

Welcome to our latest project update

In this edition, read about:

- the project Community Open Days held in December 2021;
- our sponsorship and info booth at the upcoming Walcha Show in March;
- the formal declaration of the New England Renewable Energy Zone by the NSW Government;
- our progress to lodge an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS);
- how we are working to mitigate the impact of project traffic and transport

Our Community Open Day

On 10-11 December we held Community Open Days for the project at the Walcha Bowling Club.

Over the two days, 68 community members attended the event. Our project team presented information on a range of topics including visual amenity, biodiversity, traffic and transport, noise, heritage, the community benefit fund, construction and operational jobs, and project decommissioning. Our noise expert gave a demonstration of predicted noise levels from wind turbines at different distances.

We received valuable feedback from the community across a variety of topics and perspectives. This feedback will be carefully considered in the preparation of the EIS.



Come see us at the Walcha Show 2022!

We will once again attend the Walcha Show on 11-12 March this year. We hope to see you at our info booth so we can answer your questions and further gather your feedback about the project.

This year we are the proud sponsors of the Cattle Dog Challenge!

Winterbourne Wind Farm within a declared Renewable Energy Zone

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) was formally declared in December 2021 by the NSW Government. The declaration is the first step in formalising the REZ under the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020*, and sets out the intended network capacity, geographical area and infrastructure that will make up the REZ. The REZ is a key feature of the state's goals to achieve a 50% reduction in carbon emissions (relative to 2005 levels) by 2030. The Winterbourne Wind Farm will be located in the southern portion of the New England REZ and will contribute significantly to the state's renewable energy goals.



Map of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) progress

We are working to finalise the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed wind farm.

The EIS will include detailed technical and environmental assessments of potential impacts to biodiversity, visual, noise, cultural heritage, traffic and transport, aviation, bushfire, and a number of other topics. In addition, the EIS will include a Social and Environmental Impact Assessment to assess the potential impacts and benefits of the project to the local community.

Recent progress on the EIS includes:



Biodiversity

We completed three biodiversity surveys between December 2021 and January 2022. The surveys found:

- Only one threatened flora species (New England Peppermint) detected at the project site.
- No migratory bird species detected at the project site.
- Key fauna species, including the koala, spotted tail quoll, glossy black cockatoo, little eagle, and large and little bent-wing bats.



Noise

The noise assessment evaluated expected levels of noise and vibration from wind farm construction and wind farm operations. The results demonstrate that the operational noise at all non-involved neighbour dwellings will be lower than the relevant noise criteria established by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.



Cultural Heritage

We have completed an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) in consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs). Over several field surveys, we identified a number of cultural artefacts. The project has been designed to avoid as many artefacts as possible, and where it is not possible, the artefacts will be protected during project construction, or potentially relocated in consultation with the RAPs.

Mitigating the impact of project traffic

We are currently finalising a Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment. Key conclusions of the study include:

- The project will generate up to 288 heavy and 270 light vehicle movements per day during peak construction.
- The local road network can accommodate expected traffic during construction without compromising road safety or function.
- If the project is approved, we will prepare a detailed Traffic Management Plan (TMP) prior to project construction. The TMP will include provisions to minimise impact to other road users, including school buses, pedestrians, commuters, cyclists and emergency services. The TMP will be prepared in consultation with Walcha Council and Transport for NSW, and will be a condition of development consent.
- We will upgrade local roads where necessary prior to construction to ensure the roads are capable of handling construction traffic and heavy loads.

- We will continuously monitor road conditions during construction and any damage attributed to project vehicles will be rectified. At the end of construction, the road network will be left in at least as good a condition as at the start of construction.



Project timeline

There are a number of steps involved in the assessment and development of the Winterbourne Wind Farm. The next major milestone is submission of the EIS to Department of Planning and Environment in the next couple of months, followed by Public Exhibition and comment.

If the project is approved, we would expect construction to commence in mid-2023.