

Neighbourhood Benefit Scheme

There are significant economic and community benefits associated with the Golden Plains Wind Farm (GPWF). The proponent is committed to sharing the financial benefits of the wind farm with neighbouring property owners. In consultation with the local community the proponent has identified four potential benefit schemes. Each qualifying neighbour will be eligible for more than one scheme.

Electricity Offset and Energy Audit Benefit Scheme

The objective of this scheme is to offset current electricity costs through the provision of renewable energy to an amount equal to the average Victorian home. The scheme will also provide for an experienced energy auditor to undertake an individual energy audit of each participatory dwelling to identify and prioritise appropriate solutions to reduce energy consumption within each home.

This scheme will be offered to all non-host, habitable and registered dwellings within 3km of a constructed turbine and will begin within six (6) months of commencement of onsite construction of the wind farm.

The program also provides opportunities to generate research and development collaboration opportunities with Victorian universities, to allow for students to work on real-life projects.

Financial Incentive Program for Neighbours

The objective of this scheme is to provide all neighbours (excluding host dwellings and dwellings located within the Rokewood township boundary) with an annual financial incentive payment based on the level of impact. The financial incentive payment will be calculated on the number of turbines constructed within 2km of the centre of the dwelling.

This program will compensate each neighbour with \$1,000.00 for each of the first three turbines, and \$750 for each additional turbine that is constructed within 2km of the centre of the dwelling. The annual payment will commence once the foundation construction of each wind turbine is complete. The payment will be adjusted for CPI, and will continue for the operational life of the wind farm.

By way of example, a house that has five (5) constructed wind turbines within 2 km of the centre of the property will receive an annual payment of \$4,500 (calculated as $(3 \times \$1,000) + (2 \times \$750)$).

Community GPWF Investment Program

The objective of this program is to enable host landholders and community members, living within 10 km of the wind farm, to invest financially in the project. The proponent supports community owned renewable energy as it can strengthen local communities, build community participation, and raise awareness about renewable energy. The project will provide an opportunity for the local community to secure a financial return from the wind farm.

Community Benefits Fund

During the feasibility and pre-construction phase of the wind farm, the proponent is committed to the sponsorship of local projects and organisations that benefit the local community. Once the wind farm is operational, the GPWF community fund program will provide annual financial support of up to \$240,000 (\$1,000 annually per constructed turbine) for a range of community based initiatives,

scholarships, business development projects and events that benefit local communities that surround the wind farm.

This will be a community lead initiative, to empower the community to identify and develop sustainable programs that provide real value back to the community. The program will target a range of community needs including; health and social welfare, rural job development, safety, environment, education and youth, drought relief, sport and recreation, culture, arts and economic development.

To effectively engage the community and deliver a shared vision for the community fund, the proponent intends to undertake the following engagement with the local community to further develop this program:

- hosting a workshop (facilitated by a 3rd party) with community stakeholders from a broad range of sectors including commerce, industry, tourism, education, environment, community, recreation, and residents to brainstorm ideas on how the benefit fund can best be used
- community listening posts will be set up during community open days, to draw in feedback about the community needs and the best use of funds from different members of the community,
- community benefit distribution surveys will be completed as part of our door knocking exercise
- an online space for feedback on WWE website will be created where community can provide ideas and suggestions.

The fund will be overseen by a Community Reference Group (CRG), and applications for this group will be advertised in July 2017. The CRG will commence by October 2017 and will utilise feedback received from the workshop, listening posts, and surveys to determine how best to allocate funds and in-kind contributions to maximise benefits for the communities within and around the wind farm.

The proponent has identified the following key objectives of the Community Reference Group (CRG):

- ensure information regarding the GPWF is made available to stakeholders
- enhance communication between the proponent and the community
- enhance the proponent's understanding of community issues
- encourage community partnerships
- ensure the local community benefits because of the project, and
- assist the proponent in attaining a social license to operate the wind farm.

The views and aspirations of the community will become the guiding foundation of the fund and the CRG and the proponent will ensure that the benefits are distributed equitably and efficiently across diverse programs in the community.