

## For Public Notice via Internet

### REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978* (REFERRAL NUMBER 2023-R03)

#### Proponent

Warracknabeal Energy Park Pty Ltd

#### Project

Warracknabeal Energy Park

#### Description

The Warracknabeal Energy Park (WEP) project seeks to establish a wind energy facility in the Yarriambiack Shire Council area near the township of Warracknabeal and is located within the Western Victorian Renewable Energy Zone. The project proposes to develop up to 230 wind turbine generators (WTG) with a total generation capacity of approximately 1,650 megawatts (MW) and is estimated to produce approximately 5,000 GWh of electricity per annum. The WTG will be located within two project sections (Northern Section and Southern Section) and there will be two easement corridors for overhead transmission lines, in total covering an area of approximately 26,500ha.

Other project components proposed include substations, battery energy storage systems, overhead high voltage transmission lines, site access points and access tracks, meteorological masts, temporary concrete batching plants, and temporary site compounds, equipment laydowns and storage yards.

#### Decision

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) is required for the Warracknabeal Energy Park.

#### Reasons

- The project has the potential for a range of significant effects that require rigorous assessment. In particular, the project as proposed could have significant effects on:
  - threatened species and communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
  - native vegetation and ecology of the area's terrestrial environments and freshwater environments, including ephemeral wetlands and creeks;
  - Aboriginal cultural heritage; and
  - landscape and visual amenity
- There is uncertainty about the extent and magnitude of potential effects related to historic heritage, shadow flicker, electromagnetic interference, groundwater, and 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 proposed windfarms 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 of decision:**

1 September 2023