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**REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*
(REFERRAL NUMBER 2026-R05)**

Proponent

Iberdrola Australia OW 2 Pty Limited (Iberdrola Australia)

Project

Aurora Green Offshore Wind Project

Description

The project comprises a three-gigawatt (GW) capacity offshore wind farm off the coast of Gippsland and east of Wilson Promontory National Park and supporting electricity transmission assets required to transfer energy generated by the wind farm to the existing electricity transmission network. The scope of the referral under the Environment Effects Act covers the Victorian section of the project from the 3 nautical mile (NM) limit of Victorian coastal waters to Giffard and Woodside.

The key project components proposed within Victoria include:

- i. subsea export cables within Victorian coastal waters;
- ii. a shoreline crossing through the coastal environment at either McGaurans Beach or Reeves Beach;
- iii. underground cable transition infrastructure near the shoreline; and
- iv. underground onshore transmission cables connecting to the proposed VicGrid Connection Hub located in the Gippsland Shoreline REZ.

Decision

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) **is not required** for the Aurora Green Offshore Wind project, as described in the referral accepted on 10 March 2026, **subject to the following conditions**:

- a) A targeted environment report for the Aurora Green Offshore Wind project needs to be prepared by the proponent, in consultation with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), and completed to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning. The report needs to examine and document the following:
 - i. assessment of the predicted impacts (direct, indirect and cumulative) on biodiversity values (terrestrial, coastal, estuarine, wetland and marine ecosystems) including native vegetation, flora and fauna; threatened species and ecological communities; habitat values, ecological connectivity; and species and communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*;
 - ii. alternatives for the location and siting of proposed project infrastructure and works areas, and consideration of alternative construction methods;
 - iii. the design and mitigation measures proposed to avoid, minimise and/or manage predicted impacts on values examined in the report;
 - iv. mapping that clearly articulates the full extent of project works, as well as values to be avoided (e.g. no-go zones); and

- v. a draft **environmental management framework** that sets out the proposed environmental management commitments to address predicted impacts and how these would be governed through the different approvals required for the project.
- b) The environment report required under condition (a) should be used by the proponent to inform the form of the proposal that is examined through approval processes, where relevant, and the development of relevant management plans.

Reasons

- The Victorian components of the project have the potential for significant adverse effects to biodiversity values within the terrestrial, coastal and marine environments. Various biodiversity matters are related and need assessment to understand the potential effects and their significance, and to inform appropriate design, avoidance and mitigation.
- None of the existing Victorian statutory processes and approvals address the different potential biodiversity effects together, across the terrestrial, coastal and marine environment.
- There are potentially significant adverse effects for cultural heritage. While there would be benefit in an integrated assessment of these effects together with biodiversity effects, the existing statutory processes under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* can separately examine and address these potentially significant effects.
- Other potential environmental effects of the Victorian components of the project, however, are unlikely to be significant and don't warrant integrated assessment and are readily examined separately through other existing statutory processes and requirements, such as the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, *Heritage Act 2017* and *Environment Protection Act 2017*.
- The conditions set out in this decision for an environment report, provide an appropriate and targeted means for examining potentially significant effects and related uncertainties for various biodiversity values, including the development of adequate measures to avoid and mitigate impacts in the context of relevant policy and regulatory requirements.


HON Sonya Kilkenny MP
Minister for Planning

Date 17-8-2026