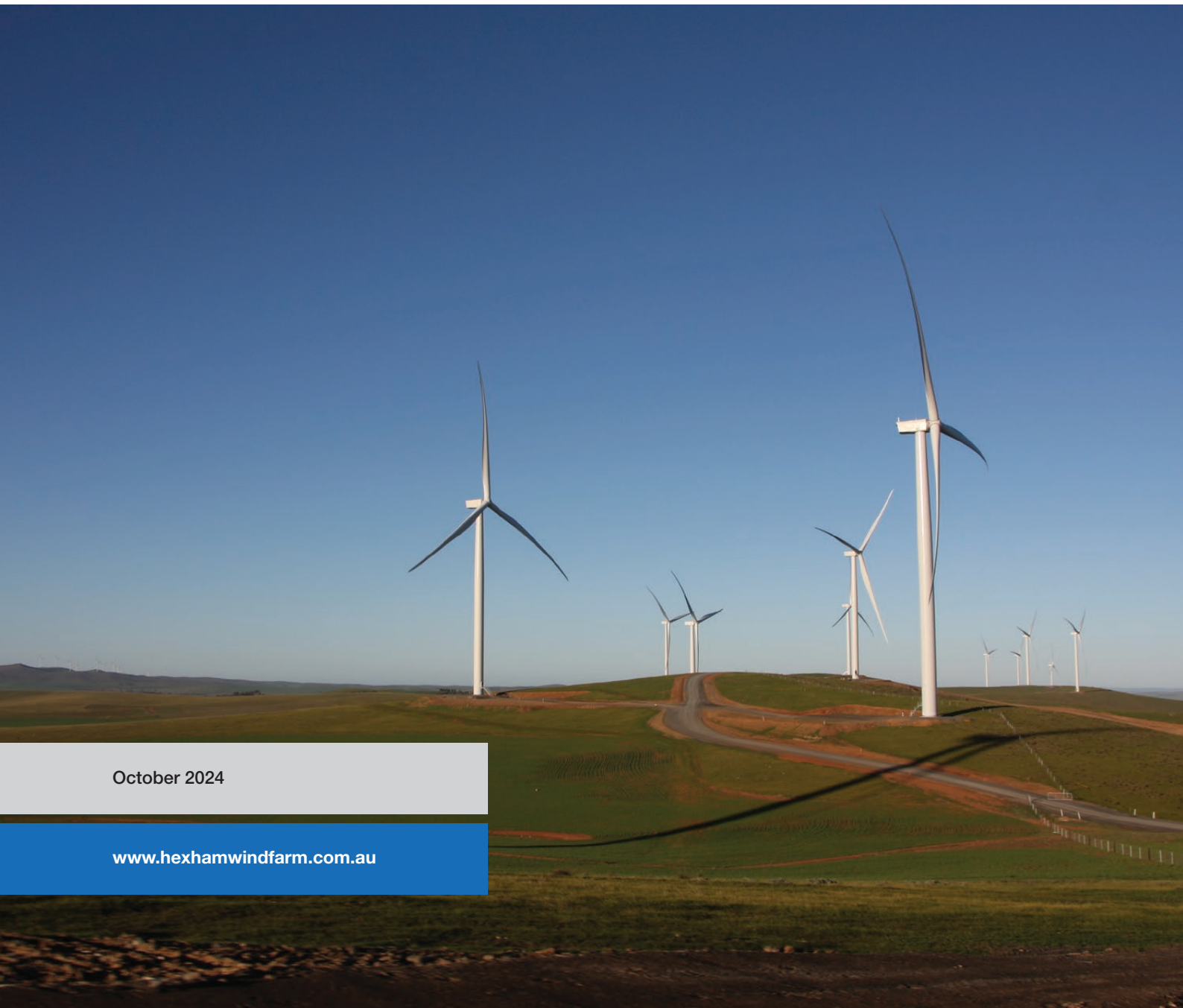


Hexham Wind Farm

Environment Effects Statement
Consultation Plan

October 2024

www.hexhamwindfarm.com.au



Acknowledgement of Country

Wind Prospect acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which the Project is located, the Eastern Maar People, and pays respect to Elders, both past and present. We acknowledge the ongoing connection between the Traditional Owners with the land and waters.

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1.0 Purpose

This Environment Effects Statement (EES) Consultation Plan (Plan) for the Hexham Wind Farm has been prepared as a requirement of the Ministerial Guidelines for Assessment of Environmental Effects under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*.

Please note: This consultation plan was last updated in October 2024 to guide the EES consultation process and contains information current at that time. Some details may no longer reflect the most recent project status.

As part of the preparation of an EES, Hexham Wind Farm Pty Ltd (the Proponent) has the responsibility of informing and consulting with the public and other stakeholders.

This document provides an overview of the guiding principles and engagement objectives. It identifies key stakeholders, the political and community environment and methodology for collecting and recording stakeholder input, feedback and grievances.

This Plan also outlines the engagement program, and methods and tools that will be delivered to inform the public, consult with key stakeholders, and provide opportunity for input into the preparation of the EES and Planning Permit Application for the Hexham Wind Farm (the Project). This Plan is not intended to follow a highly prescriptive approach however it establishes the engagement program for the EES stages of the project. Engagement plans and implementation schedules will evolve as the Project moves through the EES stages and will respond to issues and stakeholder needs as they arise during the EES process.

The Plan also provides a framework for action and accountability and documents how the Proponent will:

- inform the public about the Project and program of EES studies
- seek targeted input from stakeholders to identify issues of potential concern, obtain local knowledge of existing conditions, understand perceptions of potential effects, and gain feedback on measures that might provide reasonable responses to stakeholder concerns
- respond to stakeholder input.

2.0 Project background

2.1 Wind Prospect

Wind Prospect Pty Ltd (Wind Prospect) is the owner of Hexham Wind Farm Pty Ltd and will manage the EES process. Wind Prospect has been developing renewable energy projects in Australia since 2000 and has achieved planning approval for 22 wind farms and two solar farms totalling more than 3,400 megawatts of electricity generating capacity, of which more than 2,500 megawatts is operational or under construction. Wind Prospect is a signatory to the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Developments.

2.2 The Project

Wind Prospect has been exploring the feasibility of the Project for several years and announced the Project publicly in March 2019.

The Project is located between the townships of Hexham, Caramut and Ellerslie in the Moyne Shire local government area (LGA) of south-western Victoria. It is approximately 15 kilometres west of Mortlake and 15 kilometres north-east of Woolsthorpe. Hexham is the nearest settlement, approximately three kilometres north-east of the Project area.

The proposed Project consists of up to 109 turbines, a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure. A temporary on-site quarry to provide aggregate materials for use during construction is also being investigated.

The Project area, which covers approximately 16,000 hectares, has been selected primarily due to its high wind resource and proximity to existing transmission line infrastructure. A new terminal station would be constructed within the Project area to facilitate grid connection to the existing 500 kilovolt (kV) Moorabool-Heywood high voltage transmission line which traverses the southern section of the site.

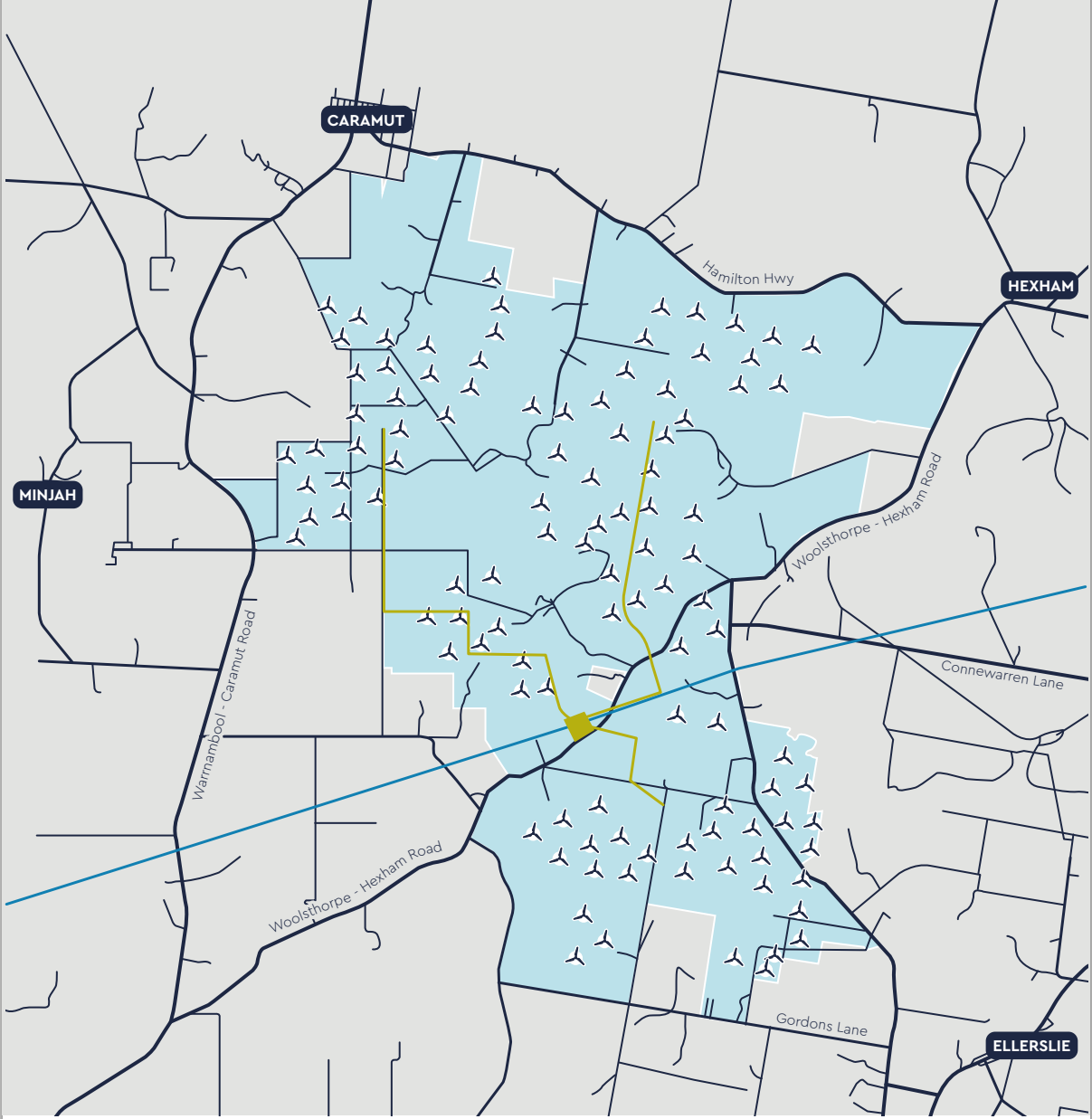
2.3 Project benefits and objectives

Overall, the Project represents a \$1 billion investment to the Moyne Shire and wider region and will create direct and indirect jobs during both construction and ongoing operations, supporting the local community and economy.






The environmental benefits are significant with the Project contributing to Victoria's renewable energy generation and greenhouse gas emissions targets. The Project, if successful, will have capacity to produce approximately 2,850 gigawatt hours annually of clean renewable electricity, enough to power up to 515,000 homes.

Key objectives of the Project are to construct a wind farm in the Hexham area which would generate green energy and connect into to the existing transmission network. Wind Prospect plans to engage with stakeholders and local community to identify any potential environmental impacts and implement appropriate mitigation and management measures to minimise negative impacts and to deliver ongoing community benefits. In addition, the Project aims to improve electricity network strength and stability, contribute to government policies relating to greenhouse gas reduction and renewable energy targets, and deliver affordable and reliable electricity to Victorians.

HEXHAM WIND FARM MAP



LEGEND

-  Turbine location
-  Project boundary
-  Terminal station and battery energy storage facility
-  Internal overhead powerlines
-  500kV Moorabool-Heywood transmission line



WIND PROSPECT
HEXHAM WIND FARM



Figure 1 Project map: indicative wind farm site boundary and proposed turbine layout.

2.4 Requirement for an Environment Effects Statement

In April 2022, the Victorian Planning Minister decided that an EES was required for the Project under the Environment Effects Act 1978 (the EE Act). It was determined the Project has the potential for a range of significant and complex effects that require rigorous assessment. The Minister for Planning's decision on the EES referral (number 2022R-03) is provided in Appendix 1.

A Technical Reference Group (TRG) has been convened by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to advise on the preparation of the EES. This comprises statutory decision-makers and government-appointed subject matter experts. The TRG meet regularly to provide advice to the Proponent and DTP during the EES process.

An EES is an assessment process, providing for the analysis of potential effects on environmental and social assets and values, and considers the means of avoiding, minimising and managing any adverse effects.

Following public exhibition of the EES and subsequent Inquiry (appointed under the EE Act) the Minister for Planning will provide a final assessment to relevant decision makers. The assessment will enable them to make decisions equipped with the knowledge of the Project's expected environmental effects and the Minister's advice about whether the proposal provides an acceptable outcome.

2.5 The EES process

During the EES process, Wind Prospect will provide opportunities for community members and stakeholders to seek information, ask questions, and provide input and feedback. On behalf of the Victorian Minister for Planning, DTP will provide two formal opportunities for community and other stakeholders to input into EES process. These opportunities are via submissions during the exhibition period for the EES scoping requirements and the EES itself once all the assessments have been completed.

Following an Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) referral to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the department determined the Project "a controlled action" as it may have significant impacts on listed threatened species and communities and listed migratory species. As a result, the Project will also require assessment under the EPBC Act before it can proceed.

The EES process is accredited to assess impacts on matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act through a Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria. The EES for this Project will be undertaken in accordance with the Bilateral Agreement, with the Minister's assessment report provided to the Commonwealth to inform the approval decision under the EPBC Act. This Plan outlines Wind Prospect's approach to stakeholder and community engagement during all stages of the EES process.

This Plan includes an engagement program that includes identified stakeholders, level of engagement (for each EES stage) and proposed methods and tools.

Figure 2 is a snapshot of the EES process and highlights the formal and ongoing opportunities for engagement.

Environmental Effects Statement Process



*REFERRAL

Victorian Government EES Referral determination



*^SCOPING

EES Scoping Phase including publication of Draft EES Scoping Requirements for public submissions and issuing the Final Scoping Requirements



* PREPARING THE EES

Preparation and submission of the EES (~12months)



*^ PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Public review of EES including exhibition, submissions and public inquiry



*^ PLANNING APPROVAL

Decision makers consider the assessment

* Ongoing consultation opportunities

A planned engagement program delivered by Hexham Wind Farm will provide ongoing opportunities for stakeholders to access information and share feedback that informs project design and development. The proposed program is included in this Plan.

^ Formal consultation opportunities

Members of the public can also participate in the EES process by providing written comments on the draft scoping requirements and exhibited EES.

Figure 2 The EES process and engagement opportunities.

3.0 Our approach

3.1 Engagement and consultation policy

Gaining community and key stakeholder support is fundamental to the success of the Project. This support will be best garnered by developing genuine and open relationships with key stakeholders and the local community. Wind Prospect recognises the importance of ensuring a “no surprises” approach with the local community and is committed to long-term relationships between the Project team and stakeholders.

Wind Prospect is dedicated to an open and transparent consultation process with all stakeholders and to providing accurate and timely information as the Project progresses. It is important that the engagement and communication activities are proactive and where possible, address issues before they arise, are responsive to issues as they are identified, and are flexible wherever possible to reflect the wishes and concerns of those who provide input.

Wind Prospect’s engagement approach aims to create respectful, honest two-way relationships with communities and key stakeholders; engagement that reflects our values and offers stakeholders and communities the opportunity to provide feedback. Proactive engagement creates a framework for discussion that will be the foundation for a positive long-term relationship with Project communities.

3.2 Our commitment

Wind Prospect recognises that the Project is a major development and relevant to the whole community. The company’s successful track-record of developing renewable energy projects in Australia since 2000 demonstrates a commitment to appropriate engagement.

This commitment includes:

- Respectful and ongoing engagement with local communities and key stakeholders.
- Embracing the values of trust and good faith.
- Ensuring respectful and timely engagement across a range of mediums and throughout the Project’s progression from planning through to operation and decommissioning.
- Designing and delivering effective stakeholder engagement to ensure community members and other stakeholders are informed, consulted, and given opportunities to be involved and to influence project outcomes.

3.3 Engagement principles

Key guiding principles are that the consultation will be:

- Constructive – all parties involved will consult in a positive manner that allows all parties to listen and contribute.
- Inclusive – the proponent will seek to understand the full range of local opinion.
- Fair and evidence based – project design decisions will be based on scientific and social studies, with important information provided by the community.
- Unconditional – engagement does not mean support for the Project and does not mean that a planning permit is more likely.

3.4 Engagement objectives

The objectives of stakeholder engagement are to:

- Identify stakeholders, and their preferred methods of engagement.
- Facilitate genuine engagement to ensure stakeholders are informed, consulted and involved during the EES process and issues are proactively acknowledged and addressed.
- Engage meaningfully with broader community and key stakeholders to address key issues raised through consultation and consider and respond to potential Project impacts.
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders and the community to gain further information and provide feedback that informs the Project development.

3.5 Engagement approach

Consultation is a key aspect of the environment assessment process in Victoria that helps build understanding around the issues and implications of projects. It enables stakeholder and community knowledge and views to be considered in both project planning and formal decision-making.²

The key stages of the EES process and engagement approach are outlined in Table 1.

² Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, EES Consultation Plan Advisory Note, October 2018.

Table 1 Proposed consultation during the EES stage

EES Stage	Key EES Activities	Consultation Objective	Consultation Focus	Key Messages	Timing
Scoping of EES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft scoping requirements for public comment for a minimum of 15 business days - Final scoping requirements to Hexham Wind Farm Pty Ltd issued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform the community and key stakeholders about the EES process, the draft scoping requirements and public comment process led by the DTP and an opportunity to provide feedback - Gather feedback and report this to the TRG for consideration - Gather insight into sentiment and key areas of concern for local community for consideration as part of the planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drop-in / info session in two or three locations on planning and assessment process (advertising these sessions required in local newspaper, project newsletter and e-update) - Quarterly project update (newsletter) - TRG site tour - Community Engagement Committee - Ongoing briefings and meetings - Project website - Ongoing information updates via project hotline and email, project website updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is an opportunity to shape the scope of the EES assessments and provide feedback on the Project and on other areas of interest, the planning process and the community engagement approach 	<p>Consultation on draft scoping requirements occurred in 2023</p>
Preparing the EES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing EES consultation and development of assessment - Completing EES technical studies - EES quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update the community and key stakeholders on the Project planning and assessment process, including information on the range of investigations being completed to understand existing conditions and potential project impacts and proposed management measures - Provide ongoing opportunities for community and key stakeholders to discuss the Project with the team and technical specialists and give feedback to inform the studies - Enable specialist teams access to land to complete the technical studies, as required - Update TRG with stakeholder feedback for their consideration - Gather insight into sentiment and key areas of concern for local community for consideration as part of the planning process and to seek ongoing feedback on engagement preferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least two information sessions in two or three locations on EES technical study program - Webinars of key EES technical investigations - Project collateral including general information booklet, fact sheets and summaries on key technical studies and areas of interest - Quarterly project updates (newsletter) - Community Engagement Committee - Regular meetings with community groups, landowners and neighbours - Ongoing information updates via project hotline and email, project website updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is an opportunity to provide input into the technical studies which inform the project design and support the planning and approval process - You can provide information to help the Project team determine existing conditions, areas of interest, assessment methods, impacts and management measures and this information will be considered as part of the planning process 	<p>March 2025</p>

EES Stage	Key EES Activities	Consultation Objective	Consultation Focus	Key Messages	Timing
Public exhibition of the EES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exhibition of EES for information and public comment - An inquiry by public hearing - Inquiry established and submission considered - Preparation of submissions report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide access to information about the EES exhibition process, how to access the EES and how to make a submission - Provide further opportunities for the Project team to provide face to face information if required - Public exhibition of EES - Receive submissions - Prepare and share the submissions report that address feedback and shows how it has been considered as part of the assessment process - Support the independent panel and inquiry process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Print advertising - Website update for EES content - Targeted stakeholder letters and emails to inform of submission process - Quarterly project updates (newsletter) - Further face-to-face or online information on the EES if required - Ongoing information updates via project hotline and email, project website updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your input is being considered as part of the planning process, to mitigate impacts and deliver benefits and this is how it is being considered - This is your opportunity to formally participate in the EES process and in the planning and assessment of the Project, though we will continue to consider your feedback will throughout all project stages 	Apr – Oct 2025
Making an assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minister's assessment and advice to decision makers - The Minister's assessment is normally provided to decision-makers and the proponent within 25 business days of receiving the report of an inquiry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform community and key stakeholders of the process, outcome and next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing information updates via project hotline and email, project website updates including next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your feedback has been considered as part of the assessment and is a key part of the approval process - Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback - We will continue to seek and consider your feedback will throughout all project stages 	Nov - Dec 2025

4.0 Stakeholder identification

4.1 Community profile

The Project is within the Moyne Shire (the Shire) in south-western Victoria. The Shire covers an area of 5,482 km² and has a population of 17,610.² Most of the growth within the shire is in the coastal areas to the south, with the entire population growing at about 0.5% per annum. Most of the population is dispersed in rural areas across the Shire.

The shire is surrounded by Southern Grampians Shire to the north, Warrnambool City Council to the south-east and Glenelg Shire Council to the west. Moyne Shire includes the townships of Port Fairy, Koroit, Mortlake, Macarthur, Peterborough, Caramut, Hexham, Ellerslie, Framlingham, Garvoc, Hawkesdale, Kirkstall, Panmure, Mailors Flat, Purnim, Wangoom and Woolsthorpe.

Moyne Shire supports 6,950 jobs and has an annual economic output of \$3.305 billion.³ The main industries in the region include agriculture, forestry and fishing. These industries support 2,340 jobs representing 34% of total employment in the shire. The agricultural, forestry and fishing sector makes the greatest contribution to economic output in the region, accounting for 33.7% of total output⁴. Regionally, the unemployment rate (in 2021) was 2.6% compared with 6.5% for the state.

4.2 Political context and energy projects

The Moyne Shire Council area is a major location for wind farm development in Victoria, due to the strong and reliable winds, low population density and the proximity of electricity infrastructure such as large transmission lines and terminal stations. The Moyne Shire forms a large proportion of South West Victoria's Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), recently established by the State Government.

The South West REZ offers Moyne Shire an opportunity to play a key role in the national renewable energy transition and provides opportunities for economic diversification in the region beyond the hosting of nationally significant critical infrastructure.

There are several wind farm projects in the area and the Moyne Shire Council (Council) has sought to ensure the interests of the community are reflected in the development of these projects. Currently, within Moyne Shire there are seven operational wind farms, two under construction, a further six proposed wind farms are undergoing assessment. A major solar and Battery Energy Storage System project has been approved.

Should all projects be constructed, the Shire would host over 800 wind turbines, generating more than three gigawatts of electricity and covering over 12% of Moyne Shire's land area⁵.

² Moyne Shire Remplan: [Remplan.com.au/moyne/economy](https://remplan.com.au/moyne/economy)

³ [Remplan.com.au/moyne/economy](https://remplan.com.au/moyne/economy)

⁴ [Remplan.com.au/moyne/economy](https://remplan.com.au/moyne/economy)

⁵ Moyne Shire Council

The Moyne Shire Council contacted the Minister for Planning on 1 May 2024 to reiterate its commitment to continuing to work with the DTP as a key stakeholder in the assessment of renewable energy developments in the area. To support this role, DTP confirmed that prior to the end of a planning application notice period, Council can request a copy of all submissions the Minister receives to Council to ensure their submission considers the issues raised by the community. Council has also developed a policy to support this and to provide the community with more clarity on the planning and approval process.

Previously, the Council passed several resolutions in relation to the development and operation of wind farms. These resolutions have been considered during the project design process, with several actions taken to address issues.

The Project falls within the Victorian lower house electorates of the South-West Coast District and Polwarth District and the Federal lower house seat of Wannon.

4.3 Community and stakeholders

According to the *Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria* guide published by DELWP (2017 and updated July 2021), the 'community' for renewable energy development is all the people who live within and identify with the geographic area surrounding the proposed site.

The wind industry defines its project stakeholders in two primary categories. The differentiator for a wind farm project is commonly between those who will or are likely to be either affected in either a positive or negative manner (i.e., affected parties) and those who might have an interest in or may influence the Project (i.e., interested parties).

Affected parties: People / entities directly affected by the Project. Typically affected parties occur within a project's defined area of influence, however, can occur outside this area in unique circumstances. This category includes:

- Communities, groups and individuals who are near neighbours (within six kilometres of a project) and the wider community (within 10 kilometres of a project).
- Project participating landholders who intend to host wind farm infrastructure, including any landholders along the transport route and transmission line route.
- The owners of, or those responsible for, infrastructure and airspace proximate to a project including communication towers and roads.
- Traditional Owners including those groups with designated Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) or applicant RAP status.
- Businesses operating proximate to a project.

- Government bodies responsible for planning and environment and management of local resources and infrastructure.
- Residents of the Local Government Area in which a project is located who may be indirectly affected by economic development and employment opportunities and additional pressures on resources and services.
- Local community, environmental and business groups such as sporting groups, Lions Club, Rotary Club and groups with a focus on local economic development and advancement.
- Other stakeholders with an interest in the Project including elected representatives, absentee landowners and government bodies that don't fall into other categories mentioned.

Interested parties: This category encompasses people or entities that are interested in the Project and / or could affect the Project in some way, including:

- Residents of the greater LGA.
- Community-based, faith-based or non-government organisations.
- Suppliers and service providers to the proponent.
- Other notable projects in the region.
- Federal, State and Local Governments.
- Project investors and financiers.
- Media, academics and / or other special interest groups.

A more detailed list of key stakeholder groups and organisations is available in Appendix 2.

4.4 Traditional Owners

The Eastern Maar peoples are the Traditional Owners and hold native title over the proposed Project area. The Eastern Maar Traditional Owners Corporation (EMAC) manages native title rights for the Eastern Maar Peoples and is a Registered Aboriginal Party.

EMAC and the Victorian government department First Peoples - State Relations (FP-SR) are being consulted in the development of the Project's Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP). Consultation with EMAC and FP-SR will guide the cultural heritage assessment process and approach to the subsurface testing of areas considered to have Aboriginal heritage significance. Consultation will also include the identification, recording and significance assessment of any intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage within the Project area.

With the support of specialist Indigenous heritage advisors, Wind Prospect will also involve and consult with Traditional Owners during the EES process on the potential economic and social benefits of the Project for Indigenous people in the region.



4.5 Hard to reach communities

Recognising that not every community member has access to reliable internet in the Moyne Shire, Wind Prospect commits to delivering an engagement program that is a mix of digital, written and in person methods and tools. The ‘hard to reach’ groups, perceived barriers to them engaging with this project, and proposed tools and tactics to ensure equal access for all are included in Table 2.

Table 2 Hard to reach communities and barriers to engagement

Group	Barriers to engagement	Tools / tactics
No internet access	Cannot participate in online engagement activities as they do not have access to the internet connection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a mix of digital and written communication tools to provide information about the Project. - Ensure online activities and platforms are compatible with a mobile device. - Partner with local libraries and organisations who can support residents who don't have access to an internet connection.
Not digitally savvy	Do not feel confident or have the skills to participate in online engagement activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide support to individuals on how to use digital tools, like Zoom, to encourage participation. - Encourage them to call the 1800 hotline to ask questions and troubleshoot issues. - Use a range of communication and engagement tools to provide the community with a choice of how they would like to participate.
Geographically isolated individuals	Do not have access to a strong internet connection or long distances mean they cannot participate in face-to-face engagement activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a mix of digital and written communication tools to provide information about the Project. - Face-to-face meetings at their properties if feasible - Tap into existing local networks to engage with as many people as possible.
Distrusting community members	Community members feel that the Project will progress regardless of community support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to promote engagement opportunities and enforce that the Project is still subject to approval and that community feedback is a key part of the approval process.
Renters (transient population)	Do not feel a strong connection to the local area so do not feel a need to participate. Given the increasing cost of home ownership, renting properties is more often than not a necessity increasing and this community should also have the opportunity to participate in the planning of the Project and to receive project updates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send communication materials to both landowners and tenants so they are aware of the Project and to confirm that their feedback is still valued.

5.0 Consultation to date

Early and ongoing consultation and engagement with the community and stakeholders is a priority. Wind Prospect is taking a planned approach that aligns with the project development phase and guides stakeholder engagement and consultation for the proposed Hexham Wind Farm. The Project is currently in the environmental and planning approvals phase and consultation activities are aligned with key project milestones during this phase. This Plan, and specifically Table 3 below, outline the consultation activities that have been completed to date. Feedback will continue to be gathered to gain insights into project sentiment and key areas of concern for the local community. These insights will be considered as part of the planning process.

Table 3 Engagement activities to date

Activity	Details
Agency consultation	<p>Preparation of the EES referral and the Scoping Requirements has required consultation with various key agencies including the DTP (formerly DELWP Planning), FP – SR, the Moyne Shire Council, Transport Victoria, Airservices Australia, Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), DEECA (formerly DELWP Environment), Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Southern Rural Water, Country Fire Authority, AusNet Services, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, the Australian Energy Market Operator, and the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.</p> <p>Regular TRG meetings continue to be held. These include DTP, government agencies, regional authorities and councils that have a statutory or policy interest in the Project. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss key aspects of the Project, potential impacts, assessments, and proposed mitigation approaches.</p>
Community Engagement Committee	<p>The Moyne Shire Council established a Community Engagement Committee (CEC) for the Project in June 2019. The CEC comprises three Moyne Shire councillors, six members of the local community and two Wind Prospect staff members. Sixteen meetings have been held to date and are expected to continue on a quarterly basis, with the last CEC held in September 2024. In September 2024, the Council endorsed the continuation of these CECs for a further two years.</p>
Stakeholder database	<p>A database has been developed and continues to evolve. It currently includes over 360 stakeholders. The Project uses a stakeholder management tool to keep stakeholder information updated and interactions recorded.</p>
Door knocking	<p>Two rounds of door knocking have been undertaken; round one is March 2019 and round two in August 2019. All neighbouring dwellings within six kilometres of the proposed Project area were visited, which was 218 dwellings in total.</p>
Public opinion surveys	<p>Public opinion surveys were provided to all neighbouring landowners within 10 kilometres of the Project when the Project was launched via a combination of door knocking activities, information sessions, mailouts and face-to-face meetings. The surveys are also available on the Project website. At the time of writing, 121 public opinion survey responses had been received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 76 responses were supportive of the Project (62.8%). - 20 responses indicated that after viewing the information provided, they were either neutral, undecided or required further information regarding the Project (16.5%). - 25 responses were against the Project (20.7%).
Information sessions	<p>Two initial community information sessions have been held at the Caramut Hall and Ellerslie Hall in May 2019. 110 people attended. Information sessions were also held in 2019, 2020 and 2022. Another three information sessions were held on June 1 and 2 2023 at Hexham, Caramut and Ellerslie to detail the EES process, explain how residents could be involved and to provide a project update.</p>
Face-to-face meetings	<p>About 100 face-to-face meetings have been held with involved landowners and neighbours. The Project team continue to meet with involved landowners and neighbours as required.</p> <p>The Project team meet with Traditional Owners and Indigenous groups monthly, at key project stages and as required.</p>

Activity	Details
Direct mail-out	Mailouts are used to communicate with owners of land within 10 kilometres of the Project. To date, direct mail has been used to introduce the Project, and provide regular updates and newsletters.
Flora and fauna interviews	40 interviews conducted with landowners within the Project area and neighbouring landowners to inform the flora and fauna assessment. Assessments are ongoing.
Newsletters and fact sheets	<p>Ten project newsletters have been issued and are published on the Project website. These newsletters are also emailed out to interested community and printed versions are sent to the surrounding neighbours within 10km of the Project area.</p> <p>A fact sheet on the EES process is available on the Project website, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and information on the Hexham Wind Farm's Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program are also available on the Project website.</p>
Project website	The Project website (https://www.hexhamwindfarm.com.au) provides easy access to information about the Project including newsletters, fact sheets and other project information such as Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program, sponsorships and FAQs. The website also has details on how to contact the Project for further engagement and a live public opinion survey.
Media release	A media release was distributed to select local media for the public launch in 2019.
Electronic mail	<p>Letters introducing the proposed Project were sent to the responsible authority, to the referral agencies (including DEECA and DTP, Moyne Shire Council, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (CMA), Southern Rural Water, Country Fire Authority and Transport Victoria), local state and federal politicians, the National Infrastructure Commissioner, Moyne Shire Council councillors, aviation operators (including recreational, agricultural / business and emergency services), transmission and distribution network service providers, communication service operators and naturalist / Landcare groups.</p> <p>The Project team continue to email stakeholders to provide updates at key project stages, and as required.</p>
Murra Warra Wind Farm Tour	A facilitated site visit of an operational wind farm was held in November 2019. A total of 19 people attended.
Meetings, phone calls, letters and emails	Various methods are used regularly to keep stakeholders informed and to provide an opportunity for feedback. This includes regular phone calls with involved landowners. As planning progresses, the Project team will meet special interest groups, schools and councils to investigate partnership opportunities

5.1 Summary of concerns

Engagement activities to date have identified community concerns. A summary of the concerns is listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Summary of concerns

Issues / concerns	Details
Cumulative effects	Cumulative effects associated with other existing, operational or proposed wind farms in the local area are potentially the issue of greatest concern and have been raised in relation to noise, visual effects and the potential impact of increased Wind Turbine Generator (WTG) numbers on aerial fire-fighting capabilities.
Noise	Local residents are concerned about wind farm noise.
Visual and landscape effect	Concerns that this Project, along with other approved wind farm projects in the local area, will result in too many turbines being visible and that this effect could change the character of the area making it more of an industrial landscape rather than an agricultural landscape.
Property values	Property devaluation and potential impacts on resale value and retirement funds of resale value and retirement funds.
Aviation	The potential impact of the Project on agricultural aviation and aerial firefighting.
Overhead powerlines	Concerns around the impact of external overhead powerlines and visual effects, risk of electrical faults causing bushfires and traffic safety.
Other issues	Other concerns raised include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - construction noise, - disruption during construction, - damage to roads, - impact on TV reception, - effects on Brolga, avifauna and Hopkins River effects to health, - increased fire risk, - concerns about impacts to existing land use and agricultural operations, and - creation of division in the local community.

5.2 Feedback

Based on extensive technical investigations and consultation over several years, Wind Prospect has identified key environmental values or assets that are important to stakeholders. These are integral to assessing potential hazards and impacts of a project and influence the Project's development and design.

Feedback has led to changes to the initial design proposed during the public launch in March 2019 with various protection buffers and exclusion areas implemented to protect environmental values as outlined in the EES referral. The Project will continue to refine the design in response to feedback and consultation with stakeholders during the EES process informed by further technical investigations on environmental values.

6.0 Engagement program

6.1 Level of engagement

Our approach to engaging stakeholders is based on the Public Participation Spectrum developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) and globally recognised as the primary framework for structuring consultation by the Victorian Government.

Table 5 shows that differing levels of participation are legitimate depending on the goals, timeframes, resources and levels of interest / concern in the decision to be made. At all levels of engagement, it is fundamental to define the promise and ensure it is clearly understood by both the decision makers and the stakeholders to be engaged.

There is potential for expectations to not be effectively managed and dissatisfaction with the engagement process to occur if stakeholders or the community do not clearly understand the promise for each engagement event.

Our objective is to inform, consult and involve with stakeholders using a range of methods and tools listed. This will evolve as feedback is sought during the EES process.

Table 5 Levels of engagement based on IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum

Level of Engagement	Engagement objective	Our promise
Inform	Provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding of the problem, opportunities and solutions.	We will keep stakeholders informed at all stages of development.
Consult	Obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives, as part of the planning process, to reduce potential impacts and to inform decisions.	We will keep stakeholders informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations and provide feedback on how your input has influenced the planning process, to mitigate potential impacts and to inform project decisions.
Involve	Work directly with the community. This can occur throughout the project or at stages of the project.	We will work with stakeholders to ensure your concerns and aspirations are considered in the planning process, to mitigate potential Impacts both construction and operation and to design and deliver the final project outcomes.

6.2 Proposed engagement methods and tools

Engagement methods (Table 6) and communication tools (Table 7) will be developed based on the needs of each stakeholder group and this will evolve as the Project progresses through the various stages of development. Each level of engagement is a valid one, provided it is delivered in a meaningful way.

Table 6 Proposed engagement methods

Method	Description	IAP2 level of engagement
One-on-one discussions	Discussions with individual landowners or community members.	Consult
Project briefings / meetings	Presentations and discussions with key stakeholder groups (see Appendix 2).	Consult
Advisory group meetings	Community Engagement Committee (CEC) meetings Technical Reference Group (TRG) meetings Department of Transport (DTP) meetings	Inform (CEC) Involve (TRG, DTP)
Site tours / visits	A forum for face-to-face discussions with Project team and technical experts as required on site.	Involve
Webinars	Online information session to provide information about the Project and provide stakeholders and community with an opportunity to ask questions. Indicative topics for Project webinars based on stakeholder and community feedback received to date include: - Project update - Landscape and visual impacts and mitigation / management - Ecology and biodiversity impacts and mitigation / management - Noise impacts and mitigation / management.	Inform
TRG meetings	Monthly meetings with the DTP convened TRG, in person and via online platform. At these meetings the proponent provides TRG with feedback and input gathered from stakeholder engagement activities in the form of reports and presentations.	Consult
Tailored landholder engagement	One-on-one conversations (in person, at their properties, via phone) with affected landowners and Project neighbours.	Consult
Information / Drop-in sessions	Public information sessions incorporating a series of displays or stations staffed by technical experts, engagement professionals or the Project team. This method of engagement will be critical to inform community of the formal opportunities for them to input into the EES (scoping requirements and public exhibition). Indicative Drop-in session topics; - Session 1: EES scoping requirements - Session 2: EES process and technical studies - Session 3: Project update - Session 4: EES lodgment and public exhibition.	Inform
Attendance at community events / pop-ups / schools	Regular attendance at community events will allow the community to view displays of information about the Project and have face-to-face discussion with representatives from the Project team. Suggested events include farmers markets, agricultural and vintage shows in the Moyne and surrounding shires.	Consult
Partnerships / joint projects and initiatives	Engagement with community groups, industry and business organisations to achieve shared outcomes (for example industry forums and community sponsorship program).	Involve
Visualisation tools	Innovative visualisation engagement tools will be available to stakeholder groups in a range of opportunities	Consult
Fieldwork / studies	EES technical specialists conduct surveys and investigations on site to inform EES process. The process of seeking access to properties to complete these studies provides an opportunity for engagement. The findings from the studies can be shared with interested community to provide more information about the Project. In addition, the specialists who complete the studies will be available at community sessions to answer further questions and / or provide more context.	Inform
Digital engagement	Online engagement enables the Project team to engage hard to reach sections of the community, to provide a space for people who can't attend face to face forums and to provide a source of ongoing up to date information. This forum can be interactive at certain stages, provide opportunities for ongoing feedback, provide access to updates and other information and to be available when it suits the community. Online surveys are also used for feedback and sentiment analysis	Inform / Consult

Table 7 Proposed communication tools and level of engagement

Tools	Description	IAP2 level of engagement
Email	Email to provide project updates, promote engagement events and respond to enquiries.	Inform
Letters and postcards	Provide project updates, promote engagement events and respond to enquiries.	Inform
Media and events pack	Media pack to include media release, key pieces of communications collateral and video / visuals. Local newspapers have a high readership and will be an important tool in promoting the Project benefits and engagement events.	Inform
1800 hotline number	Phone line for people to contact the Project team and ask questions about the Project. These are recorded in the stakeholder management database and provided to the Project manager.	Consult
Project email	Email for people to ask questions about the Project.	Consult
Project website	Central place of information regarding the Project including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project details - EES technical study information and fact sheets - Project maps - Details on how to provide information and feedback to Project team and EES process - Project newsletters and latest project updates - Community sponsorship and Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program 	Inform
Project announcements	Formally announce the Project or project milestones. Announcements will be made via e-news, and media.	Inform
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	Q&As to support internal and external communications, briefings and presentations.	Inform
Fact sheets / information sheets	Materials to support the sharing of Project information and developments.	Inform
Advertising	Press advertisements in local and national papers to inform the community and stakeholders on the public exhibition of the draft scoping requirements and exhibition of the EES periods. Press advertising to inform the community and stakeholders of public information sessions.	Inform
Briefing packs	Provide identified stakeholders with key information about the Project.	Inform
Video (simulation of final design)	Video content to capture project milestones, explain complex concepts and record community engagement events.	Inform
Infographics and designed maps	Stylised visual content to explain complex or technical concepts. Content will be embedded on project websites, newsletters and social media.	Inform
Newsletters	Use of e-news channel to send out regular updates to stakeholders and the community including the exhibition of draft EES scoping requirements and the EES exhibition periods.	Inform
Visualisation and digital engagement tools	Use of innovative visualisation and digital engagement tools.	Involve
Feedback forms / note-taking forms	Feedback / note-taking forms are used at drop-in sessions and one-on-one visits and meetings. These enable the Project team to record the interaction and identify key areas of concerns raised by the stakeholder. Notes are taken by the Project team member and added to the stakeholder management database and provided to the Project manager. This creates an evidence base for engagement and to assess whether engagement approach and community engagement is effect. It also can be used to reassure stakeholders that we listen and consider their feedback, and we are accountable for our commitments to the community.	
Reports	Summary reports of stakeholder engagement activities, attendance and key issues to be provided to the TRG and at advisory group meetings.	Inform
Surveys	Online or hard copy surveys to gather feedback and input at key project milestones and for technical study findings.	Involve
Key stakeholder communication channels	Seek to share information through key stakeholders' communication channels such as social media, newsletters, websites. Key stakeholders include councils, community and special interest groups.	Inform

6.3 Program

Following initial consultation, key stakeholder groups and their anticipated level of interest have been identified, a proposed engagement program has been established as shown in Table 8 below.

This approach to engagement focuses on stakeholders and their specific needs and interest areas. A schedule of activities has been developed and is delivered quarterly as the Project progresses. A schedule of activity planned for the has been provided as an addendum to this Plan.

Table 8 Engagement program for each stakeholder group

Stakeholder group	Details	Likely needs and interest	Engagement methods	IAP2 Engagement Approach
Local Councils	Councillors, executive and officers from the following Councils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moyne Shire Council - Warrnambool City Council - Glenelg Shire Council Community Engagement Committee (CEC) convened by Moyne Shire Council	Social and economic impacts to local residents and businesses Environmental impacts and impacts to cultural heritage significance Local community impacts and local opportunities including jobs creation Regulatory permits and approvals processes, including program and coordination Opportunities for communities and stakeholders to be involved in planning and approval processes (specifically opportunities for people to comment on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES) How feedback influences EES Opportunities for community benefit sharing Cumulative impacts and assessments Community benefits	Meetings and briefings (CEC meetings and Moyne Shire attendance at TRG meetings). Partnering with community groups through local Council.	Inform / Consult / Involve
State Government representatives and departments	Victorian Minister for Planning Minister for Regional Development Municipal Association of Victoria Member of Legislative Assembly Members of Legislative Council for Western Victoria – ALP, Liberal, Greens DEECA DTP Transport Victoria Regional Development Victoria	Environmental, social, economic impacts Potential impacts to sites and areas with cultural heritage significance Measures to avoid, minimise and manage impacts and enhance community benefit	Regular meetings Briefings as required	Inform / Consult / Involve
Federal Government representatives and departments	Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Federal Member for Wannon Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	Environmental assessment and approval Social, economic and environmental impacts	Briefings as required	Inform / Consult / Involve

Stakeholder group	Details	Likely needs and interest	Engagement methods	IAP2 Engagement Approach
Technical Reference Group (TRG)	Convened by the DTP, TRG members are from government agencies, regional authorities and councils with a statutory or policy interest in the Project	Environmental, social, economic impacts Environmental assessment and approvals including cumulative impacts Stakeholder engagement and community sentiment and feedback / input Review draft EES documentation including EES Consultation Plan	TRG meetings Stakeholder engagement reports Briefings Site tours	Inform / Consult / Involve
Authorities	Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) Country Fire Association (CFA) State Emergency Services (SES) South West Region Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Southern Rural Water AusNet Services Airservices Australia Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority	Environmental assessment and approvals Environmental, social, economic and safety impacts Potential disruption to essential services business	Briefings as required	Inform / Consult / Involve
Landowners	Landholders include the 14 participating landholders as well as the landholders hosting infrastructure and transport routes	Impacts to property and any business activities during construction and operation Compensation Access for surveys to inform EES Amenity and environmental impacts during construction and operation including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual amenity - Noise - Air quality - Cumulative impacts - Traffic and road conditions - Ecology - Access and safety - Fire risk management - Communication towers and electronic signal - Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program Opportunities to comment on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES and to provide ongoing feedback, including on how to minimise impacts	Newsletters Website Telephone One-on-one discussions Dwelling visits / doorknocks Drop-in sessions Visual impact assessments Visualisation tools	Inform / Consult / Involve
Neighbours	Neighbours within six kilometres	Impacts to property and any business activities during construction and operation Compensation Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program Amenity, social and environmental impacts including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual amenity - Noise - Air quality - Cumulative impacts - Traffic and road conditions - Ecology - Access and safety - Fire risk management - Communication towers and electronic signals - Social considerations, including community cohesion and impacts on social infrastructure, i.e. housing, roads, water, etc. Opportunities to comment on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES. Opportunities to provide ongoing feedback, including on how to minimise impacts.	Newsletters Website Telephone One-on-one discussions Dwelling visits / doorknocks Drop-in sessions Visual impact assessments Visualisation tools	Inform

Stakeholder group	Details	Likely needs and interest	Engagement methods	IAP2 Engagement Approach
Traditional Owners and Indigenous groups	Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	Economic and social benefits in relation to Aboriginal participation and employment opportunities Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program Aboriginal and cultural heritage impacts and CHMP Caring for Country and a Whole of Country approach Opportunities to comment on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES and to provide ongoing feedback	Meetings as required TRG meetings Site tours Cultural Heritage Surveys	Inform / Consult / Involve
Broader community	Residents of the Moyne Shire including those living and working in Hexham, Caramut, Ellerslie and Mortlake	Project information and updates including progression and impacts Social and economic benefits Community impacts Amenity and environmental impacts Cumulative impacts Road access and disturbance during construction Local community benefits Economic impacts Impacts and opportunities in regard to community cohesion and social infrastructure Opportunities to comment on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES	Website Newsletter Drop-in sessions Meetings as required Surveys / questionnaires Project hotline Visualisation tools Local media / advertising Attendance at community events Sponsorship program	Inform
Special interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community groups - Landcare / environmental groups - Schools, kindergartens - CFA - Sports Clubs - Lions Clubs - Rotary Clubs - Country Women's Association - Hexham Environment Action Group 	Visual amenity Employment opportunities Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program Cumulative impacts Opportunities to comment on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES, including on how to minimise impacts Impacts and opportunities in regard to community cohesion and social infrastructure	Website Newsletter Drop-in sessions Meetings as required Project 1800 hotline Visualisation tools Partnerships / joint projects and initiatives	Involve
Businesses and regional industry bodies	Businesses and regional industry bodies such as Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism	Employment opportunities and benefit program Network and economic impacts Social, economic and environmental impacts Opportunities to comment on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES Cumulative impacts including social infrastructure	Website Newsletter Drop-in and information sessions Meetings as required Project 1800 hotline Partnerships / joint projects and initiatives	Inform / Involve / Collaborate
Media		As above	Media releases as required Media responses	Inform

6.4 Proposed engagement for EES Technical Study Program

Community and stakeholder engagement are a key element of the EES process. It enables key issues to be identified and addressed during the EES process and project design. Technical studies are completed to assess the potential effects of the Project. These studies require engagement with a range of stakeholders including government agencies and the local community.

Consultation will be specific to each technical study and focussed on seeking relevant information and identifying any particular concerns that will inform project design, planning and approval (see Table 9).

Table 9 Snapshot of technical study program and engagement

Assessment topic / Key values	Technical study and assessment of effects	Stakeholder	Form of engagement	Approximate timing
Catchment values and hydrology	Surface water Ground water	Landholders, neighbours, Moyne Shire Council, Traditional Owners, Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Southern Rural Water, DEECA	Phone calls, meetings, emails, website and project newsletters	Currently underway
Biodiversity and habitat	Native vegetation and project ecological communities Flora Brolga Southern Bent-wing bat Grey-headed flying fox Other fauna	Landholders, Moyne Shire Council, DEECA, Traditional Owners, Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DEECA special interest groups such as the Southwest Environment Alliance	Phone calls, meetings, emails, drop-in sessions, webinars, website content and project newsletters	Currently underway
Landscape and visual	Landscape and visual Shadow flicker and blade glint Landforms and soils	Landholders, neighbours, Moyne Shire Council, DEECA, special interest groups	Phone calls, One-on-one discussions Dwelling visits / doorknocks Drop-in sessions Visual impact assessments Visualisation tools, Webinar, Newsletters Website	Currently underway
Amenity	Noise and vibration Aviation Air quality Electromagnetic interference Fire hazards	Landholders, neighbours, Moyne Shire Council, DEECA, EPA, Air Services Australia, Department of Defence, CFA, CASA, Department of Health and Human Services, broader community, special interest groups	Phone calls, meetings, drop-in and information sessions, webinar, website content and project newsletters	Currently underway
Cultural heritage	Aboriginal cultural heritage Historical heritage	Traditional Owners and Indigenous groups, landholders and neighbours, DEECA, Heritage Victoria, special interest groups	Phone calls, meetings, emails, website, drop-in and information sessions, fact sheets and project newsletters.	Currently underway
Land use and socioeconomic	Land use and planning Socio-Economic and community	Landholders, neighbours, Moyne Shire Council, DEECA, DTP	Phone calls, meetings, emails, website, drop-in and information sessions, fact sheets and project newsletters	Currently underway
Traffic and roads	Traffic and transport	Landholders, neighbours, Moyne Shire Council, DEECA, DTP, DEECA, broader community	Phone calls, meetings, emails, website, drop-in sessions, fact sheets and project newsletters	Currently underway

Cumulative impacts will be considered within the technical studies particularly for biodiversity, landscape and visual, social and amenity values given the proximity of other proposed, approved and operating wind farms.

Wind Prospect will engage with interested stakeholders and involved community on the technical studies being undertaken and how these studies form part of the Project assessment process and enable the community to contribute to the EES process by providing informed feedback.

6.5 Technical Reference Group

DTP has convened a Technical Reference Group (TRG) to advise Wind Prospect and the department on the scoping and adequacy of the EES studies during the preparation of the EES, as well as coordination with statutory approval processes.

The TRG members are drawn from government agencies, local government and regional authorities and are appointed to provide technical advice to both DTP and the proponent on preparing a quality EES.

The TRG also provides feedback on the EES Consultation Plan and monitors the delivery of the EES consultation program.

A TRG members site visit took place on December 1, 2022. This method of engagement provided an opportunity for members to see the proposed Project area firsthand.

The TRG meets regularly in a hybrid meeting model, consisting of online and in-person meetings. Wind Prospect will continue to work collaboratively with members of the TRG, sharing information and presenting assessment reports including assessment of cumulative adverse effects and assessment of project design alternatives.

An update on community and stakeholder activities and outcomes including sentiment and key emerging themes will be regularly presented to the TRG. This information will be provided in the form of reports and presentations.

6.6 Community Engagement Committee

The Moyne Shire Council established a Community Engagement Committee (CEC) for the Project in 2019. The CEC members are Moyne Shire councillors, local community members and Wind Prospect staff members. The meetings are conducted formally with a Chair, an agenda and with meeting minutes recorded.

Wind Prospect, the Moyne Shire Council and community representatives each present an update, and an opportunity is provided for all to ask questions of one another. The first meeting was in October 2019 and meetings are held quarterly.

The purpose of the CEC, as described in the charter, is:

- To develop strategies to create an effective flow of information to and from the community regarding the proposed Hexham Wind Farm project;
- To act as a conduit for information flow between Council, the Project proponent, the community, and relevant stakeholders regarding the progress of the Hexham Wind Farm project;
- To assist in the resolution of issues that may arise during the pre-application, application, and if necessary, during the construction and operational phases of the Hexham Wind Farm project.

In September 2024, Council passed a motion to continue the CECs with a review within two years and noted that the CECs for wind farm projects provided an opportunity for Council and community to be involved in the planning process.

6.7 Reporting, monitoring and evaluation

The Project uses a stakeholder management database to record phone calls, meetings and minutes of formal meetings with key stakeholders. A stakeholder communications folder also holds records of interactions including incoming and outgoing letters, and meeting records relating to host landowners, neighbouring residents, key interest groups, government and non-government organisations and, the Community Engagement Committee. All data is recorded and stored in line with relevant privacy acts and regulations.

These tools enable the Project team to capture the wide-ranging information, stakeholder and community questions, comments and views on the Project, including specific issues of concern.

The effectiveness of this Plan will be measured and evaluated against the communications and engagement objectives (see Table 10 for detail). This will continue throughout the EES process.

Table 10 Evaluation process

Objective	What will be achieved?	What is measured as part of the EES program
Identify stakeholders, and their preferred methods of engagement	<p>The Project successfully identifying stakeholders and their engagement needs</p> <p>Widespread understanding of the Project among impacted residents, stakeholders and the broader community</p> <p>Responsiveness to issues and complaints</p>	<p>An effective database management system</p> <p>The timeliness of information received by impacted community and stakeholders regarding impacts</p> <p>Hybrid engagement activities scheduled to suit community needs</p> <p>Number and diversity of participants</p>
Facilitate genuine engagement to ensure stakeholders are informed, consulted and involved during the EES process and issues are proactively acknowledged and addressed	<p>General community awareness and understanding of the Project</p> <p>General satisfaction among stakeholders that they have been given the opportunity to express their views and that they have been heard</p> <p>Strong local relationships and trust</p>	<p>Issue timely and relevant communications (project newsletters, direct mail, letters and FAQs)</p> <p>Participant satisfaction with delivery of engagement activities</p> <p>Website visits and downloads of information documents</p> <p>Number and diversity of participants at engagement events.</p>
Engage meaningfully with broader community and key stakeholders to address key issues raised through consultation and consider and respond to potential impacts the Project	<p>The timeliness of information received by impacted community and stakeholders regarding impacts</p>	<p>Participant feedback is captured during activities.</p> <p>Response times in getting back to enquiries from the public</p> <p>Review of methods used to distribute communications</p> <p>Timely delivery of engagement activities to maximise opportunities to influence design and planning</p>
Provide opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback that informs the project development	<p>Monitoring and responding to issues and complaints</p> <p>Demonstrated consideration of community and stakeholder input in project development / decision-making</p>	<p>Expectations and issues managed effectively through communications and meaningful engagement</p> <p>Participant feedback is captured during activities</p> <p>Number and diversity of submissions received on the draft scoping requirements and the exhibited EES</p>

6.8 Incorporating feedback

Community or stakeholder concerns, issues and feedback raised will be recorded along with the response(s) to the points raised. Where the issue relates to a specific technical assessment, it will be considered in the technical study, along with any discussion on and response to the issue.

A response to a particular issue or concern could be as follows:

- Provision of further information,
- Consideration as part of the Neighbour Benefit Sharing Program,
- Changes to the assessment to include the issue(s) raised,
- Mitigation measures, or
- Changes to the Project design.

A summary of all issues raised, along with responses and references to any relevant technical reports will be provided within the EES documentation. During construction and operation of the wind farm, any issues or concerns will continue to be recorded and responded to.

Feedback from the community on the Project including technical studies is critically important as is feedback on where, when and how the Project engages with its community. We have a commitment to continuous improvement and will refine and adjust the engagement approach and activities as required to ensure that our information is reaching the community in a manner that is appropriate and desired.

6.9 Key project information

A summary of relevant contact information is supplied in Table 11.

Table 11 Project contact information

Project contact information	
Proponent	Hexham Wind Farm Pty Ltd
Owner	Wind Prospect Pty Ltd (Wind Prospect) is the owner of Hexham Wind Farm Pty Ltd (the proponent) and will manage the EES process.
Project website	www.hexhamwindfarm.com.au
Postal Address	PO Box 110 Fitzroy VIC 3065
Project telephone	1800 934 322
Project email	info@hexhamwindfarm.com.au
Register for project updates	www.hexhamwindfarm.com.au/news

6.10 Complaints and grievances

Successful stakeholder engagement can often be measured by the effectiveness and suitability of the implemented grievance process or mechanism. Effective and responsive communication when dealing with community complaints and feedback is essential for continual development of strong robust community relations.

The complaints and grievance management system that will be implemented by Wind Prospect will align with the methodology established in Appendix 3.

Continuous improvement of the grievance mechanism is an important priority, and the Project will therefore use the following practices to assist in achieving this aim.

- Easily accessible and understandable information relating to complaint lodgment;
- Acknowledgement and registering of all complaints within one business day of receipt;
- Regular communication and feedback to complainants relating to proposed courses of action or resolution strategies;
- Where possible, documented resolution of all complaints. Alternatively, if agreement has not been achieved, demonstration of compliance and implementation of suitable engagement strategies
- Implementation of regular auditing and review process.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Minister's Decision EES Referral

For Public Notice via Internet

REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*
(REFERRAL NUMBER 2022R-03)

Proponent

Hexham Wind Farm Pty Ltd

Project

Hexham Wind Farm

Description

The proposed Hexham Wind Farm project comprises up to 108 wind turbine generators (WTGs) with a maximum blade tip height of up to 250 metres, across an area of approximately 16,000 hectares in south-west Victoria. The windfarm has an anticipated operational life of 25 years, after a 2-year construction period, with preliminary assessment indicating power generation of 2,400 gigawatt hours (GWh) per annum.

Project components, other than the WTGs, would include access tracks, connections to existing overhead 500kV transmission lines via a new terminal station, underground cabling and new overhead powerlines, a battery storage facility, meteorological masts and an on-site compound. The project may also include a temporary on-site quarry depending on the outcomes of further investigations.

Decision

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) is required for the Hexham Wind Farm project, as described in the referral accepted on 16 March 2022.

Reasons

- The project has the potential for a range of significant and complex effects that require rigorous assessment. In particular, the project as proposed could have significant effects on:
 - i. Significant biodiversity values, including threatened species and communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
 - ii. Native vegetation and ecology of the area's terrestrial environments and freshwater environments, including wetlands and creeks;
 - iii. Aboriginal cultural heritage; and
 - iv. Landscape and visual amenity.
- There is uncertainty about the extent and magnitude of potential effects related to historic heritage, traffic, shadow flicker, soils, groundwater, electromagnetic interference, aviation, amenity and socioeconomic values that also require further assessment.
- The project has potential for cumulative adverse effects on local and regional environmental values in the context of other existing and publicly known proposed projects within the region.

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- An EES is warranted to enable an integrated assessment of the environmental effects of the project and associated uncertainties, to inform decision-making for required approvals. The EES will evaluate feasible, relevant alternatives, the effectiveness of proposed mitigation and offsetting measures, including opportunities to avoid or minimise significant adverse effects through alternative layouts, designs and other mitigation measures.

Date 19/4/22

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Appendix 2: List of key stakeholders

Category	Stakeholder	Level of engagement
Local Government	Councillors, executive and officers from the following Councils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moyne Shire Council - Warrnambool City Council - Glenelg Shire Council Community Engagement Committee (convened by Moyne Shire Council)	Inform, Involve
State Government	Members of Parliament Victorian Minister for Planning Minister for Regional Development Municipal Association of Victoria Member of Legislative Assembly Members of Legislative Council for Western Victoria Departments Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action Transport Victoria Regional Development Victoria	Inform, Involve
Federal Government	Ministers Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Federal Member for Wannon Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner Departments Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	Inform
Authorities	Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) Country Fire Association (CFA) State Emergency Services (SES) South West Region Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Southern Rural Water AusNet Services Airservices Australia Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority	Inform
Directly impacted	14 participating landholders Neighbours within 6 kilometres Participating landholders hosting infrastructure and transport routes	Inform, Consult
Indigenous groups	Registered Aboriginal Parties and first nations peoples including the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	Inform, Consult, Involve
Broader community and special interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents and businesses within 10 kilometres - Schools - St Coleman's School - Mortlake College P-12 - Warrnambool College - Cemetery Trusts (Hexham and Ellerslie) - Hexham Community Association - Hexham CFA & Ellerslie CFA - Ellerslie War Memorial Committee - Caramut Football Netball Club INC - Western District Pony Club - Hexham Equestrian Centre - Great Southern Coast Eventing Association - Caramut Riding Club - Great South Coast Eventing Association - Hexham Polo Club - Western Victoria Branch of the Australian Stock Horse Association - Caramut War Memorial Hall Committee Inc - Caramut and District Garden Club - Mortlake Lions Club - Mortlake Rotary Club - Country Women's Association Mortlake Day Branch - Western Plans Spinner, Weavers and Craft Group - Environmental Groups - Hexham Environment Action Group - Ellerslie Landcare and Tree Group - Basalt to Bay Landcare - Other relevant and / or interested community groups 	Inform, Consult, Involve

Category	Stakeholder	Level of engagement
Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caramut Western Hotel and Café - Caramut Store - Caramut Post Office - Caramut Transfer Station - Mortlake businesses 	Inform, Consult, Involve
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caramut Concerns - Mortlake Lions Club Newsletter - Mortlake Dispatch - Western District Farmer - 9 News Western Victoria - 95.3 Coast FM Warrnambool - 94.5 3YB FM - 3 Way FM 103.7 - ABC South West Victoria 	Inform

Appendix 3: Complaints and grievance procedure

The purpose of this document is to describe the process that would be followed should Wind Prospect receive a complaint regarding the Project. The procedure is a mechanism that stakeholders can use to lodge complaints in a formal way that provides a stepwise approach to the handling of and response to the complaint. Information relating to the complaint would be recorded and the procedure would be reviewed following the close out of any complaint to ensure that the process is effective. Figure 3 outlines the complaints management process and a description of each step is provided below.

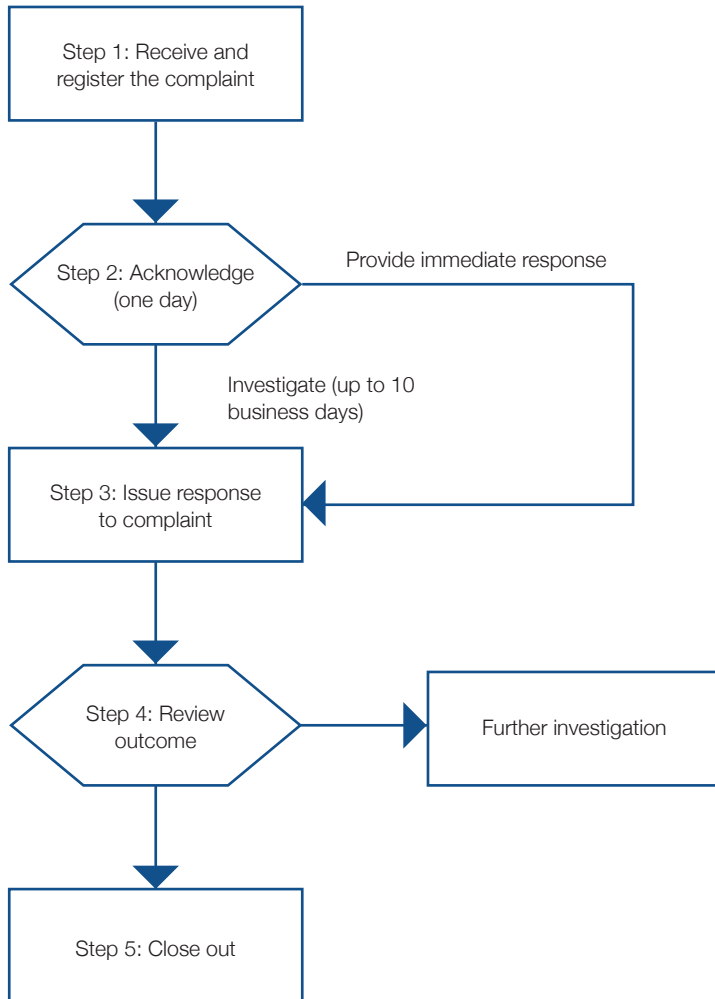


Figure 3 Wind Prospect complaints management process

Step 1: Receive and Register the Complaint

On receipt of a complaint, whether by telephone, email, letter or in person, specific information will be gathered and entered into the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database. This information will include, where available, the name and address of the complainant; the date; a description of the complaint; and, the date when acknowledged (including how acknowledged and by who). Complaints may be lodged anonymously, however, they may then be more difficult to follow up.

Step 2: Acknowledge the Complaint

Within one business day, the complaint will be acknowledged and assessed according to whether a response can be provided immediately, or whether further investigations are required before a response can be provided. Further investigations may involve discussions with the relevant technical consultant, who may need to do further work in order to address the issue raised. The time required for this will depend on the nature of the complaint, however, Wind Prospect will endeavour to seek a response within the prescribed time. A record of the actions taken to address the complaint will be included in the CRM database.

Step 3: Issue a Response to the Stakeholder

The aim will be for a response to be issued to the complainant within 10 business days of receipt of the complaint. Should this not be achievable, the stakeholder will be contacted to provide an update on progress in responding to the issue(s) raised. The response will be

issued by email or letter, depending on the preference of the complainant.

Step 4: Review Outcome of Response

Once the complainant has had an opportunity to review the response provided, Wind Prospect will ask whether it is considered that the complaint has been dealt with satisfactorily. If the complainant is satisfied with the response, the complaint can be considered to be resolved and closed out. If the complaint is not resolved then further investigation may be required.

Further Investigation

This may involve Wind Prospect investigating the complaint further and Wind Prospect will endeavour to do this within 10 business days. Alternatively, the complainant may decide to follow up their complaint with an alternative stakeholder, such as the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner.

Step 5: Close Out

An email or letter will be issued to the complainant to advise that the complaint has been closed out and this will be recorded in the CRM database.



The Project website is a useful resource to learn about the Project, keep up to date with community engagement events and opportunities and to register for project updates.

For further information:

Visit www.hexhamwindfarm.com.au

Call 1800 934 322

Email info@hexhamwindfarm.com.au

Hexham Wind Farm Pty Ltd
Suite 10, 19-35 Gertrude Street
Fitzroy Victoria 3065

