

# WILLATOOK

## Wind Farm



### KEY FACTS

**Turbines** Up to 86

**Turbine height**

Up to 250 metres

**Site area** About 7600 hectares

**Rates payable**

Estimated at \$500,000 per year, for 25 years

**Local Government**

Moyné Shire

**Responsible Authority**

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

**Landholders**

23

**Installed capacity**

About 400 megawatts (MW)

**Power generation**

About 1500 gigawatt hours (GWh) per year

**Homes powered**

About 300,000

**Transmission Line**

Up to five kilometres within the site, connecting to the Tarrone Terminal Station

**Battery storage**

Yes

**Emission savings**

About 1.7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year

**Project status**

Undertaking Environment Effects Statement

**Construction**

About two years

**Project lifespan**

25 years plus

### PROJECT UPDATE

Wind Prospect is pleased to provide an update on the proposed Willatook Wind Farm. Since the previous newsletter in October last year, some amendments have been made to the project design. We are very pleased to announce the project will now include battery storage. The batteries would be charged when the amount of energy produced by the wind is greater than what is being sent to the grid and would improve grid stability and energy storage.

The number of potential wind turbines has changed from 83 to 86, with the additional three wind turbines located in the centre of the project. This is still less than half of the initial proposal of 190 turbines. The proposed maximum tip height of each wind turbine has also been increased from 230 metres to 250 metres.

**The alteration allows for:**

1. A potential increase in the height of the lowest point of the blade, which may assist with management of potential impacts on birds and bats;
2. Greater flexibility with the choice of wind turbine model for construction.

**The proposed wind farm will also include:**

- Underground cabling between wind turbines, connecting them to an onsite substation;
- Up to five kilometres of transmission line from the onsite substation to the Tarrone Terminal Station;
- Temporary construction compound, including office facilities, and concrete batching plants;
- Onsite access tracks between all onsite infrastructure.

Investigations are ongoing into the potential for an onsite quarry.

You can read more about the main points of the wind farm in the Key Facts section on this page. We will also be having public information sessions at Willatook and Orford later this month – details are available on the last page of this newsletter. There is also a new dedicated 1800 number, 1800 934 313.

### BENEFIT SHARING PROPOSAL

If the proposed Willatook Wind Farm is constructed, a Benefit Sharing Proposal will be implemented that will operate for the lifetime of the project.

**Details are still being finalised but it is proposed to include:**

#### NEIGHBOUR BENEFITS PROGRAM

An annual benefit for inhabited dwellings located up to six kilometres from a constructed wind turbine.

#### ENERGY COST OFFSET PROGRAM

An annual benefit for eligible residents located up to six kilometres from a constructed wind turbine.

#### COMMUNITY CO-INVESTMENT PROGRAM

An opportunity for members of the local community to personally invest in the project, if there is sufficient interest.

#### COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

Annual grant-based funding of up to \$1000 per constructed wind turbine, to be used for community initiatives and administered by a community committee.

## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

The Minister for Planning has determined that the proposed wind farm requires an Environment Effects Statement (EES). The EES is an assessment process, rather than a decision making process. A decision on a planning permit application (which would be lodged at the same time as the EES) would be made after the Minister's assessment of the EES. A referral under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (the EPBC Act) was lodged with the Commonwealth Government earlier this year.

The construction and operation of the proposed wind farm has been deemed to be a controlled action, requiring assessment and approval under the EPBC Act before it can proceed. The EES process is accredited to assess impacts on matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act through the Bilateral (Assessment) Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria. The EES for this project will be undertaken in accordance with the Bilateral Agreement, with the Minister's assessment report provided to the Commonwealth to inform the approval decision under the EPBC Act.

## THE EES PROCESS

The EES process is managed by the Victorian Government's Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) on behalf of the Minister for Planning.

The EES process occurs under the Environment Effects Act 1978 with the primary role of informing statutory decision-making (Ministers, local government and statutory authorities) with respect to the acceptability of potentially significant environmental effects. The output of the EES process is a Minister's Assessment, which is provided to decision-makers.

### Key decisions following the Minister's assessment will include:

- An approved Cultural Heritage Management Plan;
- A planning permit for the wind farm and associated infrastructure, including onsite transmission line;
- Work plan for an on-site quarry;
- Other possible approvals and consents, as required (eg. authorisation to remove native vegetation).

### An EES has two main components:

1. The EES main report – an integrated, plain English document that assesses the potential impacts of the project and offers mitigation or other measures to reduce potential impacts and environmental effects. The main report draws on technical studies, data and statutory requirements.
2. The EES technical reports – specialist studies, investigations and analyses that provide the basis for the EES main report. These reports will be exhibited in full, as appendices to the main report.

The adjacent table outlines the EES process with indicative timings.



Consultation is a key aspect of the EES process in Victoria. It helps build an understanding around the issues and implications of projects and enables stakeholders' knowledge and views to be considered in both project planning and formal decision making.

Feedback from consultation can influence the project design and encompasses both informal consultation during the development of an EES and formal opportunities for public input into both the scoping requirements for an EES and the review of an exhibited EES.

**Further information on the EES process can be found here:**  
<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/what-is-the-ees-process-in-victoria>

**Documents relating to the EES will be uploaded to DELWP's website at:**  
<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/browse-projects/projects/willatook-wind-farm>

Documents will also be uploaded to the project website, once they have been finalised.

## WHAT'S NEXT

Wind Prospect has been discussing the project with stakeholders and the community over a number of years. This will be built on over the coming months as the EES process progresses. Should the proposed wind farm receive planning approval, consultation would continue throughout the lifetime of the project, from pre-construction to construction, through the operational period and during decommissioning.

As part of the EES process, DELWP issues scoping requirements that outline the set of matters that are to be investigated and documented in the EES. Scoping requirements are first drafted and these draft scoping requirements are issued for comment by interested parties for a period of 15 days. As soon as these are issued a notification will be posted on the project website at [www.willatookwindfarm.com.au](http://www.willatookwindfarm.com.au) with a link to the document.

Consultation is an opportunity to discuss the proposed wind farm and to potentially shape the design of the project. Areas of discussion could include:

### Values:

What particular aspects / values of the local area should be assessed? (For example, discussions have been ongoing with local landowners about flora and fauna species in the area).

### Issues or concerns:

Are there any particular issues or concerns with the proposal and could any of these issues be discussed further in order to mitigate potential impacts?

### Relaying information:

Is the project website suitable for relaying updates and other information about the project? If not, what else could be appropriate in the local area?

### Further engagement

**In addition to the information sessions later this month, the following consultation activities will be ongoing over the next few months:**

- Newsletters posted to dwellings within 10 kilometres of the site — the next update newsletter is expected to be issued in September, with a further newsletter issued after an EES and planning application have been lodged and validated;
- Dedicated 1800 number for project queries;
- Public opinion surveys;
- Local Communications Officer who is on hand to respond to any queries about the project;
- Project website updates;
- Workshops—if there is interest in a particular issue that you would like to discuss with one of our consultants, a workshop could be arranged;
- Face to face meetings.

**During this time, various technical studies will be ongoing, including:**

- flora and fauna;
- transport and traffic;
- noise and vibration;
- landscape and visual; and,
- cultural and historic heritage.

Any issues can be fed into these studies prior to finalisation as part of the EES process.





# WILLATOOK

## Wind Farm

### *Community information sessions*

- Tuesday July 23, 11am-7pm  
Willatook Hall, Willatook-Warrong Road **Willatook**
- Wednesday July 24, 9am-4pm  
Orford Hall, High Street **Orford**

**COME AND MEET THE WIND PROSPECT TEAM,  
AS WELL AS EXPERT CONSULTANTS IN THE  
FIELDS OF ECOLOGY, NOISE AND AVIATION**



#### **CONTACT US**

Wind Prospect Pty Ltd  
PO Box 110 Fitzroy VIC 3065

**Ph:** 1800 934 313

**E:** [info@willatookwindfarm.com.au](mailto:info@willatookwindfarm.com.au)

[www.willatookwindfarm.com.au](http://www.willatookwindfarm.com.au)