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Brewster Wind Farm

Appendix M

Community Engagement Plan

December 2021



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Brewster Wind Farm

Community Engagement Plan

December 2021

Version History

Version	Author	Date Issued	Description
1	Peter Lausberg	23/12/2020	Version 1 to coincide with commencement of consultation.
2	Severin Staalesen	01/04/2021	Version 2 to include results of community consultation prior to lodgement of planning application.
3	Peter Lausberg	01/12/2021	Version 3 to include greater project capacity.

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Contents

Version History	2
Contents	3
1 Introduction	4
1.1 About RE Future	4
1.2 Communication Plan Overview	4
2 Project Summary.....	5
2.1 Planning Process.....	5
2.2 Construction Process.....	5
2.3 Project Timeline.....	5
3 Guiding Principles and Objectives.....	7
3.1 Guiding Principles.....	7
3.2 Community Engagement Objectives	7
3.2.1 Business Objectives.....	7
3.2.2 Communication Objectives.....	7
4 Stakeholders	8
4.1 Community Background	8
4.2 Local Context	8
4.3 Regional Context	8
5 Communication Tools	9
5.1 Key Messages	9
5.2 Stakeholder Contact Management	9
5.2.1 Mail Out	9
5.2.2 Face-to-Face Visits	9
5.2.3 Stakeholder Database	10
5.2.4 Enquiries Management.....	10
5.3 Consultation Action Plan	10
5.4 Ongoing Review.....	11
6 Community Benefit Scheme	12
6.1 Landowner Rental Payments.....	12
6.2 Payments in Lieu of Rates	12
6.3 Neighbour Profit Sharing.....	12
6.4 Community Fund	12
6.5 Supporting Local Education	12
6.6 Promoting Renewable Energy	12
6.7 A Buy Local and Employ Local Policy	13
7 Appendices.....	14

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1 Introduction

RE Future Pty Ltd is the proponent of the Brewster Wind Farm (Project), which is a proposed wind energy facility located approximately 10 km east of Beaufort Victoria. This Community Engagement Plan details RE Future's proposed approach to community engagement from now through to the completion of construction and the start of commercial operation. This Community Engagement Plan has been prepared by RE Future in advance of the proposed lodgement date of the planning permit application to allow adequate time for engagement with the community surrounding the Project.

1.1 About RE Future

RE Future is an Australian owned and funded enterprise operated by a small group of seasoned wind industry professionals. Our extensive knowledge of Victoria's wind topography and the local/regional electricity grid enables us to identify new and previously overlooked locations for the establishment of wind generation facilities. With over 50 years of combined experience in the wind industry the team at RE Future contains extensive experience in wind farm development. Since 2001 they have worked independently or as partners and successfully developed over 840 MW of wind projects that are now built and operating. A common factor throughout their time in the wind industry has been their recognition that local communities host renewable energy facilities, and therefore that contributing in a fair and reasonable way to the local area is crucial to the acceptance of renewable energy projects.

1.2 Communication Plan Overview

There are six sections to this community engagement plan, outlined as follows:

- Section 1: introduction and overview;
- Section 2: provides a summary of the proposed project;
- Section 3: guiding principles and objectives of this community engagement plan are outlined;
- Section 4: stakeholder groups are identified and characterised in terms of their interests, concerns and consultation needs in the local and regional context;
- Section 5: outlines the consultation methods and tools that will be adopted, a program for their implementation, and the process for recording feedback;
- Section 6: summarises the proposed stakeholder and community benefit plan for the Brewster Wind Farm;
- Appendix 1: contains the consultation outcomes report which details consultation activities and outcomes to date;
- Appendix 2: contains the letter/pamphlet sent to all residents located within 5 km of a wind turbine location;
- Appendix 3 contains the letter left at dwellings where a visit was attempted but no one was at the dwelling at the time.

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2 Project Summary

The proposed Project is bounded by the Western Hwy to the north, Trawalla Road to the west, Kayleys Lane to the east, and Trawalla East Road to the south. The wind farm will consist of seven wind turbine generators with a combined capacity of approximately 42 megawatts. The project location and turbine layout are shown in Figure 1 below.

The turbines will be up to 247 m in height, and together will produce enough renewable energy to power 11,200 homes and abate nearly 100,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide—the broader greenhouse benefits of the Project are shown in *Table 1* below. The Project will be connected to the electrical network via the BAN-BGS 66 kV powerline which is located directly adjacent to the site. Electrical cables associated with the wind farm will be laid underground, except at the very point of connection to the power line.

Table 1: Electricity and Greenhouse Benefits

Electricity production	165,550 MWh p.a.
Number of households powered	19,600
Greenhouse gas abatement	165,550 Tonnes CO ₂ p.a.
Equivalent number of cars off the road	25,000
Equivalent number of trees planted	1,923,250

*Source: <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>

2.1 Planning Process

The planning application for the Brewster Wind Farm was lodged with the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) in the first half of 2021. DELWP is assessing the planning application against the provisions of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. At the appropriate time, all the planning application documents will be available for public viewing at the Pyrenees Shire Council Offices in Beaufort and will be accessible via a dedicated website at www.brewsterwindfarm.com.au.

2.2 Construction Process

Once a permit has been issued by DELWP, grid connection secured, and financing completed, construction of the wind farm will begin and will take approximately six to nine months. There are three main stages starting with construction of the access tracks, construction pads, foundations and underground cabling. This stage is the busiest and involves the most people and machinery. Stage two sees the turbines delivered and installed using specialised cranes and a highly skilled erection team. The final stage involves commissioning and testing, followed by the energisation of the connection to the electricity grid so that the export of energy can begin.

2.3 Project Timeline

An indicative timeline for the Project is shown in *Table 2*.

Table 2: Indicative Project Timeline

Q4 2020	Community consultation commences
Q4 2020 – Q4 2021	Specialised technical and environmental assessments complete
Q1 2021	Planning application lodged with DELWP
Q2 2021 – Q1 2022	Planning application assessed by DELWP
Q2 2022	If approved, Planning Permit issued by DELWP
Q4 2022	Commencement of construction
Q4 2022 – Q4 2023	Construction
Q4 2023	Energisation and Commencement of Operation

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Brewster Wind Farm

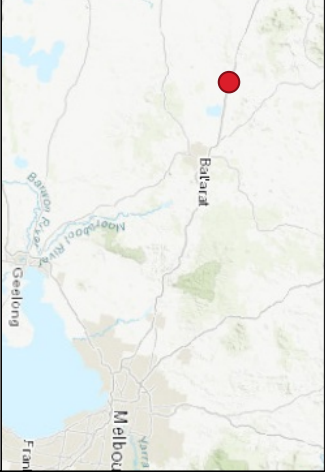
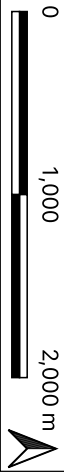
Location Plan

Legend

- Wind Turbines
- Parcels
- HIGHWAY
- ROAD
- Spring Hill Creek

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3 Guiding Principles and Objectives

The guiding principles and objectives of this plan are outlined in this section.

3.1 Guiding Principles

The approach to community engagement outlined in this plan is based on the following guiding principles:

- Stakeholders should be engaged early in the development process;
- Stakeholders should be engaged in a personal and respectful manner;
- Information concerning the project should be communicated clearly and comprehensively;
- Information concerning the project should be easily accessible and regularly updated; and
- The community engagement process should be flexible and responsive to the needs of the community.

3.2 Community Engagement Objectives

The objectives of this community engagement plan can be broken down into business objectives and communication objectives.

3.2.1 Business Objectives

By investing time and effort to deliver a comprehensive consultation and engagement plan, RE Future expects to secure the following business objectives:

- Community and stakeholder support for the Project;
- Successful construction and operation of the wind farm;
- Commercially effective partnerships between the parties involved in the Project; and
- An enduring positive relationship with surrounding neighbours and key stakeholders.

3.2.2 Communication Objectives

The successful completion of the Project requires the following communication objectives to be achieved:

- Raise awareness: raise community and stakeholder awareness about the Project, including its environmental and social benefits;
- Communicate respectfully: ensure community members and stakeholders are given the opportunity to discuss the Project in person and raise any potential benefits or disbenefits that they perceive;
- Listen to feedback: formally register any concerns raised as part of the development process and incorporate feedback into further communications wherever possible;
- Align key stakeholders: where possible, align the views and attitudes of key stakeholders including participating landowners, neighbouring residents, local community members, and regulatory authorities, to ensure the smoothest possible implementation of the Project;
- Establish community benefit scheme: consult with the local community to determine the most appropriate structure for the community benefit scheme; and
- Register interactions: ensure all interactions with stakeholders are recorded for future reference.

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4 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals, groups or other organisations or entities that have an interest in the Project. Not all stakeholder groups are homogenous and within each stakeholder group there will be varying levels of interest, impact, needs, concerns, wants, relationships and influence.

4.1 Community Background

The community around the proposed Project is quite familiar with wind farms. There are three constructed projects in the region – Waubra to the north, Chepstowe to the south and Stockyard Hill to the south west.

4.2 Local Context

The area around the wind farm comprises large agricultural landholdings that are mostly dedicated to cropping and grazing, with a small number consigned to poultry farming and blue gum forestry. The closest town to the project is Beaufort, which is located approximately 10 km to the west. The hamlet of Trawalla consisting of six dwellings, a community hall and a primary school servicing the local area is located approximately 4 km to the west of the Project site. Two clubs are located within 10 km of the site, namely Ballarat Radio Model Flying Club, the premises of which is located on Church Road some 4.8 km from the site, and the Dynamic Flight Hang Gliding School, which has a training facility at Tansey Court some 5.7 km away. The Langi Kal Kal prison is approximately 5 km to the northwest of the site.

The following table provides a breakdown of dwellings located within 4 km of a proposed wind turbine location according to whether they belong to participating landowners or neighbouring properties, and the distance zone they fall into.

Table 3: Nearby Dwellings

Distance	Stakeholder Dwellings	Neighbour Dwellings	Total
0 to 1 km	3	0	3
1 to 2 km	1	7	8
2 to 3 km	0	15	15
3 to 4 km	0	23	23

4.3 Regional Context

Apart from nearby dwellings, the community engagement plan must take note of entities and organisations within the broader region that have an interest in one or more aspects of the Project, such as:

- Local businesses;
- Local clubs and establishments;
- Regulatory authorities, including:
 - Pyrenees Shire Council;
 - Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP);
 - Country Fire Authority (CFA);
 - Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority;
 - Local Network Service Provider (Powercor); and
 - Nearby Aerodromes.

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5 Communication Tools

Throughout the development process RE Future will communicate with stakeholders on a regular basis. This section outlines the processes by which RE Future will ensure effective communication with stakeholders, as well as key activities associated with the consultation process.

5.1 Key Messages

The key messages that will be communicated to stakeholders will be:

- The Brewster Wind Farm will bring a range of economic benefits for the local area and surrounding communities;
- The Project will also have broader environmental benefits resulting from the production of 165,550 MWh of renewable electricity, which is enough power for around 19,600 homes per annum, and delivers a greenhouse benefit equivalent to planting over 1,750,000 trees;
- If approved, the wind farm will consist of seven wind turbines with a total capacity of approximately 42 megawatts and will connect into the existing 66 kV power line which traverses the site. The turbines themselves will be up to 247 m high at the tip of the blades;
- The planning application for the Project was lodged with DELWP in 2021, and nearby residents will have an opportunity to review the planning application and contribute a submission as part of the planning process; and
- As part of the Project RE Future will implement the Community Benefit Plan, the details of which are outlined in Section 6.

5.2 Stakeholder Contact Management

In the first instance stakeholders are contacted via mail and in person. Following the initial mail out, wherever possible stakeholder's preferred mode/s of communication (i.e. mail, phone, face-to-face, or email) is accommodated by project staff. The process that is followed in order to contact stakeholders is outlined below.

5.2.1 Mail Out

The first step in the community engagement process consists of a letter sent to all dwellings located within 5 km of a wind turbine location and all organisations identified as part of the stakeholder analysis. This initial communication outlines the Project, provides details of the specific benefits to be offered to nearby residents and the broader community through a Community Benefit Fund, and makes the offer of one-on-one information visits/meetings with the Project proponent. Further letters are then sent to nearby residents and stakeholder organisations on a quarterly basis or at major Project milestones. Project pamphlets are sent to all dwellings within 5 km of a wind turbine location unless a dwelling owner specifically requests not to receive any further correspondence.

A copy of the first letter/pamphlet mailed out to residents within 5 km of a wind turbine location is included as an appendix to this report. At the time of sending, the Project was planned to consist of four wind turbines, however this has now been increased to seven. An updated mail out and another round of house visits will be scheduled to maintain stakeholder involvement.

5.2.2 Face-to-Face Visits

As described above, in the first mail out all residents located within 4 km of a proposed turbine location were offered the opportunity to meet with project staff on a face-to-face basis. Regardless of whether a request was received, project staff then visited all dwellings within 3 km of a wind turbine location and attempted to make personal contact with the resident, and if that was not possible left a note repeating the offer of a one-on-one visit with project staff.

If following a one-on-one visit a resident requested a further visit, any such request has been honoured. Project staff have made two attempts to visit dwellings within 3 km of a wind turbine location and left a note

each time if no one was at home. If following two attempts to visit no response was received it has been assumed that the stakeholder in question does not want to speak with project staff and no further attempts at a face-to-face visit will be made. Details of all one-on-one interactions are recorded in the stakeholder database.

Results of face-to-face visits to date are summarised in the consultation outcomes report which is included as an appendix to this report. A copy of the letter left to notify residents of a visit has also been included as an appendix to this report. Again, these documents reflect the status prior to the addition of three additional turbines to the Project, and these processes will be repeated shortly.

5.2.3 Stakeholder Database

A stakeholder database and register has been established to record and track details of all stakeholder and community contact. The register will be used to capture community members contact details, the nature of the contact, how the contact was received, any matters raised and any actions required, as well as Project team responses, follow-up and close out. The database will be made available to the Responsible Authority upon request.

5.2.4 Enquiries Management

The timely and effective management of queries is an important aspect of the successful delivery of the Brewster Wind Farm. The Project has a dedicated email address and phone number to allow residents to contact the project proponent. Enquires are recorded in a register and an appropriate response provided within a target turn round time of five working days.

5.3 Consultation Action Plan

To date, the following actions have been taken as part of the consultation process for the proposed wind farm. This action plan will be updated on a regular basis to ensure that this plan is responsive to the needs of Project stakeholders.

Table 4: Consultation Action Plan

Action	Description	Timing	Tools
1	Inception meeting with DELWP Planning	December 2020	
2	Inception meeting with Pyrenees Shire Council	As determined by Council	
3	Launch of project webpage on RE Future website	January 2020	
4	Mail out to all residents within 4 km offering one-on-one information visits	December 2020	Project Flyer No. 1
5	Conduct one-on-one visits with nearby residents	Following first mail out	Project Flyer No. 1
6	Briefing of Pyrenees Shire Councillors and Council Staff	As determined by Council	Draft plans. Summary presentation
7	Briefing of the Wind Farm Commissioner	As determined by Wind Farm Commissioner	Draft plans. Summary presentation
8	Launch of dedicated project website	March 2021	
9	Mail out update letter to community advising of planning application status	March 2021	
10	Conduct one-on-one visits with nearby residents	December 2021	Project Flyer No. 2
11	Formal notification of an application for a planning permit	As determined by DELWP Planning	Formal notice provided by DELWP Planning

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12	Upload planning permit application documentation to project webpage	As determined by DELWP Planning	As determined by DELWP Planning
13	Briefings to DELWP Planning and DELWP Environment	TBA	TBA
14	Briefing to Pyrenees Shire Council	TBA	TBA
15	Briefings to Stakeholder Organisations	As Required	As Required
16	Update of project webpage advising of planning application status	Following determination of Minister for Planning	
17	Mail out update letter to community advising of planning application status	Following determination of Minister for Planning	Project Flyer No. 3
18	Media releases	As required	As required.
19	Update of project webpage advising of construction start date	TBA	Project Flyer No. 4
20	Mail out update letter to community advising of construction start date	TBA	Project Flyer No. 4

5.4 Ongoing Review

This plan will be regularly monitored and reviewed, with appropriate adaptations made quarterly or times if material changes are planned for the Project. By this means, the plan will be continuously improved and any lessons learned will be incorporated. For further information about the results of community consultation to date refer to the consultation outcomes report which is included as an appendix to this report.

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6 Community Benefit Scheme

RE Future is committed to ensuring that the local communities that host our projects benefit both directly and indirectly from renewable energy. This plan, like all our community benefit plans, is specific to each of our projects based on the needs of local stakeholder groups, population density and other area specific criteria.

6.1 Landowner Rental Payments

The landowners who will host the Brewster Wind Farm will receive rental payment to offset the farming land required for the wind turbines, hardstands, access tracks and electrical infrastructure. Rental payments will commence at the start of construction and will continue until the site is fully remediated at the end of the working life of the turbines.

6.2 Payments in Lieu of Rates

Under the Victorian Electricity Act 2014 the Brewster Wind Farm must make payments in lieu of rates to the relevant local Council responsible for the site. The methodology for determining payments, as set out in the Electricity Industry Act, combines a fixed charge with a variable charge based on the capacity of the power station in megawatts. Based on 2018-19 rates, and assuming the installation of 6 MW wind turbine generators, this would result in payments of approximately **\$115,000** per annum to the Pyrenees Shire Council.

6.3 Neighbour Profit Sharing

After construction is complete, the owners of all habitable dwellings within 2 km of a wind turbine location will receive neighbour profit sharing payments based on the following formula:

- Each habitable neighbour dwelling located within 2km of a wind turbine will receive an annual base payment of **\$3000**;
- Neighbours that have one or more wind turbines closer than 1.5 km from their dwelling will receive an additional payment of **\$1000** per turbine per annum; and
- Neighbours that have one or more wind turbines located between 1.5 km and 2 km from their dwelling will receive an additional payment of **\$750** per turbine per annum.

Based on the proposed layout of the Brewster Wind Farm, it is estimated that the Brewster Wind Farm neighbour profit sharing scheme will result in over **\$37,250** being distributed in the immediate area surrounding the wind farm each year.

6.4 Community Fund

To assist in the prosperity of the local community and encourage sustainable development in the area, the wind farm will also contribute **\$31,500** per annum to a local Community Fund. This amount represents a payment of \$750 per MW of installed capacity to the community on an annual basis.

It is envisaged that the Community Fund will be managed by a community reference group made up of local community members who will manage the distribution of grants and sponsorships from the fund. This methodology has been successfully implemented in the Pyrenees Shire at the Waubra Wind Farm.

6.5 Supporting Local Education

RE Future has targeted supporting local primary education as one of the best ways to build strength and resilience in local communities. Local primary schools have received annual funding at many of our previous projects, including schools at Maroona, Timboon and Simpson. At Trawalla, the wind farm will contribute **\$6,000** per annum to the nearest primary school.

6.6 Promoting Renewable Energy

In addition, each habitable dwelling within 4 km of the Project will be offered the opportunity to have installed a 5 kW rooftop solar panel system to the value of **\$5,000**. This offer has been sized to supply the majority of a

normal household's electricity requirement and thus deliver free green power to all homes within 4 km of the Project.

If a dwelling already has a solar panel system, the owner can request that the system be installed at the dwelling of a relative, or can opt to receive a payment in lieu. It is estimated that in the area surrounding the Brewster Wind Farm this initiative will contribute in excess of **\$225,000** directly to the benefit of the local community.

6.7 A Buy Local and Employ Local Policy

Wind farms require the services of various trades and businesses during their construction and operation. These include fencing, cartage, civil works, electrical trades, landscaping and ongoing maintenance by qualified trades people. RE Future has a policy to employ local businesses and trades people wherever possible, and encourages our contractors to also apply this policy.

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7 Appendices

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Appendix 1: Consultation Outcomes Report

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Brewster Wind Farm

Consultation Outcomes Report

March 2021

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Version History

Version	Author	Reviewer	Date	Description
1	SS	PL	20/03/21	First draft
2	SS	PL	31/03/21	Issued as final

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Summary

This report presents the process taken to identify and engage with the Brewster Community prior to lodgment of a planning permit application for the proposed Brewster Wind Farm. The goal of engagement is to convey key project information, community benefits and engagement options to facilitate community feedback on the project or planning. In total 47 neighbors were identified and contacted by mail in advance of in-person visits by RE Future representatives for households within 3 km of the proposed wind farm, which were carried out between December 2020 and March 2021. A project website was launched in March of 2021 and includes information concerning the project background, environmental benefits, the planning process, the community benefit scheme and contact information. A summary of the matters raised by the community in face-to-face meeting concludes the report.

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Contents

Contents	1
1 Introduction	1
2 Defining the Brewster Community.....	1
3 Background	1
4 Engagement Activity	3
5 Community Feedback Summary	4
6 Conclusion	5

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1 Introduction

This report outlines consultation undertaken with residents in the localities of Brewster, Trawalla, Ercildoune and Burrumbeet in relation to the proposed Brewster Wind Farm. The Consultation Outcomes Report is to be considered in combination with the Brewster Wind Farm Community Engagement Plan, December 2020.

A key tenet of RE Future operations is acknowledgement that local communities hosting renewable energy facilities provide a valued contribution to wider society. In person, proactive, fair and reasonable engagement combined with community benefit are the basis for acceptance of projects. Identifying stakeholder groups; facilitating communication of interests, concerns and consultation needs; and recording received feedback provides for an improved design and implementation of the proposed wind farm.

2 Defining the Brewster Community

The 'Brewster Community' for engagement and consultation purposes was designated as neighbours within 5 kilometres of proposed wind turbine locations. A total of 14 dwellings were identified in the Brewster locality, with 12 of these currently occupied. A total of 28 dwellings and the Trawalla Primary School were identified in the Trawalla locality. Of these dwellings 25 are currently occupied. Finally, three occupied dwellings were identified in the Ercildoune locality, and 1 occupied dwelling in the Burrumbeet locality. Dwelling locations are presented in Figure 1.

3 Background

The Brewster Community are familiar with wind farms as their region has three constructed projects – Waubra to the north, Chepstowe to the south and Stockyard Hill to the south-west. The community is home to rural residences and well established and generational pastoral and agricultural farming families.

The project is located approximately 10 km to the west of the nearest township of Beaufort. The hamlet of Trawalla is home to 6 dwellings, Trawalla Primary School and a community hall. The hamlet of Brewster is home to 2 dwellings, the Brewster CFA shed and a community hall. The Langi Kal Kal Prison is approximately 5 km to the north-west of the proposed site.

The wind farm promises to bring a range of local economic benefits and broader environmental benefit with generation of 96,400 MWh of renewable energy, and also makes use of existing electrical grid infrastructure. The wind farm consists of four wind turbines with a total tip height of 247 m.

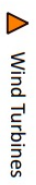
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Brewster Wind Farm

Dwellings

Legend



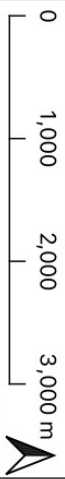
Dwellings



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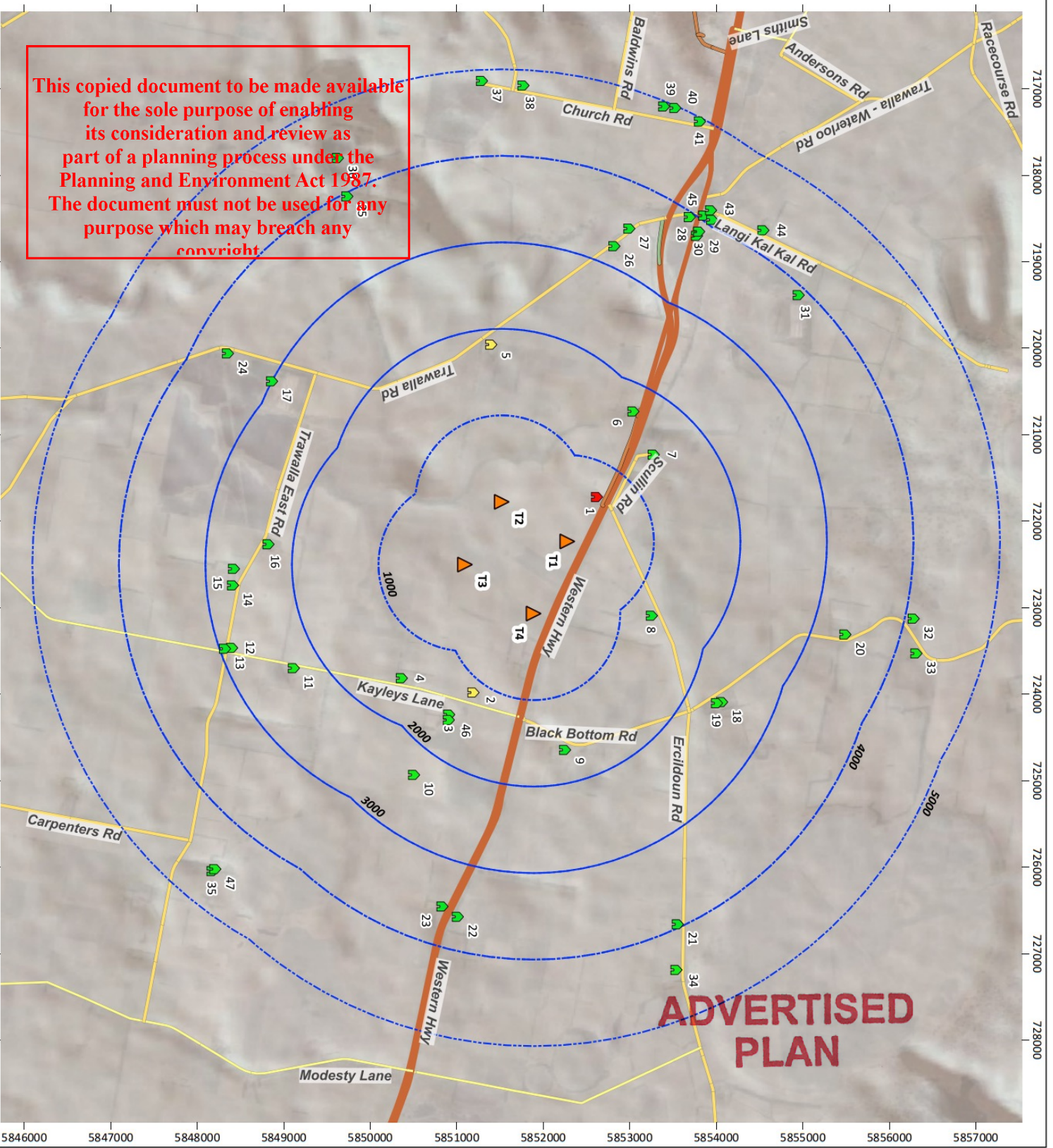


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DATASOURCES: OvermapdataState of Victoria 2020. REFuture 2020.



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4 Engagement Activity

4.1 Brewster Wind Farm Project Flyer 1

A written introduction to the proposed Brewster Wind Farm was posted to 47 addressees on 8 December 2020. This letter provided background to the proposal and addressed aspects frequently raised when discussing wind farm projects, including:

- Proposed location and number of turbines;
- Anticipated environmental benefit;
- Grid connection;
- Planning process;
- Construction activities;
- Community benefit scheme; and
- RE Future corporate background.

This letter also advised of our intent to commence visits with those householders residing within 3 km of the proposed Brewster Wind Farm, and the option to request a visit for households up to 5 km from the proposed wind farm. The telephone and email contacts for the Brewster Wind Farm were also included. This letter is available for review in Brewster Wind Farm Community Engagement Plan. A total of five of the 47 posted letters were returned marked “Left Address” by Australia Post and registered thus.

4.2 In-person visits

In-person visits were carried out for all dwellings located within 3 km of a proposed wind turbine location, commencing on 15 December 2020. The aim of these visits was to inform, build relationships, address preliminary concerns, and to seek input for refining the community benefit scheme. These and subsequent visits conducted in December 2020, February 2021 and March of 2021 are presented in Table 1. In total 11 households availed of the offered consultation at their door upon a visit or by a later scheduled meeting to suit their availability. Three households have participated in two (or more) meetings. One household was contacted by telephone to meet site agricultural quarantine requirements.

During in-person visits receipt of the introductory letter was confirmed with additional copies provided where requested. All feedback and contributions provided by residents was welcome and recorded with a summary provided in Section 5 of this report. Contact details were taken where householders were amenable to, or requested, further and/or ongoing information.

Where householders were not in attendance during house visits by RE Future representatives, a follow-up letter was left in the letterbox indicating that we had called in as part of our engagement and consultation process. This letter provided both telephone and email contact details and is available for review Brewster Wind Farm Community Engagement Plan.

Household visits to the Brewster Community by RE Future representatives continue to be provided upon request or as agreed with householders.

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Table 1: Schedule of visits to Brewster Community, engagement method and reference material

Date	Engagement method	Reference material
8 December 2020	Letter Postage	Project Flyer 1
15 December 2020	Householder visits	Visit letter
18 December 2020	Householder visits	Visit letter
22 December 2020	Email requested images	Maps per householder request
4 February 2021	Household visits	Map: dwelling to WT location
9 February 2021	Household visits	Visit letter
22 February 2021	Household visits	Map: per householder request
26 February 2021	Household visit	Map: dwelling to WT distance
1 March 2021	Household visits	EP Amendment Regulations 2021

4.3 Telephone and e-mail

Three members of the Brewster Community elected to contact via both the mobile telephone number and email address. Replies by email and telephone to these members identified two engagement meetings of mutual benefit which were subsequently scheduled and conducted.

4.4 Website

The proposed Brewster Wind Farm project has launched a webpage to provide the Brewster Community with online access to project details such as:

- Project background, environmental benefits and site selection criteria;
- Planning process information and reports to be made available;
- Community Benefit Scheme; and
- Brewster Wind Farm Contact telephone number, email address, online request form and link to RE Future website.

At the appropriate time planning documents relating to the project will be available from this website. For further information refer to www.brewsterwindfarm.com.au.

5 Community Feedback Summary

Feedback received from the Brewster Community indicated a generally pragmatic approach to the role of wind farms in securing society's future energy generation; the planning process; a positive interest in the size and mechanism of the *Community Benefit Scheme*; and uncertainty surrounding potential for amenity and community impact.

Community members conveyed their strong connection to their community, land and neighbours with a desire for both the Brewster Community Hall and CFA to be supported by the Brewster Wind Farm as key components of the Brewster Community social support structure.

payment to the Trawalla Primary School was also supported. *Neighbour Profit Sharing* payment and contribution toward a rooftop solar system under *Promoting Renewable Energy* policy was appreciated. Some residents sought assurance that accepting this payment would not require a signed agreement and waiving of rights.

An expectation of greater detail being made available upon lodging the planning permit application was evident with concerns raised by community members in relation to:

- Noise levels and compliance;
- Visual impact and shadow flicker;
- Impact to flora and both domestic and wild fauna;
- Ground and surface water impact;
- Potential for wind farm growth (additional wind turbines);
- Traffic management during and following construction; and
- Property value impact.

The Brewster Community has been advised that full and accurate project information is to be made available according to the planning application submission process. The provision of detailed information such as that provided in noise assessment and monitoring, landscape photomontages and ecological assessments is eagerly anticipated by some residents. Prioritising accuracy and detail above an immediate qualified response was largely understood and appreciated. The community was encouraged to be active participants in the planning process for the Brewster Wind Farm now, and upon their review of the planning application.

6 Conclusion

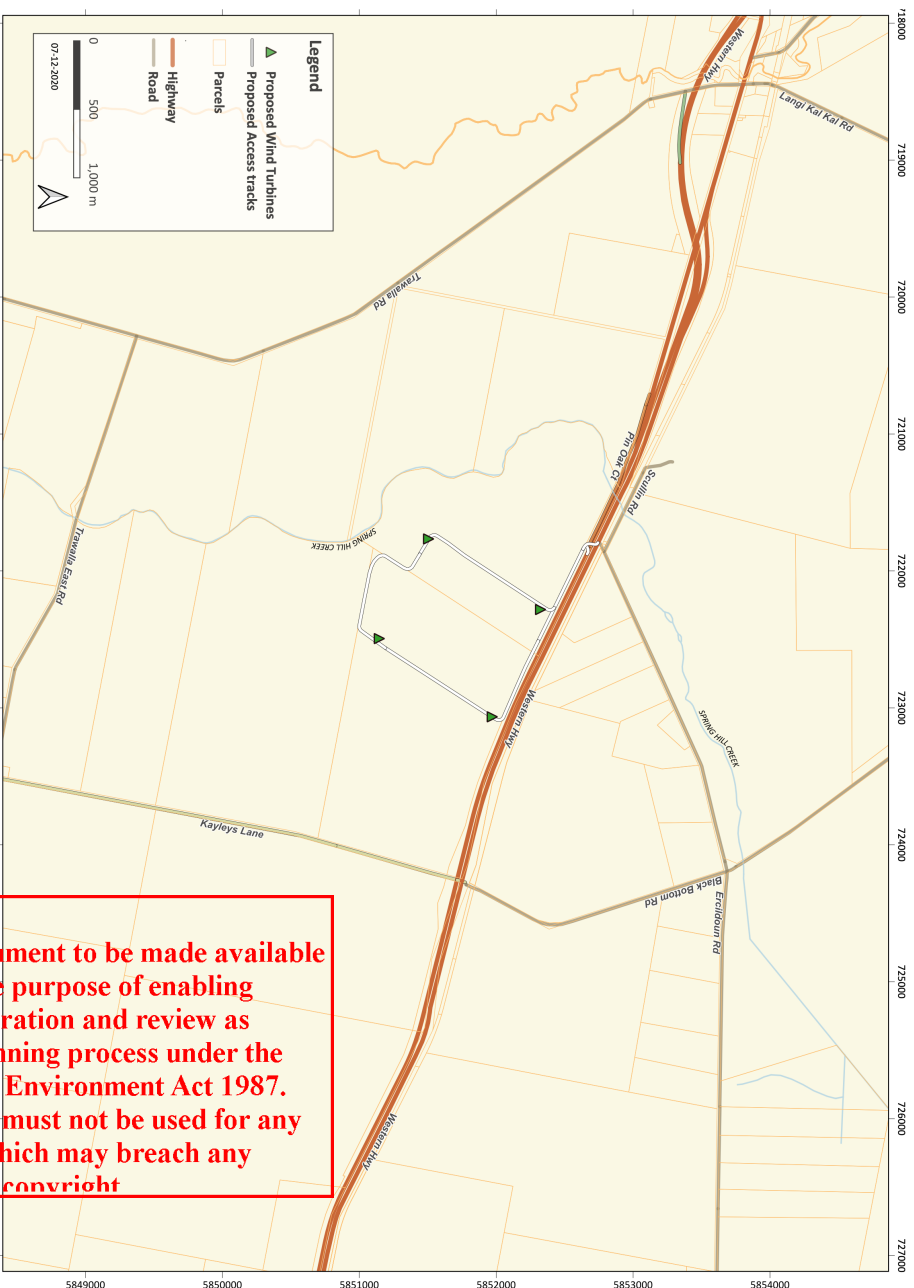
The members of the Brewster Community that engaged in consultation prior to planning permit application lodgement are familiar with wind farms and understand the local economic benefit they bring. Community pragmatism is in evidence as benefits of the Community Benefit Scheme are balanced with perceived or potential amenity loss. Reports to be presented in support of the planning application, such as visual impact, flora, fauna and noise reporting will provide sought after details to clarify the project vision and design. RE Future look forward to continued engagement with the Brewster Community.

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Project Location

The location of the proposed Brewster Wind Farm is shown on the map above. This site was chosen for the following reasons:

- It receives undisturbed wind flow with strong, consistent wind speeds;
- There are large setbacks to dwellings;
- There will be minimal effects on flora and fauna;
- It is in close proximity to the electrical grid; and
- It offers easy access for construction.

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Proposed Brewster Wind Farm






We write to you to inform you of our proposal to develop a wind farm approximately four kilometres (4 km) east of Trawalla, Victoria. This letter will introduce you to our proposal and inform you about upcoming house visits and the planning process. The information following is the first part of a series of updates that we will provide to you regarding the wind farm planning process and the development process to follow.



About the Wind Farm

The wind farm will consist of up to four wind turbine generators with a combined capacity of approximately 24 megawatts (MW). The wind farm will connect into an existing powerline adjacent to the site and as such will not require new powerlines. The turbines themselves will be up to 24.7 m in height. Together the turbines will produce enough power for almost 11,200 homes, and their greenhouse benefit will be equivalent to planting over 1,009,000 trees. The energy and greenhouse benefits of the Brewster Wind Farm are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Energy and Greenhouse Benefits

	Energy output per year (estimated).	94,600 MWh
	Greenhouse gas abatement per year through the reduction in carbon-based generation.	94,600 Tonnes CO2
	Number of households that can be powered by green energy.	~11,200 pa
	Equivalent number of cars whose emissions will be offset.	~14,300 pa
	Equivalent number of trees which would provide the same emissions reduction.	~1,099,000 pa

Source: <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>

Connection to the Electricity Grid

The wind farm will not require any new power lines. Instead it will connect into the existing local electricity network. This means that the wind farm cannot get any larger, as the local electricity network has a limited capacity. Additionally, all the cables associated with the wind farm will be located underground, except at the point of connection to the grid.

Planning Process

The planning application for the Brewster Wind Farm will be lodged with the Minister for Planning in the

coming months. The application will be assessed against the Policy and Planning Guidelines for the Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria which set standards and limits covering the following:

- Sound compliance;
- Landscape impact;
- Shadow flicker;
- Impact to flora and fauna;
- Impact to cultural heritage; and
- Electromagnetic interference.

At the appropriate time, all the planning documents relating to the wind farm will be available for public viewing at the Pyrenees Shire Council Offices in Beaupre and will be accessible via a dedicated website which will be launched in the coming months.

Construction Process

Once a permit has been issued and financing completed, construction of the wind farm can begin and will take approximately six to nine months. There are three main stages to the construction process, starting with construction of the access tracks, construction pads, foundations and underground cabling. This stage is the busiest and involves the most people and machinery. Stage two sees the turbines delivered and installed using specialised cranes with highly skilled operators. The final stage involves commissioning and testing the wind farm, and connecting it the electricity grid so that the export of energy can begin.

House Visits

In the coming days RE Future staff will commence conducting door-to-door visits to all houses within three kilometres (3 km) of the proposed site. If you are not around when we visit we will leave a note to say we've called in. If you do not live within three kilometres of the wind farm but would still like us to pay you a visit, or you are unsure of how far you live from the wind farm, simply contact us via phone or email and we will arrange a time for one of our staff members to meet you at to your home. Our contact details are at the bottom of this letter.

Community Benefit Scheme

At RE Future we understand that it is the local community that host our renewable energy facilities. As such RE

Future is committed to ensuring that the local communities that host our projects benefit both directly and indirectly from renewable energy developments in their area.

The Brewster Wind Farm will have a Community Benefit Scheme which includes the following:

- Owners of dwellings located within two kilometres (2 km) of a wind turbine generator will receive an annual payment. If you live within two kilometres of a wind turbine we will inform you during our round of house visits. Altogether these payments will amount to over \$30,000 delivered into the local area each year.

Owners of all dwellings located within four kilometres (4 km) of a wind turbine generator will be offered a rooftop solar system to the value of \$5,000. This programme has been designed to supply the majority of a normal household's electricity requirement and thus deliver free green power to all homes within four kilometres of a wind turbine generator.

- A dedicated Brewster Wind Farm Community Fund will be established and will receive \$18,000 per annum from the wind farm; and
- A further \$6000 per annum will be dedicated to a local primary school.

In addition to the community benefit scheme, the Brewster Wind Farm will also pay over \$100,000 per annum in shire rates for the lifetime of the wind farm.

About RE Future

RE Future is an Australian owned and funded enterprise operated by a small group of seasoned wind industry professionals. Our extensive knowledge of Victoria's wind topography and the local/regional electricity grid enables us to identify new and previously overlooked locations for the establishment of wind generation facilities. The team at RE Future contains extensive experience in wind farm development, with over 50 years of combined experience. Since 2001 they have worked independently or as partners and successfully developed over 840 MW of wind projects that are now built and operating.

Contacts

If you would like more information about the Brewster Wind Farm, or you would like us to pay you a visit, please contact us by phone on 0498 810 177, or via email at info@brewsterwindfarm.com.au.

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Appendix 3: Visit Letter

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To Whom It May Concern,

We are from RE Future, the company responsible for the proposed Brewster Wind Farm. We are leaving you this letter to let you know that we called in as part of our community consultation process. We will call past again some time during the next few weeks, however if you would like to contact us in the meantime please do not hesitate to contact us by phone on 0498 810 177 or via email at info@brewsterwindfarm.com.au.

Yours faithfully,



Severin Staalesen
Project Director

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