

Welcome to our latest project update

In this edition, read about:

- the upcoming exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- key benefits of the project
- a summary of EIS findings.

Exhibition of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The next project milestone is the submission of the EIS to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

We are working to finalise the EIS and lodge it in October. Once lodged, DPE will place the EIS on public exhibition for at least 28 days. DPE determines the length of the exhibition. During the exhibition period, which we expect will be in November and early December, the EIS and all supporting documents will be publicly available on DPE's Planning Portal (www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects).

We look forward to hosting another community information event in Walcha during the exhibition period, to provide information about the project and the EIS, and share with you how you can make a submission. We will advertise the exhibition period on our website and through local media.

All feedback, both positive and negative, will be carefully considered and responded to in a Submissions Report to DPE.

Key project benefits



2,100,000 MWh generated per year of clean, renewable energy.



375,000 average NSW homes could be powered by the energy produced annually from the project.



400 estimated full-time equivalent construction jobs at the peak of project construction, creating approximately **\$310 million** in wages and profits, per year of construction.



16 full-time equivalent operational jobs to be based in Walcha or surrounding communities.

Community Benefit Fund

\$1,000,000 to the Community Benefit Fund prior to the start of project construction.

\$750,000 annually to the Community Benefit Fund from the start of commercial operations through to project decommissioning. The annual payments will be escalated at CPI.*

The Community Benefit Fund will be managed by Walcha Council. Funding will be utilised to support community programs, events and facilities, as well as local businesses, not-for-profit organisations, and services and infrastructure in the Walcha and Uralla Council areas. An advisory committee including community members and representatives from local councils will review and recommend funding applications to support community initiatives.

*Based on a delivered project up to 600 MW capacity. For every megawatt over 600 MW, an extra \$1,000 per MW will be contributed annually to the Community Benefit Fund.

Environmental Impact Statement

Over the last two years, we have conducted rigorous environmental studies in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the project. The studies have been across several technical disciplines and include, but are not limited to:



Biodiversity assessment involving 2,633 hours of surveying across 12 field investigations.



Heritage assessment involving 600 hours of field surveying by archaeologists in partnership with Registered Aboriginal Parties.



Noise assessment involving background noise monitoring and technical modelling to predict the expected levels of noise and vibration during wind farm construction and operation.



Visual assessment involving an evaluation of the visual impact of wind farm infrastructure in the context of dwelling locations, topography, vegetation and the overall landscape.



Social assessment involving targeted stakeholder interviews with a cross-section of the local community to hear views and further understand potential social impacts and benefits.

The assessments have led to extensive changes to the design and delivery of the project to minimise potential environmental and social impacts. A brief summary of some key findings is presented below. There will be much more information in the EIS and we look forward to presenting those findings at the community information session during the exhibition period.

- **Biodiversity:** The project site mostly consists of exotic grasslands with sparse woodland and scattered trees. Extensive flora and fauna studies have been undertaken since 2019 to identify, and then to avoid and minimise, potential biodiversity impacts. Vegetation clearing will be offset through the NSW Biodiversity Offset Scheme. A Bird and Bat Management Plan will be developed prior to construction to define measures for reducing potential impact to avifauna during project construction and operation.
- **Heritage:** Eleven sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage value may be impacted during the project. Archaeological management strategies will manage and mitigate the potential impacts. The sites will be either protected (e.g. fenced off); avoided where possible by changes to the project design; or, if impacts are likely, managed appropriately in consultation with the Registered Aboriginal Parties prior to construction.
- **Noise:** The operational noise at all non-associated residences near the project is predicted to be lower than the NSW Government guidelines. Construction noise will be managed through a combination of work scheduling, community notifications, sound enclosures, and acoustic screens.
- **Visual:** The project layout was designed to minimise visual impacts as much as possible to nearby residences. However, the project will result in changes to the landscape during the construction and operational phases. Planting of vegetation is proposed at various non-associated residences to reduce the visibility of project infrastructure.
- **Traffic:** There will be adequate capacity in the road network to accommodate the project. A detailed Traffic Management Plan will be prepared prior to project construction, and individual transport permits will be required for all oversize and heavy load vehicles. We are also working with Walcha Council to develop a road upgrade and maintenance plan so that we can maintain the integrity of Council roads used for project traffic.
- **Social:** Stakeholder interviews identified that there may be minor impacts to daily life and farming practices during construction, which will be carefully managed in consultation with affected stakeholders. The project will create direct and indirect employment opportunities for the local community. Regional businesses will also benefit from localised procurement and from meals, accommodation and services for the workforce.

Do you have feedback or questions about the project?

We want to hear from you! We are always keen to hear from anyone with an interest in the project. Please reach out to discuss opportunities to get involved, ask questions or provide feedback for our consideration.

Website: www.winterbournewindfarm.com.au

Project Update: Approximately bi-monthly

Email: info@winterbournewindfarm.com.au

Phone: 1800 252 040



We are committed to keeping you informed about the project, and we want to hear from you! Visit www.winterbournewindfarm.com.au or call 1800 252 040 to learn more.