



Warracknabeal
Energy Park

Environment Effects Statement

EES Consultation Plan

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Glossary

Term	Description
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
BGLC	Barengi Gadjin Land Council
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CRG	Community Reference Group
CSEM	Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Manager
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change Action
DELWP	Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, which is now split into two departments, Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change Action (DEECA)
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EE Act	<i>Environment Effects Act 1978</i>
EES	Environment Effects Statement
FTE	Fulltime equivalent
GWh	Gigawatt hour
ha	Hectare
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
km	Kilometre
kV	Kilovolt
LGA	Local Government Area
the Minister	The Minister for Planning
MW	megawatt
NEM	National Electricity Market

Preliminary CSEP	The Preliminary Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) published by WestWind Energy (Proponent) in 2022.
the Project	Warracknabeal Energy Park (WAEP)
the Proponent	Warracknabeal Energy Park Pty Ltd (WAEPPPL)
Project Area	The total area in which the Project would be developed. The Project Area covers approximately 25,000 hectares.
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
REZ	Renewable Energy Zones (REZs)
SEIA	Social and Economic Impact Assessment
TRG	Technical Reference Group
UCL	Urban Centres and Localities
VRET	Victorian Renewable Energy Target
WTG	Wind Turbine Generator
WWE	WestWind Energy

1 Introduction

The Warracknabeal Energy Park (the **Project**) involves the establishment of a wind energy facility including wind turbine generators and associated electrical infrastructure approximately 40 km north of Horsham and 5 km from Warracknabeal in the Wimmera region of north-western Victoria.

1.1 Purpose and Objectives

The Environment Effects Statement (**EES**) Consultation Plan outlines the strategy and planned implementation of community and stakeholder engagement for the Project. It has been prepared as a requirement of the Victorian Ministerial Guidelines for Assessment of Environmental Effects under *the Environment Effects Act 1978 (VIC)* (the **EE Act**).

In line with the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning's (**DTP**) advisory note on EES commencement and scoping, the purpose of this document is to outline WestWind Energy's (**WWE**) plan to inform the community and stakeholders about the Project and program of EES studies; obtain input from, and engage with, stakeholders during the preparation of the EES, and respond to stakeholder input. This Plan will form an important part of the documentation for the Project's EES.

Specifically, this EES Consultation Plan provides an overview of how the Proponent will:

- Inform and consult with the community in relation to the proposed Project.
- Develop an understanding of the social locality/social area of influence of the Project, specifically the host community/communities in which the Project is proposed.
- Scope and identify any anticipated impacts upon people associated with the Project.
- Enable community and stakeholder input into the Project design, planning and development.
- Collaboratively develop relevant strategies to respond to impacts in the form of mitigation or enhancement measures and community benefit sharing options.
- Identify future engagement preferences of stakeholders and potential partnerships between the Proponent and the community so the community can be kept up to date in a manner of convenience to them and in a way community members are able to voice Project concerns and see potential mitigations.

Sections included in this document are as follows:

- Overview of the consultation approach and process for the EES (**Section 2**).
- Overview of the Project including location and key components (**Section 3**).
- Outline of the policy context in which the Project is based, including consideration of key policy settings and other Project developments occurring within the Project locality (**Section 4**).
- Outline of the engagement strategy for the Project which will focus on the identification of stakeholders' values and aspirations in relation to the Project, and to focus the SEIA and broader EES on key issues of concern for relevant stakeholders and local communities (**Section 5**).
- Overview of key messages (for external purposes) that will be developed and refined throughout the EES process for communication to targeted stakeholders and community members (**Section 6**).
- The key stages of the EES process and the engagement approach for each stage of the process (**Section 7**).
- Overview of methods for reporting outcomes of each engagement activity, and procedures for responding to complaints (**Section 8** and **Section 9**).

1.2 The Proponent

Warracknabeal Energy Park Pty Ltd (the **Proponent**) is a special purpose vehicle established by WWE to facilitate the development and delivery of the Project. The Proponent recognises that respectful, inclusive, and meaningful engagement is a fundamental part of Project planning and development. Direct engagement and listening to Project-affected communities and stakeholders provides first-hand insight into what people value and how they expect a Project to affect them.

2 Approach and Process

The Victorian Government's Preparing an EES Consultation Plan Advisory Note (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2018) outlines that consultation is a key aspect of the environment assessment process in Victoria. Informal and formal consultation with communities and stakeholders helps build understanding around the issues and implications of projects. It enables stakeholder and community knowledge and views to be considered in Project planning and formal decision-making.

As a result, this EES Consultation Plan outlines the proposed engagement approach to be undertaken during the preparation of the EES and will be updated iteratively as the EES program progresses. The approach to stakeholder engagement for the Project will be informed by relevant legislation and best practice guidelines including the following:

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic).
- *Environment Effects Act 1978* (Vic).
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic).
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2000* (Vic).
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).
- IAP2 Core Values and Public Participation Spectrum.
- Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria, 2021.
- National Wind Farm Commissioner observations and recommendations, 2020.
- Clean Energy Council – Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry, 2018.
- Community Engagement Review - Report to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy, 2023.
- Interim Guidelines for the Assessment, Avoidance, Mitigation and Offsetting of Potential Wind Farm Impacts on the Victorian Brolga Population, 2011.

2.1 Engagement Objectives

The Proponent's engagement objectives for the Project are to:

- **Inform** – community members and stakeholders about the Project, including the planning and approvals process, and how they can participate in the process.
- **Actively involve** – community members and stakeholders in the Project development to help shape outcomes.
- **Encourage participation** – empower community members and stakeholders to provide input during the design and preparation for approvals phases to help identify concerns and mitigation strategies as well as capture local insights.
- **Help people understand** – create clear and concise Project material that is accessible to community members and stakeholders.
- **Demonstrate how feedback is being used** – to inform Project development and implementation.

How community and stakeholder feedback will be used during the different phases of the Project has been identified in the Preliminary Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) developed by the Proponent, (WestWind Energy, 2022) and is summarised in **Table 1**. Where community feedback is not possible to incorporate, the Proponent will share the rationale and decision-making process transparently with the community and stakeholders.

Table 1 Summary of how community and stakeholder feedback will be used by Project phase

Stage	How feedback is used
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs options for development and assessment. • Considered in Project scope refinement. • Considered in locating and micro-siting infrastructure.
Planning and environmental assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances understanding of the local environment, potential issues, and opportunities. • Considered in preparing impact assessments. • Considered in developing measures to avoid or minimise potential impacts. • Informs communication and consultation approach. • Informs performance requirements for construction, operation, and decommissioning.
Construction and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered in construction methodology, timing, and impact mitigation. • Informs communication and engagement approach.

Source: WestWind Energy, 2022.

2.2 Principles of Engagement

Engagement undertaken by the Proponent is guided by its mission to be *“a driver of change towards a sustainable energy future for our planet...through the development of cost-effective renewable energy generation and storage solutions refined through technical excellence, commitment to communities, and cohesive company values.”* (WestWind Energy, 2023).

The core company values underpinning this mission are illustrated in **Figure 2.1** and inform the principles of engagement adopted for the Project as outlined in **Table 2**.



Figure 2.1 The Proponent's Company Values

Source: (WestWind Energy, 2023).

Table 2 The Proponent's principles of engagement for the Project

Principle	Description
Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen with an open mind. • Be open and honest about considerations, impacts and opportunities. • Explain how and why decisions are being made and how input is used to inform decisions.
Responsive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt acknowledgement of queries or concerns. • Respond to issues, no matter how large or small.
Flexible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be flexible in our approach to avoiding or mitigating impacts where possible. • Be flexible about how and when we accept feedback so that timely input can shape the Project to achieve beneficial outcomes. • Seek feedback on our communication and consultation approach and make any necessary adjustments in response to feedback.
Inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to identify and involve a broad and diverse range of stakeholders in planning and decisions. • Communicate in plain English and an accessible format. • Use a range of communication methods to reach different audiences. • Use established local networks and groups to share information about the Project, to keep people informed.
Transparency and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful and honest in all interactions. • Share information that allows stakeholders and communities to provide informed feedback. • Adhere to all relevant laws and requirements.
Accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide key points of contact within the Project team for queries or concerns. • Take ownership for issues which may arise, particularly those that could have an impact on communities or stakeholders. • Provide access to senior team members and technical specialists at information sessions.

Source: WestWind Energy, 2022

The basic principles of effective public participation adopted by the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA, 2006) will also be applied, to ensure that engagement is:

- Relevant to the context.
- Informative and proactive.
- Adaptative and communicative.
- Inclusive and equitable.
- Educative.
- Cooperative.

The engagement process will also align with the IAP2 Core Values (IAP2, n.d.) to ensure meaningful participation and transparency as to how community input will impact decision making. Level of engagement with stakeholders will be defined using the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation ranging from inform to empower (refer to **Appendix C: Key stakeholders**).

3 Project Overview

The Project involves the establishment of a wind energy facility with a total installed capacity of approximately 1,650 megawatt (**MW**) including up to 230 Wind Turbine Generators (**WTGs**) and associated electrical infrastructure. The Project locates approximately 40 kilometres (**km**) north of Horsham and 5 km from Warracknabeal, in the Wimmera region of north-western Victoria.

The Project is located within the Yarriambiack Shire and the Western Victoria Renewable Energy Zone (**REZ**) (Victorian Renewable Energy Zones Development Plan Directions Paper, 2021).

Land located within and surrounding the Project Area is used for broadacre cereals and wheat cropping, with minimal land remaining for other land uses. The land has been substantially modified over time to accommodate agricultural operations.

The Project Area covers approximately 25,000 hectares (**ha**), of which approximately 1-2% of the Project Area will be occupied by above-ground permanent wind farm infrastructure.

The Project Area consists of two (2) wind farm sections and an overhead transmission line, including:

- The Northern Section, approximately 16,000 ha in area and located 6 km north-west of Warracknabeal.
- The Southern Section, approx. 7,200 ha in area and located 7 km south-west of Warracknabeal.
- The proposed 220 kilovolt (**kV**) overhead transmission line, connecting the Northern Section and the Southern Section, and connecting the Project into the NEM at Murra Warra Terminal Station.

The Project includes the following key components:

- Up to 230 WTGs with a total installed capacity of approximately 1,650 MW.
- Two collector stations, one located in the Northern section and one in the Southern section.
- Two Battery Energy Storage Systems (**BESS**), co-located with the collector stations.
- Overhead high voltage (220 kV) transmission lines, connecting the Northern Section and the Southern Section, and connecting the Project into the Murra Warra Terminal Station.
- Underground and overhead 33 kV electrical reticulation within the wind farm Project sections, connecting groups of turbines to the collector stations.
- Ancillary infrastructure including operations and maintenance facilities, permanent turbine foundations and hardstands, site access points and access tracks (with drainage where required), transmission and grid connection infrastructure, and meteorological masts.
- Temporary infrastructure, such as concrete batching plants, site compounds, equipment laydown areas and storage yards.

The Proponent has identified 35 host landholders within the Project boundary. There are 166 landholders within a 5 km radius of the Project who will be considered as neighbours for the purposes of stakeholder engagement.

3.1 The Environment Effects Statement Requirements and Process

The Project is being assessed via an EES process in accordance with the *Environment Effects Act 1978*. The EES will generally contain:

- A description of the proposed development.
- An outline of public and stakeholder consultation undertaken during investigations and the issues raised.
- A description of the existing environment that may be affected.
- Predictions of significant environmental effects of the proposal and relevant alternatives.
- Proposed measures to avoid, minimise or manage adverse environmental effects.
- A proposed program for monitoring and managing environmental effects during Project implementation (DTP, 2023).

Table 3 provides an overview of the EES process, including the intersection between EES phases and activities, and the opportunities for community and stakeholder engagement to provide feedback and input on the proposed wind farm development and its ancillary requirements.

Table 3 Summary of engagement and activities across the EES Phases

Phase	Activities	Engagement
Determining the need for an EES	Proponent refers a project to the Minister administering the <i>Environmental Effects Act 1978</i> to determine whether an EES is required.	-
Scoping of EES	The proponent provides a preliminary list of issues to be investigated and a draft study program. Based on this, the Minister will prepare draft scoping requirements. See Warracknabeal Energy Park's Draft EES Scoping Requirements here .	Stakeholder engagement was conducted between August 2017 and November 2022 to inform the preparation of the EES study program. An overview of engagement conducted to date on the scoping of the EES can be found in Appendix B: Consultation Conducted from the Preliminary CSEP (WestWind Energy, 2022). Once prepared, the draft scoping requirements will be exhibited for public comment for 15 business days. This will provide the opportunity for members of public to provide comment. The Proponent will advertise the exhibition of the draft scoping requirements as required by the department. The Minister for Planning will then finalise the scoping requirements following this public comment period, and will be made available of the departments website.
Preparing the EES (Current phase)	WestWind Energy and consultants prepare and submit an EES. A Technical Reference Group is appointed to supply advice to the department and the proponent during the preparation of the EES.	EES consultation is undertaken as per activities planned and communicated in this Consultation Plan. This provides the community with the opportunity to capture stakeholder-identified concerns and issues and reflect this feedback in EES decision making.
Public Exhibition	EES is released for public comment. The minister may appoint an inquiry to evaluate the effects of the project, after reviewing the EES studies and public submissions.	Public review of EES including exhibition, submissions and public inquiry. This provides the opportunity for stakeholders to formally lodge feedback and receive responses from the proponent.
Assessment	Minister prepares an assessment considering EES documents, public submissions, the proponent's response and the inquiry report.	

Source: Umwelt, 2023.

4 Policy Context

This section briefly outlines the context in which the Project is based, including consideration of key policy settings and other project developments occurring within the Project locality. Having a thorough understanding of the social locality and policy context allows for nuanced understanding and mitigation of impacts and opportunities.

4.1 Federal Energy Policy and Context

Australia's commitment in international forums relating to the Paris Climate Accord, contemporary public expectations regarding the phasing out of coal as an energy source, and the rapidly decreasing energy prices from renewable sources, have all influenced the substantial growth of the renewable energy sector in Australia. There has been a growing global recognition of the need to mitigate the environmental effects associated with fossil fuel energy generation and international, national, and state-wide commitments have emerged supporting the development of clean and sustainable energy projects. Similarly, community perceptions within Australia increasingly reflect support for the development of renewable energy. For example, outcomes of a 2021 survey of 3,915 Australians conducted by Griffith University found that 87% of respondents believed climate change should be a key priority of government, 22% felt climate change was an 'extremely serious' problem right now, and 45% believed climate change would be an extremely serious problem by 2050 (Bradley, Deshpande, Foxwell-Norton, Hennessey, & Jackson, 2022). Further, the Lowy Institute Poll 2021 also found that 91% of Australians support subsidising renewable energy (Lowy Institute, 2021) and the Peoples Climate Vote indicated 76% of Australians wanted more solar, wind and renewable energy source (United Nations Development Programme, 2021).

4.2 Energy Policy in Victoria and Context

In 2020, 69% of the State's electricity was produced by three brown coal-fired power plants with emission from fossil fuel fired-electricity generation accounting for approximately half of Victoria's total net emissions (DELWP, 2020). The State's *Climate Change Act 2017* has established a legally binding target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, as well as five yearly interim targets of 28–33% below 2005 levels by 2025, and 45–50% below 2005 levels by 2030. The Act introduced a set of policy objectives and guiding principles to embed climate change in government decision making, with additional targets set in 2023 to reduce Victoria's emissions by 75-80% by 2035 and to bring forward the date to achieve net-zero emissions from 2050 to 2045 (DEECA, 2023). This action was taken as the 2020 target (of 15–20% below 2005 levels) was achieved and exceeded, with State emissions in 2020 decreasing to almost 30% below 2005 levels (DEECA, 2023).

The State Government also legislated a Victorian Renewable Energy Target (**VRET**) target of 50% renewable energy generation by 2030 under the *Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017* (Vic). In 2020, renewable energy sources generated more than 26% of Victoria's electricity, enabling Victoria to meet the first VRET target for 25% renewable energy generation by 2020. The Government has reported that the 2020 target has been achieved, (DELWP, 2021) and announced revised targets in 2023 of 95% renewable energy generation by 2035 and renewable energy storage of 6.3 GW by the same year (Premier of Victoria, 2023).

The Victorian Government has been investing in initiatives to achieve the VRET, including the Victorian Renewable Energy Auction Scheme that has contracted 928 MW of generation capacity, with the second VRET auction expected to deliver a further 600 MW of renewable energy generation, and partnerships with industry to implement large scale battery projects throughout the State (DELWP, 2021). These programs reflect the Victorian Government's commitment to large-scale and coordinated roll-out of renewable energy development.

4.3 Western Victoria Renewable Energy Zone

The establishment of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) is intended to facilitate an increase in renewable energy development and concentrate renewable energy development in appropriate locations. In 2020, the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) Integrated System Plan (ISP) identified six Victorian REZs that the Victorian Government committed to develop, these being:

- Central North
- Gippsland
- Murray River
- Ovens Murray
- Southwest
- Western Victoria (DELWP 2021).

This Project is located within the Western Victoria REZ. At this stage, the Project is planning to connect to the electricity grid via the REZ Western Victoria (V3) upgrade (Bulgana to Murra Warra via Horsham).

4.4 Regional and Local Strategy

4.4.1 Wimmera Southern Mallee Outcomes Roadmap

The 2019 Wimmera Southern Mallee Outcomes Roadmap is an output of the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership within Regional Development Victoria. It outlines the long-term social, economic, environmental, and cultural outcomes for communities who live, work or visit the region. The Partnership has consulted with thousands of people living and working in the Wimmera Southern Mallee Region, reflecting shared values and desires for the region. In particular, the Partnership has identified economic diversification, telecommunications, connectivity, strong local government, energy, rural and remote funding, early years, family violence, workforce capability, health and education and youth disadvantage as areas of key importance. These themes provide insight into key regional challenges, strengths and priorities. Of relevance is the acknowledgement of the need for affordable, sustainable and renewable energy, historical and ongoing core concentration in agricultural productivity and reference to the need to address workforce capability (Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership, 2019).

The Regional Partnership group that developed the roadmap is focused on setting a clear vision and strategy of a new energy future in the region where training services and regional coordination support renewable energy projects, and there are fewer barriers to establishing and delivering innovative renewable projects. The goal of this activity is greater access to affordable and sustainable renewable energy in the region (Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership, 2019).

4.4.2 Local Government

The Project is located in the Yarriambiack Shire Council. The Council's 2021-2025 Plan (updated July 2023) highlights the development of renewable energy projects as a key action in fostering a vibrant and diversified economy and are committed to engaging proactively with project proponents. The Council acknowledges that there are high levels of renewable resources in the region, while acknowledging that growth in this area is limited by poorly integrated grid capacity (Yarriambiack Shire Council, 2023).

The Council hosts a dedicated web page on its website outlining the key components of wind energy facilities within the LGA footprint. Community members are encouraged to include places of interest as part of a community mapping exercise which includes the areas proximal to the proposed Project.

4.5 Regional Biodiversity Considerations

Consultation regarding biodiversity matters will be undertaken with relevant local community groups and landholders as part of the Biodiversity Impact Assessment being undertaken for the EES. In accordance with the Level One assessment requirements of the *Interim Guidelines for the Assessment, Avoidance, Mitigation and Offsetting of Potential Wind Farm Impacts on the Victorian Brolga Population 2011*, consultation will be undertaken with local landholders and relevant community groups to obtain information about potential usage of the Project Area by Brolga. This will involve direct consultation with landholders whose properties may contain suitable Brolga habitat, through a questionnaire to understand if any Brolgas have been observed on people's properties or in nearby areas. In addition, consultation with relevant local community groups such as Landcare Groups and local branches of the Victorian Field Naturalists, Birdlife Australia, Field and Game Australia, and DEECA will be undertaken for Brolga, as well as other threatened species of interest for the Project.

5 Engagement Strategy

This section outlines the engagement strategy for the Project which will focus on the identification of stakeholders' values and aspirations in relation to the Project, and to focus the SEIA and broader EES on key issues of concern for relevant stakeholders and local communities. This includes opportunities to consider stakeholder feedback in the final design to address and/or enhance Project outcomes.

5.1 Stakeholder Identification

The goal of community and stakeholder engagement is to support the participation and collaboration of people who have an interest in, or those that are affected by a project. As Burdge (2004) outlines, stakeholders may be affected groups or individuals that:

- Live, work, or recreate near the Project.
- Have an interest in the proposed action or change.
- Use or value a resource associated with the Project.
- Are affected by the Project e.g., may be required to relocate as a result of the Project.

Further, the *Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria Guide* (2021), defines 'the community' for renewable energy development as all the people who live within and identify with the geographic area surrounding the proposed site.

Umwelt has undertaken a stakeholder identification process, building on the stakeholders identified in the preliminary CSEP by the Proponent, to support the planning and delivery of community and stakeholder consultation and to inform the EES. This process has involved identifying stakeholders with an interest in the Project, or those that may be directly or indirectly affected by the Project, including any potentially vulnerable or marginalised groups. All key stakeholders can be found in **Appendix C: Key stakeholders**.

Aligned to the *Preparing an EES Consultation Plan Advisory Note* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2018) the process also considered:

- the uses and values of the environment for different stakeholders
- the potential effects of the Project on stakeholder interests
- the extent to which stakeholder interests are represented by organised groups.

5.2 Stakeholder Groups

The stakeholder groups that are relevant to this Project are outlined in **Figure 5.1** below, with specific stakeholders within each of these identified in **Table 4**. A list of stakeholders can be found in **Appendix C: Key stakeholders** (this list will be iterative as engagement progresses through the EES process).



Figure 5.1

Project Stakeholder Groups

Table 4 Summary of key stakeholders by group, level of engagement and interest

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Level of Engagement	Concern identified from consultation to data, review of technical reports and publicly available data
Host Landholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35 host landholders. 	Involve/Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding potential impacts on landholders from Project construction and operation on land. Involvement in decisions which may affect land. Minimising impacts on land during construction and operation such as social amenity impacts e.g. noise and visual changes to the landscape; accessibility impacts due to construction traffic; changes to way of life and livelihood. Land use conflict - co-existing and/or compensation (if applicable). Understanding Project rationale and benefits.
Proximal Landholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 166 landholders within 5 km of a Project wind turbine. 	Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social amenity impacts such as noise and visual changes to the landscape. Accessibility impacts due to construction traffic. Changes to way of life and livelihood. Land use conflict. Impacts to private property value. Unequal distribution of financial benefits. Lack of information regarding the decommissioning process.
Residents in Neighbouring Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional locality: Yarriambiack LGA. Township locality: Warracknabeal UCL. 	Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative impacts from multiple projects. Accessibility impacts from construction workforce. Land use conflict. Regional economic benefits. Infrastructure and services provision. Perceived lack of opportunity to actively participate in the Project development process.
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yarriambiack Shire Council. Mayor, Councillors, Executive Team. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding and avoiding/minimising adverse impacts on land use planning and/or conflict.

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Level of Engagement	Concern identified from consultation to data, review of technical reports and publicly available data
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. • Opportunities to regenerate or transition local industries, businesses, and the economy. • Concerns of community and local stakeholders. • Cumulative impacts from multiple projects. • Accessibility impacts on local and regional services and businesses. • Local infrastructure and services provision (e.g., road impacts).
Broader Regional Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horsham and Hindmarsh LGAs. • Residents of Warracknabeal and the Wimmera Southern Mallee region. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumulative impacts from multiple projects. • Accessibility impacts from construction workforce. • Land use conflict. • Regional economic benefits. • Infrastructure and services provision.
Traditional Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barengi Gadjin Local Aboriginal Land Council. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mycelia Renewables (contracted by BGLC to develop a renewable energy roadmap). • Other Registered Aboriginal Parties. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Project rationale and benefits. • Understanding and avoiding/minimising potential adverse impacts, particularly Impacts on cultural connection to Country or place, or on cultural values. • Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. • Native Title. • Cultural Heritage Management Plan. • Cultural Values Assessment. • Opportunities for Indigenous procurement and employment.
Community and Special Interest Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community-based organisations (CBO) who represent directly connected groups and/or other affected parties. • Industry groups such as the Wimmera Southern Mallee Development. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Project rationale, benefits, and impacts. • Ability to access clear project information. • Cumulative impacts from multiple projects. • Accessibility impacts from construction workforce. • Land use conflict.

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Level of Engagement	Concern identified from consultation to data, review of technical reports and publicly available data
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental groups (BRIM) Resident / Progress / Ratepayer Associations and or Action Groups Rotary clubs Sporting clubs Tourism agencies and operators Local emergency services. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sense of community/sense of place. Commercial stimulus for local economy. Training opportunities for young people. Local infrastructure and services provision. Environmental impacts. Effects on electricity prices and supply.
Local/Regional Businesses and Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and regional businesses within the social locality Chamber of Commerce and Business Groups. Real estate agents/social housing support. Accommodation providers. Education providers. Community Services. 	Inform/Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding potential impacts from Project construction and operation in the local area. Ability to provide local knowledge to enhance the Project and delivery and to help avoid/minimise impacts. Opportunities to provide input to the Project and for ongoing collaboration. Clear information and updates about the Project. Maximising local benefits from the Project such as commercial stimulus for local economy and regional and local economic benefits. Increased demand/use of local and regional services by construction workforce. Cumulative impacts from multiple projects. Opportunities for local businesses and job seekers. Education providers: Future training needs and educational partnerships/ knowledge sharing related to curriculum needs.
State Government and Statutory Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Government. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister for Planning Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources and the SEC Minister for Environment 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding and avoiding/ minimising adverse impacts, particularly cumulative impacts from multiple projects in the region. Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. Alignment to Victorian Government initiatives.

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholders	Level of Engagement	Concern identified from consultation to data, review of technical reports and publicly available data
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Department of Transport and Planning ○ Country Fire Authority (CFA) ○ Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions ○ Wimmera Catchment Management Authority ○ Emergency Management Victoria ○ Members of Parliament ○ Regional Development Victoria ○ State Emergency Service ○ Transport Safety Victoria ○ Vic Roads ○ Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA). ○ Victoria Police. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines. • Community and stakeholder consultation process and outcomes.
Commonwealth Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. • Federal Wind Commissioner. • Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) • Bureau of Meteorology (BoM). 	Inform/ Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment to Federal Government initiatives. • Compliance with relevant legislation, regulatory requirements and guidelines. • Involvement in Project development and assessment. • Optimal outcomes for environment and community. • Community and stakeholder consultation process and outcomes.
Local Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements, news coverage and interviews in local newspapers, radio, and TV channels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Warracknabeal Herald. 	Inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear information and updates about the Project. • Involvement in key milestone media opportunities. • Cumulative impacts from multiple projects. • Regional benefits.

5.2.1 Traditional Owners

The Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) represents Traditional Owners from the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk peoples, and were recognised in a 2005 Native Title Consent Determination, the first in south-eastern Australia. BGLC is a Registered Aboriginal Party and the only Federally recognised authority to speak on behalf of the Wotjobaluk peoples, as outlined in the Native Title Act. It is also the only body in the region with the legislative authority to make legal decisions about cultural heritage. The BGLC is the Prescribed Body Corporate for the Wotjobaluk claim area, as outlined in the Native Title Act, giving them legal authority and obligation to work on behalf of Traditional Owners. (Barengi Gadjin Land Council, 2023).

Over the past five years, representatives of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples (WJJWJ People) have been negotiating a recognition and settlement agreement with the State of Victoria under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010. On 13 December 2022, the Victorian Government Gazette published the Natural Resource In October 2022 a Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) was signed by representatives of the Wotjobaluk Nations and the State of Victoria, Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing Plan ESCO_21974_Horsham Solar Farm_Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing Plan_Final Social Context 10 17 years after the 2005 Native Title Consent Determination. The RSA and associated agreements require the State, its agencies and affiliates to meet new obligations and ways of working in partnership with the Wotjobaluk Nations and BGLC as the recognised Traditional Owners of Country.

The vision of BGLC as articulated in the *Growing What is Good Country Plan* is “Wotjobaluk Nations working together as custodians of Culture, Country, Heritage, Lore and Language, sharing our values and representing the rights and interests of our People”.

OUR GOALS

STRONG AND HEALTHY WOTJOBALUK CULTURE Wotjobaluk Culture is our identity. Our wellbeing depends on Culture being alive and embedded in our Wotjobaluk Community, and being visible and valued as part of the wider community.	ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY We walk in two worlds, staying true to our cultural roots while being part of the modern economy. We seek economic independence, with education and training to build our capacity, so we can contribute to our Wotjobaluk Community and the wider Australian community.
HEALTHY WOTJOBALUK COUNTRY We are part of Wotjobaluk Country. It links us to our ancestors and spirits and it is the foundation of our future. If Country is treated with respect and care, and we can act on our responsibility for Country, then Wotjobaluk Country will continue to provide for us.	HEALTHY WOTJOBALUK PEOPLES Our health and wellbeing needs support. A connected Wotjobaluk Community and good health services work together to keep us and our Country healthy. A connected Wotjobaluk Community supports Wotjobaluk people with physical, emotional and chronic health issues to obtain the appropriate support.
AN ENGAGED AND CONNECTED WOTJOBALUK COMMUNITY We have had a long and sometimes difficult history, yet our identity and kinship remains strong. We connect our shared history with Wotjobaluk Country and each other, to create a strong Wotjobaluk Community. We value the diversity of Wotjobaluk Peoples. We engage with Wotjobaluk people with a disability and from the LGBTI communities.	A STRONG CORPORATION WITH EXCELLENT GOVERNANCE A transparent, cohesive and sustainable organisation reflecting respect, culture and its diversity.
RECOGNITION AND RESPECT We are the custodians of this land with responsibility to Wotjobaluk Country and all who live there. We seek recognition of our traditional rights, respect for our knowledge and cultural obligations, understanding of our aspirations, and understanding of our history before and since colonisation.	A STRONG VOICE FOR WOTJOBALUK PEOPLES We will speak out for policies that strengthen Traditional Owner communities, and give our opinion on how to turn policy into effective action on the ground.

Wotjobaluk Nations goals outlined in the Country Plan

In addition to the Country Plan, BGLC is developing a Renewable Energy Roadmap and Policy which sets out how the Corporation on behalf of the Wotjobaluk Nations wishes to work in partnership with developers of renewable energy to ensure obligations to Country are met and the benefits of the renewable energy transition are shared equitably.

There is a potential role for renewable energy projects to work alongside the BGLC in achieving the goals of a “Healthy Wotjobaluk Country” and “Economic Sustainability”. The Proponent believes that respectful and collaborative relationships with Traditional Owners are essential to the success and equity of renewable energy developments and is committed to improving relationships with Traditional Owners on whose lands they work, and to advocating for specific benefits and genuine collaboration and empowerment of Traditional Owners in the development of the Project.

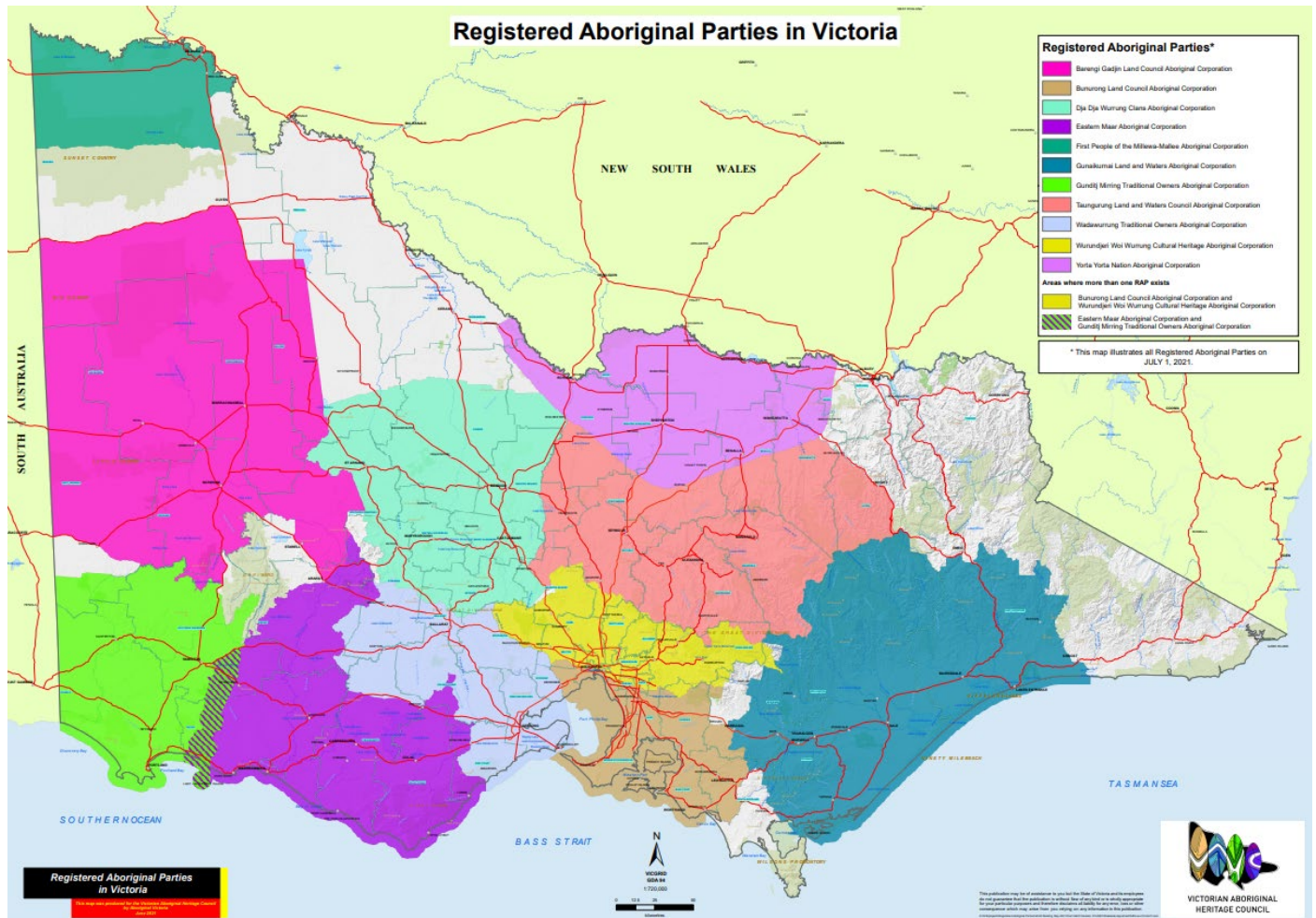


Figure 5.2 Map illustrating Barengi Gadjin Land Council in a regional context (Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council, 2021).

The Proponent will take a partnership approach to engaging with Traditional Owners and will seek involvement on a range of topics beyond Cultural Heritage, such as native title, Project design, construction, and procurement.

Initial engagement has occurred with BGLC, as outlined in **Appendix B: Consultation Conducted**, and will continue as the Project progresses with the understanding that providing accurate and timely information to the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk peoples of the Wotjobaluk Nations is a necessary and important responsibility of the Project. The Proponent will apply dedicated engagement and Project management resources to support a continual and open dialogue, provide a single point of contact for communications, and facilitate appropriate and respectful engagement.

5.3 Engagement Methods

The engagement of stakeholders and community groups will continue to include a combination of information provision (inform) and engagement (consult, involve) (International Association for Public Participation, 2018) mechanisms to:

- Improve knowledge and awareness of the proponents and their activities, the Project, and key issues/impacts as they arise.
- Facilitate stakeholder involvement in the identification of issues/impacts, areas of interest/concern and strategies to address the issues raised.

Engagement mechanisms have been selected based on engagement objectives and previous knowledge of stakeholder engagement preferences. The selected methods will build on previous mechanisms utilised by the proponent and will be based on the needs of each stakeholder group.

Proposed engagement and communication mechanisms are identified in **Table 5**.

Table 5 Proposed Engagement Mechanisms

Mechanism	Engagement Objective	Description
Project briefings/ meetings	Inform/Consult	Briefings to provide information about the Project and updates at key milestones. Meetings to address and seek input on specific matters from individuals, groups, and organisations with local or specialist knowledge, and to facilitate introduction and relationship building with key personnel. Briefings, meetings and workshops may be held in person or via video conference.
Door knocks/ Dwelling visits	Consult	Face-to-face visits with host landholders and neighbours within 5 km radius of the Project to actively involve them in Project design, capture local insights, identify concerns and mitigation strategies.
Letters and emails	Inform	Letters to relevant stakeholders to advise of key project updates/EES stages and opportunities for involvement. Messaging will be targeted towards stakeholder interests and/or concerns as summarised in Table 4 .
Site tours	Inform	Invite relevant key stakeholders to visit the site during various stages of the Project design and development. Will act as an opportunity for in-person discussions with the Project team and technical experts (if required).
Website	Inform	Other websites may be used to promote information sharing where relevant e.g., Industry Capability Network website to contain contract opportunities and Project updates to registered suppliers, at appropriate times.
Project Hotline	Inform	Continue monitoring the Project community telephone number on the website to enable the community to contact the Project team for information or to provide feedback on the Project. Record all interactions using the procedure outlined in Section 8 .
Project Emails	Inform	Continue monitoring the Project community email address on the website to enable the community to contact the Project team for information or to provide feedback on the Project. Record all interactions using the procedure outlined in Section 8 .
Project Information Sheets/ Newsletters	Inform	A suite of Project information materials is available on the Project website and in hard copy at events, information sessions and the Project's community hub. Hard copy information packs are sent via post upon request and to those who have nominated to receive updates by mail. Materials are updated regularly, as the Project's development and environmental assessments progress. Newsletters provide Project updates and information about how to get involved. E-newsletters will be distributed quarterly, with hard-copy versions supplied on request.

Mechanism	Engagement Objective	Description
Stakeholder Interviews	Involve	Telephone, online or in-person meetings with individual key stakeholders or small groups.
Online Survey	Consult	An online survey to gain feedback from key stakeholders and the broader community on the Project and community needs and values, to be advertised and distributed through various mechanisms.
Project Information/ Drop-in Sessions	Consult	Drop-in information sessions at various stages of the Project to present information and updates on the Project with invites distributed to the broader community through a number of mediums.
Attendance at community events/ pop-ups	Consult	The Project's participation in local events provides an opportunity for informal engagement and information sharing to raise awareness of the Project, the planning and environmental approvals process and opportunities to participate. Current local Warracknabeal office capacity to increase around the time of key engagement activities.
Media pack	Inform	Advertisements, news coverage and interviews in local newspapers, radio, and TV channels and on digital news and social media channels will be used to reach a broad audience across the Wimmera Southern Mallee region and Victoria.
Social Media	Inform/ Consult	Facebook and LinkedIn to communicate Project information and updates, promote discussion, and respond to enquiries. Key dates and activities, such as information sessions and public exhibition, will be advertised on social media channels.
Posters	Inform	Posters and signs in local communities, such as on community notice boards, will be used to share information with a local audience and raise awareness of the Project and opportunities to participate.
Visualization tools	Inform	Maps and other visual aids such as diagrams, photographs and illustrations are used to show the Project location, components, appearance, and processes. Augmented reality technology will be used to communicate visual aspects of the Project from locations that have a view of the wind farm.
Education provider engagement	Inform/consult	Engagement with local schools and educational institutions will be undertaken where possible to involve young people in discussions about the Project and future. Engagement may be undertaken online or in person.
Videos	Inform	Videos will be used to communicate information in an engaging and accessible way for a broad audience and shared with the media, posted on social media, the Project website and used in presentations to stakeholder and community groups.
Community Reference Group	Involve	Establish a Community Reference Group (CRG) comprising local community members, members of special interest groups, and Project team members. This group facilitates two-way communication and provides local advice to the Project team, including on issues being assessed as part of the planning and environmental approvals stage.
Technical Reference Group	Involve	A Technical Reference Group (TRG) will provide advice and assistance to the proponent through the EES stages. The TRG will be made up of individuals from government agencies, regulatory authorities and municipal councils with an interest in the Project, with a primary role to provide advice to the department and to the proponent on the adequacy of the EES studies. The TRG will be established by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and will only be active during the EES scoping and preparation phases. The TRG will also provide feedback on this consultation plan.

Table 6 outlines the mechanisms that are planned to be utilised to engage with each stakeholder group for the Project.¹

¹ With the exception of communication and media tools outlined in **Table 5.2** which will be utilized as part of the engagement activities across stakeholder groups. This includes media pack, social media, posters, visualisation tools and videos.

Table 6 Engagement mechanisms proposed for each stakeholder group

	Project briefings & meetings	Door knocks/ Dwelling visits	Letters & Emails	Site tours	Project website, hotline & email	Info sheet/ Newsletter	Stakeholder interviews	Online survey	Drop-in sessions	Community events/ Pop-ups	School engagement	Community Reference Group	Technical Reference Group
Host Landholders		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Neighbours		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Neighbouring Communities			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
Broader Regional Community			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
Traditional Owners	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Community and Special Interest Groups	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Businesses and Service Providers	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Local Government	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
State Government	✓		✓		✓								
Commonwealth Government			✓		✓								
Media					✓				✓				

6 Key Project Messages

Key messages (for external purposes) will be developed and refined throughout the EES process for communication to targeted stakeholders and community members. They will be developed in line with the principles and commitments outlined within **Section 2** of this Consultation Plan and will be used to share information related to the Project and its current activities, as well as to respond to stakeholder issues, concerns, and interests through relevant Project phases.

Key messages have been developed and refined around four message categories:

- **The Project** – What is the Warracknabeal Energy Park Project? Including details on the Project, quick facts, and Project description.
- **The Process** – the development planning and assessment process, including key milestones and opportunities for engagement and the broader SEIA and EES process.
- **The Proponent** – Who is WestWind Energy? The company, its background and development, activities in Victoria, Australia and internationally.
- **Issues and Benefits** – key issues in relation to the Project i.e., social and environmental impacts, stakeholder issues/concerns, opportunities and benefits, engagement preferences and information requirements.

These will be used to inform engagement and associated material development to ensure:

- Clear and consistent information relating to the Project.
- Clearly articulate Project aspects and components.
- The environmental and social impact assessment process and opportunities for engagement and accurately outlined.

Preliminary key messages are provided in the sections below.

6.1 What is the Warracknabeal Energy Park Project?

Question / Topic	Message
Where is the Project?	The Project is approximately 40 km north of Horsham and 5 km from Warracknabeal in the Wimmera region of north-western Victoria.
How many turbines will the Project have and what will the Project produce?	The proposed Project comprises up to 230 wind turbines with a total generation capacity of approximately 1,650 MW. This will provide power for around 1.2 million average Victorian homes annually and reduce yearly carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 4.5 million tonnes.
Will the transmission line be underground or above ground?	Connection to the National Electricity Market (NEM) requires construction of approximately 34 km of new overhead transmission lines from the collector station in the Northern Section to the collector station in the Southern Section, and from there down to the existing Murra Warra Terminal Station. The new transmission line will be delivered as part of the Project and is expected to run adjacent to the existing 220 kV Red Cliffs to Horsham transmission line for much of the route. This existing 220 kV Red Cliffs to Horsham transmission line bisects both the Northern Section and Southern Section of the Project Area.
What are the reasons for site selection?	<p>Investigations into the suitability of the land for the Project have been ongoing since 2017 over which time the Proponent has undertaken wind resource monitoring and commissioned a suite of environmental and other feasibility studies that have informed the location and design of the Project.</p> <p>The site has been selected due to its very strong and reliable wind resource that is markedly different to most existing wind farms in Victoria. The wind resource at the site is particularly significant, exhibiting higher wind speeds than the majority of the state, and a diurnal (day/night) wind speed profile that ideally complements existing solar farms in the region.</p>

Question / Topic	Message
	<p>The Project is also close to supporting infrastructure, including Murra Warra Terminal Station and 220 kV Horsham to Red Cliffs transmission line. The Project location also offers direct access to suitable local and regional road systems with many roads suitable for large loads given their regular use by farm machinery and equipment. Recently constructed substantial road infrastructure upgrades between Portland and Murra Warra Wind Farm can provide port access for the delivery of large components from suppliers to site with only minimal additional upgrades required.</p> <p>The Project Area and its surrounds contain manageable environmental constraints owing largely to the reduced presence of native vegetation as a consequence of the highly altered agricultural landscape.</p>
How much land will it take up?	The Project Area consists of two (2) wind farm sections and an overhead transmission line. The total Project Area covers approximately 25,000 ha.
What is the Western Victoria Energy Renewable Energy Zone and how does it relate to the Project?	<p>Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) are areas in Victoria with the greatest potential for renewable energy, such as wind, sunshine, rain, tides, waves and geothermal heat. The development of REZs will allow new renewable projects to be connected in a timely manner, achieving better energy affordability and reliability for consumers, helping to achieve our climate change goals and furthering regional economic development.</p> <p>The Australian Energy Market Operator has identified 6 Victorian REZs and the Project is situated in the Western Victoria REZ.</p>
How many people will the Project employ?	The Project has the potential to support approximately 899 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs during construction and 35.3 FTE jobs in the region during operation.
What is the Project rationale?	<p>The objective of the Project is to supply renewable energy to the National Electricity Market (NEM). The Project will enhance and support Victoria's electricity supply as the generation mix transitions towards renewable energy.</p> <p>Preliminary energy assessments indicate that the Project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate approximately 5,800 GWh of electricity per annum (27 % of new renewable energy generation required to meet the VRET '50 % by 2030' target). • Save 4.5 million tonnes of CO2 emissions annually, by replacing existing coal-fired power generation with renewable energy. • Power more than 1,200,000 Victorian homes. • Provide approximately 13 % of total annual Victorian electricity requirements. • Have the potential to generate new employment opportunities for residents and diversify income streams for local farmers. These factors may contribute to retaining, and potentially expanding, population levels within these LGAs and the broader region.
How long will it take to construct?	The Proponent aims to have the Project ready for construction by the time the Western Renewables Link project reaches completion in 2026, which will ensure electricity is dispatched into the Victorian transmission network before the closure of the Yallourn coal fired power station in 2028.
How long will the Project be operational?	The operational life of the Project is anticipated to be 30 years.

6.2 What is the Assessment Process?

Question / Topic	Message
Why am I being contacted?	<p>As part of the approval process for the Project, a Social and Economic Impact Assessment, including a community engagement program, will be prepared that addresses relevant guidelines.</p> <p>The engagement program includes consultation with interested parties, affected communities and local representative groups.</p> <p>The outcomes of the engagement program will inform the development of the SEIA and EES.</p>
What are the likely impacts – should I be concerned?	<p>Comprehensive assessments will be completed to identify the potential positive and negative impacts of the Project and how best to manage these potential impacts.</p> <p>The detailed design of the Project will be informed by these studies to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated to the greatest extent possible, and positive impacts enhanced.</p>
What assessment process is required?	<p>The Project is required to prepare an EES (Minister for Planning determined that an EES is required for the Project). The Commonwealth Minister declared the Project to be a controlled action under the EPBC Act. The EES serves as the accredited environmental assessment process to assess potential impacts on MNES under the EPBC Act.</p> <p>The EES process is designed to be rigorous and transparent, with opportunities provided for input from stakeholders and the wider community. The EES will describe the Project and its potential environmental effects to enable the Minister to make an assessment as to the acceptability of the Project's impacts.</p>
How long will the EES process take?	<p>Preparation of the EES will take approximately 12 months from commencement up to lodgement of the EES. The EES is anticipated to be on public exhibition in Q2 2025, during which members of the public can read the EES and make written submissions about matters presented within it. Following public exhibition and the receipt of submissions, the Minister will appoint an Inquiry panel to provide submitters an opportunity to be further heard. This Inquiry panel will prepare a report with recommendations to inform the Minister's Assessment of the EES.</p>
How can I have my say?	<p>A Social and Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) will be undertaken to inform the EES. This is occurring between March to June 2024. The SEIA assesses the impact of the Project on people and communities. To inform the SEIA, the Proponent will consult with the community to understand their concerns, interests, issues, or the benefits that people perceive the Project may deliver. The Proponent will endeavour to undertake regular, open, and transparent engagement that is helpful and constructive and to ensure feedback is addressed in Project design and planning.</p> <p>The Proponent will work closely with host landholders, neighbouring landholders and property owners, Aboriginal community representatives, and the wider community, in addition to the Yarriambiack Shire Council and Victorian Government agencies, to gain a detailed understanding of the views, issues, and interests on the proposed project.</p> <p>Prior to the Minister's Assessment, the EES will be made public, allowing for submission to be made by any member of the community or interested party. This gives the public and the wider community the opportunity to further contribute to the Project's assessment.</p> <p>The EES will be placed on public exhibition for at least 30 business days. During this time, the public can read the EES and make written submissions about matters presented within it. The public will also have the opportunity to read and make submissions on the draft planning permit application, which will be exhibited at the same time as the EES. Public exhibition allows for stakeholder-identified concerns and issues to be reflected in EES decision making. Online submissions on the EES are preferred and can be lodged via an online form on the Victorian Government's engagement website: www.engage.vic.gov.au. Only one submission is needed to address all of your views about the Project, its effects and the relevant documents.</p>

Question / Topic	Message
	<p>The engagement program for the Project includes consultation with interested parties, affected communities and local representative groups through a range of personal meetings, community forums and other mechanisms.</p> <p>People can also learn about the Project through the Project website, where people can raise queries, provide feedback, and generally express an interest in being informed via subscribing to the Project Updates and Information section.</p>

6.3 Who is WestWind Energy?

Question/Topic	Message
Who is developing the Project?	Warracknabeal Energy Park Pty Ltd is a special purpose vehicle established by WestWind Energy (WWE) to facilitate the development and delivery of the Project.
Who is WestWind Energy?	WWE is an Australian wind farm developer dedicated to the development, construction, operation and management of wind farms and other renewable energy projects in Australia. WWE's mission is to be a driver of change towards a sustainable energy future for our planet. WWE's contribution is through the development of cost-effective renewable energy generation and storage solutions refined through technical excellence, commitment to communities, and cohesive company values.
How long have WestWind Energy been operating in Australia/NSW?	WWE was established in Victoria, Australia in 2004.
Where is WestWind Energy based?	WWE are based in Gisborne, Victoria.
Where do they have project interests and what is their track record?	WWE has developed four wind farm projects in western Victoria, including Golden Plains, Mt Mercer, Moorabool and Lal Lal wind farms. Numerous other wind farms, including Warracknabeal Energy Park are in varying stages of planning. Details of all projects can be found on the WWE website.

6.4 Project Impact and Opportunities Messages

Question / Topic	Message
How will I be affected?	<p>The Proponent acknowledges that the Project will have a range of negative and positive impacts on affected stakeholders. The Proponents is committed to working with the community and key stakeholders to identify potential environmental and social impacts associated with their proposed Project and to explore relevant strategies to mitigate any negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.</p> <p>The Proponent will work to ensure that through the EES, SEIA and associated community engagement process, that community issues are well understood and are addressed, where possible, in Project design and planning.</p>
Is the Project going to be visible from houses?	<p>Potential visual impacts of the Project will be assessed early during the planning process.</p> <p>A detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be developed for the Project which will assess the characteristics and values of the existing landscape, the extent to which the existing landscape is changed by the Project and how these changes are perceived by individuals and the broader community.</p>
What is the Project going to do for residents and the community? How will we benefit?	The Proponent is committed to building strong local relationships with key stakeholders and communities as part of their planning and understands the importance of ensuring local participation and community input, to achieve positive local and regional community benefits.
Will the Project take up agricultural land?	<p>A small proportion of agricultural land, estimated at 1-2% of the 25,000 ha site area, will be occupied by permanent infrastructure e.g., internal access roads, siting of turbines and other infrastructure requirements.</p> <p>WestWind has been consulting with all host landholders throughout the design and planning phase to ensure the Project layout would result in minimal impacts to their properties and land uses.</p>

Question / Topic	Message
Will the Project make energy cheaper or easier to access in our local area?	Wind energy is one of the cheapest sources for electricity generation in Australia. As we invest more and more in renewable energy infrastructure this will assist in putting downward pressure on energy prices for local households and businesses.
How will the Project influence climate change?	The Project is aligned with the Australian Government's energy policy, through its key objectives of supporting the National Energy Market to provide reliable electricity, developing energy infrastructure that is efficient, and contributing to net reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through replacement of existing diesel-powered electricity back up system. The Project will ensure a greater usage of renewable electricity generated from existing wind and solar projects, whilst also stimulating the development of new projects.
What will happen when the Project is no longer used?	The infrastructure would be decommissioned and removed should the facility no longer be required. A decommissioning plan would be developed and implemented prior to closure to manage this process.

7 Engagement Program and Implementation across the Assessment Phases

The key stages of the planned EES process and engagement approach are outlined in **Table 7**. This table will be updated iteratively as the Project and EES process progresses.

Table 7 Summary of engagement objectives and methods during the EES Stages

EES Stage	Key EES Activity	Engagement objective	Engagement Methods and Activities	Timing
Establish scoping requirements	Formation of the Technical Reference Group to advise on the preparation of the EES. DTP consultation on EES scoping requirements. Opportunity for community and stakeholder feedback on scoping requirements. Draft scoping requirements for public comment for at least 15 business days. Issuing of final scoping requirements to WestWind Energy and made public.	Introduce the EES process, explain the role stakeholders and communities can play. Provide Project timelines. Ensure stakeholders and communities are aware of the opportunity to provide comment on the draft EES Scoping Requirements. Draft Scoping Requirements are open for public comment for 15 business days. Provide information about the objectives of the Project and key design elements to receive feedback about the Project concept. Gather insight into sentiment and key areas of concern for the local community and stakeholders. Identify opportunities where consultation and engagement could be improved/adapted to better meet the needs of stakeholders.	Project information briefings and meetings. Dwelling visits. Letters, emails and phone calls. TRG meetings – scheduled to be established by DTP and TRG site tour. Update Project website. Monitor email, phone calls and online feedback form. Newsletters/ Information Sheets. Undertake stakeholder interviews and distribute online survey. Maintain Warracknabeal office.	Jan – Sep 2024
Prepare the EES	EES consultation by proponent. Investigate existing conditions and potential Project	Confirm the final EES Scoping Requirements. Provide information and updates on the technical assessments being undertaken for the EES, including	Easter in the Beal – Easter Saturday drop in event (2024) Site tour. Update website.	Feb 2024 – Feb 2025

EES Stage	Key EES Activity	Engagement objective	Engagement Methods and Activities	Timing
	effects across a range of technical studies.	<p>assessment methods, identified impacts and management methods.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for community and stakeholders to discuss the Project with technical specialists and Project team and give feedback.</p> <p>Gather and understand stakeholder and community knowledge about the Project's potential impacts, ideas about mitigations and opportunities for improvements for the Project and ongoing engagement.</p> <p>Report to the TRG and Community Engagement Committee with stakeholder feedback and utilise their insights in future planning.</p>	<p>Monitor Project hotline and email.</p> <p>Prepare and distribute media pack.</p> <p>Update social media.</p> <p>Develop posters and visual outputs.</p> <p>Develop and distribute newsletters/letters.</p> <p>Host information sessions/drop-in sessions.</p> <p>Maintain office with longer opening hours at peak times of engagement.</p> <p>Participate in community events with pop-up stalls.</p> <p>Undertake school engagement for teachers, parents and school students.</p> <p>Undertake stakeholder interviews and distribute online survey. Analyse data and incorporate findings into engagement material.</p> <p>Ensure engagement feedback is collated and provided back to communities transparently.</p> <p>Establish and commence Community Reference Group (CRG)</p>	
Public exhibition of the EES	<p>Exhibition of EES for public comment for at least 30 business days, including the proposed Project design.</p> <p>Inquiry established and submissions considered.</p> <p>Preparation of Inquiry report.</p>	<p>Provide access to information about the EES exhibition process, including how WestWind Energy has considered feedback received throughout the Project's development the potential benefits the Project would deliver, as well as any impacts and environmental outcomes to be achieved to manage impacts.</p> <p>Provide information about how to make a submission.</p> <p>Public exhibition of EES.</p> <p>Receive submissions.</p> <p>Support the independent panel and inquiry process.</p>	<p>Update website - EES digital representation.</p> <p>Monitor Project hotline and email.</p> <p>Prepare and distribute media pack- notifying of the public exhibition</p> <p>Open Day during exhibition period</p> <p>Update social media.</p> <p>Develop and distribute newsletters/letters.</p> <p>Maintain pop-up office.</p> <p>CRG follow-up meetings.</p>	May-Jul 2025

EES Stage	Key EES Activity	Engagement objective	Engagement Methods and Activities	Timing
Assessment/ Submissions to Enquiry	Minister to appoint an Inquiry to hear from Submitters Inquire Panel report and Minister's Assessment Issued to inform advice to decision makers. Determination of Planning Permit	Inform community and stakeholders of the EES process, outcomes, and next steps.	Key stakeholders contacted. Update website. Monitor Project hotline and email. Prepare and distribute media pack- update in relation to assessment outcomes. Update social media. Develop and distribute newsletters/letters. Project meetings. Open day events.	Nov-Dec 2025

8 Reporting and Evaluation

8.1 Recording, Monitoring and Record-keeping

Outcomes and records of each engagement activity will be documented by the team member(s) in attendance.

A Stakeholder and Engagement Management System, Darzin, is being used for this Project to track all stakeholder engagement activities. This can be downloaded when required for reporting into a register in Excel format to ensure consistent tracking and recording of all community or stakeholder engagement activities and outcomes. Information to be recorded includes:

- Activity details (including stakeholder engaged, attendees, time and place, mechanism used).
- Discussion points, questions and/or main concerns raised
- Summary of key outcomes or any actions.
- Stakeholder contact details.
- Preferences for future engagement.

Following completion of engagement for each phase, outcomes and data obtained will be collated and analysed to identify key impact themes and impact prioritisation. Identified issues or impacts may also be mapped to identify any patterns.

Communications and stakeholder engagement will be monitored throughout the Project and this plan may be adapted to adjust engagement mechanisms, stakeholders, timing, or content in response to feedback or changing circumstances.

Outcomes of engagement undertaken will then be summarised in the Social Impact Scoping Report and Social Impact Assessment Report respectively.

8.2 Evaluation

The implementation of the Consultation Plan will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure the effectiveness of the Plan in achieving the objectives outlined in **Section 2**.

The evaluation will be based on measuring that:

- All key stakeholders and communities relevant to the Project have been identified, in particular, vulnerable and at-risk groups.
- All identified and interested stakeholders are provided the opportunity to participate in the engagement program.
- Relevant Project information will be provided to all stakeholders and all questions and queries received will be followed up in a timely manner by Umwelt and/or the Proponent.
- Regular Project team meetings will be held between Umwelt and the Proponent to provide required updates and ensure a collaborative and consistent approach to engagement across the Project.
- Engagement outcomes and community feedback is meaningfully and adequately considered in the development of the SEIA and EES, and where possible, is used to inform Project design and refinements, including the development of local community benefit sharing programs.
- All regulatory requirements relating to community engagement are met.
- Engagement is timely, open/transparent, inclusive, and meaningful.

Mechanisms/methods such as those outlined below, will be used to ensure that the engagement program is on track and is responsive to any changing Project issues:

- Proactive and timely contact made with stakeholders identified in **Section 7**.
- Prompt Project team response and inclusion of stakeholders interested in being involved in the Project.
- Fortnightly Project meetings to discuss outcomes of engagement progress.
- Quarterly media and communications monitoring to identify any emerging community issues and concerns.
- Evaluation items utilised in relevant survey instruments and discussion guides to facilitate process improvement.
- Outcomes of the engagement program communicated to Project team members.
- Transparent summary of community issues and impacts associated with the Project reported in the SEIA and used to inform the Project EES.

Revisions and updates to the Consultation Plan will be made as required, to address any issues raised or ideas for improvement, in collaboration with the Proponent.

9 Complaints and Grievances

The Proponent recognises that effective and timely response to community complaints is essential for maintaining good community relations. All community / stakeholder grievances received will follow the procedure outlined in the Proponent's Grievance Procedure, which is available on the Proponent's website. The Proponent's complaints management system has been designed and established in accordance with the Australian Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014 – Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations.

The procedure follows a stepped approach focused on:

- Readily accessible information on how complaints can be made free of cost to complainants.
- Immediate acknowledgement of complaints and regular and comprehensive feedback to complainants on actions proposed, their implementation and success or otherwise.
- Ideally, closure of complaints by agreement with complainants; alternatively, where agreement can't be reached, demonstration of compliance and appropriate engagement with complainants.
- Establishment and maintenance of a complaint register for the recording of receipt and acknowledgement of complaints, actions taken, success or otherwise of actions and complaint closure and for the register to be available to the public during normal working hours.
- Reporting of the contents of the complaint register to the responsible authority as required, and

The Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Manager (CSEM) will be responsible for the administration of the grievance procedure.

Figure 9.1 outlines the steps that the Proponent will follow when a complaint has been received, either in writing or verbally from stakeholders.

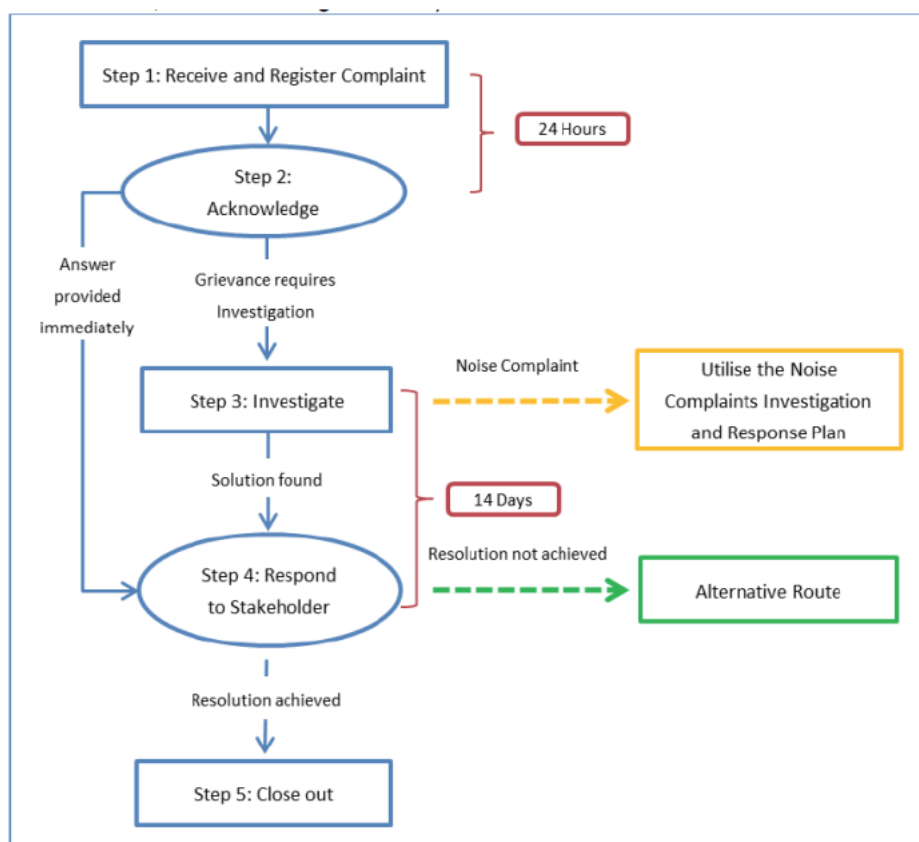


Figure 9.1 The Proponent's complaints management process

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Appendix A: Community Profile

A community profile has been conducted for the 'social locality' relevant to the Warracknabeal Energy Park Project. As **Figure 5** shows, the Warracknabeal Energy Park Project is located within the Yarriambiack Local Government Area, with the northern section of the Project 4 km northwest of the town of Warracknabeal and the southern section located 6 km southwest. The following sections provide a brief overview of the social locality, defined at the following scales:

- Regional scale: Wimmera Southern Mallee Region.
- Local Government Area scale: The host LGA of Yarriambiack Shire and neighbouring LGAs of Hindmarsh and Horsham LGAs.
- Township scale: Warracknabeal township.

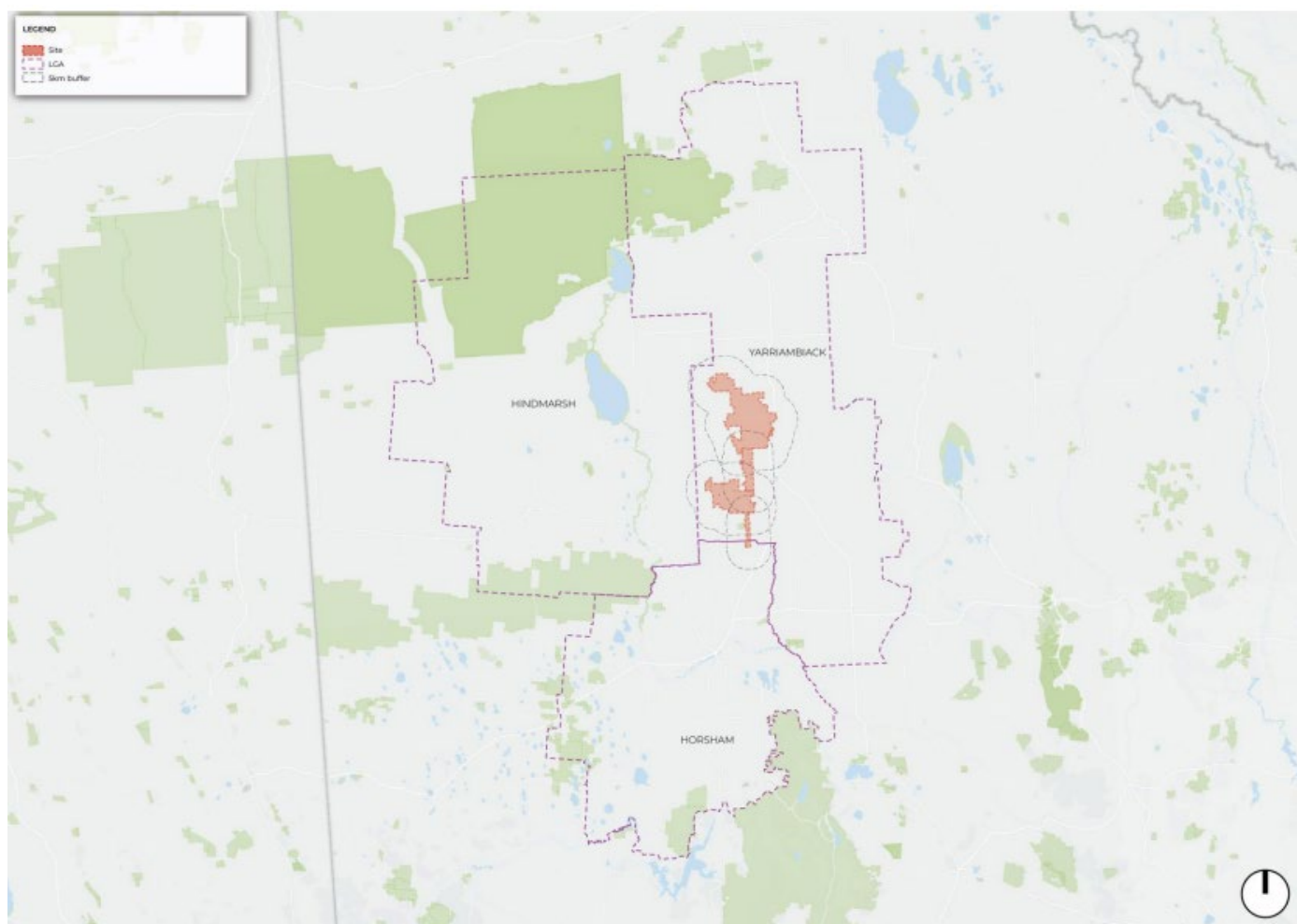


Figure 2 Project location Source: (WestWind Energy, 2022)

Initial data has been gathered and summarised in the Preliminary CSEP (WestWind Energy, 2022) and expanded by Umwelt in the formulation of this Consultation Plan. Data has been drawn from publicly available secondary datasets, including the most recent Australia Census (2021), Agriculture Victoria, the Australian Digital Inclusion Index, and Small Area Labour Markets. These data sets help to develop an understanding of the social and economic context in which the Project is located.

10.1 Regional scale – Wimmera Southern Mallee Region

The Wimmera Southern Mallee region is an agricultural economy based on dryland farming, especially grain. The region includes the traditional lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk peoples and sections of the land of the Dja Dja Warrung people, Taungurung people and the Yorta Yorta people. The region is home to some of Victoria's iconic natural attractions, including the Grampians National Park and the Wimmera River.

As **Figure 6** shows, Horsham is the key service centre for the wider region. Horsham is a major centre of employment and services for residents across Wimmera Southern Mallee. Horsham's population has been growing in recent years, in contrast to the region's smaller towns and rural areas. The region contains some of Victoria's more remote areas, bordering South Australia (Infrastrucutre Victoria, 2021).

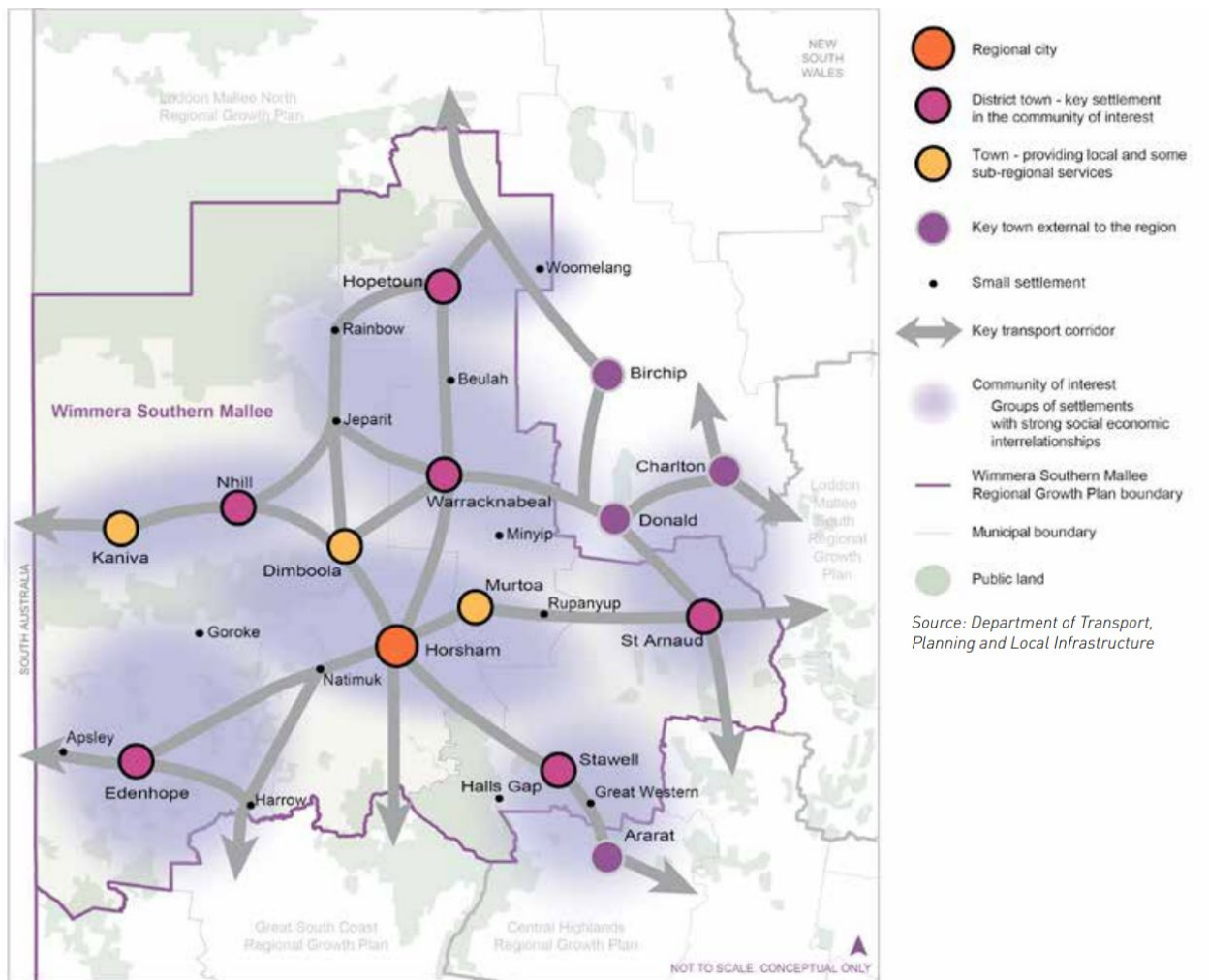


Figure 3 Strategic settlement framework plan – communities of interest

Source: (Victorian Government, 2014).

Energy security is an acknowledged challenge and opportunity for the region. Renewable energy, particularly wind generation, is an emerging opportunity for the region. However, existing transmission capacity is constrained and insufficient (Infrastrucutre Victoria, 2021). AEMO has identified the Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) as a key piece of infrastructure for the region.

This rapidly changing renewable energy and transmission line context indicates opportunities for growth in this sector but may also generate considerable community concern, as evidenced by existing opposition to VNI West (Vorrath, Sophie, 2023).

10.2 Local Government locality – Yarriambiack Shire LGA, Hindmarsh LGA and Horsham LGA

Yarriambiack Shire (the Shire) is an LGA located in the Wimmera Southern Mallee region of north-west Victoria. The Shire covers an area of 7,158 km² and had a population of 6,556 in 2021 (ABS, 2021). According to 'Victoria in Future 2019', the Shire is steadily declining in population, with a predicted population decline of 580 people or 9% of total population predicted between 2021 and 2036².

The Shire is predominantly rural, with the Warracknabeal township accommodating its main service centre. The Warracknabeal township is proximal to Hopetoun in the north and Minyip, Murtoa and Rupanyup in the south, with another 11 small towns spread throughout the municipality.

The Shire is the heartland of grain production and handling in the Wimmera Southern Mallee region. The dry-land farming area produces 25% of Victoria's total production of wheat and barley³. The number of farms in the municipality has steadily declined with the average farm increasing in size, reflecting increased efficiency in farming operations (Yarriambiack Shire Council, 2021).

The Shire's biggest employer is agriculture, with 14.1% of employed people aged 15 years and over working in grain growing⁴. Other key industries of employment in the area include hospitals (excluding psychiatric) and grain-sheep or grain-beef farming, with 9.4% and 6.5% of the population employed in these industries respectively.

As of June 2023, the unemployment rate in the Shire is 4.5%, which has increased over the past 2 years from 3.0% and is currently higher than the unemployment rate in Melbourne LGA at 3.8% (SALM, 2023). 28.7% of the population volunteered in an organisation or group (in the 12 months leading up to the 2021 census), which is considerably higher than the state level at 13.3% and is common in communities with older populations.

The neighbouring LGAs of Hindmarsh and Horsham share similar characteristics to Yarriambiack, including an older population (50 and 41 respectively), slow or declining predicted population growth to 2036 (10% decline and 3% increase respectively) and predominately rural land uses. Like Yarriambiack, agriculture, forestry and fishing is the largest industry by output and employment in Hindmarsh and is the third largest employer in Horsham LGA. Horsham features a more diversified economy than the other two LGAs. The town of Horsham serves as the main service centre for surrounding townships and includes many higher order services, retail opportunities and businesses.

10.3 Township locality – Warracknabeal

Warracknabeal is the service centre and seat of Government for the Shire. The town is a wheatbelt town surrounded by country that is primarily used for agricultural purposes and has been substantially modified over time due to agricultural operations such as broadacre cropping and livestock grazing.

The Warracknabeal township is based on a traditional grid pattern of development. Warracknabeal has developed in a moderately compact form with the majority of community facilities contained to the bounds of the Henty Highway to the east, Borung Highway to the south, Rainbow Road to the north and the Yarriambiack Creek to the west. The Creek runs through Warracknabeal and is a key environmental asset that enhances the liveability and attractiveness of the town.

The 'Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan' encourages a focus on investment in services and facilities for the northern part of the region in Warracknabeal, whilst investigating land to the south-east or west of the town to determine its suitability for in-fill residential development.

In 2021, the community of Warracknabeal had a population of 2,227, inclusive of 558 families with an average of 1.8 children. The median age of people in Warracknabeal was 51 years, with slightly more females (50.7%) than males (49.3%). Children aged 0 - 14 years make up 15.4% of the population and people aged 65 years and over made up 30.6% of the population (ABS, 2021).

² The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 'Victoria in Future 2019', July 2019.

³ Agriculture Victoria, 'Victorian Grains Industry', June 2021.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics, '2021 Census Community Profiles', 2021.

Of persons living in Warracknabeal, 2.4% were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people – a higher proportion than for the state of Victoria as a whole (1%) (ABS, 2021). The Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Japagulk peoples, collectively known as the Wotjobaluk peoples, are the Traditional Owners of the land at Warracknabeal and its surrounds. As stated in Section 7.1.1, the Traditional Owners are represented by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC).

Warracknabeal has 1,199 dwellings which have an average of two people per household. In January 2022, Warracknabeal ranked third in Victoria for the most affordable median house price, with a median house value of \$171,491 (Frost, 2022).

Table 8 outlines some key characteristics of these communities with considerations also noted as a basis to inform engagement planning.

Table 8 Summary of engagement considerations based on community profile

Characteristics of social locality (Yarriambiack LGA and Warracknabeal UCL)	Considerations for Engagement
High participation of voluntary work at 28.7% in Yarriambiack. The majority of the couples in Yarriambiack LGA do not have children (52.8%, compared to 37.6% at a state level) with the average number of children per family being 1.9 (1.8 in Warracknabeal).	Relatively small population with core community facilities located centrally. Community likely to be well-connected, place strong value on local area and features, and be a source of information about the area and its history. May also have more availability to participate in engagement activities.
Older population, with a median age of 51 in Warracknabeal and 52 across Yarriambiack LGA compared to 38 at a state level. In Warracknabeal people aged 65 years and over make up 30.6% of the population. With a small percent of the population between the ages of 25 and 50 at 22.6% compared with 35.5% at a state level.	May impact language/tone as well as mechanisms of engagement to avoid potential hurdles with computer literacy.
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is 53 (2.4%) in Warracknabeal and 1.7% of the population across Yarriambiack LGA compared to 1.0% at a state level.	Key population group to consider in any disproportionate socio-economic or cultural effects and need for tailored engagement mechanisms.
Low cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity with 83.2% of the population in Warracknabeal born in Australia, compared to 65% across the state. Additionally, 88.1% of the population in Warracknabeal speak only English at home compared to the state level at 67.2%.	Less consideration needed regarding culturally and linguistically diverse engagement mechanisms. However, the preliminary CSEP did highlight Culturally and Linguistically Diverse families (such as migrant Zimbabwean and Korean families as seen across the wider region) who may need targeted engagement mechanisms.
Key industry of employment is agriculture.	Engagement tools used will need to provide opportunity for stakeholders to discuss concerns/opportunities regarding current industries of employment and the development of other potential industries in the region. Timing of engagement to consider key seasonal and daily patterns in work to ensure engagement work around engagement preferences and requirements for agricultural lifestyles. Consider mitigations and enhancement strategies and communication of these strategies for agricultural lifestyles and employment.
Below average internet access. As of 2022 Yarriambiack LGA has an Australian Digital Inclusion Index ⁵ score of 64, which is below the national average of 73.2.	Consideration for engagement mechanisms and information provision methods that do not solely rely on digital connectivity.

⁵ The Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) is a score between 1- 100 based on digital inclusion factors such as access. Affordability and digital ability, where a score close to 100 indicates higher inclusion (Australian Digital Inclusion Index, n.d.).

Characteristics of social locality (Yarriambiack LGA and Warracknabeal UCL)	Considerations for Engagement
<p>Other proximal renewable energy projects. There are six renewable energy projects within a 50 km radius of the Project, two of which are operational (Murra Warra Wind Farm and Kiata Wind Farm).</p> <p>Additionally, there may be some overlap with development timelines, including community engagement activities, for the remaining four proximal projects with this Project.</p>	<p>Concurrent projects can increase consultation fatigue and anxiety and can reduce overall support for projects. Timing of engagement to consider key engagement activities for other proximal projects.</p> <p>Additionally, key messages could be reviewed from these projects to try and use similar language if engagement was well received and understood.</p> <p>Engagement to consider the profound impacts of cumulative large-scale projects in the region.</p>
Rapid recent increase in unemployment rates.	<p>Rising unemployment rates may lead to higher levels of social and economic vulnerability in the region and may indicate greater opportunity for Project benefits arising from employment generation. Engagement to be accessible and flexible to meet needs of lower income households and to gather feedback on ways to increase local employment and procurement outcomes.</p>
High levels of volunteerism.	<p>High levels of volunteerism are indicative of cohesive communities with strong social connections and is often related to older demographics. Higher levels of social cohesion may increase likelihood of information being shared between community members, higher levels of interest in the Project and opportunities for productive and engaged CRGs and focus groups. Engagement to take advantage of these existing networks.</p>

Source: Umwelt, 2023.

Appendix B: Consultation Conducted

The Proponent has engaged with a broad range of stakeholders using a variety of mechanisms throughout the design and planning stages of the Project to date. These activities informed the scoping phase of the EES process and are summarised in **Table 9**.

Table 9 Summary of engagement activities conducted by the Proponent

Stakeholder	Activity
Host Landholders <i>(35 host landowner families who will host wind farm infrastructure)</i>	<p>The Proponent has undertaken extensive local engagement which has informed the proposed layouts and the configuration of the Project Area. Host landholders have had extensive input into the proposed layouts, ensuring that the Project can co-exist alongside their current farming operations with minimal impact. For example, proposed WTGs and track alignments follow existing cropping patterns to ensure machinery can continue to operate efficiently. This collaborative approach has enabled the design and location of the Project to evolve via community and landholder input. The following consultation has been undertaken to date:</p> <p>Group Meetings (x 9: August 2017–June 2024) were conducted to discuss Project timelines, community engagement intentions, provide updates on the Project and to preview of content to be shared during Open Day. Most meetings were face-to-face, with some online (Teams). The Proponent hosted a host landholder meeting in June 2024 to allow landholders to come together to seek support on other major developments in the area.</p> <p>Tour (April 2019) of Mt Mercer Wind Farm was conducted with landholders. The Mt Mercer Wind Farm is an operational wind farm near Ballarat with a max capacity of 131 MW. The Proponent of this wind farm is also WAEPL.</p> <p>Letters (x6: March 2021–June 2024) were sent to advise Project updates and the Warracknabeal Office 2021 Christmas closure period.</p> <p>Newsletters (x8: October 2019–October 2022) were sent to provide Project updates.</p> <p>Host landholders are contacted on request and to communicate Project updates every three months either face-to face or via the phone. Individual Meetings were conducted with 14 individual landowners in 2024 (either in person or attendance at group landholder meetings).</p>
Neighbours <i>(Residents of 166 neighbouring dwellings within 5 km of the Project boundary)</i>	<p>Meetings (x5: August 2017–December 2017) were conducted to introduce the Project and the Proponent. Neighbours within 1.5 km of the Project were provided with the Project timeline, Project layout map and photomontage.</p> <p>Phone calls (February 2018) were made with all neighbours to check in following the Christmas period and provide any relevant updates.</p> <p>Door knocking (x4: October 2017–November 2022) was conducted for neighbours within 5 km radius to inform them about the Project status, seek information regarding the community and discuss the neighbourhood benefit program.</p> <p>Neighbour Benefit Scheme (February – March 2023) follow-up door knocking to all eligible neighbours to provide specific information regarding the NBS and subsequent NBS sign-up letters have been distributed (via post, hand delivery and via DocuSign). As of August 2024, 72 households within a 6km radius of the Project are eligible for the NBS, with 59 delivered and 27 agreements signed.</p> <p>Individual meetings were conducted with 10 neighbours in 2024.</p> <p>*NBS eligibility will be reviewed again in late 2024 and will accompany another round of door knocking for any new households eligible to join the NBS.</p>

Stakeholder	Activity
<p>Stakeholder briefings, meetings, and workshops</p>	<p>Briefings were undertaken with key stakeholders to provide information about the Project and updates at key milestones.</p> <p>Meetings and workshops were held to seek input on specific matters from individuals, groups, and organisations with local or specialist knowledge. Briefings, meetings and workshops were held in person or via video conference.</p> <p>Briefings and/ or meetings/workshops were conducted with the following stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarriambiack Shire Council with both Councillors and relevant departments (x7: August 2017 – July 2023). • DELWP/DTP/DEECA (x6: 2019-2022) • Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (x4: February 2018 – March 2023) • WMSD Renewable Working Group (x2 April 2024 -May 2024) • Warracknabeal Action Group (WAG*) (x10: December 2019 – July 2024). • Ward Councillors (Nov 2017). • Warracknabeal Aerodrome (October 2017). • Local farmers about regenerative soils initiative (August 2022). • Warracknabeal Neighbourhood House (5x: October 2022, October 2023, February 2024, April 2024 and June 2024). • Murra Warra Wind Farm (October 2022). • Brim Active Group (April 2023 and May 2023). • Country Fire Authority (CFA) (June 2023, May 2024 and June 2024). • Yarrilinks Landcare Group (June 2024) • Warracknabeal Area Club (July 2024) <p><i>*The WAG group contains representatives from Yarriambiack City Council, including the CEO , a Councilor and a member of the Community Engagement team.</i></p> <p><i>*The Warracknabeal Neighbourhood House meetings in 2024 included a Project update as well as targeted discussions about opportunities to support vulnerable groups in the community.</i></p> <p>Additionally, in April 2021, Horsham City Council were sent a letter advising them of the Project.</p>
<p>First Nations engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project introduction meeting with Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) RAP (September 2022). • Sponsorship agreement with BGLC established for \$5,000 to update BGLC's website (October 2023). • Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is being prepared by Heritage Insight will be evaluated by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation. CHMP inception meeting was April 2023. Initial cultural heritage investigations were undertaken in May 2023 with Heritage Insight, and representatives of the Barengi Gadjin Land Council. Standard assessment results meeting held at BGLC offices in Horsham (January 2024). • Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) to be conducted by Heritage Insights. Initial meeting with BGLC to discuss possible approaches/methodology held in February 2024. The CVA requires the input of the wider Wotjobaluk community, not just the BGLC RAP. A Project meeting with Barengi Gadjin Land Council RAP in May 2024 also included a site tour. • Aboriginal Cultural Heritage – meeting with BGLC for a discussion on findings from the subsurface testing for phase 1 surveys. BGLC to provide guidance on how they would like the Project to assist in protecting those findings of significance. BGLC will provide recommendations around design changes areas where the current layout is in intersection with the surface artefacts.

Stakeholder	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with BGLC through the Wimmera Southern Mallee Energy Development Partnership in April 2024 and June 2024.
Community presentations	<p>Presentations were given to community groups with an interest in the Project to share information and promote opportunities to get involved. Community presentations were held in person or via video conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation was given to Warracknabeal Probus Club (August 2022 and May 2024). General update and question session at CFA group meeting 1 June 2024.
Information sessions	<p>Information sessions were held to explain the assessment and consultation process, provide access to the Project team and technical specialists, and accept feedback about potential concerns and suggestions from communities and stakeholders.</p> <p>Five Open Day events have been delivered at Warracknabeal Scout Hall or Warracknabeal Showgrounds, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2017, key outcomes: approx. 40 people attended throughout the day to receive information and provide feedback on the proposal. May 2022: More than 60 community members visited across the two open day sessions. October 2022: Information sharing to allow for questions from community. Additionally, sponsorship was given to Warracknabeal Show to fund the free children activities on the day of the show.
Local events and information displays	<p>The Project's participation in local events provided an opportunity for informal engagement and information sharing to raise awareness of the Project, the planning and environmental approvals process and opportunities to participate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information stall and sponsorship at community event which provided people with a further chance to learn about the Project and sponsored fireworks (December 2018). Information stall and sponsorship at Warracknabeal Christmas Festival (December 2022 and 2024). Information stall at Warracknabeal Show (6 October 2022). Information stall at the Easter in the Beal' Event (April 2023 and March 2024). Surveys were also distributed at 2024 event. Dinner with Warracknabeal Eagles Football Club (July 2023). Attendance at WAG (Warracknabeal Action Group AGM (12 September 2023)) Information stall at Warracknabeal Show (10 October 2023). Attendance at WNHLC (Warracknabeal Neighbourhood House & Learning Centre) AGM (24 October 2023) Information stall and sponsorship at Brim Community Christmas event (10th December 2023).
Project survey	<p>In March 2024 a project survey was developed for use along with engagement at community events, with a weblink provided on the website and promoted through social media.</p> <p>61 people responded to the survey.</p>

Stakeholder	Activity
Website and Newsletters	<p>The Project has a dedicated webpage on the WestWind Energy’s website, which provided a Project summary, a contact number and email address for WAEPPL regarding the Project, as well as the ability to subscribe to receive Project updates and information via the newsletter (in 2024, 5 people opted in to receive newsletters via the Project website).</p> <p>The Project website was up-to-date with e-newsletters providing information regarding Project milestones including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details regarding EES process. • Advertising upcoming information stalls (Easter in the ‘Beal in March 2024, Warracknabeal Show in Oct 2024, Christmas Festival in Dec 2024). • Advertising the drop-in office open hours. • Advertising the online survey. <p>Newsletters are published online on the Project website quarterly and electronically sent out. The most recent Project newsletter was sent to 140 people in May 2024 and 11 hard copies were sent out to community members that have opted in and do not have email addresses.</p> <p>Community enquiries received via the Project hotline and Project email are recorded in the Project’s CRM system, Darzin, which enables WW to capture, track and respond to complaints and queries in a timely and structured fashion. As of July 2024, no calls were received via the Project hotline in 2024 and nine emails were received in 2024 (5 from WAG members, 3 from contractors and 1 from a community member)</p>
Warracknabeal Office	<p>An office has been open since March 2023 to the public 2 days a week, Mondays and Thursdays 9am-5pm and re-located to the main street of Warracknabeal in January 2024. This location services the community to provide a place where people can drop in to find information, ask questions and provide feedback or raise any concerns. It also provides a space to display information and promote community meetings, events and presentations.</p> <p>Since January 2024, there have been A3 sized posters displayed in the windows. These posters contain Project information and are changed regularly to reflect Project status, with the aim of catching attention of members of the public when the office is unoccupied. There are also QR codes on the posters that take people to the Project website for more information and to sign up to the quarterly newsletters.</p> <p>The office was open during ‘Easter in the Beal’ event in March 2024 where community members were invited to complete a survey in exchange for a local voucher. Approximately 40 people visited the office during the event.</p>

10.4 Summary of community and stakeholder concerns

Analysis of identified local concerns, issues, and interests, with relevance to the Project has been undertaken using the following approaches:

- Consultation undertaken to date and summarised in **Table 7**.
- Review of technical reports included with the Project EES Referral.
- Publicly available documentation on nearby renewable energy projects and other similar projects within the region or wider Australia. For example, a media analysis conducted by researchers at CSIRO has identified key areas of concerns that impact acceptance of rural wind farms in Australia (Lansbury, Ashworth, & Shaw, 2012).
- Insights from WestWind and Umwelt from previous consultation programs undertaken in or proximal to the social locality.

This material was carefully considered to ensure that the engagement program, and this Consultation Plan addresses key concerns, interests, and opportunities from the perspective of relevant stakeholder groups and informs the Project’s environmental and social assessment process.

These stakeholder concerns and opportunities, along with the aligned control and/ or enhancement measures are presented in **Table 10**. The control and enhancement measures will be included in Project messaging to provide transparency and openness with stakeholders (as per principles outlined in **Section 2.2**).

Table 10 Summary of key concerns and opportunities identified through stakeholder engagement on this Project as well as a literature review with aligned control and enhancement measures to be considered by this Consultation Plan

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
Visual amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landholders Neighbours (within 5 km radius) General community DELWP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual impact of turbines and transmission infrastructure. Consideration to Project design - CSIRO research found that the most cited reasons for rejecting wind farms were landscape change and visual amenity impacts and in particular the number of turbines in each cluster influenced acceptance. Cumulative impacts considering proximity to Murra Warra Wind Farm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive assessment into the visual impact of the Project will be prepared by Xurban and provided to stakeholders. The visual and landscape assessment will form part of the submission to determine if the Project requires the preparation of an EES. Photomontages have been created to aid consideration of potential visual impacts and inform further discussion. Photomontages depicting what the Project would look like from publicly accessible locations in the local area will be displayed at all public information sessions and included in engagement material. The opportunity to have potential visual impacts assessed using augmented reality technology is available to the owners of all near neighbour properties and is specifically offered to any near neighbour that raised concerns about potential visual impacts. This has been offered to all neighbours since 1 May 2022, but none have accepted the offer. A visual screening program to reduce impacts will be offered to dwellings that have a view of the wind farm infrastructure, developed in conjunction with Yarriambiack Shire Council and engaging local social enterprises. Internal electrical cabling infrastructure will be undergrounded as much as reasonably possible to minimise overhead powerlines and additional visual

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
			<p>impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential cumulative landscape and visual impacts have been and will continue to be assessed at key locations, between the Project and the existing Murra Warra Wind Farm. Appropriate buffers have been incorporated into the design in response to specific concerns raised near neighbours about potential cumulative impacts of the Project with the nearby Murra Warra Wind Farm.
Aviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DELWP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interface with the Warracknabeal Municipal Aerodrome. Potential impacts to farmer ability to apply fertiliser, weed, and pest control via aerial application, and aerial firefighting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WTGs have been relocated further west outside of the Design and Development Overlay protecting the Airport environs. Further Aviation matters will be independently assessed by Chirion within the Aviation Impact Assessment. We will continue to liaise and support recommendations from the CASA, DELWP and Air services. As traditional methods of spraying are predominantly used in the region, aerial spraying is rarely used and therefore, minimal impact is anticipated. However, turbines have been spaced generously and the Proponent is working with local farmers who raised concerns about aviation to assess potential impacts on their aerial operations and the options available to address these impacts in their specific circumstance.

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CFA Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities state that as long as wind turbines are no less than 300 metres apart there is adequate distance for aircraft to operate around a wind energy facility given the appropriate weather and terrain conditions. Fire suppression aircraft operate under visual flight rules and as such, fire suppression aircraft would only operate in areas where there is no smoke and can operate during the day or night.
Unequal Distribution of Financial Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbours (within 5 km radius) Barengi Gadjin Land Council General community (Brim). Yarrilinks Landcare Group 	<p>Maximising the spread of benefits across the wider community, including the township of Brim, where concerns have been raised that that Brim may feel left out of any community benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbours near the wind farm not sharing in the financial gain of the Project. Near neighbours have expressed that they have “missed out” on sharing in financial benefits from the Project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived inequitable distribution of Project benefits (from those not hosting wind turbines), as those who host turbines will have security from drought and a constant annual income Eligibility for Neighbour Benefit Sharing Scheme is based on whether the property is ‘your primary place of residence’, however this criteria does not apply to host landholders who will be eligible for financial benefits from the Project even if the property is not the owners primary residence. BGLC are looking at securing a small portion of the Community Benefit Scheme. Collaborating with BGLC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proponent will continue to engage with community members to develop schemes that will maximise the spread of benefits across the wider community. The Proponent will seek opportunities for community investment leading to improved and sustainable socioeconomic outcomes in the local area through a comprehensive community benefit-sharing program. Opportunities are wide and varied, from sponsorship and grant assistance to strategic community partnerships. Programs should be developed collaboratively and based on locally identified values, needs, interests and priorities to realise success through the CRG framework. The Proponent has committed to providing \$2,000 per operational WTG into financial benefits to the wider community. The Proponent has committed to a Neighbour Benefit Sharing Scheme to allow Project neighbours to share in the economic benefits of the Project during its operational lifecycle (within a 6km radius of the Project). A Social and Sustainable Procurement Strategy will be developed to ensure local community and disadvantaged

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
		<p>to determine how CBS funds are distributed could be beneficial.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern for community benefit fund being managed by council and not going into the right areas. 	<p>groups can benefit from the employment and business opportunities associated with construction.</p>
Agribusiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landholders Neighbours General community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any changes to farming operations that could result from the Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proponent will continue to consult with landholders throughout the design process to minimise the impacts to their agribusiness and ensure that the agribusiness operations remain in place. Collaboration with landholders regarding the interface with their agribusiness operations will include tailored, one-on-one consultation and regular landholder meetings, along with other associated activities as detailed in Section 7. As part of the contractual arrangements to secure land tenure a Paddock Protocol manual is agreed with all host landholders. The protocol outlines working principles including items like stock management, access areas, and gates. These are agreed principles in which the Project team and their contractors are contractually required to work with in respect to the landholder's property and business. Agribusiness has been independently assessed by Ethos Urban within the Social and Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA), the findings of which will be applied to all engagement activities to allow for informed discussion.
Management of construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landholders Neighbours (within 5 km 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How construction will be managed to avoid or minimise impacts on communities, landholders, agribusiness, and the local environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of the Project on local roads, and the delivery of construction materials will be assessed as part of a traffic management plan, in consultation with Yarriambiack Shire Council and the Department of

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> radius) General community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads and traffic management - particularly along Blue Ribbon Road in western part of site. Stress on accommodation supply with an influx of workers. 	<p>Transport. Before development starts, the Proponent will commission a Pavement Impact Assessment of public roads and proposed access points to the site to be prepared in consultation with the relevant road management authorities. WAEPL will remediate any damages to roads to equal to or better than the original condition found in the preconstruction Pavement Impact Assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proponent will collaborate with local providers and local government to ensure that employees and contractors working on the Project can be suitably housed, while preventing locals from being locked out of the market due to over-occupation of local residences. A Workforce Accommodation Strategy will be developed to address potential pressures on local housing stock, with key principles been developed to address the limited housing stock and balance the needs of local residents, property owners and the workforce. Compliance with these principles will ensure that employees and contractors on the Project can be appropriately housed, while ensuring local residents seeking housing are not displaced from the local housing market due to low availability or price increases.
Impacts to private property values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landholders Neighbours (within 5 km radius). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How impacts to private property will be minimized. Depreciation of surrounding property values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property values have been independently assessed by Ethos Urban within the Social and Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) and will be further assessed in the subsequent SEIA to inform the EES. CSIRO research acknowledged that property prices have not been found to change, however there may be a decrease in the potential market of buyers (Lansbury,

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
			<p>Ashworth, & Shaw, 2012).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anecdotal, a number of sales have occurred in the district in the vicinity of the Murra Warra Wind Farm in recent years, including properties close to the Project site. There has been no indication the Murra Warra Wind Farm has impacted the contract price or level of interest in any of those properties, and no expectation the Project would negatively influence this trend. This information will be applied to consultation activities to allow for an informed discussion.
Turbine noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbours (within 5 km radius) General community DELWP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise pollution during construction. Ongoing turbine noise during construction. Consideration to Project design - CSIRO research found that concerns regarding noise pollution leading to adverse health effects, including sleep disturbance, influenced acceptance. Although the link between noise and health impacts is not supported by the literature (Lansbury, Ashworth, & Shaw, 2012). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An experienced and qualified acoustic consultant will prepare an environmental noise assessment in compliance with the New Zealand Standard NZS6808:2010, Acoustics – Wind Farm Noise dated 23 March 2021 (Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment). Assessments will also comply with the Environment Protection Regulations 2021, supporting the objectives of the Environment Protection Act 2017 to prevent or minimise risks of harm to human health or the environment. By modelling the noise outputs of turbines, the proposed turbine locations, and the known location of sensitive receptors the Proponent can ensure the wind farm layout can comply with the applicable noise limits. A Noise Management Plan will be developed in consultation with the community within the vicinity of the Project prior to being submitted to the responsible authority for endorsement before development starts. The endorsed Noise Management Plan and supporting reports, plans and peer review will be placed on the

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
			<p>Project website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Complaints Management mechanism will be implemented to track and address complaints and acknowledge that perceived or intangible impacts are also experienced by community members.
Perceived lack of opportunity for Traditional Owners to actively participate in the Project development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BGLC would like developers to work together with them in a coordinated way. As the local RAP they're keen to map the landscape (not just within the site boundary) to identify places in the landscape where they wouldn't want turbines. BGLC wish proponents to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement with BGLC to have input to Project development. BGLC has developed a Renewable Energy Roadmap, which highlights priorities and key areas BGLC would like to partner with renewable energy developers. 'Above compliance' business opportunities for consideration like the native nursery providing plants for projects. Neutralising impact opportunities- actions which support First Nations peoples and place to compensate for project impacts and share benefits more equitably. Benefit or value sharing-actions that consider First Nations people and project impacts and share the benefits more equitably. Ideas for consideration could include scholarship, training and employment opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to a relationship based on ongoing conversations and regular meetings at Project level. Work with BGLC to identify priorities in the renewable energy roadmap that will support the development of the Land Council. Cultural landscape mapping (Cultural values) could be developed in collaboration with BGLC to pilot methodology for mapping cultural landscapes and values at proposed site for Warracknabeal Wind Farm. As the RAP, BGLC wants to map the landscape beyond the site boundary. They aim to identify areas where they wouldn't want turbines, considering cultural and environmental factors. Engagement in the development of the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP). Commitment to cultural values training for construction worksites.

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
Lack of information regarding what occurs at the end of the Project as part of a decommissioning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbours (within 5 km radius) • General community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness/understanding of what occurs at the end of a projects life which raises stakeholders concern or anxiety about the Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a decommissioning and rehabilitation management plan. • Include messaging about Project decommissioning throughout each stage of the Project.
Engagement with climate change related topics is significantly lower in the region compared to the State (58% somewhat or very interested compared to 74% of the State population) (Sustainability Victoria, 2017).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness/understanding of the Project or topics relating to the need for the Project leading to spread of misinformation. • SEIA/ EES process is unable to adequately identify and assess social impacts based on community engagement as stakeholders do not feel motivated to actively participate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation of Consultation Plan. • Iterative evaluation of engagement approach. • Complete ongoing monitoring of media, community issues, and local stakeholder sentiment to assist in identification of any emerging stakeholder issues. • Continue to provide opportunities for information provision and feedback from interested parties. • Continue to provide clear, transparent, and proactive communication to stakeholders regarding the Project and the assessment process – stages, timing, opportunities for input.
Stakeholder engagement program does not adequately address stakeholders' key interests and concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased stakeholder, government, and media scrutiny. • Lack of trust in the proponents given all stakeholders not consulted. • Implications for the robustness of the Project. • Negative experiences from other projects, or from others' reported experiences, that erodes trust in this Project. • Project schedule extended and potential increase in costs as a result of extra effort required to establish relationship/ address interests and concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement the Consultation Plan to ensure stakeholder interests and issues are documented. • Continue to update the Consultation Plan to ensure emerging issues are captured and stakeholder identification is refreshed as required. • Complete ongoing monitoring of media, community issues, and local stakeholder sentiment to assist in identification of emerging stakeholder issues. • Continue to provide an opportunity for key stakeholders to provide feedback, raise issues, concerns and Project opportunities. • Complaints mechanism and demonstration of how

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
			concerns have been considered publicly available.
Consultation fatigue due to multiple concurrent projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barengi Gadjin Land Council Special Interest Groups Broader community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implications to the robustness of the Project. Project schedule extended and potential increase in costs as a result of extra effort required to establish undertake secondary engagement program to reach adequate level of engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate with other engagement activities planned for the EES to avoid duplication and manage consultation fatigue. Tailor community engagement to local livelihoods and realities in terms of timing and farming seasons Continue to provide opportunities for key stakeholders to provide feedback, raise issues, concerns and Project opportunities in ways that reflect their needs. Follow up with contributors to the engagement program and keep updated with key milestones and how they can contribute.
Fire risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFA members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project may impact the fire risk in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with CFA to mitigate any fire risks.
Impacts on the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbours (within 5 km radius) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern for Yarriambiack Creek, in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birdlife along the creek Biodiversity Possibility for significant waterway impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assessments undertaken for the EES, including the Biodiversity Impact Assessment and Surface Water Impact Assessment will identify mitigation measures to avoid, minimise and manage potential impacts. These will be documented in the EES and the Project's Environmental Management Framework.
Opportunities			
Region is generally supportive of renewable energy, with 80% of the region's population supportive of wind turbines in their area (compared to 75% in State) (Sustainability Victoria, 2017).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landholders Broader community Special Interest Groups Local Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental benefits from the Project in terms of addressing climate change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge local impacts over and above the broader state and national benefits. Include messaging regarding the environmental benefit from renewable energy more broadly and specific to the Project in engagement material. Evaluate this Plan as per Section 8 to ensure information is received by stakeholders in a timely and accessible

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Government. 		manner to encourage broader information sharing.
Community Benefits		<p>Potential for financial incentives and electricity bill offsets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project funding for small communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Community Reference Group to provide input from community stakeholders. The Proponent will continue to engage with community members to develop schemes that will maximise the spread of benefits across the wider community.
Broader economic benefit - local job generation, training and upskilling, and business participation across both the construction and operational phases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local business owners (from door knocking exercise). Broader community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs, economic and industry benefits from the Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic impacts have been independently assessed by Ethos Urban within the SEIA and will support ongoing consultation and implementation of measures to maximise broader economic benefit. The Proponent will seek to maximise local benefits of the Project relating to the opportunities for local job generation, as well as training and upskilling opportunities for local businesses from the construction and operation phases, in partnership with local and regional education institutions. A Benefit Sharing Program will be created in consultation with the community and key stakeholders to deliver added value to the local region over the Project's lifecycle and potentially beyond. This will be tailored to local community needs and aspirations, prepared with local community input, and remain flexible enough to be adapted over time. The Proponent commits to maximising industry engagement with the regional community and to social procurement. The Proponent will always endeavour to use our buying power to generate social value above and beyond the value of the goods, services or construction

High level Summary of Concerns/ Opportunities	Stakeholder	Potential Consequences/Opportunities	Proposed Control/ Enhancement Measures
			being procured.
Engagement with Traditional Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barengi Gadjin Land Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value alignment established in early engagement activities between the Proponent and BGLC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to collaborate on aspects of the Project through further engagement. Align Project opportunities to the BGLC Country Plan (summarised in Section 5.2.1) where feasible.

Source: Umwelt, 2023.

10.4.1 Summary of stakeholder feedback regarding proximal windfarm

Within the Yarriambiack LGA there is one wind farm – the Murra Warra Wind Farm (MWWF) which is approximately 4 km from the southern section of the Project. The MWWF is fully operational and was developed in two stages and the first stage has been operational since August 2020 and consists of 61 wind turbines with a maximum capacity of 226 MW. The MWWF now has a total maximum capacity of 435 MW with 99 wind turbines.

The MWWF project was raised during a variety of community engagement activities for this Project conducted by the Proponent which highlights a range of possible positive and negative cumulative impacts:

- **Transportation routes:** Significant Road and intersection upgrades were conducted between Portland and the MWWF Project, therefore limited upgrades will be required for this Project.
- **Strong stakeholder support:** Yarriambiack Council were very supportive during the development of the MWWF project.
- **Reflections of engagement:** Landholders and neighbours of this Project expressed an understanding of what to expect due to the proximity of the Murra Warra Wind Farm. Some uncertainty around the authenticity of the Proponent's commitments was expressed, based on some negative experiences with the Murra Warra Wind Farm. (Note that the 'negative experiences' were always based on hearsay, not on community member's personal experiences.

Appendix C: Key stakeholders

Table 11 Key stakeholders identified in the Preliminary CSEP (with further detailed incorporated into the stakeholder details)

Category	Stakeholder	Key interests	IAP2 Level of Consultation	Engagement Activities
Decision makers –	<p>Commonwealth Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister for the Environment Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources. <p>Victorian Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister for Planning Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources and the SEC Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Department of Transport/ Regional Roads Victoria Aboriginal Victoria Environment Protection Authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning process complies with legislation and requirements. Involvement in Project development and assessment. Optimal outcomes for environment and community. Broader regulatory requirements for onshore wind. Community and stakeholder consultation. 	Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission requirements of planning process. Face to face meetings / site inspection. Factsheets / newsletters. Project information passed through organisational structure. Media coverage.

Category	Stakeholder	Key interests	IAP2 Level of Consultation	Engagement Activities
Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding and avoiding/ minimising potential adverse impacts. Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. Native Title. Cultural Heritage Management Plan. Opportunities for indigenous businesses and job seekers. Cultural Values Assessment. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings, if required. Invitation to community open days. Newsletters. Project phone line, email address. Website and social media.
Commonwealth Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner. Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA). Department of Defence Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications. Members of Parliament. Regional Development Australia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding and avoiding/ minimising adverse impacts. Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. Community consultation process. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings / site inspection. Factsheets / newsletters. Project information passed through organisational structure. Media opportunities.

Category	Stakeholder	Key interests	IAP2 Level of Consultation	Engagement Activities
Victorian Government and statutory authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country Fire Authority. Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions. Emergency Management Victoria. Members of Parliament. Regional Development Victoria. Wimmera Catchment Management Authority State Emergency Service. Transport Safety Victoria. Victoria Police. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding and avoiding/ minimising adverse impacts. Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. Community consultation process. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings / site inspection. Factsheets / newsletters. Project information passed through organisational structure. Media opportunities.
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors, executive and officers from Yarriambiack Shire Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding and avoiding/ minimising adverse impacts on council land and assets, the local environment and residents and businesses. Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. Opportunities to regenerate or transition local industries, businesses, and the economy. Community consultation process. 	Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular face to face meetings / site inspection Factsheets / newsletters. Project information passed through organisational structure. Media opportunities.

Category	Stakeholder	Key interests	IAP2 Level of Consultation	Engagement Activities
Directly affected or adjacent landholders, licence holders and asset owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private landholders in the Project site area and the Project's transmission route. AusNet Services. Crown land managers (if applicable). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding potential impacts from Project construction and operation on land, licence and/or asset. Involvement in decisions which may affect land, licence and/or asset. Minimising impacts on land, licence and/or asset during construction and operation. Co-existing and/or compensation (if applicable). 	Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings and regular group meetings. Design meetings to incorporate feedback that informs Project design to ensure minimal impact to agribusiness. Regular Project updates by letter / email / newsletter. Invitation to community consultation sessions. Paddock Protocol Agreement. Phone calls, SMS, email and website. Site inspection / site familiarisation as required. Facilitation of group tour of wind farm under construction and one that is operational. Introduction to contractors and Project construction update meetings.
Local community, business and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chambers of Commerce. Local businesses and industry. Residents of Warracknabeal and the Wimmera Southern Mallee region. Wimmera Southern Mallee Development Yarriambiack Creek Development Committee – Warracknabeal. Rotary Club of Warracknabeal. Lions Club of Warracknabeal. Lions Club of Brim. Warracknabeal Eagles Football Club. Apex Club of Warracknabeal. Country Women's Association – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale and benefits. Understanding potential impacts from Project construction and operation in the local area. Ability to provide local knowledge to enhance the Project and delivery and to help avoid/minimise impacts. Opportunities to provide input to the Project. Clear information and updates about the Project. Maximising local benefits from the Project. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Project updates by letter / email / newsletter. Invitation to community open days. Attendance at community events. Present Project updates to key groups. Project phone line, email address and website.

Category	Stakeholder	Key interests	IAP2 Level of Consultation	Engagement Activities
	<p>Warracknabeal Evening Branch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Watch – Warracknabeal. • Warracknabeal RSL. • Combined Probus Club of Warracknabeal. • Beulah Business and Information Centre. • Hockey, tennis, cricket, football, bowls, and basketball clubs in Warracknabeal. • Scouts & Cubs First Group – Warracknabeal. • Aero Club – Warracknabeal. • Warracknabeal Neighbourhood House. • Victoria State Emergency Service – Warracknabeal. • Warracknabeal Action Group. • Men’s Shed Warracknabeal. • Warracknabeal Sale Yards. • Elders Warracknabeal. • NorthWest Real Estate. • Rural North West Health. • St Vincent de Paul – Warracknabeal. • Uniting Wimmera – Crisis and Emergency Accommodation. • Warracknabeal Airport. • Wimmera Catchment Management Authority. • Brim Active Group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for local businesses and job seekers. 		

Category	Stakeholder	Key interests	IAP2 Level of Consultation	Engagement Activities
Broader community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian community. Electricity consumers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale, benefits, and impacts. Ability to access clear Project information. Effects on electricity prices and supply. 	Inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project phone line, email address. Website and social media. Factsheets / newsletters. Invitation to community open days.
Energy market operators and regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Energy Market Commission. Australian Energy Market Operator. Clean Energy Regulator. Energy Security Board. Energy Safe Victoria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project scope, capacity, and operations. Grid connection. Safety. National Electricity Market operations. 	Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face briefings, as required. Project phone line, email address. Website and social media. Factsheets / newsletters. Project information passed through organisational structure.
Industry groups, peak bodies and NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Energy Council. Regional Development Victoria. West Vic Business. Victorian Farmers Federation. Agricultural & Pastoral Societies – Wimmera Association, Warracknabeal and Warracknabeal Ladies Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale, benefits, and impacts. Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. Opportunities to regenerate or transition local industries, businesses, and the economy. Opportunities for local businesses and job seekers. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face briefings, as required. Regular Project updates by letter / email / newsletter. Invitation to community open days. Presence at community events. Project phone line, email address and website. Social media. Industry Capability Network website to contain contract opportunities and Project updates to registered suppliers, at appropriate time.
Environment groups and NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Action Network. Climate Change Council. Environment Victoria. Friends of the Earth. Landcare Wimmera. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Project rationale, benefits and impacts. Understanding and avoiding/ minimising adverse impacts. Opportunities to provide input to Project planning and delivery. 	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings, as required. Invitation to community open days. Newsletters. Project phone line, email address. Website and social media.

Category	Stakeholder	Key interests	IAP2 Level of Consultation	Engagement Activities
Educational institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federation University / Federation TAFE. Local training providers. Local playgroups, kindergartens, primary and secondary schools. Warracknabeal Playgroup. Victorian Skills Commissioner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear information and updates about the Project. Future workforce needs and opportunities. 	Inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefings. Factsheets. Project information passed through organisational structure. Website and social media.
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wimmera region media (print, radio, TV, online). Statewide media (print, radio, TV, online). Industry media (online). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear information and updates about the Project. Involvement in key milestone media opportunities. 	Inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefings. Invitation to community information sessions. Curated media releases. Newsletters. Project phone line, email address. Website and social media. High resolution images on website. Time lapse video.