

Community meeting | 16 July 2025



## **Acknowledgement of Country**

Wind Prospect respectfully acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the Bendenine Wind Farm is proposed. We honour their ongoing connection to the land and waters, and we are committed to fostering respectful, collaborative relationships with Indigenous communities across all our projects.



### **Introductions**

Developer



Ben Purcell

Managing Director

**Brad Croxford** 

Bendenine Wind Farm Project Manager

Michael Sale

Regional Development Manager Project partner

Mint Renewables

**Cara Layton** 

Head of Planning, Environment and Stakeholder Relations Lead technical consultant



Michele Ferguson

Social Consultant

Meg Brown

Social Consultant

Community engagement

Premier

**Rosie Pritchard** 

Community

**Engagement Lead** 

## **About Wind Prospect**

- Established in the UK in the early 1990s
   and wholly owned by our staff and directors
   now solely focused on Australian market
- Dedicated project developer with more than 25 years experience in sourcing and developing many wind farm sites that are now operational across Australia
- Recognise stakeholder engagement as fundamental to the success of our projects and our communication values are underpinned by fairness and transparency

22 wind farm developments approved7 currently under development



# Partnering throughout the project lifecycle



With support from





<ul> <li>Desktop assessment of site suitability</li> <li>Engagement with landholders</li> <li>Landholder agreements</li> <li>Feasibility studies</li> <li>Wind monitoring assessment of site suitability</li> <li>Energy modelling suitability</li> <li>Site investigations</li> <li>Layout development</li> <li>Site visit(s)</li> <li>Feasibility studies</li> <li>Feasibility studies</li> <li>Wind monitoring energy modelling suitability</li> <li>Site investigations</li> <li>Noise</li> <li>Shadow flicker</li> <li>Landscape and visual</li> <li>Formal public exhibition and comment process</li> <li>Feasibility studies</li> <li>Feasibility studies</li> <li>Wind monitoring energy modelling assessments</li> <li>Site investigations</li> <li>Site investigations</li> <li>Site investigations</li> <li>Site visit(s)</li> <li>Grid connection agreement</li> <li>Formal public exhibition and comment process</li> <li>Financial investment decision</li> <li>Financial investment decision</li> </ul> <li>Public road upgrades</li> <li>Site establishment</li> <li>Civil and electrical studies</li> <li>Turbine installation</li> <li>Grid connection</li> <li>Grid connection<th>Site identification</th><th>Energy studies</th><th>Specialist studies</th><th>Planning and environment</th><th>Commercials and procurement</th><th>Construction</th><th>Operation</th><th>Decommissioning</th></li>	Site identification	Energy studies	Specialist studies	Planning and environment	Commercials and procurement	Construction	Operation	Decommissioning
	<ul> <li>assessment of site suitability</li> <li>Engagement with landholders</li> <li>Site visit(s)</li> <li>Landholder agreements</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Energy modelling</li><li>Site investigations</li><li>Layout development</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Cultural heritage</li> <li>Noise</li> <li>Shadow flicker</li> <li>Landscape and visual</li> <li>Aviation</li> <li>Electromagnetic interference (EMI)</li> <li>Traffic impacts</li> </ul>	Planning Permit Application(s)  Environmental referrals and assessments  Formal public exhibition and	design  Geotechnical studies  Grid connection agreement  Procurement  Offtake  Financing  Financial	upgrades  • Site establishment  • Civil and electrical balance of plant  • Turbine installation  • Grid connection  • Community benefit scheme	generates electricity  Ongoing maintenance  Environmental compliance (e.g. bird, bat and noise monitoring)  Ongoing community	aboveground infrastructure

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

<sup>\*</sup> Indicative timeframes only, each project has its unique set of risks and opportunities

### Mint Renewables, partnering for a better future

Mint is a new business, with strong experience and committed investment.





- Formed in late 2022
- Highly capable team
- 100% Australian operation. Melbourne based
- Collectively we have worked on more than half the largescale wind farm projects built in Australia
- Long-term partnership approach with landowners and the wider community
- Funded and motivated to develop, construct, own and operate quality renewable energy and storage assets

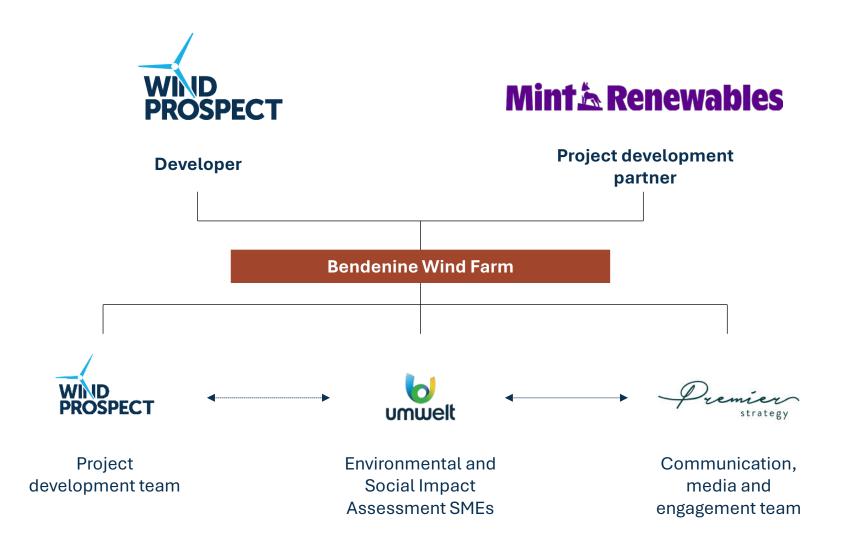


Scoping phase development



bendeninewindfarm.com.au

## Scoping phase development team

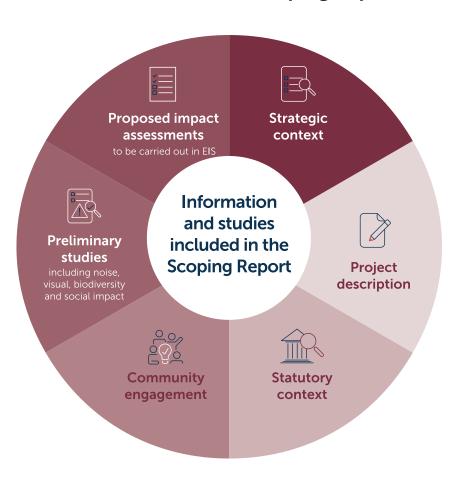


## How the studies are being carried out

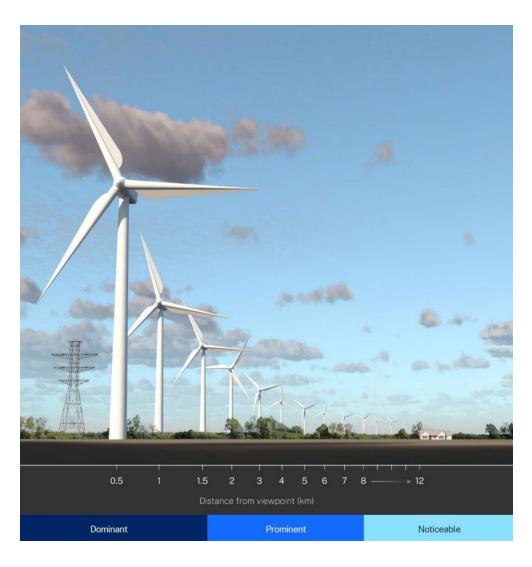
As part of the **NSW Government State Significant Development** Application,
extensive studies are completed during the
Scoping and EIS development phases

- Scoping phase environmental and social studies are considered preliminary assessments and help NSW DPHI determine whether a development can proceed
- The scoping phase assessment timeframe for wind energy developments is around 12 months
- If SEARs are issued by the DPHI, the team would undertake more comprehensive assessments
- These EIS assessments must meet any requirements set out in the SEARs, and generally take around 18-24 to complete
- Community engagement is essential to all development phases and integral to the NSW government assessment and determination of a Project

### What is included in a Scoping Report?

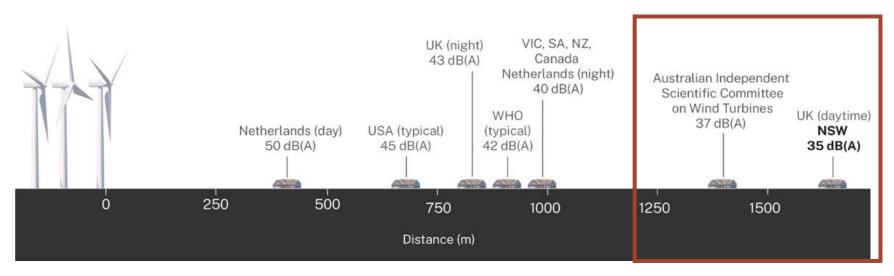


## **Spotlight on: Visual Impact Assessment**



- A Preliminary Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) for Scoping is being carried out by Moir – NSW based landscape, urban design and architectural consultancy
- We are addressing community concerns regarding visual amenity by bringing forward the next stage of assessment work ahead of schedule
- Visual impacts vary depending on turbine size, distance from a viewpoint and number of visible turbines
- The Project has applied a **3.5km setback** from each turbine in residentially zoned areas of Binalong and Bowning
- Minimum setback of at least 1.7km for all neighbour dwellings with the current layout
- The full VIA will be carried out as part of the EIS phase
- The VIA is one of several important assessments that are used to inform the Project design
- Community feedback is vital to the assessment approach

## **Spotlight on: Noise Impact Assessment**



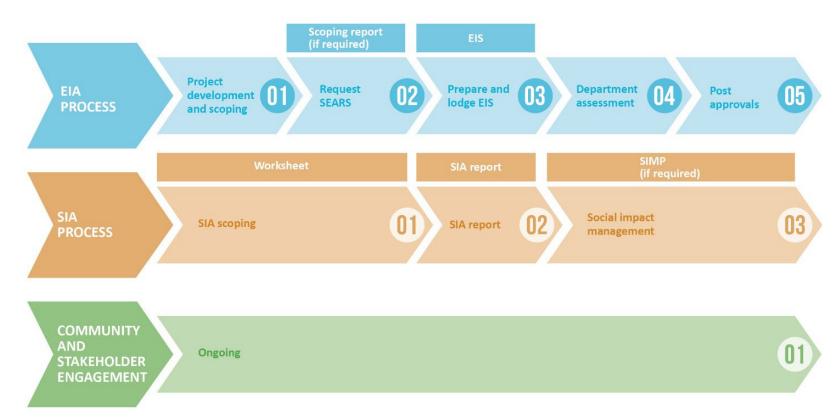
Distances at which compliance with different noise standards should occur

- NSW has conservative noise criteria compared to other jurisdictions
- In NSW, we must demonstrate that noise levels don't exceed 35dB(A) under any operational conditions
- Assessment must consider cumulative effects, including from existing or proposed wind energy projects

- Sonus is completing the preliminary noise impact assessment for the Project
- A detailed noise impact assessment is carried out in the EIS phases

## **Social Impact Assessment**







## **Social Impact Assessment**

### Social impacts can be:

- direct and indirect
- tangible and more intangible (e.g. change in sense of place and community)
- positive and negative
- reflect people's experience of development



#### WAY OF LIFE

Including how people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact



#### COMMUNITY

Including composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions and people's sense of place



#### ACCESSIBILITY

Including how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private or not-for-profit organisation



#### HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Including physical and mental health especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures and changes to public health overall



### CULTURE

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, including shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings



#### DECISION-MAKING SYSTEMS

Particularly whether people experience procedural fairness, can make informed decisions, can meaningfully influence decisions, and can access complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms



#### LIVELIHOODS

Including people's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of impacts and benefits



#### SURROUNDINGS

Including ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, and erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity



## **Social Impact Assessment process**



### **SCOPING**

- Prepare a community and stakeholder engagement strategy that outlines recommended and requested engagement activities, materials and proposed responsibilities
- Identify the extent of the Project's social locality
- Develop a social baseline of the context in which the Project is located
- Engage local community to inform initial prediction and evaluation of likely social impacts



### IMPACT PREDICTION AND ASSESSMENT

- Work collaboratively with the Project team to ensure that relevant stakeholders (individuals and groups) are aware of the Project and have been provided with an opportunity to provide input
- Undertake specific SIA engagement to inform the prediction and evaluation of social impacts
- Identify relevant/appropriate management and enhancement measures



### **IMPACT MANAGEMENT**

- Develop a Social Impact
   Management Framework Plan
   that outlines how social impacts
   are associated with the Project
   will be managed and monitored
- Ongoing engagement with community and key stakeholders
- Prepare the SIA to DPHI requirements

### We are here

The aim of the SISR is to gain an understanding of the existing community context where the Project is proposed, to identify potential social impacts (negative and positive) before they arise and identify ways in which the Project may be designed to avoid and minimise impacts.

The SISR and SIA are developed based on **primary data** (from engagement activities) and **secondary data**.



## **SIA Guideline expectations**

### Impartial:

Uses a fair, unbiased manner and follows relevant ethical standards.

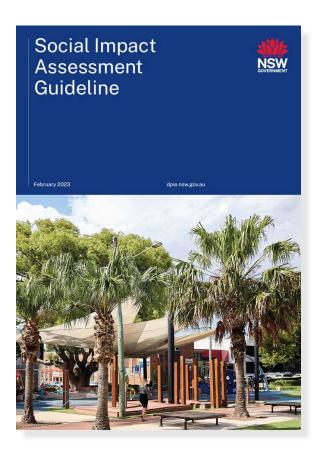
### Inclusive:

Seeks to hear, understand and respect the perspectives of all potentially affected people. Uses respectful, meaningful and effective engagement tailored to the needs of those being engaged (eg: being culturally sensitive and accessible).

### **Transparent:**

Explains, justifies and makes available information, methods and assumptions so people can see how their input has been considered.

DPHI is increasingly expecting to see practitioners collecting primary data, through engagement, to inform SIAs





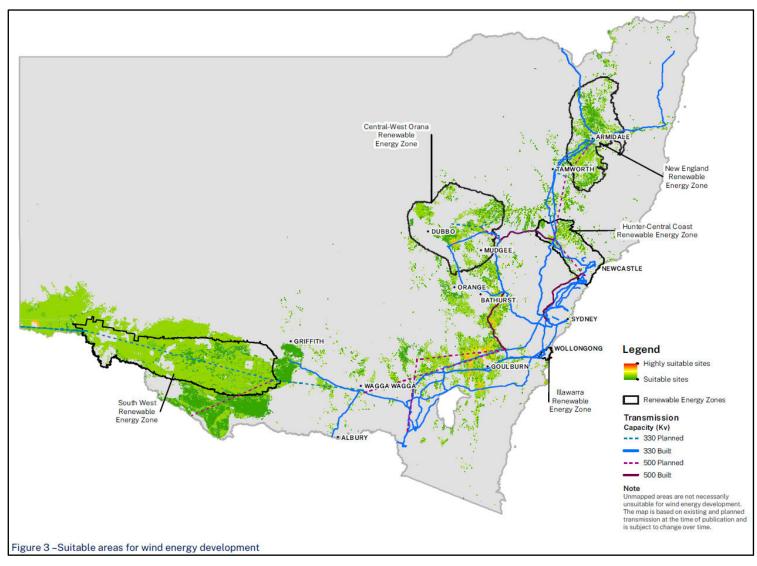


Site selection and indicative turbine layout



bendeninewindfarm.com.au

## **NSW** Renewable energy context



Australia requires new generation projects now to meet growing energy demand and replace retiring generation

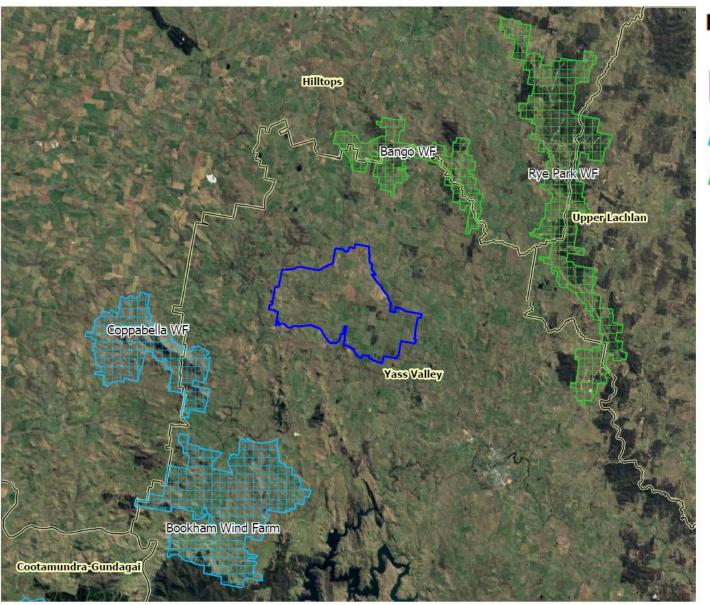
Some areas in NSW have a greater potential to host wind projects than others, factors include:

- Wind resource
- Proximity to the grid
- Environmental constraints
- Feasible port-to-site transport routes
- Proximity to electrical load centres (such as cities)

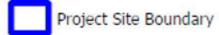
Not all of these regions are within the NSW Government's Renewable Energy Zone

Source: NSW Department of Planning, Draft Wind Energy Guideline

# Regional context



### **Regional Context**



Wind Farm Project in Planning

Operational Wind Farm

### Site selection considerations

### Why Bowning / Binalong?



Strong and reliable wind resource



Not proximate to any registered aerodromes reducing aviation safety risks



Close to major highways with ability to avoid using local roads for main haulage route during construction



Close to Yass, supporting local workforce accommodation and supply chain



Existing and planned transmission infrastructure nearby, making grid connection simpler and more efficient



Ability to be set back from townships and neighbouring dwellings with clear separation, above minimums prescribed in NSW guidelines

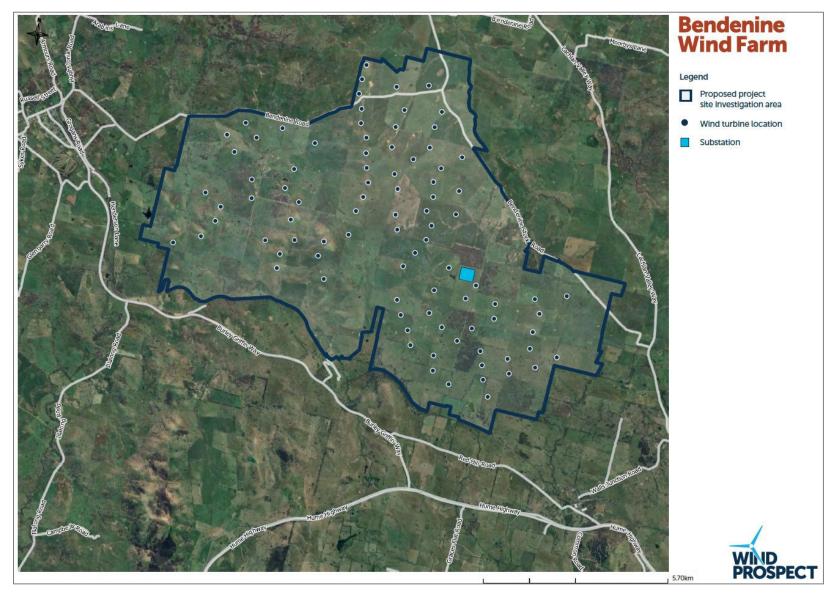


Located on mostly cleared agricultural land with minimal interaction with native vegetation, waterways and culturally significant sites



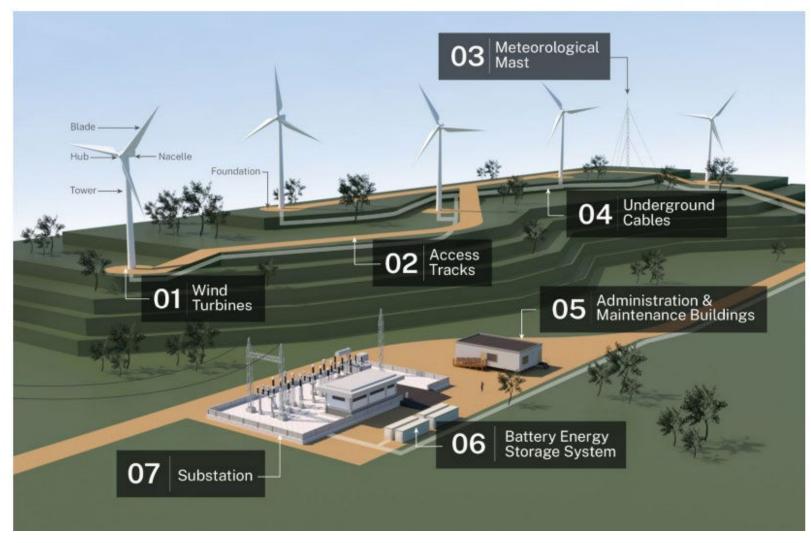
Minimal impacts to the ongoing agricultural productivity of the land

# Indicative turbine layout



- Current initial concept layout
- Subject to change, based on community feedback and outcomes of studies
- Investigating feasibility of up to 90 turbines

## Example of the site components for a typical wind project



Source: NSW Department of Planning, Wind Energy Guideline



Community and Stakeholder Engagement



bendeninewindfarm.com.au

## **Engagement timeline**

**WE ARE HERE** 

Q2-Q4 2025

Scoping phase

### **Purpose:**

Introduce the proposal to local communities

Provide information on the Project, how we proposed to keep the community and stakeholders engaged during the development of the Project

Invite feedback from community and seek to address early issues and concerns

Carry out early Social Impact Assessment

Q4 2025 - Q3 2027



Prepare and lodge EIS

### **Purpose:**

Continue to engage with near neighbours, share regular project updates, seek interest from community to develop benefit sharing framework

Continue First Nations engagement

Develop clear, transparent and accessible ways for community to provide feedback during the preparation of the EIS

Carry out Social Impact Assessment

Q4 2027 (TBC)



Public Exhibition of EIS and formal submission process



### **Purpose:**

Provide accessible and evidence-based information to community and stakeholders on the Project, potential benefits and impacts

Encourage submissions and feedback during formal NSW Govt. exhibition process

Provide on-ground engagement opportunities for community and other stakeholders



Assessment of EIS and determination

Early 2028 - beyond

### **Purpose:**

Respond to feedback and prepare a Submissions Report to address feedback received during EIS exhibition period

Continue engagement with the community

Provide project updates and notify the community when the NSW Mininster for Planning determines the Project

### Community engagement is a continuous and evolving process across the life-cycle of the Project



Ways we engage

Near neighbour meetings Fact sheets

Project newsletters

Website updates

1:1 meetings

Community meetings
1800 community hotline

Project email

Project maps

Community workshops

Stakeholder briefings

Site surveys and investigations

First Nations engagement

# **Social Wellbeing Program**

Based on feedback from the community, including the BDPA, we've heard the scale and Project development timelines has created a sense of uncertainty and stress for some members of the community.

Community wellbeing matters to us, and we want to respond meaningfully to the feedback we've heard.

- Developed in partnership with Rural Health Connect, an independent organisation connecting rural and regional communities with mental health professionals
- Service is fully confidential
- The service is available to people living or working in the area surrounding the proposed Project, including the communities of Bowning, Kangiara and Binalong.

### Supporting community wellbeing



Free, confidential support from qualified mental health professionals.



Easy access via phone or video with no travel and no referral needed.



Inclusive and nonjudgmental, open to all, regardless of project views.



Tailored for rural communities, supporting people through stress, change and uncertainty.



Trial period, developed in direct response to community feedback. Details about how to access the program will be shared with the community via the Project website and other communication shortly.

# **Benefit Sharing**

 The NSW Benefit Sharing Guideline will play a role in shaping our neighbour and community benefit sharing framework for the Bendenine Wind Farm along with feedback from the community.





Q&A



## How you can reach us



1800 497 133



info@bendeninewindfarm.com.au



# Supplementary slides to facilitate discussion

# Key design constraints – managing visual impacts

- Strict guidelines set by NSW Government
- Sensitive receivers include people's houses
- The setback distances is dependant on wind turbine height
- The design shared today is within relevant guidelines, and we've applied a conservative approach by increasing the minimum setbacks beyond what is required
- For planning, we would need to accommodate for large dimensions for conservative assumptions in the technical assessments i.e 260 m tip height

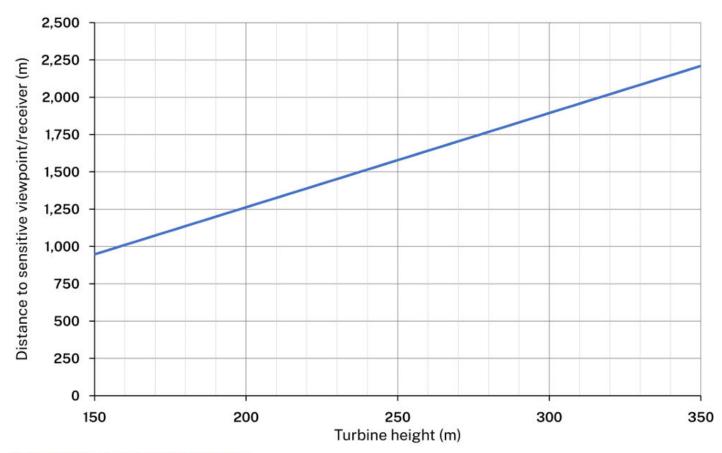
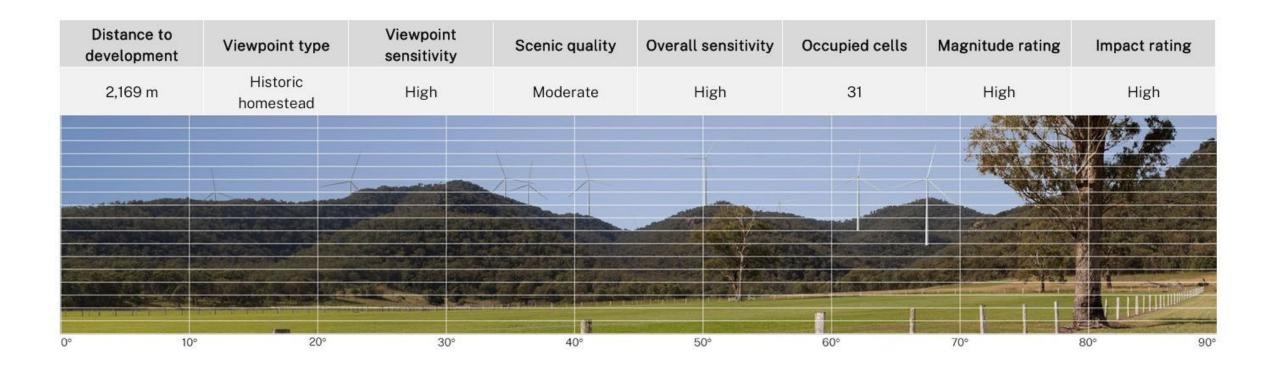


Figure 2. Setback from sensitive receivers

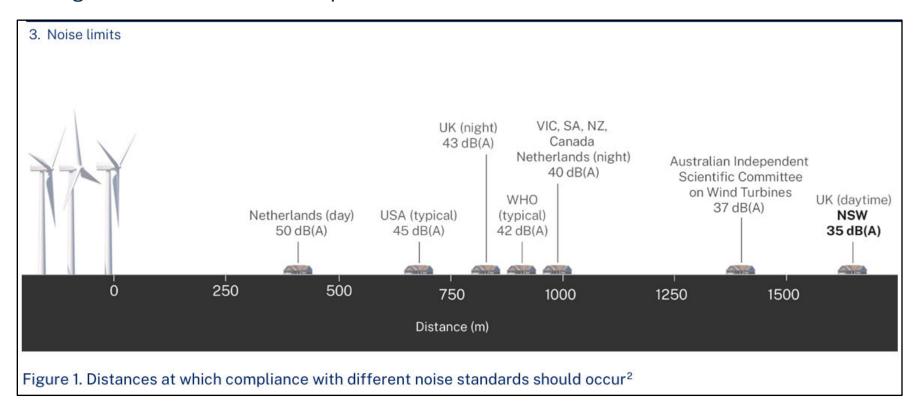
## Detailed visual impact assessment

- Example photomontage shown below to provide an indication of one tool for assessing potential visual impacts
- Application of a 3.5 km setback from residentially zoned areas in Binalong and Bowning



# Key design constraints – managing noise impacts

- NSW has conservative noise criteria
- Noise modelling is complex and requires extensive work by specialist consultants to assess, inform the project design and demonstrate compliance



## Other constraints that will be considered in detail during EIS

