

Hexham Wind Farm

FACT SHEET

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

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

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

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



Assessment

As part of the EES, an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (ACHIA) is being finalised in accordance with the Victorian Ministerial guidelines for the assessment of environmental effect (EES), the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, and a number of relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks. The aim of the ACHIA is to assess the existing environment and the likely effects of the Project in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage, and outline measures to avoid or minimise these.

How the assessment has been carried out

Wind Prospect understands the importance of Country and culture to First Nations people. Extensive consultation has occurred since the commencement of the Project with traditional owners including the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation who are the Registered Aboriginal Party for the Project area.

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

These include:

- **Desktop assessment** of registered Aboriginal places and reports on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage register, historical and cultural records, the geography of the region, and land use history.
- **Analysis of Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR)** data to identify potential Aboriginal mound sites.
- A **Ground Surface Survey assessment** was undertaken in 2019 to identify Aboriginal places within the Project activity area and test the desktop assessment outcomes.

Further surveys will be conducted on completion of the LiDAR analysis.

- **Determining whether subsurface excavation is required** to investigate areas with archaeological potential. This would occur following the completion of both the LiDAR analysis and Ground Surface Surveys.
- Identifying intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values for the Project through **consultation** with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

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



Preliminary findings

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

The preliminary findings of the assessment show that while Aboriginal cultural heritage values have been identified within the Project area, these can be effectively managed by the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) process, design mitigation and specific management measures for different phases of the Project.

Managing adverse effects

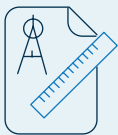
The layout of the Project has been developed by avoiding registered Aboriginal places and minimising effects on areas of Aboriginal cultural sensitivity.

A CHMP is currently being prepared in partnership with the Registered Aboriginal Party responsible for evaluating and approving the plan, the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

Mitigation and management measures proposed for the Project include:



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



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



Complying with the management measures outlined by the approved CHMP.



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

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



▼ Mature Red Gum near a proposed turbine location.



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



Next steps

The final Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment will be submitted as part of the EES documentation for review and assessment by the Planning Minister. The Minister will place the EES and all technical assessments on public exhibition for a period of 30 days. Feedback received from the community during the public review period will be summarised in a Submissions Report and considered as part of the Minister's Assessment of the Project.

Have your say

The environmental, social and economic technical studies are being finalised and we welcome you to have your say on the proposed Project. You will be provided with advance notice of the EES exhibition and the formal opportunity to submit a submission, however you can provide feedback at any time by getting in touch with the Project team by email, phone or mail.

We will be out in the community in the lead up to and during the public exhibition period to answer questions about the proposed Project, the EES, technical studies and any other queries you may have.


Visit the Project website for more information on our upcoming in-region engagement activities.

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

Contact

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

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