Bendenine Wind Farm

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

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Acknowledgment 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.

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Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Definition
The Project (Bendenine Wind Farm)	The Bendenine Wind Farm or simply 'the Project' throughout this document, is a proposed wind energy and battery development located in the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales, between the townships of Binalong and Bowning and located on Ngunnawal country in the early stages of development.
Wind Prospect	Wind Prospect is an Australian renewable energy project developer who is managing development activities for the Project
First Nations	In Australia, First Nations refers to the various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are the original inhabitants of the continent and its islands. These groups represent a diverse range of cultures, languages, and traditions, each with distinct social, economic, and spiritual connections to their land and waters
Community	A broad term used to define groups of people. A community may be people with similar interests, businesses, clubs and community-based organisations, socio-economic demographics of people, and landowners
Stakeholder	Broadly refers to people or groups who have an interest in the Project or are potentially affected by the Project. Examples include government departments, industry groups, peak lobby and interest groups, schools, and businesses
Engagement	Engagement refers to a planned process involving two-way dialogue with the specific purpose of working with people to allow for active involvement and input in the development process to inform decision making
DPHI	The New South Wales Government Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (formerly Department of Planning and Environment (DPE))
DCCEEW	The New South Wales Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
FPIC	The standard of 'free, prior and informed consent'
Social Impact	Measurable, positive or negative changes made to society or the environment as a result of an organisation's actions, programs, or initiatives
Shared benefits	Advantages or positive outcomes that are enjoyed by multiple individuals or groups, often achieved through cooperation, resource sharing, or collaborative efforts

1 Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to establish the overarching stakeholder engagement framework to guide the communication and engagement activities for the Project. This document includes a summary of proposed engagement activities from Project feasibility to decommissioning. It provides:

- Wind Prospect's approach and principles of engagement
- an overview of the Project and identified stakeholders
- proposed strategies and communication tools
- proposed strategies to engage with First Nation's communities
- a framework for benefit sharing initiatives for future stages of the Project, should the development be approved
- an overview of communication and stakeholder risks and suggested mitigations
- communication protocols, including engagement monitoring and outcomes reporting.
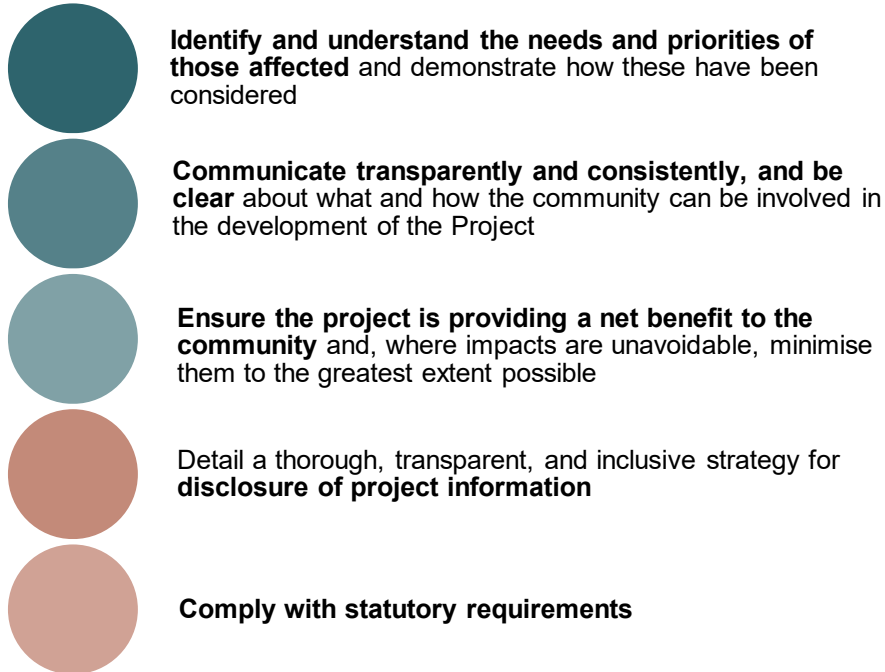
This stakeholder and community engagement plan is a live document and will evolve based on the communication needs and preferences of the community and stakeholders. The plan will be monitored, reviewed, and updated progressively throughout all phases of the Project.

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2   Our approach

2.1   Objectives of engagement

The objectives outlined in this Plan are relevant to all phases across the Project lifecycle and consider the changing nature of the social, political and environmental context.

The objective of community and stakeholder engagement for the Project is to:

Identify and understand the needs and priorities of those affected and demonstrate how these have been considered

Communicate transparently and consistently, and be clear about what and how the community can be involved in the development of the Project

Ensure the project is providing a net benefit to the community and, where impacts are unavoidable, minimise them to the greatest extent possible

Detail a thorough, transparent, and inclusive strategy for **disclosure of project information**

Comply with statutory requirements

2.2   Guiding principles

Our goal is to ensure genuine and open relationships with people affected by or interested in the Project.

We will aim to:

- **Establish and build relationships** with stakeholders and First Nations community members
- **Genuinely and authentically engage** by providing clear and concise information and listening carefully to the concerns and interests of the community
- **Ensure a local, fit-for-purpose approach to our communication and engagement activities** to build genuine and meaningful connections in the region.

Wind Prospect has adopted the Clean Energy Council's *'four foundational principles of community engagement'*. An overview of these principles is provided in **Error! Reference source not found.** below and demonstrates the foundation for the strategies and proposed actions outlined in this plan.[1]

Table 1 Wind Prospect's Adopted Engagement Principles

Principle	Description
Openness	This principle emphasises transparency and honesty in communication and decision-making processes. It involves sharing information openly with stakeholders and related parties
Inclusiveness	This principle highlights the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders in the engagement process. It aims to ensure that diverse perspectives and interests are considered
Responsiveness	This principle involves actively listening to stakeholders and taking their concerns and feedback into account. It requires timely and appropriate responses to stakeholders' needs and issues
Accountability	This principle stresses the importance of taking responsibility for actions and decisions made during the engagement process. It involves being answerable to stakeholders and ensuring that commitments are upheld

2.3 First Nations guiding principles

First Nations communities have a collective identity and shared interest in projects that extend beyond those of other interested groups such as a local school or business. It is important to understand who those First Nations community members are that will be directly involved in the Project and recognise those that have cultural and ancestral connection the country and its resources.

We are committed to First Nations engagement, cultural values and participation through procurement, employment and training throughout the Project lifecycle. Wind Prospect will also endeavour to embody the 'principles of engagement' from the First Nations Clean Energy Network.[2]

'Free, prior and informed consent' or 'FPIC'[3] has been considered when engaging with First Nations communities. FPIC is foundational in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These standards are expected to be promoted by the Project by adopting the principles outlined in **Table 1** and **Table 2**.

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[1] Clean Energy Council, Community Engagement Guidelines 2018
https://cleanenergycouncil.org.au/cec/media/background/resources/wind-community-engagement-guidelines-2018.pdf
[2] First Nations Clean Energy Network, Leading Practice Principles: First Nations and Renewable Energy Projects 2024, https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/resources/reports/Leading-Practice-Principles-First-Nations-and-Renewable-Energy-Projects.pdf
[3] United Nations, Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007,
https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

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A separate First Nations Engagement Plan will be guided by the communication and engagement preferences identified by First Nations people in the Yass region. It will be developed to support an inclusive and participatory approach to listening and responding to the interests, needs and issues of the local indigenous community.

Table 2 Principles of Engaging with First Nations Communities

Principle	Description
Engage respectfully	Approach interactions with First Nations communities in a manner that acknowledges and respects their cultural values, traditions, and protocols.
Prioritise clear, accessible and accurate information	Ensure that all project-related information provided to First Nations communities is easily understandable, transparent, and free from ambiguity.
Ensure cultural heritage is preserved and protected	Implement measures to identify, respect, and safeguard culturally significant sites and practices throughout the project lifecycle.
Protect country and environment	Commit to environmentally sustainable practices that minimise impacts on natural resources, and wildlife habitat.
Be a good neighbour	Proactively engage with neighbouring communities to address concerns, promote positive relationships, and enhance local understanding of the Project's benefits.
Ensure economic benefits are shared	Foster opportunities for First Nations communities to participate in and benefit from project-related economic activities, such as employment, training, and business partnerships.
Provide social benefits for community	Support community development initiatives that enhance social well-being, including health and education.
Embed land stewardship	Promote responsible land use practices that prioritise long-term sustainability and respect for Indigenous knowledge of land management.
Ensure cultural competency	Equip project teams with cultural competence training and awareness to effectively engage with and respond to the needs and perspectives of First Nations communities.
Implement, monitor and report back	Establish mechanisms to implement commitments, regularly monitor project impacts, and provide transparent reporting on progress and outcomes to stakeholders, including First Nations communities.

Source: First Nations Clean Energy Network, Leading Practice Principles: First Nations and Renewable Energy Projects 2024

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2.4 Regulatory context

This plan has been developed and will continue to be re-evaluated with reference to the key documents outlined in **Table 3**. Where new guidelines are published, or existing guidelines are updated, we will update our strategy to provide for the most contemporary guidelines.

Table 3 Regulatory frameworks for engagement

Document	Purpose/function
NSW, DPHI, *Wind Energy Guideline*, November 2024	Provides general guidance for proponents developing wind energy projects, including the development application process.
NSW, DPE, *Social Impact Assessment Guideline*, February 2023	Provides guidelines to assess likely social impacts for State significant projects under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* 1979 (EP&A Act).
NSW, DPHI, *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects*, March 2024	An overview of statutory requirements during planning for state significant developments.
NSW, Office of Energy and Climate Change, *First Nations guidelines: Increasing income and employment opportunities from electricity infrastructure projects*, August 2022	Describes the requirements for and approaches to consultation and negotiation with local Aboriginal communities.
NSW, DPHI, *Benefit Sharing Guideline: Guidance for state significant renewable energy development*, November 2024	Describes a range of suitable options available to distribute the benefits (financial and other) of renewable energy projects into community.

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2.5 Best practice and industry guidelines

As part of Wind Prospect's commitment to best practice community and stakeholder engagement, the development and implementation of this Plan also considers other industry guidelines and local government guidelines identified under Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4 Industry guidelines to inform community and stakeholder engagement

Document	Purpose
Clean Energy Council, *Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry*, June 2018	Holistic document which outlines high level principles and strategies for engaging with a range of stakeholders and the community for the wind farm industry.
Clean Energy Council, *Community Engagement Guidelines for Building Powerlines for Renewable Energy Developments: a guide for proponents, landholders, and communities*, December 2018	Holistic document which outlines approaches to engagement specific to transmission infrastructure associated with a wind farm development.
Clean Energy Council and KPMG, *Leading Practice Principles: First Nations and Renewable Energy Projects*, February 2024	Contemporary and industry-leading best practice guideline.
First Nations Clean Energy Network, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Best Practice Principles for Clean Energy Projects*, November 2022	Outlines high-level principles of engagement with First Nations groups.
Clean Energy Council, *A Guide to Benefit Sharing Options for Renewable Energy Projects*, October 2019	Describes a range of suitable options available to distribute the benefits of renewable energy projects into community.

2.6 Yass Valley Council local government policies

Table 5 Yass Valley Strategic Planning documents

Document	Purpose/function
Yass Valley Council, Renewable Energy Development Projects Policy, 2023	Outlines Council's position in relation to renewable energy projects proposed in the Yass Valley and act as a guide on the likely impacts and concerns of the local community that Council expects to be addressed in planning documentation.
Yass Valley Community Strategic Plan	Identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the Yass Valley Council until 2042.

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3   Project background

3.1 Wind Prospect

Wind Prospect is an experienced and successful early-stage developer of renewable energy projects in Australia having achieved planning approval for 22 wind farms and three solar farms, totalling more than 3,000 MW. Of these, 15 projects are either operational or under construction.

Wind Prospect values strong, lasting relationships with landowners, communities and stakeholders, driven by open communication and commitment to quality.

Our aspiration is to maintain industry-leading standards for engagement throughout the Project lifecycle.

3.2 Project background

The Project is located between the villages of Binalong and Bowning in the Yass Valley. Wind Prospect began exploring the possibility of a wind farm project in this area for the desirable wind resource, good integration with existing land uses, balanced with minimisation of environmental and social impacts. The Project is located approximately 20 km north-west of the larger regional centre of Yass. The entirety of the Project area is located within the Yass Valley Council Local Government Area (LGA). A figure of the Project boundary is provided on the [Bendenine Wind Farm website](#).

The region is characterised by undulating hills and agricultural land uses (primarily sheep grazing). Major transport routes include the Hume Highway (M31), which connects Sydney and Melbourne and passes near Bowning, Burley Griffin Way, which links Binalong to regional centres, and Lachlan Valley Way, which connects Yass to Boorowa. No major waterways traverse the Project area.

The Project is proposed to include up to 90 turbines, a battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure, including but not limited to: an electrical substation, internal underground cabling, overhead transmission lines, access tracks, site compounds and offices, temporary meteorological masts, temporary onsite quarries, and temporary laydown yards and batch plants.

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3.3 Regional development context

Several renewable energy projects at various stages of development are located within 50km of the Project area including those listed below in Table 6.

Table 6 Proximal Significant Projects

Renewable energy projects located in proximity to the proposed Bendenine Wind Farm
Planning
Bookham Wind Farm (Squadron Energy)
Jeremiah Wind Farm (Squadron Energy)
Approved/Not yet constructed
Coppabella Wind Farm (Ark Energy)
Operational
Bango Wind Farm (Squadron Energy)
Rye Park Wind Farm (Tilt Renewables)

3.4 Community Profile

The Yass Valley Council LGA (Local Government Area) consists of eight towns and villages including Binalong, Bookham, Bowning, Gundaroo, Murrumbateman, Sutton, Wee Jasper and Yass.

The Yass Valley LGA encompasses a total land area of about 4,000 km^2 and is served by the Hume Highway, the Barton Highway, the Federal Highway and the main southern railway line. Yass Valley is located in the Southern Tablelands of NSW, a regional area boasting a proud Aboriginal, strong colonial, and innovative agricultural history. Yass Valley is located 280 km southwest of the Sydney CBD, 600 km northeast of the Melbourne CBD and 60 km north of the Canberra CBD.

The 2023 Estimated Resident Population for Yass Valley Council LGA is 17,477 people, with a population density of 4.37 persons per square km. From 2016 to 2021, the population of the LGA increased by 1,139 people (7.1%).

3.4.1 Local Community and Project Neighbours

Wind Prospect is building an understanding of the local community context, and particularly the characterisation of the immediate geographical locality to the Project area. An overview of the proximity of towns, localities and affected landowners to the project are summarised in Table 7 and Table 8.

Table 7 Residential centres located within 15 km of a proposed wind turbine location

Name (SAL)*	Description	Population (number of people)*	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People (% of population)*	Distance and direction from nearest turbine to town/village centre
Binalong	Village	619	4.3%	5.7 km west
Bowning	Village	550	3.1%	4.9 km southeast
Galong	Village	235	6.5%	14.4 km northwest
Woolgarlo	Locality	42	*No data available*	*NA*
Kangiara	Locality	50	*No data available*	*NA*
Yass	Town	6,763	5.4%	15.6 km southeast
Bookham	Village	127	3.1%	14.3 km southwest

* Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census, Suburbs and Localities (SALs)

Table 8 Non-associated dwellings located within 6km of a proposed wind turbine

Distance from proposed wind turbine location	Mapped dwellings
0 – 2 km	8
2– 3 km	26
3 – 4 km	59
4 – 6 km	197

*Based on assumptions made during desktop spatial analysis and to be iteratively verified through stakeholder engagement

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3.5 Project phases

Key project activities and indicative milestones are outlined in Table 9 below. Project phases 3 to 5 are contingent on the NSW government approval of the proposed development.

Table 9 Project phases

Project phases		Key activities	Expected timeline
1	**Project feasibility**	Planning and environment studies, landowner meetings and negotiations, and community and stakeholder engagement commences to inform the Scoping Phase of the development. Community sponsorship program commences. In this phase a Scoping Report is required to be submitted to the DPHI for assessment and potential issue of the SEARs.	2024-2026
2	**Environmental and Planning Determination**	Prepare Environment Impact Statement (EIS), in line with the DPHI SEARs requirements, continued community and stakeholder engagement, co-creation of community benefit sharing framework, consultation with Council, key stakeholders, and First Nations' community representatives.	2026-2027
3	**If approved: post planning**	Obtain pre-construction approvals, complete detailed design, finalise project financing, community and stakeholder engagement continues, commencement of community benefit sharing programs.	2027-2028
4	**Construction and operation commencement**	Civil and electrical works, installation and commissioning of turbines, community engagement continues, operations, continuation of community benefit sharing programs.	2028+
5	**Decommissioning**	Infrastructure removed land returned to previous state, community engagement continues	2060+

4 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

4.1 Level of Engagement

Our approach to engaging stakeholders is guided by the Public Participation Spectrum developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), now known as the Engagement Institute, and widely adopted as a framework for structuring consultation and engagement in Australia.

Table 10 shows the differing levels of participation, depending on the goals, timeframes, resources and levels of interest/concern in the decision to be made. At all levels of engagement, it is fundamental to define the promise and ensure it is clearly understood by both the decision makers and the stakeholders to be engaged. It is not proposed that all levels of engagement would be reached by the community and stakeholder engagement program for the Project, but that each level of engagement would be carefully considered against the program purpose, objectives and desired engagement outcomes.
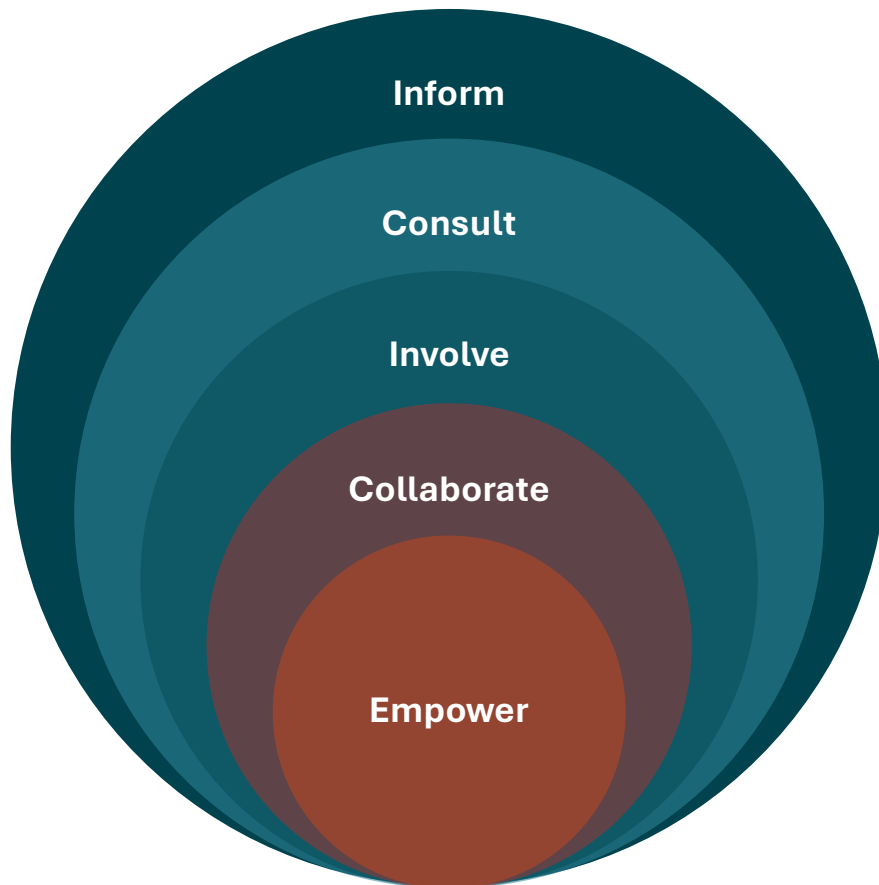

Figure 1 IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum of Engagement

Stakeholder groups are likely to have differing communication and engagement needs. Initially, a preliminary level of engagement has been assigned to each stakeholder group identified. As stakeholder levels of interest and engagement requirements evolve over the duration of the Project,

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this analysis will be updated to reflect changes and emerging issues or opportunities. Each level of engagement is valid, provided it is delivered in a meaningful way.

Table 10 Levels of engagement

Level of engagement	Purpose
Inform	This level involves providing stakeholders with balanced and objective information to help them understand the project or decision. It's a one-way communication where stakeholders receive details about the process but do not have opportunities to provide feedback.
Consult	At this level, stakeholders are consulted for their input, feedback, and suggestions. Their concerns and opinions are collected and considered in the decision-making process, but the final decision rests with the project team or decision-makers.
Involve	This level goes beyond consultation by actively seeking stakeholder input and incorporating their advice and concerns into the decision-making process. Stakeholders have more influence, and their contributions are reflected in the final decisions made.
Collaborate	Collaboration involves working directly with stakeholders throughout the entire process. Stakeholders and decision-makers work together to identify issues, develop alternatives, and find solutions that address mutual concerns and interests
Empower	At the highest level of engagement, stakeholders have the final decision-making authority or significant control over the entire process. This level empowers stakeholders to implement their preferred solutions independently or alongside project proponents.

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4.2 Stakeholder Identification Methodology

A robust process for identifying stakeholders is iterative and will evolve over time. This plan is anticipated to be regularly updated to reflect the increasing understanding of the local community and stakeholders and their changing communication and consultation preferences.

Preliminary identification of relevant stakeholders and the local community has been completed in accordance with the *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (2024). These guidelines specify that during the Scoping phase, stakeholders must be identified for further engagement. This includes individuals, special interest groups, councils, and government agencies with an interest in or likely to be affected by the project. This initial process has been undertaken using a range of desktop sources, which are summarised in Table 11.

Table 11 Preliminary stakeholder identification methodology

Stakeholder Groups	How stakeholder groups were identified in the initial stakeholder mapping exercise
Project neighbours (nominally within 6 km[4] of a proposed turbine location)	Online directories, NSW Land Registry searches, online searches
First Nations communities	Official publications and government/council sources including the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies* online resources
Government departments and organisations, politicians and political parties, council	Local print media, online media, official government sources and websites
Local industries and businesses, community groups, sensitive receivers, emergency services and areas of historical significance	Online searches, on-site touring, discussions with local landowners, local radio and television media, community newsletters
Regional community	Census data, discussions with landowners, online searches and council sources

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[4] A 6 km buffer is commonly used in wind energy development to define the area of potential visual, noise, and amenity impact around a proposed wind farm. This distance typically encompasses those residences most likely to experience perceptible effects, such as changes to landscape character and turbine visibility.

4.3 Identified Stakeholder Groups

Identified stakeholders using the methodology outlined above have been summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Identified stakeholder and community groups

*Residents and landowners immediately bordering the project or with a home within 3.5 km of a proposed turbine

5   Engagement Overview

The *Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (DPHI, 2024) notes the following expectations regarding engagement during the assessment phase.

The Proponent must:

- Inform the social locality community about the opportunities to engage and explain how feedback will be considered and documented.

- Provide relevant information in plain English so that potential impacts can be readily understood.

- Give the community the opportunity to voice their concerns and share local knowledge so that this information can be considered early on in the planning, design and assessment process.

- Consider the issues raised by the community, council and relevant government agencies when making Project refinements and accurately reflect how these issues have been addressed in EIS documentation.

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5.1 Tools and Strategies

To support Wind Prospect's engagement with stakeholders in accordance with the broader engagement strategy and to inform engagement and data collection and reporting for the social impact studies, a variety of engagement tools and strategies will be used, which are listed in Table 12.

Table 12 Engagement tools

Tools and Strategies	Description
Project website	Specific project website that provides an easy access to information about the project to interested stakeholders. Includes the ability to provide anonymous feedback and to contact project team directly for further information and sign up to the mailing list.
Dedicated project 1800 number	A dedicated project 1800 number serves as a centralised, toll-free contact point for stakeholders to access information and support related to the project
Email	The project email (info@bendeninewindfarm.com.au) allows for stakeholders and community members to liaise directly with a member of the project team.
Feedback and complaints framework	Provide a structured and transparent process for receiving, addressing, and resolving stakeholder feedback and complaints, ensuring continuous improvement and maintaining trust.
Project launch	A public launch of the project was instigated through the distribution of a newsletter to owners of land and residents within 10 km of the project site. This coincided with the website going live, and a media release being distributed. Immediately prior to the project launch, letters seeking face-to-face meetings were sent to adjacent landowners, First Nations groups, Yass Valley Regional Council, and local MP's.
Project newsletter	Project update newsletters are to be prepared and distributed to people in the local area, being the localities of Binalong, Bowning, Kangiara, and Laverstock, as well as those who sign up to the Project's mailing list. These newsletters, will be ideally distributed to absentee owners of land as well as residents, including tenants. All newsletters will include contact information, as well as the project website details. These newsletters will be distributed at key milestones or when further information is available to be shared.
Stakeholder engagement database	A stakeholder engagement database has been established, which will include all stakeholders who have been engaged to date. It is a live database and will evolve throughout the Project lifespan. The database contains stakeholder details, methods of engagement, and a record of each interaction. The record of interactions and outcomes of engagement recorded in the stakeholder database will inform the SISR and SIA/EIS phases.
Surveys	Data will be gathered using formal surveys. This includes community values and sentiment, engagement preferences, and how participants would like to see the project support their local community. This provides the opportunity for community governance. This feedback will inform the development of a

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Tools and Strategies	Description
	Benefit Sharing Program, the landscape and visual impact assessment, and the SIA studies required for the Scoping and EIS phases of development and identify community sentiment to address in supporting communication collateral and conversations with impacted stakeholders.
Project collateral	Including but not limited to FAQs, fact sheets, infographics, postcards, brochures, corflutes, and 3D models.
Face-to-face meetings (in-person or virtual)	Meetings with key stakeholders such as landholders, local council and community groups will be undertaken to provide an overview of the project and maintain relationships with key stakeholders. These meetings will also assist to identify potential concerns and opportunities and inform the SISR and SIA/EIS. Impacts identified will be fully assessed in the EIS preparation phase, as well as any potential project refinements considered.
Research Interviews	Targeted SIA research interviews with key stakeholders to inform the SISR and SIA.
Pop-up booth sessions	As required, pop-up sessions will be used to provide an opportunity for members of the local community to visit at a convenient time to learn about the project and provide feedback regarding the project proposal. These typically involve setting up a booth in a local business or high traffic area.
Community drop-in sessions	Community drop-in sessions will be held when required at venues local to the project. Project introduction information will be displayed, and the community will be able to meet the project team. These drop-in sessions will be attended by Wind Prospect staff, community engagement consultants, SIA consultants and technical consultants to provide insight into the technical assessments during the SIA/ EIS phases.
Information sessions/public exhibition	Information sessions will be held when required at venues local to the project. Detailed information about the project will be displayed and feedback will be sought. These information sessions will be attended by Wind Prospect staff, the community engagement consultants, and relevant technical experts as appropriate (e.g., SIA, planning, ecology).
Photomontages and artistic impressions of the Project	Photomontages will be developed for the community to demonstrate the anticipated visual impact of the Project. If a stakeholder raises concerns about visual impacts, Wind Prospect may suggest, or the stakeholder can request, the preparation of one or more photomontages to inform further discussions on impacts. Photomontages may also be used to at community open days.
Community Benefit Sharing Program	The community benefit program will be designed to involve the community in the potential benefits of the wind farm development and is detailed further in Section 5.3

5.2 Planned activities throughout the Project lifecycle

Table 13 details proposed engagement activities throughout the Project lifecycle.

Table 13 Proposed activities throughout the Project lifecycle

Phases	Timing*	Engagement goals	Key proposed activities	Target stakeholders
1: Project scoping	2024-2026	- Inform/Consult - Build awareness and understanding of the Project, Wind Prospect, and key next steps - Engage with nearby residents and Project neighbours - Gaining a preliminary understanding of potential concerns, impacts, and needs from the community	- Establishing landowner agreements - Launch project website, hotline and introductory newsletter - Comprehensively identify stakeholders and build stakeholder database - Initiate community sponsorship program (for development phase) - Implement complaints and feedback framework	- Landowners - Regulatory bodies - Council - First Nations groups - Near neighbours - Community
2: Environmental and Planning Determination (1) Scoping	2026-2027	The information and inputs gathered during the Scoping Phase will guide the preparation of the SIA and EIS. This process will focus on key social and environmental issues important to stakeholders and identify design refinements to minimise negative impacts and enhance positive ones.	- Maintain avenues for community feedback - Face-to-face meetings with neighbours and the community - Engage and workshop with First Nations groups and consult with key stakeholders	- Government agencies - Regulatory bodies - Service providers - Council - Community - Education and Training bodies - Near neighbours

Phases	Timing*	Engagement goals	Key proposed activities	Target stakeholders
		Documenting these changes is crucial for project development and will be discussed in the EIS and SIA.	• Maintain distributed information sources such as regular project newsletters, information brochures, and regularly host briefings and information sessions. • Targeted briefings with strategic stakeholders including Council, members of parliament, associations and representative groups, government agencies • Conduct initial community information sessions and feedback • Implement agreed approach to First Nations engagement • Provide follow-up newsletters and FAQs • Undertake community interviews/surveys to inform the SISR • Build and maintain stakeholder database • Advocacy with Council, MPs, local businesses	• First Nations people • Community businesses • Industry groups • State and Federal MPs

Phases	Timing*	Engagement goals	Key proposed activities	Target stakeholders
			• Continue co-design approach to community benefit sharing	
(2) EIS/SIA preparation	2026-2027	• Inform/Consult • Enable Project planning and design to consider community feedback and concerns and inform the SIA and SIMP • Establish, promote, and seek feedback on the community benefit sharing program • Opportunity to gain input from key stakeholders and community members into the project design and outcomes • Build understanding of key stakeholders	• Maintain distributed information sources such as regular project newsletters, information brochures, and regularly host briefings and information sessions. • Continue engagement with First Nations groups and consult with key stakeholders • Continue co-design approach to community benefit sharing • Expand stakeholder database • Undertake interviews with some involving stakeholder input as necessary • Share preliminary findings from key environmental and social studies for feedback • On-ground engagement to inform EIS feedback mechanisms and address concerns	• Government agencies • Regulatory bodies • Service providers • Council • Community • Education and Training bodies • Near neighbours • First Nations people • Community businesses • Industry groups • State and Federal MPs

Phases	Timing*	Engagement goals	Key proposed activities	Target stakeholders
			• Advocacy with Council, MPs, local businesses • Maintain avenues for community feedback	
3. Post planning (if approved)	2028+	• Inform/consult • Manage expectations regarding next steps	• Continue to provide regular updates through distributed delivery and face to face meetings • Provide increasing levels of detail in project design and construction elements • Maintain avenues for community feedback • Continue co-design approach to community benefit sharing	• Government agencies • Regulatory bodies • Service providers • Council • Community • Education and Training bodies • Near neighbours • First Nations people • Community businesses • Industry groups • State and Federal MPs
4 (1). Construction	2029+	• Inform/consult/involve • Minimise disruption to community • Manage conflict • Manage expectations • Ensure and secure local involvement	• Fortnightly construction updates • Provide adequate notification of planned works • Engage and employ local businesses, First Nations businesses, contractors and suppliers	• Government agencies • Service providers • Council • Community • Near neighbours • First Nations people

Phases	Timing*	Engagement goals	Key proposed activities	Target stakeholders
			• Face-to-face meeting with impacted near neighbours and other stakeholders • Maintain avenues for community feedback	
4 (2) Operation	Post construction -2060+	• Inform/consult/involve • Deliver to the community positive benefits from the Project	• Employ the community benefit sharing program • Continue to provide regular updates through distributed delivery and face-to-face meetings • Maintain avenues for community feedback	• Government agencies • Council • Community • Near neighbours • First Nations people
5. Decommissioning	2060+	• Inform/consult • Close off issues, receive feedback from the community	• Close off outstanding issues • Summarise the outcomes of the decommissioning process, including environmental restoration efforts and community impact assessments • Provide avenue for community feedback	• Government agencies • Council • Community • Near neighbours

Timings for each milestone development is indicative and subject to change.

5.3 Benefit Sharing Programs

Wind Prospect is committed to ensuring that our renewable energy projects create community-positive outcomes. Integral to achieving this is to ensure benefits are equally distributed throughout the local communities in which our Projects are located. We recognise that each local area is unique and the characteristics of a benefit sharing program that will best match the local Yass Valley community and beyond, will require further collaboration and consultation with the local community, Council, other stakeholders, and First Nations people. We will engage with local leaders to understand the community's needs and values.

Across its portfolio of projects, during the development phase, Wind Prospect establishes short-term community sponsorship programs to provide funds to support local community initiatives. Community sponsorship programs are separate to legacy benefit sharing programs, which are designed, in collaboration with the community and stakeholders during the development phase, to provide long-term commitments to support communities throughout the life of a project. Legacy Benefit Sharing Programs are usually rolled out once a Project is operational and remain in place for the life of the project. These Programs are in addition to host landowner agreements and near neighbour benefit sharing agreements.

Community Sponsorship Program

The Bendenine Wind Farm Project Sponsorship Fund has been established to support local community groups during the project development phase, with up to $20,000 available per year to eligible organisations and community groups. The fund is designed to help local community groups to deliver and enhance their services, programs, initiatives and facilities.

Legacy Benefit Sharing Program (post-construction)

In line with the NSW Government's Benefit Sharing Guideline, Wind Prospect, would develop a legacy benefit sharing program to provide long-term financial and other benefits to the local community. the design of this program would be guided by ongoing consultation with the community and key stakeholder groups and informed by the outcomes of the technical assessments prepared for the EIS, such as socio-economic, Aboriginal cultural heritage, landscape and visual, and environmental studies. The development of a benefit sharing program is ongoing, and implementation would only occur if the Project is approved by the DPHI.

Bendenine Wind Farm

Examples of benefit sharing programs may include:

Community funds · Education funds and scholarship · Sponsorships · Training and skills development · Conservation actions · Neighbour benefit programs · Specific community needs · Local school programs

Figure 3 Types of benefit sharing initiatives

Bendenine Wind Farm

6 Reporting, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

The Wind Prospect team regularly review the Project's community and stakeholder engagement objectives and outcomes. This will help the project team to improve the quality of communications and consultation as the Project progresses.

Our reporting, evaluation and improvement program will be achieved through continuous feedback loops using the below techniques:

- Reviewing enquiries and complaints data to identify recurring issues to respond to and emerging positive trends to champion
- Informal discussions with stakeholders
- Informal discussions with members of the project team
- Observing the level of attendance and participation at activities such as workshops, displays and information sessions, and changing approach to create fit-for-purpose consultation activities
- Feedback forms at information sessions and online
- Media monitoring including social media
- Measuring reach across traditional and non-traditional communication channels across community consultation activities
- Analysis of data from community outcome reports, community, and stakeholder meetings
- The evaluation would also include lessons learned to share with the team for the next stage of the project.

Wind Prospect's **Community and Stakeholder Feedback and Complaints Framework** provides details regarding how to provide feedback to the project team and further detail regarding how we will manage and respond to feedback and complaints.

As part of the planning and determination process for the Project, evidence of the outcomes of stakeholder and community engagement is a requirement for the scoping report and environmental impact assessment. Separate stakeholder and community engagement summary reports will be prepared and provided to the DPHI as part of the submission of the planning application process.