

## 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.

- 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