



# Welcome to our latest project update

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## Community Benefit Fund Survey update

The Community Benefit Fund (CBF) is an integral part of the proposed Winterbourne Wind Farm project. The CBF will invest at least \$35 million into local community projects over the life of the proposed wind farm.

A survey was distributed to the Walcha/Uralla community during April/May 2023 to gain insights into how local residents would like the CBF funds to be spent in their communities.

It is proposed that the CBF will be split 90% to the Walcha community and 10% to the Uralla Shire Community, which matches the relative geographic and infrastructure split of the proposed project within each LGA.

We received 62 survey responses. The survey results indicated that the majority of respondents (85%) had an understanding and knowledge of the CBF and its purpose: To invest in projects chosen by the communities of Walcha and Uralla. The survey asked respondents to rank their preferences for use of the community benefit funds across a range of options, and to

identify specific community groups or community needs which could be supported through the fund.

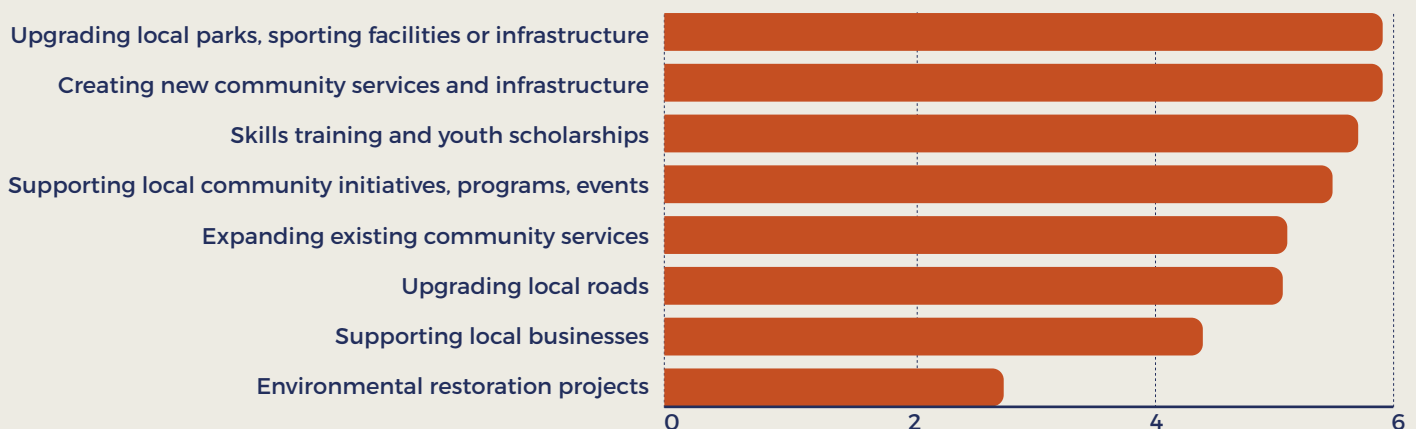
The chart below shows the survey results.

Respondents indicated a preference for the community benefit funds to be spent on upgrading local parks and sporting facilities, creating new community infrastructure, providing skills training and youth scholarships, and supporting local programs and events.

In addition, respondents identified more than 40 specific sporting clubs, community groups, health services, education services, environmental initiatives and general concepts which could benefit from funding provided by the wind farm.

We thank those residents who took the time to respond to the survey and we look forward to working with the communities and the Councils which represent them to develop funding priorities and mechanisms for the CBF.

### Survey results showing funding preferences across nominated categories



## Planning update

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project was submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) in November 2022. The EIS was on public exhibition from mid-November 2022 until late January 2023. DPE received 948 public submissions during this period, with 498 supporting submissions, 438 objections, and 12 comments. In addition, submissions were received from four local Councils and 17 state government agencies.

The next step in the permitting process is to prepare a Submissions Report which responds to the public and agency submissions received during the EIS exhibition period.

We are currently working on the Submissions Report which will be prepared in accordance with the *State Significant Development Guidelines - Preparing a Submissions Report*. A key objective of the Submissions Report will be to provide further information to the public and government agencies to address questions about the proposal, and to identify opportunities to mitigate potential project impacts.

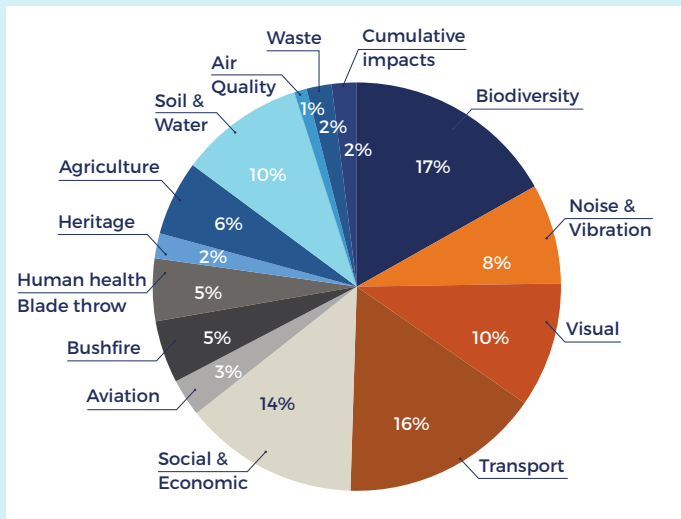
In addition, we will prepare an Amendment Report which will document any changes to the proposed project which have been made to address issues raised and/or improve project outcomes.

Although DPE initially requested that the Submissions Report be submitted by 28 April 2023, we requested an extension to 15 December 2023, noting that additional bat surveys required by the Biodiversity and Conservation Division (BCD) are seasonally dependent and cannot be completed until October/November this year.

Once the Response to Submissions report is lodged, DPE will undertake an evaluation of the project and make a recommendation to the Minister for Planning and Environment. We would expect the project would then be determined by mid-2024. If approved, we would hope to commence construction by late 2024 or early 2025.

## Issues raised through submission process

The graph below provides an overview of issues raised during EIS exhibition period.



The main issues identified in public objections/comments were:

- biodiversity impacts;
- traffic and transport impacts; and
- social and economic impacts.

The Submissions Report will provide responses to comments made by the public (both objecting and supporting submissions) during the EIS exhibition period, and where required will identify additional mitigation actions which are proposed to reduce the potential impact.

Several state government agencies also commented on the proposed project:

- Transport for NSW (TfNSW) requested further assessment of the proposed transport route including Surveyor's Creek Bridge.
- BCD requested a newly available Native Vegetation Regulatory map be used to inform a revised Land Category Assessment report for the project area, which would underpin determination of plant communities potentially impacted by the proposed project. BCD also requested additional flora and fauna surveys for the site.
- The NSW Telco Authority made recommendations about relocation of several turbines to avoid potential impacts to existing communications links.

We are working with these and other government agencies, including DPE, to address comments, conduct additional studies, and refine the project proposal prior to lodging the Submissions report later this year.

## We want to hear from you!

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.

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