

## Land Use and Environment

### Will the Project impact on agricultural land?

The Project is located on land which will continue to be used for agricultural purposes while providing a guaranteed supplementary income to landholders. The overall footprint of the wind farm and associated infrastructure will take up only a small portion of the overall project site, approximately 7%, with the improvements to on-farm infrastructure such as tracks and fencing supporting day to day management of the existing enterprises.

### Do wind farms disrupt weather patterns?

No reliable evidence has been found to support the suggestion that wind farms can have any impact on local weather patterns.

### How will the wind farm affect birds and bats?

Before being granted planning approval, a wind farm proponent must undertake a detailed biodiversity assessment that considers all the biodiversity impacts of the proposal including clearing of native vegetation and indirect or prescribed species impacts including potential bird and bat strike.

Mortality figures from wind energy projects in NSW indicate an average rate of 1 to 3 bird fatalities per turbine per year. A summary of NSW findings can be found on page 32 of the NSW guidelines ([source: Draft Wind Energy Guidelines DPIE NSW 2023](#)).

These estimated mortality rates are considerably less than estimates for other anthropogenic sources. Millions of bird and bat deaths can be attributed each year to collisions with buildings, vehicles and power lines, and predation by feral and domestic cats.

### Will trees need to be cut down?

The site is historically heavily cleared for agricultural activities. RES designs projects to have as little impact as possible to the existing environment, however removal of some native trees is unavoidable. Turbines are placed in areas away from trees, tracks are designed around existing access roads and existing clearings are used for infrastructure wherever possible. The Project is undergoing careful detailed design to reduce the impact to existing native vegetation.



### How will impacts on significant fauna and flora be managed?

Potential impacts to fauna and flora, including national or State conservation species of significance such as the Pygmy Blue-Tongue Lizard (PBTTL), have been considered as part of the ecological assessment included in the Development Application. The ecological assessment has been informed by extensive surveys of the Project site.

The proposed Project layout has undergone comprehensive review and refinement to minimise potential impacts on native vegetation, woodland areas, and PBTTL habitat as far as reasonably practicable. This included amendments to turbine locations, access track locations and size, location of temporary construction compounds, and reduction of the disturbance footprint as far as reasonably practicable. An offset strategy will be prepared and implemented to address any residual impacts.

Impacts on birds have been assessed, and the Project is not expected to cause effect to any threatened species which occur or may occur within the Project area. The Project design also implements designated exclusion zones from woodland areas and Wedge Tailed Eagles nests within these woodlands to minimise potential impacts to birds that utilise these areas.

An Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) referral will be submitted for the Project for detailed consideration of potential impacts on PBTTL and other Matters of National Environmental Significance.



### Will the Project have adverse impacts on erosion or flooding?

Erosion potential and localised flooding and drainage have been assessed as part of the Development Application. There are unlikely to be any unreasonable impacts to soil, water and air quality as a result of the proposed development, as the Project has been designed according to the physical features of the project area. A range of mitigation and management measures will be incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to minimise airborne dust events, erosion, and soil discharge into watercourse so that there are no unacceptable impacts on the local area.

A draft CEMP has been prepared as part of the Development Application in accordance with the findings of the investigative studies undertaken in the preparation of the application. A final version of the CEMP and additional management plans will be prepared during the detailed design phase of the Project, before construction begins.

### Can wind farm components be recycled?

According to a Clean Energy Council report released in 2023, around 85% to 94% of a wind turbine's mass is recyclable. Leading turbine manufacturers are taking steps to increase the sustainability of the sector through a combination of research and demonstration projects with the aim to avoid any disposal of waste. You can view the CEC report at <https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/Wind-turbine-recycling-report-2023.pdf>

