Hexham Wind Farm

JANUARY 2026

FACT SHEET

Flora and fauna

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, an Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the proposed Hexham Wind Farm has been prepared. 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.

To complete the assessments, considerable research and 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 of the region 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 Nature Advisory to carry out the Flora and Fauna Assessment for the project.

The Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* ('FFG Act') and the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* ('EPBC Act') and the Victorian Government Planning Minister's scoping requirements for the assessment of environmental effects. The assessment identifies the extent and condition of native vegetation in the project study area as well as any potential impacts on flora, fauna and ecological communities and how these could be mitigated.

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How the assessment was carried out

The risk to birds, other animals, and plants is carefully considered during a rigorous environmental planning and assessment process.

A range of biodiversity investigations and assessment methods have been undertaken to identify existing flora and fauna in the project area and to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are adopted to avoid or minimise any potential adverse effects.

Separate reports have been undertaken to assess any potential effects of the project on bat species, including the Southern Bent-Wing Bat and the state-threatened Brolga.

For more information about the studies carried out on Brolgas and bat species, please visit: hexhamwindfarm.com.au/news-and-resources

The assessment covered an area of 16,104 hectares using methods including:

- Desktop assessments of fauna species likely to be present along the proposed transportation route options (Geelong and Portland).
- Carrying out seasonal field surveys within the project study area, such as bird studies, flora and vegetation assessments, reptile and mammal, aquatic fauna and invertebrate studies, over a 14 year-period (between mid-2011 and mid-2025).
- Biodiversity investigations on Matters of National Environmental Significance (specific flora, fauna and ecological communities) listed in the EPBC Act.
- Evaluating the project's potential to affect ecological communities, including the potential cumulative effects of the development and other existing or approved developments in the area.

Findings

The findings of the Flora and Fauna Assessment identified a number of species of flora and fauna that could be impacted by the construction and operation stages. These include:

Vegetation and Flora

- Two listed threatened flora species, the Purple-Blown-grass (FFG Act) and Spiny Rice Flower (FFG and EPBC Acts) were recorded, and five threatened ecological communities (woodlands, grasslands and wetlands) under the EPBC Act and the FFG Act were recorded.
- The project development would result in the removal of around 8 hectares of native vegetation from areas across the site and four large trees along the Geelong transport route option, or 9 large trees along the Portland transport route option.
- A separate assessment of Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE) and the Surface Water and Groundwater Impact Assessments determined that the likelihood of impacts to GDEs arising from the project is low.

Fauna species and habitats

- The study site is highly modified and dominated by grazing and cropping land. Seven fauna habitat sites were identified during site surveys, and found to be low, low-moderate or moderate in habitat quality.
- Thirteen fauna species listed under the EPBC Act, and 11 species listed under the FFG Act are known to occur, likely to occur or have the potential to occur at the project site.
- Surveys conducted on and around the project site have recorded 125 bird species to date, with around 90 percent of sightings occurring below the proposed rotor swept height (area under which the wind turbine blades rotate). The project is considered unlikely to result in a significant impact to any of these species.
- Growling Grass Frog potential habitats were mapped and confirmed in and around Mustons Creek. The mapping was used to inform the site layout to avoid areas of habitat.
- Other listed species, such as the Golden Sun Moth, Hairy Burrowing Crayfish, Yarra Pygmy Perch and Little Galaxia fish were surveyed, with the findings indicating a low or negligible impact.
- The desktop assessment of fauna species likely to occur at each of the transport route locations indicated that six fauna species may be susceptible to residual impacts along the transport route as a result of tree and vegetation removal.

Managing adverse effects

Based on the assessment findings, mitigation measures have been proposed to ensure adverse effects on biodiversity are avoided or, where avoidance is not possible, minimised during the construction and operation of the proposed Hexham Wind Farm. Mitigation measures include:

Submission of a draft Bat and Avifauna Management Plan as part of the EES. This plan outlines a proposed regime for monitoring bird and bat strikes during the operation phase and the proposed adaptive management response.

Preparation of and adherence to an approved Environmental Management Plan during construction. This would include defined routes for machinery, decontamination procedures to prevent the spread of weeds, and management methods to avoid and minimise impacts to waterways.

Avoiding the placement of infrastructure within 100-meters of wetlands and watercourses and minimising the construction of waterway crossings.

Designing the project to avoid and limit impacts on threatened species such as the Growling Grass Frog.

Careful design and location of all project infrastructure to minimise the removal of native vegetation as much as possible.

Ensuring that the appropriate approvals and permits are sought from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) if removal of native flora is required and the agreed mitigation plans are in place.

If required, offsets to compensate the removal of native vegetation to accommodate the development footprint, preferred transportation route and any local road upgrades, in accordance with government policies.

Eagle nests

A total of 10 Wedge-tailed Eagle nests and three potential eagle nests were recorded, with three of these being outside of the project area. The number of nests within the study area suggest that more than one pair utilises the area for breeding. The project design has applied turbine exclusion zones, resulting in no turbines or overhead powerlines located within 500m of any known nests.

Next steps

The final Flora and Fauna Impact Assessment has been submitted as part of the EES documentation for review and assessment by the Planning Minister. The EES and all technical assessments will be placed on public exhibition for a period of 30 days. Feedback received from the community during the public review period will be summarised in a Submissions Report and considered as part of the Minister's Assessment of the project.

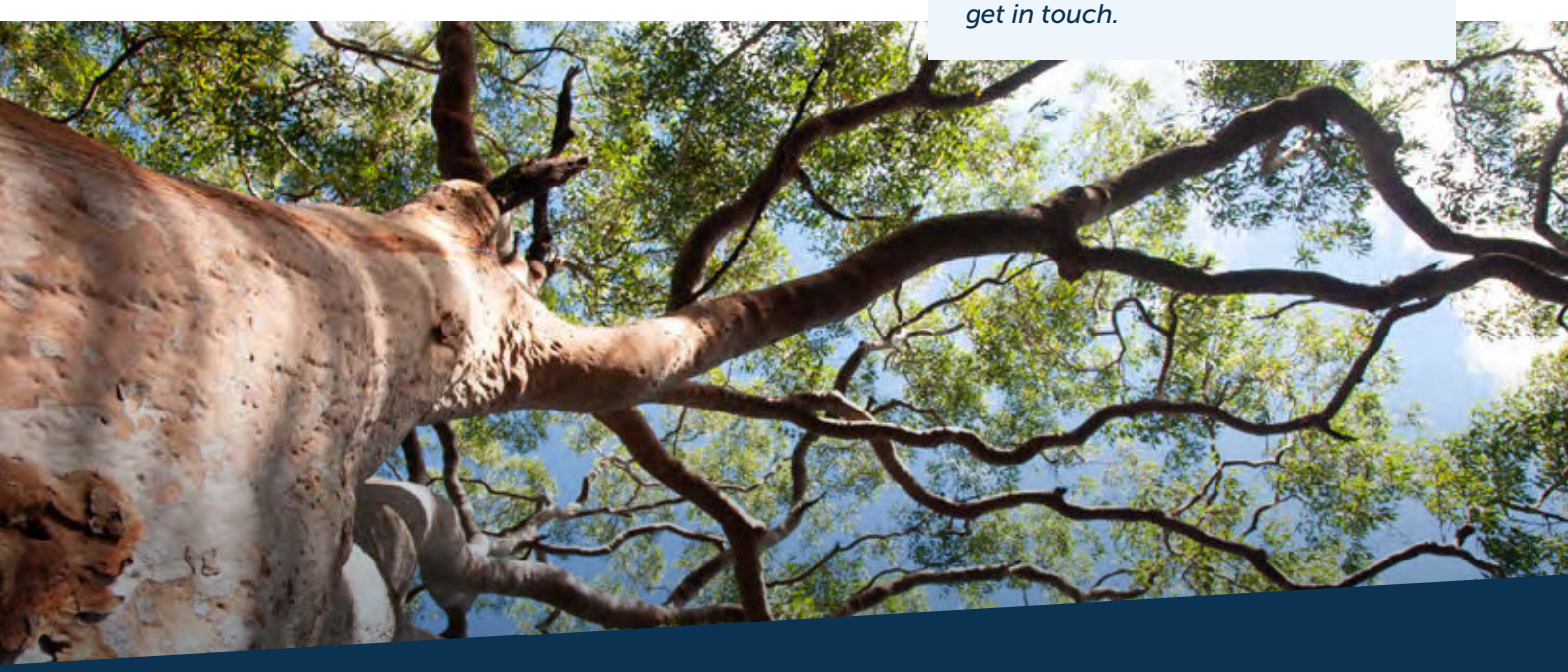
You can review the EES and technical reports on the Hexham Wind Farm website at: hexhamwindfarm.com.au/ees.

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.

Visit the Community page (hexhamwindfarm.com.au/community) for more information about 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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