Community attitudes towards a 100% renewable energy target for Yackandandah

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Executive summary

Totally Renewable Yackandandah (TRY) is a community group with the goal of sourcing 100% of Yackandandah's electricity supply from renewable energy by 2022. This report discusses the results of 26 in-depth interviews undertaken in Yackandandah in April 2015. The aim was to find out more about what different parts of the Yackandandah community think about TRY's goals, following an online survey conducted in December 2014. We spoke to people from many aspects of Yackandandah life - YCDCo, business owners, renters, people active in the community garden, arts, the museum, sports groups, parents with children in various schools and preschools in the area, health professionals, farmers and artists.

Overall, people are overwhelmingly supportive of the TRY goal. Almost everyone we spoke to mentioned that Yackandandah is the kind of town that takes on projects like this - shared initiatives that build community while solving social and environmental problems. There was a strong sense that people are 'ready to go' on the goals. Several interviewees said they thought Yackandandah was a self-reliant community - the idea of 'taking back the power' from energy companies and politicians and vesting it in the local community appealed to them. Others spoke more about the business case for energy efficiency and renewables, focussing on how TRY could help households reduce their energy bills.

However, people lacked an understanding of what TRY will do to reach the goal, what will be expected of them as residents, and the scope of the project itself. They expressed concerns about TRY needing to make the project as inclusive as possible, rather than relying on individual action (such as individual rooftop solar PV installations). Because of the technical aspect of what TRY wishes to accomplish, many people - not having expertise in renewable energy technology - did not feel able to comment on the best way for Yackandandah to become 100% renewable. People told us quite strongly that some clear possible scenarios needed to be developed so the community can then discuss how to best reach the target. This will prompt community ownership of, and involvement in, the project. The need for households to have access to quality, affordable advice from trusted sources (who aren't trying to sell them things) also came up many times in our interviews.

The next stage of TRY will be critical to the project. People are ready to start working on this project.

1. History of Totally Renewable Yackandandah

Yackandandah is a small town in north-east Victoria's Indigo Shire. With just under 900 residents in the township,[1] the surrounding communities comprise a population of 2200 people.

Yackandandah has a long history of tackling ambitious projects with the support of the community. In 2002, residents of the town established the Yackandandah Community Development Corporation, or YCDCo. YCDCo provides fuel (at a discount to shareholders) and has some 700 members.[2] Similarly, the town also maintains a community garden, toy library, community centre, radio station (Indigo FM), a local newspaper (Yackity Yack), several active service clubs, vibrant sporting clubs, a strong CFA and an annual folk festival. Recently, Yackandandah made headlines when residents crafted the longest continuous line of bunting, a verified world record.[3]

Totally Renewable Yackandandah (TRY) is an incorporated association, formed as a direct result of a Community Energy Forum conducted by Indigo Shire Council in March 2014. TRY is working with residents and businesses to generate (or purchase) sufficient electricity from renewable sources to meet 100% of the electricity needs by the year 2022.

The postcode of Yackandandah (3749) has an estimated 700 rooftops, and about 30.7% of the roofs are already installed with solar photovoltaic panels. Compared to a national average of about 14%,[4] this suggests there is already significant uptake of renewable energy in Yackandandah. In recent years, several projects such as a standalone power system at the Men's Shed and solar photovoltaic (PV) installation powering YCDCo and the Community Centre have raised the profile of solar in Yackandandah.

TRY anticipates preparing a blueprint for reaching the target of 100% renewable energy by 2022. This document will describe the technical, financial and community requirements to reach the goal.

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[1] Suburb Profile, http://house.ksou.cn/profile.php?sta=vic&q=Yackandandah, accessed February, 2015.

[2] About YCDCo, http://www.yackandandah.com/ycdco/AboutUs.html, accessed June, 2015.

[3] ABC News, http://www.abc.net.au/local/audio/2013/12/09/3908083.htm, accessed May, 2015.

[4] Australian PV Institute, http://pv-map.apvi.org.au/historical#4/-26.67/134.12, accessed February 2015

Members of TRY and other North East community energy groups.

2. Purpose of TRY research on community attitudes

The TRY committee was successful in getting a small research grant from Charles Sturt University in 2014 to explore community attitudes and practices relating to renewable energy. In late 2014, TRY conducted an online survey of 108 households in Yackandandah and surrounds, to broadly understand their views on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and their interest in and support for TRY. The results from this survey were very positive for TRY's goals, with the majority of respondents stating that energy efficiency was important to them. The respondents were interested in getting more information about energy efficiency, and had a strong willingness to support TRY through a community energy project, purchasing green power, or installing solar panels.

To complement and verify the quantitative survey research, qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted in 2015 with a greater range of people involved in Yackandandah's civic, business and community life.

3. Methods

Twenty-six members of the Yackandandah community were interviewed. A list of 31 potential interviewees was initially selected from the Yackandandah community, using purposeful sampling to include a range of demographics including age, gender and role in the community. Some interviewees were selected from their participation in the preceding online survey; others due to their prominent roles in active community groups (see list, Appendix 3). Particular effort was made to engage people who might be ambivalent or unsupportive of TRY goals, to hear their views. Accounting for attrition and unavailability, the final number of interviewees was 26 (12 women, 14 men).

The interviews were semi-structured, with a list of 12 questions (see Appendix 2) to guide the conversation. The interviews took between 30 and 60 minutes, conducted at the Community Centre or the interviewee's home or business, and were recorded when consent was given.

Notes and recordings from the interviews were then summarised, and analysed for key quotes and themes.

4. Results

Existing personal/business use of renewable energy/energy efficiency

What does your home or business already have in the way of energy efficiency and renewable energy?

Although all interviewees were aware of at least some options for energy efficiency and solar for their homes or businesses, they ranged significantly in the extent to which they had them installed. Uptake of solar was extensive, with people having a range of experiences with suppliers and installers. Some interviewees had not installed solar or undertaken energy efficiency retrofitting because they had been unable to afford it. A number of interviewees had solar-passive homes; others had quite extensive energy-reduction technology such as appliances on timers. Generally, the more informed interviewees felt about the products they had installed, the more they reported they were satisfied with how they were working. One interviewee gave the example of having solar installed by a business that due to poor siting choices were ineffective. Once he read up about the technology, however, he installed additional panels he has been very satisfied with and which almost completely cover his electricity use.

Many interviewees had positive experiences with energy efficiency and solar panels in their home and/or business, however several others mentioned their dissatisfaction with the process they'd been on to get solar, with a perceived high transaction cost.

However, this generally did not affect their support for renewable energy more broadly, or for the TRY goal.

Knowledge of TRY goals and whether they are considered realistic

What do you know already about the TRY goals?

Almost all the interviewees knew about TRY's goals, to get Yackandandah to 100% renewable energy, though not everyone knew about the goal timeline (to do this by 2022).

Beyond this, people generally had very little knowledge about what TRY was proposing to reach the goal, or possible methods for reaching it. Some interviewees thought the proposal was mainly centred around the entire town getting rooftop solar PV, at their own cost, or were unaware of other methods to reach the 100% goal (such as energy efficiency, community generation, or purchasing renewable energy from electricity retailers).

Many interviewees sought clarification on whether 'Yackandandah' included the surrounding communities of Allans Flat, Osbornes Flat, Bruarong and the Indigo Valley. Several people felt that these areas should also be included, depending on the technical feasibility.

'*Are you talking rural properties too? I think if you're going to do it, do the whole area. For me it's the postcode 3749. The outlying areas contribute as much to the town. I would like to see the whole area included.' - #26*

Additionally, people sought clarification on whether the goal included just residential energy use, or whether it would include electricity for farms, petrol for cars, as well as water and wood burning. Several interviewees said they thought a "100% renewable" endeavour should include other factors or issues such as recycling or sustainable consumption. These issues should be clarified in the blueprint.

Do you think the TRY goals are realistic? Why, why not?

There was a range of views on this question. Some people thought it would be easily attainable, while others thought Yackandandah might come close but that reaching a 100% goal would be difficult or impossible, perhaps because it would require every member of the Yackandandah community to take action. In the future, TRY should be clear in its expectations of individual households.

There was generally low knowledge of the goal and how it would be achieved. Some people assumed TRY would be requiring everyone to install solar, for instance, or that the town was going to go 'off-grid'.

*"[I know that the goal is to go 100% renewable], but I don't know how you do that; I don't know what a grid really i*s*... there's a lot of people like me that probably don't understand energy and how it works – [or] who to call to actually make it happen". - #25*

Generally, it was felt that if the project is reliant on individual households to act, it will be very difficult to get to 100%, whereas if Yackandandah can generate its own energy to be distributed to all households, the goal will be more attainable. *'The risk is how you get buy in from people in such a short time, especially if people are expected to spend their own money' – #15*

Several people said that whether or not the goal was realistic, it was still worth aiming for. There was general agreement that a 100% goal was a better target to work towards. Some people that felt this goal should be broken down into stages with clear sub-goals.

"I don't know if the goal is realistic but it's certainly worth pursuing. If the target isn't reached on that day, I'm not too concerned; the main issue is that people are working towards it." -#21

"I hope that Yackandandah can do it, it's exciting… we need to do this for the kids – leave the place better than we found it" - #22

Others were very optimistic:

"I would even say it could happen before 2022. I think we'd be really proud. It's going be the way we head, we're all starting to change our mindsets, banks are starting to not give loans to big [coal] companies...I think in ten years' time we'll be like 'I can't believe we were the only ones doing it, and now everyone's doing it!' - #8

Support within Yackandandah for TRY goals

To what extent do you think the Yackandandah community supports the TRY goal?

Most interviewees believed Yackandandah residents were already supportive of the goal, or would be supportive once there was a stronger plan. However, many questioned the nature of support - whether it would be merely passive support, or extend beyond that to active involvement.

A number of interviewees cautioned that apathy, rather than active opposition, would be more of an issue for the project. Many interviewees stressed the importance of community-level action, rather than just expecting people to do it all alone as the best way to go about addressing this potential apathy. One interviewee said she'd be 'supportive and keen to be involved if there's something specific they need me to do, but would rather see how it takes shape and help out later' and that she thought most people in Yackandandah would take part 'when doing it is easier than not doing it'. This wait-and-see approach was echoed by several others:

'*My guess is about 30% know and care already. I think it's more a case* [the rest of the town] *of not knowing, and how much people care* [rather than active opposition]*. I'd think it'd be 'that sounds like a good idea, I'd be interested to see what they come up with'...but if any place is going to make it happen, Yack is in a good position. If a community was going to do it...we've got the right one* [in Yackandandah]*, that I do believe' - #26*

None of the people interviewed were aware of any anti-renewable energy sentiment in the Yackandandah community. However, some reported that there was a sense that government assistance (through feed-in tariffs or other subsidies) are no longer available, which generally weakens the economic case for renewable energy.

Best approaches to achieve renewable energy goal

How do you think we could achieve 100% renewable energy?

This question elicited mixed responses. Very few people had strong beliefs about the 'right' way to reach the goal in a technical sense. Among those that did specify approaches, ideas included energy efficiency upgrades to homes and businesses; rooftop solar photovoltaic installations on houses, businesses or community buildings; a centralised large-scale solar installation (as in a 'solar farm'); micro-hydroelectric schemes, and buying renewable energy from outside (i.e. by switching to a 100% renewable electricity retailer).

"The [TRY] goal is great on the surface, the question is how to get there?" - #16

Some interviewees stated they thought TRY would need to find some way to cover every person in town, since not every person had the willingness or ability to actively change their own energy provider, invest in a community project, or get rooftop PV.

The need for more information from TRY was raised by nearly every interviewee. People wanted to see a clear, coherent timeline and strategy for the goal. Reducing the time, information and cost barriers to renewable energy uptake was mentioned by most participants. Several interviewees expressed views along the lines of 'tell me what I need to do and I'll do it', but felt they were not qualified to join the project as leaders.

"My feeling about TRY is a 'watch this space' kind of thing." - #5

For getting individual households committed to the goal, interviewees repeatedly raised the importance of strong lines of communication through existing networks:

'*You need many steps and stages... people need to ask someone they trust, know, and their agenda isn't to sell them more panels… 'how do I make sure I don't buy $10,000 of stuff that's not relevant?'*.' - #7

'*You need to remind people a lot to create a strong social norm, if everyone else has it, you will do it, you don't want to guilt people but you want them to come on board because it looks like they're having fun with their solar! Approach from it from different angles - get people to switch to clean energy, or reduce use, [or] invest in a shared thing*.' - #21

Support for a community energy project

Do you think people would be interested in supporting a large scale community energy project? What would it look like?

The YCDCo model was raised by several interviewees; it is seen as a successful project that the community took ownership of and is proud of.

"YCDCo proved to me that Yackandandah can do whatever it wants to do. We could take on a challenge to do a large scheme...When the YCDCo float happened I was surprised at how many people were behind it; it's not something people are passionate about, a petrol station, it's not like your primary school closing, and yet it ticked so many other boxes for the community [and so there was support]" - #11

"YCDCo was a good learning experience for the town – that you can do things like this" - #4

"[Yackandandah] has a great community vibe – people seem to pull together, it is very supportive. Other communities might not get something like YCDCo to work". - #23

However, some interviewees expressed doubts that the success of YCDCo could be replicated with a community energy project; either because the perceived need might not be as immediate; because investors might not see as direct a benefit; and/or because the capital needed to be raised would be much greater.

Yackandandah community members meeting to discuss the benefits of renewable energy.

Concerns about the project and views on best way forward

What concerns do you have about the process adopted by TRY and the 100% goal in general?

What risks do you perceive for this project?

What's the best way for TRY to work with Yackandandah on this project?

Several interviewees said they were concerned about inequity and affordability: actions like installing solar panels and buying energy efficient products, or investing in a community generation project, are not affordable to everyone.

"There will always be people who can't afford [household solar]. I don't know how you can get everyone fully incorporated." -#10

Moreover, some people identified a dynamic where some members of a community take an action like installing solar, or going off grid, can make electricity more expensive for those who are unable to afford to do the same - which exacerbates the inequity.

Communication was a recurrent theme. People repeatedly said that TRY would need to devise a communications strategy to work across the whole town - that everyone needed to know about the project. A doorknocking campaign, articles in Yackity Yack, continuing the use of the Facebook page, town meetings and signs up around town and in the community noticeboards were all mentioned as some of the ways TRY should keep in touch.

There was a sense that people would step up and be involved, once a baseline level of knowledge was reached by the town.

5. Discussion

Throughout the interviews, several key themes emerged and these can be described as follows.

Yackandandah community strength and motivation to support TRY goals

Many interviewees described the Yack community as exceptional, even stating that projects like TRY were the reason that many Yackandandah residents chose to live in and around the town. Many expressed pride in what the town has achieved so far. As well as YCDCo, the success in setting a world record for bunting, the flourishing of the community centre, the folk festival, and Yackandandah Primary School's recent performance in Melbourne were all cited as examples of Yackandandah's remarkable strengths. The town was described as having a high level of trust between residents, being an educated and generally affluent place ready to commit to worthwhile projects, with an unusually high level of volunteering and civic participation. Interviewees pointed to these attributes as reasons why Yackandandah should take on the TRY challenge.

Yackandandah prides itself on fighting above its weight and taking on challenges that a lot of other communities won't, so I think there'd be very strong support…" - #11

"The community cohesiveness of Yackandandah is very advantageous – the community is a catalyst [for change]." - #9

"YCDCo is example of what the community does best – it's why we moved to Yackandandah. The strength of Yackandandah is its volunteers" - #2

"As a community, there are a lot of people who are passionate about taking action. There are enough people to get to a critical mass, a groundswell, it's just the finances and whether the national political environment will support it...the politics are tied up with coal even though it's obvious we need to switch to renewables…I think people are really proud to be that lighthouse town that starts something new around the world. This town has that personality." - #7

People stated a range of motivations for supporting the TRY goal. These included community pride and spirit (including the benefits to Yackandandah's reputation), a desire to achieve energy self-sufficiency and independence, and economic incentives (saving money while electricity costs are rising). Some interviewees also mentioned environmental or climate change-related motivations, but these were a minority and rarely stated this as a primary motivation.

"To focus only on [financial benefits] would be missing the point - we're not going to save the planet cost-free". - #19

TRY should consider why various people and sectors of the Yack community are supportive of the TRY project and communicate accordingly. In particular, angles around community building and energy independence seemed to resonate most strongly with the interviewees.

Official TRY launch, November, 2014.

Need for conceptual clarity about the TRY goals and process

Perhaps the strongest theme from the interviews was that Yackandandah would be willing to support the project, but there needs to be much more conceptual clarity about what is required to meet the goals. It was felt that, given the technical nature of the project, more information, informed by expertise and the current energy use patterns of the town, was urgently needed, as was a coherent plan from TRY that people could participate in. Information about the timeline of the project is also critical, so people can make informed decisions about household purchasing of solar and energy efficiency installations.

Several people raised the idea that there is has already been a lot of work in Yackandandah to make households and buildings energy efficient. Therefore, TRY needs to find a way of capturing, acknowledging and encouraging existing or impending energy efficiency/renewable activities, and incorporating this activity into the overall project, rather than starting from scratch. Establishing a relationship with the council and electricity distributors is critical to establishing this baseline picture of Yackandandah's energy use.

A similar project in Uralla, NSW called ZNET has developed a detailed and accessible summary of "what is possible", published online.[5] If TRY were to generate a summary

[5] ZNET Uralla: What's possible? http://z-net.org.au/project-uralla/whats-possible/. Accessed June 2015.

along these lines for Yackandandah, and publicise it among the community, this would address many of the above concerns.

Communications

The interviewees also raised the need for a stronger communications plan from TRY, with serious attempts to reach all segments of Yackandandah society, with concerns expressed that many people are currently not aware of TRY at all. At present, the TRY Facebook page has been very important - nearly all interviewees who said they had knowledge of other 100% renewables efforts said they had read about them on Facebook, and most people were kept updated about TRY through this medium. However, others only were kept updated by bumping into people on the TRY committee.

A publicity program could include a regular column in Yackity Yack, articles in Border Mail, Facebook posts, calendar of visiting meetings of local community groups with specific asks from them, street stalls and signs in windows of shops. Several interviewees also suggested that TRY get the local schools involved, and reach parents that way. In general it was felt that a range of mediums and repeated contact is needed to progress the goal.

Need for independent, locally-relevant information and advice

Almost every interviewee expressed the need for TRY to produce and share more information about what households can do to lower their emissions. Several people said that they personally were supportive of the goal and had been 'meaning to do something' about reducing their energy use or installing solar but had just not gotten around to it, because of high information barriers.

Independent, high-quality advice tailored to individual households is likely to be very valuable to many households in Yackandandah. This should come through either local people or through contracting advice - but not a company, which is, for instance, simply trying to sell solar panels without regard for household energy use or cost.

"There's a big gap between interest and knowledge, and the cost gap makes it harder… I'd love someone to come out and tell me what I've got, if it works or not, and what I need – but no one can tell me who that person would be… it's a bit of a gap in my knowledge really". - #25

"People should be able to go to TRY to find out about their solar requirements and getting help and advice… word of mouth is 100% better than anything else" - #23

There seem to be untapped gains in household energy efficiency and solar - people who would be keen and could afford the upgrades, but haven't yet put time or money towards

it. TRY could play a role in getting these people engaged. Energy efficiency comes first, before starting a community energy project.

'*You can't just put solar panels on your roof, you've got to change the way you use energy*'. - #23

There was also appetite for specific information on heat pumps/hot water systems, bulk buys of energy efficiency installations and solar, how renters can reduce energy use and how landlords can benefit from solar and energy efficiency installations.

Funding models

People generally did not express strong or detailed preferences regarding how TRY projects would be funded. There was strong support for a model similar to YCDCo (when this example was raised), as it is seen as proven to work, owned by the community and deliver benefits to the same community.

Although the structure of YCDCo is a public unlisted company, people also expressed support for a cooperative model, citing YCDCo as an example. This indicates that the concept of *community ownership* is more important than the exact mechanism of how this ownership is implemented.

Grants from government and other sources had much less support. People saw them as less available than in previous political climates, and saw a risk of being beholden to the interests of the grant body, at the expense of independence. However, there was a general sentiment that grants were not to be ignored if they were available and the conditions agreeable.

Many interviewees expressed the need to make the project something that included everyone in town, including options for people to have longer-term loans with low interest, a payback scheme with the council or other models that would make financial sense for households. Given the financial savings associated with energy efficiency, and the low cost of renewables after the initial construction phase, developing appropriate finance models should be attainable.

TRY should carefully explore a range of funding models for both household energy efficiency measures and a community energy project.

6. Recommendations on options for reaching the goal

There are many different ways that the goal of 100% renewables by 2022 could be reached.

Underpinning each of these, Yackandandah would likely need to have an **energy efficiency** project to ensure that the energy generated was used efficiently.
There are several options for the actual generation of power:

- Purchasing green power
- Generating home power through solar PV and storage, and solar hot water
- A community energy project that would meet the town's energy needs.

Meeting the 100% target will most likely involve a combination of two or more of these options.

Energy efficiency

In TRY's earlier survey, energy efficiency was seen as a critical issue. Many homes in Yackandandah are uninsulated, older homes that require a lot of energy. People want advice on how to retrofit their homes, in addition to any community project.

An initial focus from TRY on household energy efficiency (retrofitting/behaviour change) could be very effective in building the project and reducing Yack's emissions. However, this should be connected to the broader campaign, well-documented, and conducted in a way that grows the campaign - such as a door-knocking initiative followed up by an audit of household energy use.

A service such as Ecologic, which enables energy-efficiency audits to be done quickly with minimal training for the auditors, could be useful in this endeavour.

Proposal: that TRY coordinates independent and accurate advice and support for energy efficiency measures in households and businesses in Yackandandah, and introduces a framework for capturing energy savings from this.

Green power

Several people mentioned a willingness to use green power, but in both the surveys and the interviews, very few people are already doing this. Simply purchasing power from elsewhere may not be the best option for Yackandandah - there is a sense that the town

can go further than this - however it may be an interim step and appeal to renters who are not yet able to partake in the TRY goal.

Proposal: TRY's blueprint investigates the costs and benefits of switching to a renewables energy power company, and includes a recommendation in its promotional materials.

Home power generation

Most interviewees either had solar and were happy with it, or had considered getting an installation, but found the process overwhelming and had discontinued their search, while remaining interested. A lack of knowledge about 'the right way to do it' was cited by several interviewees who did not yet have solar PV.

Proposal: that TRY coordinates advice and support for solar PV and solar hot water, for households and businesses, potentially in conjunction with the energy efficiency advice discussed earlier, and tracks the take up and use of this.

Community energy project

Many of the interviewees expressed enthusiasm for a larger-scale community energy project, such as a solar installation. There were several reasons for this; it was seen as being a way to generate enough energy for the entire town - regardless of people's financial ability to invest in it upfront, it would ensure that renters and low income earners were not left out, it would be an easier way of reaching the goal as opposed to having to convince every single household to invest, and it fits in well with Yackandandah's ethos of community-led projects.

YCDCo's success was repeatedly brought up in the interviews, with many people expressing support for a similar model. Generally, interviewees were open to a range of governance models, and suggested that TRY compile several scenarios for community discussion. People had very little sense of what it would cost to build a community energy project, or how long it would take to get one going, or what Yackandandah would need in the future. Expert advice will be needed on all of these questions.

Proposal: that TRY develops several scenarios for how a community energy project could work; including potential costs, funding, capacity, and timeline, for discussion in the Yack community.

Other issues

The Council: establishing a strong relationship with the Indigo Shire Council was seen as a critical step to attaining TRY's goals. Whether an energy efficiency campaign, retrofits, and/or a community energy project, the Council will be an important part of the process.

New buildings: Yackandandah is undergoing a period of growth with many people returning to the area or moving here for the first time. There is a need to ensure new buildings are as energy efficient as possible, to save on costs and time for reaching the goal.

Grid ownership and independence: One strategy that some communities have taken in Europe and elsewhere in response to high-energy prices is to 'buy back' their grids from the utility companies.[6] This is similar - or more likely complementary - to the strategy of small towns and communities choosing to 'go off grid' entirely.[7] Several interviewees suggested the latter as a strategy for TRY, and more broadly many people repeatedly highlighted the Yackandandah community's strong values of self-reliance and community pride. In effect, a precedent was set when the community 'bought back' the local petrol station through YCDCo. With other communities in Australia currently discussing these options, TRY could help promote a conversation about Yackandandah 'buying back' its grid, or disconnecting from the broader network, in its efforts to reach the 100% goal.

Changing technology: Over the next seven years, renewable energy technology is likely to become more affordable. TRY could attempt to estimate when the best time to buy/install is, however there are also financial benefits to investing earlier.

7. Further research

It became obvious in this research that many people in Yackandandah are willing to support TRY. However, there may be a sampling bias where the people active in community and arts organisations and local businesses may be more supportive of the goal. Further research should include attempts to either representatively sample more broadly across the town, or target those with low knowledge and interest of TRY's goals.

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[6] See Giles Parkinson, 'Should Australian towns buy back their grids?' http://reneweconomy.com.au/2013/should-australian-towns-buy-back-their-grids-75269. Accessed June 2015.

[7] See Giles Parkinson, 'Why whole towns will want to take themselves off grid'. http://reneweconomy.com.au/2014/why-whole-towns-will-want-to-take-themselves-off-grid-69073, Accessed June 2015.

Appendix 1 - Interview questions

1. Can you tell me about what you do in Yack? What organisations are you a part of, or have you been a part of?
2. What does your home or business already have in the way of energy efficiency and renewable energy?
3. What do you know already about the TRY goals?
4. Do you think the TRY goals are realistic? Why, why not?
5. Have you heard of other communities working towards 100% renewable energy? (prompt for examples)
6. To what extent do you think the Yackandandah community supports the TRY goal? (prompt for examples of any anti-renewable energy sentiment in Yack; prompt for whether they think people are wanting to use RE in their own homes).
7. How do you think we could achieve 100% renewable energy? (prompt for ideas)
8. Do you think people would be interested in supporting a community-owned project, similar to YCDCo?
9. Describe the broad categories for finance models, and see what think they of them. (Prompt for whether they think Yack community would be willing support crowd sourcing for general installations or only for their own group facilities).
    - Crowd sourcing;
    - Community cooperative;
    - Community owned company (eg YCDCo);
    - Publically listed company.
    - Government grant
10. What concerns do you have about the process adopted by TRY and the 100% goal in general? What risks do you perceive for this project?
11. What's the best way for TRY to work with Yackandandah people to do this?
12. The next step is developing a strategic plan – any ideas about what should definitely be/not be included?
13. Any other questions / contributions?
14. How would you like to be involved in the future?

Appendix 2 - List of organisations with members interviewed

As well as individual community members and small business owners, interviewees included current or former members of the following organisations:

- Arts Yackandandah
- Yackandandah CFA
- Yackandandah Chamber of Commerce
- Yackandandah Community Development Company (YCDCo)
- Yackandandah Community Garden
- Yackandandah Folk Festival
- Yackandandah Football Netball Club
- Yackandandah Health
- Yackandandah Kindergarten
- Yackandandah Men's Shed
- Yackandandah Museum & Historical Society
- Yackandandah Primary School Council

Appendix 3 – Grant Expenditure

$2000.00 – Research Consultants

$250.00 – Report publication and distribution.