Energy Assessment
PA2503812

Watta Wella Renewable Energy Project

Officer Assessment

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

Contents

Disclaimer

Executive Summary

Key Information	Details
Application No:	PA2503812
Received:	15 July 2025
Statutory Days:	28 (as of 26/06/2026)
Applicant:	RES Australia Pty Ltd c/- Umwelt Ptd Ltd
Planning Scheme:	Northern Grampians
Land Address:	Joel Forest Road, Joel Joel (multiple land parcels) Refer to body of report for a full description.
Project Name:	Watta Wella Renewable Energy Project
Proposal:	Use and development of: - A 360 megawatt (MW) wind farm comprising 45 turbines with a maximum height of 255 metres - A battery energy storage system (BESS) with a capacity of 400MW/1600MWh - Ancillary infrastructure (substation, overhead and underground powerlines, operation and maintenance facility) - Two permanent metrological masts - 15.28 hectares (ha) native vegetation removal - Display of business identification signage not exceeding 3sqm to each premises - Construction of an overhead powerline to connect the facility to the Bulgana Terminal Station, which is located within the wind farm site.
Permit preamble:	Use and development of land for a wind energy facility and utility installation, associated buildings and works, display business identification signage and native vegetation removal.
Development Value:	$1 billion
Why is the Minister responsible?	Under Clause 72.01-1, the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for a planning permit application for the use or development of land associated with a: – Energy generation facility with an installed capacity of 1 megawatt or greater; – Utility installation used to: • Transmit or distribute electricity. • Store electricity if the installed capacity is 1 megawatt or greater. – Application where Clause 53.22 applies matters under Division 1 of Part 4 of the Act.

Key Information	Details		
Planning Controls	Zones:	Majority of the project is within the Farming Zone (FZ), with small portions within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ), Transport Zone 2 (TRZ2) and Transport Zone 3 (TRZ3)	
	Overlays:	Partially within the Floodway Overlay– Schedule 1 (FO1), Land Subject to Inundation – Schedule 1 (LSIO1), Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO), Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1) and Specific Controls Overlay 2 (SCO2)	
Why is a permit required?	**Clause**	**Control**	**Permit Trigger**
Zone:	Clause 35.07-1	Farming Zone (FZ)	Use of land for wind energy facility and utility installation (BESS and ancillary infrastructure).
	Clause 35.07-4		Construct a building or construct or carry out works for a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.07-1; earthworks which change the rate of flow or discharge point of water across a property boundary.
	Clause 36.04-1	Transport Zone 3 (TRZ3)	Use of land for a utility installation
	Clause 36.04-2		Construct a building or construct or carry out works for a use in Section 2 of Clause 36.04-1
Overlays:	Clause 44.03-2	Floodway Overlay– Schedule 1 (FO1)	Construct a building or to construct or carry out works.
	Clause 44.04-2	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay – Schedule 1 (LSIO1)	Construct a building or to construct or carry out works
Particular Provisions:	Clause 52.05-14	Signs	Construct or display a business identification sign not exceeding 3sqm
	52.06	Car Parking	N/A – Car parking must be provided to the satisfaction of responsible authority
	Clause 52.17-1	Native vegetation	Remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation
	Clause 52.32-2	Wind Energy Facility	Use of land for a wind energy facility

Key Information	Details		
General Requirements and Performance Standards	Clause 53.22-1	Significant Economic Development	N/A – As outlined in the Planning Report (pg. 83), the proposal qualifies under this process since it meets the conditions listed for the use of a renewable energy facility and utility installation.
Cultural Heritage:	The Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) #17482 approved on 17 November 2025.		
EPBC Act:	On 16 November 2022, the project was determined to be a Controlled Action (ref. 2022/09316) under the EPBC Act due to the potential for significant environmental impacts on matters of national environmental significance.		
Environment Effects Act	On 26 October 2022, the Minister for Planning determined that no EES was required for the project subject to conditions requiring an Environment Report (ER). The ER is the accredited assessment pathway for the EPBC assessment under the bilateral agreement.		
Referral Authorities:	AusNet Transmission Group (s55 – determining) Secretary to DEECA (s55- recommending) Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (s55 – determining) Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (s55 – recommending) WorkSafe (s55 – determining)		
Advice Sought:	Head, Transport for Victoria DEECA (birds and bats; Crown land)		
Public Notice:	Notice of the application under section 52 of the Act was required. **10** submissions (including **6** objections) have been received as of 26 June 2026. Submissions were received from the following agencies: Country Fire Authority (CFA) Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Department of Defence Northern Grampians Shire Council (objection)		
Dwellings within 1km of turbines	One dwelling is located within 1 km of a turbine (T25). Evidence of written consent from the landowner was provided with the application in accordance with Clause 52.32-3.		
Renewable Energy Zone	Most of the project is located within a declared Western REZ.		
Delegation:	Approval to determine under delegation received on 23 June 2026.		
Recommendation:	Issue a planning permit subject to conditions.		

Process and Documentation

Planning Process

1. The key milestones in the application process were as follows:

Milestone	Date
Application lodgement	Received 30 June 2025, fee paid 15 July 2025
Further information requested	11 August 2025
Further information received	15 September 2025
Section 50 amendment	17 July 2025
Section 57a amendment	12 May 2026
Public notice (section 52)	25 February 2026 to 3 April 2026 15 May 2026 to 01 June 2026 to council only (following the section 57a amendment)

Decision Documents

2. The subject of this report is the decision documents (as advertised with the application and described below).

Decision Documents
– Certificate of Titles, Copy of Plans and Land Tenure Information. – Map Book (Detailed Development Plans), prepared by Umwelt and RES, undated (received on 12 May 2026). – Agricultural Assessment, prepared by RMCG, dated April 2025. – Auditor Verification of Pre-Construction Noise Assessment, prepared by Tonkin & Taylor Pty Ltd, dated 11 July 2025. – Aviation Impact Assessment, prepared by Aviation Projects, dated 20 June 2025. – Bat and Avifauna Management Plan, prepared by Ecology and Heritage Partners Pty Ltd, dated July 2025. – Cultural Heritage Management Plan #17482, approved on 17 November 2025. – Ecological Assessment (Environment Report), prepared by Ecology and Heritage Partners, dated February 2026. – Electromagnetic Interference Assessment, prepared DNV, dated 30 May 2025. – Environmental Noise Assessment, prepared by Marshall Day Acoustics, dated 30 June 2025. – Haulage Route Assessment, prepared by Impact Traffic Engineering, dated 3 June 2025. – Historic Heritage Assessment, prepared by Tardis Archaeology Pty Ltd, dated 8 April 2025. – Hydrology and Flood Report, prepared by Afflux Consulting, dated 3 June 2025. – Landscape Character and Probable Visual Effect Assessment, prepared by Wax Design, dated 16 July 2025. – Probable Visual Effect Assessment on Residential Properties, prepared by Wax Design, dated 16 July 2025. – Planning Assessment Report, prepared Umwelt, dated May 2026. – Shadow Flicker Assessment, prepared by DNV, dated 22 May 2025. – Social Impact Assessment, prepared by Umwelt, dated June 2025. – Traffic Impact Assessment, prepared by Access Traffic Consulting, dated 2 June 2025. – Risk Management Plan, prepared by Fire Risk Consultants, dated May 2025.

Decision Documents
– Landowner written consent, signed on 06 April 2024.

Proposal

3. The application seeks approval for the use and development of a 360MW, 45-turbine wind energy facility (wind farm), utility installation (400MW/1600MWh battery energy storage system (BESS) and 200 kV powerline), associated buildings and works, removal of native vegetation and display of business identification signage.
4. The project can be summarised as follows:

Wind Farm	BESS

– Up to 45 wind turbine generators (WTGs) with a maximum turbine blade tip height of up to 255 m, rotor diameter of 178 m and minimum blade clearance of 60 m above ground level.
– Turbine foundations and hardstands.
– Substation located north-east of Landsborough Road.
– ~2.4 km of overhead 200 kV transmission line connecting the wind farm substation to the existing Bulgana Terminal Station.*
– ~48 km of internal access tracks from public roads to be used during construction and operation.
– ~370 km of underground 33 kV cabling reticulation connecting the WTGs to the wind farm substation, mostly constructed in parallel trenches; horizontal direction drilling (HDD) near turbine T9.
– Operation and maintenance (O&M) facility, ~ 1.4ha in size, located immediately north of the wind farm substation.
– Temporary infrastructure:
  – Three concrete batching plants covering ~6 ha, located near turbines T24, T28 and T39.
  – One construction compound of ~4 ha, located north of Vineyard Rd and near turbine T24.
  – Laydown areas covering ~5.5 ha, located adjacent to concrete batching plants.
  – One meteorological monitoring mast (met mast) of ~100 m above ground level.
– Two permanent met masts (a maximum height of 166 m each), subject to further design.
– No aviation obstacle lighting is proposed.
	– ~400 battery storage containers and 132 containers for power conditioning systems (PCS), with three battery storage containers connected to each PCS.
	– Substation located south-east of wind farm station and near turbine T16 (includes protection equipment, a control building and LV switchgear, two water tanks, and main substation equipment, and harmonic filters).
	– ~1.3 km of overhead 220 kV transmission line connecting the BESS substation to the existing Bulgana Terminal Station.*
	– O&M facility, located east of turbine T24 and north of wind farm O&M facility.
	– Control building and ten 40-ft storage containers.

Wind Farm	BESS

*Transmission line routes and lengths are subject to final design details of the Western Renewable Link project.

Ancillary Works

- Removal of 15.28 ha of native vegetation including 51 large trees and eight small, scattered trees.
- Four primary site access points are proposed on Landsborough Road.
- Associated buildings and works to facilitate construction, including road and intersection upgrades along Landsborough Road and reinforcement of crossings on local government roads.
- A total of up to 30 permanent car parking spaces located near the operation and maintenance areas of the wind farm and BESS.
- Four business identification signs where the total display area does not exceed 3 sqm to each premises.

5. The project is anticipated to generate powering up to 200,000 homes over the project life span of 30 years.
6. The applicant has provided the following concept plans and images of the proposal:

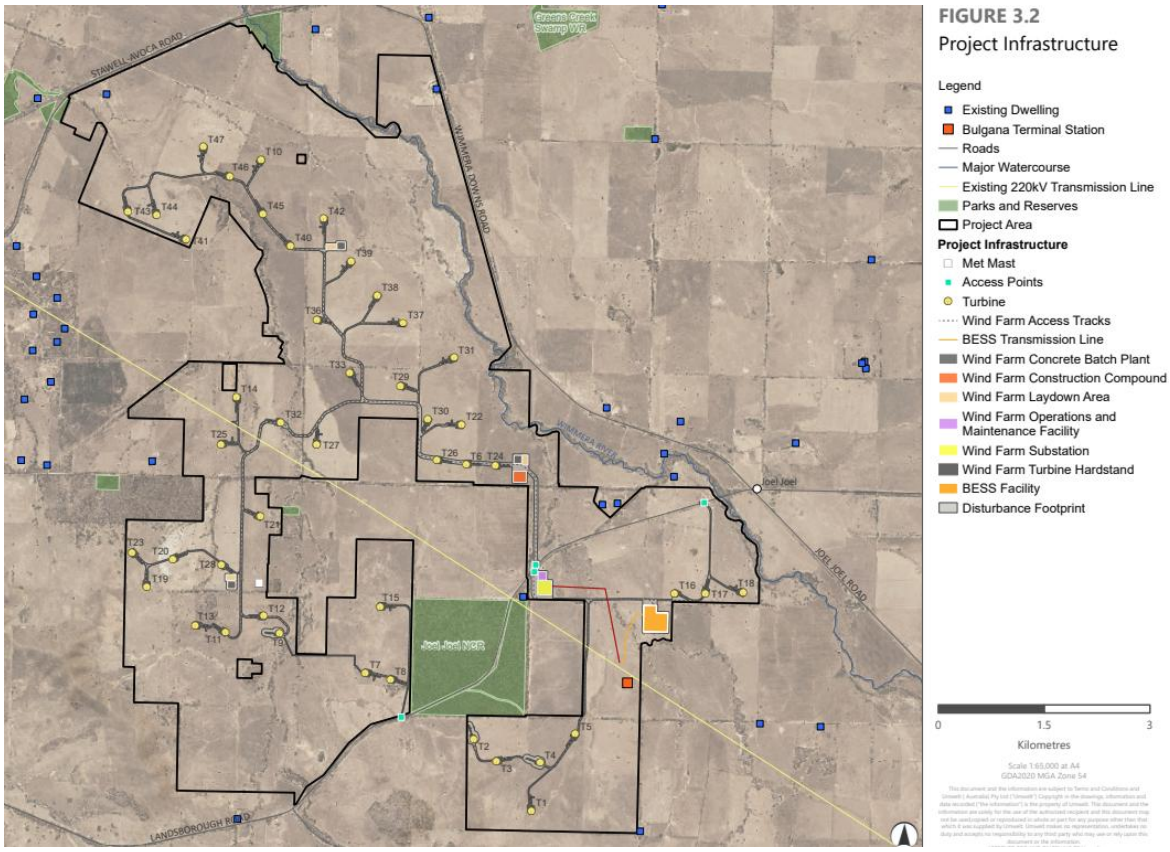


***Figure 1**: Proposed site plan of the wind farm (turbines shown in yellow) and BESS facility (shown in marigold) Source: Decision plans*

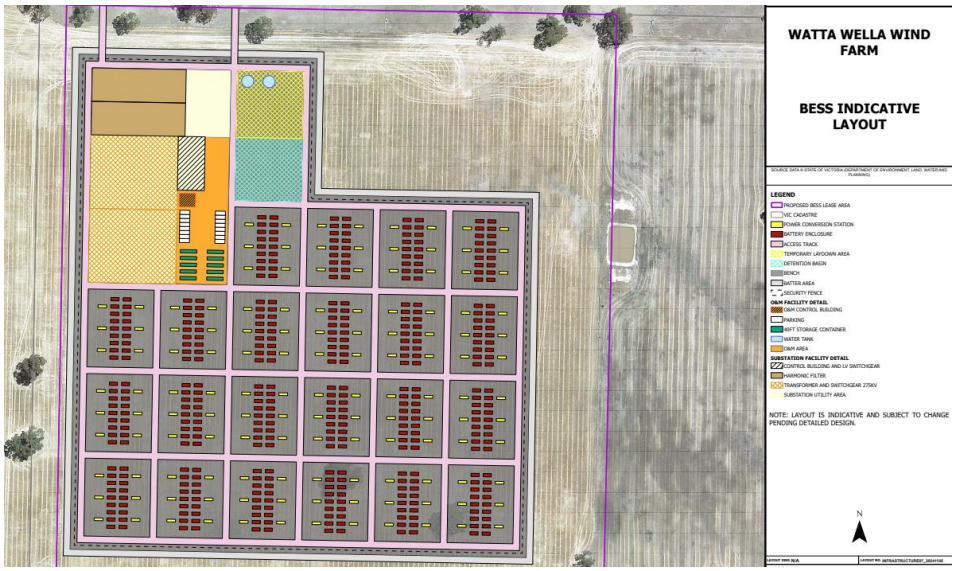


***Figure 2**: Proposed indicative layout of the BESS facility. Source: Decision plans.*

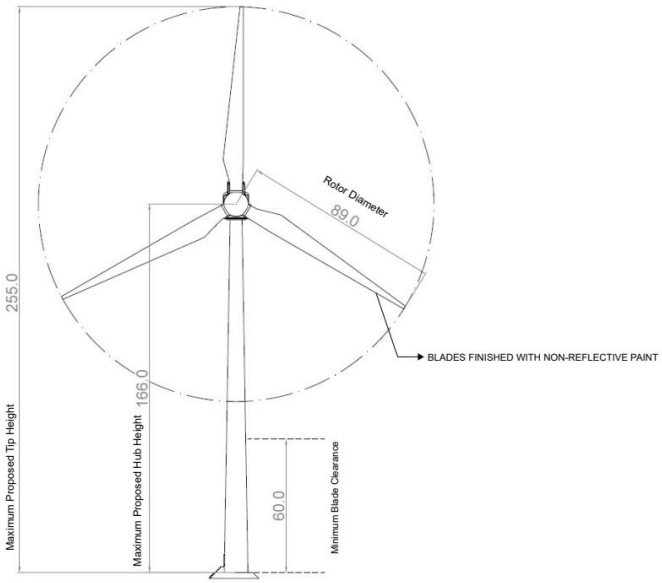


***Figure 3**: Proposed elevation of turbines. Source: Decision plans*

Subject Site and Surrounds

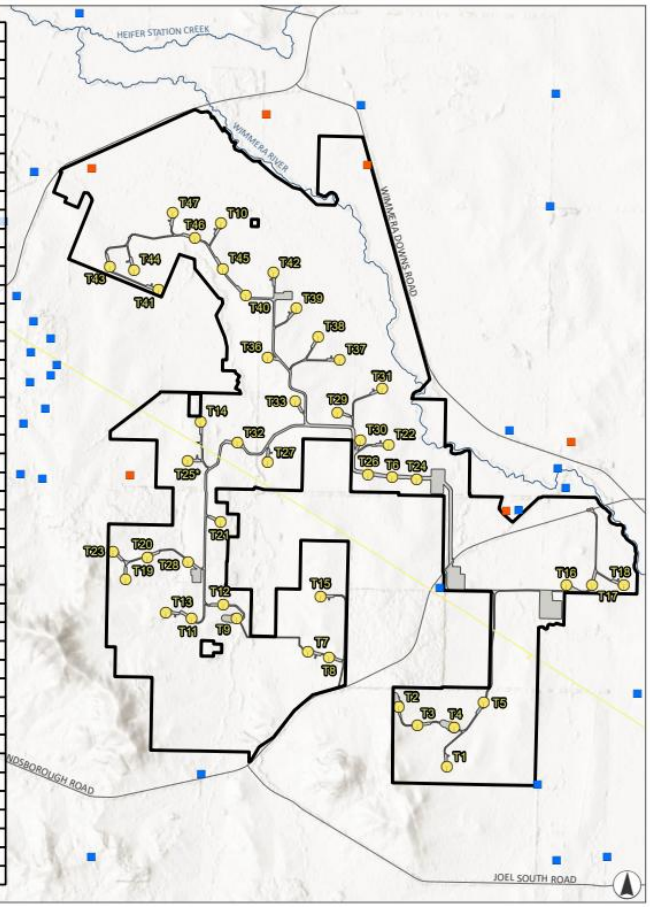
Site Description

7. The site is located within the Shire of Northern Grampians local government area, which is approx. 220 km north-west of Melbourne. The closest towns are Stawell and Ararat, located approx. 16 km to the south-west and 30 km to the south of the site, respectively.
8. The site is located within the Wimmera Southern Mallee region and is adjacent to the Joel Joel Nature Conservation Reserve.
9. The site comprises approx. 4,850 ha of predominately private agricultural land (cleared or modified by dryland mixed farming, sheep and cattle grazing, and cropping) in Joel Joel, Joel South, Concongella, and Greens Creek.

10. The site is bound by Wimmera Downs Road, between Stawell-Avoca Road (most northern boundary) and Landsborough Road (southern boundary).
11. There are two stakeholder dwellings on the wind farm site and seven stakeholder dwellings outside the project boundary with an agreement held with the proponent. Out of the total nine stakeholder dwellings, there is one stakeholder dwelling which is located outside the project boundary but is within the 1 km of the proposed turbine (T25). Consent from the landowner was provided with the application in accordance with Clause 52.32-3 of the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme. The proposed minimum setback distance between the dwelling and T25 is 980 m.
12. A total of 54 non-stakeholder dwellings is located in close proximity to the project area, with the setback distances to the nearest proposed wind turbine varying between 1.32 km to 3.12 km. Figure 4 depicts the map showing the setbacks to the closest stakeholder and non-stakeholder dwellings.

name	x	y	ClosestDwelling_m	Distance2Boundary_m
T1	675122.625	5897322	1568.244049	285.431717
T2	674305.6875	5898338.5	2129.875798	97.732488
T3	674628	5898023	2264.17637	422.598653
T4	675250	5898000	1713.422326	674.24108
T5	675746	5898411	1656.501341	253.887968
T6	674199.125	5902231	2013.61524	255.474008
T7	672768.625	5899273.5	2482.34686	612.696869
T8	673126.6875	5899182	2212.068529	279.968158
T9	671554.6875	5899832	2691.893712	241.050271
T10	671291	5906540	1996.79506	756.915009
T11	670789	5899847	2636.440048	761.254692
T12	671330.8125	5900081.5	2700.318393	262.278184
T13	670358.1875	5899945.5	2402.606406	1006.412671
T14	670945.625	5903180.5	1504.881366	486.891995
T15	672979.875	5900212	2030.129426	373.188157
T16	677150.3125	5900399.5	1508.668042	122.293521
T17	677587.625	5900403.5	1706.549102	134.34048
T18	678124.8125	5900407.5	1866.314786	148.078671
T19	669671.8125	5900497	1773.68385	309.510134
T20	670040.6875	5900880.5	1419.045584	548.803142
T21	671283	5901486	1723.225297	168.92938
T22	674135.1875	5902785.5	2065.855272	627.152798
T23	669461.875	5900980.5	1320.327327	90.343022
T24	674611.1875	5902203.5	1613.411766	275.512834
T25*	670723	5902511	980.0	517.662362
T26	673784	5902287	2289.913989	288.315204
T27	672082.375	5902497.5	2345.451761	471.868898
T28	670731	5900805	1763.569271	653.638077
T29	673268	5903336	2935.940357	463.885788
T30	673656.1875	5902866.5	2535.953711	146.356148
T31	674027.125	5903732.5	2273.50484	525.230304
T32	671571	5902822	1904.899698	787.261102
T33	672550.5	5903526.5	3071.53916	652.979474
T36	672086.375	5904265.5	3074.551116	573.920428
T37	673305	5904230	3124.510604	1358.32931
T38	672940	5904620	3034.03711	1492.100637
T39	672571	5905101	2717.532781	1254.401029
T40	671710.625	5905318	3031.651195	407.752098
T41	670229	5905408.5	2005.858459	89.9831
T42	672181	5905700	2432.882262	980.461378
T43	669407	5905806	1585.10305	146.34636
T44	669813.5	5905753	1834.986211	251.166696
T45	671321	5905775	2710.198187	369.93972
T46	670848	5906297	2100.091104	350.086732
T47	670475.1875	5906718	1562.851698	710.549451

*owners consent from this dwelling has been provided with the planning permit application



Appendix B.3
Detailed Plans of Watta Wella Renewable Energy Project - Turbine Coordinates

Legend
- Non-involved Dwelling
- Involved Dwelling
- Project Area
- Turbine
- Existing 220kV Transmission Line
- Roads
- Major Watercourse
- Disturbance Footprint

0 1,500 3,000
Metres

Scale 1:80,000 at A4
GDA2020 MGA Zone 54

umwelt

Figure 4: *Map showing setbacks to stakeholder and non-stakeholder dwellings. Source: Decision plans*

13. The site topography is relatively flat to moderately undulating, with several defined hillocks rising to between 20 m to 50 m above the underlying terrain.
14. The site has been highly modified due to agricultural practices; however, the scattered presence of native vegetation exists throughout paddocks, within roadside reserves and along creek lines and property boundaries.
15. An existing 220 kV transmission line passes through the southern portion of the site.
16. The site is located in the Farming Zone (FZ), Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ), Transport Zone 2 and 3 (TRZ2 and TRZ3). The site is predominantly within the FZ, with small portions located in PCRZ, TRZ2 and TRZ3 (refer Figure 5 below). No buildings or works are proposed within the TRZ2 and PCRZ. Proposed underground reticulation cables for the wind farm run through TRZ3 (Landsborough Road).

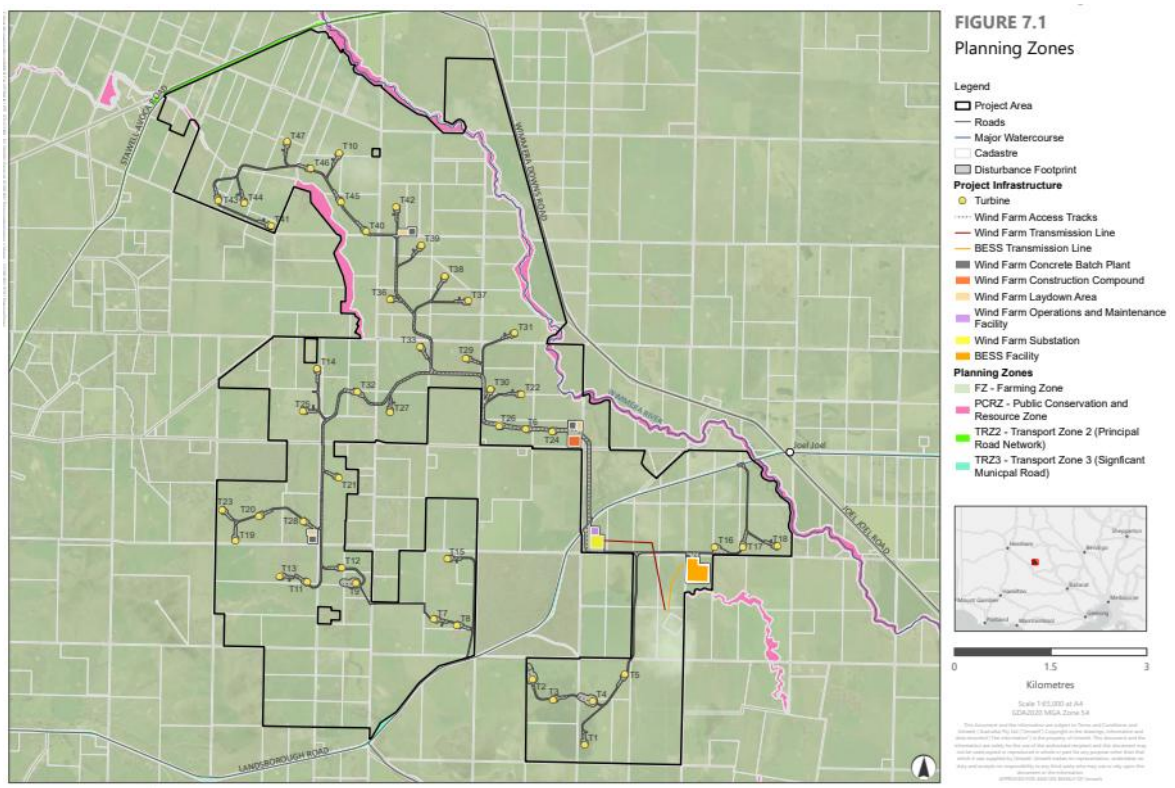


***Figure 5**: Zoning Map. Source: Planning Report.*

17. The site is partially affected by the Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 1) (ESO1), Floodway Overlay (Schedule 1) (FO1), Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (Schedule 1) (LSIO1), Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) and Specific Controls Overlay (Schedule) (PS Map Ref - SCO2). Refer Figure 6 below.

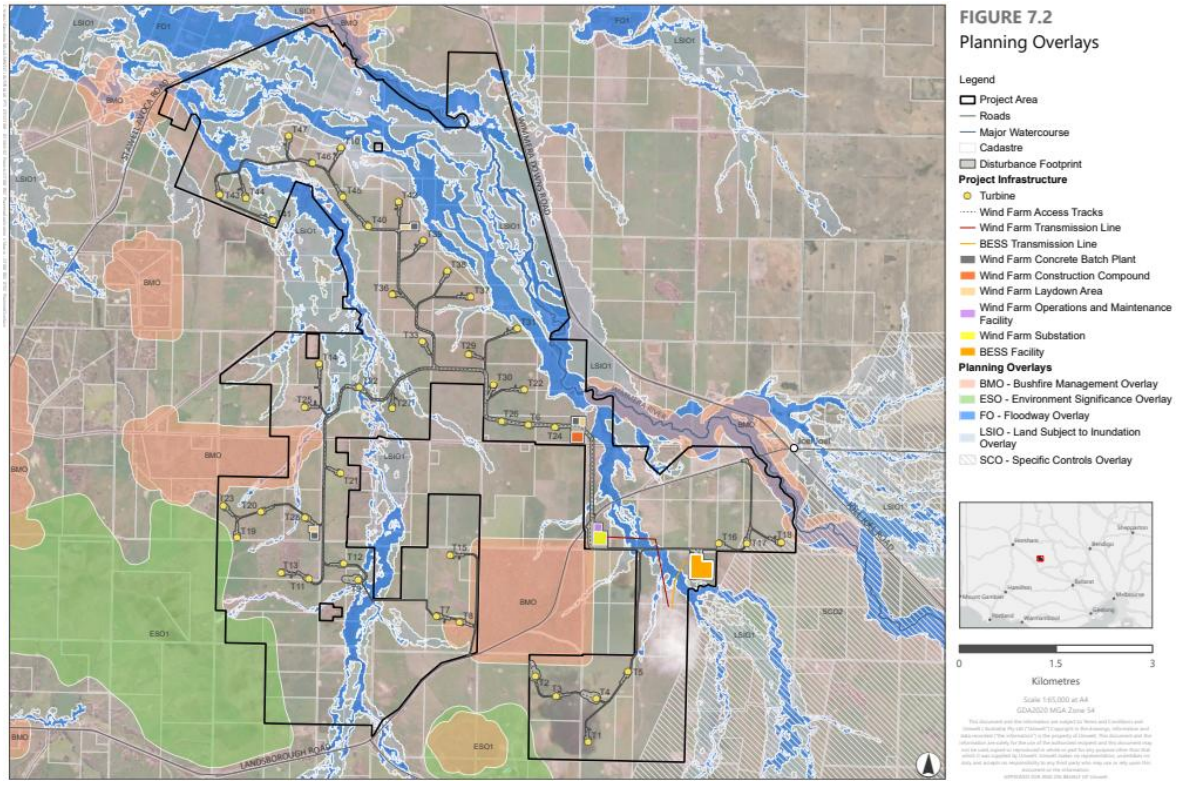


***Figure 6:** Overlay Map. Source: Planning Report.*

18. The site intersects with Wimmera River, Six Mile Creek and Seven Mile Creek. While no proposed infrastructure intersects the Wimmera River, some WTG reticulation cables and access tracks cross Six Mile Creek and Seven Mile Creek.
19. The site is located within a Bushfire Prone Area (BPA).
20. Refer Attachment 2 for the formal site description, including the comprising land parcels and road reserves. Figure 7 illustrates the site plan with land description.

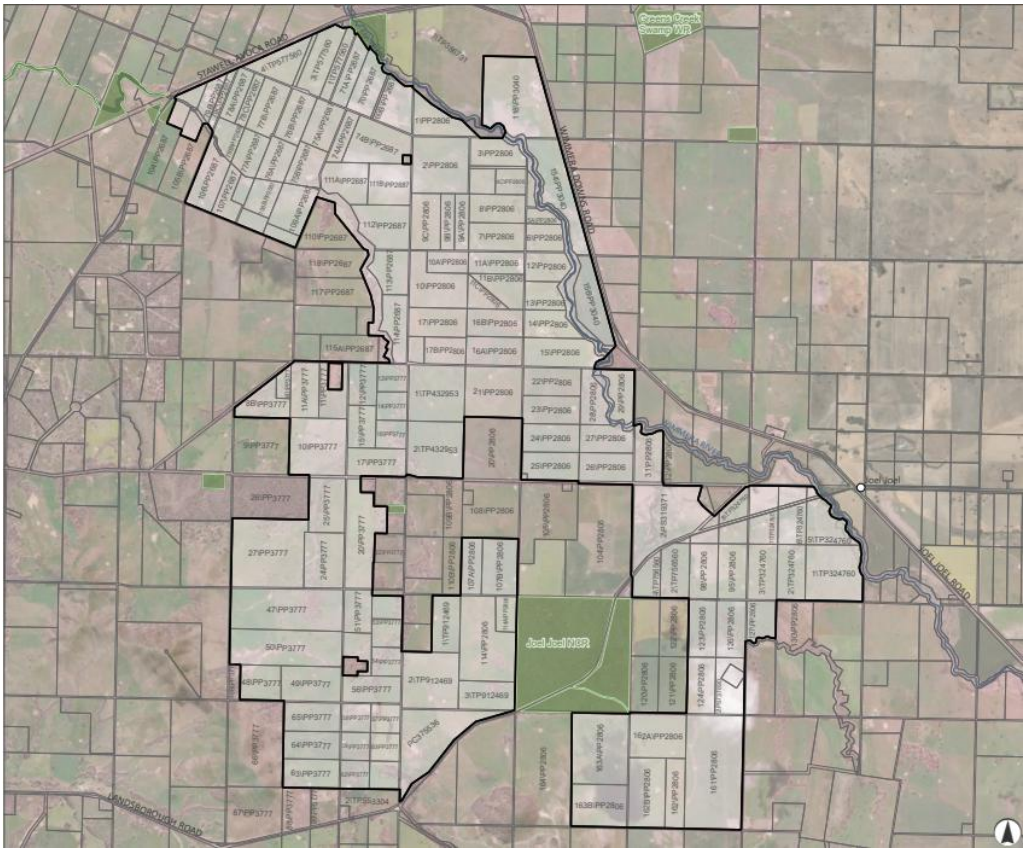


Figure 7: *Site plan with land description. Source: Planning Report.*

21. There are no covenants on any of the titles. However, it is noted that two of the land titles (Lot 2 on PS737890C, Vol 11247 Fol 212 and Crown Allotments 123, 124, 126, 127 Parish of Joel Joel, Vol 12277 Fol 186) are subject to a section 173 agreement (AT490601X). This agreement outlines developer's obligations for the approved Bulgana Green Power Hub, including written notification to council and decommissioning and rehabilitation to the satisfaction to council if a WTG or the project ceases operation. The proposal does not breach this agreement.
22. The land is affected by several electricity easements and a carriageway easement. The project has been designed to account for the constraints imposed by the easements.

Site Surrounds

23. The surrounding area is characterised by agricultural uses, primarily prime lamb production and cropping. The surrounding area is generally cleared of vegetation, with scattered presence of vegetation to the west of subject site, and predominantly flat topography.
24. There are a number of dwellings and farm buildings in the surrounding area, typical of a rural setting.
25. The land surrounding the site is predominately used for farming, but also contains several energy facilities, as described below:

- To the **north** of the site: The proposed Navarre Wind Farm (102 turbines) (9 km) is under assessment for the Environment Effects Statement (EES). No planning permit application has been lodged for this project.
- To the **south** of the site: Bulgana Green Power Hub (wind farm) (directly abuts the subject site to the south) and Ararat Wind Farm (12 km) are both operational.
- To the **south-east** of the site: Crowlands Wind Farm (10 km) is operational.
- To the **west** of the site: Stawell Solar Farm (9 km) and Ledcourt Solar Farm (27 km) are both operational. Joel Joel BESS has been approved.

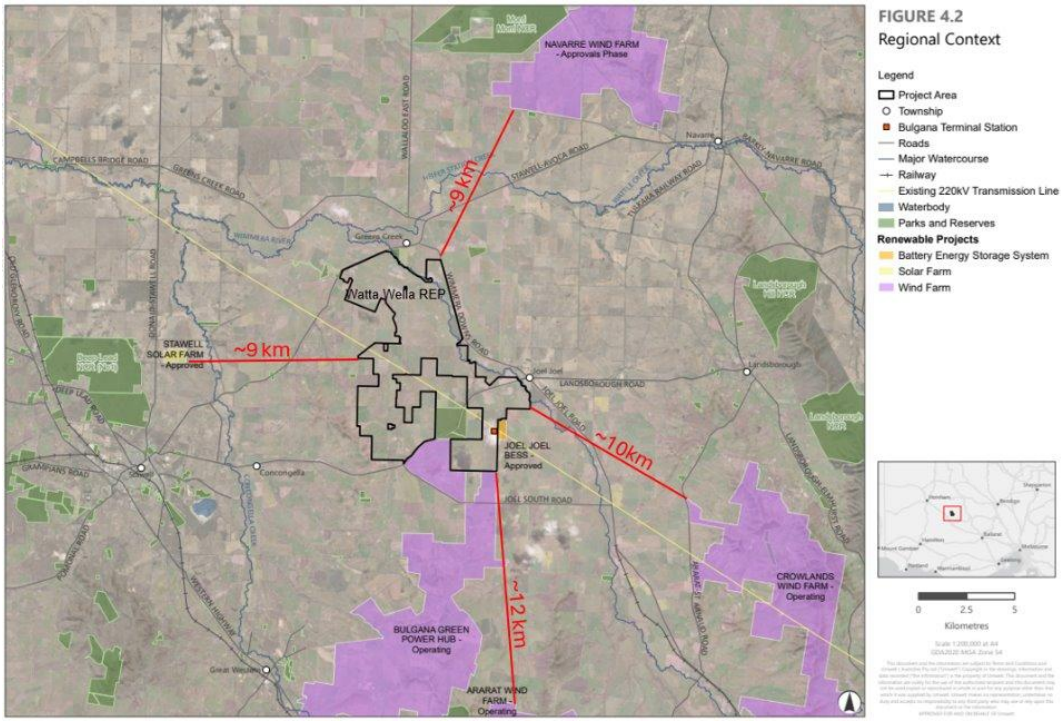


Figure 8: *Context Plan showing surrounding renewable energy projects. Source: Planning Report.*

26. A site inspection of the subject site and surrounds was undertaken on 5 April 2026. Images of the site and surrounds are reflected in Figures 9-15.

Figure 9*: View west towards location of proposed turbines T10, T42, T39, T38, T37. Photo from Wimmera Downs Road.*

Figure 10: *View south-west towards location of proposed turbines T43, T44, T47, T46 & T10. Photo from Stawell-Avoca Road.*

Figure 11: *View north-west towards location of proposed turbines T24, T6, T26, T30, T22. Photo from Landsborough Road.*

Figure 12*: View north-west towards location of proposed turbines T11, T9, T8, T7, T12, T13, T15 and T19. Photo from Landsborough Road.*

Figure 13: *View south looking towards location of proposed turbines T2, T3, T4 and T1. Photo from Vances Crossing Road.*

Figure 14: *View south-west towards location of proposed turbines T2 and T3 as well as south-east corner of Joel Joel Nature Conservation Reserve. Photo from Vances Crossing Road.*

Figure 15: *View north towards location of proposed turbines T26, T6, T 24, T30, & T22. Photo from Vineyard Road.*

Referrals

27. The application was referred to the following authorities under section 55 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act), as summarised below:

Organisation	Referral Type	Provision/ Clause	Response Date	Response	DTP Assessment
AusNet Transmission Group	Determining	66.02-4	18/9/25	No objection subject to conditions requiring: - WTG to be sited at a sufficient distance from the existing transmission line. - Any proposed development or use of the Ausnet easements must be approved by AusNet before works commence. - Vehicle access by AusNet must always remain available along the easements. - Detailed drawings of the proposed transmission lines submitted to AusNet for approval prior to construction.	These conditions have been included in the permit.
Secretary to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)	Recommending (Native Vegetation Removal)	66.02-2	3/12/25	No objection, subject to conditions requiring: – Plan to show native vegetation removal – Offset of removed vegetation – Native Vegetation Management Plan (NVMP) – Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP)	These conditions have been included in the permit, with slight modifications. DEECA provided further clarification on the definition of biodiversity values in relation to NVMP. NVMP has been updated accordingly.
WorkSafe Victoria	Determining	66.02-7	3/11/25	No objection, subject to conditions requiring: – Risk Management Plan	These conditions have been

Organisation	Referral Type	Provision/ Clause	Response Date	Response	DTP Assessment
				– Fire Management Plan – Emergency Management Plan all in line with CFA guidelines – Applicant to obtain written advice from CFA's dangerous goods unit prior to construction. – Safety documentation accessible to future developers/ operators for the BESS site during development.	included in the permit.
Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (CMA)	Recommending	44.03-6 (FO) 44.04-7 (LSIO)	8/10/25	No objection, subject to conditions requiring: – FFL of the BESS, substation and turbine bases constructed 300mm above the 1% AEP flood height. – Any works in, on or over designated waterways require a Works on Waterway Permit. – Hydraulic Report – CEMP – Landowner consent obtained where afflux cannot be mitigated and neighbouring landowners are impacted. – Electrical fittings and connections fixed above 300mm above 1% AEP flood height. – Waterproof conduits and cables in flood-prone area. – Pollutants, chemicals, oil stored above 300mm above 1% AEP flood height.	These conditions have been included in the permit, with slight modifications.

Organisation	Referral Type	Provision/ Clause	Response Date	Response	DTP Assessment
Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water	Determining	66.02-5	30/9/25	No objection, no condition.	N/A

Advice Sought

Head, Transport for Victoria

28. Agency advice from Head, Transport for Victoria (TfV) regarding the traffic and transport related matters was received on 11 June 2026.
29. Head, TfV supports the proposal subject to conditions and permit note, including:
    - Preparation and implementation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP)
    - Compliance with requirements of the Road Quality Auditor
    - Traffic management, road upgrade and maintenance works carried out to the satisfaction of Head, TfV
    - Any temporary infrastructure works required to mobilise oversize and over-mass vehicles must be designed and completed to the satisfaction of Head, TfV
    - Permit note requiring any approval form the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator need to be obtained for oversize and over-mass vehicle routes.
30. All conditions and permit note to be incorporated in the permit.

DEECA

31. Agency advice from DEECA regarding the birds and bats as well as Crown land related matters was received on 10 November 2025 and 3 December 2025.

<u>Birds and Bats</u>

32. DEECA has suggested permit conditions requiring a Bat and Avifauna Management Plan (BAM Plan) and associated monitoring programs. All suggested conditions will be included in any permit issued with minor modifications.
33. With regard to the Swift Parrot and Powerful Owl, DEECA suggested that the BAM Plan must specify a review process for the Swift Parrot and curtailment monitoring program to determine whether any adaptive changes or improvements to the monitoring regime are recommended over the life of the project.
34. While the project area and surrounds may form part of the home range of at least one breeding pair of Powerful Owl (recorded at Joel Joel Nature Conservation Reserve in 2023), DEECA agrees that the collision with turbines is low and further species-specific monitoring is not warranted.

<u>Crown land</u>

35. A permit note requiring authorisation from DEECA to use or occupy Crown land. This will be included in any recommendation.
36. DEECA also advised that, before works starts, the implications of *Land Act 1959* and *Crown land (reserves) Act 1978* be considered further, including cancellation or amendment of Crown land licences (particularly road licences, if the area is to be used/required for access in consultation with Council), and any required authorisation to use or occupy any areas of Crown land, including transmission line overhang.

Public Notice

37. In accordance with section 52 of the PE Act, public notice of the application was given between 26 February 2026 and 3 April 2026. This application was amended on 12 May 2026 under s57A of the PE Act. DTP gave notice of the amended application to Northern Grampians Shire Council only between 15 May 2026 to 1 June 2026. Notice was given in the following manner:

Section of PE Act:	Notice was given to:	Given by:
52(1)(a)	Owners and occupiers of adjoining land	Permit applicant
52(1)(b)	Northern Grampians Shire Council	DTP
52(1)(c)	N/A – The scheme does not prescribe any notice	N/A
52(1)(d)	**In accordance with section 52(2) of the PE Act, notice under 52(1)(d) was given in the following ways:**	**Given by:**
52(2)(a)(ii)	Notice was given in the Stawell Times for one issue.	Permit applicant
52(2)(a)(iii)	Owners and occupiers of all land within 5 km of the project boundary	Permit applicant
52(2)(b)	– Country Fire Authority (CFA) – Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation – Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) – Department of Defence – Airservices Australia – Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA) – Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) – Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) – Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) – Environment Protection Authority (EPA) – Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (CMA) – VicGrid – Department of Defence	DTP

38. **10** submissions (including **6** objections) have been received at the time of writing this report (as of 26/06/2026).

Objections

39. The following concerns were raised in the objections:

- Biodiversity impacts, including:
  - Threatened bird and bat species such as the Powerful Owl, Barking Owl, Hooded Robin, Brown Treecreeper, Golden Moth, Speckled Warbler, Swift Parrot, Eastern Bent-wing Bat and Diamond Firetail.
  - Waterways (i.e. river and creek lines) and nature conservation areas
  - Loss of 16 ha of native vegetation
  - Non-threatened fauna species (koala and platypus)

- Visual impacts
- Noise and vibration impacts
- Construction impacts, including dust, erosion and heavy vehicle traffic on local roads
- Social impacts, including no tangible solutions regarding accommodation for construction workforce
- Traffic impacts, including on Vineyard Road
- Impacts on property values
- Reduction of agricultural land available for farming
- Insufficient setbacks to conservation areas and existing dwellings
- Fire risk and emergency response
- Cumulative impacts of nearby proposed, approved or existing renewable energy projects and BESS
- Health and wellbeing impacts
- Flood and hydrology impacts
- Electromagnetic interference
- Biosecurity concerns
- Lack of independent expert evidence
- Lack of synchronous inertia means no grid stability
- Developer to provide upfront decommissioning or remediation bond
- No local employment opportunities
- Supporting documentation is not accurate

Northern Grampians Shire Council

40. The council submitted an objection, dated 24 March 2026, raising primary concerns regarding the proposal, including:

    - Cumulative impacts from proposed and approved large-scale renewable energy and transmission projects in the region, including overlapping construction timeframes, such as:
      – construction noise, traffic and dust impacts on nearby residents;
      – traffic impacts on safety and road access of local road users, including on the condition and serviceability of local road; and
      – impacts of the significant construction workforce on local services and infrastructure.
    - The submitted Social Impact Assessment references an Accommodation, Employment and Procurement Strategy (which has not yet been developed); however, Council considers this strategy to be insufficient to address the current lack of housing in the surrounding area. Council suggested that the project incorporate a worker accommodation camp during construction to be implemented via a condition of any approval.
    - Impact on local road network within the LGA, including Joel Joel Road, Joel South Road and Landscborough Road. The traffic concerns relate to road deterioration, structural impacts, safety risks to road users (including pedestrians), cumulative impacts, maintenance and monitoring obligations. Council requires bank guarantees or financial security to address the potential road and structure damage, road condition surveys (pre- and post-construction), ongoing inspection and rectification programs for affected roads and structures, and coordination with Council on the timing, scale, and route of construction traffic, to be included as conditions on any approval.
    - The supporting documents does not clarify specify the number, scale, or exact location, of the temporary concrete batching plants. The submitted Noise Impact Assessment does not assess the proposed batching plants nor consider the cumulative noise impacts associated with the operation of the project.

DTP response:

41. The suggested condition for a workers accommodation camp is not able to be included in the proposal. If the proponent chooses to, they could investigate this separate to the planning permit application; however,

based on previous experience with larger approved and/or operational wind farms, the impacts are expected to be manageable, with workers able to travel to the site.

42. Other concerns raised by council, include social and traffic impacts, cumulative impacts on noise, visual, shadow flicker, and turbine fire risks. These are assessed in the report below.
43. The council has also provided recommended conditions to be imposed on any permit to issue, including

    - Traffic and road management documents (i.e. Revised Traffic Impact Assessment, Pavement Management Plan, Structure Management Plan, Road Safety Plan, TMP)
    - Road network agreements and approval (i.e. Road Management Act Agreement, Road and Infrastructure Bank Guarantees (Construction Transport Route and Structures))
    - Post-construction requirements and coordination planning (i.e. Post Construction Assessment, Independent Engineering Review and Regional Project Coordination Plan)
    - Workforce and accommodating (i.e. Workforce Health Services Plan, Workforce Accommodation Strategy and Location and design of Workers Camp)
    - Environmental and site management plans (i.e. Detailed Biosecurity Management Plans, Screening Vegetation Plan, Plans and Drawings, and Concrete Batching Plants – Operational and Environmental Management)

44. Most of the suggested conditions relate to traffic and transport impacts and are not standard permit conditions for wind farm and BESS projects and are unnecessary to include. Most matters raised can be appropriately addressed via a TMP. Refer to the traffic section for further assessment. Conditions provided by Head, TfV will be incorporated on any permit to be issued.
45. An officer assessment relating to matters of site suitability, noise, shadow flicker, flooding, fire risk, landscape and visual impact, agriculture, traffic, ecology and biodiversity impacts is detailed in the assessment section of this report. A response to some of the other prominent matters raised in the objections is provided in the table below:

Objector Concern	DTP Officer Response
Property values	The consideration of property values and land devaluation is not included within the decision guidelines of the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme and cannot be considered within the assessment and determination of the project.
Lack of independent expert advice	The technical reports have been prepared by suitably, qualified professionals in their respective fields. These reports are considered sufficient to inform a planning assessment.
Lack of synchronous inertia means no grid stability	The department is required to consider the application lodged. The application does not include a synchronous condenser.
Developer to provide upfront decommissioning or remediation bond	There is no requirement for a decommissioning or remediation bond under the Planning Scheme or the PE Act. A Decommissioning Plan is required and will be addressed via a permit condition. Enforcement will be the responsibility of the Northern Grampians Shire Council.

46. Overall, DTP submits that the matters raised in the objections which are relevant to the planning assessment are suitably addressed by the application, are assessed below, and are subject to the recommended permit conditions.

Submissions

47. Four submissions were received from government agencies and authorities (who were not referral authorities under section 55 of the PE Act), as summarised below:

Submitter	Date received	Summary of submission	DTP Officer Response
CFA	31/3/26 & 10/06/26	No objection, subject to conditions requiring: – Risk Management Plan (RMP) – Emergency Plan (EP) and Fire Management Plan (FMP) CFA accepts the siting of turbine T8 within the BMO, subject to additional risk controls included in the RMP (and FMP as appropriate) to the satisfaction of CFA.	These conditions have been included on the permit. Refer fire section of the report.
CASA	17/3/26	No objection, and recommended that: – Obstacle lighting installed on the turbines due to the height of these structures. – A radar activated steady red low intensity (200 cd) aviation hazard lighting system, or consultation with obstacle lighting suppliers about incorporating a cowling system (similar to a "lampshade") into the lighting system to minimise downward light spill without impacting aviation safety. – Any wind monitoring masts associated with the development should be marked as per *Section 8.110 of CASA's Manual of Standards Part 139* with the inclusion of aviation hazard markers. – The coordinates and estimated survey heights of each turbine and monitoring mast must be reported to the Airservices Australia (ASA) Vertical Obstacle Database (VOD) email address after the determination of the application. One month prior to works commencing, ASA should be contacted via the VOD email address so that a NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) can be published by ASA. On the completion of works, the VOD should be advised of the surveyed height and location of each wind turbine and wind monitoring mast for accurate database recording. – Feeback should be sought from ASA and the Department of Defence.	The recommendations (excluding aviation safety lighting for the WTG) have been incorporated into the conditions of any permit issued. Section 52 notice was given to ASA and the Department of Defence. No response received from ASA to date. Department of Deference's submission is provided below.

Submitter	Date received	Summary of submission	DTP Officer Response
EPA	13/3/26	No objection but recommended a permit note. – The proposed permit note identifies the proponent's responsibilities under the general environmental duty (GED) of the *Environment Protection Act 2017*.	Note to this effect has been included in the permit.
Department of Defence	30/4/26	No objection, and recommended that: – Notification to ASA as the project meets tall structure reporting criteria. – Proponent to complete and submit the vertical obstacle notification form to ASA (VOD team). – Recording tall structures supports aeronautical charting, which improves pilot navigation and flight safety. – ASA maintains a central database of all structures (location and height). Reporting applies to structures: - Over 30 m AGL with 30 km of an aerodrome. - Over 45 m AGL elsewhere for Royal Australian Air Force.	The recommendations have been incorporated into the conditions of any permit issued.

Assessment

Key Considerations

48. The Northern Grampians Planning Scheme (the scheme) contains policies and controls that guide the assessment of wind energy facilities and utility installations. These are found in the state and local planning policies, the relevant zone and overlays, and other relevant provisions. The assessment below addresses the relevant sections of the planning scheme while having regard to the matters which must be considered in accordance with Section 60 of the PE Act.
49. The following are deemed the key considerations in assessing the acceptability of the proposal:

- Strategic policy context and planning controls
- Whether the proposal responds to the vision and strategic directions of the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and the Planning Policy Framework (PPF)
- Suitability of the land use in the TRZ2, FZ, and impacts on agricultural land
- Suitability of the proposal against the relevant overlays and particular provisions
- Biodiversity and native vegetation impacts
- Fire risk and emergency management
- Vehicle access, road and traffic considerations
- Amenity impacts in terms of noise, light spill, visual impact, shadow flicker, electromagnetic interference and construction impacts
- Aviation impacts
- Flooding and hydrology impacts
- Social and economic impacts
- Acceptability of the proposed business identification sign

Permit Triggers

50. A planning permit for the project is triggered by the following clauses of the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme (the scheme):

Clause	Permit Trigger
35.07-1 (FZ)	Use of land for wind energy facility and utility installation (BESS and ancillary infrastructure)
35.07-4 (FZ)	Construct a building or construct or carry out works for a use in Section 2 of Clause 35.07-1; earthworks which change the rate of flow or discharge point of water across a property boundary.
36.04-1 (TRZ3)	Use of land for a utility installation (underground reticulation cabling for the wind farm)
36.04-2 (TRZ3)	Construct a building or construct or carry out works for a use in Section 2 of Clause 36.04-1
44.03-2 (FO1)	Construct a building or to construct or carry out works
44.04-2 (LSIO1)	Construct a building or to construct or carry out works
52.05-14	Display a business identification sign not exceeding 3sqm
52.17-1	Remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation.
52.32-2	Use of land for a wind energy facility
53.22	N/A – As outlined in the Planning Report (pg. 83), the proposal qualifies under this process since it meets the conditions listed for the use of a renewable energy facility and utility installation.

51. There are no works proposed in the PCRZ, TRZ2, ESO1, SCO2 and BMO that trigger a permit.

Strategic Direction and Policy Context

52. Overall, the Purpose and Vision for Victoria (Clause 01), Municipal Planning Strategy (Clause 02) and the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) of the scheme encourage the facilitation of renewable energy and battery storage projects, on balance with the protection of the environment and agricultural land. In particular, Clause 01.01 (Purposes of this Planning Scheme) identifies that a key purpose of the scheme is "to support responses to climate change".
53. The project is supported by *Plan for Victoria (2025)*, which seeks to ensure that 'Regional Victorian communities will attract and benefit from investment in renewable energy – wind, solar and battery storage – projects'.
54. Additionally, Victoria's *Renewable Energy Action Plan*, 2018 and Victoria's *Climate Change Strategy*, 2021 both outline the importance of renewable energy generation and battery storage projects in Victoria's renewable energy transition.

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

55. An assessment against the relevant objectives and strategies of the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) of the scheme is provided in the table below:

Clause	Description	Assessment
02.01	Context	The MPS acknowledges Northern Grampians Shire is located in Wimmera Southern Mallee Region, characterised by significant natural landscapes, water resources, and established settlements in Stawell and St Arnaud. Council's vision is to enhance lifestyles and community, boost economic growth and to provide sustainable infrastructure. The application provides for a $1 billion project within the municipality, creating up to 380 jobs during construction and up to 20 jobs during operation, while supporting diversification of the local economy. The project has generally been sited to minimise impacts on native vegetation (where possible) and biodiversity values of the region, respond to fire and flooding risks and ensure the continued use of the site for agricultural purposes. The proposal is considered to respond appropriately to this policy context by providing a wind energy facility and BESS in an appropriate location with minimal impacts on the valued elements and amenity of the area. Conditions of the recommendation will require protection of native vegetation that is to be retained and includes mitigation/monitoring for avifauna impacts. The use is discretionary in the FZ and TRZ3; however, it is considered appropriate, as a wind farm could not reasonably be located within an urban zone.
02.02	Vision	
02.03	Strategic Directions	
02.04	Strategic Framework Plans	

Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

56. An assessment of the project against the relevant objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) is provided in the table below:

Clause	Description	Assessment
Clause 12	**Environment and Landscape Values**	
12.01-1S	Protection of biodiversity	

Clause	Description	Assessment
12.01-1R	Protection of biodiversity – Wimmera Southern Mallee	Clause 12 focuses on the protection of ecological systems, native vegetation, biodiversity, and identified environments or landscapes. Where possible, the project has avoided impacts to ecological values, including: – Narrowing the disturbance footprint in areas of high quality/value habitat; – Relocating turbines and/or associated hardstands to avoid native vegetation and threatened fauna; – Relocating access tracks to avoid scattered trees and moving into paddocks to avoid widening existing roads, which includes valuable roadside vegetation; and – Preparing a draft Bat and Avifauna Management Plan (BAM Plan) to manage risk of bird and bat collisions during operation. Refer to the clause 52.17 and biodiversity sections of the report below for a more detailed discussion of these matters. Conditions of the recommendation will require protection of native vegetation that is to be retained and includes mitigation/monitoring for avifauna impacts.
12.01-2S	Native vegetation management	
12.03-1S	Rivers and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs	
12.05-1S	Environmentally sensitive areas	
12.05-2S	Landscapes	The project will have moderate visual impacts on the landscape and will be located in proximity to several operational wind farms. However, these impacts are considered acceptable due to the existing topography and presence of vegetation belts. Refer to the landscape and visual assessment for further details.
Clause 13	**Environmental Risks and Amenity**	
13.02-1S	Bushfire	The facility has been developed in accordance with the CFA's *Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities* (the CFA Guidelines) to appropriately respond to bushfire risk. Refer to the fire section of the report for assessment.
13.03-1S	Floodplain management	Most of the project infrastructure is situated outside the FO1 and LSIO1. The application was referred to the Wimmera CMA who did not object to the proposal subject to conditions that are included in the permit. Subject to these conditions, it is considered that the risk posed by the project in relation to flood hazards is appropriately managed.
13.03-1L	Floodplain management – Northern Grampians	
13.05-1S	Noise management	The project is predicted to achieve compliance with the relevant noise limits. Conditions of the recommendation will require the preparation of a final predictive noise assessment, measuring the impact of the final chosen

Clause	Description	Assessment
		turbines and BESS units. Refer to the noise section of the report below for additional information.
13.07-1S	Land use compatibility	As discussed further below in this assessment, the proposed use is considered acceptable with appropriate mitigation measures in place, on balance with the with the benefits of the provision of a renewable energy generation and storage facility.
Clause 14	**Natural resource management**	
14.01-1S	Protection of agricultural land	These provisions seek to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland and facilitating diversified agricultural uses. The facility will provide supplementary income and increase the resilience of the land's agricultural activities. The development will not unreasonably impact agricultural activities on surrounding land. The physical footprint of the project is approx. 79.3 ha within a 4850 ha site (approx. 1.64%). This represents a small footprint, and the remainder of the land can continue to be used for farming. The project is located within the special water supply catchment area. A referral response was received from Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water who did not object to the project with no conditions. The project is unlikely to have major impacts on flood flow through the region and any impacts of flood flow on the infrastructure are unlikely to be significant. Refer to the hydrology section of the report for assessment.
14.02-1S	Catchment planning and management	
14.02-2S	Water quality	
Clause 15	**Built Environment and Heritage**	
15.03-2S	Aboriginal cultural heritage	The site is located within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity. CHMP #17482 has been approved on 17 November 2025 by Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.
Clause 17	**Economic Development**	
17.01-1S	Diversified economy	The proposed wind energy facility and BESS meet the objectives of clause 17 by creating jobs during the construction and operation of the facility, and by supporting the rural economy to grow and diversify without unreasonably affecting the existing agricultural use.
17.01-1R	Diversified economy – Wimmera Southern Mallee	
Clause 18	**Transport**	

Clause	Description	Assessment
18.02-4S	Roads	The construction traffic impacts can be suitably managed through the preparation of a TMP and operational impacts on the road network will be negligible. A condition requires a TMP to be prepared, including intersection upgrades, haulage routes and road condition surveys. Impacts are temporary and manageable. Local road upgrades will be undertaken where required to safely accommodate oversize loads. The development will not significantly change long-term traffic volumes.
18.02-7S	Airports and airfields	No impacts to airfields, flight paths or aviation safety. CASA and Department of Defence have no objection to the proposal, subject to recommendations. Refer aviation section further below of the report.
Clause 19	**Infrastructure**	
19.01-1S	Energy supply	The proposal is consistent with clause 19 which supports the renewable energy led transition to a low-carbon economy with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed facility is estimated to generate approx. 360 MW of wind energy and store 400 MW of electricity, reducing emissions by 800,000 tonnes of CO_2 per annum. The proposed BESS will also assist in the delivery of power during peak times to the network to meet community demand for energy needs. Most of the project is located within the declared Western renewable energy zone (REZ). The REZ were introduced into legislation under the Ministerial Order made under section 63 of the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, gazetted on 29 May 2026.
19.01-2S	Renewable energy	
19.01-2R	Renewable energy – Wimmera Southern Mallee	

57. Overall, the proposal is consistent with the relevant planning policies within the MPS and PPF.

Zones

Farming Zone (FZ)

58. The project is predominantly located within the FZ.
59. The FZ seeks to (as relevant) provide for the use of land for agriculture, encourage the retention of productive agricultural land, ensure that non-agricultural uses do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture, encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities, and encourage the use and development of land based on comprehensive sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.
60. Having regard to the relevant decision guidelines at clause 35.07-6, the proposed use and development is an appropriate outcome in the FZ as follows:

- Whilst the proposal is not itself an agricultural land use, the proposed use and development is considered to be consistent with the purpose of the FZ. The proposal does not adversely affect the use of the land for ongoing dryland mix farming (cropping, cattle and sheep grazing) and it does not prevent or impede on the ability for surrounding properties in the FZ to continue to use their land for agricultural purposes.
- The wind farm, BESS facility and ancillary infrastructure are considered appropriate for the site. The built form will be sufficiently setback from adjoining properties, with consent received from one dwelling setback under 1 km (setback 980 m). Visual impacts will be reduced by existing vegetation belts along properties boundaries and road reserves. Furthermore, additional on-site and off-site screen planting will be incorporated, via permit conditions, in areas where existing vegetation is limited.
- The site is located near a 220kV transmission line that transects the project area from north-west to south-east, and connects to the Bulgana Terminal Station, enabling a connection to the existing electricity network.
- The facility will provide supplementary income to stabilise and increase the resilience of agricultural activities.
- The facility supports the diversification of the local economy and the sustainability of the rural community.
- The facility is located adjacent to the Stawell-Avoca Road and Landsborough Road, allowing the consolidating of infrastructure provision. The traffic impacts of the construction and use of the facility are discussed further in the relevant section of this report and are acceptable subject to standard conditions.
- The proposal has considered potential fire hazards and incorporates fire safety design recommendations in accordance with CFA requirements.

61. There will be a minor reduction in the extent of land under agricultural production from the footprint of the turbines, access tracks and ancillary infrastructure. The physical footprint of the project is approx. 79.3 ha within a subject site of 4,850 ha (approx. 1.64%) during operational stage. This is considered a negligible impact on the agricultural function and potential of the land and its capacity to support viable agriculture and associated communities. Conditions of the recommendation will require the facility to be decommissioned at the end of its operational life.

Transport Zone 3 (TRZ3) (Significant municipal road)

62. The proposed underground reticulation cabling associated with the wind farm will cross Landsborough Road, which triggers a permit in the TRZ3 for the use and development of a utility installation. The cabling is proposed to be bored under the road to avoid at surface impacts.
63. The TRZ seeks to provide for the use and development of land that complements, or is consistent with, the transport system and to ensure the efficient and safe use of transport infrastructure.
64. The proposed underground cabling (utility installation) is compatible with the purpose of the TRZ.
65. No sensitive or incompatible uses are introduced to TRZ3 land, and it is considered that recommended conditions for a TMP and CEMP will manage the impacts and ensure works will not unreasonably compromise the operation of the transport system.

Overlays

Floodway Overlay – Schedule 1 (FO1) & Land Subject to Inundation Overlay – Schedule 1 (LSIO1)

66. Portions of the project area are located within the LSIO and FOI, which generally correspond to the Wimmera River, Six Mile Creek and Seven Mile Creek which extend from the north-west to south-west of the site.
67. Turbine T32 is located both within the FO1 & LSIO, while four other turbines (T9, T10, T31, and T41) are located only within the LSIO1.

68. Access tracks, transmission lines connecting the BESS facility and the wind farm substation to Bulgana Terminal Station are located within the FO1 and LSIO1.
69. The application requirement for a Hydrology and Flood Report has been met and assessed against the relevant decision guidelines of FO and LSIO, as outlined in the hydrology section of this report; the project is unlikely to have major impacts on flood flow through the region and any impacts of flood flow on the infrastructure are unlikely to be significant, subject to mitigations measures detailed below.

Environment Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1)

70. The subject site is partially within the ESO1 in the south-western portion of the site (refer Figure 6).
71. ESO1 relates to Significant Ridge Environs. The statement of environmental significance identifies that there are significant ridges on the highest land in the municipality which display erosion characteristics and which are susceptible to further environmental degradation.
72. While ESO1 affects part of the site, no works are proposed within the area covered by this overlay, and as such, no permit is required.

Particular and General Provisions

Clause 52.05 (Signs)

73. Signage in the Farming Zone is in Category 4 – Sensitive areas.
74. Pursuant to Clause 52.05-14, a permit is required to display business identification signage, noting the total display area must not exceed 3 sqm to each premises.
75. The proposal includes four non-illuminated business identification signs located at each of the four main site entrances along Landsborough Road. The proposed dimension of each sign will be 1.8 m x 1.6 m (total display area of 11.52 sqm). The proposal does not include 3sqm of signage on any given parcel of land. Given the scale of the development and the number of land parcels within the project area, the proposed extent of business identification signs is considered acceptable.
76. The signage is acceptable as it will provide appropriate site identification without impacting significantly on the amenity of the surrounds or road safety given that it does not include illumination.
77. As such, the signs are considered to meet the objectives and decision guidelines of Clause 52.05. The details of the proposed signage can be confirmed via a permit condition.

Clause 52.06 (Car Parking)

78. Clause 52.06 seeks to ensure that an appropriate number of car parking spaces is provided for new uses.
79. Pursuant to Clause 52.06-6, car parking must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
80. A car parking area comprising up to 15 car parking spaces is proposed within each of the operation and maintenance areas for the wind farm and BESS (a total of up to 30 car parking spaces), to accommodate up to 20 staff as well as any visitors during operation of the facility. This is considered acceptable given the low car parking demand during the operational phase.

Clause 52.17 (Native Vegetation)

81. The application seeks the removal of up to 15.28 ha of native vegetation, including 13.772 ha of native vegetation patches, 51 large tress and eight small, scattered trees.
82. Pursuant to clause 52.17-1 of the scheme, a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation.
83. The purpose of clause 52.17 is to ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
84. The location of the proposed native vegetation to be removed can be found in Figure 2 of the submitted Ecological Assessment (Environment Report) (ER) prepared by Ecology and Heritage Partners.

85. The application falls under the detailed assessment pathway of the DEECA Guidelines, as the site is located within Location 3 and involves the removal of 15.28 ha of native vegetation. A referral to the Secretary to DEECA was required.
86. The ER contains the avoid and minimise statement for the project. The design and development of the facility have avoided and minimised impacts to native vegetation by:

    - Relocating several turbines and/or associated hardstands to minimise or avoid ecological impacts on scattered trees, an area of Heathy Woodland ECV, confirmed Golden Sun Moth habitat and modelled habitat for Tawny and Stuart Spider-orchids and Elfin Leek-orchid.
    - Relocating access routes and project infrastructure away from nearby reserves, including Joel Joel Nature Conservation Reserve, Watta Wella I18 Bushland Reserve, Green Creek Streamside Reserve, Vinelea Bushland Reserve and Seven Mile Creek Streamside Reserve;
    - Limiting native vegetation impacts to only eight out of 45 turbines hardstands, with the remaining turbines located within cleared paddocks; and
    - Realigning access tracks off public roads (to avoid road widening requirements) to private property to avoid impacts to native vegetation within the road reserve of Vineyard Road and Vances Crossing Road.

87. DEECA's referral response outlined that they do not object to the application, subject to conditions requiring:

    - Plan to show native vegetation removal
    - Offset of removed vegetation
    - Native Vegetation Management Plan
    - CEMP

88. The removal requires an offset of 4.5200 General Habitat Units (GHUs) with a minimum Strategic Biodiversity Score of 0.3581, located within Wimmera CMA or Northern Grampians Shire municipal areal, and protection of at least 51 large trees.
89. With these conditions included on the permit, the application is considered to meet the decision guidelines of clause 52.17 and the DEECA Guidelines. Refer to additional discussion of biodiversity matters further on in this assessment.
90. DTP notes that the ER outlines that native vegetation is proposed to be removed along the haulage route to facilitate the transportation of turbine components from Port of Geelong or Port of Portland to the site. However, as the native vegetation is located across multiple local government areas (Pyrenees, Ballarat and Ararat), its removal is not being considered by this application. Separate planning approvals for native vegetation removal will need to be sought once the haulage route is confirmed.

Clause 52.32 (Wind energy facility)

91. The purpose of clause 52.32 is to facilitate the establishment and expansion of wind energy facilities, in appropriate locations, with minimal impact on the amenity of the area.
92. The application meets the application requirements of clauses 52.32-3 and 52.32-4.
93. Refer to the relevant thematic sections of this report for an assessment of the project against the decision guidelines of clause 52.32-5.

Clause 53.22 (Significant Economic Development)

94. Clause 53.22 seeks:

    - To prioritise and facilitate the planning, assessment and delivery of projects that will make a significant contribution to Victoria's economy and provide substantial public benefit, including jobs for Victorians.
    - To provide for the efficient and effective use of land and facilitate use and development with high quality urban design, architecture and landscape architecture.

95. This application is a Category 1 application under clause 53.22-1. As such it is exempt from the decision requirements of sections 64(1), (2) and (3), and the review rights of sections 82(1) of the PE Act.

Other Matters

Agricultural Impact

96. Clauses 14.01-1S (Protection of agricultural land) and 14.01-2R (Agricultural productivity – Wimmera Southern Mallee) seek to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland.
97. The application includes an Agricultural Impact Assessment prepared by RMCG.
98. The subject site is currently used for cropping, dryland mixed farming, sheep for wool and meat, as well as some cattle grazing.
99. The project has been designed to enable the continued use of agricultural practices around the development footprint of the turbines and supporting structures. The proposed development footprint of the facility is approx. 79.3 ha (12 ha for the BESS, 0.3 ha for overhead transmission lines, and 67 ha for the wind farm) and covers approx. 1.64% of the total site area of approx. 4850 ha.
100. This results in an estimated annual production loss of $69,230, which is considered negligible at both at the regional and state level.
101. Temporary construction impacts can be managed through appropriate mitigation measures for biosecurity and erosion control. This can be addressed via a permit condition for a CEMP.
102. The proposal's impact on agricultural land is considered acceptable. Conditions have been included in the recommendation requiring a CEMP and the rehabilitation of the site back to its prior condition after the facility ceases operation, to ensure that the land remains suitable for agricultural use into the future.

Fire Risk

103. The subject site is located within a BPA and partially within the BMO.
104. Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire Planning) and clause 52.32 (Wind energy facilities) require the consideration of bushfire risk, to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities and prioritise the protection of human life.
105. The application is supported by a Risk Management Plan (including Fire Safety Study) which has been prepared in accordance with the CFA's Design Guidelines and Model Requirements: Renewable Energy Facilities (the CFA Guidelines).
106. The risk assessment found that the most likely bushfire scenario involves fire approaching the site from the north-west or south-west, although bushfires may also originate from other directions.
107. The project has incorporated bushfire mitigation measures in its design, including:

    - Static water supply tanks
    - Fire breaks around the base of the wind turbines, BESS, substations and operations and maintenance areas
    - Smoke detection and fire suppression systems within the wind turbine nacelles
    - Fire safety systems within the BESS enclosures
    - Access tracks and overtaking bays
    - Ongoing maintenance programs for the life of the facility (e.g. vegetation management)

108. The report identifies that the fire risk within the facility, including the wind turbine nacelles, substations and the BESS, is low risk and that the implementation of the recommended mitigation treatments will ensure a high level of fire safety.
109. Notice of the application was given to the CFA who did not object to the application, subject to conditions that will be included in the recommendation requiring:

    - Dedicated water supply (576 kL for the BESS and 45,000 L for the wind energy facility)
    - Risk Management Plan (RMP), Emergency Plan (EP) and Fire Management Plan (FMP)

110. Additionally, turbine (T8) is located entirely within the BMO. CFA has provided written confirmation, dated 10/06/2026, that this turbine location is acceptable subject to additional risk controls (listed below) to be included in the RMP (as FMP as appropriate), to the satisfaction of CFA. The risks controls are:

    - A fire break around WTG 8 of at least 20 m radius. This 20 m radius must be maintained as vegetation-free, mineral earth fire break all year around (except the hard stand).
    - An additional minimum 45,000 L effective capacity static fire water supply near WTG 8, to be located to the satisfaction of CFA.
    - The provision of fire detection and suppression systems within the turbine nacelles across the facility, including WTG 8.
    - Construction and ongoing management of wind farm access track that runs north to south adjacent to the western extent of the Joel Joel Nature Conservation Reserve.

111. DTP submits that, with the CFA's conditions, the application has appropriately responded to the bushfire risk. It is also noted that WorkSafe Victoria did not object to the grant of the permit, subject to conditions in line with CFA's conditions.

Noise

Wind Turbine Noise

112. The application includes an Environmental Noise Assessment (ENA) prepared by Mashall Day Acoustics and an Auditor Verification of Pre-Construction Noise Assessment (AVPNA) prepared by Tonkin & Taylor Pty Ltd.
113. In accordance with the requirements for a pre-construction (predictive) noise assessment at clause 52.32-4, the ENA provides an assessment of the proposed turbines in accordance with the New Zealand Standard 6808:2010 Acoustics – Wind farm noise (NZS 6808:2010).
114. The noise modelling was based on a candidate turbine model Nordex N175 6.x with a rotor diameter of 175m and hub height of 160m. The noise modelling assumes that the wind turbines will operate in an unconstrained mode of generation (i.e. without noise reduced operating modes) and with blade serrations.
115. The AVPNA concludes that the ENA has been conducted in accordance with the New Zealand Standard NZS6808:2010.
116. The acoustic assessment identified 65 receivers located within 5 km of the proposed turbines as shown below in Figure 16. This includes two stakeholder receivers located within the project boundary and seven stakeholder receivers outside the project boundary where a noise agreement is proposed.

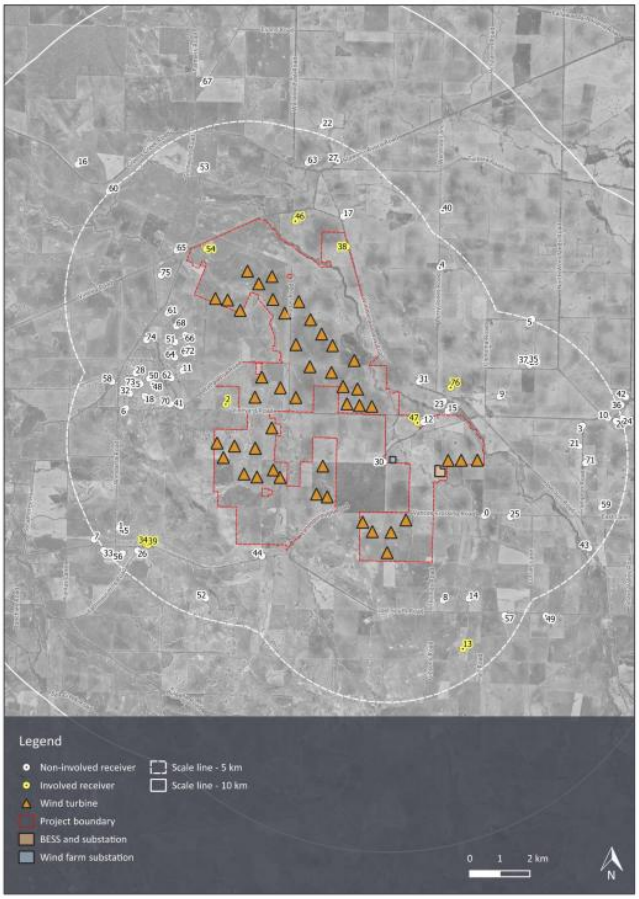


Figure 16: *Noise receivers within 5 km of Watta Wella Renewable Energy Project. Source: ENA*

117. Noise agreements are in place or proposed between the proponent and the landowners of receivers 2, 13, 34, 39, 46, 47 and 76.
118. The ENA has identified the noise limits applicable to stakeholder and non-stakeholder receivers as shown below:

Receiver	Noise limit
Non-stakeholder	40 dB or background LA_{90} + 5 dB, whichever is the greater
Stakeholder located outside project boundary with noise agreement	45 dB or background LA_{90} + 5 dB, whichever is the greater
Stakeholder within the project boundary	N/A - Reference level of 45 dB or background LA_{90} + 5 dB, whichever is the greater

119. The ENA concludes that the proposal will comply with the New Zealand Standard 6808 and the noise limits determined in accordance with the Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (EP Regulations). The highest predicted noise level at non-stakeholder receivers is 37.2 dB LA90 at receiver 30. The highest predicted noise level at stakeholder receivers (with a noise agreement) is 40.0 dB LA90 at receiver 2. For stakeholder receivers within the project boundary, the highest predicted noise level is 35.5 dB LA90 at receiver 54.
120. This achieves the base (minimum) noise limits determined in accordance with NZS 6808:2010. Specifically, the report finds that the predicted noise levels:

- Comply with the base noise limit of 40 dB L_{A90} by at least 2.8 dB at all non-stakeholder receivers.
- Comply with the base noise limit of 45 dB L_{A90} by at least 5.0 dB at all stakeholder receivers outside the project boundary.
- Comply with the base noise limit of 45 dB L_{A90} by at least 9.5 dB at all stakeholder receivers within the project boundary.

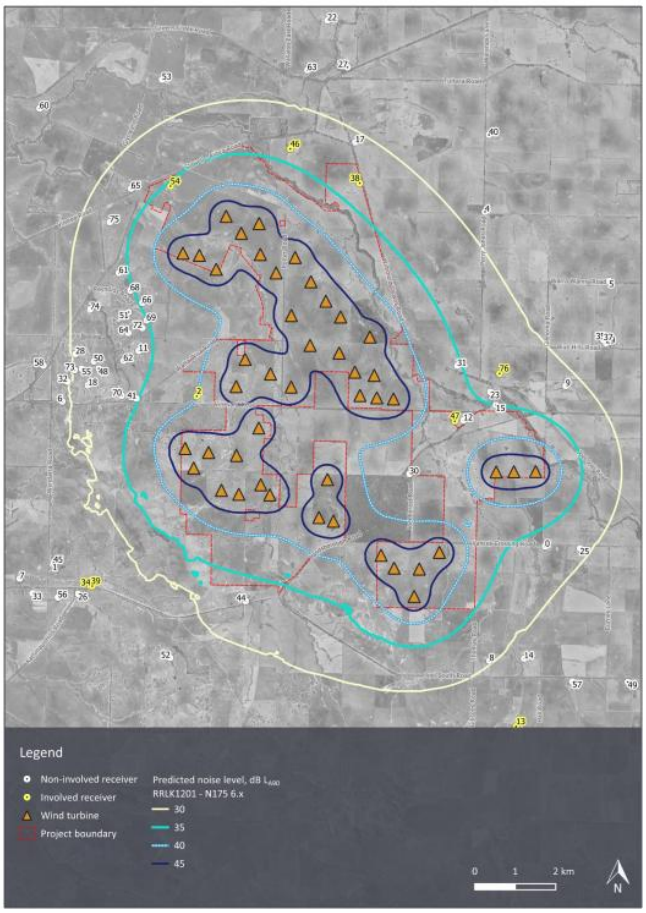


Figure 17: *Excerpt of the ENA showing the noise contours. Source: ENA*

121. The ENA also considered cumulative wind farm noise levels by considering the Bulgana Green Power Hub (BGPH) (operational). The noise contribution of the BGPH was found to be sufficiently low and inconsequential to the noise assessment for the proposed Watta Wella Renewable Energy Project.
122. Only two receivers (receivers 8 and 44) are located within 3 km of wind turbines of both projects. The highest cumulative predicted noise level is 37.3 dB L_{A90} at receiver 44, which is below the applicable base limit of 40 dB L_{A90}.

Consideration of noise other than wind turbines

123. Clause 13.05-1S (Noise management) requires the consideration of noise effects on sensitive land uses, including the consideration of the noise requirements of the EP Regulations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (EP Act) (as considered in the above paragraphs).
124. Additionally, clauses 13.05-1S and 52.35-5 require consideration of matters in relation to the noise effects of the proposal.
125. The starting point for the assessment of the noise effects is that the proposal is expected to comply with the 2010 NZ Standard as confirmed above.
126. Division 5 of Part 5.3 of the EP Regulations provides a bespoke framework for wind turbine noise.

127. The EP Regulations use the 2010 NZ Standard as the default standard for operational noise limits which supports its use as a benchmark in a planning assessment. It is also relevant that the EP Act will prohibit unreasonable noise (s166), even where no condition is proposed in relation to management of operational noise in a planning permit. Noise emitted from turbines other than in compliance with the EP Regulations will be unreasonable noise. In addition, noise in compliance with the EP Regulations may still be unreasonable noise in contravention of s166 of the EP Act based on factors set out in paragraph (a) of the definition of 'unreasonable noise' in s3 of the EP Act.
128. Since July 2021, the Victorian EPA is the primary regulator of operational wind farm noise. The standard practice since July 2021, is not to include noise regulation conditions on permits where the EPA regulatory framework is sufficient to manage noise impacts of wind farm proposals.
129. Therefore, the remaining issue is whether the proposal's demonstrated capacity to comply with the 2010 NZ Standard, and the requirement for the proposal to comply with other requirements of the EP Act framework, is sufficient to manage the noise effects of the proposal.
130. In Uren v Bald Hills Wind Farm [2022] VSC 145, the Supreme Court made findings or observations that suggest there are potential negative amenity impacts that the 1998 and 2010 NZ Standards do not address. That is, that even when these standards are complied with, impacts including the following may still arise:

    - The standards do not require differentiation between day and night hours, leaving the potential for disturbance of sleep at dwellings;
    - The standards do not adequately account for intermittent noises, and only assess continuous or ongoing wind turbine noise;
    - The 40dB(A) noise limit adopted by the 1998 NZ Standard is higher than most other jurisdictions, which prescribe 35dB(A) as an acceptable limit (either generally, or at specific locations or times).

131. In relation to the third matter, the 2010 NZ Standard introduces a 35dB(A) limit for 'high amenity areas' whereby 'a more stringent noise limit may be justified to afford a greater degree of protection of amenity during evening and night-time' (clause 5.3.1). Guidance on what areas should be characterised as high amenity areas is provided by the VCAT decision of *Cherry Tree Wind Farm Pty Ltd v Mitchell Shire Council & Ors [2013] VCAT 521* and in EPA Guidance. The 'high amenity area' classification has been interpreted by VCAT as not generally applying to the FZ. This interpretation has been adopted by the EPA. The same interpretation has been adopted for the purposes of this decision. Because of that, there are many dwellings that do not have the benefit of the 35dB(A) limit.
132. The 2010 NZ Standard is designed to reduce noise effects, not eliminate all potential negative amenity impacts.
133. The application has been submitted with the ENA that predicts that of all surrounding non-stakeholder dwellings, the highest noise levels are predicted at receiver 30 (37.2 dB L_{A90} predicted). It is unlikely that there will be adverse amenity impacts from noise from the facility.
134. Even if there are the possibility of adverse amenity impacts arising, notwithstanding the wind energy facility's expected compliance with the 2010 NZ Standard, that standard is still considered to achieve an appropriate balance of impacts from a planning perspective. The effects of the proposal and its noise on the environment and people, and the potential level of audible noise at dwellings permitted by the 2010 NZ Standard, is considered to be acceptable from a planning perspective when balanced against the benefits that the wind energy facility will produce. The benefits are addressed throughout this report.
135. It is considered that compliance with the 2010 NZ Standard and the unreasonable noise requirement of the EP Act framework provides a sufficient level of protection to human health, community amenity and the environment. The 2010 NZ Standard is considered to sufficiently manage the risk of wind turbine noise, whilst ensuring wind farm operators can operate responsibly and contribute to renewable energy generation in an economic manner.
136. Finally, clause 13.05-1S of the scheme relevantly contains a strategy, policy guidelines and policy documents regarding noise emissions.

137. Clause 13.05-1S also requires consideration as relevant of the Noise Limit and Assessment Protocol for the Control of Noise from Commercial, Industrial and Trade Premises and Entertainment Venues (Publication 1826.5, Environment Protection Authority, September 2025) (Noise Protocol). However, under the EP Regulations, the Noise Protocol does not apply to wind turbine noise, in lieu of the noise standards outlined above. Given the EP Regulations contains a bespoke framework for assessing wind turbine noise and appropriate noise limits, it is preferable to respond to that framework in this assessment.
138. Clause 13.05-1S also requires consideration as relevant of the Environment Reference Standard (Gazette No. S 245, 26 May 2021) (ERS).
139. The ERS sets out objectives for different land use categories. However, these are typical ambient sound level values and are neither noise limits nor noise design criteria. For the category of land that is of a kind likely to be affected by wind turbine noise, the ERS noise objectives are lower than the noise limits under the 2010 NZ Standard, particularly during the night. However, due to the unconventional way wind turbine noise propagates through environments (unconventional when compared to other commercial industrial or trade noise), it is appropriate to rely on a standard developed specifically for sound emitted from wind energy facilities.
140. For these reasons, it is considered that despite the potential for some limited negative amenity impacts, it is sufficient to rely on the 2010 NZ Standard for appropriate noise limits.
141. Additionally, the project is located within proximity to several reserves as detailed under the assessment of clause 52.17 above. Most of these reserves are located in the FZ, with the exception of Greens Creek Streamside Reserve, which is located in PCRZ.
142. DTP agrees with the ENA that the wind turbine noise in these natural areas is unlikely to be relevant to the ERS environmental value for natural areas, noting that available information from Parks Victoria indicates they are not specifically used for natural soundscape experiences, have limited visitor amenities or attractions, and may have restricted or no public access.
143. Overall, the predicted noise impacts of the wind turbines are considered to be acceptable. DTP recommends that conditions be included on any permit issued requiring an updated pre-construction predictive noise assessment to be undertaken prior to the commencement of construction, to ensure that the final project design and turbine selection will demonstrate compliance with the applicable noise limits.

Noise from sources other than wind turbines

144. Clause 13.05-1S also requires consideration, as relevant, of the Noise Protocol.
145. The ENA has also been prepared in line with the Noise Protocol for the BESS and two substations (one for wind farm and one for BESS).
146. As the battery and substations are proposed to operate 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, meeting the applicable night-time noise limit of 34dB, infers meeting the noise limits during all other time periods as modelled in the table below:

Period	Day of week	Start time, hrs	End time, hrs	Noise limit, dB ENL
Day	Monday – Saturday	0700	1800	45
Evening	Monday – Saturday	1800	2200	39
	Sunday, Public holidays	0700	2200	
Night	Monday – Sunday	2200	0700	34

147. The ENA details that the proposal's design incorporates in the following noise controls measures:

- Installation of a manufacturer designed noise control kit to the inverters located at the BESS;
- Specification of the reduced maximum noise level for the HV transformers located at two substations;
- Noise barriers adjacent to the HV transformers located at the wind farm substation (refer to Figure 18).

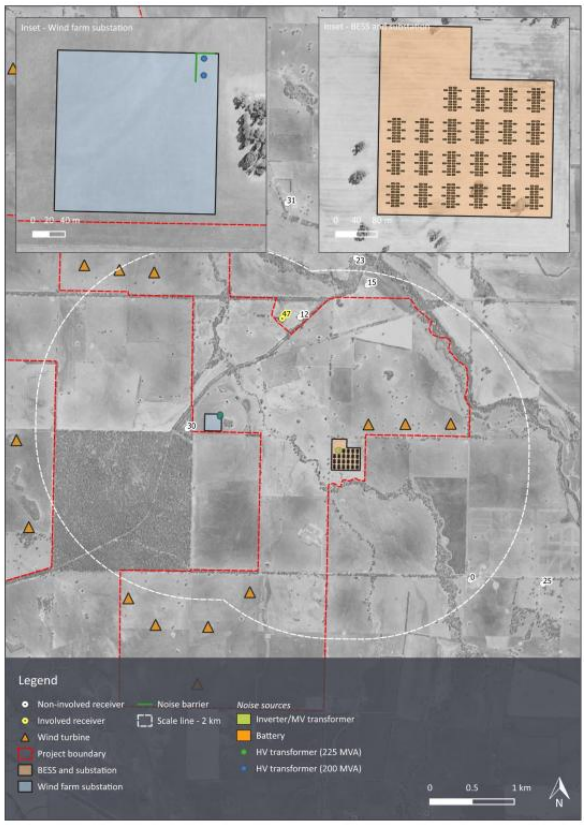


Figure 18: *BESS and two substations concept noise source layouts (Noise wall shown in green). Source: ENA*

148. The proposed noise barriers are to be designed to a minimum of 2 m above the top of the HV transformers; however, the final specifications and extent of noise barriers will be determined at the detailed design stage.
149. A condition 1 requirement will be added to the permit to ensure all noise mitigation measures are shown on the development plans.
150. The predicted noise levels at all receivers within 2 km of the BESS and two substations are predicted to comply with the night period noise limit by at least 3 dB (with implementation of the noise control measures detailed above) as shown below. The noise model assumes that all BESS modules and the two substations are operating at 100% power output:

Receiver	Wind farm substation	BESS substation	BESS	Cumulative
	dB L_{Aeq}	dB L_{Aeq}	dB L_{Aeq}	dB ENL [1]
Non-involved receivers				
0	< 10	13	27	29
12	15	10	23	26
15	11	8	21	24
30	23	15	27	31
Involved receivers outside the Project boundary				
47	15	10	23	26

151. The ENA also considered cumulative commercial, industrial and trade (CIT) noise levels by considering the Joel Joel BESS (approved not constructed), Bulgana Terminal Station and BESS (both operational).
152. The predicted cumulative effective noise levels (ENL) are at (i.e. receivers 0 and 30) or below the most stringent night-time noise limit of 34 dB ENL at nearby receivers, as shown below. The noise predictions are based on the conservative assumption that all three projects operating at 100% capacity.

Receiver	Project, dB L_{Aeq} [1]	BTS, dB L_{Aeq}	JJB, dB L_{Aeq}	Cumulative, dB ENL [2]
Non-involved receivers				
0	27	28	28	34
12	24	30	23	33
15	22	22	- [3]	25
30	29	28	25	34
Involved receivers outside the Project boundary				
47	24	30	22	33

153. The noise modelling indicates that the Joel Joel Nature Conservation Reserve (natural area) is most likely to experience operational noise from the two substations and BESS. Majority of this reserve is predicted to experience noise levels above 20 dB ENL, with the remainder of the reserve (predominately to the west) below 20 dB ENL. As discussed above, it is unlikely that the noise from the substations and BESS at this reserve would materially compromise the ERS values for natural areas.
154. Conditions have been included on any permit issued requiring an updated pre-construction predictive noise assessment be undertaken prior to the commencement of construction, to ensure that the final project design and BESS selection will demonstrate compliance with the Noise Protocol.

Landscape and Visual Impact

155. Clauses 12.05-2S (Landscapes), 52.32-5 and the Wind Farm Guidelines require the consideration of the impact of the project on significant landscapes, open spaces, sightlines and views from dwellings. It is noted that the planning policies in the zones and PPF do not specifically require the consideration of the impact of the development on views from private properties, as similarly established in *Dance vs Colac Otway SC* [2024] VCAT 443. Further, while the subject site is partially affected by ESO1, the proposal does not include any works in this overlay, as such, no permit is required. The proposal seeks to maintain the natural beauty of the ridge system.
156. The application is supported by a Landscape Character and Probable Visual Effect Assessment (LCPVEA) prepared by Wax Design.
157. The proposal is located in a well-vegetated agricultural landscape that extends across the Wimmera River floodplains.
158. The LCPVEA assessed the predicted visual impacts of the proposed facility from five public viewpoints within a 20 km buffer as shown in Figure 19.

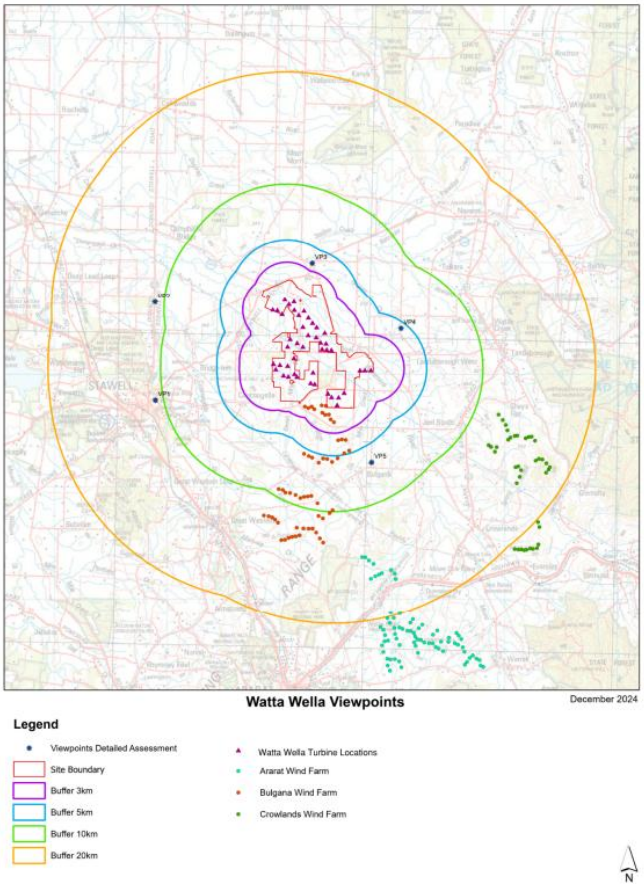


Figure 19: *Location of the 5 public viewpoints. Source: LCPVEA.*

159. View locations 1, 2 and 5 are assessed experiencing a 'moderate' level of visual impact from the wind farm, as shown in Figures 20-22.

Figure 20*: Photomontage of view location 1 – Big Hill Lookout, Stawell (south-west regional). Source: LCPVEA.*

Figure 21: *Photomontage of view location 2 - Stawell Donald Road (west regional). Source: LCPVEA.*

Figure 22: *Photomontage of view location 5 - Settlement of Bulgana (south-east sub-regional). Source: LCPVEA.*

160. View locations 3 and 4 were rated as 'substantial' visual impact from the wind farm, with the percentage of visual change to the landscape estimated at 47% and 43%, respectively (refer Figures 23-26).
161. From view location 3, turbines T10, T42, T45, T46 and T47 are particularly prominent, while turbines T16, T17, and T18 appear as outliers to the east, extending the horizontal visual effect of the proposed facility.

Figure 23: *Wire line of view location 3 – Stawell Avoca Rd, Greens Creek (north-east sub-regional). Source: LCPVEA.*

Figure 24: *Photomontage of view location 3 - Stawell Avoca Rd, Greens Creek. Source: LCPVEA.*

162. From view location 4, the proposed wind turbines form distinct infrastructure elements arranged in two defined clusters, with turbines T7 and T8 appear as isolated elements situated in between two larger clusters. To the north-east, wind turbines extend across the Concongella Hill ridgeline, altering the visual landscape character and contributing to the cumulative visual effect of both the proposed facility and the BGPH. To the west, turbines T1-T5 and T16-T18 form a consolidated visual grouping that modifies the existing horizon line.

Figure 25: *Wire line of view location 4 – North-east of Joel Joel (east sub-regional). Source: LCPVEA*

Figure 26: *Photomontage of view location 4 - North-east of Joel Joel. Source: LCPVEA.*

163. The visual impacts from the proposed BESS, two substations and other infrastructure (i.e. control buildings, access tracks, operational maintenance areas and transmission lines) were assessed. These visual effects are limited or negligible (contained within specific viewsheds) by the screening provided by existing vegetation and landforms. Transient visual effects will be experienced along local roads around the proposed development, with varying degrees of visual screening from landforms and existing vegetation depending on the viewpoint.
164. In accordance with the recommended mitigation measures, a permit condition will be included for on-site landscaping to mitigate potential visual impacts of the proposal, including:

    - Landscape treatments provided around the perimeter of the operation maintenance compounds;
    - Planting of scattered native eucalypt tree grounds along the northern boundary of the BESS;
    - Retain existing trees in the site and to the edges; and
    - Potential for tree planting along Landsborough Road.

165. It is noted that there are 65 dwellings within the 5 km; however, the preliminary consultation resulted in 16 dwellings agreeing to be involved in the visual impact assessment. With many properties containing significant belts of existing vegetation along the boundaries, the visual impacts are as follows:

    - 5 dwellings with a slight increase to moderate visual effect;
    - 10 dwellings with a moderate visual effect; and
    - 1 dwelling with a moderate increase to substantial visual effect.

166. A condition regarding off-site landscaping works will be included on any recommendation to further reduce the visual impact of the proposed facility across to all dwellings within the 5 km.
167. Subject to the above mitigation measures, particularly off-site landscaping, and given the overall moderate landscape character sensitivity, the visual impacts on views from public viewpoints and dwellings are considered to be acceptable on balance with the benefits of the provision of a renewable energy generation and storage facility.

Cumulative visual impacts

168. The LCPVEA identified nearby existing wind energy facilities being the Crowlands Wind Farm (10 km south), BGPH (directly south) and the Ararat Wind Farm (12 km south-east) of the proposed development.
169. In terms of cumulative effects, the proposal will result in combined visibility, particularly from viewpoints to the east and north-west looking south. The proposal will be perceived as an extension of the BGPH, extending the visual effect of wind turbine clusters by approx. 12 km to the north.
170. The separation and spacing of Crowlands and Ararat Wind Farms mitigate the frequency and succession cumulative visual effects, whilst also limiting the succession visual effect of the proposed development.
171. Overall, the regional landscape character is contained within an approx. 20km viewshed by surrounding ranges, ridgelines and extensive vegetation; as a result, the cumulative effects of the proposal will be fragmented and seen within a sub-regional and regional context.

Shadow Flicker and Blade Glint

172. The application includes a Shadow Flicker Assessment (SFA), prepared by DNV, which provides an assessment based on the Windfarm Guidelines and National Wind Farm Development Guidelines - Draft (July 2010) prepared by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (National Guidelines). The National Guidelines require that dwellings receive no more than 30 hours of shadow flicker per year.
173. The SFA demonstrates that:

- A total of seven dwellings will experience some shadow flicker from the turbines: three stakeholder dwellings and four non-stakeholder dwellings.
- One stakeholder dwelling (Dwelling 2) is predicted to experience shadow flicker above the recommended limit of 30 hours per year. The modelling found that a predicted theoretical shadow flicker durations within 50 m of Dwelling 2 is approx. 69.4 hours per year. However, when considering the likely reduction in shadow flicker due to cloud cover and rotor orientation, the predicted actual shadow flicker durations within 50 m of Dwelling 2 is approx. 15.3 hours per year, which exceeds the recommended limit of 10 hours per year.
- Of the four affected non-stakeholder dwellings and the remaining two stakeholder dwellings, none are predicted to experience shadow flicker durations above the recommended limit of 30 hours per year.
- Blade glint is not expected to be problematic, as modern wind turbines are generally finished with a non-reflectivity surface.
- A cumulative impact assessment was undertaken for the potential shadow flicker from the proposal and BGPH. Two dwelling locations (Dwellings 8 and 44) were identified as potential receptors of cumulative shadow flicker based on their proximity to turbines; however, only limited shadow flicker is predicted at these dwellings from BGPH turbines, generally below a moderate level of intensity. No dwellings were identified to experience cumulative shadow flicker impacts from both the proposal and BGPH turbines above a moderate level.

174. The owner of Dwelling 2 has consented to the levels of modelled shadow flicker and have entered into an agreement waiving the requirement. The applicant has supplied the signed agreement for Dwelling 2.
175. Conditions of the recommendation will limit the amount of shadow flicker experienced at existing dwellings to less 30 hours per year, unless an agreement has been entered into with the affected landowner/s.

Electromagnetic Interference (EMI)

176. The decision guidelines of clause 52.32 (Wind energy facility) and the Wind Farm Guidelines require the responsible authority to consider the effect of the proposal on electromagnetic interference (EMI).
177. The application is supported by an EMI assessment prepared by DNV, which demonstrates that:

- One radiocommunication tower is located within 2 km hosts point-to-area style licenses used for mobile radio communications, which may potentially interfere through reflection or scattering of the signals from the proposed turbines.
- Dwellings located within, adjacent and surrounding the facility, particularly to the west and north-west, have increased potential to experience interference to digital television signals from the Ballart tower, particularly in areas to the west where the signal is already marginal. Digital television signals from Horsham broadcast tower may also be impacted; although the potentially affected dwellings are unlikely to be receiving signals from this tower.
- Interference to signals from geostationary satellites that transmit programs intended for international audiences is possible at one nearby dwelling; however, it is unlikely that residents will be receiving signals from these satellites and mitigation measures are available.
- No turbines are located within the diffraction exclusion zones for the fixed point-to-point links passing over the site, and interference is considered unlikely.

- The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) has advised that impacts to their radars are expected to be manageable, and responses received from operators of point-to-multipoint links and emergency services indicate that the proposal is unlikely to have any impact on these services.
- Potential EMI impacts on other services, including trigonometrical stations, CB radio, mobile phone and wireless internet services, and broadcast radio, are either considered to be minor or have been assessed through consultation with the service operators.
- There is a potential for cumulative EMI impacts from nearby operating wind farms (BGPH, Crowlands and Ararat Wind Farms) for broadcast digital television signals received at nearby dwellings as well as a potential for increased interference to mobile phone and FM radio signals in areas where there may be multiple turbines between the user and the transmission tower. Cumulative impacts to other services, including point-to-point links and NBN fixed wireless internet signals, are not expected.

178. A summary of the stakeholder feedback and potential mitigation measures is provided under Table 6 of the EMI.
179. Notice of application was given to the BoM; however, no response has been received to date.
180. Conditions have been included in the recommendation that require a telecommunications and EMI survey undertaken for dwellings within 5 km of the site, including a procedure for investigating complaints and restoring any EMI or reception concerns to the receiver's pre-existing quality.

Traffic and Transport

181. Clause 18.02-4S, the decision guidelines of 35.07 (FZ), 36.04 (TRZ) and 65.02 all require consideration of access and traffic impacts relating to the proposed use and development.
182. The application is supported by a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) prepared by Access Traffic Consulting, which considers the traffic impacts of the proposed facility on local and state roads during construction and operation. The site is proposed to be accessed from eight different locations:

    - Four vehicle access points from Landsborough Road;
    - One road crossing point from Vineyard Road;
    - Two road crossing points from Potter Road; and
    - One road crossing point from Vances Crossing Road.

183. The additional road crossings are where the internal access roads within the project area proposed to intersect the adjacent road links as detailed above.
184. During construction, turbine and tower components will be transported to the site via over-size over-mass (OSOM) vehicles either from Port of Geelong or Port of Portland. Refer to Table 4 of the TIA for route specifications.
185. BESS components will also be transported from Port of Geelong or Port of Portland during construction.
186. Quarry materials for the wind farm and BESS components are proposed to be sourced from Tuckers Hill Quarry via Western Highway, Stawell-Avoca Road and Landsborough Road.
187. The TIA notes that the construction phase for the wind farm is expected to span 27 months and estimates that the proposed turbine transport traffic volumes generated are:

    - 1,816 vehicles from either Port Geelong or Port of Portland, including:
        - 1,170 light vehicle escorts
        - 585 turbine component transport vehicles
        - 61 ancillary turbine component transport vehicles

188. The construction phase for the BESS is expected to span 13 months and as with wind farm construction, traffic will primarily be generated by the transport of materials and equipment and daily workforce movements.
189. In terms of cumulative impacts, two approved projects (Joel Joel BESS and Stawell Solar Farm) are likely to be completed prior to the commencement of the proposed construction phase of the project. Additional

traffic from nearby existing wind farms and approved solar farm and BESS facility would be negligible and accounted for in background traffic growth, with no significant cumulative impacts on the road network anticipated.

190. The TIA demonstrates that the project is expected to have only minor impact on the operation of the existing road network subject to the implementation of mitigation measures and road upgrades. These include:

- TMP
- Completion of minor works along the identified transport route to accommodate the swept paths of the OSOM turbine component transport vehicles (in consultation with local councils)
- Provision of suitable access intersections with Landsborough Road at proposed accesses (Site Access 1, 5, 6 & 8) to accommodate basic right turn (BAR) and basic left-turn (BAL), adopting a speed of 110 km/h.
- Temporary speed reduction on Landsborough Road to 80 km/h in the vicinity of Site Access 1 and 8 during construction.
- Provision of advisory 'truck turning' signage on Landsborough Road approaches to Site Accesses 1, 5, 6 & 8 during construction.
- Provision of suitable treatments at road crossings on Potter Road, Vineyard Road and Vances Crossing Road, including advance warning signage and stop sign control for crossing movements.
- Proponent to enter into an infrastructure agreement or similar with Northern Grampians Council regarding the required mitigation works on the identified sections of Landsborough Road to offset the calculated pavement impacts of the construction phase of the project (including pre and post construction phase dilapidation inspections completed by Council).

191. The application is supported by a Haulage Route Assessment prepared by Impact, which considers the viability of turbine blade and tower component delivery from Port of Geelong and Portland. The proponent has not selected a preferred route.

192. The application sought interdepartmental advice from to the Head, Transport for Victoria, who did not object subject to the inclusion of conditions on the permit requiring:

- Preparation and implementation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP)
- Compliance with requirements of the Road Quality Auditor
- Traffic management, road upgrade and maintenance works carried out to the satisfaction of Head, TfV
- Any temporary infrastructure works required to mobilise oversize and over-mass vehicles must be designed and completed to the satisfaction of Head, TfV
- Permit note requiring any approval form the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator need to be obtained for oversize and over-mass vehicle routes.

193. With these conditions, it is considered that the road network can satisfactorily accommodate the proposed facility.

Biodiversity

194. Clauses 12.01-1S, 12.01-1R, 12.01-2S, 65.01, the Wind Farm Guidelines, and the PE Act seek to protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity, including (but not limited to) the following strategies and objectives:

- *Ensure that decision making takes into account the impacts of land use and development on Victoria's biodiversity, including consideration of:*
  - *Cumulative impacts.*
  - *Fragmentation of habitat.*
  - *The spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens into natural biodiversity.*
- *Avoid impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity.*
- *Consider impacts of any change in land use or development that may affect the biodiversity value of national parks and conservation reserves or nationally and internationally significant sites; including*

wetlands and wetland wildlife habitat designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention) and sites utilised by species listed under the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (CAMBA), or the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA).

- *Assist in the identification, protection and management of important areas of biodiversity.*
- *To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.*
- *Conserve native vegetation on private land, Crown land, declared water stream-side reserves and roadside.*

195. The application is supported by an ER, including a draft Bat and Avifauna Management (BAM) Plan.
196. Much of the site has been cleared due to agricultural activities and is dominated by crops or pasture supporting non-indigenous grasses and weeds; consequently, most of the remnant vegetation and fauna habitats has been removed. However, some threatened flora and fauna species and biodiversity values are present (or potentially present) on or surrounding the site, such as roadside reserves and along creek lines. These include:

    - Significant flora species, such as River Swamp Wallaby-grass, Buloke, Hairy Tail, Grassland Bindweed and Broad-lip Diuris. The presence of several species from the Orchidaceae Family listed as 'general protected' under the FFG Act.
    - Threatened fauna species listed under the EPBC Act and/or FFG Act which have potential to occur at the site, including Golden Sun Moth, Hooded Robin, Swift Parrot, Speckled Warbler, Powerful Owl and Eastern Bent-wing Bat. Noting that Swift Parrot, Powerful Owl and Eastern Bent-wing Bat can potentially fly at rotor swept area height.

197. The key biodiversity impacts of the project are:

    - Direct and indirect impacts to native vegetation (as already assessed at clause 52.17 above); and
    - Risk of bird and bat collisions with wind turbines.

198. Where possible, the project has been sited to avoid impacts to threatened bird and bat species and mitigated by preparing a draft BAM plan in consultation with DEECA, DTP and the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). The BAM plan includes several mitigation measures to reduce the likelihood of bird and bat collision with turbines. These measures include (but not limited to):

    - Operational phase monitoring (e.g. bird utilisation surveys, bat surveys, carcass monitoring protocols);
    - Impact triggers for listed and non-listed bird and bat species (e.g. procedures for reporting, investigation and response to dead birds/bats);
    - Habitat modification (e.g. vegetation planting/removal);
    - Any on site lighting will be recessed using baffles to minimise spill, using low-lux systems;
    - Restriction of grain-feeding within 120 m of turbines (subject to consultation with landowners);
    - Minimum buffer of 300 m applied from high-value foraging habitat to centre of all turbines;
    - Increasing turbine and powerline detectability (e.g. audio deterrents);
    - Temporary turbine curtailment for confirmed presence of Swift Parrot within 5km of a turbine;
    - Temporary shutdown of all turbines within 1 km of nearby reserves (i.e. Walla Wella Reserve and Joel Joel nature Conservation Reserve) for confirmed presence of Swift Parrot within the project area; and
    - Image sensing technology to detect and monitor bird flight for high-risk or impacted species (e.g. IdentiFlight® or similar).

199. Advice was sought from DEECA on avifauna impacts. DEECA responded that they did not object but recommended that conditions of any permit issued require a final BAM plan to be endorsed in consultation with DEECA, including a five-year monitoring a reporting program.

200. With these mitigation measures in place, the project will not have unreasonable impacts on biodiversity or threatened species.
201. The ER found the following regarding cumulative impacts:

- The project will result in an impact to Golden Sun Moth habitat during construction phase, with no expected cumulative impact due to the apparent absence of the species within a 10 km radius of the site. It is proposed that this impact be offset on-site, as per the Offset Management Strategy outlined in the ER. Future on-site offset areas for the protection of the species will result in the permanent protection of the Golden Sun Moth habitat through the establishment of an on-title security agreement(s). This offsite management strategy will be implemented through the EPBC approval.
- Five operational wind farms (BGPH, Ararat, Crowlands, Challicum Hills and Maroona Wind Farms) within 50 km of the project have been considered. The project will contribute to cumulative impact in the broader landscape, although the development footprint is predominately located within a cleared and uniform landscape.
- Overall, the cumulative impacts to bird species are likely to be low due to the setbacks and separation of each listed wind farm above. Mitigation measures, including turbine curtailments and siting of turbines away from potential foraging habitat near reserves, can minimise any additional cumulative impacts, particularly for the Swift Parrot.
- The presence of the Eastern Bent-wing bat within the assessment area presents a risk for potential collisions. Given the low recorded presence of the species within the assessment area, the proposed turbine siting and scale, the absence of documented turbine-related impacts, and the distance to known maternity roosting sites, the likelihood of collision for the Eastern Bent-wing Bat is very low. Accordingly, cumulative impacts to this species as a result of the project are expected to be low.

202. On 16 November 2022, the project was determined to be a controlled action under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) as it was considered to have a significant impact on the following matters of national environmental significant (MNES):

- Listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A)
- Listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A)

203. On 26 October 2022 the Minister for Planning determined that no EES was required under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (EE Act), subject to conditions requiring an Environment Report (ER). The ER is the accredited assessment pathway for the EPBC assessment under the bilateral agreement.
204. The action is being assessed by the Commonwealth via an environment report (ER). This planning application can be determined prior to the Commonwealth's decision on the controlled action.
205. Overall, it is considered that impacts to biodiversity values and threatened flora and fauna are acceptable, and that further detailed consideration of impacts to EPBC species can occur through the Commonwealth's EPBC assessment process.
206. If the EPBC assessment determines that additional mitigation, or changes to the project are required, these can be accommodated within the planning approval. The proposal must be constructed and operated in accordance with the planning approval and the EPBC approval. The planning approval can be modified if required to comply with the EPBC decision.

Aviation

207. Clause 18.02-7S and the decision guidelines of clause 52.32 (Wind energy facility) seek to assess the impacts of the project on aviation and safeguard the ongoing, safe and efficient operation of Victorian airports and airfields.
208. The closest airports and aerodromes to the project are:

- Stawell (approx. 14 km west)
- Ararat (approx. 26 km south)

- St Arnaud (approx. 42 km north-east)
- Wyndarra (approx. 5.6 km south-west)
- Navarre (uncertified aerodrome) (approx. 13km north-east)
- Moonambel (uncertified aerodrome) (approx. 26 km east)

209. The application is supported by an Aviation Impact Assessment (AIA) prepared by Aviation Projects, which concludes that the proposed wind farm:

    - Will not infringe any Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS);
    - Would not infringe Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Aircraft Operations (PANS-OPS);
    - Would not impact any nearby designated air routes;
    - Would not have an impact on the grid Lowest Safe Altitude (LSALT);
    - Would be wholly contained within Class G airspace;
    - Would be unlikely to create downwind wake turbulence from the turbine blades in the circuit area of uncertified aerodromes; and
    - Would be outside the clearance zones associated with aviation navigation aids and communication facilities.

210. The cumulative impacts of the project and the operational BGPH in proximity to the aerodrome could limit accessibility further for aircraft arriving from and departing to an easterly direction to avoid overflying turbines on approach and departure. However, the proposed facility would not result in any adverse impact on flight operations at Wyndarra aerodrome.
211. The AIA identified that the project (including WTG and wind monitoring towers (WMT)) would not require obstacle lighting to maintain an acceptable level of safety to aircraft.
212. Notice of the application was given to CASA, Airservices Australia and Department of Defence. CASA did not object to the application; the following recommendations from CASA have been included as conditions:

    - Any wind monitoring masts associated with the development should be marked as per *Section 8.110 of CASA's Manual of Standards Part 139* with the inclusion of aviation hazard markers.
    - The coordinates and estimated survey heights of each turbine and monitoring mast must be reported to the Airservices Australia (ASA) Vertical Obstacle Database (VOD).

213. CASA also provided recommendations regarding aviation lighting:

    - Obstacle lighting installed on the turbines due to the height of these structures.
    - A radar activated steady red low intensity (200 cd) aviation hazard lighting system, or consultation with obstacle lighting suppliers about incorporating a cowling system (similar to a "lampshade") into the lighting system to minimise downward light spill without impacting aviation safety.

214. The supplementary letter from Aviation Projects, dated 5 June 2026, confirms that the aviation safety lighting system will not be included on the WTGs and is in line with the recommendation of the AIA. The letter notes that CASA cannot mandate aviation obstacle lighting where the obstacle is outside the limits of the OLS of a CASA certified aerodrome.
215. DTP does not recommend including conditions requiring aviation safety lighting to the WTG. This is because the risk is considered low, due to the findings in Table 10 of the AIA, which summarise the likelihood and risk levels associated with the residual risks of the proposed wind farm. Overall, the AIA indicates that there is an acceptable level of aviation safety risk related to the identified risks outlined in Table 10, even without obstacle lighting on the WTGs. It is considered that if the proposal included any aviation safety lighting, it would have resulted in a negative visual impact on the area.

Hydrology

216. The site is partially encumbered by LSIO1 and FO1 and is located within a special water supply catchment area.

217. Clauses 12.03-1S, 13.03-1S and 13.03-1L seeks to protect and enhance waterway systems and the decision guidelines of LSIO, FO, and 52.32 (Wind energy facility) require the consideration of impacts on natural environment and flood risk to life and safety.
218. The application was supported by a Hydrology and Flood Report (HFR) prepared by Afflux Consulting, which demonstrates that:

    - The proposed turbines, substations and BESS are located outside the 100 m buffer from the Wimmera River and the 30 m buffer from the Six Mile Creek and Seven Mile Creek, which intersect the project area.
    - Majority of turbines and associated infrastructure are located outside of the mapped flood extents of the LSIO1 and FO1.
    - Four turbine bases (T10, T31, T32 and T44) and several turbine hardstands (T5, T6, T9, T18 T22, T23 and T41) are located within the LSIO1 and/or FO1 (refer Table 2 of the HFR). However:
        - These generally remain in proximity to shallow flooded extents (i.e. < 0.5 m) in a 1% AEP event.
        - Hardstand areas maintain buffers of up to 200 m to LSIO1 and FO1 areas.
        - Raising sensitive components at least 300 mm above the identified flood level and employing sufficiently rated enclosures is expected to minimise impacts from water exposure to wind turbine components.
    - Floodplain impact assessment (i.e. afflux of water) for pre and post development conditions confirms that impacts are highly localised and reduce to negligible levels at associated property boundaries.
    - Cable reticulation for the turbines and battery components to the substations are proposed to be underground and to be located along access tracks.
    - The BESS is located adjacent to the LSIO1, with minor interaction with the 1% AEP flood extent along its western edge. Mitigation measures will ensure floodwaters do not enter the BESS and can flow freely without obstruction. All electrical installations and connections will maintain a minimum 300 mm freeboard above identified flood levels (i.e. 1% AEP) and employ appropriately rated enclosures.
    - The wind farm substation is located outside the LSIO1 but with minor flood interactions. The wind farm substation infrastructure can be located away from major overland flow paths, with appropriate freeboard levels set and cabling appropriately located (i.e. within 300 mm freeboard).

219. The proposed earthworks may change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary due to deep excavation for the turbine foundation (up to 4 m) and shallower excavations/fills of up to 1 m for substations, BESS hardstand, access tracks, and underground cable reticulation. The HFR outlines that the earthworks are likely to represent negligible changes to the existing topography and will not result in a significant impact on surface water flows resulting from these specific works, subject to mitigation measures (i.e., detailed civil design and culverts where necessary).
220. The HFR concludes that the project is unlikely to have major impacts on flood flow through the region and any impacts of flood flow on the infrastructure are unlikely to be significant. Any required mitigations measures are minor and largely addressed through the standard secondary consents that would be required as part of the detailed design process (e.g. works on waterways permits).
221. The Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (determining referral authority for special water supply catchment area) did not object to the application with no conditions. Wimmera CMA (recommending referral authority for FO1 and LSIO1) did not object to the application, subject to conditions requiring:

    - FFL of the BESS, substation and turbine bases constructed 300 mm above the 1% AEP flood height.
    - Any works in, on or over designated waterways require a Works on Waterway Permit.
    - A Hydraulic Report.
    - A CEMP.
    - Landowner consent obtained where afflux cannot be mitigated and neighbouring landowners are impacted.
    - Electrical fittings and connections fixed above 300 mm above 1% AEP flood height.

- Waterproof conduits and cables in flood-prone area.
- Pollutants, chemicals, oil stored above 300 mm above 1% AEP flood height.

222. DTP submits that, with Wimmera CMA's conditions, the application has appropriately responded to the flooding and hydrology risk. DTP has used these conditions, but modified them to include some improvements in operation of the conditions, and consolidation of the EMP conditions to avoid have two separate EMPs for the permit

Social and Economic Effects

223. Sections 60(1)(f) and 60(1B) of the PE Act require the responsible authority to consider any significant social effects the use or development may have, including having regard to the number of objectors in considering whether the use or development may have a significant social effect.
224. The project will contribute to the local economy by creating up to 380 jobs during construction and up to 20 jobs during operation. The proponent has committed to a community benefit program for the life of the facility which is estimated to contribute up to $360,000 per annum to neighbours and community organisations.
225. It is considered that, on balance, the proposal achieves a net community benefit when balanced with its other social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Decommissioning

226. The future decommissioning of the proposed facility can be adequately addressed via permit conditions requiring a Decommissioning Management Plan (DMP). These conditions will require the infrastructure to be removed from the site and the land to be rehabilitated and reinstated to its prior condition to ensure that there is no permanent loss of agricultural land.

Staging

227. Given the scale of the proposed project, conditions have been included on the permit to allow the use and development to be completed in stages, providing that the corresponding conditions/obligations are also satisfied in stages.

Other Victorian and Commonwealth legislation

228. The subject of this report is the assessment of the project under the PE Act.
229. The table at Attachment 1 of this report provides an overview of the project's key approval and assessment requirements under other Victorian and Commonwealth legislation.

Recommendation

230. The proposal has been considered against the matters at section 60 of the PE Act, is consistent with the relevant planning policies of the Northern Grampians Planning Scheme and will contribute to the provision of renewable energy generation and storage within the Northern Grampians region.
231. The proposal is supported by the various referral agencies, subject to conditions which have been included in the recommendation.
232. It is recommended that Planning Permit No. PA2503812 for the use and development of the Watta Wella Renewable Energy Project (as described in this report) be issued under delegation from the Minister for Planning, subject to conditions.
233. It is recommended that the following stakeholders be notified of the above decision in writing:

- Applicant (RES Australia Pty Ltd c/- Umwelt Ptd Ltd)
- Council
- Objectors
- All submitters, including the following agency submitters:
  - CFA
  - CASA
  - Department of Défense
  - EPA
- Referral authorities:
  - WorkSafe
  - AusNet Transmission Group
  - Secretary to DEECA
  - Wimmera CMA
  - Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water

Prepared by: [redacted]

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

☒ No Conflict

☐ Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:

☐ Completed the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form.

☐ Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form on to the hardcopy file.

☐ Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form into the relevant electronic workspace.

Name: [redacted]

Title:

Signed: [redacted]

Dated: 17/06/2026

Reviewed by: [redacted]

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

☒ No Conflict

☐ Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:

☐ Completed the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form.

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☐ Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form into the relevant electronic workspace.

Name: [redacted]

Title:

Signed: [redacted]

Dated: 26 June 2026

Approved by: [redacted]

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

☒ No Conflict

☐ Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:

☐ Completed the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form.

☐ Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form on to the hardcopy file.

☐ Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form into the relevant electronic workspace.

Name: [redacted]

Title:

Signed: [redacted]

Dated: 26 June 2026

Attachment 1: Requirements under other legislation

Act	Discussion
***Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act)**	Under the EPBC Act, an action that has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance (MNES), must be referred to the Commonwealth Minister for Environment and Water. On 16 November 2022, the project was determined to be a controlled action as it was considered to have a significant impact on the following MNES: – Listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A) – Listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A) The action is being assessed by the Commonwealth via an Environment Report (ER) under the Environment Effects Act. The ER is the accredited pathway for the EPBC assessment. This planning application can be determined prior to the Commonwealth's decision on the controlled action.
***Environment Effects Act 1978* (EE Act)**	The EE Act can require the preparation of an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) for activities considered to have, or to be capable of having, a significant effect on the environment. *The Ministerial Guidelines for Assessment of Environmental Effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978* (DTP 2023) outlines the criteria to consider whether to refer a project to the Victorian Minister for Planning who will determine if an EES is required. On 26 October 2022, the Minister for Planning decided that an EES was not required for this project, subject to conditions. The conditions require an environment report, to be prepared in consultation with DTP and DEECA, to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning, assessing existing conditions, predicted (direct, indirect and cumulative) impacts on native vegetation and biodiversity, and identifying alternatives and mitigation measures. The ER under the EE Act is the accredited assessment pathway for the EPBC controlled Action.
***Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (AH Act)**	The AH Act seeks to avoid adverse effects to Aboriginal cultural heritage values as far as reasonably practicable. Where adverse effects cannot be avoided, measures must be implemented to minimise and mitigate adverse effects. The subject site includes areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity, and a mandatory Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required. The CHMP was approved by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation on 17 November 2025. The application is consistent with the activity described in the CHMP.
***Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act)**	Under the FFG Act a permit is required to take, kill, injure, disturb or collect threatened species or protected flora species from public land. There are permit exemptions under the FFG Act which apply to the non-commercial removal of protected flora from private land, unless there is 'critical habitat' that has been declared on the land. The submitted ER notes that two state-listed threatened species under the FFG Act (Buloke and Hairy Tails) were recorded within the assessment area and notes that a permit under the FFG Act to 'take' protected flora should be reviewed.

Act	Discussion
	DEECA has provided a permit note to ensure the applicant undertakes appropriate due diligence in obtaining a Protected Flora Permit.
***Climate Action Act 2017* (CA Act)**	The purpose of the CA Act includes (but is not limited to): – to facilitate the consideration of climate change issues in specified areas of decision making of the Government of Victoria; and, – to set policy objectives and guiding principles to inform decision-making under this Act and the development of government policy in the State. Section 20 of the CA Act states that: *The Government of Victoria will endeavour to ensure that any decision made by the Government and any policy, program or process developed or implemented by the Government appropriately takes account of climate change if it is relevant by having regard to the policy objectives and the guiding principles.* This assessment has had consideration of the policy objectives and the guiding principles of the CA Act. The proposed facility is estimated to generate approx. 360 MW of renewable energy and store 400 MW of electricity, reducing emissions by approx. 800,000 tonnes of CO_2 per annum which will help achieve the emissions reduction targets in Part 2 of the CA Act. It is noted that the community were invited to be involved in the planning permit application process via public notice under s52 of the PE Act.
***Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (the Charter)**	The Charter gives legal recognition and protection in Victoria to many important human rights, particularly civil and political rights. DTP is committed to upholding its responsibilities under the Charter. This planning application has been assessed in a manner that is compatible with the human rights identified in the Charter.
***Transport Integration Act 2010* (TI Act)**	The purpose of the TI Act is to create a new framework for the provision of an integrated and sustainable transport system in Victoria. The assessment of this planning application has had regard to the transport system objectives and decision-making principals of the TI Act.

Attachment 2: Formal Description of Land Parcels

The site is formally described as comprising the following land parcels:

- Crown Allotments 69A, 69B, 70 Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 02316 Fol 043)
- Crown Allotments 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 07729 Fol 051)
- Crown Allotment 107 Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 02891 Fol 051)
- Crown Allotment 12 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 01266 Fol 054)
- Crown Allotments 26, 27, 28, 29, 31 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 04256 Fol 111)
- Lots 1 and 2 on TP612306A (Vol 03826 Fol 135)
- Lots 1, 2, and 3 on TP912469W (Vol 12015 Fol 139)
- Crown Allotment 25A Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 10532 Fol 142)
- Crown Allotment 20 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 07818 Fol 180)
- Crown Allotment 161 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 05591 Fol 183)
- Crown Allotment 105A Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 02397 Fol 214)
- Crown Allotments 22, 23, 24, 25 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 06187 Fol 223)
- Crown Allotments 7B, 8B Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 08454 Fol 295)
- Crown Allotment 21 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 03113 Fol 431)
- Crown Allotment 57 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 453)
- Crown Allotment 50 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 446)
- Crown Allotment 60 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 456)
- Crown Allotment 27 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 04908 Fol 483)
- Crown Allotments 30, 32, 33, 36, 38 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 03788 Fol 485)
- Crown Allotment 11 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 07358 Fol 492)
- Lots 1 and 2 on TP553304F (Vol 08764 Fol 525)
- Crown Allotments 154, 156 Parish of Malakoff (Vol 08490 Fol 527)
- Crown Allotment 107B Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 08587 Fol 579)
- Crown Allotment 104A Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 01064 Fol 640)
- Crown Allotment 10 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 06589 Fol 701)
- Crown Allotment 71A Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 09519 Fol 702)
- Crown Allotments 113, 114 Parish of Glynwylln, Crown Allotments 5A, 6, 12, 13, 14 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 11602 Fol 773)
- Lot 1 on TP006879E (Vol 11602 Fol 773)
- Lot 2 on TP006879E (Vol 11602 Fol 774)
- Crown Allotment 9 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 03349 Fol 785)
- Crown Allotment 25 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 03349 Fol 786)
- Crown Allotment 8D Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 06399 Fol 798)
- Crown Allotments 4B, 4C, 5B, 7, 8, 9A, 9B Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 06310 Fol 859)
- Crown Allotment 2 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 09968 Fol 864)
- Crown Allotment 9C Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 09968 Fol 863)
- Crown Allotment 106 Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 02855 Fol 874)
- Crown Allotments 1, 3, 4A Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 06675 Fol 883)
- Crown Allotment 74B, 111A, 111B, 112 Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 06675 Fol 884)
- Lot 2 on PS537402K (Vol 10994 Fol 897)
- Crown Allotment 24 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 3345 Fol 907)
- Crown Allotment 11A Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 02900 Fol 916)
- Crown Allotment 114 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 05905 Vol 935)
- Crown Allotment 15 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 06880 Fol 942)
- Crown Allotments 10, 10A, 11A, 11B, 11C, 16A, 16B, 17, 17A 17B (Vol 08853 Fol 984)
- Lots 1 and 2 on TP432953R (Vol 03144 Fol 774)

- Crown Allotment 107A Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 12262 Fol 909)
- Crown Allotment 114A Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 12262 Fol 910)
- Crown Allotments 123, 124, 126, 127 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 12277 Fol 186)
- Land in Plan of Consolidation 375536B (Vol 11892 Fol 862)
- Lot 2 on PS737890C (Vol 12247 Fol 212)
- Crown Allotments 162, 162A, 162B Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 11602 Fol 768)
- Crown Allotments 163A, 163B Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 11602 Fol 769)
- Lots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 on TP324760G (Vol 11602 Fol 776)
- Land in Plan of Consolidation 381711A (Vol 12396 Fol 560)
- Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 on TP859992Y (Vol 11602 Fol 770)
- Lot 2 on PS319371L (Vol 10128 Fol 181)
- Crown Allotment 47 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 443)
- Crown Allotment 50 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 446)
- Crown Allotment 51 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 447)
- Crown Allotment 53 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 449)
- Crown Allotment 48 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 444)
- Crown Allotment 49 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 445)
- Crown Allotment 52A Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 448)
- Crown Allotment 54 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 450)
- Crown Allotment 55 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 451)
- Crown Allotment 56 Parish of Watta Wella (Vol 12285 Fol 452)
- Crown Allotments 79A, 79B Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 11183 Fol 424)
- Crown Allotments 77A, 77B, 78A, 78B, 78C, 79C Parish of Glynwylln (Vol 11219 Fol 605)
- Crown Allotments 95, 98 Parish of Joel Joel (Vol 11602 Fol 779)
- Lot 3 on PS322629D (Vol 11602 Fol 771)
- Lot 1 on TP756362J (Vol 11602 Fol 777)
- Lots 1, 2, 3 on TP898098E (Vol 11602 Fol 780)
- Crown Allotment 118 Parish of Malakoff (Vol 08933 Fol 703)
- Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 on TP577560B (Vol 09519 Fol 703)

The site also includes road/reserves of the:

- Stawell-Avoca Road
- Vances Crossing Road
- Potter Road
- Perry Road
- Vineyard Road
- Landsborough Road
- Watta Wella Road

The site also includes unnamed government roads as follows:

- Adjacent 79C\PP2687, 78A\PP2687, 77B\PP2687, 76B\PP2687, 75A\PP2687, 74A\PP2687
- Adjacent 107\PP2687, 108A\PP2687
- Adjacent 74A\PP2687, 75A\PP2687, 75B\PP2687, 111A\PP2687, 112\PP2687
- Adjacent 1\PP2806, 2\PP2806
- Adjacent 2\PP2806, 4B\PP2806, 3\PP2806, 4A\PP2806
- Adjacent 118\PP3040, 154\PP3040
- Adjacent 3\PP2806, 7\PP2806, 4A\PP2806, 4C\PP2806, 8\PP2806, 7\PP2806, 6\PP2806, 5A\PP2806, 5B\PP2806
- Adjacent 5B\PP2806, 5A\PP2806

- Adjacent 112\PP2806, 9C\PP2806, 9B\PP2806, 9A\PP2806, 7\PP2806, 6\PP2806, 12\PP2806, 11A\PP2806, 10A\PP2806, 10\PP2806
- Adjacent 154\PP3040,156\PP3040
- Adjacent 11A\PP2806, 11B\PP2806, 16A\PP2806, 16B\PP2806, 12\PP2806, 13\PP2806, 14\PP2806, 15\PP2806
- Adjacent to 4C\PP2806, 5B\PP2806, 6\PP2806, 15\PP2806, 22\PP2806, 21\PP2806
- Adjacent 5B\PP2806, 5A\PP2806, 17B\PP2806, 17A\PP2806, 16A\PP2806
- Adjacent 9C\PP2806, 9B\PP2806, 9A\PP2806
- Adjacent 31\PP2806, 27\PP2806, 26\PP2806, 29\PP2806
- Adjacent 12\PP3777, 11\PP3777, 15\PP3777, 10\PP3777, 17\PP3777, 25\PP3777, 23\PP3777, 20\PP3777, 24\PP3777, 51\PP3777, 55\PP3777
- Adjacent 24\PP3777, 27\PP3777, 47\PP3777, 51\PP3777
- Adjacent 2\PS319371, 1\TP756362
- Adjacent 3\TP324760, 7\TP324760, 8\TP324760
- Adjacent 50\PP3777, 49\PP3777, 55\PP3777, 56\PP3777, 54\PP3777, 53\PP3777, 52A\PP3777, 65\PP3777, 64\PP3777, 63\PP3777, 62\PP3777, 59\PP3777, 58\PP3777, PC375536, 57\PP3777, 60\PP3777, 1\TP553304, 2\TP912469, 3\TP912469, 114\PP2806, 1\TP912469, 107B\PP2806, 107A\PP2806, 95\PP2806, 127\PP2806
- Adjacent 95\PP2806, 7\TP324760, 6\TP324760, 98\PP2806, 126\PP2806, 162B\PP2806, 163A\PP2806


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