating Action* includes inspiration and visioning. Tray 2, *Shaping Action* includes integrated thinking, relationships, working with other community initiatives, professionalism and being informed. The third tray, *Being Organised*, includes formal structures, formal agreements, social entrepreneurism and funding. The bottom drawer is *Engagement Tools*, which include informal meetings, open dialogue, public meetings/workshops/hui, building literacy, regular communication, supporting wider community interests, lively creative events, opportunities for community investment, multiple paths for feedback, and listening and responding.

Groups leading community-initiated projects face huge challenges in establishing projects compared to the energy industry, particularly with lack of funding and technical expertise. But their comparative strengths can be in their creativity and nimbleness, the ability to draw on a wide range of skills from within and outside the community, and most importantly the ability to engage the community in co-creating a project that will contribute to a shared community vision. We hope that this toolkit will help many other communities do just that.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BEP – Blueskin Energy Project (2011 –)

BRCT – Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust

BLOC – Blueskin Low Oil Commuting

CSAFE – Centre for Sustainability: Agriculture, Food, Energy and Environment

DCC – Dunedin City Council

DG – Distributed Generation

DIA Lotteries – Department of Internal Affairs Lotteries

EECA – Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority

GTT – Get The Train

IEA – International Energy Agency

NERI – National Energy Research Institute

NZWEA – NZ Wind Energy Association

OERC – Otago Energy Research Centre

ORC – Otago Regional Council

OWL – Our Wind Limited

PHW – Powerhouse Wind Limited

REFIT-NZ – Renewable Energy Feed-in Tariff – New Zealand

REG – Renewable Energy Generation

RMA – Resource Management Act

SMF – Sustainable Management Fund (now merged into the 'Community Environment Fund')

WEGies – Waitati Edible Gardeners

WEP – Waitati Energy Project (2007 – 2011)

WOO – Waitati Open Orchards

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a story of how a community has come together to build its resilience. It tells of the evolution of an idea for an integrated energy community in the Blueskin Bay area about 15km north of Dunedin, in the South Island of New Zealand. 'Blueskin' refers to a number of settlements (and around 1000 homes) in the vicinity of Blueskin Bay, connected by a landscape, an electricity grid, many friendships and a shared vision. The full Blueskin Bay resilience story involves many community-based initiatives, but this report mainly focuses on the emergence of the idea of a community-owned wind cluster. In particular, it sets out to record how the community has been engaged in the germination and growth of this idea, both informally and latterly through a series of events part-funded by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA).[1]

[1] EECA is a Crown Entity, established under The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000, out of a member's Bill put forward by then MP Jeanette Fitzsimons, and aims to help "New Zealanders at home and in business understand and overcome the barriers to being more energy efficient and using more renewable energy" while contributing to a "secure energy system for New Zealand". See: http://www.eeca.govt.nz/.

The primary purpose for this report is to inform EECA of the outcomes of and insights from this community engagement process. We thank EECA for its support, and hope that the report will be useful to guide other communities as they seek to follow a similar path. Writing this report also provided an opportunity to capture the community's journey over the past five years, over which time the idea of a resilient community has grown from a small seed to a well-established sapling.

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A 'Think Big' paradigm has dominated the New Zealand energy sector since the 1970s[2]. In recent years there has been considerable public disquiet about large-scale energy projects, particularly wind.[3] Public opposition does not fit well with the New Zealand government's aspirations for 90% renewable electricity generation by 2025.[4] Yet there is another way. As pointed out by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in his 2006 report "Get Smart, Think Small"[5], there is huge potential for small-scale energy developments, and in particular community-initiated developments, to contribute to New Zealand's energy future and at the same time help build local resilience. The National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation which came into effect in 2011 also recognises that renewable generation, "regardless of scale"[6], is vital to address climate change and security of energy supply. Community-initiated and/or community-owned energy developments, if appropriately designed and located, can win on all fronts – they can assist in increasing renewable energy supplies, be smaller scale, be more acceptable to the public, and build local resilience. Yet unlike other parts of the world, New Zealand does not yet have any established examples of community-initiated renewable energy generation. The Blueskin Energy Project is forging new ground.[7]

It began in 2006 when a small group of residents in the small rural New Zealand settlement of Waitati began planning for a resilient, locally driven energy future, and as part of this vision dreamed of establishing a community wind turbine. The idea caught fire, and people from other settlements in the vicinity of Waitati, centred on Blueskin Bay, began to become involved. The Blueskin Energy Project was born. The difference between this modest dream and most other small dreams is that concerted planning, co-ordination and work, along with a healthy dose of luck, have allowed the dream to take on more and more solid form. In 2010 an independent technical and financial study established the feasibility of a local wind cluster in Blueskin Bay. In September 2011 a formal community engagement project was launched to take the project to the next stage: to see if there was sufficient community support to proceed with more detailed design and resource consent processes. This report focuses on the community engagement since 2006, and particularly since 2011 when the more intensive and structured engagement part-funded by EECA was undertaken.

In recording the Blueskin story we hope that other communities that wish to establish their own energy systems can learn from this journey. Importantly, we want to share the creative, participatory process that have been essential to ensure the concept was shaped by the community and pushed along by a groundswell of community support. If this had not been the case, the Blueskin Energy Project would not have proceeded.

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[2] See: Easton, B. (2001). *The Nationbuilders*. Auckland University Press: Auckland.

[3] Stephenson, J., & Ioannou, M. (2010). *Social acceptance of renewable electricity developments in New Zealand*. Commissioned by Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority. Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago.

[4] Ministry of Economic Development (2011). Developing Our Energy Potential: New Zealand Energy Strategy 2011-2021.

[5] PCE, 2006. Get smart, think small: Local energy systems for New Zealand. Wellington: Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.

[6] New Zealand Government (2011) National Policy Statement of Renewable Electricity Generation, page 3.

[7] We acknowledge that there are several other communities in New Zealand that are concurrently working to establish locally-owned energy developments, and thank these groups for their support and sharing as we work to make our dreams a reality.

The Blueskin Energy Project is today governed by the Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust (BRCT), which has emerged as the umbrella body for a host of community sustainability initiatives. BRCT's vision is "to facilitate a positive, healthy, secure and resilient future for Blueskin Bay and linked communities and promote sustainable resource use". This vision drives a holistic and integrated approach, so that the aim of the Energy Project is to contribute to the overall resilience of the community in social, environmental and economic terms. The precise ways in which this will eventuate (e.g. business model, institutional structure) will depend on the outcomes of further community engagement.

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We use the term 'community engagement' rather than 'community consultation' because from the outset the energy project has been one that has grown out of the community rather than proposed to the community. We also believe that engagement, as a model of involving communities in the driving seat from the outset, has much to offer to other situations and circumstances. Blueskin's community engagement has occurred over the six years since the concept was merely a gleam in the eye of a few community members. The ways in which the community has been involved has differed in many significant ways from most consultation for renewable energy developments, particularly that the project has emerged through various 'co-creation' mechanisms in the form of public meetings, energy group meetings, workshops, and informal and formal feedback, as detailed in the following sections.

We do not claim to provide a complete and rigorously tested toolkit for community engagement from idea to project completion, as this account finishes prior to the lodging of a resource consent application or establishment of an ownership model. BRCT is still on the path to developing New Zealand's first community wind cluster, and the engagement process we describe is merely the first steps of an ongoing community dialogue which we expect will lead to other positive and robust community outcomes. There has never been a blueprint for the engagement process, and the community leaders involved have learned as they have gone along. The most recent engagement, part-funded by EECA, was about as formal as it has got, and even so there has still been a lot of learning on the way. But something seems to have worked, given the level of support and the growing enthusiasm for the idea. We consider that the process and methods used are worth sharing, in that they demonstrate an innovative path through all-too-common conflict zones for renewable energy projects. We hope they will be useful for other community groups that also have a 'gleam in the eye'. And despite obvious differences between the Blueskin Energy Project and industry-initiated renewable energy projects, we believe the energy industry will also gain insights from this account. We also hope local government and central government will gain insights that will assist in policy development to support community-scale renewable energy developments.[8]

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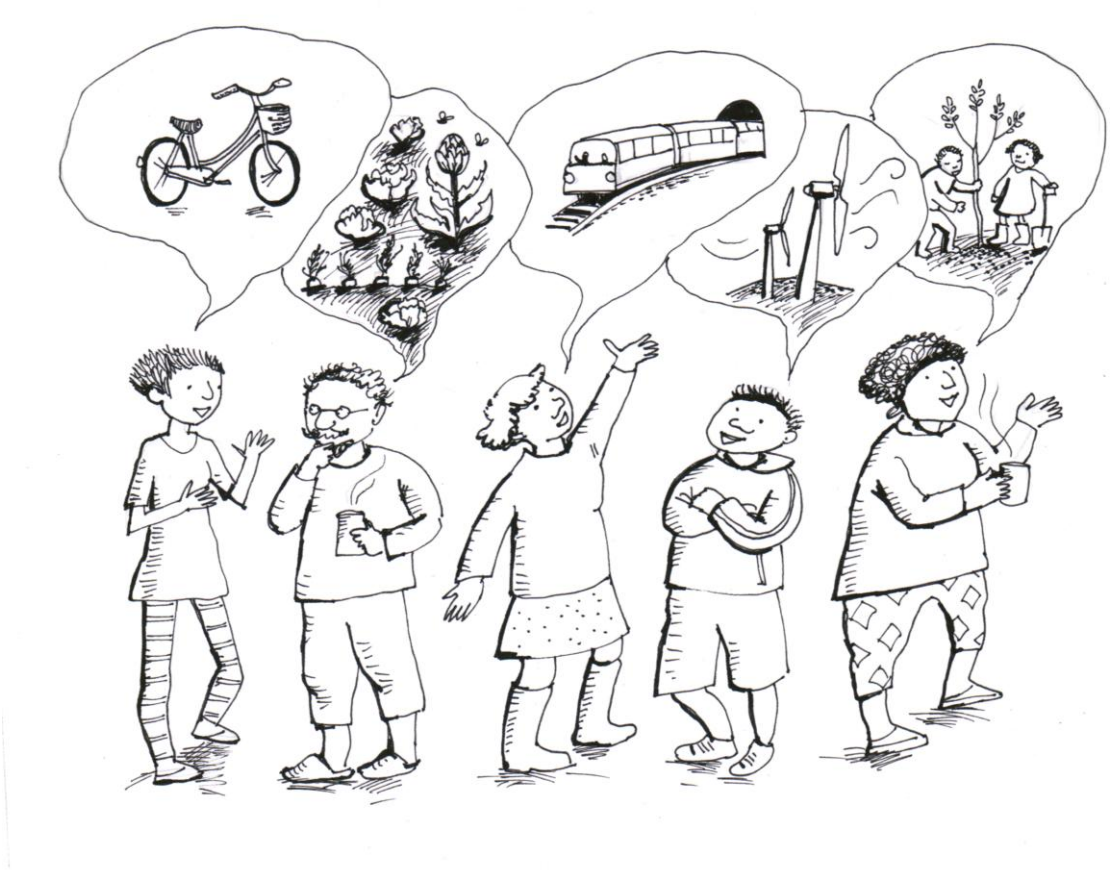
The report is set out as follows: **Section 2** explains how it all began and ***describes the community energy actions*** through years 2006–2011; **Section 3** describes and explains the ***structured engagement process*** part-funded by EECA that began in 2011; **Section 4** details the broad range of ***relationships*** which have been key to the success so far of the project; **Section 5** looks at ***models of community involvement*** in renewable energy developments; **Section 6** is a ***reflection on community engagement*** and the process to date; **Section 7** sets out a proposed ***community engagement toolkit*** that is the result of this experience; and **Section 9** is the ***conclusion***. Appendices are provided at the end of the report.

[8] For example, the recent (in early 2012) Dunedin City Council Draft Spatial Plan recommends a 'Distributed Development' model of community development, requiring mechanisms to allow communities take charge of developing a vision for their neighbourhoods in partnership with Council; and the Porirua City Council 'Village Planning Programme' provides a living example of community engagement.

2. THE BLUESKIN STORY



2. 1 HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The small community of Waitati (501 inhabitants[9]) has long been a hub for environmental action. The alternative lifestyle "Mushroom Magazine"[10], published in Waitati in the 1970s-80s by members of this largely close-knit, free-thinking community, was an exemplar of alternative practices, stamping an indelible identity on the area. A generation later, green thinking still permeates Waitati and to some extent the other settlements around Blueskin Bay: Long Beach, Purakaunui, The Gums, Osborne, Evansdale and Warrington, and those further up the coast like Seacliff and Karitane.

Fast forward to the 25th and 26th April 2006, when high rainfall in East Otago caused severe flooding in Waitati, cutting roads, stranding residents, and washing away stock and property. Waitati's response to this event revealed strong informal networks that worked well, and also revealed that Civil Defence was much less able than expected to take charge of dramatic emergency situations. The idea of community resilience was seeded.

[9] 2006 Census.
[10] Printed on a small press in several locations in Waitati from 1974 – 1985.

In June 2006, the Blueskin Greens organised a forum on wind power with Russell Norman, Bob Lloyd and Richard Reeve in the Waitati hall. Two large wind farms proposed for Central Otago (Project Hayes and Mahinerangi) were topical at the time, and the issue of peak oil was gaining public profile. In September 2006, a community visioning exercise was organised in Waitati, headlined by Green MP Sue Kedgely who gave a presentation on 'Food and Energy'. Community participants were asked to look 10 and 20 years into the future. What would be better? What additional challenges would residents face? The exercise led to community members planning some short, medium and longer term actions[11]. The first tangible outcomes were a film night ("How Cuba Survived Peak Oil") and the establishment of the Waitati Edible Gardens group.[12]

The proximity of Blueskin to Otago University and the many lectures open to the public provide many opportunities for members of the public to hear experts speak on a range of issues. In the energy field, the EMAN 410 seminars[13] were accessible to the public and often highly relevant. When Jeanette Fitzsimons presented a talk in September 2006 in the EMAN 410 seminar series (titled "Energy Challenges in the 21st Century"), she unwittingly set the nascent Waitati energy initiative a challenge: how can people be encouraged to change their energy consumption habits?

In February 2007, Jeanette Fitzsimons visited Waitati as part of her nationwide "Climate Defence" tour promoting action on climate change and renewable energy. One of the themes that had been part of the community visioning workshop – local renewable energy – bubbled to the surface again.

Then, after a serendipitous conversation in mid-2007 between Scott Willis (Waitati resident and assistant lecturer) and Janet Stephenson (planning lecturer), a group of Masters of Planning students were set the task of planning for a resilient, self-sustaining Waitati community by 2017 (i.e. within 10 years). The students spent time speaking with community residents and produced an impressive body of work, covering areas such as transport, food production, water supply social connectedness, flood protection and local energy. One aspirational statement put it thus:

> "*Waitati in 2017 will be equipped with a process of genuine community collaboration to ensure thoughtful and inclusive decision-making. This process will be supported by Local Government authorities over time as the wisdom of 'local initiatives finding solutions to local issues' is recognised. Expected outcomes include a heightened sense of civic responsibility, ownership and trust, not only in the participation process but also in the physical outcomes*".[14]

Students presented their work back to the community in a public forum at the Waitati hall in September 2007, attended by around 50 residents.

Impetus to expand the realm of actions as initially established in the 2006 visioning workshop was growing. But it was not until November 2007 that the community energy project was born. Scott Willis was contacted

[11] Local food production; local energy production; reduction of waste; low carbon transport systems; rainwater harvesting; direct economics; stronger community; local industry; engagement in land-use policy; and a re-investment in the local knowledge and skill base were all main themes that emerged from the workshop (BRCT documents).

[12] The Waitati Edible Gardens group began offering edible garden tours and publishing a column in the local newsletter. By 2007 it had launched a membership drive and begun summer harvest market, and in 2008 began also running workshops, and established a community garden. In 2009 new additional initiatives were launched: Waitati Open Orchards – fruit trees in public spaces for all; and School Edible Gardens – help with local schools encourage seasonal fresh food consumption and grow gardening skills in the young.

[13] http://www.physics.otago.ac.nz/nx/eman/eman-410-seminar-series-downloads.html

[14] Perry, L. (2007). *Waitati 2017: Plan 438 assignment*.

by a representative of the "Be the Change" bus tour[15] group, who suggested the bus might stop in Blueskin bay. This was the catalyst that led to the first Blueskin Energy Expo in November 2007, and the simultaneous establishment of the Waitati Energy Project group.

A core group of six local residents worked together to create the Energy Expo. They brought together a range of participants to create and an all-day event at the Waitati hall, with the "Be the Change" bus parked outside. The hall was filled with displays from clean-tech businesses, community groups, DCC sustainability initiatives, the ORC climate change initiative, recent Otago University research on Waitati, and technology innovations. There were also human-powered energy demonstrations, with a hand wound ice-cream maker, and a bicycle-powered television. A competition was held for the best grass-roots energy innovation and prizes given. No record of numbers was kept, however a rough estimate puts numbers at over 100 visitors and the hall remained crowded throughout the day. Everyone was exhausted when it came time to pack up.

The Energy Expo November 2007.
WEP photos

The Energy Expo, held alongside the 'Be The Change' tour, was a very successful community event in its own right, but also the catalyst for an ongoing community focus on action on energy. A core group of residents involved adopted the name 'Waitati Energy Project' and by late 2007 had set out a vision, mission and objectives. Despite being an informal, flat-structured community group, it had clear parameters to enable and shape action.[16]

2.2 COMMUNITY ENERGY ACTION IN 2008

The following year saw a great deal of activity with the establishment of the Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust, a community member taking on a core co-ordination role, acquisition of some funding, and a number of home energy audits. In order to contain the length of this report, we move to listing key achievements for each year as bullet points, with those in **bold** described in more detail below.[17]

[15] The "Be the Change campaign", a campaign aiming to inspire New Zealanders to take action on climate change, and put pressure on political leaders was promoted via a nationwide biodiesel bus tour co-ordinated by NGO's Forest and Bird, Oxfam and Greenpeace in 2007-2008.
[16] See http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/node/426
[17] Key events in the energy project since 2007 can be found online at:
http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/node/1115 in the Blueskin/Waitati Energy Project blog space.

- Early in 2008, with permission from the national Transition Town website administrator and support from active community volunteers, action was taken to list Waitati as a 'Transition Town'[18]. From that point, the Waitati Energy Project had an online presence.
- **An application to the Sustainable Management Fund to support the Waitati Energy Project.**
- Community volunteer Scott Willis assumed responsibility for group co-ordination, calling meetings, writing articles in the local newsletter and ensuring a collective approach to community energy, supported by other group volunteers.[19]
- 21 free Home Energy Rating Scheme audits for Blueskin households (February – August 2008), provided and administered by EECA. The new HERS audits were trialled in Blueskin Bay and this exercise formed a valuable vehicle to discuss energy issues in the community over several months.
- A Warm Homes Energy Info Evening (12 June) with prize giveaways including a ceiling lot of Novatherm insulation donated by Insulpro including installation donated by Whare Mahana.
- A very well-attended second Energy Expo at Waitati hall on 10 August 2008.
- A public 'Energy Forum' on 22 October (Theme: 'Rising Electricity Prices: Town in Transition'), with speakers Ian Buchan (owner/manager of Power Options, specialising in installing distributed and off-grid generation systems), Inga Smith (Co-Chair of Solar Action), Janet Stephenson (convenor of the Otago Energy Research Centre), and Jeanette Fitzsimons (Greens Co-Leader, and Government Spokesperson on Energy Efficiency and Conservation).
- **Launch of Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust in October 2008.**
- In early 2008 a meeting between WEP members and the steering committee of Otago University's Otago Energy Research Centre (OERC) led to an agreement that WEP could benefit from research, and the OERC members or their students might be able to undertake research if the right combination of topic and skills could be matched. WEP and OERC members came up with a list of potential research topics, and developed a simple protocol that would be followed if research was to be undertaken. This involved asking the WEP if research could be undertaken, and providing feedback to the community on the results of any research.
- At the 'Waitati Research Feedback' Public Meeting (4 December 2008) various university research projects undertaken through 2008 relating to Waitati were presented in a public meeting and discussed.[20] Research presented was:
- "Is Small Beautiful? Attitudes towards community-owned wind energy in Waitati" by Matthew Hoffman;
- "Visualising Home Energy Efficiency" by Jess Hughes's Research Project (an analysis of the Home Energy Rating Scheme experience in Waitati);
- "Children and Transport" research on children's travel patterns (Dunedin-wide study that included Waitati school) , presented by Assoc Professor Claire Freeman;
- **"Waitati Household Energy Use Survey"** undertaken as a baseline survey on home energy practices by Daniel Gnoth and Professor Rob Lawson, funded by the Otago Energy Research Centre.
- Presentation on the Waitati Energy Project to the annual Otago Energy Research Centre symposium in November 2008.

[18] See: http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/waitati

[19] Community volunteers in 2007 – 2008 included Leone Rousselot, Geraldine Tait, Sue Hensley, Carl Scott, John Kaiser, Derek Onley, Hank Rebmann, Derek Onley, Simon Ruddenklau, Lindsay Graham, Elsbeth Moody, Juergen Gnoth, Nathan Clarke and others.

[20] Completed reports on this research are held at the BRCT office and Blueskin library.

2.2.1 Application to Sustainable Management Fund

The first collective action on energy took the shape of an application to the Sustainable Management Fund[21] in 2008, supported by the Otago Energy Research Centre[22], Powerhouse Wind Limited[23] and EECA (who also sponsored 21 Home Energy Rating Scheme audits as part of their support). This application was submitted in the name of the Waitati Energy Project - there was no legal body formed at that stage. The application was ultimately unsuccessful but the exercise helped confirm the energy vision (which later became the Blueskin Energy Project vision when the project was re-named in 2011) (see Box 1).

Box 1: The Blueskin Energy Project vision, mission and objectives

Vision

Our vision is to facilitate a positive, healthy, secure and resilient future for Waitati, Blueskin Bay and linked communities and promote sustainable resource use. We are engaged in an active transition to a lower energy future and seek to lower our carbon footprint while developing an energy resilient system.

Mission

The Blueskin Energy Project will act to strengthen Waitati and Blueskin Bay communities in the immediate, mid and long-term future, with emphasis on energy and community resilience. We acknowledge the challenges posed by climate change, peak oil and the emerging global recession. We will actively collaborate with partners who recognise the need for communities to engage in sustainable initiatives and we will seek to develop partnerships with other groups, actors and communities who share the key theme of our vision.

Objectives

1. To develop and administer projects that provide education, support and resources to maximise locally based sustainable provision of energy, food, and water.
2. To develop and administer projects that provide education, support and resources to minimise energy use, encourage healthy homes and encourage sustainable households.
3. To secure and manage funding to achieve the stated goals of the BEP, and to stimulate local sustainable economic activity.
4. To develop and maintain relationships to achieve the stated goals of the BEP.
5. To ensure community partnership in any enterprises initiated by the BEP and to aim for the most equitable use of resources.
6. To foster linkages between organisations with objectives similar to, or complementary to, the BEP's own Vision and Objectives.
7. The BEP's goals and activity will always remain charitable.

'The community is not a fully fixed zone, but can include the inner Blueskin Bay (Waitati, Evansdale and Warrington) and the full Blueskin Bay (Purakaunui, Seacliff, touching Karitane). The BRCT community is also defined via the extent of the Waitati Sub-Station local electricity grid, the inter-relationships between the local

[21] Sustainable Dunedin City, an incorporated society, played an umbrella role to enable the application.

[22] The OERC is a collaborative research centre based at the University of Otago, with the goal of "bring[ing] together researchers from many disciplines with a common interest in the transformation of New Zealand's current energy system to one which is efficient, secure, sustainable, and carbon neutral". See: http://www.otago.ac.nz/oerc/about_us.html

[23] Powerhouse Wind is an innovative, cutting-edge, clean-tech company developing a revolutionary 2kW single-blade household scale wind turbine. See: http://www.powerhousewind.co.nz/index.htm

sustainability groups, coastal communities to the North of Dunedin previously serviced by rail, and the emerging 'food-shed' expressed as food markets in the Northern Districts. Larger Blueskin Bay corresponds exactly with the southern half of our papatipu rūnaka at Karitane'.

2.2.2 LAUNCH OF THE BLUESKIN RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TRUST

The community members involved in the Waitati Energy Project began as a small group of volunteers living in and around Waitati. The group had no formal membership or contractual arrangements, nor any formal elected positions. The organisational structure evolved over time in response to the complexity of the project and its geographical expansion.

By mid 2008 some of the community volunteers decided to establish a community trust to represent the range of community initiatives (energy, food, transport etc) that had been catalysed by the 2006 visioning workshop, and any new initiatives that might emerge. The trust structure could provide governance as well as a legal body suitable for securing funding. On the 1st of October 2008 the Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust (BRCT) was formally established (see Box 2).

Within two months of its quiet launch, BRCT managed to secure funding (from TaskForce Green and the Otago Community Trust) to employ a staff member for 30 hours a week. Scott Willis moved from being a volunteer co-ordinator for WEP to a near full-time employee of BRCT, with goals of establishing a community office and stimulating initiatives.

The WEP volunteer network, along with the newly established BRCT, sketched out the concept of an integrated energy community, i.e. a community in which energy was considered holistically – not only as electricity but also heat, transport and food production, and both its consumption and production, as well as the role of social networks. The formation of BRCT as a legal body gave greater legitimacy to this vision and was an essential ingredient in establishing collaborative relationships with industry, local government and government agencies, university, NGOs, business and landowners. These new collaborations set BRCT on a dynamic development pathway.

BOX 2: BLUESKIN RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TRUST

The Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust is a charitable community trust. The Trust sees 'community good' projects as essential to building a more resilient community. While the Blueskin Energy Project, with the immediate goal of pursuing a local wind cluster, is the Trust's main activity, the wind cluster project is not an end in itself. It is merely one of the means to achieving that goal and increasing the ability of the community to achieve other community good goals. The Trust also supports other community initiatives, which include Waitati Edible Gardeners (WEGies), Waitati Open Orchards (WOO), Get-The-Train (GTT) and Blueskin Low Oil Commuting (BLOC). The Trust values all community relationships and desires to strengthen community actions and engagement in not only this initiative, but all initiatives that will serve to prepare the community for a low-oil future under the conditions of a changing climate.

Vision

To facilitate a positive, healthy, secure and resilient future for Blueskin Bay and linked communities and promote sustainable resource use.

Mission

The Trust will act to strengthen our communities in the immediate, mid and long-term future, with emphasis on energy, food, water and community resilience.

BRCT's current membership includes its patron (Jeanette Fitzsimons); six trustees (Chris Skellet [co-chair]; Ross Johnston [co-chair]; PJ Clarke [secretary]; Tony Wilson; Gerry Carrington and Katie Parker); one officer (Antony Deaker [treasurer]); one employee (Scott Willis [project manager]); five formalised volunteers (Laurence Hay, Justine Molloy, Jenna Packer, Chris Le Breton and Craig Marshall) and many 'friends'. The Trust, in addition to driving a NZ first community wind initiative, provides broad support for many other community sustainability initiatives.

2.2.3 WAITATI HOUSEHOLD ENERGY USE SURVEY

Otago University researchers undertook the 'Waitati Household Energy Use' survey which assessed current household energy behaviours in Waitati. This included heating methods, insulation, energy practices, values, learning about energy, and basic demographics. 160 homes were surveyed, with a 50% response rate. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the survey revealed strong pro-environmental values amongst many householders. The media was a key information source for information about energy, but local sustainability groups and friends and family were just about as important, while the internet was one of the least valued sources of information on energy. The survey revealed that social 'influencers' were crucial to helping people decide on pathways with good environmental outcomes. Having this baseline data means that future surveys will be able to show how the community has changed its energy technologies, practices and attitudes in the years ahead. A further follow-up survey is being undertaken as this report is being written.

Rhyss Owen, the winner of a WEP ceiling lot of Novatherm insulation, is congratulated by Bruce Ritchie of Whare Mahana at the conclusion of a 2008 Energy Information Evening. Photo by WEP

2.3 COMMUNITY ENERGY ACTION IN 2009

2009 was a very busy year, with activities including a community visioning workshop, a housing insulation project and the start of wind measurement. Key achievements for each year are listed as bullet points, with those in **bold** described in more detail below.

- Community engagement: There were 4 WEP meetings; an evening of research presentations; GEOG380 students took two local school groups on a field trip to two local wind testing stations to explain about renewable generation, the Blueskin project and science (16th October); BRCT held a film premiere of "In Transition"; attendance at the '350 Spring Festival' (24th October); and a second WEP presentation[24] to the OERC annual symposium.
- **A community visioning workshop.**
- Waitati Household Energy Use Survey research feedback event, 23rd of April, 2009.
- Co-ordinated by BRCT, community volunteers examined the potential for small-scale renewable generation options, looking into the viability of micro-hydro and household photovoltaics (pre-feasibility).
- **BRCT co-ordinated an insulation retrofit programme which insulated over 400 predominantly low-income households (Blueskin and the wider area) with an 80% subsidy and follow-up audits.**
- BRCT's subscriber email network climbed to well over 100 subscribers from under 50 in the space of a month, and continued to grow.
- **Climatology students measured wind at automatic weather stations at two high points near Waitati.** With this data plus previously recorded wind resource data from the wider area, it became clear there was potential for wind generation within the Blueskin area.
- BRCT facilitated an agreement between Powerhouse Wind Ltd and a Blueskin household allowing the installation of Powerhouse Wind's "Thinair 102" single-bladed turbine prototype, designed by a Dunedin firm for single households. The successful installation of the Thinair 102 prototype brought the example of wind energy directly into the community. Located at a rural-residential property, it was clearly visible and its hosts received a great deal of community interest.
- Early discussions were held with local government, landowners and green tech industry (with no action resulting at this stage).
- New formalised agreements with a range of partners were established.
- BRCT secured funding for a second staff member (fixed term) through Task Force Green.
- **Hikurangi Foundation became a funding and support partner.**
- BRCT was successful with a bid to EECA's Distributed Generation Fund to carry out a feasibility study on the concept of a wind turbine cluster (reported in 2010).

2.3.1 WEP INSULATION RETRO-FIT PROJECT

In February 2009, Scott was invited to Wellington to make a presentation to EECA on the Waitati Energy Project. The presentation was to provide an overview of Waitati's energy vision and aspirations. For BRCT, this was a valuable opportunity to discuss the challenges with EECA staff from different divisions in one room (rather than a conversation with one section of EECA only). However, the meeting provided an unexpected acceleration of the community's vision when Robert Linterman, manager of the Residential Delivery Group, offered BRCT an opportunity to facilitate a subsidised insulation retrofit pilot programme for Blueskin and the

[24] 2008 was the first time a WEP presentation had been made at the symposium.

wider Dunedin area. EECA wanted to fund a pilot (which later took shape nationally as the "Warm Up New Zealand: Heat Smart programme"[25]) and the BRCT happened to be represented at the right place at the right time.

Community networks sprang into action that very day, and the WEP volunteers began securing numbers of homes for retrofits to ensure BRCT could deliver enough households for the pilot. By the end of June 2009, under the title of the 'Waitati Energy Project Retrofit Programme' (insulation pilot), well over 400 homes had received 80% subsidised insulation retrofits in the Blueskin area, Waikouaiti, Hampden, Port Chalmers and Mosgiel.

In retrospect, in many ways the role the BRCT and the energy group played in this retrofit trial provided a 'step change' for the Trust and WEP volunteers. Contracts and protocols were developed with the local authority and industry, experience was gained in developing appropriate relationships with industry, and some very practical community organising was fine-tuned to great effect. BRCT's subscriber email network climbed to well over 100 subscribers from under 50 in the space of a month, and continued to grow.

BRCT was also able to build up its knowledge of energy issues as identified by the community. These included households who wanted to do things their own way rather than accept a subsidy which required a bureaucratic approach; the lack of appropriately skilled trades-people with green building skills; and the desire for an 'integrated approach' to energy (i.e. addressing both energy use and energy supply) from numerous householders. The power of social networks became visible and was recognised by community organisers.

2.3.2 WIND DATA COLLECTION PILOT

At around the same time (March 2009), an agreement was reached with Nicolas Cullen, Senior Lecturer in Geography at the University of Otago, to set up a project whereby third-year climatology students (GEOG380 paper) would undertake a project involving wind data collection, working in conjunction with the WEP group. This was essentially a pre-feasibility study which would assist in determining the wind resource at a site offered by a land owner above Waitati settlement. BRCT found itself working simultaneously at both the consumption end (insulation retrofits) and the production end (pre-feasibility study of renewable generation) of energy, all the while maintaining an energy awareness within the community.

By July 2009, most of the work associated with the retrofit programme was complete, and the wind pre-feasibility study took on greater importance. Community enthusiasm for the 2006 wind energy dream was still strong. Scott recalls a visit he received at the BRCT office:

> "*John said he'd been wanting to talk for some time. He was unhappy that we'd made so little progress on the wind idea – 'when are we going to get a turbine?' I had hardly caught breath after the intensity of the retrofit rollout, hundreds of homes in only a few months, and said as much. John understood, and appreciated the retrofits, but really wanted to see action on the wind turbine. He wanted progress*".

That visit was a reminder of the general enthusiasm within the community for advancing the local wind energy dream. It was also a reminder that some people assumed that getting their own renewable generation was just a question of putting the shoulder to the wheel – there really was no conception of just how huge a project and paradigm-altering it would be.

[25] See: http://www.eeca.govt.nz/node/3107. The programme was launched in June 2009 in a $300, 000,000 government deal negotiated with the Green Party. The programme ...

By mid 2009, the student data collection was indicating that there was likely to be sufficient wind resource for a wind turbine.

2.3.3 COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOP

In June 2009, the Otago Energy Research Centre offered BRCT an opportunity to run an 'integrated thinking' workshop on the community energy ambition.[26] Expert facilitation was provided by Paul Stephenson, of Synergia[27], supported by Rob Lawson and Janet Stephenson, of OERC. It was held on the 30th of July 2009 as an all-day workshop at the Waitati community hall. Selected community leaders and representatives of community actions and groups (covering as wide a range of interests as possible) were invited by BRCT to participate in this exercise, and almost all attended. The workshop, involving 14 community members, aimed to develop a collective vision for the energy project as well as wider community sustainability objectives, and in doing so provide direction for BRCT. Prior to the event, all invited individuals were provided with a proposed workshop agenda and information to establish a common purpose for the workshop. The 'situation' was presented as:

> "*The Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust is working to create ecologically sustainable and economically viable energy infrastructure for the Waitati Community, via the Waitati Energy Project. There are important and far-reaching decisions to be made in the near future and the Trust wishes to ensure there is community support for the next steps. The Trust is also engaged in areas other than Energy (Food and Transport) and wishes to build capacity for future action in these areas*".

The first part of the day developed consensus on an integrated community vision, summarised in several diagrams (Figures 2 & 3, page 25). Detailed discussions on the energy project helped identify key issues and questions that had to be addressed. The outcomes were hugely helpful in informing the work pathway ahead if community wind power was to be achieved. One participant supplied some reflections after the workshop:

> *"On reflection, it seems to me that we missed a step between the "big picture" stuff and the energy project stuff. I think it would have been interesting to "map" the energy project against the "future vision" to see how many of the broad aims/long-term goals the energy project addresses. It may well be that this work has already been done, of course... Regarding the energy project itself, I am probably on the side of the "hesitators". It is a bold initiative and high-risk - and these are things that tend to make me worry. If it happens, though, it would be an outstanding achievement and a major symbolic victory for "relocalization"/"transition".*[28]

Crucially, a consensus emerged at the workshop that the wind project was far bigger than Waitati. It implicated all of the communities that were linked by being supplied from the electricity substation at Waitati, which included Warrington, Evansdale, Purakanui, Osborne and Long Beach. All these communities lay around or near to Blueskin Bay and were also potentially able to see the proposed turbine/s, depending on location. Blueskin thus started to be used as the name for the geographical area to be served by the wind cluster[29].

[26] OERC sponsored the Synergia workshop.
[27] "*Synergia* is a consulting, research and evaluation group specialising in the health, social services and public sector domains" (see http://www.synergia.co.nz/).
[28] Personal communication, 31/07/2009 [email].
[29] Nevertheless, it still took until September 2011 for the 'Waitati Energy Project' group to change its name to the 'Blueskin Energy Project' group.

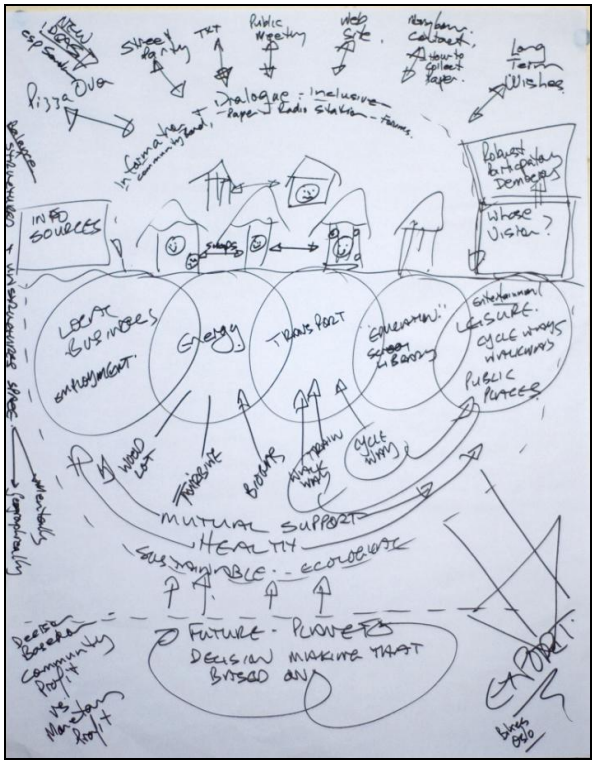


Figure 2
'Rich Picture 1' created at the Synergia workshop.
BRCT photos

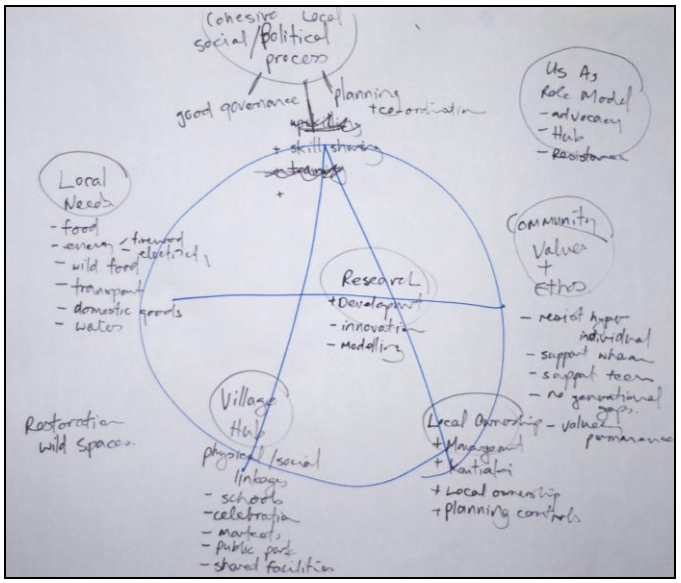


Figure 3
'Rich Picture 2' created at the Synergia workshop.
BRCT photos

2.3.4 HIKURANGI FOUNDATION

Following the community workshop, a relationship that had been incubating for several months became formalised when the Hikurangi Foundation[30] confirmed partner support of BRCT and the energy project. This support came with some funding, allowing pursuit of some initial objectives relating to the wind project, as well as regular meetings with other Hikurangi-supported leaders nationally, mentoring and workshop opportunities. The relationship with Hikurangi provided not only financial support; it also provided new networks, PR assistance, and a wider network. BRCT was now well placed to begin serious work on establishing the feasibility of wind generation in the Blueskin area.

With data in hand from two student-monitored Automatic Weather Stations, and knowledge about further (previously recorded) wind resource data from the wider area, the potential for wind generation within the Blueskin area was beginning to be established.

With this as background, BRCT submitted an application to EECA's 2009 Distributed Generation (DG) Fund[31] to conduct a feasibility study on community wind power for Blueskin.

2.4 COMMUNITY ENERGY ACTION IN 2010

Community engagement activities continued in 2010 alongside the all-important feasibility study. Key achievements for each year are listed as bullet points, with those in **bold** described in more detail below.

- ✓ **Feasibility study, funded by EECA.**
- ✓ Community outreach: There were two WEP meetings; ongoing monthly articles and E-newsletters and the online blog; a WEP presentation to the OERC annual symposium; one 'Energy & Blueskin Bay' information flyer sent out; BRCT provided the organisational hub for the Blueskin 10.10.10 action; BRCT provided funding for WEGie initiatives.
- ✓ **BRCT revised structure and functioning.**
- ✓ **Community members' field trip to Pioneer Generation's wind cluster.**
- ✓ **Wind cluster became BRCT's Flagship Project.**
- ✓ **Application to EECA for structured engagement process.**
- ✓ **Start of public perceptions research.**
- ✓ Blueskin mail drop, to advise about upcoming engagement opportunities, December 2010.

2.4.1 FEASIBILITY STUDY

The successful bid to EECA's Distributed Generation Fund was to carry out a feasibility study into the development of a grid-embedded, community-owned wind turbine. Work had begun on the feasibility study by the end of 2009, and continued into 2010. The study involved contributions from Tony Wilson, of

[30] See 'Relationships' section. Hikurangi is "New Zealand's incubator for low carbon social innovation - we support social entrepreneurs and communities to create a thriving and resilient future." [http://www.hikurangi.org.nz/]

[31] "The Distributed Generation (DG) Fund was established by EECA in 2008/09 to kick-start activity and development of small-scale renewable electricity projects in New Zealand." (http://www.eeca.govt.nz/distributed-generation-fund). The fund is no longer active, but was at the time the only government support for small-scale renewable generation in New Zealand.

accountancy firm Polson Higgs, Terry Jones, of PowerNet Limited, Scott Willis, of BRCT, and Janet Stephenson, Solis Norton and Seth Gorrie from Otago University's Centre for Sustainability. Advice and assistance was also provided by Greg Sise, Energy Link Limited, Peter Dowling, Pioneer Generation Limited, and Otago University climatologist Nicolas Cullen, plus specific expertise from other individuals[32]. The comprehensive report 'Blueskin Power Co-operative Wind Project'[33] was delivered to EECA in April 2010, after five months of collaborative work.

The study concluded, amongst other things, that several Blueskin sites appeared likely to have a good wind resource for a wind turbine, although further site-specific testing was required; that entering the electricity market was likely to require a partnership with a generation company; that development in a wind cluster of approximately three turbines would increase the financial viability; and that there was enough information at hand to proceed to further feasibility work. The study also revealed much about the nature of the local grid, relevant to the future design of the project.

Importantly, the study helped to specify the risks and proposed strategies to manage these risks and proceed further down the path of community-controlled wind power. It underscored that substantial challenges faced any group other than a major industry participant who wanted to develop renewable generation in New Zealand. It also revealed the high front-end cost (consultation and project feasibility/design) of any renewable generation development – costs that are typically counted as part of the final project by developers but which, for a community organisation, would have to be raised through funding applications, community fundraising and contract work.

In the process BRCT developed new or stronger relationships with the University of Otago, OtagoNet/PowerNet, EECA, Hikurangi Foundation, EnergyLink Ltd, Energy3, Pioneer Generation, WindFlow Technology, Powerhouse Wind and the DCC. BRCT also began a wider evaluation of sites, created new relationships with landowners with potential sites, and made a first appraisal of the practical business models available to allow community control of a small wind cluster under New Zealand conditions.

2.4.2 BRCT REVISED STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING

All that dynamism over such a short time had revealed stresses in BRCT systems, and following the feasibility study attention was turned to consolidating the Trust and building up capacity, while maintaining momentum. Along with continuing to run community meetings and other community services, BRCT set to work improving systems, bringing new people with specific expertise on to the Trust, and ensuring an adequate funding stream to continue work. The BRCT strategic plan 'action areas' in 2010 were:

1. The Community Energy Project[34]
2. Fundraising Activities
3. Long-Term Sustainable Funding Strategy
4. Internal systems and processes
5. Community projects [35]

[32] A number of other individuals assisted in the development of the feasibility report as acknowledged in the report.
[33] Available online at: http://www.eeca.govt.nz/node/10898
[34] At the time the strategic plan was developed it was recognised that 'Waitati Energy Project' was too narrow a definition but there had not been any formal name change. Therefore 'Community Energy Project' was selected as a broader accurate term.

BRCT identified the WEP email newsletter, the WEP blog/Blueskin News publication, media coverage and WEP meetings along with specific-issue public meetings as crucial elements to ensure transparency, ensure trust and invite broad participation. BRCT also recognised that while it was important to have an employee to achieve Trust goals, those goals needed to be clearly defined to ensure productivity.

2.4.3 Field trip to Horseshoe Bend

BRCT realised that the energy project ran the risk of 'invisibility' if there were not some short-term outcomes as well as the hoped-for longer-term outcome of energy resilience for Blueskin via the wind turbine cluster proposal. Partly as a fact-finding mission, partly as an 'appetite whetting' exercise, BRCT organised a field trip to the Pioneer Generation[36] wind turbine cluster at Horseshoe Bend in Central Otago in March 2010. This field trip stimulated interest in, and community discussion about, potential industry partners, social enterprise, community control and the practical elements of industry relationships and community expertise.

Participants in a Waitati Energy Project fieldtrip to Pioneer Generation's 'Horseshoe Bend' wind cluster in 2010. Photo Nick Holmes

2.4.4 Wind cluster becomes BRCT's flagship project

BRCT, having established its place as a community advocate and having recognised the widening interest in energy issues, began thinking about ways to strengthen the integrated energy approach. A result of this reflection was a determination to provide economic mechanisms to allow pro-environmental values to

[35] BRCT strove to maintain momentum on the various other community projects as well. BRCT secured $10,000 of Lotteries funding in 2009 to support Waitati Edible Garden group projects, which led in 2010 to two contracts: One to develop the Waitati Open Orchards initiative (now a community group); the other to assist food production at local enviro-schools (which has led to an independently funded job-share position at one Blueskin school).

[36] Pioneer Generation is a community-owned electricity generation company, based in Alexandra, Central Otago, New Zealand: http://www.pioneergen.co.nz/

flourish, without neglecting 'community good' projects[37]. To enable meaningful change towards local resilience within Blueskin communities, it was seen as highly desirable to have a positive economic project, which would provide a monetary flow for greater local autonomy of action. By the end of 2010 BRCT had decided that a local wind cluster was the key, and it thus became their 'flagship' project[38] (although other projects relating to food and transport were not neglected).

WEP was renamed the Blueskin Energy Project (BEP) as of September 2011, recognising that a number of communities around Blueskin Bay were now potentially included in the project by virtue of the fact that they all lay within the same lines network, in addition to the fact that these communities were also linked through strong social networks.

2.4.5 Application for structured engagement process with community

By the second half of 2010 it had become apparent to BRCT that further substantial work on the proposal could not take place without some measurable level of wider community support – it was not enough to have positive email correspondence with email newsletter subscribers or engagement in WEP meetings. BRCT was faced with the challenge of planning and funding a comprehensive community engagement process. In October 2010, a planning session involving Janet Stephenson, Scott Willis, Ros Day and Ross Johnston[39] set out a preparatory pathway: dates, materials, preliminary research, and funding required.

In late 2010 BRCT submitted a research proposal to EECA to develop and trial pilot an engagement process relating to the wind cluster idea, but which might also be applicable to other communities wishing to develop local renewable energy initiatives. Funding was secured on 30th of June 2011, and subsequently a donation was also received from the Otago Community Trust in September 2011 to assist with the process. BRCT was now in a position to proceed with the next crucial step in making Blueskin Energy a reality: a more structured process of community engagement. This is described in Section 3.4.

2.4.6 Public perceptions research commenced

Janet Stephenson instigated a university-funded summer internship project to conduct some public perceptions research to identify what issues were of concern to the Blueskin community, and how well the turbine cluster concept was understood. In December 2010 Seth Gorrie was awarded the internship and began work. The research and outcomes are reported in Box 3 below.

[37] For example, BRCT sponsored the Blueskin 101010 event in 2010, raising awareness on the actions ordinary people can take to combat climate change

[38] Called "the Community Energy Project" at the time. Between 2009 and 2011 a realignment of parameters was taking place, however it was only in September 2011 that the 'Waitati Energy Project' was renamed the 'Blueskin Energy Project' to more accurately describe its wide community focus.

[39] Ross Johnston is the BRCT trustee working with BRCT employee Scott Willis on community engagement, while as detailed earlier Janet Stephenson (OERC) and Ros Day (Planner) are contributors to the community engagement and research.

2.5 COMMUNITY ENERGY ACTION TO MID-2011

Another very busy year with increasing levels of community engagement and some key new relationships. Achievements are summarised below with items in **bold** described in more detail following.

- BRCT shifted its office at the start of 2011 to a new office located at Waitati School, building stronger community relationships and institutional efficiency in the process.
- Community engagement: There was one WEP meeting merged in a forum (see below) & one BRCT networking meeting; ongoing monthly articles (now including in the Rothesay News) and E-newsletters and the online blog; an inaugural 'Grass Roots Gig'[40]; launch of Twitter and Facebook accounts[41]; a WEP presentation to the OERC annual symposium; BRCT supported a WOO funding application. There were also community open days as detailed in the following Section 3.
- **Public Perceptions research completed.**
- **Energy Project Forum,** 15 February 2011.
- New Monthly 'Blueskin Power' column launched in Rothesay News, 1 March 2011.
- **Launch of OWL in Blueskin Bay,** 9 March 2011.
- Meeting with James Hansen, USA Climate Change expert, 19 May 2011.
- **Democratising Energy Hui, June 2011.**
- BRCT – Waikouaiti Coast Community Board Meeting.

2.5.1 PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS RESEARCH COMPLETED

Seth Gorrie's summer research project through the Centre for Sustainability (CSAFE) was an independent piece of research on public perceptions of the 'Blueskin Power' project. The aim of the research was threefold: to examine the state of knowledge about 'Blueskin Power' within the Blueskin community, identify effective means of communication with the Blueskin community, and identify how BRCT could help develop community knowledge and awareness.[42] Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were undertaken with 16 householders, largely randomly selected, from Blueskin communities between November 2010 and February 2011.

The research findings (see Box 3 for summary) were extremely useful in that they provided information not just on what current opinions were, but also on what was known and what was not known about the energy project, and what geographical areas needed attention in terms of deeper engagement. It served to direct the shape of the information provided in the formal community engagement project launched in September 2011. Seth presented the findings back to the community in a meeting at Waitati Hall.

[40] BRCT held a 'Grass Roots Gig' "fun-raiser" event in March 2011, to raise funds for community initiatives and to hold an auction to assist victims of the Christchurch earthquake. World-famous songwriter and activist Dana Lyons headlined the event, and BRCT raised just under $300 to support its own activities and $3250 for Christchurch which was donated to 'Project Lyttleton', a community group providing an excellent example of community resilience in Christchurch city.

[41] Student intern (Xavier Van Houtte) from the International Business Academy (bachelor programme) joined BRCT mid-February for two and a half months. Xavier brought with him a strong interest in social media and established BRCT's Facebook page[41] and Twitter account[41] – new innovations for BRCT that opened up a wider audience and new ways of publicising events.

[42] A full copy of the report is available from the BRCT office and the Blueskin Library. Quotes are from the report.

Seth's research also made BRCT aware of a crucial information gap: some residents in the Long Beach, Purakaunui, The Gums and Osborne area of Blueskin do not receive the Blueskin News community newsletter. Instead, they receive the Rothesay News, published in Port Chalmers, and thus missed out on the regular news updates on BEP. In March 2011 a new monthly 'Blueskin Power' column began in the Rothesay News, aimed at reaching those Blueskin residents who knew little or nothing about the proposal to date.

BOX 3: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS RESEARCH FINDINGS

Most people interviewed saw the project as positive (it "*sort of fits within a sort of ideology of my own which is around small and local*"); albeit with challenges of establishing a collective perspective ("*there is a huge number of people who don't really care, and how do you win those people over and how do you get through to them and get them on board?*"); including the *shape of community ownership* ("*I would love to see just one turbine owned by the community, bought by the community, owned by the community, profits go back to the community*").

Householders generally seemed to have a good appreciation of the reason for the energy initiative ("*It's to avoid the problems that I see with putting in huge wind turbines like up in the Lammerlaw Range or wherever these pristine environments*"), and the choices to be made ("*it isn't just good because its renewable energy and we are all tree huggers you know, that doesn't make it automatically good. It has to actually be viable as well.*"). Many householders were positive about wind energy ("*wind doesn't stop the wind blowing you know, it just borrows it for a minute and then continues*") and there was some interest in the selection of turbines with a clear preference for NZ-made (i.e. the WindFlow 500 turbine manufactured in Christchurch). Support for the project came from people who supported renewable generation on principle, those who saw a structural beauty in turbines and people who liked the idea of being able to see where their electricity was being produced.

Potential positive and negative effects of a local wind cluster were also discussed, such as being visually appropriate (e.g. preference for the industry-standard 'white' turbine), questions about noise, birdstrike, and strong interest in location. It is understandable during this stage of the project, with no single preference for a site, that possible effects were discussed in more general terms.

In terms of a developer, what emerged strongly was desire for a development model that provided for social equity and wide distribution of benefits, with a clear willingness from respondents to make compromises to ensure the viability of the project, i.e. over the legal form it would take. People also seemed quite hard-headed about the need for local investment (time and money) to get the project going. There also appeared to be a degree of confidence in the BRCT to handle the 'expertise challenge'.

Respondents were also interested in the personal benefits of the project. There was also a clear indication that people would generally like cheaper power (and within that, the expectation that this project could deliver just that). It became evident that some residents in the Purakaunui/Osborne/Long Beach area were not aware at the time of the interviews that their power was distributed via the Waitati substation, and therefore were part of the same network and thus potentially affected by the proposal.

There was a clear need for more information, in accessible form ("*I would definitely like to be informed, probably not so much involved as informed because I'm not one of these people who gets tremendously involved in these things but I would like to know what is going on so yeah regular information bulletin or anything like that would be helpful I think for the local residents all around here you know.*"). The findings also helped identify the elements that would be valuable for the formal community engagement project, (e.g.. "*I wonder about the visuals [...] it would be good to sort of see mock-ups in terms of and with mock-ups it would be good to see them from a couple of angles too*". Public events, like positive stories through film, not just meetings, were also identified as desirable, as well as simple visual presentations.

2.5.2 OUR WIND LTD

Out of the blue, in early 2011, BRCT was approached by an emerging industry-sponsored body designed to assist the development of community renewable generation. 'Our Wind Limited'[43] [OWL], whose purpose is to assist the development of community-owned wind clusters, was subsequently launched on 9 March, 2011. The event, held in Blueskin Bay, saw the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between OWL directors and BRCT trustees to advance the wind cluster project within a two-year window[44].

OWL directors with BRCT in Blueskin Bay, 9th March 2011.
Photo by Craig Baxter, Otago Daily Times

The launch and simultaneous signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Our Wind Limited at Waitati was a significant occasion for BRCT that also provided an opportunity to engage with significant stakeholders in the Blueskin Energy Project wind cluster proposal. [45]

[43] Our Wind Ltd (OWL), formerly a subsidiary of Christchurch wind-turbine manufacturer Windflow Technology.

[44] See http://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/151080/community-set-its-own-wind-turbines

[45] Attendees at the launch included Suzanne Ellison and Hinerangi Ferrall-Heath (representing Puketeraki Marae), Terry Jones (representing OtagoNet/PowerNet), Chris Baillie (Orokonui Ecosanctuary), Gerard Collings (Waikouaiti Coast Community Board), Steve Bennett (Department of Internal Affairs), Worik Stanton (for Green MP Metiria Turei), David Clark (Local Labour MP), Bill Currie (Powerhouse Wind Limited), Boris Baeumer (Waitati School Board of Trustees), Laurence Hay (BRCT), John Kaiser (BRCT), Janet Stephenson (OERC), alongside OWL directors Morgan Williams, Jeanette Fitzsimons, Simon Young, Barry Leay and Geoff Henderson, and BRCT trustees and staff Lynnaire Johnston, Gerry Carrington, Ross Johnston, Xavier Van Houtte, Tony Wilson, Antony Deaker and Scott Willis.

OWL is formally welcomed to Blueskin Bay at the gates of Waitati School by BRCT Iwi representative Antony Deaker, 9 March 2011.

OWL's offer to work with the Trust brought not only technical expertise and industry sponsorship; it also signalled BRCT's rising profile to the Blueskin community and to other partners and potential partners. By May 2011 a 10-metre wind tower provided by OWL had been established at a prospective Blueskin wind cluster site, an MOU signed with the landowners, and precise site-specific testing begun[46].

BRCT, while being assisted by OWL's technical data collection and promise of collaborative work on business proposals, remained in the driving seat as community advocate. Throughout 2011 BRCT concentrated on finding ways around the roadblocks to community wind by investing in relationships within and beyond the Blueskin community.

2.5.3 Energy Project Forum

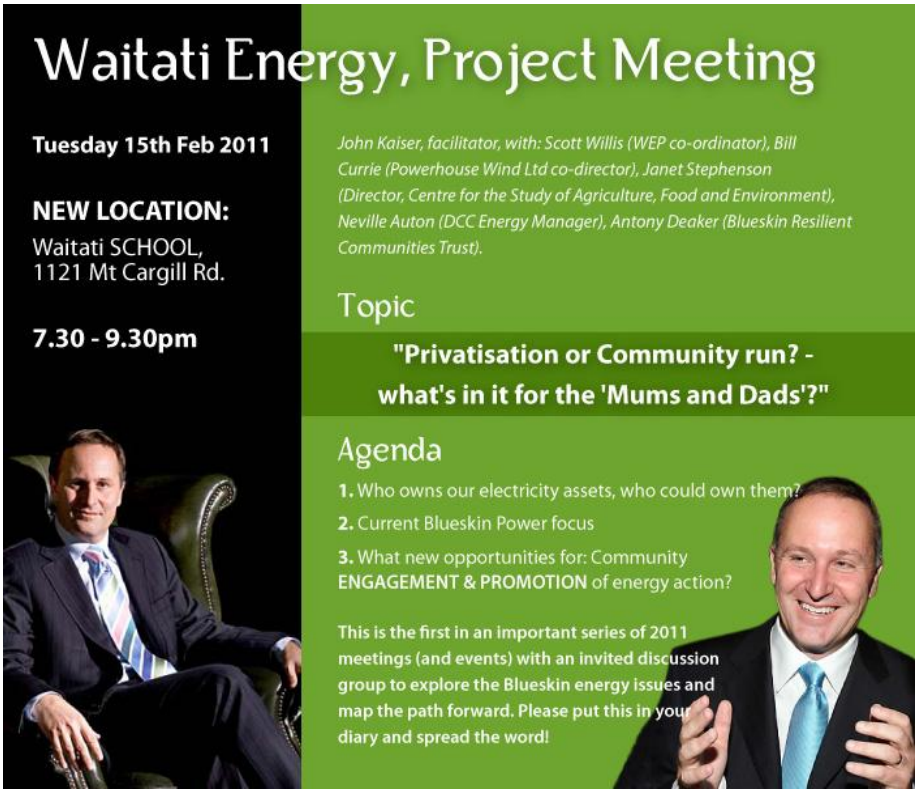
As a prelude to launching the formal 'community engagement project' – which BRCT needed to commit to[47] in 2011 despite having (at that stage) no confirmation of formal funding – WEP held an important public forum on the 15th of February 2011. The forum topic (Privatization or Community run? – what's in it for the Mums and Dads?) was deliberately provocative to encourage attendance. It also provided an opportunity to make a disclosure about the forthcoming formalisation of a relationship with an (at that point unnamed) industry partner (Our Wind Limited).The panel consisted of Scott Willis (WEP co-ordinator); Bill Currie (director, Powerhouse Wind); Janet Stephenson (Director, Centre for Sustainability); Neville Auton (DCC energy manager); Antony Deaker (secretary, Blueskin Resilient Communities Trust). The forum was attended by at least 20 people (no roll taken).

Discussion at the forum provided important insights into the areas that would need to be addressed in more formal engagement and enabled BRCT to secure further offers of community support. Some key points to emerge were whether there was sufficient wind resource, the need to incorporate an energy efficiency strategy along with the focus on renewable generation, the need for partnering with a major organisation, the

[46] BRCT has information from several other potential sites around Blueskin Bay, from student research stations, National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research, and an abandoned industry project.

[47] BRCT had announced in a flyer in December 2010 that public events would be happening in 2011. BRCT required further community affirmation before entering into the structured community engagement process.

importance of self-reliance in the face of ever-increasing power prices, and the need to effectively communicate more widely across the Blueskin community.



Flyer advertising the forum on Feb 15th, 2011. BRCT documentation.

The forum was billed as a WEP meeting, but was more structured and formal than earlier WEP meetings and incorporated more elements. It was clearly a 'transitional' meeting demonstrating greater structure than previous WEP meetings.

2.5.4 Democratising Energy Hui

In June 2011, with Hikurangi Foundation support, BRCT organised a hui to further explore the wind cluster concept with the Maori community and with other experts, some of whom were in the area to also attend a National Energy Research Institute event in Dunedin.[48]

The "Democratising Energy" hui was held at Puketeraki Marae in Karitane, and hosted by Kati Huirapa Runaka who had been and remain very supportive of the project. Attendees included industry, local government, iwi, and community representatives, researchers, and local members of parliament.

The hui established that the BRCT was in a pivotal position: community-owned wind projects were in their infancy in NZ, and given the significant progress and support, BRCT was in a position to 'create the path' for others as well as achieve their ambition of stronger community. The hui strengthened relationships and revealed strong support for the wind cluster project from the Kati Huirapa Runaka and Ngai Tahu representatives, and significant interest from all parties present. An action point for BRCT from the hui

[48] See http://www.neri.org.nz/news-and-events/events/winter-lights-2011-neri-thought-leadership-forum/

included forming a small national working group to look into developing and promoting 'Regulated Independent Power Purchase Agreements'. Specific advice relevant to BRCT's project was collected, particularly on enhancing the relationship with iwi and with the Electricity Authority. Additionally, the potential of working towards a Power Purchase Agreement with the DCC was seeded[49]. Participants expressed their strong support for the concept of a Blueskin wind cluster.

Hui afternoon participants at Puketeraki Marae in June 2011.

[49] In early 2012 BRCT and the DCC began working towards an MoU to enable the development of a Power Purchase Agreement.

3.0 STRUCTURED ENGAGEMENT PROCESS 2011-12

Community engagement, always a strong feature of the Blueskin Energy Project, became an even greater focus for BRCT during the second half of 2011. This stage, crucially assisted by funding from EECA and the Otago Community Trust, was intended to "pilot an engagement toolkit for Renewable Energy Generation development". The design of the engagement process was influenced by (a) community feedback including the public perceptions research and the forum on 15 February, (b) a desire to go beyond the 'consultation' considered best practice for planning consents (See section 5.3.1) into much deeper engagement, (c) the findings of a study on social acceptance of renewable electricity generation (See section 5.3.2), and (d) inspiring international examples especially Hepburn Wind in Australia (See section 5.3.5).

Planners Ros Day and Andrew Henderson were contracted to provide an engagement brief, working together with Janet Stephenson (CSAFE), Scott Willis and Ross Johnston (BRCT). While the planners prepared the engagement process, Ross Johnston and Scott Willis worked with BrandAid Design Communications[50] to develop the key messages and establish the visual themes for posters etc. These developments signalled a significant professionalism of the project, while ensuring good community fit.

Specific engagement methods used were:

a) Local publicity: Household leaflet drop, newspaper advertisements, BEP website and e-newsletters, public noticeboards
b) Online survey
c) Community open days
d) Follow-up individual discussions
e) Community feedback meetings

Details on each of these are provided below.

3.1 LOCAL PUBLICITY

The leaflet drops in late 2011 and early 2012 were different to previous publicity in that they went to individual households compared to the previous more generally-focused communication through newsletters and the web. The leaflets aimed to ensure that areas that had not previously been made aware of the project were drawn in. Leaflets provided simple basic information about the BEP and aimed to stimulate interest. Local media was also used to good effect to communicate to the Blueskin community. The establishment of the Blueskin Energy Project website in September 2011 gave a new, attractively presented online presence where information could be posted and easily accessed, allowing for a more professional projection of the project and allowing further participation.

Three open days were held:

Long Beach Hall	Sunday 11 Sept	1-4.30pm
Warrington Hall	Saturday 17 Sept	1-4.30pm
Waitati Hall	Sunday 18 Sept	1-4.30pm

In the lead-up to the open days, three advertisements were placed in the city's daily paper the *Otago Daily Times*, and aimed to ensure wide media spread to capture the attention of the widest possible group. E-newsletters were also used to promote the open days and follow-up activities. Posters on public

[50] Brand Aid is a Dunedin based design and brand development company, see: http://www.brandaid.co.nz/.

noticeboards also advertised each open day and invited participation from anyone interested. The great difference between publicity in 2011 and what had gone before was its intensity, its diversity and its co-ordinated focus.

3.2 ONLINE SURVEY

The engagement planning team considered that an online survey would be a useful tool to gauge community views on a range of issues as a complement to the open days and other techniques. The public perceptions research results were helpful in deciding what questions to ask. The purpose of the survey was to gather community opinions and preferences in relation to the Blueskin Wind Cluster proposal. Questions were asked about people's knowledge of electricity and their relationship with it; the general landscape values held and preferences for potential sites; level of interest in personal investment in a wind cluster; interest in a community dividend; general preferences for a business model; and opinion on how the project had been handled to date. Information was also sought on where respondents lived (to ascertain where the interest was and what gaps there were) and whether they had participated in the open days. The online survey tool 'QuestionPro' was utilised to design the survey, which consisted of a range of both open-ended qualitative questions, and questions that would provide quantitative data (e.g. yes/no questions). It was designed and created by Scott Willis, assisted by John Williams of the University of Otago Marketing Department, and reviewed by the engagement team.

The survey was launched on Saturday, 10 September 2011. It was promoted and distributed to the community via the local newsletter, the BRCT regular E-newsletters and the new website. Analysis of the survey was completed in March 2012 when 49 completed survey responses had been received. The intention was to close the survey, however with a further pamphlet drop in April/May 2012 planned, it was decided to keep the survey active. To date (17 May 2012) there have been 60 responses to the online survey and further analysis is possible.

Box 4 – SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

- As at February 2012, 49 people had completed the online survey.
- The large majority had heard about the project from the BRCT via the various media channels including *Blueskin News*, the BEP Mailing List, and the *Otago Daily Times*.
- 10 of the respondents had attended an open day, while 25 reported they had not attended an open day. The remaining respondents did not respond to this question.
- Nearly half of the respondents (47%) lived at Waitati. Warrington was the second most represented with 19%.
- Respondents were asked to select from a range of statements regarding their future ambitions in relation to energy use. The most commonly selected future ambition was 'being able to better manage household energy consumption' (21%) with the second most represented ambition being the ability to 'have control over own electricity generation' (19%).
- Respondents generally value landscapes in the Blueskin area. The most commonly reported reasons were 'value wild places' and 'beautiful, functional, and productive'. Some viewed the landscapes as being multi-functional. Others signalled they did not want any further developments on the landscapes unless further discussion occurred.

- Almost all respondents supported the proposition that the community should try to meet its energy needs within the local rural landscapes. Just one respondent disagreed.
- With regard to site preferences, 46% of respondents indicated a preference for the Porteous Hill site (BRCT's preferred option), while a further 28% of respondents indicated it was too early to comment in relation to site preferences for the turbines. 5% did not want to see turbines anywhere.
- When asked if they would be interested in investing in the local wind cluster if it was a viable project, 72% indicated 'YES' and 5% indicated 'NO'. Others (23%) commented that investment would depend on their financial circumstance.
- In relation to personal capital investment to get the wind cluster established, 11% thought they would contribute $10,000, 30% would contribute $6,000; 16% would contribute $3,000; and 14% would contribute $1,000. Around one third of respondents were unsure with regard to this question.
- When asked if they would be interested in signing a long-term contract with one of the electricity retailers if there was some protection from price increase and a rebate on electricity bills, 85% of those who responded to this question indicated 'Yes', while 24% responded with 'No'. Note, not all people responded to every single question.
- In relation to community dividends, 85% of those who responded to this question were in favour of a modest community dividend as well as a return to investors. A similar proportion of respondents would value the community dividend going back into supporting local energy initiatives such as insulation and solar hot-water. Up to 67% of respondents also supported the reinvestment of community dividends into other community initiatives.
- In relation to ownership and business structure, the Community Co-operative/Limited Liability option was the most preferred option, followed by the Joint Venture option. Least favoured was the Conventional Company Structure.
- In relation to the role of the BRCT and its approach in relation to the BEP, the most commonly selected statements were that the BEP project is progressing at the right speed, that it is an inclusive process, and that 'it feels serious'.

3.3 OPEN DAYS

The open days aimed to provide as many opportunities as possible to explain the project to the largest number of people possible, and to encourage greater participation and ongoing engagement. These events were particularly significant because:

- This was the first time BRCT had pulled together all the high-level elements of the project into a complete package (albeit with several key matters still undecided and needing community input).
- This was the first time the project had been presented to settlements outside Waitati.
- This was the first time professionals had been involved to provide assistance on engagement.

The engagement team designed the open days as an opportunity to get a good 'feel' for the level of community support. Unless there was a demonstration of a significant level of support, the project would need to be reconsidered. Much thought went into how to design the open days to allow wide participation and good information, and to gauge community feelings about the energy project, without being directive.

A wide variety of visual aids were created, as well as different means of collecting community members' perspectives on the project (see following sections for details). Scott Willis as project manager was available the whole time at each open day, representing the project. BRCT trustees, with their general knowledge of the

project, were available to talk about project details and also about the work of the Trust. Community volunteers/friends of BRCT were enlisted to be available to talk to people about specific aspects, capture their comments, show them associated material and generally 'host' the public. Planners Ros Day and Andrew Henderson were present at the open days as well but took a back seat, focusing on capturing people's feedback on Vox-Pop forms and stickies, answering questions about planning issues, and observing the process for the team debrief at the end of each day. This reflection at the end of each day was invaluable in both capturing impressions while fresh in the mind, and in fine tuning details for the subsequent open days.

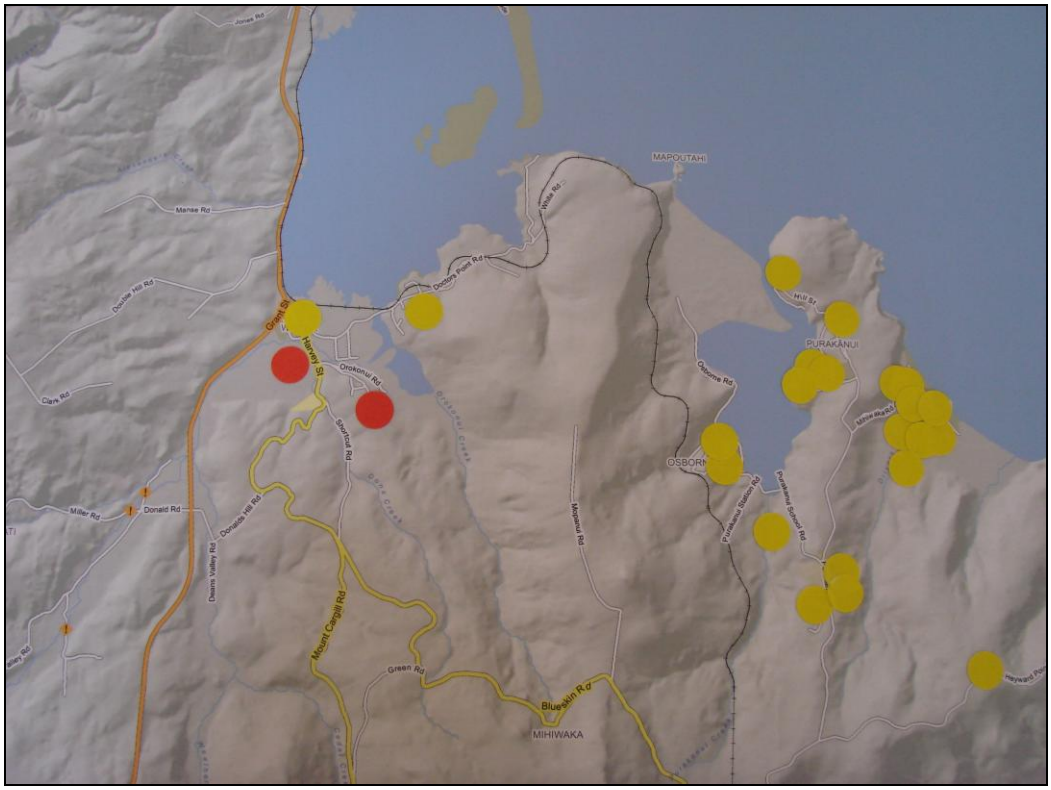
Three open days were held (11 September 2011 at Long Beach, 17 September at Warrington and 18 September at Waitati). In total, 95 'parties' were recorded attending.[51] Of these, the highest proportion of visitors attended the Waitati open day (42%), with the remaining visitors equally divided across the Warrington and Long Beach open days (28% and 28% respectively). The most commonly represented residential location of attendees was Waitati (35%), followed by Warrington (25%), and then Purakanui (14%). The open days also attracted interest from the wider Dunedin area, including those living in Port Chalmers, St Clair, North Dunedin, and Brighton (the Brighton attendee owned a crib in Waikouaiti). This highlights the potential to harness the interest of people in the wider Dunedin area.

The open days formed the core of the community engagement process, and the methods used are further detailed below and in Appendix 1.

3.3.1 Aerial Maps

Large aerial satellite maps of the Blueskin Bay area, and the wider Dunedin area, were laid out on tables in the halls. All attendees were encouraged to record their residential location on the maps with a sticky dot. (See below and Appendix 1). At the completion of the open days, the residential distribution of attendees was examined to assess the spatial extent of community engagement, and to identify those areas that were potentially under-represented at the conclusion of this phase of the community engagement.

[51] We are not certain that all attendees were recorded. However, we do not believe that the recorded numbers differ significantly from the actual numbers. A 'party' would usually be counted as an adult individual, so might include an adult with children.



Aerial map from Long Beach open day

3.3.2 POSTER DISPLAYS

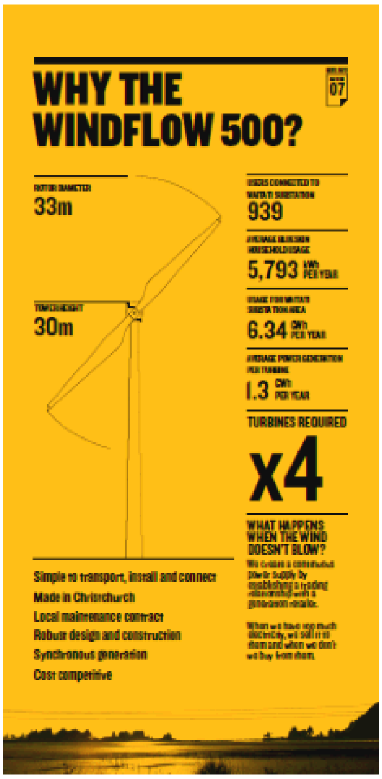
At each open day the poster display, which consisted of 13 posters developed with the assistance of BrandAid, were hung along the walls of the community hall (see below for examples and Appendix 1.2 for full set). The posters were set up in a particular order to ensure that each participant left with an understanding of:

- The origins and aims of the BEP;
- Preliminary BEP feasibility issues;
- Ownership and business structure options;
- Preliminary BEP prospective turbine sites;
- How to become involved;
- Who to contact with any queries, concerns, ideas.

The posters were designed to be simple to interpret and easy to read, even at a distance. They were printed on textile banner material to allow hanging and were 890mm wide by 1760 long. Attendees were invited to record any comments on 'post-it' notes which could be attached to the relevant poster.

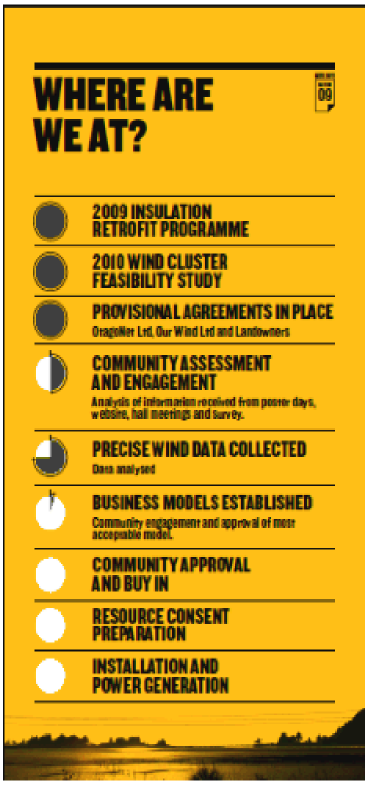
HOW COULD YOU BE INVOLVED?
05
SWAP TO THIS ELECTRICITY SUPPLY
BENEFITS
Access to an electricity supplier who can moderate price increases
Annual rebate on electricity bill.
INVEST IN THE OWNERSHIP OF CLUSTER
BENEFITS
Return on investment
Green investment
Supporting resilience in your community.
COMMUNITY BENEFITS
Seed money for other green energy. (e.g domestic solar panels)
Reinvestment into local community initiatives.
HOW MUCH MONEY DO WE NEED?
APPROX
$4.8 MILLION
WHERE FROM?
Local People
Ethical Investors
Our Wind Ltd (OWL)

OWNERSHIP & BUSINESS STRUCTURE
06
SOME BASIC OPTIONS
1
COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE
Local money 85%
Our Wind Ltd 15%
Most local control
Most investment from us
Most return to us
2
JOINT VENTURE
Local money 20%
Our Wind Ltd 15%
Ethical Investors 65%
Less local control
Less investment from us
Less return to us
3
COMPANY STRUCTURE
Our Wind Ltd 15%
Shareholders 85%
Very limited control
Individual shareholding investment from us
Returns to individual shareholders



WHY THE WINDFLOW 500?
07
ROTOR DIAMETER
33m
TOWER HEIGHT
30m
USERS CONNECTED TO WAITATI SUBSTATION
939
AVERAGE BLUESKIN HOUSEHOLD USAGE
5,793 kWh PER YEAR
USAGE FOR WAITATI SUBSTATION AREA
6.34 GWh PER YEAR
AVERAGE POWER GENERATION PER TURBINE
1.3 GWh PER YEAR
TURBINES REQUIRED
x4
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE WIND DOESN'T BLOW?
Simple to transport, install and connect
Made in Christchurch
Local maintenance contract
Robust design and construction
Synchronous generation
Cost competitive

FUTURE POTENTIAL
08
WHAT ELSE MIGHT THE FUTURE HOLD?
BRCT anticipates that a successful wind cluster development will allow us to unlock further energy options for Blueskin communities.
POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE
• Micro-Hydro
• Micro-Wind
• Solar Photovoltaics
• Solar Hot Water
• Tidal Power
• Biomass
• Insulation
• Hydrogen Storage
• Smart Meters
• DIY Plans
• Emerging Technologies



WHERE ARE WE AT?
09
2009 INSULATION RETROFIT PROGRAMME
2010 WIND CLUSTER FEASIBILITY STUDY
PROVISIONAL AGREEMENTS IN PLACE
DragonFler Ltd, Our Wind Ltd and Landowners
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND ENGAGEMENT
Analysis of information received from poster days, website, hall meetings and survey.
PRECISE WIND DATA COLLECTED
Data analysed
BUSINESS MODELS ESTABLISHED
Community engagement and approval of most acceptable model.
COMMUNITY APPROVAL AND BUY IN
RESOURCE CONSENT PREPARATION
INSTALLATION AND POWER GENERATION

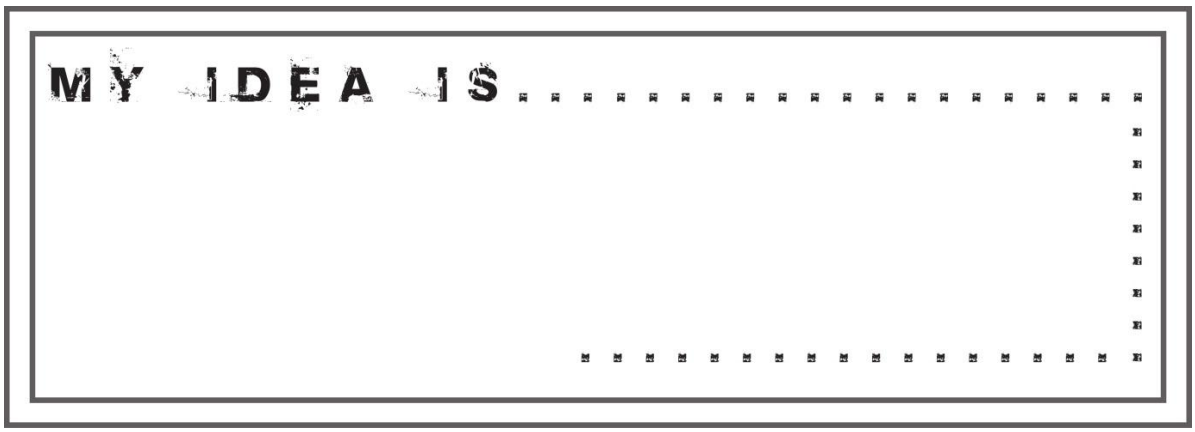
THE TRUST
10
THE BLUESKIN RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TRUST (BRCT)
AIMS TO
To create a healthy, secure and resilient future for Blueskin Bay and linked communities and promote sustainable resource use.
UMBRELLA FOR
BLUESKIN ENERGY PROJECT
WAITATI EDIBLE GARDENERS
WAITATI OPEN ORCHARDS
GET-THE-TRAIN
BLUESKIN LOW OIL COMMUTING
PARTNER AGREEMENTS
INDUSTRY
Our Wind Limited (OWL)
WindFlow Technology Ltd
RESEARCH
University of Otago
Otago Energy Research Centre
PROPERTY
Local landowners
BUSINESS
PROMOTION

The photo below shows how the poster displays were presented at the Waitati Community Hall.

Open day posters on display in Waitati Hall

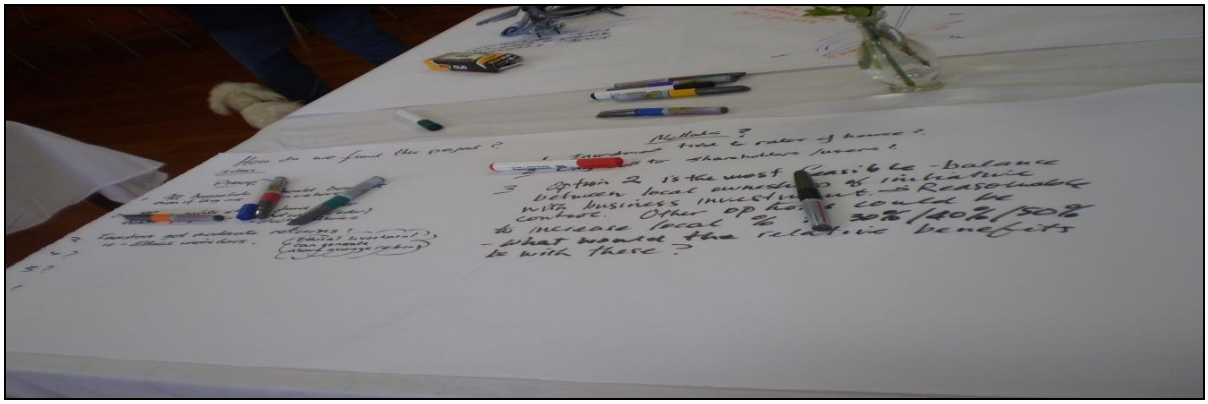
3.3.3 Vox-Pop Forms

A series of “Vox-Pop” forms were designed to encourage attendees to record any views or concerns regarding any aspect of the BEP. The forms were positioned at the end of the poster display so that attendees were able to ‘post’ views anonymously in a ballot-box. An example of one of the Vox-Pop series is given below. Other leader statements included “My concern is ...”, “My vision is ...”, “Listen Here!”, “You want to know what I reckon?”, “Has anyone thought about..?”. In total 31 Vox-Pop forms were posted over the three open days.



3.3.4 Graffiti Strip

A roll of plain white paper was laid out on a flat surface which attendees could “graffiti” with their “thought-tags”. The idea behind this was that it could allow doodling as much as formal comments, and would also be a place for children to be creative. The goal was to make participation and engagement as inclusive as possible. People particularly appreciated this format and often responded to other comments already on the paper.



The Graffiti Strip during the Warrington open day

3.3.5 STRAW POLL

To gain an appreciation of how the community viewed the various options in relation to the proposed business structure and ownership of the BEP, attendees were asked to cast a "straw poll' vote on one of three general options presented in the poster display. The options were:

- Community Co-Operative
- Joint Venture
- Company Structure

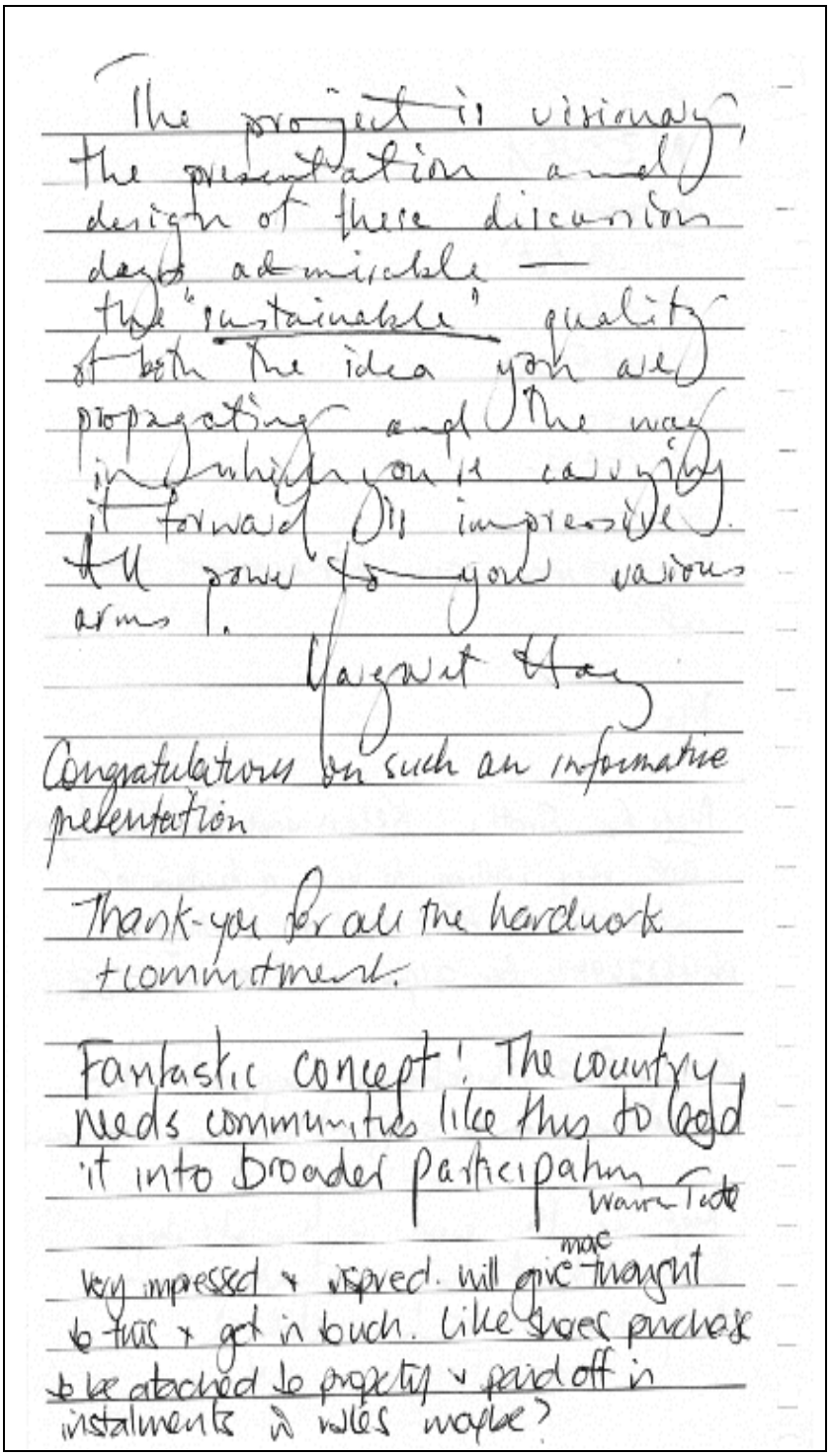
Most attendees, before leaving, were provided with a literal short straw to post in one of the three 'business structure' containers.

Of the 95 recorded attendees, 72 voted in the straw poll. The straw poll was not designed to choose the final business entity (there still remained too many unknowns to provide the full pros and cons for each option) but instead to get a feel for the community preferences for the business entity and thus allow more efficient investigation of a model that might best fit community desires.

The Straw Poll at the 'Exit Desk' at the Long Beach open day

3.3.6 COMMENTS BOOK

Prior to leaving the event, participants were asked to provide their contact details if they desired to be kept informed of the project, and were given the opportunity of recording any final thoughts and impressions within a comments book. Comments made were generally very supportive. A copy of a page from the comments book is provided below.



The project is visionary, the presentation and design of these discussion docs admirable — the "sustainable" quality of both the idea you are propagating and the way in which you're carrying it forward is impressive. All power to your various arms!

Margaret Hay

Congratulations on such an informative presentation

Thank-you for all the hardwork + commitment.

Fantastic concept! The country needs communities like this to lead it into broader participation

Wayne Tate

Very impressed + inspired. will give mac thought to this + get in touch. Like shoes purchase to be attached to property + paid off in instalments if rates maybe?

3.3.7 VERBAL DISCUSSIONS

During each of the open days, the team involved were available to discuss any aspect of the proposal with community members. The key messages from any verbal discussions were recorded, where possible, via post-it notes, and included in the record of each open day. These were incorporated within the open day feedback under themes, and can found in the detailed open day records in Appendix 1.

3.3.8 VIRTUAL FLYOVER

Seth Gorrie had developed a 3D Google map which allowed people to have a virtual flyover of the wind cluster sites investigated in the Blueskin Bay area, and to view these sites from up close and from afar. Seth brought this interactive model along to the open days. It provided a sophisticated 'gaming style' perspective which elicited a great deal of interest.

Checking out the virtual flyover

3.3.9 MOCK-UP PHOTOS

While the open days were really about communicating the energy project in general terms (because specifics had not yet been determined), the engagement team did not want people leaving with no idea of what a wind cluster might look like in the landscape. Caution had to be taken to not be overly prescriptive, but the project team decided to risk giving emphasis to the preferred site to allow visualisation of what turbines would look like in the landscape. Four images of the Porteous Hill site were manipulated to show four WindFlow 500 turbines as viewed from three different locations around Blueskin Bay (one image provided a scale).

Porteous Hill with photoshopped turbines from Don's Creek

3.3.10 FUN, INFORMATIVE AND IMPROMPTU DISPLAYS

Alongside the techniques for communicating the wind cluster concept, a number of other elements were used to 'liven up' the space. There were static noticeboard displays of articles and cartoons relating to the project or wind power in general. Hamish Trolove of EECA loaned a Wind-Up Electricity Demonstration Unit; Nathan Clarke provided use of a TV powered bicycle; Ross Johnston provided material and know-how for paper, stick and pin windmills; Phillipe Gelis arrived at the Warrington open day with a remote-controlled helicopter with LED lights, which he and others flew around the hall to the amusement of many, and unrolled a glowing LED lighting strip.

All of these things drew in the curious, the young and adventurous, and became focal points for more general conversations and a way to break down formality between strangers. Management of the quantity of fun, interactive elements was important, as for this stage of the project the purpose was to facilitate participation and engagement in the proposed wind cluster, so the team tried to reach a balance between these lively displays relating to energy in general, and interactive material on the wind cluster proposal.

Wind-up electricity demo unit in action, Warrington Hall

More details on the open days and a report on the outcomes are in Appendix 1.

3.4 FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSIONS

The engagement team came up with the idea of follow-up discussions as a way of getting feedback from people who didn't manage to get to an open day but wanted more information, or who might prefer an informal setting to a public event. The concept was promoted via the enlarged BEP Update E-list and in articles in both the Blueskin News and Rothesay News.

In the period since the open days and June 2012 there has only been one meeting requested by members of the community, with three people attending (and seven apologies). Despite this low uptake, the meeting itself was a success in the measure of interest expressed, and opens the possibility of further meetings instigated by community members as the project progresses.

Personal one-to-one enquiries have, in contrast, been much higher, particularly after the first 2012 pamphlet drop when the BEP office received a flush of telephone and email enquiries, resulting in a new spike in E-list

newsletter subscriptions (100+ new email subscriptions have been registered since the start of the structured engagement process).

3.5 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK MEETINGS

Community feedback meetings were suggested by the engagement team for early timetabling following the completion of the open days. The idea was to give rapid feedback on the results of the engagement project. However, that desire was moderated by the BRCT during its reflections on the engagement outcomes during the evaluation phase, in preparation for this report. The Trust had no desire to rush into a further set of meetings without greater progress to show to the community. This hesitation was in part a concern about community 'consultation fatigue' but also came from a renewed confidence that the open days showed considerable support from the Blueskin community for the project, and that there was community enthusiasm to continue to move things forward.

As a consequence, priority was given to finalising this report, analysing responses, and furthering work-streams relating to the next steps of the project itself. Community feedback meetings, which will incorporate updates on new progress, have been scheduled to occur in the three open day locations (Long Beach, Waitati and Warrington) in September/October 2012.

3.6 REFLECTIONS ON THE STRUCTURED ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The more intensive structured engagement process was extremely successful at engaging more widely with the Blueskin community. Results from both the online survey and the open days show that the Waitati community continues to have the highest response representation (unsurprisingly as this is where the concept originated) but that there is considerable interest from the other Blueskin Bay communities as well. Future engagement activities should target the less represented areas (Seacliff, Osborne, Purakaunui, The Gums, Long Beach and Evansdale). The engagement process has highlighted the opportunity for the BRCT to also engage with the non-resident community of the Blueskin area (i.e. holiday home owners).

At the start of the structured engagement process there were 170 email subscribers to the BEP E-list. By June 2012 this number had grown to 270 – an increase in 100 email subscriptions and a concrete signal of the interest shown by the community in keeping up to date with project progress.

BOX 5: HIGH-LEVEL OUTCOMES FROM THE STRUCTURED ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Overall, the community feedback from the structured engagement conveyed a largely positive view of the project. Both the open days and the online survey suggest that the Blueskin community is excited by the possibility that it may be paving the way for other New Zealand communities to follow a similar path.

Ownership and Business Structure

The community has signalled a strong preference for either a community co-operative or a joint venture. No great support for a company structure was expressed in either the online survey or the open days. At the open days, numerous community members were interested in discussing how the ownership and business structure could be established, and many contributed ideas in relation to what form the business structures

could take. Community members also raised the concept of 'ethical investments'. Future engagement activities should harness this community interest and knowledge, with the view of developing a business and ownership structure that is acceptable to and supported by the community.

Investment

The results of the online survey indicate support for community investment in the wind cluster. Many indicated they would be willing to consider personal capital investment. However, the results also indicate a level of reservation and caution in relation to financial uncertainties – both personal financial circumstances, and lack of confidence in the vitality of the BEP.

The findings also signal community interest in a future arrangement with an electricity retailer if there was some protection from price increase and a rebate on electricity bills. Many residents also indicated support for a modest community dividend as well as a return to investors, and the reinvestment of the community dividend going back into energy initiatives such as insulation, solar hot-water and other community initiatives.

Key areas of Community Interest

Across the three open days, attendees had many questions about all aspects of the BEP, including lifespan of project/turbines, capacity of the distribution system, spatial extent of the distribution system, financial feasibility of project, project design, characteristics of turbines, financial accessibility for residents, and environmental effects of turbines. This highlights where further information and discussion is needed at future engagement activities.

Key areas of Community Concern

Across the three open days, a number of areas of community concern emerged. These included the validity of the wind data to date and the resulting interpretation of the project feasibility; the perceived lack of ethical investment underpinning the BEP; and how realistic the stated projected benefits to the community/shareholders would be.

The survey results revealed that the Porteous Hill site was overall the most preferred site, although a number of respondents felt it was too early to comment. The majority of attendees who expressed a view at the Open days were not concerned with the detail of prospective sites at this stage in the project. A small proportion expressed concern about Mopanui as a potential site; suggested that other sites should be investigated; and raised concerns about environmental effects of the project - bird life, visual impact and health impacts. Many residents commented that it is too early to respond to the specific details, which is an issue to be mindful of as the project progresses.

These views should be taken into account in moving the project forward and when developing future engagement activities around a more defined project proposal so as to directly address any concerns.

A number of attendees were also interested in discussing wider energy issues other than the proposed turbine cluster, which reinforces BRCT's broader aim of supporting an integrated energy community involving both demand and supply sides.

4. RELATIONSHIPS

The BRCT would not have been able to carry out all of the activities described in the previous chapters without a strong network of relationships both within the Blueskin community, within Otago and nationally.

Some of these are supportive organisations in the wider Dunedin area that help extend the project reach. Puketeraki Runaka forwards on the email newsletter (the BEP Update[52]) to internet-connected runaka households (approx. 465 households) four times a year. Likewise, Port Chalmers Transition Town forwards on the newsletter to its network of email subscribers and Transition Valley 473 (the Transition Group in North East Valley, Dunedin) passes on selective BEP Update information to its e-list. These are all ways of getting information to a larger number of households in addition to those usually reached by the BEP Update email, Blueskin News articles and Rothesay News articles.

There are also many Dunedin/Otago individuals, organisations and institutions, such as those represented by the invitees at the launch of OWL, with whom BRCT has developed strong relationships. In addition, BRCT has relationships with government and local government agencies, organisations, businesses and NGOs from elsewhere in NZ.

All of these relationships are important to the evolution of the project and will become increasingly important as the project progresses. We anticipate that more relationships will develop over time. This section outlines the key relationships to date.

[52] Formerly 'WEP Update'.

4. 1 COMMUNITY GROUPS WITHIN BLUESKIN

The community groups who use the umbrella of BRCT are all 'flat structure' community groups and enjoy plenty of community support. BRCT provides a legal structure to enable their activities when and if required.

BRCT also works co-operatively with other local community groups where and when possible and/or desirable.

Table 1

Group	About
Blueskin Energy Project (BEP) (previously known as the 'Waitati Energy Project')	The "Waitati Energy Project" group was set up in 2007. In September 2011 the name was officially changed to "Blueskin Energy Project" (BEP) in order to reflect the geographic scope and to confirm the new scale of operations. As the main strategic operations focus of BRCT, supported by BRCT's primary employee, the Blueskin Energy Project has transformed from a flat structure community group to a community project supported by volunteers with BRCT governance and an employee. Its primary focus is the Blueskin wind cluster and a long-term focus is establishment of Blueskin communities that are energy positive and energy literate. BEP meetings, though less regular, still provide the creative input to the community energy initiative. They ensure direct governance and strategic guidance for the project.
Waitati Edible Gardeners (WEGies)	The WEGie group is a loose group established in 2006 that is concerned with strengthening the community through food production, with emphasis on domestic scale growing, and maintains a diversity of activity including harvest markets, edible garden tours, workshops, publications, community garden, and garden mentoring. BRCT provides support when required, and publicises activity via its subscriber email newsletter.
Waitati Open Orchards (WOO)	The Waitati Open Orchards group grew out of a WEGies project and aims to grow a diverse range of fruit and nuts in public spaces throughout Waitati, for public harvest. BRCT has provided support in a WOO funding application and publicises WOO activity via its subscriber email newsletter.
Get-The-Train	Get-The-Train is a small Blueskin rail transport advocacy group established in 2008 to promote commuter rail and greater use of rail. BRCT provides support when required, provides a banking service and publicises Get-The-Train activity via its subscriber email newsletter.

Blueskin Low Oil Commuting (BLOC)	Blueskin Low Oil Commuting was launched on the 10th of October 2010 to coincide with the Global Day of Action on Climate Change, with the goal of reducing hydrocarbon demand and consumption through everyday activities. Its current focus is bicycle commuting. BRCT provides support when required and publicises BLOC activity via its subscriber email newsletter.

4. 2 IWI

BRCT is building a close working relationship with Kati Huirapa Runaka ki Puketeraki. The Runaka are one of the 18 papatipu marae of Ngai Tahu iwi and have manawhenua for the Blueskin area.

Table 2

Who	About
Kati Huirapa Runaka ki Puketeraki, Puketeraki Marae	This relationship has grown through regular meetings between BRCT representatives and the runaka (tribal council) manager, attending runaka executive meetings and latterly the establishment of a runaka working party with the kaupapa of climate change and energy resilience. Runaka members see the relationship with BRCT as a means to exercise kaitiakitaka (guardianship/stewardship) in the local physical environment and an opportunity to secure benefits for the runaka members and the marae itself. The runaka now distribute the BRCT e-newsletters about energy issues and the Blueskin Energy project to their membership around the world. In October 2011 the runaka hosted BRCT's Democratising Energy Hui on their marae. This was a perfect venue to bring people from around the country and across the spectrum of energy issues together. The hui experience produced excellent outcomes and a clear unity of purpose. At that hui Ben Te Aika, Ngai Tahu employee dedicated to land based projects and tribal properties, identified synergies with the group's next steps and the likely position of Ngai Tahu iwi.

4. 3 INDUSTRY

The BRCT's industry relationships allow crucial expertise to be shared – not only technical expertise assisting a community initiative, but sharing community knowledge to ensure industry is connected to and valued by community, and community is valued by industry, breaking down information barriers.

Table 3

Who	About
Our Wind Limited	OWL is a new (2011) company with a vision of communities owning their own electricity generation (http://www.ourwind.co.nz/). In February 2011 BRCT signed a Memorandum of Understanding with OWL. See section 2.5.2 for more details.
OtagoNet/PowerNet Ltd	OtagoNet/PowerNet Ltd are the owners and managers of the local electricity grid (http://www.powernet.co.nz/). BRCT signed a Memorandum of Understanding with OtagoNet/PowerNet Ltd in 2009.
Windflow Technology Ltd	Windflow Technology Ltd is a New Zealand (Christchurch-based) wind turbine design and assembly company. (http://www.windflow.co.nz/). The 'WindFlow 500' is its signature wind turbine. BRCT signed a Confidentiality Agreement with Windflow Technology Ltd in 2009.
Powerhouse Wind	Powerhouse Wind is a small, innovative, clean-technology company whose signature product is the 3kW single-bladed 'Thinair 102' turbine. (http://www.powerhousewind.co.nz/). BRCT holds a document provided by PHW outlining PHW's obligations in relation to BRCT.
Green Chip Ltd	Green Chip Ltd is a New Zealand business supporting emerging New Zealand technology companies to innovate and scale up their business. BRCT has a Memorandum of Understanding with Green Chip Ltd.

BRCT also works with a number of other industry bodies informally and is aiming to establish further formal arrangements as the integrated energy concept evolves.

4. 4 RESEARCH

One key attribute of BRCT activities and a factor in the success of many community actions has been 'action with knowledge'. BRCT is mindful that poorly resourced community groups confronted with climate change and peak oil face enormous challenges. But despite resource deficits, limited staff and limited volunteer time, substantial results can be achieved by having good information and knowing where to best put the slim resources. BRCT is always keen to challenge the assumption that research is a one-way street and believes that a collaborative process with research partners results in greater value for all.

Table 4

Body	About
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA)	EECA is a Crown Entity, set up by the New Zealand Government in the year 2000 to encourage, support and promote energy efficiency, energy conservation, and the use of renewable sources of energy. (http://www.eeca.govt.nz/). EECA funded the feasibility study and report (2010) and was the core funder for the engagement process and action research contained in this report.
University of Otago	The University of Otago is an internationally renowned research and teaching institution ("New Zealand's top ranked university for research quality"). (http://www.otago.ac.nz/). BRCT has signed Memorandum of Understandings with University of Otago students and researchers in relation to various elements of energy research in Blueskin Bay. BRCT had a contract with Dr Janet Stephenson in relation to this report.
Ros Day and Andrew Henderson (planners)	Ros Day is an independent consultant planner and Andrew Henderson was previously senior planning consultant of Boulder Planning (Otago) Ltd. Together they have extensive experience in community engagement and resource management with a particular interest in renewable generation. BRCT had contracts with both planners in relation to this report.
Otago Energy Research Centre (OERC)	The Otago Energy Research Centre is a University of Otago research centre representing researchers from many disciplines with a common interest in the transformation of New Zealand's current energy system to one which is efficient, secure, sustainable and carbon neutral. (http://www.otago.ac.nz/oerc/). The Blueskin Energy Project group has a research protocol agreement with OERC. OERC members have facilitated a number of research projects and

	also directly contributed to the project in a number of ways. **Scott Willis, BRCT project manager, has given a talk/update on the BEP almost every year at the OERC's annual research symposium, attended by 50-70 researchers, students and others interested in energy issues from business, local government and the community.**

4.5 COMMUNITY SECTOR AND NGOs

BRCT enjoys strong informal relationships with the community sector, largely through the Transition Town network, particularly local Transition Town initiatives. These include the Wellington Community Wind Group[53], Harbour Wind on Banks Peninsula[54] and REFIT-NZ.[55] Other more formal relationships are described below.

Table 5

Organisation	About
The Hikurangi Foundation	The Hikurangi Foundation is a charity that aims to catalyse positive action by New Zealanders on climate change. (http://www.hikurangi.org.nz/). In September 2009 Hikurangi signed a two-year support agreement with BRCT to assist BRCTs activities, as part of its 'Community Climate Action Hubs' initiative. This agreement involved a number of other community groups and established a national network connected through Hikurangi. In June 2012 Hikurangi and BRCT strengthened and renewed the partnership for a further 12-24 months.
Otago Community Trust	The Otago Community Trust (OCT) is a philanthropic organisation which applies its Trust funds for charitable and other purposes which are of benefit to the community. (http://www.oct.org.nz/). In September 2011 OCT signed an agreement with BRCT, providing a donation to help support the community engagement project. OCT, along with EECA, is a major funder of BRCT's community engagement.

[53] See: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Wellington-Community-Wind-Group/145412955508828
[54] The Harbour wind group, many of whom are Lyttleton residents, are still recovering from the Christchurch Earthquake in 2012 and community wind activity has slowed as a consequence.
[55] See: http://www.refit.org.nz/

4.6 LANDOWNERS

To develop a local wind cluster the Blueskin Energy Project requires identification of a suitable site for development. Many sites have been offered, and BRCT has also approached some owners regarding setting up wind-testing equipment. BRCT has had MoUs with various landowners for wind testing over the past few years. Only one MoU is current at the time of writing this report.

Table 6

Landowner	About
The Ireland-Robertson families	The Ireland-Robertson families are landowners in Blueskin Bay. BRCT and the Ireland-Robertson families have signed a Memorandum of Understanding allowing wind monitoring at the Porteous Hill site, to evaluate its suitability as a site for the Blueskin wind cluster.

4.7 FUNDERS

Table 7

Funder	Amount	Details	Period
Hikurangi Foundation	$11, 027	Blueskin Energy Project (donation)	July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012
Lotteries	$28, 185 (+ GST)	Employment of project manager (grant)	April 1, 2011 – 31 March, 2012
EECA	$27, 567 (+ GST)	Community Engagement Project (contract)	June 30, 2011 – June 30, 2012
Otago Community Trust	$15, 000	Community Engagement Project (donation)	September – 31 March, 2012
Waikouaiti Coast Community Board	$750 (+ GST)	Contribution to open day banners (grant)	September 2011

4.8 OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

Alongside a range of informal relationships with 'friends of the project' such as EnergyLink, BRCT works closely with local government, both through mechanisms such as our local community boards (the Waikouaiti Coast Community Board and Port Chalmers Community Board) and the Dunedin City Council directly in forums, and with staff and councillors. Scott Willis represents BRCT on the DCC Community Resilience Forum which meets every six weeks.

5. MODELS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This chapter outlines several different approaches to community involvement: 'best practice' consultation in relation to processes under the Resource Management Act; consultation guidance from the NZ Wind Energy Association; NZ research that suggests going beyond consultation to enhance community acceptability of renewable energy developments; and the Hepburn Wind example in Australia.

5.1 'BEST PRACTICE' CONSULTATION UNDER THE RMA 1991

The Resource Management Act 1991 (the RMA) sets out the law for the management of natural and physical resources. It prescribes all the key processes that local authorities must work within when considering and making decisions on resource consent applications, and sets out the form and manner in which resource consent applications must be lodged (see Appendix 2.1 for the relevant sections of the RMA).

With regard to Renewable Energy Generation ('REG') developments, the National Policy Statement on Renewable Energy (2011) seeks to create an environment which will support and assist the ongoing development of REG across New Zealand with the hope of achieving the desired targets of 90% renewable generation promoted within the New Zealand Energy Strategy 2011.

BOX 6: CONSULTATION IS DESIRABLE BUT NOT LEGALLY REQUIRED

A key conclusion of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's 2006 report *Wind power, people and place* was that:

> *"Local communities are contributing little to decisions on location, scale and design of wind farm developments. International research stresses the importance of engaging local communities early and often as a key success factor"* (p 111).

Furthermore, the report notes that:

> *"Community acceptance and successful wind farm development depend not only on the extent, appearance and location of wind farms, but also on the process by which they are developed, and who develops them"* (p 111).

However, Section 36A of the RMA directly states that there is **no statutory obligation** for resource consent applicants, or councils, to undertake consultation in relation to a resource consent application. As a consequence, decisions surrounding whether to undertake consultation, and the nature, extent, scope and format of consultation, is entirely at the discretion of the resource consent applicant. This discretion overlooks the importance of consulting or engaging with communities over applications that may affect (or benefit) them.

In certain circumstances, proposals for renewable energy developments can go through a 'streamlined' consenting process under the Streamlining and Simplifying Amendment Act 2009, thereby avoiding the local-level 'first instance' decision-making powers of the local authority. This can apply where either:

- An REG applicant requests that the proposal is referred directly to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA); or
- The Minister for the Environment "calls in" REG proposals of national significance.

At least three wind farm proposals have been already been "called in" by the Minister for the Environment. Under this process, the resource consent application is referred either to a Board of Inquiry or the Environment Court. In both situations, people still have an opportunity to submit and be heard at the hearing. The decision reached by a Board of Inquiry or the Court can be appealed only on a point of law to the High Court. The new EPA consenting and decision-making mechanisms do not change the relevant RMA sections. However, the direct referral and call-in processes could potentially compromise the ability of community members to be involved in the resource consent processes.

5.1.1 'BEST PRACTICE' GUIDANCE

Although the RMA does not prescribe consultation requirements for resource consent applications, there are two significant reasons why a resource consent applicant should see consultation as important:

- Schedule 4 (1) of the RMA sets out the requirements of an Assessment of Effects on the Environment which must be provided with any resource consent application. This specifically requires a resource consent application to identify "the persons affected by the proposal, the consultation undertaken, if any, and any response to the views of any person consulted" (1) (h).
- Regardless of whether there is a statutory obligation to consult, consultation with people and communities who are interested in, or are likely to be affected by, a development proposal is widely accepted to be good practice and an important component of any resource consent application lodged under the Resource Management Act 1991.

The 'Quality Planning Website'[56] provides guidance on 'best practice' in relation to various planning processes including consultation. It draws on the experience of practitioners and shares best practice examples and case studies. The guidance note on 'Consultation for Resource Consents' is for planners, councils and developers and is based on the principles of consultation defined by the Environment Court (see Appendix 2.2).

The guidance note outlines consultation as follows:

> "Consultation generally occurs with people who may be adversely affected by, or have a specific interest in, a resource consent application, and is essentially a process about:
>
> - Providing enough information to an interested or affected party to enable them to understand a proposed activity;
> - Discussing the resource consent application with them;
> - Receiving any comments they might have on the proposal and, where appropriate, amending the proposal to be more acceptable to the consulted parties;
> - Gaining all the necessary information to provide a thorough and complete application."

It lists the key benefits to undertaking consultation as including:

- Helping an applicant to modify a resource consent application to reduce adverse environmental effects and make it more acceptable (if possible) to affected parties or the wider community;
- Helping to ensure that all potential effects on the environment have been identified and addressed in the application;
- Providing information to the local community about a future change that may occur in the area;
- Building better relationships between the applicant, the council, and any consulted parties, including tangata whenua;
- Helping the resource consent proposal encounter less opposition in the later stages of the consenting process; and
- Producing a better proposal with more acceptable outcomes.

Resource consent applicants are advised within the guidance note to:

[56] www.qualityplanning.com

- Take time to understand the principles of consultation;
- Consider whether consultation may identify new information or alternatives to improve the proposal;
- Consider whether undertaking consultation would assist in ensuring a thorough assessment of environmental effects;
- Understand the legal requirements and responsibilities for reporting on consultation;
- Provide sufficient information and time for the consulted party to:
- genuinely consider the information provided
- participate (such as being able to discuss the application or ask questions and make suggestions)
- make informed decisions, particularly if their written approval is subsequently sought.

The Guidance Note draws from a number of sources including the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) "Spectrum of Public Participation"[57] (see Figure 3). This presents a spectrum of possible levels of public involvement, and the subsequent impact and influence of this on the decision-making process. Specifically, the model presents five categories representing increasing levels of public impact: from "Inform" (at the lowest level), "Consult", "Involve", "Collaborate", to "Empower" (at the highest level). Consultation is thus only on the second level of the spectrum. According to the IAP2, consultation has the goal of "obtaining public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions". Consultation is not and should not simply be discussing a pre-determined outcome with an interested or affected party. The spectrum is a useful way of comparing different types and levels of engagement.

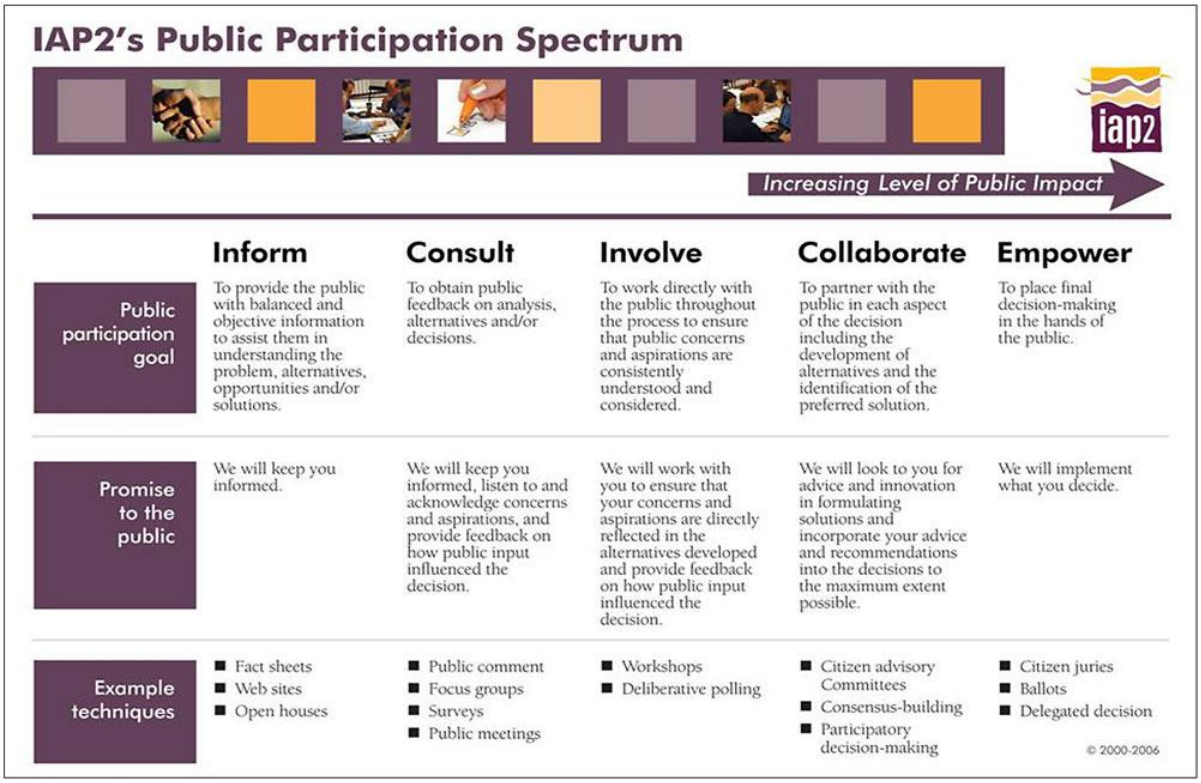


Figure 4

International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) "Spectrum of Public Participation"

[57] http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf

The Quality Planning guidance promotes an early approach to consultation by applicants as this provides the parties with an opportunity to exchange information, and to make a genuine attempt to seek and consider alternative views on the proposal. Applicants are also advised that consultation may be an ongoing process, especially for large projects. This may allow the proposal to be progressively modified to produce a project with better environmental outcomes that is more acceptable to the community.

5.2 NZ WIND ENERGY ASSOCIATION GUIDANCE

The New Zealand Wind Energy Association (NZWEA) is an industry association that works towards the development of wind as a reliable, sustainable, clean and commercially viable energy source. The NZWEA aims to represent wind energy to the public, government and the energy sector. Its members include 80 companies involved in New Zealand's wind energy sector, including electricity generators, wind farm developers, lines companies, turbine manufacturers, consulting firms, researchers and law firms.

The NZWEA provides guidance and resources to its members and the public about the RMA consent process specifically in relation to wind energy proposals.[58] A series of 'Fact Sheets' promotes the following general steps:[59]

Site Investigations

After investigating a site, a developer will develop the proposal to the project stage and submit a resource consent application to the local council.

A. Consultation with Affected Parties

Developers may meet with affected parties to discuss specific impacts e.g. noise, visual impacts.

B. Wind developer applicant describes the project and prepares an application for Resource Consent

- Positive effects
- Negative effects
- Mitigation measures
- Assessment of Environmental Effects typically includes assessments on issues relating to construction, landscape, visual, traffic, and noise, cultural and archaeological factors.

C. Public Notification

The council and the developer make the proposal/project details available to the public. This process allows for submissions in support/or opposition of the proposal/project.

D. Submission Process

Any person/party with an interest in the proposal may make a submission on the proposal/project within a statutory timeframe.

E. Hearing Process

[58] In 2010 the NZWEA appointed a Senior Environmental Planner who is co-ordinating the process of creating new Wind Energy Development Guidelines Project which will include best practice guidance for key stakeholders across central and local government, professional bodies, and industry. The ultimate goal of these guidelines is to simplify and streamline consenting processes under the RMA 1991 so as to reduce uncertainly and cost, and to help achieve government policy objectives relating to REG targets.

[59] Sourced and adapted from http://windenergy.org.nz/documents/factsheets/community.pdf

Once the council has received submissions from the public and the council officers have prepared a report about the proposal, a resource consent hearing will be held. At the hearing the applicant and submitters may speak in support of their submission.

F. Decision

The hearing's commissioners will consider all the submissions it receives, together with the application, and then make a decision about whether or not to grant the resource consent. If the consent is approved, it will often have conditions attached to it such as the number of turbines that can be built or mitigation measures the developer must undertake.

G. Appeals

Consent decisions can be appealed to the Environment Court. The applicant or any person who made a submission on the application can appeal the decision. The appeal must be lodged within 15 working days of receiving the decision. Environment Court decisions can be appealed to the High Court only on a point of law.

From the guidance disseminated by the NZWEA, it is clear that the Association is promoting nothing different from the standard approach to consultation as outlined in the Quality Planning practice note on consultation.

In practice, consultation varies widely and is largely dependent on 1) the scale and significance of the development proposal; 2) the extent and magnitude of the anticipated environment effects of the proposal; 3) the complexity of the issues and subject community/stakeholders, and 4) the inclination or willingness of developers to follow guidance as to what represents good consultation practice

5.3 BEYOND CONSULTATION

While 'best practice' advice on project development places a great deal of attention on consultation processes, recent research evidence suggests that more positive public responses can be gained from going beyond consultation to more inclusive engagement. A recent extensive study in the European Union covering many renewables developments in many countries concluded that "local residents are not opposed to developments because of NIMBY issues, but because they are insufficiently engaged in decision-making, and their needs are not taken into account in the planning process." The report also notes "the main factor that seems to emerge as an explanation for variations in local support or resistance is the level of participation of local residents…".[60]

While 'streamlining' planning procedures might seem to make things simpler for REG developers, it can have the effect of causing a backlash in public sentiment. Both the EU report and other recent publications call for democratic, participatory methods to engage the public at various scales – both at the wider spatial planning scale and at the site-specific scale - to build greater acceptability of renewable developments.[61,62] Case studies in England, Wales and Denmark show that projects with high levels of participatory planning are more likely to be publicly supported and succeed.[63]

[60] Heiskanen, E. et al., (2007), ibid.

[61] Dunlap, C. (2009). Regulating Land use Technologies – How does Government Juggle the Risks?. In M. Winter & M. Lobley (Eds). *What is Land for? The Food, Fuel and Climate Change Debate.* P263-290, p. 281

[62] Patrick Devine-Wright (2010), ibid.

[63] Loring, J.M., (2007). Wind energy planning in England, Wales and Denmark: factors influencing project success. Energy Policy, 35(4), 2648–2660.

In New Zealand, the EECA-commissioned report *Social Acceptance of Renewable Electricity Developments in New Zealand*[64] examined how the NZ public was responding to new RE developments, and potential reasons for support or opposition. The report came up with a number of propositions to enhance public acceptability.

5.3.1 Recent Research

Internationally, social research into public responses to renewable energy developments has proliferated over the past 15 years, with most of this focusing on wind farms. The starting point for such research has often been the conundrum that polls repeatedly show high public preference for wind energy over other energy generation forms, yet there is frequently public resistance to development proposals. Within policy and developer circles, the term NIMBY (not-in-my backyard) is often used as an explanation, implying that it is an innate human condition to oppose local change, and that people will act to protect their 'patch' however much they support the concept of wind energy. However, research has repeatedly shown this 'explanation' to be both inaccurate and simplistic.[65] To give one example - if NIMBY explained public opposition then nearby residents would always be more opposed that than those further away, yet research finds no consistent relationship between proximity to a development and levels of opposition – it varies greatly with the context.[66]

Opposition to wind farms is influenced by many factors, some more obvious than others. Actual or potential effects, which are required to be considered under the RMA, are obvious. These include such things as the impacts of construction, noise, bird strike and visual effects. However, public responses are shaped by more than simply the anticipated effects. Other influences include the values associated with the proposed location, the scale of the wind farm, preferences for alternative solutions, and the socio-cultural characteristics of the local population.[67,68] In addition, public responses to these factors and any effects, and whether they are seen as problematic, are strongly influenced by how the developer engages with the public.

Procedures for assessing environmental effects are generally well developed and will not be discussed further here. Of the other factors, two that are particularly relevant to the BCRT proposal are scale and site-related values, briefly discussed below. The subsequent discussion is about community engagement.

5.3.2 Scale

Research in NZ shows a strong public preference for smaller-scale wind farms[69,70] and international studies reinforce this.[71] Compared to Europe, New Zealand has few small-scale wind farms. The likely reason is that the European policies have encouraged small-scale renewables using measures such as feed-in tariffs and

[64] Stephenson & Ioannou, 2010 http://www.eeca.govt.nz/node/11817
[65] Devine-Wright, P. (2004). Beyond NIMBYism: towards an integrated framework for understanding public perception of wind energy. *Wind Energy* 8(2): 125-39.
[66] See Stephenson & Ioannou 2010 for examples relating to New Zealand.
[67] Jessica Graham, Janet Stephenson and Inga Smith (2009): Public Perceptions of Wind Energy Developments: Case Studies from New Zealand. *Energy Policy* 37: 3348-3357
[68] Patrick Devine-Wright (2010). *Renewable Energy and the Public – from NIMBY to Participation.* Earthscan, London.
[69] Barry, M., & Chapman, R. (2009). Distributed small-scale wind in New Zealand: Advantages, barriers and policy support instruments. *Energy Policy, 37*(9), 3358-3369.
[70] Schaefer, M., (2010) Accelerating the deployment of wind energy in New Zealand: the adaptability of a feed in tariff. Thesis, Masters of Energy Studies 2010 Otago University, Dunedin.
[71] Devine-Wright, P. (2004). Beyond NIMBYism: towards an integrated framework for understanding public perception of wind energy. *Wind Energy* 8(2): 125-39.

favourable taxation/consenting laws.[72] New Zealand lacks policy measures to encourage small-scale wind farms, and this lack of community-scale wind farms may be reinforcing the well-aired public perception of wind farms as industrial-scale, inappropriate and with no local benefits.

If people experience wind turbines then they tend to be more accepting of them, up to a certain level of wind-farm saturation. The EU's Create Acceptance project found that where there was historic local experience with a renewable energy technology, this engendered a 'local embeddedness' which led to a greater level of social acceptance of that technology more generally.[73]

If there were more opportunities in New Zealand to develop small-scale community wind projects, this could have positive spin-offs for wind developments more widely by improving the 'local embeddedness' of wind projects.

5.3.3 Place Values

Siting decisions are crucially important for social acceptability, and not all sites are equal in the public eye. While the technical qualities of the site may be seen as the most significant drivers for the developer, the social, environmental and cultural qualities of the site and its environs will be the most important aspects for the public. Even use of the term 'site' can be problematic. Devine-Wright[74] points out that "residents and visitors do not engage with a site, they engage with a place that is simultaneously material and psychological, objective and subjective. Public engagement strategies informed by the siting perspective are in danger of playing down or completely overlooking the symbolic and emotional associations people may have with the locality faced with development... Overlooking such associations may only serve to exacerbate pre-existing sceptical beliefs and a lack of trust between residents and development companies".[75] It is important that public engagement processes provide opportunities for these values and attachments to be expressed, and ideally that the public have input into the site selection process so that less sensitive locations can be identified. Local involvement in siting decisions has been identified as a factor in implementation success,[76] and the EU project showed early community participation enabled project managers to better integrate local concerns into project designs.[77]

5.3.4 Community Engagement

It is well established that positive perceptions of a developer are associated with positive attitudes towards a proposal, and *vice versa*. Trust is key, because "siting decisions are always heavily loaded with risk components: environmental, economic and social risks."[78] The public is unlikely to accept risk that they perceive to be present unless they have a level of comfort with the credibility of the developer and of the assurances that the developer makes. Gaining trust requires that the developer avoids pre-judgement:

[72] Barry, M., & Chapman, R. (2009), ibid.
[73] Heiskanen, E. et al., (2007). Create Acceptance: Factors influencing the societal acceptance of new energy technologies: Meta-analysis of recent European projects. European Commission Sixth Framework Programme Deliverable 3.1, 3.2 and 4, WP 2 draft report. Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands. http://www.esteem-tool.eu/fileadmin/esteem-tool/docs/Resourcesreport.pdf
[74] Devine-Wright, P. (2010). From backyards to places: Public engagement and the emplacement of renewable energy technologies. Chapter 5 in P. Devine-Wright (Ed.) *Public engagement with renewable energy: from Nimby to participation.* Earthscan: London.
[75] Devine-Wright (2010) ibid.
[76] Breukers, S., & Wolsink, M. (2007). Wind power implementation in changing institutional landscapes: An international comparison. *Energy Policy, 35*(5), 2737-2750.
[77] Heiskanen, E. et al., (2007). ibid.
[78] Wüstenhagen, R., Wolsink, M., & Bürer, M. J. (2007). Social acceptance of renewable energy innovation: An introduction to the concept. *Energy Policy, 35*(5), 2683-2691.

"Meaningful participation ... cannot be undertaken with the assumption that certain participants (i.e. objectors) are wrong or less legitimate".[79] Trust is unlikely to be generated if consultation is undertaken simply as a means to diminish opposition rather than opening up a meaningful dialogue. Similarly, local discontent can be exacerbated by poor project management and insensitive decision-making processes.[80,81] Local financial involvement also enhances support for wind projects.[82,83,84] This might include community members becoming financial stakeholders in co-operative ventures, and/or distributing financial benefits through community benefit packages.[85,86]

Drawing from the studies above and other research, the Social Acceptance study[87] proposed that the public would be more likely to find new energy developments acceptable if the following criteria were met:

Box 7: TWELVE PROPOSITIONS FOR ENHANCING ACCEPTABILITY

1. The public have good **knowledge** of and **familiarity** with the technology
2. The type, scale, and rate of proliferation of the technology is **within norm-based bounds** (noting these will change over time)
3. People consider the development is suitable in relation to the **qualities of the site**
4. The proposal does not have significant **impacts** on themselves and other tangible and intangible qualities that they value
5. They feel that **trade-offs** are openly and satisfactorily discussed and regularly revisited
6. They feel that developers have listened to their concerns and dealt with them **respectfully and honestly**
7. They feel **trust and good faith** in the developer and this is continued through the life of the project
8. They have a stake in the development, or there is another **tangible flow of benefits** back to the affected individuals and community/ies
9. They have some **certainty** as to likely future constraints on REG developments
10. They feel that their voices and concerns will be considered to be **legitimate and credible** in the consenting process
11. The management and effects of the windfarm **over time** continue to be seen in a positive light
12. They feel that they are **contributors to the energy transition** rather than onlookers.

We will discuss these 12 propositions again in relation to the Blueskin Energy Project in Section 6.

[79] Aitken, M., (2009) Wind Power Planning Controversies and the Construction of 'Expert' and 'Lay' Knowledges. *Science as Culture* 18(1), 47-64.
[80] Breukers and Wolsink (2007). ibid.
[81] Ellis, G., Cowell, R., Warren, C., Strachan, P., Szarka, J., Hadwin, R., et al. (2009). Expanding Wind Power: A Problem of Planning, or of Perception? *Planning Theory & Practice, 10*(4), 523-532.
[82] Pasqualetti, M.J., Gipe, P. & Righter, R.W. (2002). *Wind Power in View. Energy Landscapes in a Crowded World.* Academic Press, San Diego, CA.
[83] Hinshelwood, E., (2009). *Wind engineering* 24(4): 299-306
[84] Gross, C. (2007). Community perspectives of wind energy in Australia: The application of a justice and community fairness framework to increase social acceptance. *Energy Policy, 35*(5), 2727-2736.
[85] Bell, D., Gray, T., & Haggett, C. (2005). The 'Social Gap' in Wind Farm Siting Decisions: Explanations and Policy Responses. *Environmental Politics, 14*(4), 460-477.
[86] Wolsink, M. (2007). Planning of renewables schemes: Deliberative and fair decision-making on landscape issues instead of reproachful accusations of non-co-operation. *Energy Policy, 35*(5), 2692-2704.
[87] Stephenson J. and M. Ioannou (2010) Social Acceptance of Renewable Electricity Developments in New Zealand. Report for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority. http://www.eeca.govt.nz/node/11817

5.3.5 HEPBURN WIND EXAMPLE

The Hepburn Community Wind Park Co-operative just outside of Daylesford in Victoria is Australia's first community wind development and was successfully commissioned in June 2011. It is useful to review its community engagement process.

Shortly after commissioning Hepburn's two turbines, the co-operative launched the Hepburn Wind Community Fund, with the first round worth $15,000 (the first round closed on the 14th of October 2011). The fund will provide $15,000 per turbine every year in grants to the local community. Over the life of the project this equates to more than $1 million. Hepburn is also being compensated for converting supporters to Red Energy and this money is also going directly into the community fund.

Hepburn Wind Farm during construction, 2011.

The fund's launch and generosity is testimony of the benefit of community wind power, and its existence demonstrates an understanding of some of the above research findings ("*local financial involvement also enhances support [...] This might include [...] distributing financial benefits through community benefit packages*"). As the Hepburn Wind Community Fund application guidelines state:

> *"Through the Fund, we seek to strengthen and build local resilience by providing financial support to community groups and organisations that are working to build a vibrant and sustainable community. The Fund supports organisations that operate within the Hepburn Shire and in the parts of the Moorabool Shire close to the wind farm at Leonards Hill.*
>
> *The Fund's focus is squarely on community, and aims to:*
>
> - *strengthen and build capacity within our local community*
> - *inspire innovative approaches to local issues*
> - *encourage collaboration and collective action*
> - *raise awareness of and commitment to sustainability*

- *deliver positive environmental outcomes.*[88]"

Clearly the promise of community benefit has been demonstrably met. However, the story to get to that point was not as clear-cut as these positive outcomes seem to indicate and herein lies the lesson for New Zealand initiatives.

The idea for the project began seven years ago when some Daylesford residents attended a public meeting for a proposed wind farm in the local area. The developer met with strong opposition at the meeting and the proposal was subsequently dropped. Deeply disappointed that the community's response to wind energy was a negative one, the group set about building the vision for a community-owned wind farm that would benefit the entire community.

Government support was crucial to the establishment of the project, and residents worked with niche industry developer Future Energy who was interested in the development of small/medium REG developments. With Future Energy co-ordinating the project development, it fell to the local steering committee to build local community support for the project. Future Energy agreed to take on much of the early financial risk in exchange for a development fee. [89]

Over the seven years it has taken to develop the project, "more than 1,950 co-operative members have contributed over $9.7 million to construction of the wind park. The Victorian state government has provided grants totalling $1.725m and the Bendigo Bank a $3.1m loan".[90]

This project has transformed a community which originally opposed wind energy by running one of the most intensive community engagement programmes in the country. They have now built a community-owned and controlled wind farm of two 2.05 MW wind turbines providing green electricity and financial benefit to the local community. Their engagement has been successful because it was authentic local-to-local communication, they were able to clearly communicate the benefits and they put in the hard yards, rain or shine, including a stall on the main street. Since inception Hepburn's community engagement has included:

- more than 135 street information stalls in the local area;
- more than 90 personal home visits and more than 15 letters sent to their immediate neighbours;
- seven bus tours providing more than 350 people with the opportunity to visit turbines at nearby wind farms;
- speaking at more than 50 events, locally and internationally, to promote Hepburn Wind, including at schools, universities, clubs, wind forums, energy conferences, sustainability conferences, and social enterprise conferences;
- sending out more than 35 press releases that featured in numerous articles in local, state and national print, television, magazine and radio media;
- placing 20 advertisements in the local papers to keep the community aware of the project status;
- participation in and sponsoring of numerous events including the International Day of Climate Action and Walk Against Warming;
- appearing at events such as Sustainable Living Festival, Alternative Energy Association meetings, Chill Out, Swiss Italian Festa, Daylesford New Years Eve Parade and Clean Energy Week;
- actively engaging and supporting local sustainability groups such as WISE, MRSG, MASG, BREAZE, BSG, SHARE, HRN and others;

[88] Hepburn Wind Community Fund Application Guidelines,
[89] http://hepburnwind.com.au/the-project/
[90] http://hepburnwind.com.au/the-project/

- actively engaging online using their website, Twitter and Facebook;
- sending newsletters approximately every 4-6 weeks to their 6500 member mailing list;
- running and sponsoring public forums about the project and general sustainability issues;
- holding a ground-breaking ceremony in October 2010 with The Hon Gavin Jennings MP and 150 key stakeholders and members;
- holding a Turbine Raising Picnic Day in March 2011 on site which attracted 300 attendees;
- holding their official launch in November 2011 with more than 750 supporters;
- running site tours for members, local residents, universities, schools and interested groups and organisations.

They also note that:

> *"We cannot claim to have won over everyone in our community. We continue to respectfully attempt engagement with the few remaining objectors to our project."*

The Hepburn group believes that the constant engagement is an advantage and the fact that its volunteers and staff are part of the community means that engagement can be sustained over a long period.[91] The Hepburn example verifies many of the 12 propositions in section 5.3 relating to community engagement, trust-building and flow of benefits to the community.

Hepburn Wind has greatly benefited from state government and other support to a level not available to New Zealand community wind proponents. For example, Sustainability Victoria granted $975,000 to the project,[92] far eclipsing the financial support the Blueskin project has received to date. As well as state government support, Australia has niche Renewable Energy Generation companies with the financial confidence to invest in new community projects. In New Zealand there is still to date far less tangible support from government and industry (although this is incrementally improving).

Embark's case study on Hepburn Wind notes that the first major project priority 'community support' and the other is 'state government support'. The chairman of Hepburn Wind is quoted in the case study as saying, "*Any community wanting to build a significant community energy project would benefit greatly from having a supportive community environment action group in the area*".[93]

[91] Information provided via email by Taryn Lane, Community Officer, Hepburn Wind [received 21 September 2011 15:14].
[92] Hepburn Case study, Embark http://embark.com.au/display/public/content/Hepburn+Community+Wind+Park+Co-operative
[93] Hepburn Case study, p2

Tour of the Hepburn Turbines.

5.4 SUMMARY

The Quality Planning website and wind energy sector provide similar guidance on standard expectations and good practice in relation to consultation for REG development. In relation to the IAP2 public participation spectrum, the expectation is at the low end of engagement: 'inform' and 'consult'.

The Social Acceptance research by Stephenson and Ioannou suggest that social acceptability is shaped by a range of matters, most of which require earlier and broader community involvement than simply focusing on environmental effects once the site has been chosen and the project has been designed. Their 12 propositions to enhance acceptability require much deeper engagement with communities, and creating opportunities for active community involvement at many levels. This requires working at the 'collaborate' and 'empower' end of the IAP2 spectrum. Hepburn Wind is a good example of how this has occurred, driven by the community itself. How does the Blueskin experience stack up?

6.0 REFLECTING ON ENGAGEMENT

This section reflects on the community engagement processes that have been fundamental to the trajectory of the Blueskin Energy Project. Some of the engagement has been planned, and other parts completely organic and unplanned but nonetheless valuable. The first section reviews the main elements of the engagement processes, a comparison is made of how BEP addressed the 12 propositions for enhancing acceptability of REG development, comparison to standard RMA consultation follows, with finally a conclusion.

6.1 COMPARING TO THE IAP2 SPECTRUM

How does this wide range of engagement processes used by BRCT compare to other processes? Looking at the IAP2 Spectrum gives some useful insights into how it compares with the 'best practice' consultation under the RMA which fits squarely under 'inform' and 'consult'.

The following diagram illustrates the engagement levels and examples of different methods used at Blueskin, and their role in building an empowered participation in the project.

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Newspaper columns Website Blog Leaflet drops Posters Visit to turbine cluster	Vox-pop Survey Post-it notes	Public meetings Research feedback meetings Energy Expos Open days Straw poll	Vision-building workshop Forums Hui	BRCT Opportunities for community members to invest in / have shares in the Blueskin cluster

Through this analysis it is clear that the BRCT is involved in public participation right across the full spectrum.

6.2 COMPARING TO THE TWELVE PROPOSITIONS

Section 5.3 presented 12 propositions for enhancing acceptability of RE projects from the Social Acceptance study[94]. A challenge for the BEP was to attempt to address these matters through its public engagement process, and in doing so test whether these propositions were robust. The following table shows each of these 12 propositions and a commentary on the experience of the BEP in relation to these.

Table 8 HOW BEP addressed the 12 propositions for enhancing acceptability of REG development

"Energy Acceptance" Proposition	BEP Engagement Outcomes
The public have some level of knowledge and familiarity with the technology.	**The BEP engagement outcomes demonstrate a clear interest within the Blueskin Bay community for matters relating to REG wind technology.** Some community members have visited the Horseshoe bend turbine cluster and others have seen turbines in operation elsewhere. Some members have also been involved in helping with the wind-testing devices. The outcome of the public perceptions research shows a level of community interest in relation to the selection of turbines with a clear preference for NZ-made wind technology.

[94] Stephenson J. and M. Ioannou (2010) Social Acceptance of Renewable Electricity Developments in New Zealand. Report for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority. http://www.eeca.govt.nz/node/11817

	A key theme resulting from community feedback via the community open days is the community interest in the design and characteristics of wind turbines, including factors such as the lifespan and capacity of the wind turbines, physical characteristics of the turbines in relation to height, size, colour; the performance of turbines in extreme weather events; and the perceived reputation of wind turbine technology providers.
Public consider the development is suitable in relation to the qualities of the site. **The REG proposal does not have significant impacts on the public and other tangible and intangible qualities that they value.**	**The BEP engagement outcomes demonstrate that the Blueskin community is intimately aware of the study area and potential REG development sites under consideration by the BRCT. An emerging community preference for the Porteous Hill site is evident.** Public perceptions research highlighted some potential community concerns in relation to the impact of a REG wind turbine development on landscape values, visual qualities of the rural environment, potential for bird strike, and potential for health impacts. Generally, open day attendees showed interest in the potential sites presented, and the reasoning behind the preferred site option. Overall, participants were generally comfortable with the prospective site options presented with the knowledge that they would have a future opportunity to be involved in site selection. The results of the online survey indicate that survey respondents consider the most suitable site to be Porteous Hill, aligning with the BRCT preferred site at present.
They feel that developers have listened to their concerns and dealt with them respectfully and honestly. **They feel trust and good faith in the developer.** **The public and communities feel that they are contributors to the energy transition rather than onlookers.**	**The BEP engagement outcomes demonstrate that there has been overall a positive reception to the BRCT engagement initiatives to date and that the community is eager to become involved throughout the different project development stages.** In this case the BRCT is the proponent for the REG development on behalf of the community, and so there is no external developer as such. The results of the online survey showed that the majority of respondents viewed the approach of the BRCT in relation to the BEP project positively. Further opportunities to evaluate the community's experience and perceptions of the BRCT will be possible following the implementation of future project development stages. Further opportunities to evaluate the community's experience and perceptions with regard to the overall 'energy transition' will be possible following the implementation of future project development stages. The engagement process has involved and will continue to involve the community in helping guide the process; will seek opportunities for community investment; will maintain community governance; and the BRCT will continue to work at the broader vision of an integrated energy community involving many aspects of supply and use of energy.
The type, scale and rate of proliferation of the technology is acceptable to	**The BEP engagement outcomes demonstrate that overall the community is receptive and supportive of the BEP project and in particular, supportive of REG wind technology.**

the people of that region at that point in time.	REG development was clearly supported by the community across all engagement activities. The community has expressed particular support for the energy philosophy underpinning the BEP project in relation to the energy future of the Blueskin community area. The results of the online survey showed that the significant majority of respondents supported the proposition that the community should try to meet its own energy needs within the local rural landscape with wind energy technology. There are also some alternative views within the community regarding other forms of energy solutions distinct from wind energy solutions. This demonstrates a deep community awareness of alternative energy solutions within the area, an interest which is supported by BEP/BRCT's wider vision.
They have a stake in the development, or there is another tangible flow of benefits back to the affected individuals and community(ies).	**The BEP engagement outcomes demonstrate strong community interest in being involved in the decisions surrounding the ownership model.** Public perceptions research highlighted a strong community interest in shaping the community ownership model into a form which will provide individual shareholder as well as community benefits. The online survey results show that the majority of respondents were interested in personally investing into the BEP depending on the viability of the project and personal financial circumstances. The majority of respondents were interested in some level of personal gain from their investments through mechanisms such as price rebates and protection from price increases. The majority of respondents were also in favour of a modest community dividend in addition to a return for investors. Some views expressed at the open days related to concerns about the financial feasibility of the project and the opportunities for local households to participate. Others were concerned regarding the perceived lack of guarantee for profits to be realised through the BEP and the perceived lack of finance for the project. It is expected that a successful development of the Blueskin Energy Project wind cluster will provide a mechanism to develop other community benefits with pro-environmental outcomes, such as further subsidised insulation and household photovoltaics. These associated outcomes, if achievable, would provide wider community benefit than simply electricity from renewable generation.
They have some certainty as to likely future constraints on REG developments – that is, they do not feel obliged to oppose every proposal as a matter of principle in order to prevent proliferation. **They feel that their voices and concerns will be considered credible in the**	**The BEP engagement outcomes demonstrate an awareness within the community regarding the future resource consent requirements and other recent high profile REG proposals in Otago.** Further opportunities to evaluate the community's experience and perception of the consenting process will be possible following the implementation of future project development stages. Across all engagement initiatives there has been a strong indication that the community is generally confident in BRCT as a community advocate and its role in ensuring the interests of the community are put first. Notably, the BRCT is actively engaging with the Dunedin City Council regarding the development of its first Spatial Plan which addresses the future potential for

consenting process. **The management and effects of the REG plan over time continue to be seen in a positive light by the public.** **They feel that trade-offs are openly and satisfactorily discussed and regularly revisited.**	REG development in Dunedin City. It is anticipated that this document will provide further certainty regarding future REG developments in Dunedin and this information will be shared with the Blueskin community through future engagement activities.

Overall, it is evident that the BRCT's engagement approach is addressing or starting to address each of the 12 propositions.

We believe that a successful toolkit for engagement should have a good fit with all the elements of the IAP2 spectrum, and with the 12 propositions for social acceptability. We will return to the toolkit in Section 7.

6.3 COMPARING TO 'STANDARD' CONSULTATION UNDER THE RMA

On the basis of both the Quality Planning guidance and the NZWEA guidance, a typical consultative approach utilised by an REG developer could be assumed to take the following path: Following the preliminary investigations into potential sites and feasibility, an REG developer would typically be advised to undertake consultation with affected parties once a given proposal was at the 'Project Stage' (prior to lodging a resource consent application). Consultation at this stage would likely be limited to the environmental impacts of the defined proposal on the chosen site. Once a resource consent application has been lodged with the relevant consent authority, the public notification process would enable any member of the public to make a submission. Again, the submission must be limited to the environmental impacts of the defined project. A submitter could appeal the decision to a higher court if not happy with the outcome. This would be the extent of public engagement in a project. We show this process in Figure 5.

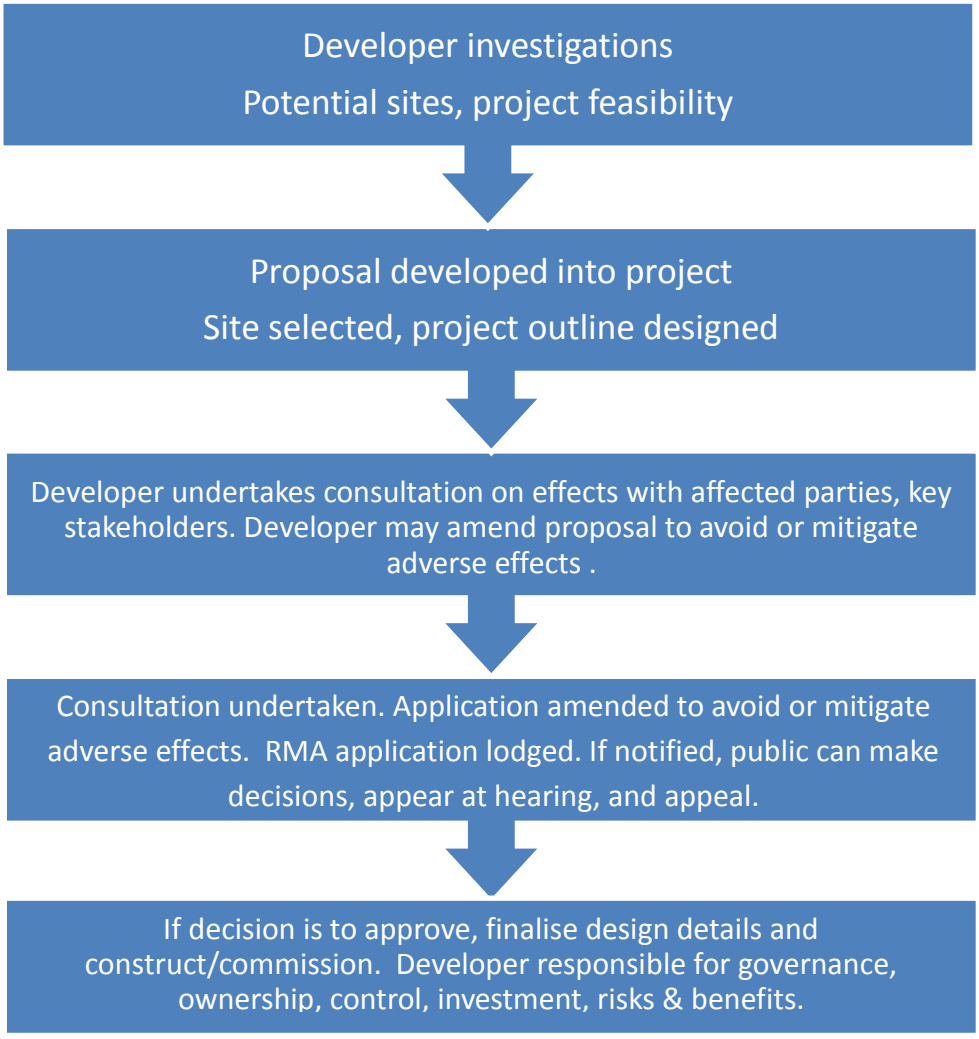


Figure 5: Standard consultation process for an REG project

A community-based energy generation project, in comparison, would or could have the community involved from the outset, right through to being part of the governance for and investors in the project. The RMA consultation process would still occur but would be alongside a much deeper engagement on all aspects of the project. It could look something like this:

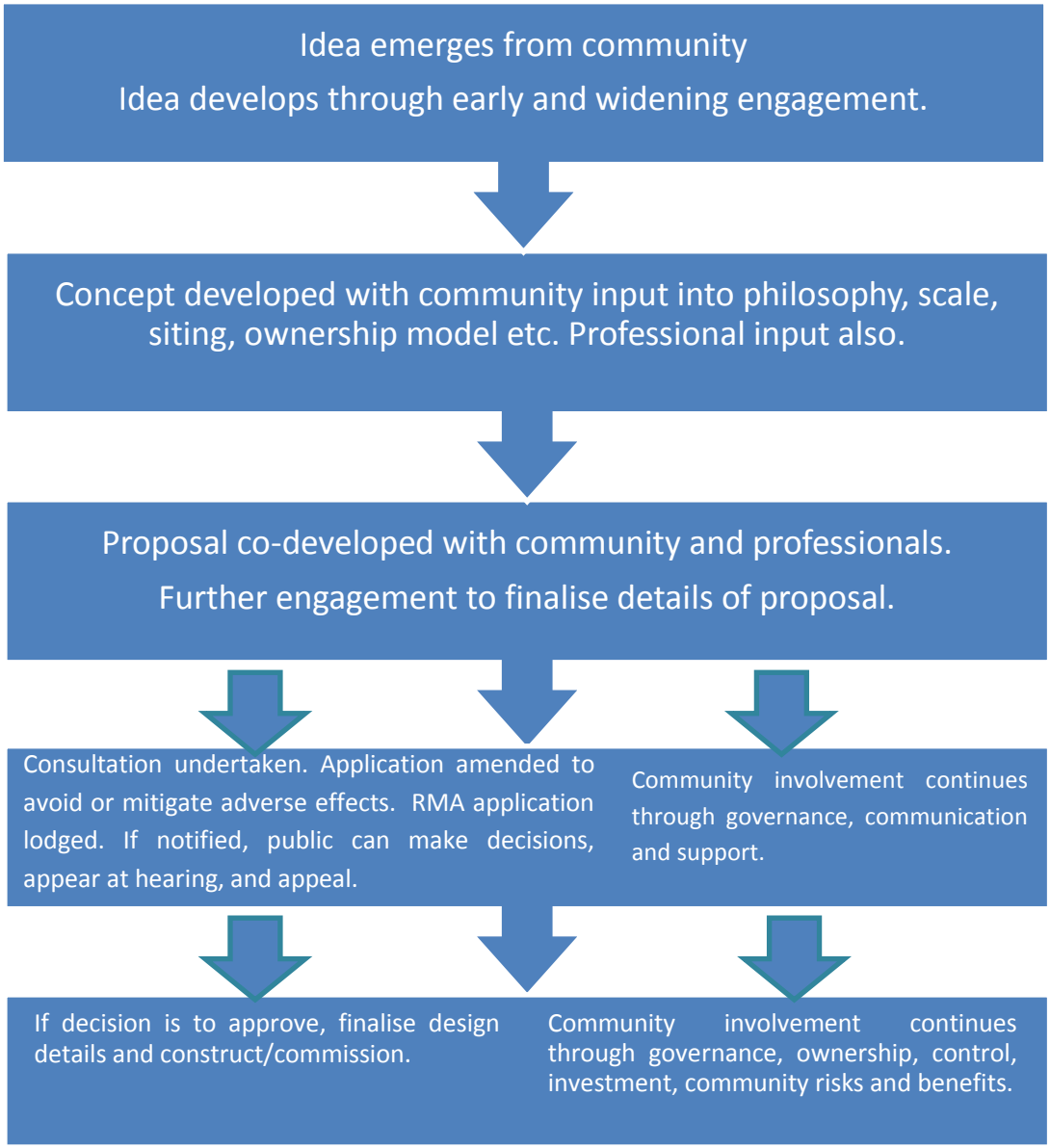


Figure 6: A potential engagement process for a community-initiated energy project

This second model is an example of an all-of life model of engagement, not only 'front-loaded'[95] so that the community is involved in the project development process from the outset, but also continued through the life of the project through involvement in governance, direct investment, and sharing in the risks and benefits of the project.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The engagement process has clearly demonstrated that the Blueskin community has a strong interest and desire to be involved in decision-making related to REG development issues which sit *beyond* what is currently included in the 'best practice' consultative approach. The engagement outcomes show:

- A strong interest within the Blueskin Bay community for action on sustainable energy above and beyond a degree of energy independence via a small wind turbine cluster.
- Overall the community is receptive and supportive of the BEP project.
- A good awareness of the potential development sites under consideration by the BRCT, with an apparent preference for a particular site.
- A positive reception to the BRCT engagement initiatives to date. The community is eager to become involved throughout the different project development stages.
- Strong community interest in being involved in the decisions surrounding the ownership model, and in personally investing in the project.

Overall, these positive responses provide a clear indication that the Blueskin community is responding positively to the participatory process underway. The community response supports the suggestion in the '12 propositions' that social acceptability could be enhanced if these 12 matters are addressed. It also reinforces that there is more involved in achieving community support and acceptance towards REG development than the consultative processes considered 'best practice' under the RMA. Importantly, it has involved going beyond consultation to being engaged in many project development factors that typically sit outside of the resource consenting process including:

- Governance and business structures;
- Community investment options;
- REG philosophy and alignment with community visions;
- REG energy options and technology of renewable energy generation applications;
- Wind Feasibility issues and related data;
- Technical and physical characteristics of wind turbine structures and procurement options;
- Project parameters including site options and scale of REG applications under consideration.

One of the benefits of the extensive community engagement has been to generate positive responses to the proposal. (If the community had been giving negative signals then the proposal would not be proceeding, so in either case the engagement has been beneficial). The three models discussed in this section: IAP2, the 12 Propositions and the front-loading model of engagement are all helpful ways of thinking about the Blueskin story, and what lessons can be gleaned from it to help develop the Community Engagement Toolkit.

[95] The term was coined by recently retired Environment Court judge Shona Kenderdine in her talk to the 2012 NZ Wind Energy Association conference: *Frontloading – community dynamics and consenting*

7.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

A toolkit is exactly that, a set of tools in a kit. Not every task requires every tool, not every tool will be used the same way by every person undertaking a task, sometimes a tool is missing and another will have to take its place. However, no-one disagrees with the value of a toolkit when approaching a complex task. And human society is complex enough without adding in the challenges of an REG project. Where this toolkit differs from other, more standard toolkits, even those designed for REG, is in its community focus. This toolkit is one that has been assembled by community DIYers for the most part, and is fit for purpose. It has been used and proven and may therefore be used again, and again, however the results of its use depend on the skill of its users and not just the toolkit itself.

Although this report is about community engagement, it does not happen in a vacuum – there are many preconditions. We set up the toolkit with several 'trays' of preconditions, and finish with a bottom drawer of community engagement tools which are like a pick-and-mix lolly stall. Using the toolkit as a whole should mean that a project covers all of the elements of the IAP2 "spectrum of public participation" and also addresses the "12 propositions to improve social acceptability" of renewable energy developments.

We do not set out 'how' to use the toolkit precisely – this whole report shows what the BRCT and supporters have done and how – but we do believe that you will find use for *all* the tools presented here. Whether as a community organisation, an industry developer, local government or civic society organisation, what you will find is a list of tools and their arrangement in different 'tool-trays'. We do assume however that you will find it useful to begin with the first tray.

7.1 FIRST TRAY: INITIATING ACTION

Projects usually begin with passion – some intense enthusiasm that is chaotic in shape or nature. While the passion is essential, by itself it will not sustain a project. The first tray of the toolbox represents the early, chaotic phase, which is necessary both as early appraisal and as part of engagement in order to wash to the surface larger issues and help guide the use of more specific tools in other trays.

7.1.1 CATALYST/INSPIRATION

What is it that allows people to actively consider that 'a better world is possible' and to break with the 'business as usual' standard fare? A flood[96], a fire, a landslide or other catastrophe are occasions when people collectively reassess their situation and their lives, and such events, if not so chaotic as to destroy the social fabric of community, also offer the opportunity to develop an alternative vision and fire it up with the passion of motivated individuals. This is the moment for a passionate few to build a collective action and numerous proven tools for effective community organising exist which are helpful even for those experienced in community action.[97]

A small crisis event is not always available on demand and this is where inspirational speakers/leaders demonstrate their value in catalysing collective action. As set out in 'Section 2: The Blueskin Story', in Blueskin it was a combination of crisis event (flood) and inspirational speakers (Sue Kedgley and Jeanette Fitzsimons) that provided the impetus for community members to start to work together and set BRCT on the path to develop community energy. Other inspiring forums have also been held where a panel of local experts/friends of Blueskin have come along to share ideas. The importance of these events was not just in sharing ideas and information, but in getting people together to discuss their responses to those ideas and any other incidental things that came up. Again tools and templates exist to assist community organising.[98]

7.1.2 VISIONING

Creating a collective vision is one of the most important and simple single steps to enable wide community participation. It may also be difficult to achieve. There are no hard and fast rules about creating a vision, suffice to say that a vision is about what you hope to become. It can also be helpful to create a 'mission statement' that expresses the overall aims. Following the 'Vision' and 'Mission' typically come 'Objectives' – details of what will be done. The WEP (now BEP) developed its vision early on (Box 1); the community visioning workshops in 2006 and 2009 built up a vision for the future of the area which was inclusive of many interests; and the BRCT used these to inform the development of its own vision (Box 2). These visions are all well aligned and emerge from the input of many different members of the community. It is often usual to begin establishing a collective vision or to conduct visioning as part of a workshop using pictures, open dialogue and negotiation to achieve consensus. It can be helpful to have a skilled facilitator, and to use a variety of

[96] Like the 2006 flooding of Waitati.

[97] View and explore, for example the Transition Towns website (www.transitiontowns.org.nz/) or see Hopkins, R., (2011) *The Transition Companion: Making your community more resilient in uncertain times*, Green Books: Totness, and the earlier: Hopkins, R., (2009) *The Transition Handbook: Creating local sustainable communities beyond oil dependency (Australian & New Zealand Edition)*, Green Books: Totness.

[98] Ibid

collaboration techniques like brainstorming[99] and rich pictures[100]. Often a rough consensus will emerge which will need subsequent discussion and rewriting. The BRCT Vision, Mission and Objectives did not emerge directly from a BRCT visioning workshop but followed on from community workshops that had expressed more or less explicit vision statements. The precise wording of the Vision, Mission and Objectives was devised by a small group to be effective for the establishment of a legal body and to be as inclusive as possible to enable wide community action and participation through time.

7.2 SECOND TRAY: SHAPING ACTION

If passion ignites action, for it to be maintained, some shaping must occur. This tray, where some early ordering and planning takes place, and where early processes are trialed ensures foundations are laid for further work.

7.2.1 INTEGRATED THINKING

The Blueskin wind cluster project was not the first project out of the blocks or the first idea for community action in Blueskin Bay. It was first mooted at the initial 2006 visioning workshop, but only as part of a general approach to addressing the challenges of peak oil and climate change, informed by the Kinsale Energy Descent Plan.[101] The challenges and opportunities in making the transition to a low carbon community sit behind the wind cluster project, while the reality of society as it is shape the parameters. The wind cluster is the Trust's flagship project at present, but is not the end point, only a stepping-stone on the path towards greater community resilience in Blueskin and as a working model for New Zealand communities, part of an integrated vision of community resilience. Through an 'integrated thinking' lens it is easy to see the Blueskin wind cluster's value as a 'social enterprise' supporting other community initiatives, with greater than mere economic value[102], which in turn increases the value of the wind cluster project.

7.2.2 RELATIONSHIPS – SHARING AND LEARNING

Setting up a community REG project is a huge task involving many skills. Unlike an energy company, a community can't 'buy' these skills, it has to find them in other ways. One source is within the community itself – it's amazing what skills and knowledge you can find on your own back doorstep if you reach out. Another source is through developing relationships with individuals, organisations and businesses. The main constraints of community REG are often funding and technical know-how, meaning that public resources, pro-bono expertise and advice are crucial tools for the task. BRCT has a rich range of relationships, some of which also involve MOUs (see section 4) to help support the BRCT vision, from mentoring and technical know-how to financial support and policy advice. A third source is by linking up with other community groups going down a

[99] http://www.mindtools.com/brainstm.html
[100] http://www.smarttoolkit.net/?q=node/421
[101] Hopkins, R (ed). (2005). *Kinsale 2021: An Energy Descent Action Plan – Version.1.2005*. Kinsale Further Education College: Ireland.
[102] Aligning well, for example, with the 'Four Wellbeings' of the Local Government Act 2002, aiming to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities.

similar path, whether in NZ or elsewhere in the world. Even groups with no dedicated workforce can develop capacity and expertise through sharing knowledge and information with other groups with similar ambitions. BRCT has been lucky to be part of the Hikurangi Foundation's network of community organisations taking action on climate change, and through this has been able to share experiences with other groups throughout New Zealand.

True community engagement and participation require significant input of time and resources. An advantage, however, that community organisations have is that the volunteers and staff are a part of the community. As such they are likely to be able to 'stay the distance' unlike staff in businesses, and thus maintain a constant and personalised presence over a sustained period in a way that commercial developers are unlikely to be able or willing to do. Attention to building and maintaining relationships is crucial.

7.2.3 Working with other community initiatives

Many community networks grow out of community initiatives where there is a great deal of informal information sharing. As part of an integrated approach to resilience, BRCT aimed at the outset to support a range of community initiatives and work with others, and use the tools developed in the pursuit of one project, the Blueskin Energy Project (bank accounts, administration, fundraising kit, etc) to assist other initiatives. Remaining aware of the vitality and activity of the variety of community initiatives and sharing knowledge and resources where possible builds participation and engagement. It is important, nevertheless, to ensure boundaries are firmly in place so that action is not diluted and capacity stretched.

7.2.4 Professionalism

The BEP was started by a very informal group of people discussing an idea. As the idea has grown it has required bringing in professional skills such as accountants and energy specialists for the feasibility report, climatologists and modellers for the suitability of the wind and site, designers for the open day posters and planners for the structured engagement process. Ironically, if the project had started with specialists such as these the community may well have rejected the concept, but given the idea has evolved organically and with a great deal of trust built up, the input from professionals is now appropriate and has indeed proved to be a drawcard for some community members who put high value on professional advice.

7.2.5 Being Informed

Independent research has been another important element of the BEP experience. Given the BEP is community initiated it is critical that the analysis underpinning the engagement outcomes is prepared independently and without bias, which affords an extra level of objectivity to the engagement process. The relationship with Otago University has been incredibly helpful in this regard.

The independent research undertaken by Seth Gorrie on community perspectives of the BEP was invaluable. His public perceptions study with a sample of local community members helped reveal the range of issues and attitudes towards the BEP, and provided a preliminary 'snapshot' indication of the likely areas of community support and opposition. The interview process itself was important in that it was an open exchange which allowed the people interviewed to find out more about the project during the interview, and then respond to that. This in itself led to a more informed community.

Measuring isn't everything but it is useful to understand how things are, and how they are changing. For BRCT, the online survey and informal survey at the Open days (the 'straw poll') were very helpful for getting an idea of the level of support. However, the quantitative data they provide must be read alongside the qualitative feedback received through other means such as the public perceptions interviews. Another set of measures was the Waitati Household Survey undertaken in 2008. A repeat of the survey being undertaken in 2012 will reveal to what extent Waitati households have changed things like insulation or heating methods. Over time, by repeating measures you can get a sense of what progress is being made, and whether it is in the direction of the Vision or not!

7.3 THIRD TRAY: BEING ORGANISED

Organisation is about giving previous planning some structure to allow creative passion to become more productive.

7.3.1 FORMAL STRUCTURES

Although the BEP started out with an unstructured group, it was important that after a certain point in time it became a legal entity. The establishment of BRCT as a charitable trust was the most appropriate option given the roles it needed to play. As a legal body with a bank account, BRCT could sign agreements, apply for funding, negotiate contracts and demonstrate transparent process to enable community trust and give oversight to BEP. Having the Trust in place as a recognised leadership group representing community interests is a core strength of the project and key to the community feeling it is 'their' project.

In future as the project evolves, other types of organisational structure are likely to be needed, and this is one of the areas in which community views are being canvassed. In a nutshell, the structure has to suit the needs, functions and aspirations of the stage of the project, and should be able to alter over time as these change.

7.3.2 FORMAL AGREEMENTS

Formal agreements will be required to gain access to expertise and objective information allowing community engagement to be meaningful. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU), Confidentiality Agreements, Pro-Bono contracts may all be very important in the early days, with formal contracts, joint venture arrangements and partnerships becoming important as a project moves forward.

7.3.3 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

The Waitati community engagement would not have been successful without a dedicated and capable co-ordinator to make things happen and to always 'be there' with an open door or on the end of a telephone when people had questions to ask or issues to debate. To facilitate community participation, any engagement project needs a central figurehead, and ideally continuity, so that social connection with the project is not lost or broken. That person needs to have some skill as a social entrepreneur: "Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent,

tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change".[103] Ideally, a social entrepreneur is someone who "presents ideas that are user-friendly, understandable, ethical, and engage widespread support in order to maximize the number of local people that will stand up, seize their idea, and implement with it." (Ibid).

For the BRCT, being able to employ Scott Willis in this core role has only been made possible through a series of funding applications to various bodies – not a guarantee of a regular income and quite stressful when the money dries up. Having the Trust and many volunteers is also crucial, but without someone in a central co-ordinating role the project would have taken a lot longer to get going and possibly would not have got to where it is today. The value of a funded co-ordinator or project manager cannot be underestimated.

7.3.4 FUNDING

Funding is a requirement for community engagement. Whether we live in strong, supportive communities or in more dislocated communities, we will encounter a great diversity of opinion, perspective and pathways for participation. It is highly unlikely that any volunteer approach would be able to secure donations of professional expertise, printing, hall hire, etc, even if volunteers were somehow able to plan, organise and execute engagement on the scale necessary for a significant infrastructure project such as the modest Blueskin Power project, which is significant because of its scale – appropriate for the community it is designed to serve. BRCT has secured funding from a government contract and community funding, without which very little could have been organised or executed. Community groups aiming to undertake broad community engagement in the future will likely call on community funding bodies as well and while it is less likely that government funding for innovative research will be accessible for similar projects, what may become available could be central or local government support for community engagement in order to facilitate the uptake of REG. We can also envisage some enlightened approaches by companies who see the benefit of partnering with community to achieve REG goals and may be willing to contribute some of the costs of engagement.

7.4 BOTTOM DRAWER: ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

This layer is all about what makes it all work. We don't go into the precise tools used at the open days – they are detailed separately in Section 3.3 and Appendix 1 – and instead we concentrate on what creates the magic of people engaging in, and contributing to, a collective vision.

7.4.1 INFORMAL MEETINGS

Formality isn't everything, and in fact can stifle the creativity and flexibility needed in the early days of a project. In the early days of the energy project, small (5-10 people) WEP meetings were held irregularly in group members' houses, as well as numerous 'sub-group' meetings.[104] Without any formal community structure at first, yet within a supportive community environmental culture and using the Kinsale Energy

[103] Ashoka 2012: http://www.ashoka.org/social_entrepreneur [Accessed 5/9/2012; 4.22pm]

[104] 'Sub-group' here refers to self-organised volunteers working in different areas of action. For example, two people worked on micro-hydro initially, six on organising the first energy expo, two on photovoltaics and two on Home Energy Rating Scheme audits.

Descent Plan[105] as an operational guide, a number of small but significant community energy events and projects were successfully organised. In retrospect, the loose group of community residents working as WEP were effectively creating 'ripples' that gradually engaged more community members in the idea of an integrated energy community. The actions were not directed at a single specific outcome but were responsive to community members' interests and current opportunities, albeit driven by the long-term vision of a resilient community. Resulting actions included the energy expos, household energy audits, information evenings (one with a ceiling insulation retrofit giveaway) and research evenings.

7.4.2 Open Dialogue

A key element of the WEP meetings in the 2007–08 period was the informal 'Open Dialogue' style format.[106] The format can be messy, but it allows all participants in a meeting to share ideas and opinions. One important rule is 'respect' among participants, to allow freedom of expression and encourage listening. At each meeting, a draft agenda was suggested, modified and used as a framework, but never dominated meetings. Conversation was led by the most interested and involved member in a particular activity. Minutes, when noted,[107] were taken by a different person at each meeting, and sometimes only circulated much later. The important elements of the meetings in retrospect were the opportunities to share ideas and opinions in a relaxed environment, the building of trust amongst members, and building competencies through the facilitation of the many events and actions which drew in the wider community.

7.4.3 Public meetings/workshops/hui

Public meetings, workshops and hui are a crucial part of any engagement process. With the BEP, many such events were held, dealing with a variety of energy issues. In the 2007-08 period there were seven in total, counting the two Energy Expos in this period, as public presentations and talks were given as part of the Expos.[108] Fewer such meetings have been held in more recent years, possibly because of the range of other forms of engagement that have been used. The 'democratising energy' hui was an excellent meeting that helped consolidate relationships with Kati Huirapa and Ngai Tahu representatives. As long as they can be appropriately facilitated, public meetings act like a pressure valve and testing room for ideas, as well as allowing specific topics of local interest to be raised. Anyone who has attended any of the public meetings in Blueskin Bay dealing with energy issues will appreciate the wide range of perspectives, the different levels of knowledge, the political tensions exhibited, the occasional grandstanding and seemingly 'random' issues discussed, as well as the passion, humour, and cups of tea.

7.4.4 Building Literacy

[105] Under Rob Hopkins, Transition Town guru, students at a sustainability course in Kinsale, Ireland, produced a strategy document with a vision and a series of practical steps for locally designing a way down from the oil peak. See http://transitionculture.org/2005/11/24/kinsale-energy-descent-action-plan/ [Accessed 7/10/11].

[106] Bojer, M. et al. (2006). *Mapping Dialogue. A research project profiling dialogue tools and processes for social change, Version 2.0*. Johannesburg, South Africa. Available online at: http://www.collectivewisdominitiative.org/papers/pioneers_dialogue.htm [accessed 7/10/2011].

[107] Minutes became important as the group and number of actions grew but early participants did not place particular importance on formal structures and early meetings were very informal.

[108] We have not counted other community meetings related to the Waitati Open Orchards group during this period but it is important nevertheless to recognise that there is never a neat distinction between people and topics in public meetings. Energy issues were also discussed in other fora but cannot be quantified.

Electricity doesn't have a taste (unless you stick a live wire on your tongue – not suggested) or colour and yet is a basic part of our lives. The fact that it is mundane and associated with utilitarian things (whiteware, tools) makes it difficult to build an emotional connection with electricity. The Blueskin experience began with work to increase energy literacy, because unless you can grasp some basic ideas about energy then it's hard to see why you might need to change. Events like the Energy Expos, the Open days, home energy audits and research feedback events all helped build energy literacy. Seeing and experiencing is a key way to engage people. The trial of the single-household Thinair turbine in the community, and the trip to see the Horseshoe Bend turbine cluster, were important in giving community members something tangible to see and discuss and thus engage more deeply with the concept of wind energy.

7.4.5 Multiple and Regular communication

Regular items in the local media have been a key engagement tool to spread information in the community about what was happening and to encourage people to get involved. A monthly BEP column has appeared in the Blueskin News since November 2007, which is distributed to almost all Blueskin households each month. For many people this is their only regular source of knowledge about the project. The column also doubles as a blog on Waitati's pages on the Transition Towns website. Monthly articles for the Rothesay News (from March 2011) were produced after the public perceptions research revealed a significant number of Blueskin households were not in the distribution area for the Blueskin News.

The other key communication tool that began in the early period was the establishment of a subscriber email newsletter (the 'WEP Update' – now, since September 2011, the 'BEP Update'). Email is more immediate, and provides a greater level of information for people who have indicated a direct interest in the project and desire to be kept informed. The email newsletter is sent out each month, with an additional one or two email newsletters in a month when there is a lot to report.

The research relationship with the University of Otago has been very helpful to the energy project as a whole, providing key information about everything from wind strengths to community perspectives. But from an engagement perspective the most important thing has been the research feedback meetings in the local hall where researchers talk about their findings to the community. These are always well attended and lead to excellent discussions on all manner of related topics.

7.4.6 Supporting wider community interests

A key strength of the BRCT's role and approach is that it aims to build community resilience in many ways, and the wind turbine cluster is just one aspect of a much bigger picture. BRCT continues to support a number of other community initiatives, and one purpose of the wind cluster is to eventually provide ongoing funding for such initiatives. This social enterprise model is something that has repeatedly found strong community support. The wind cluster is intended to be more than generation: it is a community support activity that ticks environmental, social, and economic goals within a 'strong sustainability model'[109].

7.4.7 Lively creative events

[109] See: Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand Inc (SANZ) (2009), *Strong Sustainability for New Zealand: principles and scenarios,* Nakedize Limited: Auckland NZ.

The Open days with a variety of different ways to provide information (people, posters, articles, objects, etc) and seek feedback (comments, discussion, vox-pop, etc) were very effective in communicating and engaging with the wider community. People became engrossed in the event and provided rich and helpful feedback. Other lively creative events relating to the BEP include the Energy Expos, an information evening and participation in public events like community climate change actions.

7.4.8 Opportunities for community investment

From the outset the aim was to have the wind turbine cluster community-owned as much as possible and desired. It is clear there is strong interest from community members, some of whom are not usually those attending public meetings, to invest in or have shares in the project. While the project is not yet open to investors, it is important to ensure the 'architecture' is in place (email contact for would-be investors for example). Investors in the project, whether private, institutional or ethical/social investors have different objectives (and different ability to invest), yet this community project with economic, as well as environmental and social return provides a common ground. We envisage that the emotional link to community may increase through this provision of an opportunity to invest.

7.4.9 Multiple Paths for getting Community Feedback

If public meetings and WEP/BEP meetings open to the public were effective in generating ideas, wider participation was only possible as other feedback pathways opened up. The Open days provided open visual displays in three different community halls; the online survey gave access to web-connected residents; phone, email and an open office provide direct feedback opportunities; and the local media contains monthly updates as does the BEP e-list, stimulating further feedback. While a line was drawn in the sand for the generation of this report, multiple pathways remain open to ensure participation continues.

7.4.10 Wild cards and Networking

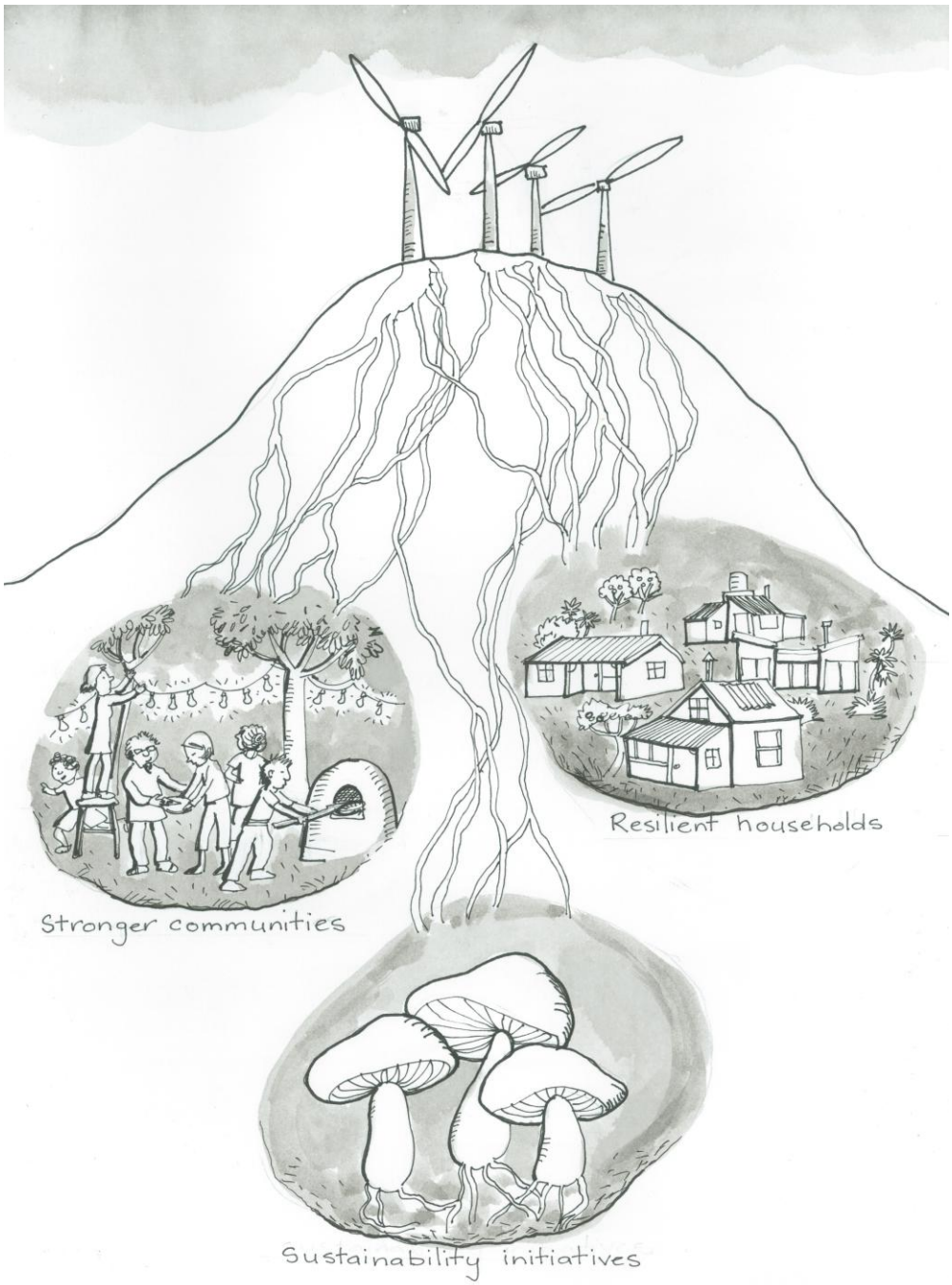
BRCT grabbed opportunities, like the visits by Nicole Foss, and Dana Lyons, and the NERI conference with its delegates, to bring people together. While the 'Democratizing Energy' Hui had a BEP energy focus, the other events were simple 'community good' events: presentation and debate on the one hand and music, party and Christchurch fundraising auction on the other. These events have a value in recharging the batteries, but more than that, they also provide informal opportunities to meet and hold conversations in an unstructured, agenda-less setting, which all contributes to the strengthening of local networks.

7.4.11 Listening and Responding

Where engagement and participation differs significantly from 'consultation' is in the process of listening and responding. The process of developing the Blueskin Energy Project has involved multiple paths for community feedback combined with the willingness to take on board ideas for additional initiatives/actions where the capacity exists. Listening is a creative process that allows ideas to expand and grow. And it is really almost an accident that BRCT discovered the power of listening and understood the full value of responding to questions and queries. Funding squeezes means that often it's time for a pause, and a moment for reflection, all the

while drawing deeper on the community networks to make things happen – networks which bring out new, richer perspectives. Time for a cuppa?

8. CONCLUSIONS



The story of the Blueskin Energy Project could not be contained in the covers of this report. It could go on for several more volumes, and it is certain that this is just the beginning. Whatever the outcome of the wind cluster idea, the community has developed a vision and impetus to build resilience in energy, food and transport, and new shoots will keep on emerging.

And many different stories could be told – of the role of music and food in community-building; of the various explorations of different energy generation modes that have been explored and in some cases trialled; of the technical aspects of the wind testing and analysis … But the story that had to be told in this report was of the community engagement process, the role it has played in the development of the Blueskin Energy Project, and the lessons that can be shared with others.

It must be admitted that the engagement process was never 'designed', but has emerged (and continues to emerge) partly in response to the community's own initiatives and partly as an inventive and opportunistic series of events arranged by the BRCT, its co-ordinators and volunteers. As the scope of the project evolved (as a result of community support) it became ever-more crucial that the public engagement process provided opportunities for the community to have a voice on wider socially determined issues, for example, site options, scale and scope of the project. The engagement methodology developed for 'structured engagement process' was designed by a team which had members with long experience with consultation under the RMA, an awareness of the shortcomings of 'typical' best-practice consultation, and informed by the IAP2 and the '12 propositions' from the Social Acceptance report, as well as a fair dollop of pure inventiveness, creativity and professional design skills. The intention was to maximise opportunities for community discussion and input on a wide range of relevant matters *prior* to the detailed plans being developed for the wind turbine cluster, and well prior to any resource consent application.

Producing this report at this point in time, well before the project is complete, might seem premature. After all, we have no way of knowing what the future will hold, only that much hard work and further engagement will be needed even before the proposal is lodged for resource consent, let alone established and operational. But we do feel that there is much to share, particularly because Blueskin is at the forefront of community-initiated renewable energy in New Zealand, and because the engagement process has been comprehensive and remarkably positive. Even if the project went no further, the relationships and resilience built from the project to date would be worth it.

We hope that this community engagement toolkit, and the supporting material, will be useful to other communities seeking to develop their own energy projects (or other projects), and perhaps to far-sighted energy companies who see potential in working alongside communities. We believe also that improved policies and support at the national and local government levels could do much to help make small-scale energy projects a reality, so that they could make a significant contribution to New Zealand's renewable energy future.

For the Blueskin Energy Project, resourcing challenges remain, and the difficulties of operating in hostile or indifferent policy and market environments are great. Based on current studies and community feedback, however, BRCT is confident that if they progressively address these challenges with a supportive community alongside, the wind cluster will provide the community with an integrated package of positive environmental, social and economic outcomes. Resilient settlements with secure energy and thriving communities: this is the promise of the Blueskin Energy Project.

APPENDIX 1: OPEN DAYS

1.1 ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY VIEWS AND FEEDBACK

BLUESKIN ENERGY PROJECT
ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY VIEWS AND FEEDBACK

OPEN DAYS HELD AT LONG BEACH, WARRINGTON, WAITATI

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2011: 1.00PM-4.30PM SATURDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2011: 1.00PM-4.30PM
SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2011: 1.00PM-4.30PM

INTRODUCTION

This report provides an analysis of the community feedback obtained from three consecutive community open days held by the Blueskin Resilient Community Trust at Long Beach, Warrington, and Waitati in September 2011, as part of the Blueskin Energy Project. This report also evaluates the open day experience as an engagement method, and highlights key lessons learnt which are relevant to the on-going engagement with the community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODS AT THE OPEN DAYS

The analysis provided in this report is based on the engagement outcomes of the community open days. Various engagement techniques and methods were employed for the open days to encourage community feedback on the BEP. These include:

Aerial Maps

Large aerial satellite maps of the Blueskin Bay area, and the wider Dunedin area, were presented on tables. All attendees were encouraged to record their residential location on the maps. At the completion of the open days, the residential distribution of attendees recorded on the maps was examined to assess the spatial extent of community engagement, and to identify those areas that were potentially under-represented at the conclusion of this phase of the community engagement. A copy of the aerial maps is at the end of this section.

Poster Displays

At each open day the poster display (which consisted of 13 posters) was presented along the perimeter walls of each community hall (see 1.2 below). The poster display was designed in a way that would encourage attendees to view the poster content in a particular order to ensure that each participant left with an understanding of the:

- Origins and aims of the BEP
- Preliminary BEP feasibility issues
- Ownership and business structure options
- Preliminary BEP prospective turbine sites
- How to become involved
- Who to contact with any queries, concerns, ideas.

Attendees were invited to record any comments on ‘post-it’ notes which could be attached to the relevant poster.

Vox-Pop Forms

A series of "Vox-Pop" forms were designed to encourage attendees to record any views or concerns regarding any aspect of the BEP. The forms were positioned at the end of the poster display so that attendees were able to 'post' their anonymous views within a ballot-box. A copy of the Vox-Pop series is presented in Appendix 1.2.

Graffiti Strip

A roll of plain brown "butchers" paper was laid out on a flat surface which attendees could "graffiti" with their "thought-tags". See photo in 1.2 below.

Straw Poll

To gain an appreciation of how the community viewed the various options in relation to the proposed business structure and ownership of the BEP, attendees were asked to cast a vote on one of three options presented in the poster display.

Comments Book

Prior to leaving the event, participants were asked to provide their contact details, and were given the opportunity of recording any final thoughts and impressions within a comments book.

Verbal Discussions

During each of the open days, the nature of any verbal discussions was recorded where possible.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK – ANALYSIS

The following analysis of community views represents the collation and synthesis of community views captured across the multiple engagement methods described above. The data represents a mix of quantitative and qualitative information which is analysed for key themes. The analysis provides a snapshot of community views in three coastal community locations, and highlights key areas of interest, concern and knowledge that the community holds in relation to the BEP project. The analysis is presented under the following key headings:

- Level of community engagement
- Areas of community support
- Key question areas
- Community views on business structure and ownership
- Areas of community concern
- Community visions
- Ideas and suggestions
- Summary and lessons learnt

At each open day, attendees were asked to place a coloured sticker on an aerial map to represent where they live in relation to the open day community area. Many attendees were accompanied with friends or family, and/or indicated they were representing the views of fellow family members who were unable to make the open day. For the purposes of this analysis, the numbers recorded in the following table represent the number of attendee 'parties' who identified with the corresponding residential location. The table does not provide an exact record of attendee numbers.

Table 1: Attendee Residential Locations

	Open dayLocation			
Attendee Location of Origin	**Long Beach**	**Warrington**	**Waitati**	**TOTAL**
Long Beach	8	NA	NA	8
Evansdale	NA	NA	1	1
Waitati / Doctors Point	3	2	26	33
Heyward Point Road	1	NA	1	2
Purakanui	9	NA	4	13
Osborne	2	NA	1	3
Warrington	NA	22	2	24
Seacliff	NA	1	1	2
Port Chalmers	NA	NA	3	3
Dunedin	4	2	2	8
TOTAL	27	27	40	**95**

Overall, the three open days attracted a total of 95 'parties'. Of these, the highest proportion attended the Waitati open day(42%), with the remaining equally divided across the Warrington and Long Beach open days (28% and 28% respectively).

The attendee record demonstrates that the most commonly represented residential location of attendees was represented by Waitati residents (35%), followed by Warrington (25%), and then Purakanui (14%). The least represented areas across all three open days included Evansdale, Heyward Point Road, Seacliff, Osborne and Long Beach.

The open days attracted interest from the wider Dunedin area, including those living in Port Chalmers, St Clair, North Dunedin, and Brighton. The Brighton attendee owned a crib in Waikouaiti and was interested in the nature of the project. This highlights the potential to harness the interest of the non-resident population in the study area and northern coastal areas. The collective spatial representation of attendees across all three open day locations is represented in Maps 1 and 2 below.

AREAS OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Across the three open days, many positive statements of support for the BEP were received. Some were clearly impressed with the presentation, content and design of the open days, while others variously reported inspiration and satisfaction in regards to the concept of the BEP, and the progress and achievements of the BEP, and of the local community to date.

- ***"The Project is visionary – the presentation and design of these discussions days admirable, the "sustainable" quality of both the idea you are propagating and the way in which you're carrying it forward is impressive. All the power to your various arms."***
- ***"Congratulations on such an informative presentation."***
- ***"Fantastic concept! The country needs communities like this to lead it into broader participation."***
- ***"Very impressed and inspired. Will give more thought to this and get in touch."***
- ***"Inspiring progress! Great Stuff."***
- ***"Fantastic! These sorts of communities are the future of the world. Good luck."***
- ***"This is a brilliant idea."***
- ***"Sounds like a good idea."***

A couple of people indicated general support for the project based on ethical principles surrounding electricity supply and community control:

- ***"Finally a common-sense approach to electricity supply – let's do it!"***
- ***"I think is a great idea. I'm tired of being ripped off by corporate giants only interested in profit. Give control back to the community!"***

A few attendees reported support for the project but qualified this support with the hope that the project will be cost-effective and that the project would gain further political support.

- ***"This is good for our small community – Waitati. I am keen to see it come to fruition as long as it is cost effective. Thank you."***
- ***"Only if it makes money."***
- ***"Keep up the good work. Let's hope for a bit of help eventually from the politicians."***

A few participants supported the proposal in principle, and noted that this view was dependent on financial factors:

- ***"Awesome work!! Money we may invest will only add to the valuation of our property – that's if you're money minded."***
- ***"Supportive of the proposal but unlikely to have the funds to support financially."***

One party indicated they were happy to have a turbine on their land in Warrington. Another person reported a recently altered perception of wind turbines having seen wind turbines in operation en-route to Middlemarch:

- ***"On recently seeing the wind turbines on the way to Middlemarch they were less of a blot on the countryside than the huge power (triffids) along the main power lines. I'm all for our local project."***

COMMUNITY VIEWS ON OWNERSHIP AND BUSINESS STRUCTURE

Attendees were asked to cast a 'straw' vote as to their preferred 'Ownership and Business Structure'. The three options presented included 1) Community Co-Operative; 2) Joint Venture; and 3) Company Structure. The details of these options can be viewed in the poster display material attached. Table 2 below presents the straw poll results across the three open days.

Table 2: Attendee Preferred Ownership and Business Structure

Option	Long Beach	Warrington	Waitati	TOTAL
1	12	6	18	36
2	12	13	9	34
3	1	1	0	2
TOTAL	25	20	27	72

A total of 72 straw votes were cast across the three open days. Overall, options 1 and 2 were similarly represented, receiving 50% and 47% of all votes cast respectively. The most favoured option across all open days was option 1 – Community Co-Operative, receiving a total of 36 votes, representing 50% of all votes cast. The second most favoured option across all open days was option 2 – Joint Venture, receiving a total of 34 votes, representing 47% of all votes cast.

The highest proportion of voters was represented by attendees at the Waitati open day, followed by attendees at Long Beach, and lastly attendees at Warrington. Option 1 was the most preferred in both the Long Beach and Waitati communities, while option 2 received the highest proportion of votes at the Warrington open day. The least favoured option across all open days was option 3, receiving just two votes, representing 3% of all votes cast.

Further comments in relation to ownership and business structure were variously received across post-it notes on the poster display, the graffiti strip, and vox-pop forms. Several people specifically identified support for option 2 as being the most likely/most feasible ownership and business structure, as demonstrated by the following quotations:

- ***"Option 2 is the most feasible – balance between local ownership and initiative with business investment."***
- ***"Go for this* [Option 2] *Keep control local. Otherwise how does it differ from just one more power generation company?."***

A couple of people expressed conditional support for option 1 or option 2 which was dependent on personal financial circumstances. One person specifically expressed non-support for option 3. In relation to the investment options and business structure, several attendees shared their views on how the business structure could work, as illustrated by the following range of views and questions:

- **"Could the investment be made by monthly payments?"**
- **"Investments tied to rates of houses?"**
- **"Only sell to shareholders / users?"**
- **"All households should benefit even if they are not investors."**
- **"Some profits should fund other projects e.g. hot water (solar)."**
- **"Investors get moderate returns – ethical investors."**
- **"Ethical investors can generate above average returns."**
- **"Shares purchase to be attached to property and paid off in instalments across weeks maybe?"**

- **"Other options could be to increase % to 30%/40%/50% – what would the relevant benefits be with these?"**
- **"I've voted for the joint venture but in an ideal world I'd go for community co-operative."**
- **"A business loan repaid via electricity bills over 5-10 years? Love the project!"**

Across the three open days, many questions were raised by the community which have been grouped under seven headings below:

Lifespan of Project / Turbines

A few members of the community were interested in the life-span of the project, and a few were also interested in the anticipated lifespan of the wind turbine models presented.

- ***"Will this happen in my lifetime?"***
- ***"What is the lifetime of one of these turbines?"***
- ***"What is the lifespan of the turbines? Do they need replacing over time? How would that affect the costing?"***

Capacity / Extent of REG Distribution

Several community members variously raised questions surrounding the spatial extent of the REG distribution that would be provided by the BEP, particularly for wider communities in Seacliff and Port Chalmers, and also the capacity of the BEP:

- ***"How many houses will it power?"***
- ***"How many houses will four turbines power?"***
- ***"What area exactly would the generation cover? Exactly who/where would the turbines supply electricity? Perhaps draw a radius around the area on future maps."***

Financial Feasibility of Project

A couple of people expressed the desire to have access to further details in regard to the financial feasibility of the BEP:

- ***"Has there been an analysis of the likely financial benefits?"***
- ***"So what contribution do you think is needed per household on average?"***

Project Design

A number of attendees were interested in the design and characteristics of the proposed wind turbines, and the resilience of the structures in adverse weather conditions:

- ***"What colours will the turbines be?"***
- ***"What colour will the turbines be?"***
- ***"What height do they [the turbines] need to be?"***
- ***"Are there any issues with icing or snow in cold weather?"***
- ***"If the wind is too high will the blades fall off?"***
- ***"Prefer small cluster – nothing worse than large wind farms and all you can see is turbines."***

Financial Accessibility

Perhaps the most frequently asked question by the community related to the financial accessibility of residents to the BEP. Questions were variously raised about the costs of connecting to the REG distribution to community residents, and the scope for any financial assistance or loan mechanisms:

- ***"What will it cost individual households to connect to the scheme."***
- ***"Will it be accessible to households on a benefit?"***
- ***"What if someone wants to but can't afford it?"***
- ***"What will it cost to connect to the scheme? (for individual houses?)"***
- ***"Is it accessible to people on a benefit? (cost-wise?)"***
- ***"Break down in costing to the ratepayer. Investment required." (check detail)***
- ***"How much will it cost individual home owners?"***
- ***"Will my power bill be cheaper?"***
- ***"What scope is there for some form of financial assistance, tax relief, loans."***

Environmental Effects

A couple of people were specifically interested in the environmental effects of the BEP:

- ***"How much noise will the turbines create, and over what distance will it be audible?"***
- ***"How noisy will it be? Purakanui is quiet at the moment."***

Other

One attendee requested further information on the extent and location of Landscape Management Areas under the Dunedin City District Plan, and another sought further information in relation to the local employment that would result from the project. One community member was interested in how the government could be mobilised to take "an active interest in such a visionary project."

AREAS OF COMMUNITY CONCERN

Across the three open days, a number of areas of community concern emerged. These are discussed below:

Background Data / Project Feasibility

There was a level of concern expressed by a few attendees regarding the validity of background data and the preliminary BEP feasibility study findings:

- ***"Lifespan estimates vary with wind variability. Infrastructure a big part of costs."***
- ***"Price is always relative to income and [word illegible] index [therefore] this is misleading."***
- ***"Best wind resource? On 4 months of monitoring is nonsense."***
- ***"4 months is not 75% of required 'precise wind data'."***

Ethical Investments

Concern was also expressed by one or two attendees regarding the ethical investment principles being compromised by the BEP:

- ***"Kikarangi Foundation is part financed by the Warehouse which 1) exploits cheap labour in China 2) destroys local businesses 3) promotes consumerism. Hardly ethical money."***
- ***"Windflow Technology's history is not as tidy as it could be. A court case is still in progress with regard [to] ISO certification of generators supplied to a wind farm in the North Island. NZ Wind Farm was supplied with generators and were advised they were ISO certified. They were not."***

Benefits to shareholders / community

A couple of comments received indicate that there may be some doubts within the community in terms of the actual benefits the community and/or shareholders will realise as a result of the BEP:

- *"No guarantee of profits."*
- *"Lack of finance – may be better to invest in smaller scale wind turbines."*

Prospective Sites

Numerous attendees commented on the prospective site locations. Notably, several indicated no preference in site location, subject to no environmental impacts resulting. A few specifically expressed a concern regarding the prospective Mopanui site location.

- *"My preference for the site is the best site for high wind."*
- *"Don't mind where it is located, just as long as it cheapens the electricity."*
- *"No problems with the prospective sites so long as they do not result in adverse effects on views and noise."*
- *"No turbines on Mopanui Ridge – anywhere! High conservation area – should be acknowledged and respected."*
- *"Mopanui Ridge – often windy; predominantly southerly or nor easterly."*
- *"Not keen on Mopanui site – visually inappropriate."*
- *"Strong winds experienced up from Purakanui, to the LHS boundary of the Ecosanctuary."*
- *"Not particularly concerned about placement/location of wind turbines, so long as they go in the best place."*

Environmental Effects

Many people provided feedback on their concerns and perceptions regarding the potential environmental impacts of the project. These concerns were variously held on the basis of potential impact on bird life, visual impact, and health impacts.

- *"Not getting a precedent of wind mills on the Silver Peaks skyline."*
- *"The ever increasing cost of electricity not just to the domestic consumer but to the environment generation of it and the impact on our rivers and waterways etc."*
- *"Can we be reassured that someone is looking out for the birds? What is the risk to them?"*
- *"The birds flying into the blades and get killed or hurt."*
- *"What about the impact on roads etc to get the turbines in – visibility etc."*
- *"Experience in Germany suggests that turbines can result in health impacts if located too close to houses – closer than 2km is not good."*
- *"Anecdotal evidence that wind turbines in Mahinerangi injure/strike birds – they pay someone to collect carcasses. This is relevant because there are hawks, falcons and other alpine birds in the local area. Carefully consider height in relation to bird flight paths."*

COMMUNITY VISIONS

Several members of the community took the opportunity to convey their vision for either their community, or the BEP.

- *"A sustainable community owned and operated energy source – what is happening with Blueskin Energy Project is fantastic and ground breaking and hopefully the beginning of a new way of communities being in charge of their own energy source and use."*

- ***"To see the project come to fruition with returns to the investors based on their investment dollars and with a smaller return to the community (if any leftover!)."***
- ***"Community invest. If concerned for people's land view you sell idea that property valuation will increase. Win-win situation."***
- ***"A world that my grandchildren can live in without having to grapple with the legacies of global warming, pollution, and over-exploitation of rare resources. The wind power initiative is impressive because it ticks so many boxes that potentially will result in a better world. The project has advanced far further than I ever dreamed possible and obviously reflects considerable local commitment, expertise and enthusiasm. Realistically any wind farm must balance aesthetic considerations with effectiveness. At this stage low visibility towers on a ridge is particularly important and commendable."***

IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

Numerous attendees offered further ideas and suggestions in relation to the BEP project, or related issues.

One person mentioned that Hampden is "also trying to get off the grid" and suggested that the Trust investigate what initiatives are underway. Another provided the example of a community in Hopetown in Western Australia with similar energy initiatives.

A few people mentioned wider energy issues relating to hydro / solar / power / LED lighting / batteries / education:

- ***"Do it now - look at micro wind/hydro."***
- ***"For $8000 you can get solar hot water and a long way to [word illegible] independence."***
- ***"Solar water heating power a must!"***
- ***"Integrate into the project consideration of LED lighting – in tandem. Promote the efficient use of lighting (LED) with sustainable energy production. Perhaps make Waitati a pilot/experimental village with LED."***
- ***"An education programme in tandem with the project giving ideas etc on the efficient use of power? E.g. LED, better ways of using and managing power?***
- ***"Explore nickel iron batteries – most efficient in the world – no lead, eco-friendly."***
- ***"First ensure you minimise energy use – the last thing you want to do is produce more electricity."***
- ***"What can you cut down on, or produce in other ways e.g. solar hot water."***

Some offered feedback on the open day engagement initiatives and made some suggestions for improvements:

- ***"Fund raising gigs/dates in summer to help support people involved. Great work. Ask Splashroom Media for help."***
- ***"Next time make more use of community notice boards to advertise event."***
- ***"Doco/trailer of idea and vision. Saves energy of team. Post it via Facebook/YouTube. Splash Room Media."***

One attendee had been previously involved in planning processes as part of the Purakanui Environment Group and expressed an eagerness to be kept informed about any DCC future plan changes and implications of the Blueskin area.

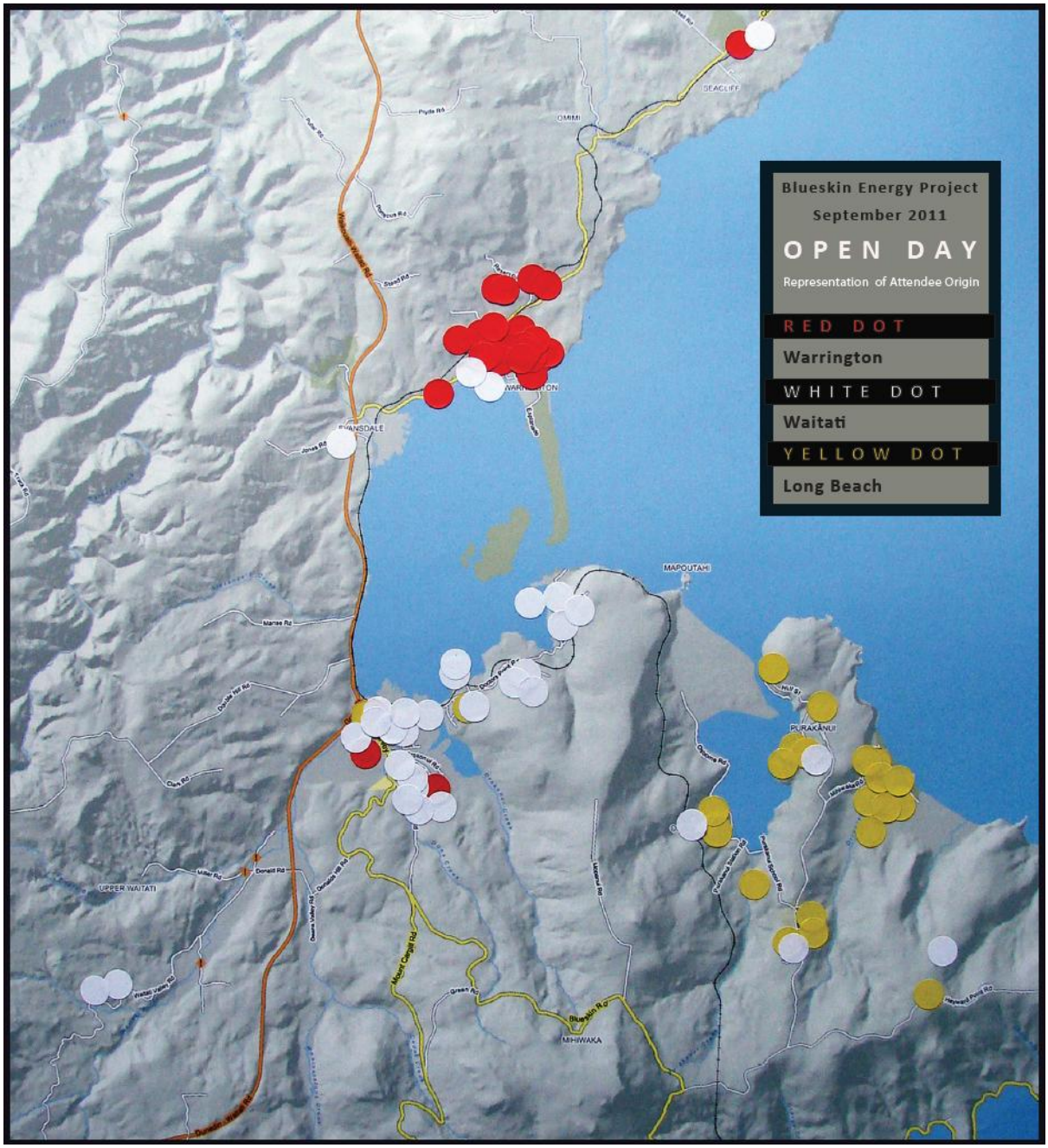
One attendee was of the view that other sites should be investigated and provided a suggestion of Heyward's Point area.

Several people commented that it was too early to provide specific comments as the open day was the first opportunity to familiarise themselves with the project.

A few attendees expressed the following additional thoughts:

- ***"We'll sell you a fridge for your windfarm shares – what's to prevent this from happening?"***
- ***"Pedal-powered pokie machines (the harder you pedal, the better the odds)."***
- ***"Re-build the water wheel at the bottom of Shortcut Road (see the 'Blueskin Days' Book). It was one of the local flax mills and apparently generated 12 horsepower. You can still see the old hard race. Right across the road from Waitati School. Good for charging cellphones?"***

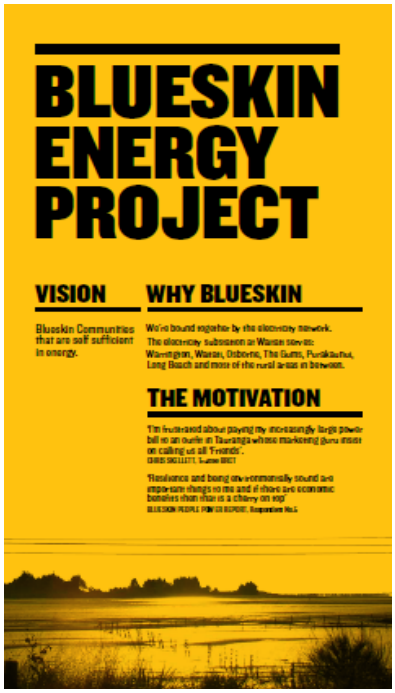
Map 1: Attendee origin in Blueskin area across all open days

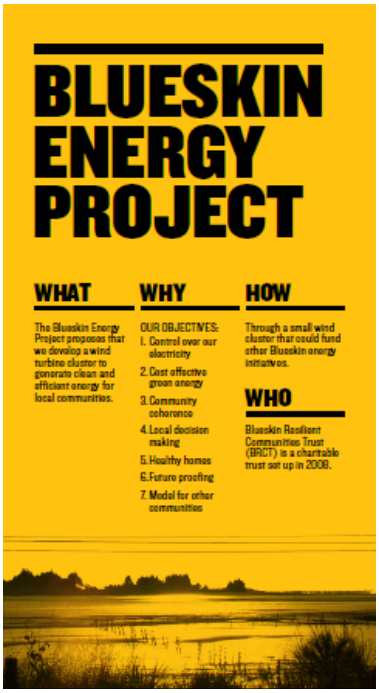


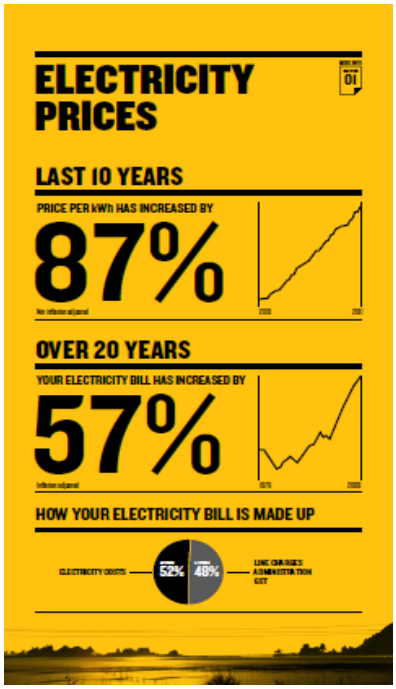
Map 2: Attendee origin in wider Dunedin across all Open Days

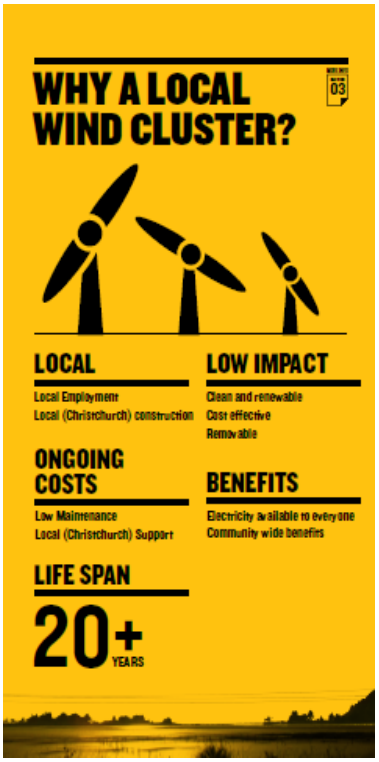
1.2 FURTHER DETAILS ON OPEN DAYS

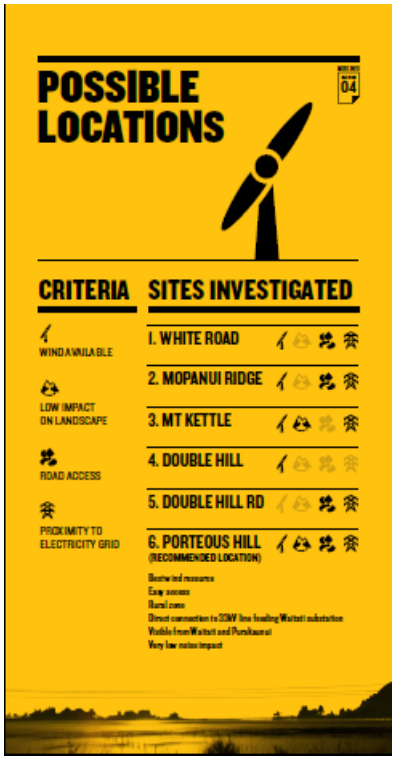
POSTER DISPLAYS











HOW COULD YOU BE INVOLVED?

SWAP TO THIS ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

BENEFITS

Access to an electricity supplier who can moderate price increases

Annual rebate on electricity bill.

INVEST IN THE OWNERSHIP OF CLUSTER

BENEFITS

Return on investment

Green investment

Supporting resilience in your community.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Seed money for other green energy. (e.g domestic solar panels)

Reinvestment into local community initiatives.

HOW MUCH MONEY DO WE NEED?

APPROX

$4.8 MILLION

WHERE FROM?

Local People

Ethical Investors

Our Wind Ltd (OWL)

OWNERSHIP & BUSINESS STRUCTURE

SOME BASIC OPTIONS

1	2	3
COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE	**JOINT VENTURE**	**COMPANY STRUCTURE**
Local money 85%	Local money 20%	Our Wind Ltd 15%
Our Wind Ltd 15%	Our Wind Ltd 15%	Shareholders 85%
Most local control	Ethical Investors 65%	Very limited control
Most investment from us	Less local control	Individual shareholding investment from us
Most return to us	Less investment from us	Returns to individual shareholders
	Less return to us	

WHY THE WINDFLOW 500?

USERS CONNECTED TO WAITATI SUBSTATION
939

AVERAGE BLUESKIN HOUSEHOLD USAGE
5,793 kWh PER YEAR

USAGE FOR WAITATI SUBSTATION AREA
6.34 GWh PER YEAR

AVERAGE POWER GENERATION PER TURBINE
1.3 GWh PER YEAR

TURBINES REQUIRED

x4

Simple to transport, install and connect

Made in Chirschurch

Local maintenance contract

Robust design and construction

Synchronous generation

Cost competitive

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE WIND DOESN'T BLOW?

We create a community power supply by establishing a trading relationship with a generation retailer.

When we have too much electricity, we sell it to them and when we don't we buy from them.

FUTURE POTENTIAL

WHAT ELSE MIGHT THE FUTURE HOLD?

BRCT anticipates that a successful wind cluster development will allow us to unlock further energy options for Blueskin communities.

POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE

- Micro-Hydro
- Micro-Wind
- Solar Photovoltaics
- Solar Hot Water
- Tidal Power
- Biomass
- Insulation
- Hydrogen Storage
- Smart Meters
- DIY Plans
- Emerging Technologies

WHERE ARE WE AT?

- **2009 INSULATION RETROFIT PROGRAMME**
- **2010 WIND CLUSTER FEASIBILITY STUDY**
- **PROVISIONAL AGREEMENTS IN PLACE**
  OragoNet Ltd, Our Wind Ltd and Landowners
- **COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND ENGAGEMENT**
  Analysis of information received from poster days, website, hall meetings and survey.
- **PRECISE WIND DATA COLLECTED**
  Data analysed
- **BUSINESS MODELS ESTABLISHED**
  Community engagement and approval of most acceptable model.
- **COMMUNITY APPROVAL AND BUY IN**
- **RESOURCE CONSENT PREPARATION**
- **INSTALLATION AND POWER GENERATION**

THE TRUST

THE BLUESKIN RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TRUST (BRCT)

AIMS TO

To create a healthy, secure and resilient future for Blueskin Bay and linked communities and promote sustainable resource use.

UMBRELLA FOR

- BLUESKIN ENERGY PROJECT
- WAITATI EDIBLE GARDENERS
- WAITATI OPEN ORCHARDS
- GET-THE-TRAIN
- BLUESKIN LOW OIL COMMUTING

PARTNER AGREEMENTS

INDUSTRY

OragoNet/PowerNet Ltd

Our Wind Limited (OWL)

WindFlow Technology Ltd

PowerHouse Wind

RESEARCH

University of Otago

Otago Energy Research Centre

BUSINESS

GreenChip Limited

PROPERTY

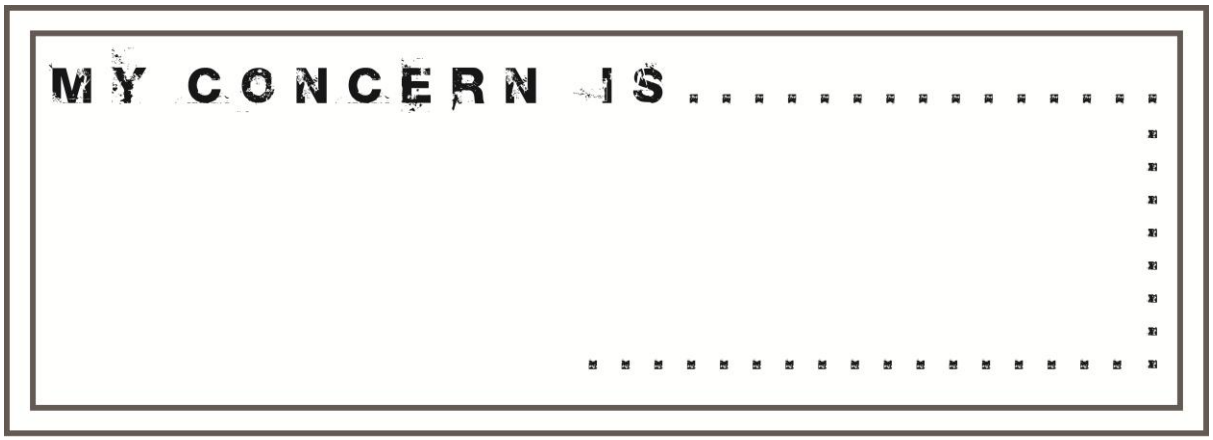
Local landowners

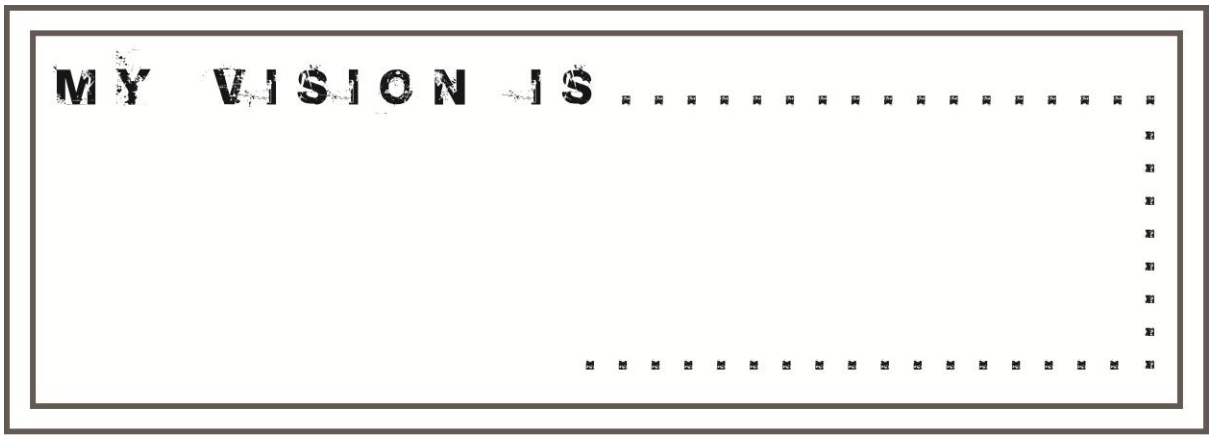
PROMOTION

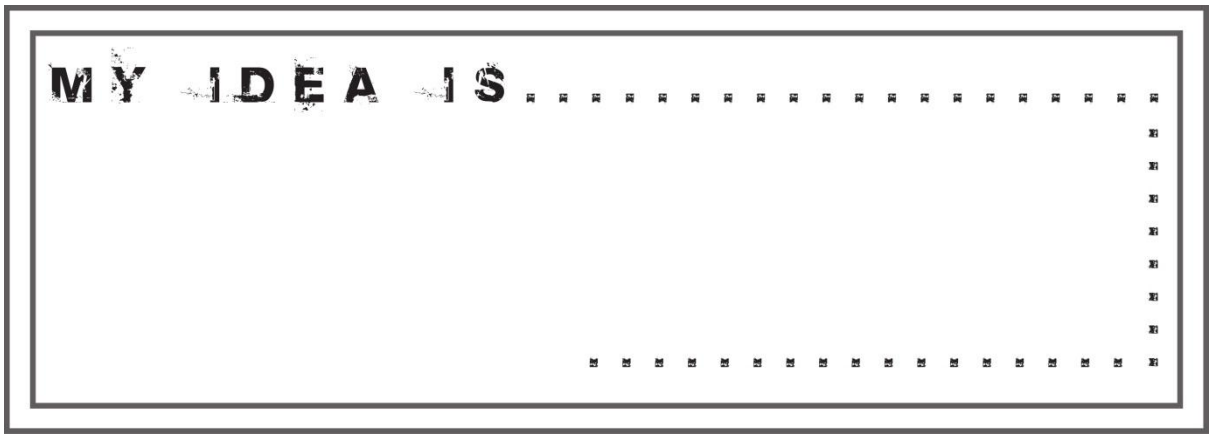
Hikuroa Foundation

The photo below shows how the poster displays were presented at the Waitati Community Hall

VOX-POP FORMS







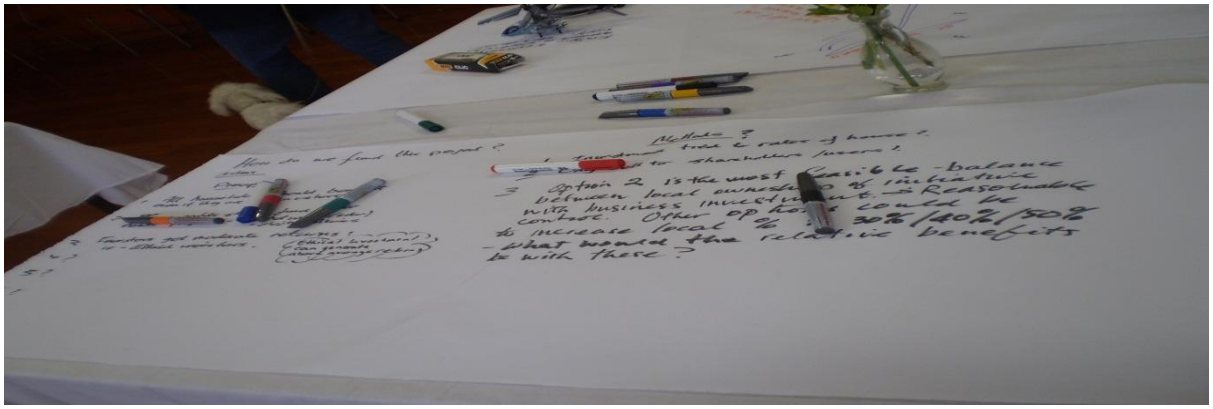

LISTEN HERE.....
!.....


HAS ANYONE THOUGHT...
...ABOUT...?


YOU WANT TO KNOW...
...WHAT I RECKON ?

GRAFFITI STRIP

"The Blank Canvass". The Graffiti Strip is launched at the Long Beach open day – the first of three community open days.



The Graffiti Strip becoming populated with 'thought-tags' throughout the Warrington open day – the second of three community open days.

The Graffiti Strip overall attracted many 'thought tags' by the time the final community open day at Waitati had taken place.

STRAW POLL

At each of the three community open days attendees were asked to cast a 'straw' vote as to their preferred 'Ownership and Business Structure' option as presented on the poster display.

The options included:

1. Community Co-operative
2. Joint Venture
3. Company Structure

For each option, an indicative proportional cost structure and the key characteristics were presented.

The straw poll at the 'Exit Desk' at the Long Beach open day.

APPENDIX 2: CONSULTATION UNDER THE RMA

2.1 RELEVANT RMA SECTIONS

s88 Making an application

1. A person may apply to the relevant consent authority for a resource consent.
2. An application must:
   a) be made in the prescribed form and manner; and
   b) include, in accordance with Schedule 4, an assessment of environmental effects in such detail as corresponds with the scale and significance of the effects that the activity may have on the environment.
3. If an application does not include an adequate assessment of environmental effects or the information required by regulations, a consent authority may, within five working days after the application was first lodged, determine that the application is incomplete and return the application, with written reasons for the determination, to the applicant.
4. If, after an application has been returned as incomplete, that application is lodged again with the consent authority, that application is to be treated as a new application.

s36A No duty under this Act to Consult

No duty under this Act to consult about resource consent applications and notices of requirement.

1. The following apply to an applicant for a resource consent and the local authority:
   a) neither has a duty under this Act to consult any person about the application; and
   b) each must comply with a duty under any other enactment to consult any person about the application; and
   c) each may consult any person about the application.
2. This section applies to a notice of requirement issued under any of sections 168, 168A, 189, and 189A by a requiring authority or a heritage protection authority, as if:
   a) the notice were an application for a resource consent; and
   b) the authority were an applicant.

Schedule 4 Assessment of effects on the Environment

Matters that should be included in an assessment of effects on the environment. Subject to the provisions of any policy statement or plan, an assessment of effects on the environment for the purposes of section 88 should include:

a) a description of the proposal:
b) where it is likely that an activity will result in any significant adverse effect on the environment, a description of any possible alternative locations or methods for undertaking the activity:
c) [Repealed]
d) an assessment of the actual or potential effect on the environment of the proposed activity:

e) where the activity includes the use of hazardous substances and installations, an assessment of any risks to the environment which are likely to arise from such use:
f) where the activity includes the discharge of any contaminant, a description of:
    i. the nature of the discharge and the sensitivity of the proposed receiving environment to adverse effects; and
    ii. any possible alternative methods of discharge, including discharge into any other receiving environment:
g) a description of the mitigation measures (safeguards and contingency plans where relevant) to be undertaken to help prevent or reduce the actual or potential effect:
h) identification of the persons affected by the proposal, the consultation undertaken, if any, and any response to the views of any person consulted:
i) where the scale or significance of the activity's effect are such that monitoring is required, a description of how, once the proposal is approved, effects will be monitored and by whom.

2.2 PRINCIPLES OF CONSULTATION

The Environment Court has 'synthesised' a statement of principles for consultation from many earlier decisions. This is quoted in paragraph 104 of the case *Horahora Marae v Minister of Corrections A085/2004*, which specifically cites the earlier decision in the La*nd Air Water Association and Others v Waikato Regional Council A110/2001* (paragraph 453).

The Environment Court's statement of principles for consultation are:

i. The nature and object of consultation must be related to the circumstances.
ii. Adequate information of the proposals is to be given in a timely manner so that those consulted know what is proposed.
iii. Those consulted must be given a reasonable opportunity to state their views.
iv. While those consulted cannot be forced to state their views, they cannot complain, if having had both time and opportunity, they for any reason fail to avail themselves of the opportunity.
v. Consultation is never to be treated perfunctorily or as a mere formality.
vi. The parties are to approach consultation with an open mind.
vii. Consultation is an intermediate situation involving meaningful discussions and does not necessarily involve resolution by agreement.
viii. Neither party is entitled to make demands.
ix. There is no universal requirement as to form or duration.
x. The whole process is to be underlain by fairness.

These principles can be further drawn on from other decisions of the Court to include that:

- there is an overall duty on the part of both parties to act reasonably and in good faith, because consultation is not a one-sided affair
- consultation has overlapping requirements of reasonableness, fairness, open mind, freedom from demands, and the need to avail oneself of the consultation opportunity
- consultation is as much about listening as it is about imparting information, and is more about the quality of information imparted than it is about the quantity
- consultation is not an end or an obligation in itself, it is just one possible method of gathering views from those affected so that they can be taken account of in the decision-making process. The

primary obligation is to ensure that the decision-maker has sufficient material before it to make the necessary decisions about Part 2 issues.

2.3 PARTIES WHO MIGHT BE CONSULTED

Relevant parties who may potentially be consulted in standard RMA processes include:

- regional council, if an application is to be made to the district council
- district councils, if an application is to be made to a regional council
- local community boards of district councils where they exist
- tangata whenua group(s)
- residents ' associations/ community groups/ business associations/ recreational associations or clubs
- national and local environmental groups
- individual landowners and tenants
- the local office of the Regional Fish and Game Council
- the local conservancy of the Department of Conservation
- New Zealand Historic Places Trust
- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- New Zealand Transport Agency
- Public Health Services
- service authorities or utility providers, i.e. power companies, airports, port companies, telecommunications companies
- resource user groups.