Lake Victoria Wind Farm

Application Number: **02546** Commencement Date: **10/08/2024** Status: **Locked**

1. About the project

1.1 Project details

1.1.1 Project title *

Lake Victoria 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 *

01/01/2027

1.1.4 Estimated end date *

31/12/2060

1.2 Proposed Action details

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

Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd as trustee for the Lake Victoria Wind Farm Trust (WestWind) proposes to build the Lake Victoria Wind Farm, which would include the construction and operation of up to 203 wind turbine generators (WTGs) spread over an area of about 41,700 hectares about 24 kilometres northwest of Wentworth in south-western NSW (the Project). The Project would be located within the Wentworth Shire Local Government Area (LGA). Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd as trustee for the Lake Victoria Wind Farm Trust (WestWind) is part of the WestWind Group of companies. Refer to Attachment A for a locality map.

The Project is a renewable energy development with a generation capacity of up to 1.5 gigawatts (GW), enough to power over 800,000 households annually across the national electricity market (NEM). The Project would also include the installation of between one and four battery energy storage systems (BESS) within the Project area.

The Project is located on a mix of freehold land and Crown Land. The Project area comprises land primarily used for agricultural purposes, which has been modified over time through agricultural practices, including livestock grazing and some cropping. Patches of wooded vegetation are scattered across the Project area

The key components of the Project are as follows:

- Up to 203 (3 blade) WTGs (3 to 8 megawatt (MW) capacity each), with a maximum blade-tip height of 280 metres above ground level
- 3 to 6 permanent meteorological masts
- Three collector stations and one terminal station (co-located with a collector station)
- Provision for 600MW battery energy storage system (up to a capacity of 2,400 MWh)
- Other operational infrastructure, including site offices, amenities, laydown areas and operational and maintenance facilities
- Temporary infrastructure areas including construction site compounds, workers worker accommodation, laydown and stockpile areas and batching plants.
- Approximately 416 kilometres of access tracks throughout the Project area (minimum width of 5.5 metres on straight tracks, widened to 7 metres on corners)
- Internal collector network (electrical connections between the proposed wind turbine generators and the substation).

The Project is anticipated to be operational by 2031 and would operate for around 30 years. Around 70 workers would be required for the operation and maintenance of the Project (35 remote support workers and 35 site-based workers).

The Project would require infrastructure components to be transported to the site, either from Melbourne or Adelaide. Site access would be off Nulla Road, however alternative access points on Anabranch Mail Road and Tooperoopna Road may be used if they meet the necessary requirements (e.g. load limits). Investigations into whether road upgrades would be required for the delivery of WTG components, including swept path analyses, would be carried out during the EIS phase.

Of the 41,700 hectares that comprise the Project area, around 259 hectares of overhead transmission lines would be installed as part of the Project, while the works footprint would amount to around 1,800 hectares, equivalent to around five per cent of the total Project area.

Refer to Attachment B for the works footprint and avoidance areas.

The Project would involve typical construction work such as clearing and grubbing, earthworks and excavation, rock hammering, crushing and screening, concrete batching, hauling material, transporting equipment, parts assembly, concrete formwork and associated activities, building of permanent structures, maintenance and refuelling, electrical works, testing and commissioning.

Disturbance activities include:

1. Vegetation clearing: this includes the removal of some native vegetation to make way for the construction of wind turbines, access roads, and other infrastructure. This can cause temporary disturbance to flora and fauna due to the noise, vibration and movement of clearance machinery. There may also be longer term impacts to flora and fauna due to the resultant loss of habitat.
2. Soil excavation and grading: to prepare the site for turbine foundations and access roads, soil excavation and grading will be required. This can lead to soil erosion and mobilisation of contaminants into surface water and/or groundwater.
3. Construction of access tracks: building new access tracks or upgrading existing ones to transport materials and equipment to the site. This can lead to increased weed incursion and soil compaction

within agricultural areas.
4. Installation of turbines and infrastructure: erecting the wind turbines and associated infrastructure, such as substations and transmission lines. This will involve heavy machinery and construction activities that can generate noise and dust, impacting local air quality and noise levels.
5. Operation and maintenance activities: regular maintenance of the turbines and infrastructure, which may include periodic vegetation management and road maintenance.

For further details on the key construction activities see Attachment D, Section 3.2, pages 17-18.

The Project layout has undergone various design amendments in response to feedback from stakeholders, such as associated receivers, and results of preliminary ecological and cultural heritage investigations undertaken for the Project area. This has allowed impacts on areas of higher biodiversity values to be avoided and/or minimised. The Project layout will continue to be refined as the project progresses through the environmental assessment.

Attachments to this referral include:

- Attachment A – Locality map
- Attachment B – Preliminary Project layout
- Attachment C – Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report (Aurecon, 2024)
- Attachment D – Scoping Report – Lake Victoria Wind Farm
- Attachment E – Preliminary EPBC Act Biodiversity Technical Report – Lake Victoria Wind Farm (EnviroKey, 2024)
- Attachment F – Plant Community Types for the Project area
- Attachment G – Lake Victoria Wind Farm Change of company name
- Attachment H – Lake Victoria Wind Farm Unit Trust Deed

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? *

The NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (the EP&A Regulation) provide the planning framework for the Project. The Project meets the threshold for State Significant Development (SSD) as defined under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (Planning System SEPP) and is subject to assessment under Part 4 of the EP&A Act. Being development for the purpose of electricity generation with a capital investment value of more than $30 million, the Project is declared to be SSD under the provisions of the Planning System SEPP.

Accordingly, approval for the Project would be sought under Part 4, Division 4.7 of the EP&A Act. Under Section 4.5(a) of the EP&A Act, the consent authority for SSD is the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces unless the development is of a kind for which the Independent Planning Commission is declared the consent authority by an environmental planning instrument.

The need for other approvals under NSW legislation would be considered during further Project development and environmental assessment.

The Project has also been considered against the Commonwealth's Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 - Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) (DEWHA, 2013). Based on the results of preliminary ecological investigations (reference: Attachment E, Section 5, pages 50-110), there is potential

for the Project to impact the following EPBC Act listed species and ecological communities:

- Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri*) – endangered species.
- Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*) – vulnerable species
- Mallee Bird Community of the Murray Darling Depression Bioregion – endangered ecological community.

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. *

The Proponent has been engaging with key stakeholders about the Lake Victoria Wind Farm since February 2022 and with the community since March 2024 as part of its commitment to early, meaningful, respectful and effective engagement.

The Proponent's approach to engagement is being planned and delivered in line with:

- NSW Government 'Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects' (DPE, 2022)
- NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Community Participation Plan (DPE, 2019)
- NSW DPE Draft Energy Policy Framework (DPE, 2023)
- State Significant Infrastructure Guidelines – Preparing a scoping report (DPE, 2022)
- Clean Energy Council Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry (Clean Energy Council, 2018)
- International Association of Public Participation core values and public participation spectrum, as globally internationally recognised standards and tools.

Key stakeholders who may have an interest in the Project have been identified through desktop research and stakeholder mapping of the local community, capturing those in geographical proximity to the proposed Project. The Project team have engaged in a range of activities, including hosting community open days and meeting with neighbouring landowners and local stakeholders in-person to build and maintain genuine, trusting relationships.

Engagement activities in the local area have been well promoted through local channels. All landowners and neighbours have been contacted and have provided feedback on the Project, including their assessment of the area's visual amenity value. The open days garnered predominately neutral to positive feedback from the local community, offering initial Project insights and opportunities for in-depth feedback through stakeholder interviews.

Engagement would remain a key focus, and The Proponent will continue to engage potentially affected landowners, the community and key stakeholders to ensure they receive comprehensive updates about the Project and provide opportunities for feedback on the Project and the planning process.

In March 2024, the Proponent conducted an open introductory meeting with the Barkandji Native Title Group Aboriginal Corporation to introduce personnel, provide an overview of the Project, address any concerns, and explore opportunities for involvement.

In June 2024, the Proponent conducted an open introductory meeting with the Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council to introduce personnel, provide an overview of the Project, address any concerns, and explore opportunities for involvement.

Further detail on engagement undertaken to date and planned during further Project development and environmental assessment is included in Attachment C *Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report* (Aurecon, 2024), Sections 1.2 and 1.4.

1.3.1 Identity: Referring party

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1.3.1.1 Is Referring party an organisation or business? *

Yes

Referring party organisation details

ABN/ACN	15656111125
Organisation name	WESTWIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PTY LTD
Organisation address	3437 VIC

Referring party details

Name	Sarah Cane

Job title	Planning and Environment Manager
Phone	0411252819
Email	environment@w-wind.com.au
Address	PO Box 433, Gisborne VIC 3437, Australia

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	18669902738
Organisation name	LAKE VICTORIA WIND FARM PTY LTD
Organisation address	3437 VIC

Person proposing to take the action details

Name	Sarah Cane
Job title	Planning and Environment Manager
Phone	0411252819
Email	environment@w-wind.com.au
Address	PO Box 433, Gisborne VIC 3437, Australia

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? *

Yes

1.3.2.16 Describe the nature of the trust arrangement in relation to the proposed action. *

The owner of the Project will be Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd as trustee for the Lake Victoria Wind Farm Unit Trust. A copy of the trust deed is provided as Attachment H.

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. *

Prior to this project, Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd has no environmental management record.

Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd (the Proponent) as trustee for the Lake Victoria Wind Farm Unit Trust is a special purpose vehicle established by WestWind Energy to facilitate the development and delivery of the Project. It is expected that the Proponent will be responsible for all phases of the Project including development, permitting, construction, compliance, operation and decommissioning.

WestWind Energy has a consistent record of proactively seeking environmental approvals where required and ensuring that any commitments or conditions placed on activities as a result of these approval processes are adhered to.

WestWind Energy is currently the largest developer of wind energy projects in Victoria by approved megawatts of generation from working with Victorian regional and rural communities. WestWind Energy's previous projects demonstrate the company's history of responsible environmental management and strict compliance with all environmental protection laws and regulations.

WestWind Energy's projects previously referred under the EPBC Act include:

- Mt Mercer Wind Farm (130MW – in operation since 2013) (EPBC 2005/2116);
- Lal Lal Wind Farm (228MW – in operation since 2019) (EPBC 2007/3721);
- Moorabool Wind Farm (320MW – in operation since 2020);

- Golden Plains Wind Farm (1,333MW – construction commenced late-2022) (EPBC 2017/7965);
- Warracknabeal Energy Park (1,650MW – undergoing environmental and planning approvals since mid-2023) (EPBC 2023/09546);
- Bottle Tree Energy Park (400MW - undergoing environmental and planning approvals since late 2023) (EPBC 2023-09659); and
- Cobar Wind Farm (216 MW - undergoing environmental and planning approvals since early 2024) (EPBC 2024-09843).

WestWind Energy would undertake the Project in accordance with their corporate environmental policy and framework as detailed below.

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

Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd as trustee for the Lake Victoria Wind Farm Unit Trust is a special purpose vehicle established by WestWind Energy to facilitate the development and delivery of the Project. As a subsidiary of WestWind Energy, Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd adheres to WestWind Energy's environmental policy and planning framework.

WestWind Energy's Sustainability Policy is reproduced below:

WestWind Energy is a developer and operator of environmentally friendly electric power generators. WestWind Energy is committed to the operation of electricity generation facilities which minimise environmental impact both in construction and operation.

WestWind Energy will manage its activities in an ecologically sustainable manner and to continuously improve their impact on the shared environment.

To achieve this objective, WestWind Energy will:

- Conduct all activities in accordance with the relevant legislation, government policies, agreements and planning approvals;
- Design, implement and audit programmes and works to responsibly minimise environmental impacts from the operation of its facilities;
- Establish and monitor environmental targets and indicators aimed at continually improving environmental performance;
- Work within a framework of sustainable development by using resources in a manner which maximises their value to both WestWind Energy and the general community;
- Respond promptly and effectively to any known significant environmental impacts caused by operations under its control;
- Educate and train personnel and contractors in their environmental obligations and responsibilities and educate and train employees toconduct their activities in an environmentally responsible manner;
- Consult and inform other organisations and the general community of the environmental impacts of its activities;
  Promote the efficient use of energy, raw materials and other resources within its operations;
- Promote environmental awareness among employees, supplier and contractors;
- Manage land under its care with sensitivity, having due regard for local environmental sensitivities; and
- Make this policy known and available to the public

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	18669902738
Organisation name	LAKE VICTORIA WIND FARM PTY LTD
Organisation address	3437 VIC

Proposed designated proponent details

Name	Sarah Cane
Job title	Planning and Environment Manager
Phone	0411252819
Email	environment@w-wind.com.au
Address	PO Box 433, Gisborne VIC 3437, Australia

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	15656111125
Organisation name	WESTWIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PTY LTD
Organisation address	3437 VIC

Representative's name	Sarah Cane
Representative's job title	Planning and Environment Manager
Phone	0411252819
Email	environment@w-wind.com.au
Address	PO Box 433, Gisborne VIC 3437, Australia

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	18669902738
Organisation name	LAKE VICTORIA WIND FARM PTY LTD
Organisation address	3437 VIC
Representative's name	Sarah Cane
Representative's job title	Planning and Environment Manager
Phone	0411252819
Email	environment@w-wind.com.au
Address	PO Box 433, Gisborne VIC 3437, Australia

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

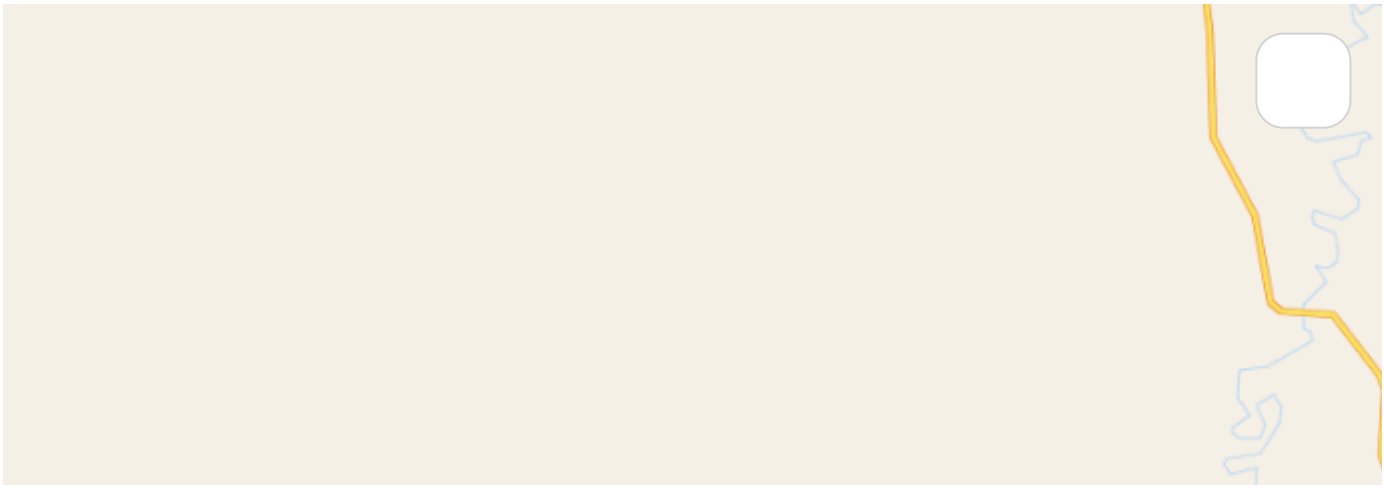
1.4 Payment details: Payment allocation

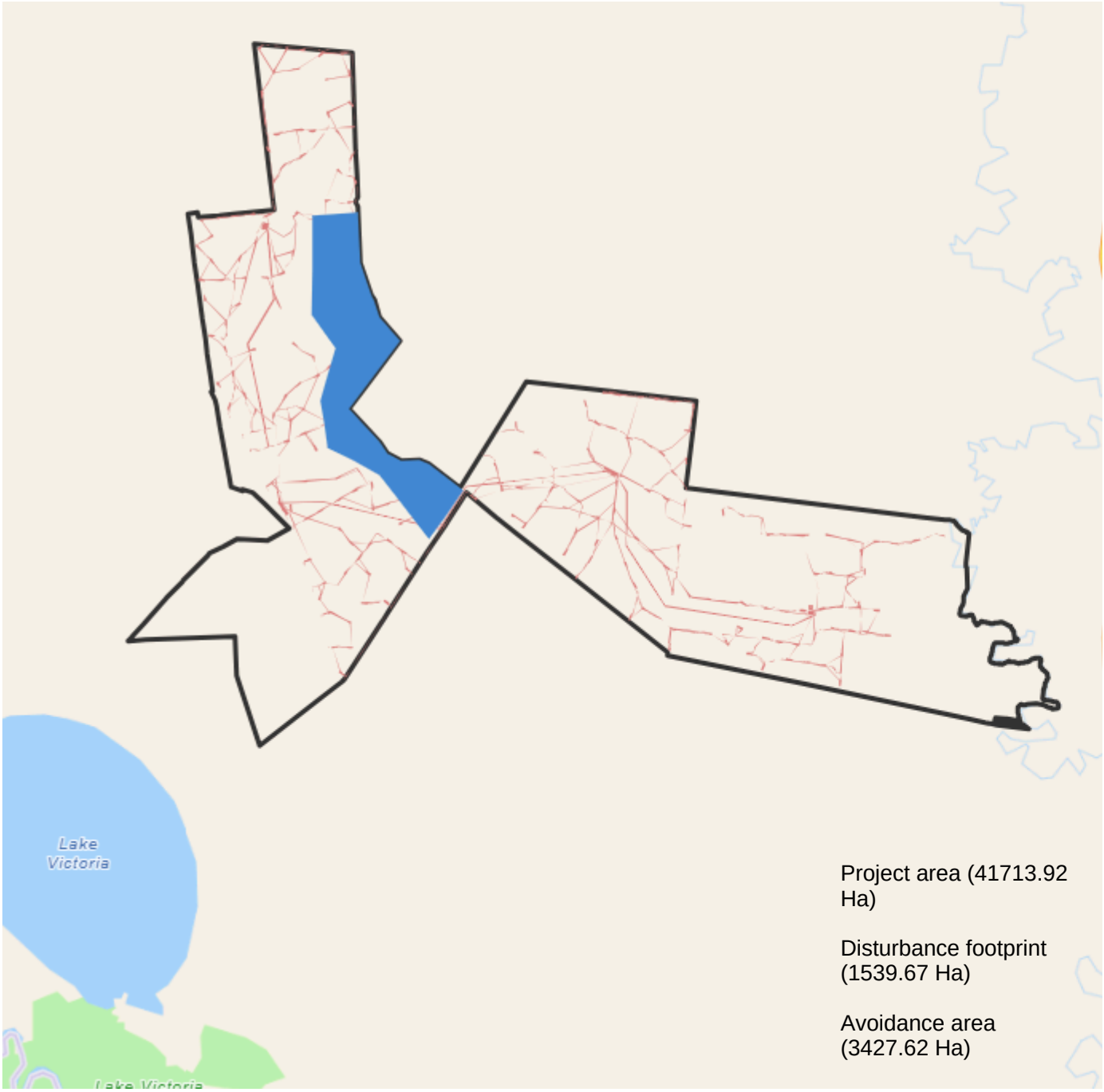
1.4.11 Who would you like to allocate as the entity responsible for payment? *

Person proposing to take the action

2. Location

2.1 Project footprint





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2.2 Footprint details

2.2.1 What is the address of the proposed action? *

Nulla Rd, Renmark Rd, Anabranch Mail Rd and Tooperoopna Rd, NSW 2648

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

New South Wales

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 area is located across the following eight lots:

- Lot 4167 DP766733 – NSW Crown Lands
- Lot 500 DP761443 – NSW Crown Lands
- Lot 4168 DP766734 – NSW Crown Lands
- Lot 501 DP761444 – NSW Crown Lands
- Lot 4 DP1255308 – NSW Crown Lands
- Lot 4169 DP766735 – NSW Crown Lands
- Lot 502 DP761489 – Freehold Landholder
- Lot 12 DP756190 – Freehold Landholder

3. Existing environment

3.1 Physical description

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

The Project area is located on land primarily used for agricultural purposes. The land has been modified over time through agricultural practices, including livestock grazing and some cropping. Patches of wooded vegetation are scattered across the Project area. The Project area includes nine associated receivers and there are seven non-associated receivers located within five kilometres of the Project area. The Project area is bordered by the Great Darling Anabranch River towards the east and Lake Victoria is approximately 4.4 kilometres south-west. Under the Wentworth Local Environment Plan 2011, the Project area is located in RU1 – Primary Production zoning.

The landscape in the Project area is characterised by dune fields, sandplains, and undulating plains. Wetlands are mapped along the eastern side of the Project area along the Great Darling Anabranch and within the western extent of the Project area. Key fish habitat is mapped along the Great Darling Anabranch and in Lake Victoria. The Project area includes several farm dams that contain varying levels of water. The Project area has been subject to agricultural activity and subsequent disturbance and modification over many decades and is regularly subject to periods of drought.

Native vegetation occupies around 94 per cent of the proposed development footprint, with the majority of native vegetation consisting of Black Oak woodland and Bluebush Shrubland plant community types (Attachment E, Section 3.1, pg 8).

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

The Project area is located on land primarily used for agricultural purposes. The land has been modified over time through agricultural practices, including livestock grazing and some cropping. Patches of wooded vegetation are scattered across the Project area. The Project area is zoned RU1 – Primary Production under the Wentworth LEP and is currently used for agricultural purposes by multiple landholders.

A significant portion of the Project Area is mapped as Category 1 (Exempt Land), indicating that land clearing had occurred previously or that the area provided minimal conservation value. Aside from grazing, some landowners have undertaken broad-acre cropping on occasion.

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

The Project area falls within the South Olary Plain subregion of the Murray Darling Depression bioregion in southwestern NSW. The landscape in the region is characterised by dune fields, sandplains, and undulating plains, and is located immediately west of the Great Darling Anabranch and is around 4.4 kilometres northeast of Lake Victoria.

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

Elevation across the Project area ranges between around 30 metres to 70 metres above sea level.

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.

The Project area has been subject to preliminary ecological investigations (refer to Attachment E – Preliminary EPBC Act Biodiversity Technical Report – Lake Victoria Wind Farm (EnviroKey, 2024)).

The majority of the project area consists of grazed and generally degraded native vegetation which occupies 98.26% of the total Project Area, with Non-native Vegetation/Highly Disturbed/Cleared Land accounting for the remaining 1.74% (26.76ha).

Native vegetation occupies 94.32% (approximately 1,440 hectares) of the proposed development footprint. PCT 58 Black Oak woodland accounts for 44.6% of the Project area, while PCT 154 Bluebush Shrubland accounts for 37.2% of the Project area (a total of 81.8% of the Project area for these two PCTs). Neither of these PCTs form part of a TEC that is listed under the EPBC Act. See Attachment E, Section 3.1, pg. 8 for a complete summary of the existing native vegetation communities.

PCT 170 and 171 are found within the Project area and are consistent with the vegetation known to potentially support the *Mallee Bird Community of the Murray Darling Depression Bioregio*n, as listed by the EPBC Act (DAWE, 2021). “Mallee Dependent Birds” have been recorded in the Project area through field surveys, including the Crested Bellbird, Jacky Winter, Grey-fronted Honeyeater and Splendid Fairy-wren. Many of these species are considered relatively widespread in most vegetation communities in the locality and defining them as “Mallee Dependent Birds” is not indicative of their current habitat occupancy. Within the Darling Riverine Plains bioregion, PCT 15 Black Box open woodland wetland is consistent with the Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands of the Darling Riverine Plains and Brigalow Belt South Bioregions. About 173.19 hectares occurs within the Project area with about 1.57 hectares (modified and highly modified) proposed for direct impact. Plains Mallee Woodland of the Murray Darling Depression Bioregion TEC may also be present in the Project area, however field surveys to date have not identified any portions of the Project area that would be defined as this TEC (Attachment E, Section 3.2, pg. 36).

A number of EPBC Act listed entities have been recorded during the preliminary field surveys, including:

Flora:

- Coolibah – Black Box open Woodland of the Darling Riverine Plain Bioregion TEC

Fauna:

- Mallee Bird Community of the Murray-Darling Depression Bioregion TEC
- Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*)
- Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri*)
- Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata cucullata*)
- Rainbow Bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*)

Corben's Long-eared Bat may have been recorded onsite. However, the use of echolocation call recorders, a commonly used and efficient way of surveying bat fauna, cannot differentiate between different members of the *Nyctophilus* genus. In line with the precautionary principle, presence has been assumed and the significant impact criteria applied (Attachment E, Section 3.4, pg. 38).

Invasive species prevalent in the project area include feral goats, foxes, cats, rabbits, pigs, Wild Sage, Onion Weed and Paddy Melon (Attachment E, Section 5).

For further detail on the existing flora and fauna see Attachment D, Appendix D, Section 3, pages 5-41

A minor portion of the Great Darling Anabranch occurs within the Project area. This, however, does not intersect the works footprint. Some farm dams are present across the Project area, which have served the long-term agricultural activities and the need to store water piped from the Great Anabranch of the Darling River Private Water Supply and Irrigation District. However, these are unlikely to be considered important aquatic habitat (Attachment E, Section 3.3.2, pg. 37).

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

The Project area is located in the South Olary Plain subregion of the Murray Darling Depression bioregion. Plant community types (PCTs) within the Project area include:

- PCT 15 - Black Box open woodland wetland
- PCT 28 - White Cypress Pine open woodland
- PCT 58 - Black Oak - Western Rosewood open woodland
- PCT 64 - Samphire - Water Weed - Sea-Heath shrubland saline wetland
- PCT 143 - Narrow-leaved Hopbush - Scrub Turpentine - Senna shrubland
- PCT 150 - Bottlewasher - Copperburr grassland
- PCT 153 - Black Bluebush low open shrubland
- PCT 154 - Pearl Bluebush low open shrubland
- PCT 157 - Bladder Saltbush shrubland on alluvial plains
- PCT 160 - Nitre Goosefoot shrubland wetland
- PCT 170 - Chenopod sandplain mallee woodland/shrubland
- PCT 171 - Spinifex linear dune mallee
- PCT 221 - Black Oak - Pearl Bluebush open woodland
- PCT 253 - Gypseous shrubland on rises

These PCTs were recorded in both modified and intact condition. The location of the PCTs and their condition is provided in Attachment F.

The soils in the region differ depending on the landform. On the dune fields, red, brown, and yellow calcareous sands are prevalent, with more clayey materials found in the swales. On the sandplains, the soil tends to be heavier, displaying brown gradational or texture contrast profiles. Lakes and depressions have clay floors, while salt lake floors carry little to no vegetation.

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.

The Project area does not contain or is nearby any Commonwealth or National heritage places.

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

The Project area is located on Barkandji Country. The Barkandji Traditional Owners #8 (Part A; NCD2005/001) and Barkandji Traditional Owners #8 (Part B; WCD2017/001) native title determinations are the determination areas for the Barkandji peoples. Tar-Ru (Lake Victoria) is a freshwater lake and highly significant Aboriginal site. Tar-Ru was an invaluable resource for Aboriginal people travelling through or staying in the area, especially when the flooding of the lake was more predictable before water flow regulation. A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) carried out on 4 April 2024 identified 82 Aboriginal heritage places within the Project area. These sites are largely concentrated in the southwestern portion of the Project area and eastern portion near the Great Darling Anabranch. Based on the EIS for Project EnergyConnect (Transgrid, 2020), which runs through the Project area, the most common Aboriginal site type present in the area was open artefact scatters, largely associated with hunting and the manufacture of stone tools. Further investigation and consultation would be required through future design development to understand the nature of any additional sites within the Project area.

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 located within the Murray-Darling Basin, with the Great Darling Anabranch running through the eastern extent of the Project area. The Darling River is located around 15 kilometres east of the eastern boundary of the Project area and the Murray River is located around 18 kilometres south of the south-western boundary of the Project area. Lake Victoria is located around 4.4 kilometres south-west of the Project area.

Lake Victoria is a naturally occurring shallow lake about 60 kilometres downstream of the Murray–Darling junction in south-western New South Wales. The lake forms an 'off-river' storage that assists in regulating flow and salinity in the Murray River as it flows into South Australia (Murray-Darling Basin Authority, 2024). Mangroves are located on the north-eastern side of Lake Victoria between the lake and the Project area.

Wetlands are mapped along the eastern side of the Project area along the Great Darling Anabranch and within the western extent of the Project area (as well as in Lake Victoria). Key fish habitat is mapped along the Great Darling Anabranch and in Lake Victoria.

The Project area includes several farm dams that contain varying levels of water. There are seven registered groundwater bores located within the Project area based on a desktop review of the MinView Geological Survey of NSW (Department of Regional NSW, 2023). Two bores are located in the western extent of the Project area and five bores are located in the eastern extent (mainly near the Great Darling Anabranch).

The Project is not mapped as a flood planning area (as defined in the Flood risk management manual (DPE, 2023c)) under the Wentworth LEP.

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	No	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. *

There are no World Heritage sites within 50 kilometres of the Project area.

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.

—

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. *

There are no National Heritage places within 50 kilometres of the Project area.

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.

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Ramsar wetland
No	No	Banrock Station Wetland Complex
No	No	Riverland
No	No	The Coorong, and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert Wetland

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 Project is 37km upstream of the closest RAMSAR Wetland (Riverland RAMSAR site in South Australia). Other downstream Ramsar wetlands include:

- Banrock Station Wetland complex –50-100km away
- The Coorong, and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert Wetland – 150-200kms away

Relevant construction activities comprise localised excavation of individual turbine foundations (often to a depth that does not intersect groundwater), installation of underground electrical cables (to a lesser maximum depth than that of the foundations) and establishment of access tracks (generally dirt, with drainage as appropriate). These activities (pre-mitigation) are not expected to generate hydrological impacts of the type or magnitude which could impact downstream Ramsar sites (including via the Great Darling Anabranch or other nearby waterways).

During construction, the Project would implement standard construction industry best practice as well as site-specific mitigation measures to avoid and minimise potential erosion and associated impacts on surface water and groundwater quality.

Furthermore, the limited presence of waterways within the Project footprint reduces the risk of surface runoff being transported to downstream aquatic environments.

As such, the action is unlikely to have direct or indirect impacts on any RAMSAR wetlands.

For further details on RAMSAR wetlands refer to Attachment E, Section 4.3.1, pages 47-48.

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	Amytornis striatus howei	Murray Mallee Striated Grasswren, Striated Grasswren (sandplain)
No	No	Aphelocephala leucopsis	Southern Whiteface
No	No	Atriplex infrequens	
No	No	Bidyanus bidyanus	Silver Perch, Bidyan
No	No	Botaurus poiciloptilus	Australasian Bittern
No	No	Calidris acuminata	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris ferruginea	Curlew Sandpiper
No	No	Craterocephalus fluviatilis	Murray Hardyhead
No	No	Falco hypoleucos	Grey Falcon
No	No	Galaxias rostratus	Flathead Galaxias, Beaked Minnow, Flat-headed Galaxias, Flat-headed Jollytail, Flat-headed Minnow

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Gallinago hardwickii	Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe
No	No	Grantiella picta	Painted Honeyeater
No	No	Hemiaspis damelii	Grey Snake
No	No	Leipoa ocellata	Malleefowl
No	No	Lepidium monoplocoides	Winged Pepper-cress
No	No	Litoria raniformis	Southern Bell Frog,, Growling Grass Frog, Green and Golden Frog, Warty Swamp Frog, Golden Bell Frog
Yes	No	Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri	Major Mitchell's Cockatoo (eastern), Eastern Major Mitchell's Cockatoo
No	No	Maccullochella macquariensis	Trout Cod
No	No	Maccullochella peelii	Murray Cod
No	No	Manorina melanotis	Black-eared Miner
No	No	Melanodryas cucullata cucullata	South-eastern Hooded Robin, Hooded Robin (south-eastern)
No	No	Neophema chrysostoma	Blue-winged Parrot
Yes	No	Nyctophilus corbeni	Corben's Long-eared Bat, South-eastern Long-eared Bat
No	No	Pedionomus torquatus	Plains-wanderer
No	No	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	Polytelis anthopeplus monarchoides	Regent Parrot (eastern)
No	No	Pterostylis xerophila	Desert Greenhood
No	No	Rostratula australis	Australian Painted Snipe
No	No	Solanum karsense	Menindee Nightshade
No	No	Stagonopleura guttata	Diamond Firetail
No	No	Swainsona murrayana	Slender Darling-pea, Slender Swainson, Murray Swainson-pea

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Swainsona pyrophila	Yellow Swainson-pea

Ecological communities

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Ecological community
No	No	Buloke Woodlands of the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions
Yes	No	Coolibah - Black Box Woodlands of the Darling Riverine Plains and the Brigalow Belt South Bioregions
Yes	No	Mallee Bird Community of the Murray Darling Depression Bioregion

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. *

Twenty-seven threatened species and two threatened ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act were identified as having potential to occur in the Project area through the EPBC Protected Matters Search Tool. Further assessment concluded that five threatened species and two threatened ecological communities have been confirmed present through field surveys (or are potentially present in the case of Corben's Long-eared Bat due to the use of Echolocation call recorders not being able to differentiate between members of the Nyctphilus genus). Refer to table in Attachment E, Appendix 2 for further details on likelihood of occurrence. Thes species and ecological communities confirmed present are as follows:

- Mallee Bird Community of the Murray-Darling Depression Bioregion – endangered ecological community – confirmed present
- Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands of the Darling Riverine Plains – endangered ecological community – confirmed present
- Hooded Robin (south-eastern form) (*Melanodryas cucullata cucullate*) – vulnerable – confirmed present
- Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri*) – endangered – confirmed present
- Rainbow Bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*) – marine – confirmed present
- Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*) – vulnerable – confirmed present
- Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*) – vulnerable – could potentially occur.

Impact assessments under the EPBC Act, in accordance with the Department of Environment (DoE) (2013) *Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 - Matters of National Environmental Significance*, were carried out for these species (refer to Attachment E Significant Impact Criteria). Due to uncertainties around bird and bat strike and barotrauma impacts, these assessments concluded that the Project may result in impacts to the following species:

- Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri*)

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

The potential impacts to the Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri*) would include direct loss of about 1,444 hectares (equivalent to 3.5 per cent) of potential habitat within the Project area through vegetation clearing during construction. There may be an ongoing risk of bird strike during operation of the Project. There may also be indirect impacts to the species caused by noise and dust during construction.

The potential impacts to Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*) would include direct loss of about 863 hectares (equivalent to 5.4 per cent) of potential habitat within the Project area through vegetation clearing during construction. There is also an ongoing risk of bat strike and barotrauma during operation of the Project. There may also be indirect impacts to the species caused by noise and dust during construction.

Bird and bat utilisation surveys would continue to be carried out through Project development, including the development of a Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan (BBAMP). It is anticipated that the potential impacts to the above species can be mitigated and managed to an acceptable level.

In addition to the above species, the Mallee Bird Community of the Murray-Darling Depression Bioregion TEC would potentially be impacted by the Project as a result of the potential impact to "Mallee dependent" bird species. Potential impacts to the Mallee Bird Community would include clearance of around 190 hectares of Mallee vegetation, 32 hectares of which is considered relatively intact. This is the equivalent of only around four per cent of total Mallee vegetation within the Project area, however due to uncertainties surrounding bird strike impacts and in line with the precautionary principle, the Project may result in impacts to the species composition of the Mallee Bird Community. Similarly to the Pink Cockatoo and Corben's Long-eared Bat, utilisation surveys would continue to be carried out through Project development, including the development of a BBAMP, which would provide greater certainty around impacts to the Mallee Bird Community.

The project would also include clearance of around 1.57 hectares of Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands of Darling Riverine Plains and the Brigalow Belt South Bioregions TEC. Of this 1.57 hectares 0.99 hectares is highly modified and 0.58 hectares is of a modified condition. No intact condition areas of this TEC are proposed for direct impact. While the Project would result in relatively minor impacts, the vast majority (98% of this TEC) in the Assessment area would remain unaffected.

For retained areas of the abovementioned TECs that are not directly impacted, mitigation measures such as dust suppression and protection of retained vegetation by exclusion barriers would manage the risk of inadvertent impacts during construction.

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. *

As a precautionary measure, the impacts to the Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri*) may be considered significant because there is potential for the Project to:

- lead to a long-term decrease in the size of a population
- reduce the area of occupancy of the species
- adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of a species
- disrupt the breeding cycle of a population of the species
- modify, destroy, remove, or isolate or decrease the availability or quality of habitat to the extent that the species is likely to decline

- interfere with the recovery of the species.

The above impacts have been determined as a result of uncertainties around bird strike impacts and the need to apply the precautionary principle. Further details are provided in Attachment E, Section 5.3.4.

As a precautionary measure, the impacts to the Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*) may be considered significant because there is potential for the Project to:

- lead to a long-term decrease in the size of an important population of the species
- reduce the area of occupancy of an important population of the species
- disrupt the breeding cycle of a population of the species
- interfere with the recovery of the species.

The above impacts have been determined as a result of uncertainties around echolocation bat data and bat strike and barotrauma impacts, and the need to apply the precautionary principle. Further details are provided in Attachment E, Section 5.2.10.

As a precautionary measure, impacts to the Mallee Bird Community of the Murray-Darling Depression Bioregion may be considered significant because there is potential for the Project to:

- reduce the extent of the ecological community
- adversely affect habitat critical to the survival of an ecological community
- cause a substantial change in the species composition of an occurrence of an ecological community, including causing a decline or loss of functionally important species
- interfere with the recovery of an ecological community.

The above impacts have been determined as a result of some uncertainty surrounding potential impacts to the Mallee Bird Community and the need to apply the precautionary principle. Further details are provided in Attachment E, Section 5.4.2.

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. *

Based on a precautionary approach, the Project may have a significant impact on Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri*) and Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*), which are threatened species listed under the EPBC Act, and the Mallee Bird Community of the Murray-Darling Depression Bioregion, which is a threatened ecological community listed under the EPBC Act. As such, the Project is considered a controlled action.

The other matters listed in tables at the start of Section 4.1.4 of this form are not considered to warrant a controlled action decision because the preliminary ecological assessment prepared by EnviroKey demonstrates that significant impacts are not likley. Refer to Attachment E for further details.

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. *

The impacts of the Project would be further assessed as part of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), supported by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report carried out in accordance with the NSW Biodiversity Assessment Methodology.

Micro-siting of wind turbine locations would occur to minimise potential impacts to Pink Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri leadbeateri*), Corben's Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*) and the Mallee Bird Community of the Murray-Darling Depression Bioregion. While this has already occurred during design development to date, it would continue during development of the Project's EIS and include:

- placing turbines, associated access tracks and other Project infrastructure along existing cleared tracks and avoiding areas with more abundant hollow-bearing trees, where possible
- avoiding placement of turbines within 500 metres of farm dams within the Project area.

Further investigation will be undertaken to assess the potential impacts of bird and bat strike and barotrauma. This will include continued seasonal Bat and Bird Utilisation Surveys for a minimum period of 24 months, as well as the development of a Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan (BBAMP). The BBAMP will outline monitoring measures, key thresholds for determining permissible impacts and corrective actions that are required to achieve the BBAMP objectives.

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

An offset strategy will be developed for the Project. At a minimum, this would include offsets required under the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme.

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

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Calidris ferruginea	Curlew Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris melanotos	Pectoral Sandpiper
No	No	Gallinago hardwickii	Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe
No	No	Motacilla flava	Yellow Wagtail

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

No

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

Two migratory species, the White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) and the Fork-tailed Swift (*Apus pacificus*), listed under the EPBC Act were identified as having potential to occur in the area through the EPBC Protected Matters Search Tool. Further assessment concluded that neither of these predicted migratory species are likely to occur in the Project area. Refer to table in Attachment E, Appendix 2 for further details on likelihood of occurrence.

The potential impacts to the White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) would include the direct loss of around 1,444 hectares of habitat through vegetation clearing during construction. There would also be an ongoing risk of bird strike during operation of the Project. However, Biosis (2006) conducted a study on a number of EPBC Act listed species, including White-throated Needletail, and the potential for these species to be at risk of collision with wind turbines in the Gippsland region of Victoria. That study concluded that the overall likely level of impact on an Australian population of White-throated Needletail was low. This was on the basis that, while there was a high likelihood that a portion of the population would encounter a wind farm, the estimated proportion of the Australian population to do so was less than two per cent. They also concluded that the behaviour of this species (i.e. high flying) put White-throated Needletail at a high risk of collision if entering a wind farm site. However, a review of previous records of White-throated Needletail in NSW found that only a single record is known in the vicinity of the Project area (east of Wentworth) from 1996 with the majority of records in the eastern portion of NSW. If this distribution of previous records is indicative of potential occurrence with the Project area, it is unlikely that the species would occur there frequently and is likely to only occur in the region sporadically given that migratory movements mostly occur along either side of the Great Dividing. On this basis, the less than two per cent of the population purported to encounter a wind farm in the Gippsland region of Victoria, would be much lower in southwestern NSW. As such, the Project is unlikely to have a significant impact on this species. Refer to Attachment E, Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.8 for further details on White-throated Needletail.

The potential impacts to the Fork-tailed Swift (*Apus pacificus*) would largely be associated with bird strike due to the high-flying nature of this species. However, most records of this species are east of the Great Dividing Range, with no Fork-tailed Swifts being recorded within the Project area through bird and bat utilisation surveys to date. Smales and Venosta (2005) conducted a study on a number of EPBC Act listed species, including the Fork-tailed Swift, for the potential of these species to be at risk of collision with wind turbines in the Gippsland region of Victoria. That study concluded that the overall likely level of impact on an Australian population of Fork-tailed Swift was low. This was on the basis that, while there was a high likelihood a portion of the population would encounter a wind farm, the estimated proportion of the Australian population to do so was less than two per cent. They also concluded that the behaviour of this

species (i.e. high flying) put Fork-tailed Swift at a high risk of collision if entering a wind farm site. However, a review of previous records of Fork-tailed Swift in NSW found only three recordings of the species in the vicinity of the Project area from 1998 (east of Wentworth) and in 2022/24 at Tarawi Nature Reserve (well distant of the Project area to the north-west) with the majority of records in the eastern portion of NSW. If this distribution of previous records is indicative of potential occurrence with the Project area, it is unlikely that the species would occur there frequently and is likely to only occur in the region sporadically given that migratory movements most occur along either side of the Great Dividing Range as birds move south. This confirms that the region is of little importance to the species, and therefore, would not host an ecologically significant proportion of the population. Refer to Attachment E, Section 5.1.2 for further details on the Fork-tailed Swift.

Refer to Attachment E, Section 5.1 for further details on migratory species.

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. *

The Project does not involve a nuclear 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. *

The Project is not located in or near to a Commonwealth Marine Area.

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. *

The Project is not located on or within the catchment of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

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 Project is not a large coal mining or coal seam gas development.

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. *

The Project is not located 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. *

Not applicable. The Project area is within Australia.

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. *

During the scoping stage of the Project, consideration has been given to the ‘do nothing’ scenario and the ‘Project scenario’. The ‘do nothing’ scenario would mean that the 203 WTGs and BESS would not be constructed at the proposed Project location, which would forego the benefits of the Project. The outcomes of the ‘do nothing’ scenario would include:

- Not delivering the estimated emissions savings of the Project of 3.3 million tonnes of CO2 per year
- Not contributing towards Australia’s 2050 net zero targets, as legislated in the Climate Change Act 2022
- Not contributing towards NSW’s 2050 net zero targets, as legislated in the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023

- Not providing economic benefits, including approximately 375 construction and 70 operational jobs that would be created as part of the Project
- Not supporting policies, such as the NSW Electricity Strategy and 2022 Integrated System Plan, which aim to increase the uptake of renewable energy generation in NSW and Australia.

The ‘do nothing’ scenario is not the preferred option for the Project.

5. Lodgement

5.1 Attachments

1.2.1 Overview of the proposed action

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att A LVWF Locality Map.pdf Project locality map		No	High
#2.	Document	Att B LVWF Preliminary Project layout.pdf Preliminary Project Layout		No	High
#3.	Document	Att C LVWF Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report.pdf Community and Stakeholder Engagement		No	High
#4.	Document	Att D LVWF Scoping Report.pdf Scoping Report		No	High
#5.	Document	Att E LVWF Preliminary EPBC Act Biodiversity Technical Report.pdf Biodiversity report including sensitive information (previously unpublished species locations in Fig 3-11, pp. 45); redacted copy (Fig 3-11 redacted) also attached for publication.	19/07/2024	Yes	High
#6.	Document	Att E-REDACTED LVWF Preliminary EPBC Act Biodiversity Technical Report – Lake Victoria Wind Farm.pdf Biodiversity report with sensitive information (previously unpublished species locations in Figure 3-11) redacted. Suitable for publication.	19/07/2024	No	High
#7.	Document	Att F LVWF Plant Community Types.pdf Plant Community Types		No	High
#8.	Document	Att G LVWF Change of company name confirmation.pdf Confirmation of company name change from Lake Victoria Energy Park Pty Ltd to Lake Victoria Wind Farm Pty Ltd.	05/03/2024	No	High
#9.	Document	Att H LVWF Unit Trust Deed.pdf Trust deed, describing the nature of the trust arrangement.	20/02/2024	Yes	High

5.2 Declarations

Completed Referring party's declaration

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

ABN/ACN	15656111125
Organisation name	WESTWIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PTY LTD
Organisation address	3437 VIC
Representative's name	Sarah Cane
Representative's job title	Planning and Environment Manager
Phone	0411252819
Email	environment@w-wind.com.au
Address	PO Box 433, Gisborne VIC 3437, Australia

☑ 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, **Sarah Cane of WESTWIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT 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	18669902738
Organisation name	LAKE VICTORIA WIND FARM PTY LTD

Organisation address	3437 VIC
Representative's name	Sarah Cane
Representative's job title	Planning and Environment Manager
Phone	0411252819
Email	environment@w-wind.com.au
Address	PO Box 433, Gisborne VIC 3437, Australia

☑ 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, **Sarah Cane of LAKE VICTORIA WIND FARM 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, **Sarah Cane of LAKE VICTORIA WIND FARM 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. *