

# Hexham Wind Farm

## FACT SHEET

# Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The proposed Hexham Wind Farm (the project) is located between Hexham, Caramut and Ellerslie in the Moyne Shire in south-west Victoria. If approved, the project would incorporate up to 106 wind turbines with an approximate height of up to 260 metres from ground to blade tip. The proposed project also includes an on-site terminal station and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and other associated infrastructure.

As part of the Victorian government's planning and approvals process for major projects, Wind Prospect has prepared an Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the proposed Hexham Wind Farm. An EES is a requirement under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*, and includes a detailed assessment of a wide range of environmental and social aspects such as biodiversity, ecology, historical heritage, Aboriginal cultural heritage, landscape and visual amenity, traffic and transport, noise, socioeconomic and surface and groundwater.

Extensive research and community and stakeholder consultation has been undertaken to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects on the environment and the social fabric of the community during construction, operation and decommissioning of the project. Wind Prospect recognises the value of the natural and built environment in which the project is based and understands and respects the community's desire to protect both the environmental and social landscape that has existed for many years.



## Assessment

As part of the EES, Wind Prospect engaged Tardis Archaeology Heritage Advisors to prepare an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (ACHIA). The ACHIA has been prepared in accordance with the Victorian Government Planning Minister's scoping requirements for the assessment of environmental effects, Commonwealth and State legislation, and in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation. The aim of the ACHIA is to assess the existing environment and the likely effects of the project in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage, and outline measures to avoid or minimise these.

# How the assessment has been carried out

Wind Prospect respects the significance of Country and culture to First Nations people. The project team and technical specialists have been consulting with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation during the development of the project.

In addition to ongoing consultation, a range of technical investigations and assessment methods have been used to assess the existing environment and identify Aboriginal places in or near the project.

These include:

- **Desktop assessment** of registered Aboriginal places and reports on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage register, historical and cultural records, the geography of the region, and land use history.
- **Analysis of Light Detection and Ranging** (LiDAR) data to identify potential Aboriginal mound sites, which are earth features formed by the accumulation of material where Aboriginal people lived for long periods of time.
- A **Ground Surface Survey assessment** was undertaken in 2019 to identify Aboriginal places within the project activity area and test the desktop assessment outcomes.

▼ Intensive survey of rocky outcrop on edge of terrace of Mustons Creek.



# Findings

The assessment of potential impacts includes consideration of all phases of the project, including planning, construction, operation and decommissioning. Through the consultation and assessment process, 112 registered Aboriginal places were identified within the project activity area.

## Artefacts

Five stone artefacts were found within the investigation area during the Aboriginal cultural heritage field assessments. Based on the site types identified within the project site, should project works encounter further unidentified areas of cultural heritage as part of works, the impacted sites would likely be stone

artefact sites with low numbers and densities of stone artefacts. These stone artefact sites are considered to have low archaeological significance. It is considered unlikely through these findings that large, high density stone artefact sites would be impacted by the project.

The results of the assessment indicates that mounds are unlikely to be present within the project site, and therefore are unlikely to be impacted. Should mounds be encountered, they are likely to be degraded as a result of agricultural activity and would have low archaeological significance. No other site types were found in the activity area or are considered likely to be present.

## Intangible cultural heritage

The project area contains significant Aboriginal intangible cultural heritage values including the Wedge-tailed Eagle, and Southern Bent-wing bat, and culturally significant flora, hydrology and ephemeral wetlands.

Findings of the assessment show that while Aboriginal cultural heritage values have been identified within the project area, these values can be effectively managed by the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) process, with the implementation of design mitigation and additional management measures developed in consultation with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

## Managing adverse effects

The project footprint has been designed to avoid registered Aboriginal places and minimise impacts to areas of Aboriginal cultural sensitivity.

A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is currently being prepared in partnership with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation. The Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation is responsible for evaluating and approving the CHMP.

The ACHIA identifies a number of mitigation and management measures including:



Continuing to identify potential new Aboriginal places throughout the CHMP and modifying the project layout accordingly.



Identifying and minimising any adverse effects due to pre-construction activities in accordance with relevant regulations.



Complying with the management measures outlined by the approved CHMP.



Ongoing identification and consultation to identify and manage adverse effects during the project's operation and maintenance.

▼ Basalt floaters in the paddock for the proposed terminal station to connect to the overhead transmission line.



▼ Basalt floaters and aggregated basalt boulders on level plain at the location of mound cluster north and east of Saleyards Road, facing north.



▼ Mature Red Gum near a proposed turbine location.

## Next steps

The ACHIA has been submitted as part of the EES documentation. The EES and all technical assessments will be placed on public exhibition for a period of 30 days. You can review the EES and technical reports on the Hexham Wind Farm website at: [hexhamwindfarm.com.au/ees](http://hexhamwindfarm.com.au/ees).

Formal submissions received from the community during the public exhibition period will be summarised in a Submissions Report and considered as part of the Minister's Assessment of the project.



### Have your say

During the public exhibition period, you have the opportunity to provide a formal submission on the proposed Hexham Wind Farm. There will be opportunities to meet the project team and hear from technical experts about the project, the EES and technical studies.

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*Visit the Community page ([hexhamwindfarm.com.au/community](http://hexhamwindfarm.com.au/community)) of the website for more information on our upcoming in-region engagement activities and ways to get in touch.*



Wind Prospect respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which our office and each of our projects are located. We also acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to the land and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

## Contact

If you need an interpreter, please call 13 14 50. If you are deaf and/or find hearing or speaking with people on the phone difficult, please contact the National Relay Service on voice relay number 1300 555 727, TTY number 133 677 or SMS relay number 0423 677 767.

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