Dawson Wind Farm

Application Number: **02997** Commencement Date: **15/07/2025** Status: **Locked**

1. About the project

1.1 Project details

1.1.1 Project title *

Dawson Wind Farm

1.1.2 Project industry type *

Energy Generation and Supply (renewable)

1.1.3 Project industry sub-type

Wind Farm

1.1.4 Estimated start date *

01/11/2027

1.1.4 Estimated end date *

31/10/2057

1.2 Proposed Action details

1.2.1 Provide an overview of the proposed action, including all proposed activities. *

Highland Energy Australia Pty Ltd, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) of EDFR1 Holdings Australia Pty Ltd – a related body corporate of EDF Renewables Australia Pty Ltd (EDF), is proposing to develop the Dawson Wind Farm (the Project) located approximately 20 km south-east of the township of Banana, in Central Queensland.

The Project includes a wind farm of up to 75 wind turbine generators (WTGs) with a nameplate generating capacity of up to 600 MW, a battery energy storage system (BESS) with 500 MW power and 1000 MWh storage capacity, and ancillary infrastructure such as substations and electrical transmission lines.

The Project is located in the Banana Shire Council Local Government Area. The Project traverses three lots, involving three landholders, and a number of adjoining road reserves to provide access to the host properties.

For the purposes of the referral, **the total Project Area is 12,240 ha** (associated with the boundaries of the host properties, and the road reserves and watercourses where crossings occur). The **total area of the Project Footprint is 939 ha** and includes the disturbance footprint within the host properties, and the potential disturbance within local access roads.

Site Selection and Project Design

The site selection process considered environmental and social factors to ensure that the development avoided unnecessary impacts from the outset. The following criteria were considered in the site selection process, which has resulted in the Project site that is proposed (as per this referral):

- In comparison to other wind farm sites in Queensland, primarily on the Great Dividing Range, this site is historically disturbed with comparatively fewer environmental values.
- The siting of this Project is expected to allow multiple projects to be consolidated on fewer transmission lines, thus limiting the breadth of impacts across communities.
- The Project site supports a high wind resource, an integral factor in the success of the Project.

The design of the Project considered feedback from landholders as well as outcomes of ecological surveys undertaken across the site. The following factors informed the design from the initial stages of the Project:

- Feedback from landholders to ensure existing agricultural land uses can coexist with the proposed development.
- Avoidance of regulated vegetation and ecological values verified through ground-truthing, including threatened ecological communities (TECs), where practicable.
- Avoidance of watercourses and water features, where practicable, to negate impacts to riparian vegetation and habitat values.

Dawson Wind Farm Components

Key Project infrastructure associated with construction (temporary infrastructure) and operation (permanent infrastructure) include:

Permanent infrastructure:

- **Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs)**: Up to 75 steel WTGs with generation capacities between 6.0 and 8.0 MW, approximately 70 m blade lengths, and a maximum tip height of approximately 260 m above ground level. Hardstand areas are currently estimated to be approximately 1.9 hectares (ha) (85m x 220 m), however, these specifications will be further refined and confirmed during detailed design.
- **Collector substations**: Two potential 33 kV / 275 kV collector substation locations, each approximately 3.3 ha, providing flexibility for design optimisation.
- **BESS**: One BESS with 500 MW power and 1,000 MWh storage capacity, housed in outdoor containers within a compound of up to 4 ha and co-located with the substation.

- **Operations and maintenance facility**: Compound of approximately 0.64 ha including a maintenance shed, water tanks, washdown bay, chemical storage area, office, staff kitchen, toilets, parking, and supporting infrastructure.
- **Medium voltage (MV) reticulation cables**: 33 kV buried and overhead feeder cables connecting WTGs to substations, generally aligned with internal access tracks.
- **Meteorological (met) masts**: Three masts supporting wind measurement and telecommunications equipment.
- **High Voltage Overhead Transmission Line (OHTL)**: High voltage line for external grid connection.
- **Site entrances**: Three access points - one each on Ogdens Road, Barfield Road, and L Andersen Road.
- **Internal access tracks**: Internal access roads with a trafficable width of approximately 5.5 m, plus batters and roadside drainage.
- **Waterway crossings**: Various crossings are anticipated to comprise a mix of box culverts and pipe culverts for maintaining hydrological connectivity.

Temporary infrastructure:

- **Construction compounds**: Two compounds approximately 1.5 ha each, including workshops, offices, parking, kitchens, and ablutions for construction personnel.
- **Laydown areas**: Two areas approximately 2.4 ha each for storing plant, materials, equipment, and turbine components.
- **Concrete batching plants**: Two plants approximately 1.2 ha each.
- **Temporary meteorological masts**: Three masts previously installed within the Project Footprint to inform early-stage wind monitoring.
- **Power curve verification masts**: Four temporary masts approximately 1 ha each to be installed to support wind measurement and telecommunications, and associated access tracks to the Power curve verification masts.
- **Bores and water dams**: Including turkey's nest dams, to be established for construction water production, capture, and storage.

All temporary infrastructure will be removed following construction, except potentially the installed water bores and select dams.

Grid Connection

The Project is proposed to connect to the National Energy Market (NEM) via the "Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project" (TWFCP), which is a proposed new double 275 kV transmission line anticipated to traverse the Project Area (subject to the final alignment) from the Mount Benn substation in the north to the proposed Theodore Wind Farm located approximately 20 km east of Theodore, Queensland, to the south.

The TWFCP is being developed by Powerlink Queensland. In the Theodore Wind Farm - Connection Project – Final Corridor Selection Report (Powerlink Queensland, February 2025), the likely planning approvals for the project are anticipated to be obtained through the Ministerial Infrastructure Designation (MID) process. Environmental approval from the Australian Government under the EPBC Act is noted as a potential environmental approval required for the TWFCP.

Should the TWFCP be referred under the EPBC Act, it is expected that this would be a related, but separate action to the proposed Dawson Wind Farm project as it is the transmission line into which the proposed Dawson Wind Farm would use to connect to the NEM. However, at the date of this referral, the TWFCP is yet to be referred.

Access to the Project Site

To enable the transportation of components for the Project to site, including WTG towers and blades on over size over mass (OSOM) vehicles, locations along the road network between the Leichhardt Highway to site require minor upgrade, maintenance and/or additional clearance. The road network from the Port of

Gladstone (anticipated Port for component delivery) to the Leichhardt Highway has been previously utilised to transport OSOM components, therefore there is no additional clearing proposed beyond that considered in this assessment.

The extent of the OSOM vehicle access is from all external roads providing access to the Project to the Leichhardt Highway. Five roads are considered in this scope.

Project Development

Project development is anticipated to comprise the following activities:

- Site establishment and preparation, including internal and external access tracks (for infrastructure delivery), construction compounds, water storage, concrete batching plants and laydown areas.
- Turbine hardstand and foundation formation and installation of towers and turbines with cranes.
- Medium-voltage underground cabling interconnecting WTGs.
- Construction of substation and control room, collector substation/s and BESS.
- Construction of overhead powerlines for reticulation (if/where required).
- Construction of the operations and maintenance facility.
- Construction of the point of connection of the wind farm to the NEM.
- Decommissioning of temporary construction related infrastructure.
- Site rehabilitation and restoration.
- Testing and commissioning of the wind farm.

For the scope of this assessment, the Project excludes low impact activities including geotechnical / drilling investigations and upgrades to internal site access tracks for the purposes of site access during preliminary investigations up until the point EPBC Act approval is obtained. These works will be undertaken to avoid impacts to MNES, and where required, low impact activities will be subject to separate approval processes under relevant State legislation. However, the scope of the assessment includes the necessary geotechnical / drilling and related earthworks that would be required as part of construction, should the requisite approvals, including EPBC Act approval, be granted.

Decommissioning

While it is not currently anticipated, if, closer to the proposed end date of the proposed action, EDF wish to extend the operational life of the Project, EDF will ensure it engages with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), and any other relevant regulatory bodies at the time, to obtain the necessary approvals required.

Separate and Unrelated Developments

The nearby Banana Range Wind Farm (EPBC Act referral 2019/8503), currently under development by EDF entity “Orange Creek Energy Pty Ltd” is considered a separate and unrelated action to the proposed Dawson Wind Farm project. The Banana Range Wind Farm is an unrelated development to the Dawson Wind Farm development as:

- The Banana Range Wind Farm project is a separate entity to the Dawson Wind Farm entity
- The Banana Range Wind Farm project has its own connection point to the NEM
- The Banana Range Wind Farm project is not a stage of the Dawson Wind Farm development.

1.2.2 Is the project action part of a staged development or related to other actions or proposals in the region?

No

1.2.6 What Commonwealth or state legislation, planning frameworks or policy documents are relevant to the proposed action, and how are they relevant? *

As part of Australia's broader climate and energy policies, there are several renewable energy targets, towards which the Dawson Wind Farm development, would contribute. A summary of the relevant targets is provided below:

- 82% renewable electricity by 2030 – a federal policy target for the National Electricity Market (NEM) to achieve 82% integration of renewable energy sources into the energy mix.
- Net zero emissions by 2050 – Australia's long-term climate commitment under the Paris Agreement.
- 43% emissions reduction by 2030 (from 2005 levels) – enshrined in law under the Climate Change Act 2022 (Cth).

In addition, the Queensland Government has legislated its net zero by 2050 target through the Clean Economy Jobs Act 2024 (Qld).

As a renewable energy (i.e., wind farm) project, the Dawson Wind Farm will contribute to these national and state targets by supporting the decarbonisation of the NEM.

The key relevant legislation, planning frameworks, and policy documents relevant to the proposed action are summarised below. Further certainty around required secondary approvals and/or permits is anticipated as the design progresses. All necessary secondary approvals and permits will be obtained prior to the commencement of the relevant activities (subject to the applicable primary approvals being obtained).

Commonwealth Legislation

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) – Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) (listed threatened species and threatened ecological communities, and migratory species) are known to occur within the Project Area. This referral has been prepared in accordance with the Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1, EPBC Act Policy Statement 2.3 - Wind Farm Industry 2009, and with consideration of the Referral Guidance for Endangered Koala, EPBC Referral Guidance for 14 Birds Listed as Migratory, and the EPBC Act Environmental Offsets Policy. This referral has also assessed other potential MNES triggers relevant to the proposed Action, including the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP), World Heritage Areas (i.e., the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA)), and National Heritage Places (i.e., the Great Barrier Reef National Heritage Place (GBRNHP)).

State Legislation

- *Planning Act 2016* – the Project requires a development permit for a material change of use (MCU) in accordance with State Code 23 for wind farm development and ancillary infrastructure from the Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. An operational works permit is also required for clearing of native vegetation in accordance with State Code 16. Secondary approvals will likely be required under the Planning Act including waterway barrier works approvals for crossing of waterways.
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NC Act) – A Species Management Program (SMP) may be required to authorise impacts to animal breeding habitat. A Protected Plant Clearing Permit may be required for clearing activities within 100m of an Endangered, Vulnerable or Near Threatened flora species listed under the NC Act.
- *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2013* (ACH Act) – The Project Area lies within the traditional lands of the Wulli Wulli and the Gaangalu Peoples, who are the Aboriginal Parties for the purposes of the ACH Act in regard to the identification and management of indigenous cultural heritage within the Project Area. The proponent will enter into a Cultural Heritage Management Plan/Agreement under Part 7 of the ACH Act with both the Wulli Wulli People and the Gaangalu People. The Cultural Heritage Management Plan with the Wulli Wulli People was signed in 2024.
- *Biosecurity Act 2014* – Field ecology surveys have identified the presence of pest plants and animals, including those with classifications under the Biosecurity Act. Weeds listed as weeds of national

significance (WoNS) were also noted during survey activities. Management and mitigation measures and plans will be developed to avoid the spread of weed and pest species.

- *Vegetation Management Act 1999* (VM Act) – The VM Act regulates the management of vegetation using the Regional Ecosystem classification system.
- *Local Government Act 2009* – A road corridor permit may be required for any proposed works required within local government roads.
- *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994* – A road corridor permit may be required for any proposed works required within State-controlled roads.
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act) - Should any environmentally relevant activities be proposed, an environmental authority would be required under the EP Act.

Local Planning Scheme

The Project is located within the Banana Shire Local Government Area; the Proposed Action will need to have consideration for the outcomes sought by the Planning Scheme. Secondary to the MCU and operational works permits under the Planning Act, development permits will be required under the Banana Shire Planning Scheme 2021 for excavation and filling for elements such as temporary batching plants (which do not fall within the definition of a “wind farm” under the Planning Act) or internal access tracks and road upgrades.

1.2.7 Describe any public consultation that has been, is being or will be undertaken regarding the project area, including with Indigenous stakeholders. Attach any completed consultation documentations, if relevant. *

Stakeholder Engagement Overview

A comprehensive approach to stakeholder engagement activities is being undertaken as part of the development of the Dawson Wind Farm. Consultation has included, and will continue to include, government bodies, Indigenous stakeholders, landholders, and the broader community.

Cultural Heritage Engagement

Engagement with Traditional Owners has included consultation with representatives of the Wulli Wulli and Gaangalu peoples. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) has been agreed with the Wulli Wulli People, while discussions with the Gaangalu People are ongoing to reach a formal agreement.

Government and Regulatory Engagement

- Discussions have commenced with State and local governments regarding approvals processes and statutory requirements.
- A meeting with Banana Shire Council representatives was held on 19 June 2025 to initiate dialogue on a Community Benefits Agreement.
- An update was provided to Banana Shire Councillors in July 2024.

Community and Landholder Engagement

- The Project team has engaged directly with host landholders and adjoining neighbours. Host landholders have contributed to infrastructure layout refinement by identifying preferred locations and constraints.
- Quarterly community drop-in sessions have been held in Banana and Biloela since March 2023, in parallel with the Banana Range Wind Farm. Each session runs for approximately 1.5 hours in Banana and 2 hours in Biloela. Session dates are as follows:
    - 2 March 2023
    - 15 June 2023
    - 7 September 2023
    - 7 December 2023
    - 3 March 2024
    - 13 June 2024
    - 5 September 2024
    - 27 November 2024
    - 3 April 2025
    - 19 June 2025

These sessions will continue on a quarterly basis, with the next scheduled for September 2025.

Public Communication and Transparency

- The Dawson Wind Farm website was launched in May 2025 and includes an online enquiry form: www.dawsonwindfarm.com
- Project updates are published approximately quarterly in the *Banana Shire Focus Magazine* and shared via email with subscribers throughout the development phase

1.3.1 Identity: Referring party

Privacy Notice:

Personal information means information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable.

By completing and submitting this form, you consent to the collection of all personal information contained in this form. If you are providing the personal information of other individuals in this form, please ensure you have their consent before doing so.

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Alternatively, email us at privacy@awe.gov.au.

☑ **Confirm that you have read and understand this Privacy Notice ***

1.3.1.1 Is Referring party an organisation or business? *

Yes

Referring party organisation details

ABN/ACN	41634731356
Organisation name	EDF RENEWABLES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Organisation address	2000 NSW

Referring party details

Name	Emma Hollo
Job title	Development Manager
Phone	0448591141
Email	emma.hollo@edf-power.com
Address	31.1/123 Pitt St, Sydney CBD

1.3.2 Identity: Person proposing to take the action

1.3.2.1 Are the Person proposing to take the action details the same as the Referring party details? *

No

1.3.2.2 Is Person proposing to take the action an organisation or business? *

Yes

Person proposing to take the action organisation details

ABN/ACN	11658680972
Organisation name	HIGHLAND ENERGY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Organisation address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000

Person proposing to take the action details

Name	James Katsikas
Job title	CEO
Phone	0438 193 200
Email	james.katsikas@edf-power.com
Address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000

1.3.2.14 Are you proposing the action as part of a Joint Venture? *

No

1.3.2.15 Are you proposing the action as part of a Trust? *

No

1.3.2.17 Describe the Person proposing the action's history of responsible environmental management including details of any proceedings under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources against the Person proposing to take the action. *

Highland Energy Australia Pty Ltd is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) owned by EDFR1 Holdings Australia Pty Ltd – a related body corporate of EDF Renewables Australia Pty Ltd (EDF).

EDF (inclusive of its related body corporate and SPV) has a satisfactory record of environmental performance across its portfolio of operations across Australia.

EDF has no existing record of having been the subject of any prosecution or civil proceedings in Australia under State, Territory, or Commonwealth environmental or natural resources legislation which is relevant or material to this referral.

EDF has an Environmental and Social Policy which sets out the principles and objectives for the overall environmental and social performance of the business.

1.3.2.18 If the person proposing to take the action is a corporation, provide details of the corporation's environmental policy and planning framework

A copy of EDF's Environment and Social Policy is provided as **Att. A-EDF-Social-and-Environment-Policy.**

1.3.3 Identity: Proposed designated proponent

1.3.3.1 Are the Proposed designated proponent details the same as the Person proposing to take the action? *

Yes

Proposed designated proponent organisation details

ABN/ACN	11658680972
Organisation name	HIGHLAND ENERGY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Organisation address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000

Proposed designated proponent details

Name	James Katsikas
Job title	CEO
Phone	0438 193 200
Email	james.katsikas@edf-power.com
Address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000

1.3.4 Identity: Summary of allocation

Confirmed Referring party's identity

The Referring party is the person preparing the information in this referral.

ABN/ACN	41634731356
Organisation name	EDF RENEWABLES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Organisation address	2000 NSW
Representative's name	Emma Hollo
Representative's job title	Development Manager
Phone	0448591141
Email	emma.hollo@edf-power.com
Address	31.1/123 Pitt St, Sydney CBD

Confirmed Person proposing to take the action's identity

The Person proposing to take the action is the individual, business, government agency or trustee that will be responsible for the proposed action.

ABN/ACN	11658680972
Organisation name	HIGHLAND ENERGY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Organisation address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000
Representative's name	James Katsikas
Representative's job title	CEO
Phone	0438 193 200
Email	james.katsikas@edf-power.com
Address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000

Confirmed Proposed designated proponent's identity

The Person proposing to take the action is the individual or organisation proposed to be responsible for meeting the requirements of the EPBC Act during the assessment process, if the Minister decides that this project is a controlled action.

Same as Person proposing to take the action information.

1.4 Payment details: Payment exemption and fee waiver

1.4.1 Do you qualify for an exemption from fees under EPBC Regulation 5.23 (1) (a)? *

No

1.4.3 Have you applied for or been granted a waiver for full or partial fees under Regulation 5.21A? *

No

1.4.5 Are you going to apply for a waiver of full or partial fees under EPBC Regulation 5.21A?

No

1.4.7 Has the department issued you with a credit note? *

No

1.4.9 Would you like to add a purchase order number to your invoice? *

No

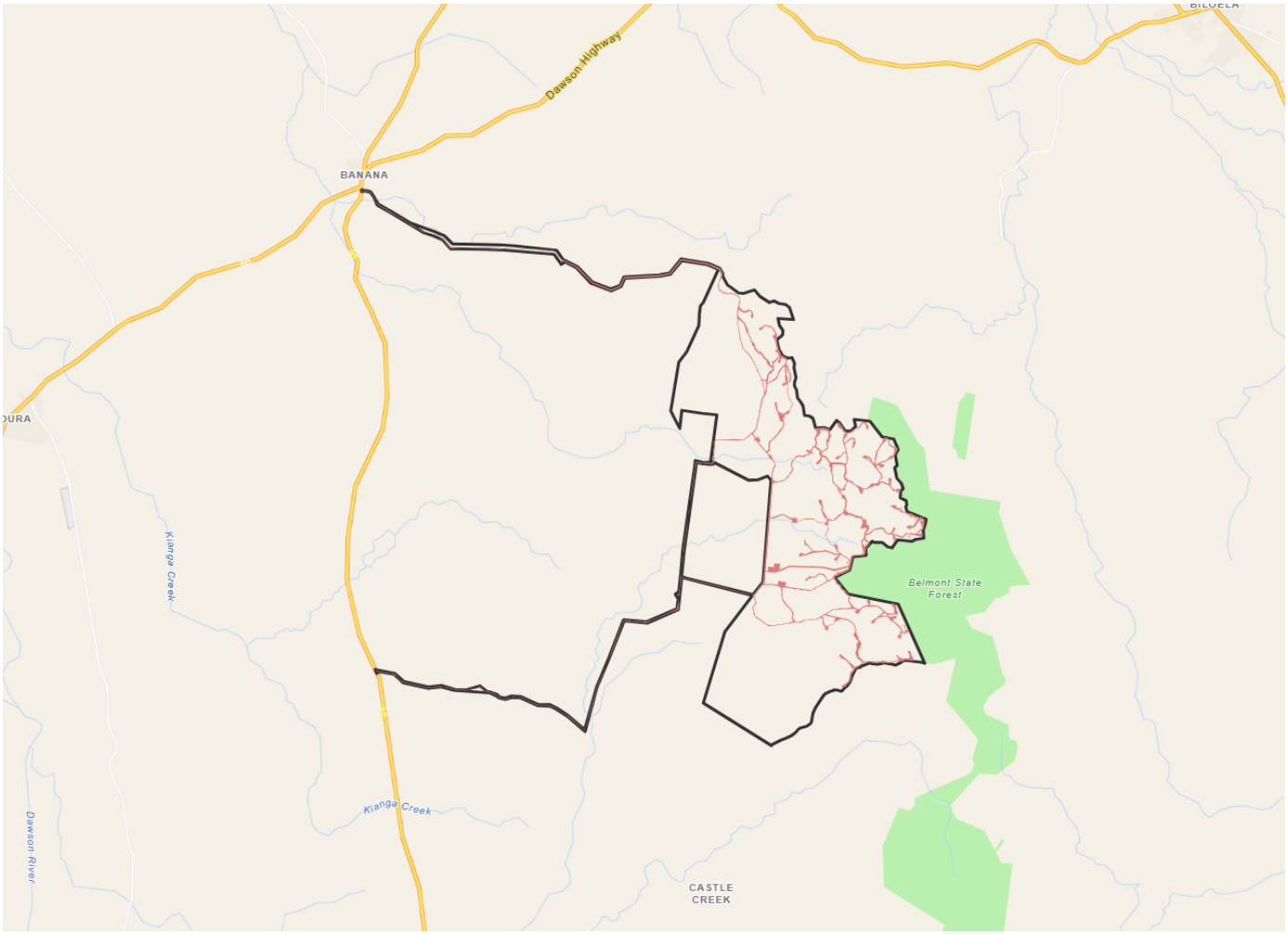
1.4 Payment details: Payment allocation

1.4.11 Who would you like to allocate as the entity responsible for payment? *

Person proposing to take the action

2. Location

2.1 Project footprint



Project Area: 12257.12 Ha **Disturbance Footprint:** 939.70 Ha

2.2 Footprint details

2.2.1 What is the address of the proposed action? *

2179 Barfield Road, Tarramba, Queensland

2.2.2 Where is the primary jurisdiction of the proposed action? *

Queensland

2.2.3 Is there a secondary jurisdiction for this proposed action? *

No

2.2.5 What is the tenure of the action area relevant to the project area? *

The Project is proposed across three land parcels. All parcels are held in freehold tenure. The applicable lots are:

- 11FN293 (Monkey Springs)
- 12FN294 (Brookleigh)
- 6DW447 (Glenhalvern)

Lot 12FN294 is also subject to a dedicated Forest Consent Area administered by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries (DPI). A Forest Consent Area allows the State to retain the ownership of commercial timber after a property held in leasehold tenure has been converted to freehold tenure, as the ownership of the commercial timber is separate from the ownership of the land. Additionally, Lot 12FN294 is bisected by the tertiary stock route 901BANA; this stock route intersects the proposed Project Footprint in one location. Queensland stock routes are jointly managed by Queensland State and Local Governments. A tertiary stock route is considered a minor or unused stock route.

The Project Area also comprises areas within five named roads. Banana Shire Council is the road manager for all roads included in this scope, with the exception of the Leichhardt Highway which is a State-controlled Road. The relevant Council roads are:

- Barfield Road
- L Andersons Road
- Ogdens Road
- Uncle Tom Road

3. Existing environment

3.1 Physical description

3.1.1 Describe the current condition of the project area's environment.

The Project is located on privately-owned freehold properties, approximately 20 km south-east of the township of Banana, central Queensland. The host properties are zoned as Rural under the Banana Shire Planning Scheme and are currently utilised for grazing activities. It is proposed that the current land use will continue during the construction and operation of the Project. The Project Area also includes road reserves, which contain used formed roads. The clearing proposed along the road verges will not change the proposed land use within the road reserves.

Site Description

Topographically, the site comprises lower-lying areas located in the western portion of the Project Area that generally slope downwards towards the west, and elevated areas associated with the Banana Range, which runs north to south along the eastern side of the Project Area. The Banana Range is typically expressed as steep hills and ridges with relatively deeply incised gullies; however, elevations and inclines are most pronounced in the north of the Project Area.

Hydrologically, the Project Area is dissected by several watercourses that typically originate as first-order streams in elevated areas, such as along the central ridgeline. These streams flow downslope predominantly in a westerly direction, away from the proposed Project Footprint. Second- and third-order streams are generally confined to the lower western portions of the Project Area, where the topography is flatter, and deeper gully lines are present.

There are three residential dwellings located within the Project Area. These dwellings will remain during the life of the Project as the current land use will co-exist with the proposed action. Other landholder infrastructure such as farm dams, sheds and tracks will also remain throughout the construction and operation of the proposed development. The existing infrastructure within the landholdings has informed the design of the Project layout and, therefore, the Project does not propose to impact on current land use practices.

The Project Area predominantly supports eucalypt woodland communities dominated by narrow-leaved ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra*) and, in some areas, spotted gum (*Corymbia citriodora*) open forest. The understorey and ground layer is generally dominated by native and introduced grasses, including buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) and regenerating wattles (*Acacia spp.*), particularly black wattle (*A. leiocalyx*). A large portion of the Project Area has been historically cleared and supports cattle grazing, particularly in the western sections of the Project Area. The site is also subject to ongoing disturbance from weed invasion.

3.1.2 Describe any existing or proposed uses for the project area.

Existing Land Use

The host properties within the Project Area are currently used for cattle grazing. As such, there is a mix of cleared and vegetated paddocks, numerous small, scattered farm dams that hold water, and various farming-related infrastructure such as stock yards and sheds located within the properties. Surrounding properties are predominantly rural, residential, and protected areas for forestry production, including:

- Banana township approximately 20 km to the north-west of the Project Area and Biloela township approximately 25 km to the north-east of the Project Area.
- Belmont State Forest directly east/south-east of the Project.

Proposed Land Use

The proposed land use consists of the Project components outlined in **Section 1.2 of this referral**; operational infrastructure includes wind turbines, BESS facility, electrical reticulation, substation and collector substations, operations and maintenance facility and ancillary infrastructure. In accordance with the Planning Act, the proposed development is defined as a renewable energy facility – wind farm.

The proposed land use will co-exist with the existing land use described, with landowner activities and infrastructure remaining on site. The Project design considered the existing and future use of the Project Area for agricultural purposes.

3.1.3 Describe any outstanding natural features and/or any other important or unique values that applies to the project area.

There are no outstanding natural features or other important or unique values that apply to the Project area.

Belmont State Forest is located adjacent to the Project Area in the east/south-east. No Project infrastructure will encroach into the State Forest.

3.1.4 Describe the gradient (or depth range if action is to be taken in a marine area) relevant to the project area.

Topographically, the site comprises lower-lying areas, approximately 260 m AHD, located in the western portion of the Project Area that generally slope downward towards the west and elevated areas associated with the Banana Range, which runs north to south along the eastern side of the Project Area. The Banana Range is typically expressed as steep hills and ridges up to approximately 560 m AHD with relatively deeply incised gullies; however, elevations and inclines are most pronounced in the north of the Project Area.

3.2 Flora and fauna

3.2.1 Describe the flora and fauna within the affected area and attach any investigations of surveys if applicable.

Flora

Approximately half of the Project area (excluding the areas associated with the road reserves) has been partially cleared for grazing purposes. The clearing of vegetation has been maintained due to ongoing active land uses and will continue to be maintained, with cattle grazing practices to co-exist with the Project.

Field surveys were undertaken across the Project Area and Project Footprint between 2021, 2024, and 2025. The mapping of vegetation communities across the Project Area was conducted via quaternary surveys to verify the mapped vegetation in accordance with the Methodology for survey and mapping of regional ecosystems and vegetation communities in Queensland (Neldner et al. versions 5.1 [2019], 6.0 [2022], and 7.0 [2023]). Quaternary surveys are intended to provide a rapid means of assessing vegetation structure, floristic composition, and status. Flora surveys were undertaken to inform preferred habitat types for threatened flora and fauna species and conducted prior to Project design to ensure ecological constraints were considered and avoided to the extent practicable.

The PMST identified five (5) Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) as potentially occurring within the Project Area or within 10 km of the Project Area. Through desktop assessment, only Brigalow (*Acacia harpophylla* dominant and co-dominant) was considered possibly occurring. However, during the field investigation:

- The patch of RE 11.12.21 (analogous with Brigalow TEC) was determined to be in poor condition and did not meet the TEC threshold condition
- A patch of Semi-evergreen Vine Thickets of the Brigalow Belt (North and South) and Nandewar Bioregions TEC (SEVT TEC) was identified in the north-west of the southern property, which aligned with Regional Ecosystem (RE) 11.3.11, a recognised constituent RE of the SEVT TEC.

As such, the following TEC is considered known to occur in the Project Area:

- Semi-evergreen Vine Thickets of the Brigalow Belt (North and South) and Nandewar Bioregions: One patch, approximately 5.6 ha.

The Project Footprint avoids the patch of SEVT TEC.

Proposed swept path footprints within the road reserve and along the external road access network to the Project site have not been ground-truthed. A conservative approach to vegetation mapping has been applied based on State regulated vegetation mapping. This has informed initial habitat mapping for applicable species. Conservatively, patches of Brigalow TEC have been assumed as present along the road network and will be ground-truthed and confirmed during the Project's assessment process.

Assessment of the potential impacts of the Project on TECs is considered in **Section 4.1.4 of this Referral**.

The PMST report identified 10 flora species as potentially occurring within the Project Area or within 10 km of the Project Area. Further desktop assessment identified a total of 12 flora species listed under the EPBC Act as species or species habitat that may, or is likely to, occur in the Project Area.

As a result of the field survey, a total of four (4) flora species are considered possible to occur within the Project Area due to historical records within 50 km and the presence of small, marginally suitable patches of SEVT and Brigalow habitat that align with their known habitat preferences, despite no detections during targeted surveys. These four species are:

- Ooline (*Cadellia pentastylis*)
- Cossinia (*Cossinia australiana*)
- *Solanum* dissectum; and
- *Solanum johnsonianum.*

Numerous weed species are present within the Project Area, including invasive species listed as an Environmental Weed, Restricted Matter, or Exotic under the Queensland Biosecurity Act 2014. Five (5) weed species observed within the Project Area are also listed as Weeds of National Significance (WoNS), including:

- Cat's Claw Creeper (*Dolichandra unguis-cati*)
- Lantana (*Lantana camara*)
- Creeping lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*)
- Cardona Pear (*Opuntia streptacantha*); and
- Velvety Tree Pear (*Opuntia tomentosa*)

Fauna

During the survey effort across the Project Area to date, a total of 211 species were observed, including nine (9) non-native fauna species listed under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. These species include:

- Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*) – Disease vector;
- European Brown Hare (*Lepus capensis*) – Feral Animal;
- Cane Toad (*Rhinella marina*) – Poisonous;
- Cat (*Felis catus*) – Feral Animal and Restricted Matter;
- Common Myna (*Sturnus tristis*) – Feral Animal;
- Dingo (*Canis familiaris* (dingo)) – Potentially Aggressive and Restricted Matter;
- House mouse (*Mus musculus*) – Disease Vector;
- Pig (*Sus scrofa*) – Feral Animal and Restricted Matter; and
- Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) – Pest.

The desktop assessment identified a total of 36 threatened species listed under the EPBC Act as species or species habitat that may or is likely to occur (PMST), or recorded in the WildNet database within 50 km of the Project Area. These results include:

- 12 birds;
- Seven mammals;
- Seven reptiles; and
- 10 listed Migratory Species.

18 listed marine species were also identified in the PMST; however, as the Project Area is not within a listed Commonwealth marine area, these MNES have not been considered further as part of this Project's impact assessment.

To guide field survey efforts, a likelihood of occurrence assessment (LOO) was undertaken based on the desktop assessment results. Based on the results of the desktop assessment and the LOO, field surveys were undertaken in accordance with the relevant Commonwealth and State Department's guidance material for threatened mammals, birds, reptiles, and bats. A number of different survey methods were used to consider all potential species. The fauna survey effort and methods are detailed in the Significant Impact Assessment report (SIA) that has been prepared to support this referral. Please refer **Att. B-1-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 2.3.4, pp. 28-44**; **Att. B-2-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 2.3.4, pp. 45-57** for details on the fauna survey effort**.**

As a result of the field survey, a total of five (5) fauna species are considered known or likely to occur within the Project Area.

Species known to occur include:

- Greater Glider (central and southern; *Petauroides volans volans*)
- Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*)
- White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapus caudacutus*)
- Squatter Pigeon (*Geophaps scripta scripta*)

Species that are considered as likely to occur within the Project Area, but could not be confirmed include:

- Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*)

In accordance with the LOO assessment (**Att. B-7-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Appendix 5, pp. 166-192**), other species are considered possible or unlikely to occur.

3.2.2 Describe the vegetation (including the status of native vegetation and soil) within the project area.

Land Zones and Soils

Based on available soils mapping for the Project Area, the dominant soils are Tenosols (shallow gravelly loams and very shallow undifferentiated soils) and Vertosols (cracking clay soils that occur mostly on the undulating plains and rises in the west of the Project Area). Dermosols (clay soils) and Chromosols (non-sodic texture contrast soils) are also common in many areas. There are no mapped acid sulfate soils (ASS) within the Project Area and ASS are considered unlikely to be present based on the geomorphic environment of the area.

Under the RE classification system, these areas correspond to two distinct land zones: Land Zone 3, which includes alluvial plains consisting of clay, silt, sand, and gravels associated with floodplains, and Land Zone 12, which includes shallow soils developed on igneous rock such as basalt.

Vegetation

Based on the Queensland Government vegetation management mapping data, the Project Area is mapped as approximately 50% non-remnant vegetation, and 50% a mix of Category B (remnant), Category C (high value regrowth) and Category R (regrowth water course and drainage feature area). The regional ecosystems mapped by the State as occurring within the Project Area are detailed in **Att. B-2-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 3.3.1, pp. 62-67**.

Based on the results of quaternary site assessments, the ground-truthed vegetation values appear to differ from the mapped values. A figure providing the ground-truthed vegetation values overlaid with the Project Footprint is provided in **Att. B-2-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Figure 9, p. 77**.

Habitat Types

Six (6) broad habitat types have been identified within the Project Area based on quaternary site assessments and habitat assessments. The habitat types are described in detail in **Att. B-2-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 3.3.2, pp. 68-77** and summarised below.

- Narrow-leaved Ironbark Woodlands

Vegetation across much of the eastern hilly areas of the Project Area, as well as in some lower-lying areas in the east that remain uncleared and along watercourses, consists of eucalypt woodland dominated by narrow-leaved ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra*) and red bloodwood (*Corymbia erythrophloia*). Other associated canopy species include pink bloodwood (*C. intermedia*), brown bloodwood (*C. trachyphloia*), bottle trees (*Brachychiton populneus*, *B. rupestris*, and *B. australis*), spotted gum (*C. citriodora*), bat-wing coral tree (*Erythrina vespertilio*), Queensland peppermint (*E. exerta*), Dallachy's gum (*C. dallachiana*), silver-leaved ironbark (*E. melanophloia*), and Clarkson's bloodwood (*C. clarksoniana*). The canopy height of this community ranges from 15 to 30 m, with an estimated canopy cover of 10 – 50%.

- Riparian Eucalypt Woodlands

Drainage lines and watercourses on the northern and central properties support narrow strips of eucalypt woodland dominated by Queensland blue gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*) with an understorey dominated by black tea-tree (*Melaleuca bracteata*). This community also contains river red gum (*E. camaldulensis*) and white bauhinia (*Lysiphyllum hookeri*), with sections of these drainage lines having been invaded by cat's claw creeper (*Dolichandra unguis-cati*) and mother-of-millions (*Bryophyllum delagoense*).

On Glenhalvern, and parts of Brookleigh, this community is dominated by Queensland blue gum (*E. tereticornis*) and carbeen (*Corymbia tessellaris*) with a midstory of flaxleaf paperbark (*Melaleuca trichostachya*), black tea-tree (*M. bracteata*) and bottle trees (*Brachychiton populneus*, *B. rupestris*, and *B. australis*).

- Semi-evergreen Vine Thicket (SEVT)

Small areas within the southern property, as well as to the north of the Project Area in Belmont State Forest, contain patches of SEVT communities. These patches occur in each of the two Land Zones identified within the Project Area (i.e., Land Zones 3 and 12).

The SEVT community occurring in Land Zone 12 is dominated by a range of canopy species, including bottle trees (*Brachychiton rupestris*, *B. australe*, and *B. populneus*), southern siris (*Heliodendron thoezetiana*), broad-leaved leopard tree (*Flindersia collina*), scrub whitewood (*Atalaya salicifolia*), crow's apple (*Owenia venosa*), scrub ironbark (*Acacia fasciculifera*), rusty fig (*Ficus rubiginosa*) and shiny-leaved stinging-tree (*Dendrocnide photinophylla).* Canopy cover averages over 80% with a median height of 20 m.

This community is State-mapped as Category B (remnant) RE 11.12.4 – Semi-evergreen vine thicket and microphyll vine forest on igneous rocks. The survey assessment confirmed the accuracy of this mapping. This community does not conform to a TEC under the EPBC Act and is listed as Least Concern under the VM Act.

The SEVT community occurring in Land Zone 3 in the northwest of southern property transitions between the Queensland blue gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*) and silver-leaved ironbark (*Eucalyptus melanophloia*) dominated woodlands within the same alluvial floodplain and fringing Sawpit Creek to the west and the drainage line feeding the creek from the south. Canopy species in this community, therefore, consist of emergent but sparse (approximately 10% canopy cover) Queensland blue gum, silver-leaved ironbark, and bottle trees (*Brachychiton australis*, *B. populneas*, and *B. rupestris*), ranging in heights between 10 and 25 m. A secondary tree layer, dominated by small-leaved ebony (*Diospyros humilis*), wilga (*Geijera salicifolia*), Queensland ebony (*Lysiphyllum hookeri*), with white cedar (*Melia azedarach*). Canopy cover and height averages 30%, and 10 m, respectively.

- Brigalow Woodland

One patch (approximately 5.7 ha in area) of remnant vegetation in the central area of the southern property consists of a brigalow (*Acacia harpophylla*) dominated woodland. This community features a tall (maximum 30 m) but sparse (estimated canopy cover of 10 – 20%) brigalow canopy, with scattered bottle trees (*Brachychiton* spp.) throughout.

The entire patch of vegetation is State-mapped as a Category B (remnant) heterogeneous RE polygon consisting of RE 11.3.4 / 11.3.2 / 11.3.25 (60/35/5). Geological mapping for the area identifies volcanic and metamorphic mafites and felsites from the late Carboniferous to early Permian era, which do not correlate with Land Zone 3. Ground-truthing through a flora assessment determined that the brigalow-dominated vegetation is consistent with RE 11.12.21 – *Acacia harpophylla* open forest on igneous rocks, colluvial lower slopes. However, as stated in Section 1(b)(i), the patch was determined to not meet the TEC threshold criteria.

- Spotted Gum Open Forest

Areas within the northeast of Monkey Springs and areas in the northeast and south of Brookleigh consist of spotted gum open forest. This community is dominated by spotted gum (*Corymbia citriodora*). Other canopy species include narrow-leaved ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra*) and rusty gum (*Angophora leiocarpa*) towards the east and southeast of Brookleigh. Midstory species include *Acacia* spp., soap tree (*Alphitonia excelsa*), native witch-hazel (*Turraea pubescens)* and juvenile canopy species. Prickly pear trees (*Opuntia* spp.) are frequent in this vegetation community. Large trees and hollow-bearing trees are also prevalent within this community. The canopy height of this community is 30 m, with an estimated canopy cover of 30 – 50%.

- Non-remnant Pasture Areas

This community occupies the remainder of the Project Area and is particularly concentrated in the western lowland areas of all three properties. It is comprised of exotic pasture species, with sparse woody regrowth, including quinine bush (*Petalostigma pubescens*), black tea tree (*Melaleuca bracteata*), *Acacia* spp., and

narrow-leaved ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra*). The midstory is generally absent, with the exception of wait-a-while (*Capparis lasiantha*). Invasive species include prickly pear (*Opuntia* spp.), creeping lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*), and parthenium (*Parthenium hysterophorus*).

Connectivity

As outlined above, the vegetation within the Project Area includes mature native canopy trees and large, contiguous patches of remnant vegetation, providing terrestrial connectivity through structural ecological linkages. At a landscape scale, the Project Area forms part of a regionally significant corridor that extends from the Dawson Highway in the north, through Belmont State Forest and other remnant vegetation on adjacent properties, to the State-significant corridor at Trevethan State Forest – spanning approximately 80 km.

3.3 Heritage

3.3.1 Describe any Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas or other places recognised as having heritage values that apply to the project area.

No Commonwealth heritage places overseas, or other places recognised as having heritage value apply to the Project area.

3.3.2 Describe any Indigenous heritage values that apply to the project area.

To date, the Gaangalu People have undertaken cultural heritage survey works over the met mast footprint and associated tracks. Identified cultural heritage sites will be avoided by the Project. Further cultural heritage surveys across the broader Project Footprint are planned with both the Wulli Wulli and Gaangalu Peoples, with fieldwork targeted for Q3 2025.

3.4 Hydrology

3.4.1 Describe the hydrology characteristics that apply to the project area and attach any hydrological investigations or surveys if applicable. *

The Project Area is situated within the Dawson River sub-catchment of the broader Fitzroy River catchment. Site drainage is generally in a westerly direction towards Banana Creek in the north of the Project Area and southwest towards Lonesome Creek in the south of the Project Area. Both these creeks flow into the Dawson River and eventually into the Fitzroy River over 100 km north of the Project Area. From there the Fitzroy River flows initially north before arcing to the southeast, discharging to the Coral Sea south-east of Rockhampton near Port Alma.

To the east of the Project Area is a catchment divide whereby to the east water drains into the Prospect The Project Area is intersected by numerous waterways, the most significant of which are Banana Creek, Tarramba Creek, and Sawpit Creek. Waterways of the Project Area are expected to be intermittent, experiencing flow for relatively short duration following rainfall and runoff in the catchment. Stream flows are expected to be highly variable, with most channels drying during winter to early spring when rainfall and runoff is historically low.

The Fitzroy River flow is highly episodic, with a seasonal bias to high flows in summer. The catchment has recognised land degradation problems, including all forms of soil erosion by water and soil fertility decline. Erosion risks associated with the Project are considered in the P-ESCP in **Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf, Section 3.9, pp. 17-26.**

The closest Ramsar-listed wetland is the Shoalwater and Corio Bays Area, located approximately 180 kilometres north of the Project Area. The Fitzroy Basin connects to the sea through the Fitzroy River at Gladstone, over 150 kilometres away from the Ramsar site. Hydrologically, the site is not connected to the Ramsar site and, as such, it is considered highly unlikely the Project will impact the Ramsar site.

4. Impacts and mitigation

4.1 Impact details

Potential Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) relevant to your proposed action area.

EPBC Act section	Controlling provision	Impacted	Reviewed
S12	World Heritage	No	Yes
S15B	National Heritage	No	Yes
S16	Ramsar Wetland	No	Yes
S18	Threatened Species and Ecological Communities	Yes	Yes
S20	Migratory Species	Yes	Yes
S21	Nuclear	No	Yes
S23	Commonwealth Marine Area	No	Yes
S24B	Great Barrier Reef	No	Yes
S24D	Water resource in relation to large coal mining development or coal seam gas	No	Yes
S26	Commonwealth Land	No	Yes
S27B	Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas	No	Yes
S28	Commonwealth or Commonwealth Agency	No	Yes

4.1.1 World Heritage

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.1.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.1.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

In accordance with the PMST report generated through this referral portal, there are no World Heritage areas within 30 km of the Project Area. The activities proposed as part of this action as described in **Section 1.2 of this referral** will not have any direct or indirect impacts to World Heritage Areas.

Consideration of the Great Barrier Reef as a World Heritage Area

Context

The Project is located within the Dawson River sub-basin in the very upper reaches of the GBR Fitzroy Basin catchment and is subject to the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan. The Project is approximately 200 km upstream of the mouth of the Fitzroy River, connected via creeks which flow into the Dawson River which is a tributary of the Fitzroy River. The assessment of the Project considers impacts to water quality by erosion and sedimentation, and via chemical spills. While watercourse crossings are proposed, suitable mitigation and management measures will be applied to limit the residual risk of impacts to the GBRWHA to low (further detail below).

Due to the distance from the GBR (approximately 200 km), the nature of the Project (construction involving temporary ground disturbance) and the implementation of mitigation and management measures, it is unlikely that the Project would impact on the GBR.

To support this assessment and the Referral, a site-specific Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP) has been prepared and attached at **Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf**. The P-ESCP considers the site characteristics such as soils, hydrology and drainage patterns and climatic conditions to determine the best practice management and mitigation measures for the Project in accordance with the legislative context and standards. International Erosion Control Association (IECA) 2008 have guided the preparation of the P-ESCP and informed best practice erosion and sediment controls for the site.

Conservatively, the GBR is considered a sensitive receptor in the P-ESCP. Discharge water quality objectives established for the Project are to consider sensitive receiving environments (considering the Reef 2020 Water Quality Improvement Plan). A review of the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan determined that the Project will not impact on the objectives of the Plan, with no net worsening on water quality anticipated due to the distance from the reef, and in the context of the downstream land uses (between the Project area and the discharge point into the GBR via the Fitzroy River), including intensive agriculture and grazing, residential development (such as the city of Rockhampton). The Fitzroy River discharges north of Curtis Island at Port Alma; heavy industry at these locations also contribute to impacts on the GBR.

In accordance with the P-ESCP, controls, as per the IECA guidelines, will be applied to the Project to:

- Facilitate best practice stormwater management;
- Avoid or minimise soil erosion; and
- Facilitate best practice soil and sediment management.

Management and Mitigation

The following measures will be implemented to mitigate and manage impacts of erosion and sediment as much as practicable during the construction phase of the Project:

- Erosion in active construction areas cannot be eliminated but can be controlled. As part of the construction planning, a certified ESCP will be prepared prior to construction and implemented during on-site activities. Sediment and erosion control measures to prevent soil loss will be developed consistent with the IECA Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control (BPESC) document. The ESCP will form part of the overall Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that will be prepared prior to construction. Particular focus will be given to managing runoff in the vicinity of watercourses. A summary of the controls to be implemented at the site include:
    - Erosion controls:

        - Staging of works to limit the duration and overall area of exposed soils at any one time in minimsed, and ground disturbing activities occur in lower rainfall periods
        - Demarcation of no-go zones, within which access or work is not permitted
        - Minimisation of trafficking disturbance by limiting vehicle activity to formed access tracks
        - Protection of groundcover in temporary disturbance areas by including these areas in the above no-go zones
        - Utilising temporary groundcovers where practicable to protect exposed soils not ready to be permanently stabilised
        - Establishing groundcovers, such as rock of grave over site office, parking, and laydown areas.
    - Drainage controls:
        - Implementation of a stormwater management plan.
        - Temporary drainage controls design in accordance with IECA recommendations.
        - Management of clean and dirty water across the site.
        - Installation of measures to manage water diversions through the site including velocity and quality.
    - Sediment controls:
        - Sediment traps will be designed and positioned by a suitably qualified person.
        - Sediment controls will be applied only after all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent erosion have been adopted.
        - Sediment laden runoff from construction areas will be directed to appropriate sediment control device in accordance with the required treatment standard.
        - All sediment control measures will be designed, installed, operated and maintained in accordance with IECA 2008.
        - All material removed from sediment traps during maintenance will be disposed of in a manner that does not cause ongoing soil erosion or environmental harm.
- Other actions such as stockpile management, instream works, weather preparedness and dust management will also be implemented to manage activities during construction.
- Creek crossing locations will seek to take advantage of existing gaps in the riparian corridors as far as practicable. Work in creek crossings will be carried out in periods of no flow where practicable.
- On-site infrastructure will be designed to ensure water flows are not impounded or concentrated (e.g., culverts and diversion ditches.)
- No equipment or materials will be stored across flow paths.
- The extent of the area required to carry out the permitted activity will be limited to the minimum area necessary to reasonably carry out the works.
- Waterway crossings will be designed in accordance with the accepted development requirements for waterway barrier works wherever practicable to ensure fish passage is not impeded.
- Watercourse crossings will be designed to maintain flow and minimise the increase in flow volume or velocity.
- Constructed access tracks (e.g. culverts or splash-through crossings) will be provided with a scour apron and cut off wall on the downstream side sufficient to prevent bed erosion.

Notwithstanding the proposed erosion and sediment controls to be implemented and the significant distance between the Project Area and the mouth of the GBR, to be conservative, a significant impact assessment has been undertaken for the GBRWHA. The significant impact assessment is provided in **Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-PESCP.pdf, Appendix B-5, pp. 76-79.**

As concluded in the assessment, it is highly unlikely the Project will have an impact on the GBRWHA (or values of the GBRNHP, or GBRMP).

4.1.2 National Heritage

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.2.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.2.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

In accordance with the PMST report generated through this referral portal, there are no World Heritage areas within 30 km of the Project Area. The activities proposed as part of this action as described in **Section 1.2 of this Referral** will not have any direct or indirect impacts to National Heritage Places.

Consideration of the Great Barrier Reef as a National Heritage Place

Context

The Project is located within the Dawson River sub-basin in the very upper reaches of the GBR Fitzroy Basin catchment and is subject to the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan. The Project is approximately 200 km upstream of the mouth of the Fitzroy River, connected via creeks which flow into the Dawson River which is a tributary of the Fitzroy River. The assessment of the Project considers impacts to water quality by erosion and sedimentation, and via chemical spills. While watercourse crossings are proposed, suitable mitigation and management measures will be applied to limit the residual risk of impacts to the GBRNHP to low (further detail below).

Due to the distance from the GBR (approximately 200 km), the nature of the Project (construction involving temporary ground disturbance) and the implementation of mitigation and management measures, it is unlikely that the Project would impact on the GBR.

To support this assessment and the Referral, a site-specific Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP) has been prepared and attached at **Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf**. The P-ESCP considers the site characteristics such as soils, hydrology and drainage patterns and climatic conditions to determine the best practice management and mitigation measures for the Project in accordance with the legislative context and standards. International Erosion Control Association (IECA) 2008 have guided the preparation of the P-ESCP and informed best practice erosion and sediment controls for the site.

Conservatively, the GBR is considered a sensitive receptor in the P-ESCP. Discharge water quality objectives established for the Project are to consider sensitive receiving environments (considering the Reef 2020 Water Quality Improvement Plan). A review of the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan determined that the Project will not impact on the objectives of the Plan, with no net worsening on water quality anticipated due to the distance from the reef, and in the context of the downstream land uses (between the Project area and the discharge point into the GBR via the Fitzroy River), including intensive agriculture and grazing, residential development (such as the city of Rockhampton). The Fitzroy River discharges north of Curtis Island at Port Alma; heavy industry at these locations also contribute to impacts on the GBR.

In accordance with the P-ESCP, controls, as per the IECA guidelines, will be applied to the Project to:

- Facilitate best practice stormwater management;
- Avoid or minimise soil erosion; and
- Facilitate best practice soil and sediment management.

Management and Mitigation

The following measures will be implemented to mitigate and manage impacts of erosion and sediment as much as practicable during the construction phase of the Project:

- Erosion in active construction areas cannot be eliminated but can be controlled. As part of the construction planning, a certified ESCP will be prepared prior to construction and implemented during on-site activities. Sediment and erosion control measures to prevent soil loss will be developed consistent with the IECA Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control (BPESC) document. The ESCP will form part of the overall Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that will be prepared prior to construction. Particular focus will be given to managing runoff in the vicinity of watercourses. A summary of the controls to be implemented at the site include:
    - Erosion controls:

        - Staging of works to limit the duration and overall area of exposed soils at any one time in minimsed, and ground disturbing activities occur in lower rainfall periods
        - Demarcation of no-go zones, within which access or work is not permitted
        - Minimisation of trafficking disturbance by limiting vehicle activity to formed access tracks
        - Protection of groundcover in temporary disturbance areas by including these areas in the above no-go zones
        - Utilising temporary groundcovers where practicable to protect exposed soils not ready to be permanently stabilised
        - Establishing groundcovers, such as rock of grave over site office, parking, and laydown areas.
    - Drainage controls:
        - Implementation of a stormwater management plan.
        - Temporary drainage controls design in accordance with IECA recommendations.
        - Management of clean and dirty water across the site.
        - Installation of measures to manage water diversions through the site including velocity and quality.
    - Sediment controls:
        - Sediment traps will be designed and positioned by a suitably qualified person.
        - Sediment controls will be applied only after all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent erosion have been adopted.
        - Sediment laden runoff from construction areas will be directed to appropriate sediment control device in accordance with the required treatment standard.
        - All sediment control measures will be designed, installed, operated and maintained in accordance with IECA 2008.
        - All material removed from sediment traps during maintenance will be disposed of in a manner that does not cause ongoing soil erosion or environmental harm.
- Other actions such as stockpile management, instream works, weather preparedness and dust management will also be implemented to manage activities during construction.
- Creek crossing locations will seek to take advantage of existing gaps in the riparian corridors as far as practicable. Work in creek crossings will be carried out in periods of no flow where practicable.
- On-site infrastructure will be designed to ensure water flows are not impounded or concentrated (e.g., culverts and diversion ditches.)
- No equipment or materials will be stored across flow paths.
- The extent of the area required to carry out the permitted activity will be limited to the minimum area necessary to reasonably carry out the works.
- Waterway crossings will be designed in accordance with the accepted development requirements for waterway barrier works wherever practicable to ensure fish passage is not impeded.
- Watercourse crossings will be designed to maintain flow and minimise the increase in flow volume or velocity.
- Constructed access tracks (e.g. culverts or splash-through crossings) will be provided with a scour apron and cut off wall on the downstream side sufficient to prevent bed erosion.

Notwithstanding the proposed erosion and sediment controls to be implemented and the significant distance between the Project Area and the mouth of the GBR, to be conservative, a significant impact assessment has been undertaken for the GBRNHP. The significant impact assessment is provided in **Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf, Appendix B-5, pp. 76-79.**

As concluded in the assessment, the Project will not have an impact on the GBRNHP (nor the values of the GBRWHA, or GBRMP).

4.1.3 Ramsar Wetland

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.3.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.3.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

The closest Ramsar-listed wetland to the Project Area is the Shoalwater and Corio Bays Area, located approximately 180 kilometres north of the Project Area. The Project Area is located within the Fitzroy Basin, which drains into the ocean via the Fitzroy River at Gladstone, over 150 kilometres
away from the Ramsar site. As the Project Area is not hydrologically connected to the Ramsar site, it is considered highly unlikely the Project will impact the Ramsar site.

4.1.4 Threatened Species and Ecological Communities

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

Threatened species

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Arthraxon hispidus	Hairy-joint Grass
No	No	Cadellia pentastylis	Ooline
No	No	Calidris acuminata	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris ferruginea	Curlew Sandpiper
No	No	Cossinia australiana	Cossinia
No	No	Dasyurus hallucatus	Northern Quoll, Digul [Gogo-Yimidir], Wijingadda [Dambimangari], Wiminji [Martu]
No	No	Delma torquata	Adorned Delma, Collared Delma
No	No	Denisonia maculata	Ornamental Snake
No	No	Dichanthium queenslandicum	King Blue-grass
No	No	Dichanthium setosum	bluegrass
No	No	Egernia rugosa	Yakka Skink
No	No	Elseya albagula	Southern Snapping Turtle, White-throated Snapping Turtle
No	No	Erythrotriorchis radiatus	Red Goshawk
No	No	Falco hypoleucos	Grey Falcon
No	No	Furina dunmalli	Dunmall's Snake
No	No	Gallinago hardwickii	Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe
Yes	Yes	Geophaps scripta scripta	Squatter Pigeon (southern)
No	No	Grantiella picta	Painted Honeyeater
No	No	Hemiaspis damelii	Grey Snake
No	No	Hirundapus caudacutus	White-throated Needletail
No	No	Leuzea australis	Austral Cornflower, Native Thistle

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Macroderma gigas	Ghost Bat
No	No	Neochmia ruficauda ruficauda	Star Finch (eastern), Star Finch (southern)
Yes	Yes	Nyctophilus corbeni	Corben's Long-eared Bat, South-eastern Long-eared Bat
Yes	Yes	Petauroides volans	Greater Glider (southern and central)
No	No	Petaurus australis australis	Yellow-bellied Glider (south-eastern)
Yes	Yes	Phascolarctos cinereus (combined populations of Qld, NSW and the ACT)	Koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory)
No	No	Polianthion minutiflorum	
No	No	Pteropus poliocephalus	Grey-headed Flying-fox
No	No	Rheodytes leukops	Fitzroy River Turtle, Fitzroy Tortoise, Fitzroy Turtle, White-eyed River Diver
No	No	Rostratula australis	Australian Painted Snipe
No	No	Solanum dissectum	
No	No	Solanum johnsonianum	
No	No	Stagonopleura guttata	Diamond Firetail
No	No	Turnix melanogaster	Black-breasted Button-quail
No	No	Xerothamnella herbacea	

Ecological communities

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Ecological community
No	No	Brigalow (Acacia harpophylla dominant and co-dominant)
No	No	Coolibah - Black Box Woodlands of the Darling Riverine Plains and the Brigalow Belt South Bioregions
No	No	Poplar Box Grassy Woodland on Alluvial Plains
No	No	Semi-evergreen vine thickets of the Brigalow Belt (North and South) and Nandewar Bioregions
No	No	Weeping Myall Woodlands

4.1.4.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

Yes

4.1.4.2 Briefly describe why your action has a direct and/or indirect impact on these protected matters. *

The proposed Project Footprint is 939 ha across three adjacent land parcels and five named roads. The proposed Project components and activities of the action are detailed in **Section 1.2 of this referral**. As a result of the proposed action, the following potential direct and indirect impacts have been identified:

- Construction
  - Vegetation clearing results in loss of habitat
  - Habitat fragmentation and reduced connectivity
  - Fauna injury or mortality due to vehicle strike
  - Entanglement in fencing
  - Fauna injury or mortality during vegetation clearing
  - Introduction of increased prevalence of pests and weeds due to increased vehicle movements and vegetation clearing
- Operations
  - Collision with turbine towers, blades, and powerlines
  - Barotrauma
  - Introduction of increased prevalence of pests and weeds due to increased vehicle movements
- Decommissioning

At the end of the Project's operational life, infrastructure will be decommissioned, and the site rehabilitated to facilitate continuation of the current land use (i.e., agriculture). Decommissioning involves the removal of all above-ground infrastructure such as turbines, overhead transmission lines and switching stations. Removal of buried infrastructure is not normally undertaken as this typically causes additional disturbance and environmental impacts. Once above-ground infrastructure is removed, the land is rehabilitated in line with specific approval conditions, landholder agreements and the relevant legislation at the time of decommissioning.

Impacts during decommissioning are likely to relate primarily to vehicle movements around the Project area, potential for spread of weeds and elevated risk of bushfire as described in the sections above. Decommissioning activities will be restricted to the Project footprint. Should any activities be required outside the Project footprint, this would be subject to a separate assessment if required.

Further details on the nature, scale and duration of likely impacts are provided at **Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 4.1, pp. 100-108**.

The threatened species and ecological communities captured in PMST results generated by the referral portal have been considered, and a supporting likelihood of occurrence is provided at **Att. B-7-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Appendix 5, pp. 166-191.**

Threatened Species and Ecological Communities

Five (5) threatened fauna species were identified as requiring further consideration in the ecological assessment process in accordance with the EPBC Act Significant Impact Guidelines (DOE 2023). The following species are likely to be impacted by the proposed action due to the presence of habitat:

- Greater glider
- Koala
- Corben's Long-eared Bat
- Squatter pigeon

In addition, the following species may be 'possibly' impacted by the proposed action:

- White-throated Needletail

In addition, one TEC (SEVT) was identified as requiring further consideration in the ecological assessment process. However, as per the SIA (**Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.1, pp. 119-122**), the SEVT will be avoided by the Project Footprint.

The following provides a breakdown of the amount of field verified habitat or potential habitat for each listed threatened species in the Project Footprint:

- Greater glider – 599.8ha (46.1ha of denning habitat, 553.7 ha of foraging and dispersal habitat)
- Koala – 634.8ha (45.7 ha of breeding habitat, 589.1 ha of foraging and dispersal habitat)
- Corben's Long-eared Bat – 599.8 ha (588.2 ha of breeding habitat, 11.7 ha of foraging and dispersal habitat)
- Squatter pigeon – 224 ha (breeding, foraging, and dispersal habitat)
- White-throated Needletail – 939 ha (foraging habitat)
- SEVT TEC – 0 ha

Indirect Impacts to MNES Threatened Species and Ecological Communities

As a result of the proposed action, the following indirect impacts to MNES may occur:

- Fragmentation of Greater Glider habitat to establish access tracks. Access tracks and clearing will break canopy connectivity essential for Greater Glider movement. This fragmentation reduces genetic exchange, increases mortality, and may lead to local extinctions if sub-populations become isolated.
- Noise, vibration and light spill from machinery and vehicles, which may disturb or degrade habitat during construction. Disturbance can alter behaviour and reduce breeding success, especially in sensitive arboreal mammals.
- Construction facilitates weed spread and may inadvertently introduce pest species such as feral cats or foxes, which prey on native fauna. Ongoing maintenance activities (e.g., slashing) can further exacerbate this impact.
- Increased habitat degradation from edge effects, such as increased dust accretion on vegetation as a result of the proposed works. Dust generated from construction roads can impair photosynthesis, reduce plant health, and affect food availability for herbivores and pollinators.

Cumulative Impacts

At present, there are no similar projects under construction or operating in the vicinity of the proposed Dawson Wind Farm. However, it is acknowledged that the Banana Range Wind Farm, located to the north of the Project holds EPBC approval, and the proposed Theodore Wind Farm, located approximately 25 km south of the Project, has been referred to DCCEEW for assessment under the EPBC Act. Should these projects obtain approval and be constructed, it is anticipated that there may be a cumulative impact to listed aerial species, such as the White-throated Needletail (possible collision risk). However, as stated in this referral, it is currently considered 'possible' that the Dawson Wind Farm would significantly impact this species (impacts associated with collision risk), pending further BUS and the results of CRM.

Cumulative impacts to other listed species are not anticipated as any significant impacts to these species from the Dawson Wind Farm will be offset in accordance with an approved offset area management plan.

Further, as stated in the P-ESCP (**Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf)**, best practice erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented to reduce the risk of impacts to water quality, and downstream sensitive receptors, including the GBR. Given the implementation of these measures, and the distance to the GBR (200 km upstream), it is considered highly unlikely that there will be a cumulative impact of these proposed projects on the GBR.

4.1.4.4 Do you consider this likely direct and/or indirect impact to be a Significant Impact? *

Yes

4.1.4.5 Describe why you consider this to be a Significant Impact. *

Significant impact assessments have been undertaken in accordance with the EPBC Significant Impact Assessment Guidelines and EPBC Act Policy Statement 1.1 for all listed threatened species that are either known to occur or are likely to occur within the Project Area. The significant impact assessments for each of these MNES is presented in **Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5, pp. 116-134; Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5, pp. 135-153.**

In accordance with the outcomes of the significant impact assessments undertaken for the five (5) applicable fauna species, and one (1) threatened ecological community, it has been determined that the proposed action will have a potential significant impact on the following threatened species:

- Greater Glider – Direct impacts to 599.8 ha of suitable habitat within the Project Footprint, including 46.1 ha of denning and 553.7 ha of foraging/dispersal habitat. This is from a total of 5,885.9 ha of suitable habitat in the Project Area, comprising 595.5 ha of breeding and 5,290.8 ha of foraging/dispersal habitat – refer **Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.2, pp. 122-127**.
- Koala – Direct impacts to 634.8 ha of suitable habitat within the Project Footprint, including 45.7 ha of breeding habitat and 589 ha of foraging/dispersal habitat. This is from a total of 6,381.9 ha of suitable habitat in the Project Area, comprising 582.7 ha of breeding/foraging/dispersal habitat and 5,799.3 ha of foraging/dispersal habitat – refer **Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.3, pp. 128-133**.
- Corben's Long-eared Bat – Direct impacts to 599.8 ha of suitable habitat within the Project Footprint, including 588.2 ha of breeding habitat and 11.7 ha of foraging/dispersal habitat. This is from a total of 6,381.9 ha of suitable habitat in the Project Area, comprising 5.656.1 ha of breeding/foraging/dispersal habitat and 234.5 ha of foraging/dispersal habitat – refer **Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.4, pp. 133-134; Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.4, pp. 135-139**.
- Potential significant impacts to the White-throated Needletail require completion of all eight seasonal BUS and subsequent CRM to enable a more accurate, evidence-based assessment. It is anticipated that the eighth seasonal BUS assessment will be completed in winter 2026. The SIA for this species is at **Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.6, pp. 146-153**.

Significant impacts to the SEVT TEC (**Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.1, pp. 119-122**) and Squatter Pigeon (**Section 5.3.4, pp. 39-40; Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.5, pp. 139-146)** are considered unlikely.

4.1.4.7 Do you think your proposed action is a controlled action? *

Yes

4.1.4.8 Please elaborate why you think your proposed action is a controlled action. *

Throughout the development of the Project to date, the design has been optimised to avoid impacts to MNES to the extent possible in accordance with the avoidance, minimise, and mitigation hierarchy. However, the Project recognises significant impacts are likely to three listed threatened species, being:

- Greater Glider
- Koala
- Corben’s Long-eared Bat

As such, it is considered the proposed action would constitute a controlled action under the EPBC Act.

In addition, it is currently considered there may be ‘possible’ significant impacts to the White-throated Needletail. The results of CRM, to be undertaken after eight seasonal surveys, is expected to confirm if a significant impact is likely or unlikely for this species.

4.1.4.10 Please describe any avoidance or mitigation measures proposed for this action and attach any supporting documentation for these avoidance and mitigation measures. *

As outlined in the SIA (**Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 4.2, pp. 109-115**), a range of avoidance, mitigation, and management measures have been identified to reduce the potential ecological impacts of the Project. These measures have been divided into measures that can be applied during the various phases of the proposed development, including during the following phases:

- Planning and Design
- Clearing and Construction
- Operational
- Decommissioning

The measures being considered for each phase of the Project are presented in the SIA (**Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 4.2, Table 12 pp. 109-115**), and replicated below.

Planning and Design

- Infrastructure is located in already cleared areas, such as utilising existing access tracks. However, the Projects' ability to avoid impacts is constrained by wind profiles, topography, logistics and landholder preferences which require the placement of turbines, and subsequently supporting infrastructure, in areas that support MNES habitat.
- Avoid the clearing of the patch of known SEVT TEC.
- Further refinements to the design will be made throughout the referral and infrastructure micro-siting processes to reduce potential environmental impacts. For instance, the design will retain large hollow bearing trees, particularly in riparian habitats, which may provide Greater Glider launch points and ensure connectivity and avoid installing barbed wire fences.
- Bird and bat species at higher collision risk are distributed widely across the Project Area, limiting full avoidance. However, micro-siting and ongoing BUS will help refine turbine placement and flight pattern understanding to minimise impacts.

Clearing and Construction

- Preparation of a Construction Vegetation and Fauna Management Plan (CVFMP), including detailed mitigation measures.
- Enforcing vehicle speed limits of 40km/hr on the site.
- Development and implementation of additional management plans, including Biosecurity Management Plan, Weed and Pest Management Plan, and a Construction Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, a Construction Environmental Management Plan, and a Bird and Bat Management Plan.
- Light pollution will be managed through consideration of lighting used during construction (e.g., investigating the use of low-pressure sodium or mercury bulbs with UV filters to reduce sky glow and disorientation of birds and bats).

Operational

- Development and implementation of additional management plans, including Biosecurity Management Plan, Weed and Pest Management Plan, and a Construction Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, a Construction Environmental Management Plan, and a Bird and Bat Management Plan.

Decommissioning

- Decommissioning activities will be restricted to previously disturbed areas wherever practicable to avoid additional habitat loss or degradation.
- Erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented in accordance with the ESCP plan and current best practice guidelines to prevent off-site sedimentation and protect adjacent vegetation and waterways.

- Weed and hygiene protocols will be followed throughout decommissioning, including vehicle and machinery washdown procedures, to prevent the spread of invasive species and pathogens.

Species Specific Measures

In addition, species specific mitigation measures have been identified for implementation, where possible, including:

- Koala
  - Where koalas are present, identify the tree they are in and adjacent trees, and ensure these are not cleared until the individual has left the area of its own accord
  - Maintain koala habitat outside of the Project Footprint
  - Site personnel will not be permitted to bring domestic dogs into the Project area.
- Greater Glider
  - Where hollow-bearing tree retention is not practicable, investigate the use of glider poles and nest boxes.
  - Where micro-siting can be performed, high-quality and locally significant trees will be retained to maintain habitat connectivity and facilitate safe movement between patches.
- White-throated Needletail
  - The implementation of a comprehensive Bird and Bat Management Plan (BBMP) will ensure that the risk of operational impacts for this species (i.e., collision and displacement) is minimised.

4.1.4.11 Please describe any proposed offsets and attach any supporting documentation relevant to these measures. *

As described in the SIA (refer **Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 6, pp. 154-155**), significant residual impacts may occur to the Greater Glider, Koala, and Corben's Long-eared Bat as a result of the Project. There is also the potential for a significant impact on the White-throated Needletail, subject to further assessment and the outcomes of CRM. Therefore, offsets will be proposed for these MNES in accordance with the EPBC Environmental Offsets Policy (DSEWPC, 2012). Specifically, offsets will:

- Be primarily land-based and designed to deliver a direct conservation outcome for the relevant MNES;
- May include indirect offsets where appropriate;
- Will support habitat for the MNES and preferably have connection to populations or occurrences within or adjoining the offset area;
- Offset areas will preferably be located as close as possible to the area of impact and have good connectivity to ensure they remain viable in the longer-term;
- Provide habitat quality gains through restoration, fire management, weed and pest animal management; and
- Involve robust monitoring and reporting programs to ensure conservation outcomes are being demonstrated.

An offset availability analysis will be undertaken as part of the offset strategy during the next phase of the project assessment. As stated in the SIA (**Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 6, pp. 154**), an Offset Area Management Plan will be prepared once an appropriate site (or sites) have been identified.

4.1.5 Migratory Species

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Actitis hypoleucos	Common Sandpiper
No	No	Apus pacificus	Fork-tailed Swift
No	No	Calidris acuminata	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris ferruginea	Curlew Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris melanotos	Pectoral Sandpiper
No	No	Cuculus optatus	Oriental Cuckoo, Horsfield's Cuckoo
No	No	Gallinago hardwickii	Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe
Yes	Yes	Hirundapus caudacutus	White-throated Needletail
No	No	Motacilla flava	Yellow Wagtail
No	No	Pandion haliaetus	Osprey

4.1.5.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

Yes

4.1.5.2 Briefly describe why your action has a direct and/or indirect impact on these protected matters. *

As outlined in the SIA (**Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.6, pp. 146-153**), there is a possibility of a significant impact on the White-throated Needletail due to the potential for turbine collision. However, to inform the assessment of potential collision risk, CRM will be undertaken following the completion of eight seasonal surveys.

Should it be determined following CRM, that this is a risk to the species, the potential impact may contribute to a long-term decrease in population size and interference with the recovery of the species.

4.1.5.4 Do you consider this likely direct and/or indirect impact to be a Significant Impact? *

No

4.1.5.6 Describe why you do not consider this to be a Significant Impact. *

White-throated Needletail

As stated in **Section 4.1.5.2 of this Referral**, it is acknowledged collision risk during operations is a potential direct impact to this species: although, the degree of risk is presently unknown, pending the CRM results. As such, it is currently considered 'possible' that there will be a significant impact to this species.

Nevertheless, it is anticipated that the CRM results will inform the development and implementation of an adaptive BBMP, which will minimise collision risk below the significant impact threshold for this species.

A significant impact assessment is provided in **Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 5.3.6, pp. 146-153**.

4.1.5.7 Do you think your proposed action is a controlled action? *

Yes

4.1.5.8 Please elaborate why you think your proposed action is a controlled action. *

As it is considered possible that the Project may have a significant impact on migratory species (i.e., the White-throated Needletail (listed as threatened; migratory), Migratory Species is considered a relevant controlling provision for the purpose of this referral.

4.1.5.10 Please describe any avoidance or mitigation measures proposed for this action and attach any supporting documentation for these avoidance and mitigation measures. *

As outlined in the SIA (**Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 4.2, Table 12 pp. 109-115**), a range of avoidance, mitigation, and management measures have been identified to reduce the potential ecological impacts of the Project. These measures have been divided into measures that can be applied during the various phases of the proposed development, including during the following phases:

- Planning and Design
- Clearing and Construction
- Operational
- Decommissioning

Examples of the relevant measures for migratory species being considered for the Project include:

Planning and Design Phase

- Avoidance of impacts
    - Bird and bat species at higher collision risk are distributed widely across the Project Area, limiting full avoidance. However, micro-siting and ongoing BUS will help refine turbine placement and flight pattern understanding to minimise impacts.
- Minimisation and mitigation
    - Lighting is most likely the most important human-controlled element influencing the fatality rates of birds and bats colliding with any buildings (Longcore et al., 2008). Various lighting options will be considered to mitigate impacts to bird and bat species.
    - Design aspects for turbines will be considered including painting one turbine blade black to reduce bird collisions.
    - Passive bird and bat monitoring and curtailment strategies during high-risk periods will be investigated (e.g., use of operational monitoring systems) to inform targeted or on-demand turbine shutdowns based on species detections and predictive flight activities. It is noted that current risk levels do not warrant curtailment, further BUS and CRM are needed to assess collision risk and determine appropriate cut-in speeds.

Clearing and Construction Phase

- Minimisation and mitigation
    - A Construction Vegetation and Fauna Management Plan (CVFMP) will be prepared and implemented and it will include detailed mitigation measures.

Operational Phase

- Minimisation and mitigation
    - A Bird and Bat Management Plan (BBMP) will be developed following the completion of two years of BUS, and this plan will assess the potential impacts of turbine operations on bird and bat populations and outline adaptive management measures.

Decommissioning Phase

- Minimisation and mitigation
    - Fauna protection will be considered during decommissioning, including scheduling works to avoid sensitive periods for local fauna (e.g., breeding seasons).

The full list of avoidance, mitigation and management measures being considered is provided in **Section 4.1.4.10 of this referral**, and in the SIA report (**Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf, Section 4.2, Table 12 pp. 109-115**).

4.1.5.11 Please describe any proposed offsets and attach any supporting documentation relevant to these measures. *

Offsets for migratory species are not currently proposed, as, at present, it is considered possible that the Project may have a significant impact on the White-throated Needletail (listed as migratory, and threatened).

Offsets will be pursued for threatened species that the Project may have a significant impact on, as described in **Section 4.1.4.11 of this Referral.** As such, should the results of CRM indicate a likely significant impact to migratory species, suitable offsets will be proposed.

4.1.6 Nuclear

4.1.6.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on this protected matter? *

No

4.1.6.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

There are no nuclear activities proposed as part of the action.

4.1.7 Commonwealth Marine Area

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.7.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.7.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

In accordance with the PMST report generated through this referral portal, there are no Commonwealth marine areas within 30 km of the Project Area. The activities proposed as part of the action and subsequent potential impacts will not have direct or indirect impacts to Commonwealth marine areas.

4.1.8 Great Barrier Reef

4.1.8.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on this protected matter? *

No

4.1.8.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

In accordance with the PMST report generated through this referral portal, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) is not located within 30 km of the Project Area. The activities proposed as part of the action and subsequent potential impacts identified in **Section 1.2 of this referral** are not anticipated to have direct or indirect impacts to the GBRMP.

Consideration of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

Context

The Project is located within the Dawson River sub-basin in the very upper reaches of the GBR Fitzroy Basin catchment and is subject to the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan. The Project is approximately 200 km upstream of the mouth of the Fitzroy River, connected via creeks which flow into the Dawson River which is a tributary of the Fitzroy River. The assessment of the Project considers impacts to water quality by erosion and sedimentation, and via chemical spills. While watercourse crossings are proposed, suitable mitigation and management measures will be applied to limit the residual risk of impacts to the GBRMP to low (further detail below).

Due to the distance from the GBR (approximately 200 km), the nature of the Project (construction involving temporary ground disturbance) and the implementation of mitigation and management measures, it is unlikely that the Project would impact on the GBR.

To support this assessment and the Referral, a site-specific Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP) has been prepared and attached at **Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf**. The P-ESCP considers the site characteristics such as soils, hydrology and drainage patterns and climatic conditions to determine the best practice management and mitigation measures for the Project in accordance with the legislative context and standards. International Erosion Control Association (IECA) 2008 have guided the preparation of the P-ESCP and informed best practice erosion and sediment controls for the site.

Conservatively, the GBR is considered a sensitive receptor in the P-ESCP. Discharge water quality objectives established for the Project are to consider sensitive receiving environments (considering the Reef 2020 Water Quality Improvement Plan). A review of the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan determined that the Project will not impact on the objectives of the Plan, with no net worsening on water quality anticipated due to the distance from the reef, and in the context of the downstream land uses (between the Project area and the discharge point into the GBR via the Fitzroy River), including intensive agriculture and grazing, residential development (such as the city of Rockhampton). The Fitzroy River discharges north of Curtis Island at Port Alma; heavy industry at these locations also contribute to impacts on the GBR.

In accordance with the P-ESCP, controls, as per the IECA guidelines, will be applied to the Project to:

- Facilitate best practice stormwater management;
- Avoid or minimise soil erosion; and
- Facilitate best practice soil and sediment management.

Management and Mitigation

The following measures will be implemented to mitigate and manage impacts of erosion and sediment as much as practicable during the construction phase of the Project:

- Erosion in active construction areas cannot be eliminated but can be controlled. As part of the construction planning, a certified ESCP will be prepared prior to construction and implemented during on-site activities. Sediment and erosion control measures to prevent soil loss will be developed consistent with the IECA Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control (BPESC) document. The ESCP will form part of the overall Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that will be prepared prior to construction. Particular focus will be given to managing runoff in the vicinity of watercourses. A summary of the controls to be implemented at the site include:
    - Erosion controls:

        - Staging of works to limit the duration and overall area of exposed soils at any one time in minimsed, and ground disturbing activities occur in lower rainfall periods
        - Demarcation of no-go zones, within which access or work is not permitted
        - Minimisation of trafficking disturbance by limiting vehicle activity to formed access tracks
        - Protection of groundcover in temporary disturbance areas by including these areas in the above no-go zones
        - Utilising temporary groundcovers where practicable to protect exposed soils not ready to be permanently stabilised
        - Establishing groundcovers, such as rock of grave over site office, parking, and laydown areas.
    - Drainage controls:
        - Implementation of a stormwater management plan.
        - Temporary drainage controls design in accordance with IECA recommendations.
        - Management of clean and dirty water across the site.
        - Installation of measures to manage water diversions through the site including velocity and quality.
    - Sediment controls:
        - Sediment traps will be designed and positioned by a suitably qualified person.
        - Sediment controls will be applied only after all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent erosion have been adopted.
        - Sediment laden runoff from construction areas will be directed to appropriate sediment control device in accordance with the required treatment standard.
        - All sediment control measures will be designed, installed, operated and maintained in accordance with IECA 2008.
        - All material removed from sediment traps during maintenance will be disposed of in a manner that does not cause ongoing soil erosion or environmental harm.
- Other actions such as stockpile management, instream works, weather preparedness and dust management will also be implemented to manage activities during construction.
- Creek crossing locations will seek to take advantage of existing gaps in the riparian corridors as far as practicable. Work in creek crossings will be carried out in periods of no flow where practicable.
- On-site infrastructure will be designed to ensure water flows are not impounded or concentrated (e.g., culverts and diversion ditches.)
- No equipment or materials will be stored across flow paths.
- The extent of the area required to carry out the permitted activity will be limited to the minimum area necessary to reasonably carry out the works.
- Waterway crossings will be designed in accordance with the accepted development requirements for waterway barrier works wherever practicable to ensure fish passage is not impeded.
- Watercourse crossings will be designed to maintain flow and minimise the increase in flow volume or velocity.
- Constructed access tracks (e.g. culverts or splash-through crossings) will be provided with a scour apron and cut off wall on the downstream side sufficient to prevent bed erosion.

Notwithstanding the proposed erosion and sediment controls to be implemented and the significant distance between the Project Area and the mouth of the GBR, to be conservative, a significant impact assessment has been undertaken for the GBRMP. The significant impact assessment is provided in **Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-PESCP.pdf, Appendix B-6, pp. 79-80.**

As concluded in the assessment, the Project will not have an impact on the GBRMP (nor the values of the GBRNHP, or GBRWHA).

4.1.9 Water resource in relation to large coal mining development or coal seam gas

4.1.9.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on this protected matter? *

No

4.1.9.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

The proposed action does not include large coal mining development or coal seam gas, therefore does not trigger the water resource controlling provision.

4.1.10 Commonwealth Land

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.10.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.10.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

In accordance with the PMST report generated through this referral portal, there is no Commonwealth land within 30 km of the Project Area. The activities proposed as part of the action will not have direct or indirect impacts on Commonwealth land.

4.1.11 Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.11.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.11.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

The proposed action is located within Australia and will not impact a Commonwealth Heritage Place overseas.

4.1.12 Commonwealth or Commonwealth Agency

4.1.12.1 Is the proposed action to be taken by the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth Agency? *

No

4.2 Impact summary

Conclusion on the likelihood of significant impacts

You have indicated that the proposed action will likely have a significant impact on the following Matters of National Environmental Significance:

- Threatened Species and Ecological Communities (S18)

Conclusion on the likelihood of unlikely significant impacts

You have indicated that the proposed action will unlikely have a significant impact on the following Matters of National Environmental Significance:

- World Heritage (S12)
- National Heritage (S15B)
- Ramsar Wetland (S16)
- Migratory Species (S20)
- Nuclear (S21)
- Commonwealth Marine Area (S23)
- Great Barrier Reef (S24B)
- Water resource in relation to large coal mining development or coal seam gas (S24D)
- Commonwealth Land (S26)
- Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas (S27B)
- Commonwealth or Commonwealth Agency (S28)

4.3 Alternatives

4.3.1 Do you have any possible alternatives for your proposed action to be considered as part of your referral? *

No

4.3.8 Describe why alternatives for your proposed action were not possible. *

Timeline

As a renewable energy Project, the development of the Project will support Australia's and the State of Queenland's broader climate and energy policies. These targets are time-bound, as follows:

- 82% renewable electricity by 2030 – a Federal policy target for the NEM
- Net zero emissions by 2050 – Australia's long-term climate commitment under the Paris Agreement
- 43% emissions reduction by 2030 (from 2005 levels) – enshrined in law under the Climate Change Act 2022
- The Queensland Government has legislated its net zero by 2050 target through the Clean Economy Jobs Act 2024.

As a renewable energy project, the Dawson Wind Farm will contribute to these national and state targets by decarbonising the NEM. Delaying the timeframe of the Project will limit the extent to which the proposed action may contribute towards these targets.

Site Selection and Project Design

The site selection process considered environmental and social factors to ensure that the development avoided unnecessary impacts from the outset. The following criteria were considered in the site selection process, which has resulted in the Project site that is proposed (as per this Referral):

- In comparison to other wind farm sites in Queensland, primarily on the Great Dividing Range, this site is historically disturbed with comparatively fewer environmental values
- The siting of this Project is expected to allow multiple projects to be consolidated on fewer transmission lines, thus limiting the breadth of impacts across communities
- The Project site supports a high wind resource, an integral factor in the success of the Project.

The design of the Project considered feedback from landholders as well as outcomes of ecological surveys undertaken across the site. The following factors informed the design from the initial stages of the Project:

- Feedback from landholders to ensure existing agricultural land uses can coexist with the proposed development
- Avoidance of regulated vegetation and ecological values verified through ground-truthing, including TECs, where possible
- Avoidance of watercourses and water features, where practicable, to negate impacts to riparian vegetation and habitat values.

To date, the layout has undergone several small updates to reduce impacts on environmental values. For instance, access tracks have been moved to avoid additional waterway crossings and clearing of ground-truthed remnant vegetation (Of Concern riparian vegetation (RE 11.3.25)).

5. Lodgement

5.1 Attachments

1.3.2.18 (Person proposing to take the action) If the person proposing to take the action is a corporation, provide details of the corporation's environmental policy and planning framework

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. A-EDF-Social-and-Environment-Policy.pdf EDF Social and Environment Policy	30/06/2025	No	High

3.2.1 Flora and fauna within the affected area

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. B-1-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part one of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High
#2.	Document	Att. B-2-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part two of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High
#3.	Document	Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part three of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High
#4.	Document	Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part four of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High
#5.	Document	Att. B-5-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part five of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High
#6.	Document	Att. B-6-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part six of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High
#7.	Document	Att. B-7-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part seven of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High

3.2.2 Vegetation within the project area

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. B-2-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part two of seven.	23/07/2025		High

3.4.1 Hydrology characteristics that apply to the project area

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf.pdf Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP)	01/08/2025	No	High

4.1.1.3 (World Heritage) Why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf.pdf Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP)	31/07/2025	No	High

4.1.2.3 (National Heritage) Why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf.pdf Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP)	31/07/2025		High

4.1.4.2 (Threatened Species and Ecological Communities) Why your action has a direct and/or indirect impact on the identified protected matters

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part three of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High
#2.	Document	Att. B-7-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part seven of seven.	23/07/2025	No	High
#3.	Document	Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf.pdf Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP)	31/07/2025		High

4.1.4.5 (Threatened Species and Ecological Communities) Why you consider the direct and/or indirect impact to be a Significant Impact

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf	23/07/2025		High

		Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part three of seven.			
#2.	Document	Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part four of seven.	24/07/2025	No	High

4.1.4.10 (Threatened Species and Ecological Communities) Avoidance or mitigation measures proposed for this action

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. B-3-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part three of seven.	23/07/2025		High

4.1.4.11 (Threatened Species and Ecological Communities) Proposed offsets relevant to avoidance or mitigation measures

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. B-4-Dawson-Wind-Farm-SIA.pdf.pdf Significant Impact Assessment (SIA) report - part four of seven.	23/07/2025	No	High

4.1.8.3 (Great Barrier Reef) Why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att. C-Dawson-Wind-Farm-P-ESCP.pdf.pdf Preliminary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (P-ESCP)	31/07/2025	No	High

5.2 Declarations

Completed Referring party's declaration

The Referring party is the person preparing the information in this referral.

ABN/ACN	41634731356
Organisation name	EDF RENEWABLES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Organisation address	2000 NSW
Representative's name	Emma Hollo
Representative's job title	Development Manager
Phone	0448591141
Email	emma.hollo@edf-power.com
Address	31.1/123 Pitt St, Sydney CBD

☑ Check this box to indicate you have read the referral form. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

☑ By checking this box, I, **Emma Hollo of EDF RENEWABLES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD**, declare that to the best of my knowledge the information I have given on, or attached to this EPBC Act Referral is complete, current and correct. I understand that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

Completed Person proposing to take the action's declaration

The Person proposing to take the action is the individual, business, government agency or trustee that will be responsible for the proposed action.

ABN/ACN	11658680972
Organisation name	HIGHLAND ENERGY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Organisation address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000
Representative's name	James Katsikas

Representative's job title	CEO
Phone	0438 193 200
Email	james.katsikas@edf-power.com
Address	Level 27, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000

☑ Check this box to indicate you have read the referral form. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

☑ I, **James Katsikas of HIGHLAND ENERGY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD**, declare that to the best of my knowledge the information I have given on, or attached to the EPBC Act Referral is complete, current and correct. I understand that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence. I declare that I am not taking the action on behalf or for the benefit of any other person or entity. *

☐ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

✔ Completed Proposed designated proponent's declaration

The Proposed designated proponent is the individual or organisation proposed to be responsible for meeting the requirements of the EPBC Act during the assessment process, if the Minister decides that this project is a controlled action.

Same as Person proposing to take the action information.

☑ Check this box to indicate you have read the referral form. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

☑ I, **James Katsikas of HIGHLAND ENERGY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD**, the Proposed designated proponent, consent to the designation of myself as the Proposed designated proponent for the purposes of the action described in this EPBC Act Referral. *

☐ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *