KENTBRUCK
GREEN POWER HUB

ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS STATEMENT SUMMARY

umwelt
Environmental & Social Consultants

NEOEN

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www.kentbruckgreenpowerhub.com.au

Acknowledgement of Country

Neoen acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Gunditjmara people, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

We pay our respects to their Elders – past, present and emerging.

This document summarises the key findings of the Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the Kentbruck Green Power Hub (the Project). It provides an overview of the project, including the project's objectives and how the project was developed including options and alternatives. It includes the key findings of the many technical assessments and details the next steps for the project in the EES process.

More detail on any of the technical assessments mentioned in this document can be found in the full Environment Effects Statement documentation which is online or in Neoen's Portland office.

Contents

Overview

The Kentbruck Green Power Hub is a proposed wind farm in south west Victoria, being developed by Neoen. Neoen is one of Australia's leading renewable energy producers with over 3 GW of wind, solar and battery storage projects in operation or under construction.

The wind farm location was selected because it has high wind speeds, relatively few neighbours and a strong grid connection point. The Project is estimated to involve a $1.2 billion infrastructure investment, creating at least 350 jobs during construction and 14 jobs when operational.

While the project has been intentionally sited in a commercial pine plantation with little ecological value, it is nearby to some sensitive ecosystems. To support and protect local species, Neoen has committed a significant fund for the sponsorship of ecological studies, protection activities and species recovery projects worth $1 million per year from the commencement of operations for the 30-year expected life of the Project. The fund would be administered by Neoen and would initially have a focus on Southern Bent-wing Bat.

In addition to this significant contribution to local fauna, the project will also reduce the use of coal generation in Victoria, which will contribute to the state's efforts to combat the worst effects of climate change. The Project's contribution to emissions reduction is the equivalent of removing 766,000 cars from the road or planting 15.8 million trees.

Neoen has held successful community information days, has met with the Glenelg Shire Council on numerous occasions, and has an open shop front in the centre of Portland for local people to drop by and ask questions.

The Project was referred to the Victorian Minister for Planning on 24 July 2019 in accordance with Section 8(3) of the *Environment Effects Act 1978 (EE Act)*. On 25 August 2019, the Minister determined that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required for the project due to the potential for significant environmental effects.

Neoen has commissioned numerous technical studies since then to better understand the physical, ecological, cultural, and social environment within which the project is proposed and the surrounding region. Developing this understanding has played a key role in the wind farm design, and the development of management and mitigation measures to ensure the project is able to operate in an acceptable manner.

This document summarises many of those studies, but a lot more detail can be found in the full EES documents which are publicly available online and in various physical locations. For more information, see How to get involved.

Figure 1

Kentbruck Green Power Hub facts and figures.

1.2 BILLION

Estimated infrastructure investment

350

Jobs during construction

14

Jobs during operations

2,000 GWh

Generated annually which is equivalent to:

2 million tonnes of CO_2 displaced

411,000 homes powered

766,000 cars off the road

15.8 million trees planted

$150,000

Annually distributed to local community initiatives

Project description

This section provides details of the project's objectives, its location, and what infrastructure will be constructed as a part of the wind farm. It also discusses the community involvement in the project so far.

Project objectives

The fundamental objective of the wind farm is to provide a source of competitive and reliable renewable energy to help power homes and businesses in Victoria and throughout eastern Australia.

Neoen's environmental and social objectives for the project are to:

- Maximise project benefits such as affordable electricity production, local jobs and investment and direct financial benefits to neighbours, the community and biodiversity funding, while avoiding or minimising adverse impacts on the local community and biodiversity.
- Provide regular, consistent and considered consultation with the local community as well as other stakeholders to ensure their expectations and preferences are reflected in the Project's design and approach to operations from an early stage.
- Develop the Project in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development, in particular, recognising the importance of natural resources and ecosystems for meeting environmental, social and economic needs now and into the future.
- Identify, where possible, opportunities to partner with community stakeholders in the co-design and delivery of equitable, lasting community benefits including procurement, employment, training and support for key social groups.

Photo 1

Aerial photo of the pine plantation in the Kentbruck area, which represents common landscape features of the Project Area. The Portland-Nelson Road is also shown in this photo.

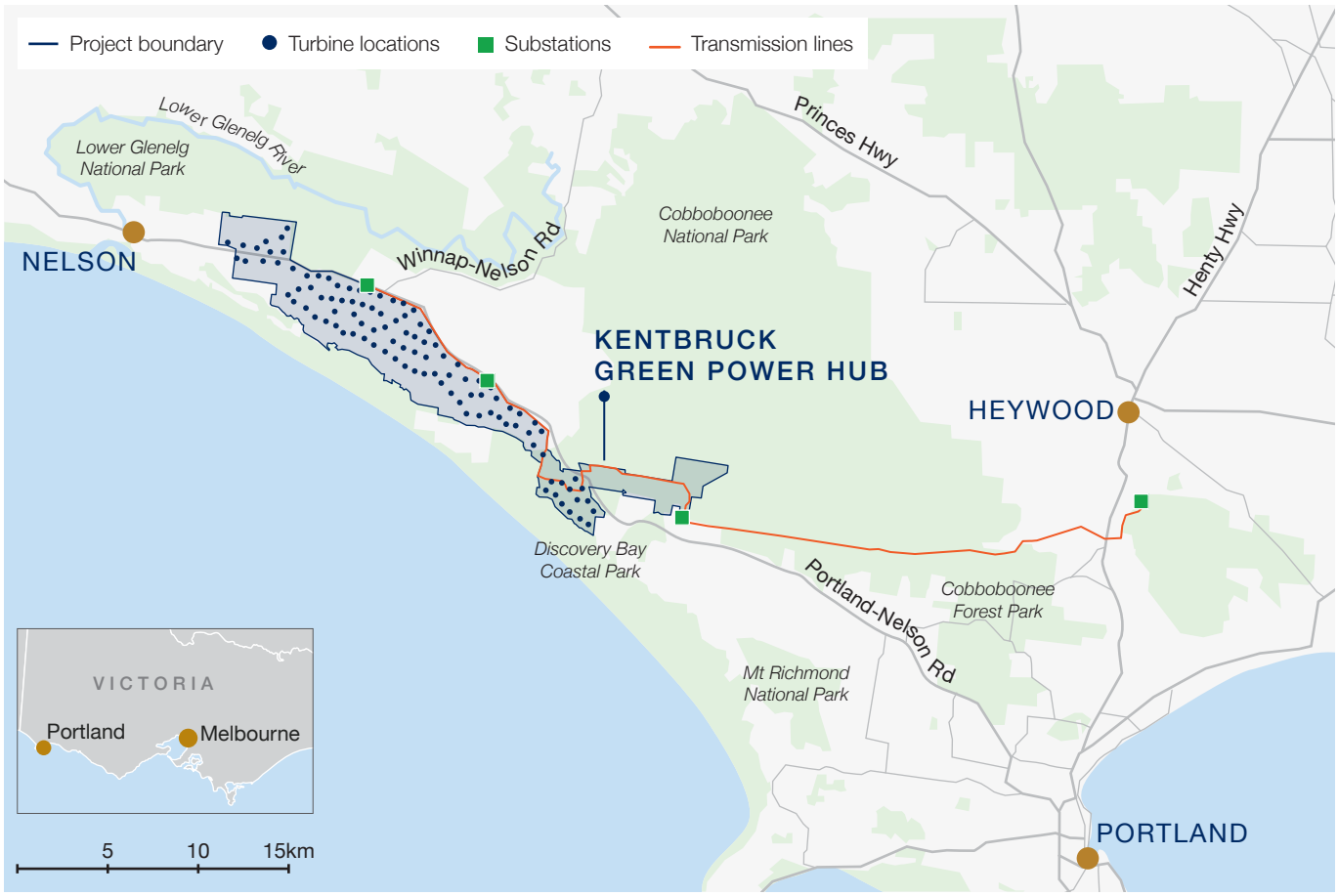


Figure 2

Indicative wind farm layout.

Location

Kentbruck Green Power Hub is located in far south-western Victoria and within the Glenelg Shire Council Local Government Area (Glenelg LGA).

Most of the wind turbines are located within an active commercial pine plantation inland of Discovery Bay, situated between Nelson to the west, and Portland to the southeast. There is an existing network of public roads both surrounding and internal to the Project Area, as well as several private access roads within the plantation in which the wind farm is sited.

Within the Project Area[1], land is predominantly used for commercial radiata pine forestry operations. A small section of the wind farm site is also located on agricultural land that abuts the Lower Glenelg National Park to the north and Cobboboonee Forest Park to the east.

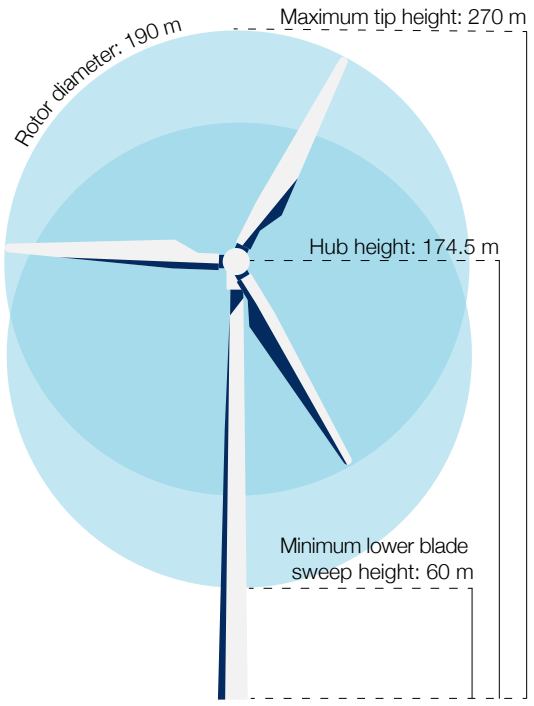
The transmission line linking the Project to the main Victorian electricity grid travels underground beneath an existing road through the Cobboboonee Forest Park and Cobboboonee National Park, and then through agricultural land to the existing Heywood Terminal Station, south of Heywood.

1 Project Area is larger than the Project Boundary and includes a buffer. Some studies including biodiversity studies take place not just within the Project, but also around it.

Approximately 22% of land in the Project Area is freehold land that is primarily used for grazing, and around 78 % of the land is commercial pine plantation. Around 0.1% of the Project Area is public land.

Figure 3

Indicative wind turbine dimensions



Project infrastructure

Kentbruck Green Power Hub will involve the construction of around 105 wind turbines in order to produce electricity. This electricity will be transported from the wind farm into the existing electricity network at Heywood Terminal station through a new transmission line.

The Project involves the following key infrastructure:

- A wind farm of up to 600 megawatts (MW), comprising approximately 105 wind turbines with a maximum tip height of 270 metres (m) above ground level (see Figure 2 and Figure 3).
- Each wind turbine will be fixed to a large underground foundation with a diameter of approximately 25 m and depth of approximately 4 m. Subject to detailed geotechnical assessments, the turbine foundations would consist of concrete slab (gravity) or rock anchor foundations.
- A new 275 kilovolt (kV) transmission line connecting the wind farm to the existing electricity transmission network. The transmission line would be approximately 26.6 km in length, running underground under an existing public road through the Cobboboonee Forest Park and Cobboboonee National Park, and then through agricultural land to the existing Heywood Terminal Station, south of Heywood.
- On site electrical infrastructure including a main substation and smaller collector substations, as well as underground and overhead electrical cables that link each turbine into these substations.
- Meteorological monitoring masts that measure wind speed and direction.
- Permanent hardstand areas at each turbine, which are flat graded areas to enable turbine construction and maintenance.
- Graded access roads to each turbine, many of which are already existing but some of which will be newly constructed.
- Temporary infrastructure including construction compounds, concrete batching plants and laydown areas, which will be removed when construction is complete.
- A limestone quarry to provide material for hardstands and for upgrades to existing access roads or construction of new access roads.

Community involvement

The success of Kentbruck depends on the development of genuine, open and ongoing relationships with the local community and other key stakeholders. Our approach has been to start our engagement early, and to provide ongoing opportunities for people to participate and have their say. Engagement approaches used to date include one-on-one meetings, project briefings and updates (in-person, virtual, written and electronic), community events and information sessions.

Neoen has a staffed site office in Portland which is open three days a week, and the opening hours will increase when the project is on public exhibition.

All feedback provided by members of the community throughout the Project's engagement and consultation process, has been recorded, responded to, and used to inform the design of the Project where possible. Feedback has also informed the development of benefit sharing initiatives valued at approximately $350,000 per annum, an ecology fund of $1,000,000 per annum as well as local and Indigenous participation initiatives.

Evaluation and monitoring measures will be detailed in the Community Engagement Plan used to guide the ongoing delivery of community engagement and the overall development of the Project.

Photo 2

Neoen office opening in Portland, August 2022.

Project stages

Site selection

Site selection for the Kentbruck Green Power Hub was largely determined by analysing potential sites against the following criteria:

- A strong wind resource
- Low density of housing and reasonable distance to nearby townships
- A supportive local community
- Distance from high-value ecological areas
- Proximity to electricity transmission infrastructure and available capacity of the transmission network
- Proximity to areas with high electricity demand
- A smooth landscape (which minimises turbulence and mechanical stress on turbines and improves the constructability of the project)

The Project's location scores well on those criteria. Publicly available data indicates that the Portland area has a good wind resource, which is reinforced by the presence of existing wind farms in the area. The site has a low population density in surrounding areas, extensive existing road networks, and proximity to the existing AusNet 275 kV and 500 kV transmission network.

Responsive project design

The Project has undergone significant design changes since 2019 when the Project comprised 157 wind turbines, a battery storage facility and two potential transmission line corridors. Following the consideration of various alternative design choices, and in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, it now comprises 105 turbines, no battery storage facility and one preferred transmission line route.

Biodiversity constraints accounted for a significant proportion of these design changes, with over 80 turbines relocated or removed to minimise potential biodiversity impacts. Turbines were removed/relocated to be at least 500 m from the Ramsar site as well as excluded from Brolga breeding buffers and movement corridors. Turbines were also excluded from within 2 km of the Lake Mombeong campsite to reduce potential visual and noise impacts.

The battery storage facility was removed from the Project to focus on progressing the wind farm component which has reduced the bushfire and noise amenity risks of the Project.

The Heywood transmission line route was identified as the preferred transmission line option for the Project for a range of reasons, particularly to minimise impacts on the local community which clearly communicated to Neoen their preference for the under-road route through Boiler Swamp Road. This solution utilises an existing infrastructure corridor, providing opportunities to minimise potential impacts relating to social and cultural considerations, visual amenity, existing land uses and the environment.

Photo 3

Aerial photo of recently logged areas of the plantation.

Project benefits

The key project benefits are energy security, as well as environmental, economic and community benefits.

Energy security

The coastline near Portland experiences some of the strongest winds in Victoria. Strong wind speeds mean competitively priced electricity and reliable electricity generation, which supports energy security in our changing grid. Building a wind farm in the windiest possible location also means fewer turbines overall are required to generate the electricity that Victorians need today and into the future.

The wind farm connects into the grid at the Heywood interconnector, a very strong position in the electricity network that will mean relatively little curtailment, or wasted electricity.

AEMO's Integrated System Plan (ISP) provides a blueprint for Australia's complex and rapid energy transformation towards net zero emissions, enabling low-cost renewable energy and essential transmission to provide consumers with reliable, safe, secure, and affordable power.

The 2022 ISP confirmed the importance of this area, by declaring the South West REZ Expansion as a future ISP project, triggering preparatory design to harness more renewable generation along the 500 kV backbone of the state's transmission system.

The grid connection location of the Kentbruck wind farm at the Heywood Terminal Station is also close to the Portland aluminium smelter. Siting generation and connection near Victoria's largest single electricity load (around 8-10% of Victoria's electricity demand) can reduce the amount of electricity that is transported from over 500 km away in the Latrobe Valley, and thereby have an impact on reducing fossil fuel generation. The wind farm could also help lower the energy costs for the smelter, and in doing so help support its financial viability.

This large wind farm could contribute approximately 5% of Victoria's electricity generation, a substantial step towards the achievement of the state's renewable energy targets.

Environmental benefits

The wind farm is predominantly located in an actively managed and harvested pine plantation. Locating the Project within a pine plantation is a decision Neoen made in accordance with its Biodiversity Policy (2023) which commits to *"Where feasible, prefer development of new projects on land with minimum protected status due to its ecological or biological value or on land with low biodiversity value"*. The pine plantation has significantly less inherent biodiversity values than other locations in the region.

However, several areas recognised for their conservation significance are within the vicinity of the wind farm, including Lower Glenelg National Park to the north, Cobboboonee National Park to the east, and Discovery Bay Coastal Park to the south. Several of these conservation areas form part of the Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay Ramsar site, comprising highly significant wetland values.

Neoen has undertaken extensive research to understand and respond to the biodiversity and habitat values that are present within and around the wind farm. Investigations into the biodiversity values of site and surrounds have been ongoing for more than five years and has involved some of the most significant monitoring campaigns undertaken for a wind farm in Victoria. This includes collecting bat call data over more than 10,000 detector nights, from detectors mounted at several heights on four monitoring masts as well as ground detectors. Ecologists have also recorded data about birds that are flying, foraging, roosting, and nesting in and around the Project site, as well as other threatened fauna such as small mammals, and botanists have surveyed and mapped native vegetation and threatened fauna.

This ecological data has been used to develop the projects layout design as well as management and mitigation to minimise impacts and risks.

In response to the critically endangered status of the Southern Bent-wing Bat, Neoen has committed a $1 million annual spend on species recovery. Projects to assist the species could include habitat conservation and regeneration, and Neoen will work with local experts on the most effective projects. This is intended to make the project nature positive, meaning that it will have a net positive effect on the environment in which it is located.

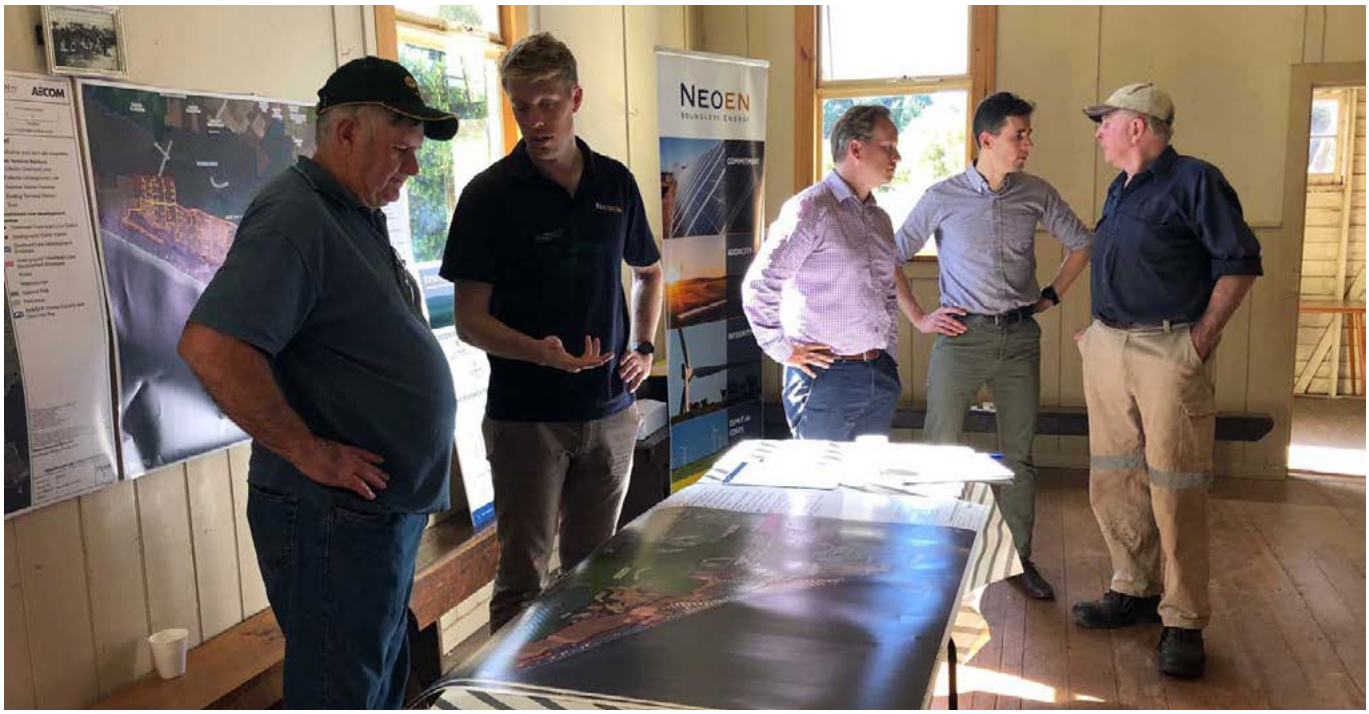


Photo 4

Community information day for Kentbruck in 2019.

Economic and community benefits

The wind farm enjoys strong community support. Neoen has held successful community information days in 2019 and 2022, met with the Glenelg Shire Council on numerous occasions and has an open shopfront in the centre of Portland for local people to drop by and ask questions.

Construction of the Project would help support businesses in the Glenelg LGA and across the State more broadly, with the potential to generate up to $158.9 million for the Glenelg LGA and up to $635.8 million for the State of Victoria (assuming 25% employment from the study area). Operation of the Project has potential to generate up to $50.5 million for the Glenelg LGA, and up to $63.1 million for the State of Victoria[2].

Neoen will use local service providers and businesses to service and supply the Project where possible and will develop a Local Participation Plan prior to construction commencing, which will contain targets for local and regional employment during construction and operation. Neoen's first focus is to hire local people to deliver its projects, recognising that locals are familiar with the land involved and often have the skills required for construction.

There is strong and consistent evidence that the provision of apprenticeship and trainee opportunities during construction of a project benefits the individuals involved by increasing their probability of employment and expected hourly weekly wage rate in subsequent years.

Neoen has committed to providing $150,000 per year for local projects and initiatives throughout the Project's lifetime as part of its Community Benefits Sharing Program.

Neoen has also publicly announced a Neighbour Benefits Program. Neoen is committed to an equitable, transparent and easy-to-understand Neighbour Benefits Program which offers direct payments to landowners with residential dwellings within 3.5 km of the Project. The payments will be annual and will commence at the beginning of Project operation and continue for the life of the Project.

The area surrounding the project has a very low population density. The township of Nelson is around 3 km west of the western extent of the wind farm, and the regional centre of Portland is around 30 km to the southeast.

The area is culturally significant for Gunditjmara Traditional Owners, and is also popular for recreational and tourism activities, including sightseeing, walking, camping and recreational fishing. Neoen is working with the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC) to undertake an extensive cultural values assessment in partnership with to ensure the project has a positive legacy for the Gunditjmara community. Cultural heritage surveys have been undertaken to ensure the wind farm's design protects local cultural artefacts and values and a CHMP will be finalised with the GMTOAC for the Project.

2 Kentbruck Environmental Effects Statement: Chapter 17, Socio-economics.

Technical reports

This section presents a very brief overview of the technical reports completed as a part of the Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the Project. These technical reports have been completed in response to the Minister's EES scoping requirements

Significantly more detail is available in the EES main report, which is publicly available.

The assessment framework used in the EES is a systematic risk-based approach to:

- Understand the existing environment within the Project Area and surrounds.
- Identify potential impacts of the Project on the environment.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures to avoid, minimise and manage potential impacts.

There are 20 technical studies that form part of the EES, studying impacts that the wind farm may have on aspects including aboriginal cultural heritage, water, flora and fauna, noise, air quality, and landscape character.

In the first instance and where possible, the Project design was adjusted to avoid any impacts that the technical study identified. If impacts were unavoidable, mitigation measures were identified to reduce the potential impacts. This process was repeated iteratively until the impacts were reduced as low as practically possible. Following this, the residual impacts of the Project were assessed and evaluated against the relevant draft evaluation objectives.

Potential cumulative impacts (a combination of impacts from this Project and other projects) have also been assessed where relevant. The scope of projects considered as part of the cumulative impact assessment was tailored to each discipline.

Environment

Biodiversity impacts are a key consideration for all wind farms. Kentbruck is sited in an area which neighbours on the south side a protected Ramsar wetland, and on the northeast a National Park. Because of this environmentally significant region, the potential impact to flora and fauna from the wind farm is a key focus of the Environmental Effects Statement (EES). A large team of experts spent several years undertaking studies on birds, bats, native vegetation and other important species in the area through desktop studies, field surveys and microphone recording of bird and bat calls.

The most significant potential impact from the Project is mortality of threatened avifauna species due to collision with turbines. Several design changes were adopted in response to this including removal of turbines from within 500 m of the Ramsar site and 300 m of parks and conservation reserves to reduce collision risk for bird and bat species that utilise these habitats.

More information on environmental impacts can be found in EES Chapters 7 to 10, and Appendices C to I.

Native vegetation

The wind farm site has been positioned within pine plantation, blue gum plantations and cleared farmland, and has been designed with the specific objective of avoiding and minimising impacts on native vegetation. Impacts have been further reduced or avoided through project design and construction method selection, such as removal or relocation of turbines within the wind farm layout and constructing sections of the transmission line underground.

Southern Bent-wing Bat

The Southern Bent-wing Bat (SBWB) is listed as critically endangered under both the *EPBC Act* and the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act)*. Acoustic bat-call surveys confirmed that SBWB routinely fly within the wind farm site including areas occupied by pine plantations. Based on evidence from extensive site surveys as well as scientific knowledge of the species, the following key mitigation measures will be used to reduce risks to the SBWB.

Minimum blade height

The project plans to use turbines with a lowest blade-tip height that will be 60 metres above the ground. The majority of existing wind turbines in Australia have lowest blade-tip heights of between 20 and 35 metres. Of a total of 2743 Southern Bent-wing Bat calls detected, nine (0.33%) were at or above 54 metres above the ground.

Turbine free buffers

The 12 month-survey period for SBWB found call activity had a higher concentration in the north-west of the wind farm site in proximity to the nearest known cave location used by the species. Turbines are excluded within 5 km of known roost sites in this area, all areas within 300 m of boundaries with surrounding conservation reserves, and other public land supporting native vegetation, and from within 500 m of wetlands.

Curtailment

Bat activity is highest at low wind speeds, so bat collision risk can be reduced further by turning wind turbines off during low wind speeds, at times of high bat activity. This is called curtailment. The project plans to develop a curtailment strategy, to be finalised during the development of the BBAMP.

Brolga

Site-specific buffers were applied to brolga breeding habitat and movement corridors which resulted in the removal or relocation of 42 turbines from the original Project layout. The overhead powerline that was originally positioned down the centre of the farmland to the east of Portland-Nelson Road was also changed to underground and moved to the northern boundary of the property, to further minimise potential impacts on brolga.

Water and ecosystems

Because the water systems are so important to the environment in the area, detailed technical impact studies were undertaken for the EES. The greatest potential for impacts on surface water, ground water and groundwater-dependent ecosystems is through Project construction activities, which have potential to mobilise sediment, changing water quality.

Photo 5

Brolga pair on a nest in farmland within the eastern section of the wind farm site, 9 July 2021 (Biosis).

Community and culture

Aboriginal cultural heritage

The Traditional Owners of the land on which this project will be sited are the Gunditjmara people. The identification and conservation of places and objects relating to Aboriginal heritage is important, as these represent records of human interactions within the landscape and provide a sense of interconnectedness between past generations and present Aboriginal peoples. Ground disturbance activities associated with construction of the Project, such as trenching and excavation, have the potential to impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage places and values.

An extensive impact assessment has been undertaken in consultation with the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC). In getting to know the area, Neoen supported GMTOAC to undertake a Cultural Values Assessment, to record intangible cultural heritage, in the form of stories of the region.

It also considered tangible cultural heritage and undertook a predictive modelling exercise to use soil and landscape features to predict where cultural heritage might be found. These undertakings have provided new insights into how to design the wind farm in such a way to avoid or minimise impacts to Aboriginal heritage.

In accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is being prepared to appropriately assess and manage the impacts to previously unregistered Aboriginal cultural heritage to comply with the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.

Photo 6

Speaking on Nyamat Mirring (Sea Country), March 2023.

The CHMP will also include appropriate mechanisms and processes to manage any potential harm to unidentified Aboriginal places and cultural heritage values.

Impacts on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage are detailed in EES Chapter 11 and Appendix J.

Socio-economic impacts

Potential socio-economics impacts that could result from the Project have been identified through research and consultation with stakeholders as well as input-output economic modelling.

Temporary population increase could be an impact, this will happen during construction and decommissioning These periods may also disrupt existing land uses, including agricultural operations on host properties, and could generate amenity, recreation, and visual impacts on the local area, affecting how people experience their surrounds and sense of place.

Socio-economic impacts are detailed in EES Chapter 17 and Appendices R and S.

Historical heritage

Two historical heritage sites are located within the Project Area, the Former Kentbruck School, and the Boiler Swamp Sawmill. Direct impacts on these sites will be avoided through strategic placement of Project infrastructure, and indirect impacts will be avoided through a range of measures including employee/ contractor inductions, identifying the site on design and construction plans, and onsite demarcation of the site.

Historical heritage impacts are described in EES Chapter 11 and Appendix K.

Photo 7

Steam boiler on Boiler Swamp Road, which is part of the Boiler Swamp Sawmill delisted heritage site (Biosis, 2020).

Amenity

Visual amenity

Assessing landscape character involves identifying and describing the variation in character of the landscape and the combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinct from one another. How the landscape is perceived and experienced by people can vary.

Key viewpoints (both public and private) were identified, including non-involved dwellings, public lookouts, tourist attractions, roads and key vantage points. Potential visual impacts on these viewpoints from the Project were then determined based on a combination of receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of visual effects.

The images here show the degree to which turbines will be visible from the Lake Mombeong campsite (Figure 4) and the sand dunes at Swan Lake (Figure 5).

Visual amenity impacts are described in EES Chapter 12 and Appendix L.

Noise and vibration

The Project is anticipated to generate noise during both construction and operation. A total of 40 receivers were identified within 5 km of the proposed turbines, comprising 33 non-involved receivers on properties that are not associated with the Project (14 dwellings and 19 campsites), and 7 residential dwellings on properties associated with the wind farm (involved receivers).

A Noise Management Plan (NMP) will be prepared and implemented during operation to ensure compliance with operational noise requirements as per the pre-development noise assessment.

Noise levels associated with each of the main construction activities have been predicted at the nearest receivers and are considered typical for the construction of a wind farm. The highest noise levels are predicted to occur during cable trench digging, followed by the construction of powerlines (overhead and underground) and access roads. However, the works associated with these construction activities would progress relatively quickly and these levels would therefore only be expected to be reached for a short period of time, typically less than three to four weeks and less than one week for the highest noise level associated with cable trench digging.

Noise and vibration impacts are described in EES Chapter 14 and Appendix O.

Air quality

Potential air quality impacts from the Project are expected to be limited to construction and decommissioning activities when there is potential for dust to be generated, such as from vehicular movements, earthworks, and activities associated with the quarry and construction of turbine foundations, access tracks and underground powerlines.

These impacts would be managed through the implementation of industry best practice measures, including dust suppression, restricting vehicle movements, and scheduling works to avoid adverse weather conditions, resulting in negligible residual impacts.

Air quality impacts are described in EES Chapter 13 and Appendix N.

Figure 4

Approximate 90° field of view north-north west to east-north east from Lake Mombeong campsite.

Figure 5

Approximate 90° field of view north to east from sand dunes at Swan Lake.

Shadow flicker and blade glint

Shadow flicker and blade glint can cause visual impacts on nearby receptors. Shadow flicker is the fluctuation of light levels that can appear to flicker when the path of the sun takes it behind the moving blades of a specific turbine relative to the position of the viewer. The effect of the flickering lasts only until the sun passes above or below the blade rotation, usually a matter of minutes. Assessment has been undertaken for 105 turbine locations and 355 dwelling locations. Three dwellings have a modelled shadow flicker exposure above zero hours per year.

Blade glint is caused by the reflection of sunlight from a wind turbine blade which can be experienced by an observer as a repeating flash of light from a wind turbine. To reduce the possibility of blade glint occurring, the Project's wind turbine blades will be painted in a non-reflective coating.

Shadow flicker and blade glint impacts are described in EES Chapter 12 and Appendix M.

Infrastructure

Construction of the wind farm will increase traffic on the surrounding road network needed to access the site. A transport study has been undertaken to look at impacts on the road network and its users and to consider ways to mitigate these impacts.

Prior to construction, road condition surveys will be undertaken to ensure public and private roads are in a suitable condition to accommodate construction vehicles, and to provide a baseline of pavement conditions to determine if upgrades or remediation of road assets is required after construction.

Delivery of large wind turbine components from overseas is expected to be via the Port of Portland, resulting in a relatively short transport route for the largest trucks. Several intersections and wind farm site access points along the transport route will require upgrade works to allow for the delivery of the oversized turbine components.

Electromagnetic interference (EMI), also known as radio system interference, can occur when wind turbines induce unwanted disturbance to radio waves transmitted between a signal source and signal receiver. An independent specialist will be engaged to undertake a pre- and post-construction assessment of the television and FM broadcast reception strength at the location of any existing or approved dwellings within 5 km of any turbine.

If a post-construction assessment establishes an unacceptable increase in interference to reception as a result of the wind farm, measures to restore the affected reception to pre-construction quality will be undertaken.

Impacts on aircraft safety have been assessed in order to reduce potential hazards associated with nearby aerodromes and air routes.

Bushfire Risk Assessment

The Bushfire Risk Assessment involved consideration of all possible fire mitigation and suppression efforts for the protection of life and property. Bushfire risk was assessed in relation to potential fires originating from both within and external to the proposed wind farm site.

Impacts on infrastructrue are described in EES Chapters 15 and 18, and Appendices P, T, U and V.

To learn more about any of these impacts, and to see the detail behind the studies, please read the EES chapter and reports, publicly available online and in other locations (see page 21).

Environmental management

Each technical assessment completed for the EES provides recommendations for appropriate environmental impact mitigation measures to be adopted by the Project. The Environmental Management Framework (EMF) provides a transparent framework with clear accountabilities for managing and monitoring the environmental effects associated with the construction and operational phases of the Project.

The Project would be delivered in accordance with the environmental commitments outlined in the EMF and statutory approval documents. Neoen would ensure that construction and operational contractors used for the Project prepare management plans which incorporate all required conditions of approval and mitigation measures. Contractors would also be required to comply with legislation and other relevant guidelines and policies and obtain other approvals, licences, permits or consents that may be required.

The EMF also provides for the regular review and updating of plans and procedures, as well as independent monitoring, auditing and reporting of compliance. The roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders are defined to ensure that there are clear accountabilities for the implementation of the environmental management requirements.

Photo 8

A wind farm in a pine plantation.

EES process

On 25 August 2019, the Victorian Planning Minister issued a decision determining that an EES would be required for the Project due to the potential for a range of significant environmental effects, including on threatened fauna and ecological communities, Aboriginal cultural heritage values, landscape values, and effects on surface water and groundwater.

The specific environmental matters to be investigated and documented in the Project's EES are set out in the Scoping Requirements for Kentbruck Green Power Hub Environment Effects Statement, which were issued in February 2020 following public consultation.

A total of 20 technical studies have been undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the Project and inform the EES. The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) convened a Technical Reference Group (TRG) to provide guidance to Neoen throughout the EES preparation process. DTP has been responsible for managing the EES process and will review the EES to ensure it is adequate for public exhibition.

Following the EES public exhibition period, a joint inquiry and advisory committee (IAC) in a form agreed to by the Minister will be convened to consider the effects of the Project having regard to the EES, the exhibited draft Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA) application, and public submissions.

It is intended that the Inquiry will also be asked to advise on the project's draft PSA, submitted alongside the EES. In this case it would form a joint Inquiry and Panel. The Inquiry will conduct a hearing, which provides an opportunity for those who have made submissions on the EES or draft PSA and indicated they would like to be heard at the hearing to speak in support of their written submission.

Following conclusion of the hearing, the Inquiry will submit its report to the Minister to inform the Minister's assessment for the Project Members of the public and any other parties seeking to be heard at the public hearing are required to submit a written submission and indicate on the online submission form or hard copy submission coversheet that they would like to be heard at the hearing. Information on the hearing process and timetable will be published as it becomes available at engage.vic.gov.au.

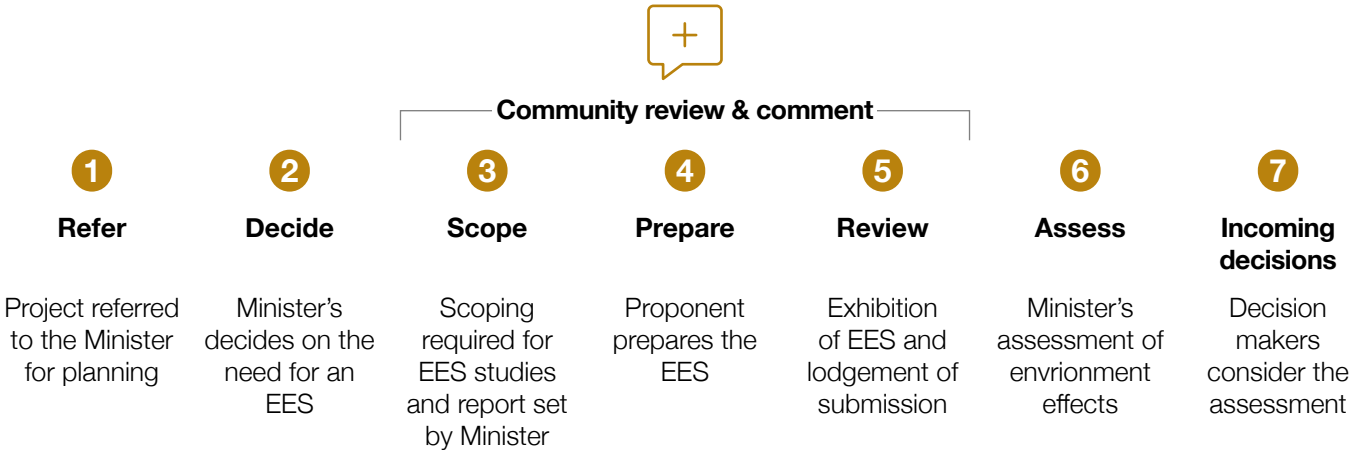
The IAC will provide a report to the Minister for Planning, who will consider this report to inform the Minister's assessment of the Project's environmental effects.

The Minister for Planning will conclude the EES process by issuing a written assessment of the project's environmental impacts under the *EE Act*. The Minister's assessment is not an approval in its own right, but will recommend whether the project's environmental effects are acceptable, and may set out modifications or further management measures that the Minister thinks are appropriate. The Minister's assessment is authoritative statutory advice that needs to be considered by relevant decision makers of project approvals.

The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment will also use the advice provided by the Minister in deciding whether to approve the project under the EPBC Act and what conditions will apply to that approval.

Figure 6

The Environmental Effects Statement Process for Victoria.



How to get involved

As required by the *Environment Effects Act 1978* and the decision by the Minister, the EES and draft PSA will be on public exhibition for at least 30 business days.

During this time the public are invited to review the EES documents and make written submissions.

Exhibition

The EES and draft PSA will be on public exhibition for 30 busniess days.

During this time the public are invited to review the EES documents and draft PSA and make written submissions.

The EES, draft PSA and supporting documents will be available to read and download from the Project website: kentbruckgreenpowerhub.com.au.

Hard copies can be viewed at the following locations:

Neoen Portland Office
111 Bentinck Street, Portland
Monday 4.00–7.00pm and Saturday 11.00am–2.00pm

Glengelg Shire Council
71 Cliff Street, Portland
Monday to Friday 9.00am–5.00pm

Nelson Visitor Information Centre
Leake Street, Nelson
Everyday 10.00am–12.30pm, 1:30pm–5.00pm

Department of Energy, Environment, and Climate Action
8 Nicholson Street, Melbourne
Monday to Friday 9.00am–5.00pm

State Library of Victoria
328 Swanson Street, Melbourne
Everyday 10.00am–6.00pm

A USB flash drive will be sent to any stakeholder at any time during the public exhibition period upon request.

Hard copies of the EES and planning permit application can be obtained from the Proponent at cost by contacting:
1800 966 206
contact@kentbruckgreenpowerhub.com.au

Submissions

Submissions on the EES and draft PSA must be made in writing and be received by the exhibition closing date. The submission process is independently managed by Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) and any enquiries regarding the submissions, or the Inquiry and Advisory Committee and Hearing process should be directed to PPV.

Submissions can be lodged via an online form on the Victorian Government's engagement website: engage.vic.gov.au. Only one submission is needed to address all of your views about the Project, its effects and the relevant documents.

If you do not have internet access and are unable to lodge a submission online, contact PPV through the DEECA Customer Call Centre on 136 186 (select option 6) and request a hard copy submission coversheet. Each hard copy written submission must be accompanied by a completed coversheet issued by PPV.

All submissions must state the name and address of the person making the submission. Petitions will be treated as a single submission and only the first names from a petition will be registered and contacted. Pro-forma submitters will be registered and contacted individually if they provide their contact details. However, pro-forma submitters who want to be heard at the hearing will be heard at the Hearing as a group.

Submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published on the Engage Victoria website. Do not include personal information in the body of your submission (such as your email address or phone number or photos of people, particularly children). Your submission and your name will be made public.

Inquiry and advisory committee process

The Minister for Planning will appoint a joint Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) under the *Environment Effects Act 1978 and the Planning and Environment Act 1987* to hold an inquiry into the Project and its environmental effects. The IAC will review the public submissions, the EES, and the draft PSA. It will consider the environmental effects of the Project in accordance with the Terms of Reference issued by the Minister for Planning.

After the exhibition period, the IAC will hold a Directions Hearing, where the necessary arrangements and timetable for the public hearing will be established. Further information about the Directions Hearing arrangements will be published on engage.vic.gov.au when determined.

Members of the public and any other parties seeking to be heard at the public hearing are required to submit a written submission and indicate on the online submission form or hard copy submission coversheet that they would like to be heard at the hearing. Information on the hearing process and timetable will be published as it becomes available at engage.vic.gov.au.

The IAC will provide a report to the Minister for Planning, who will consider this report to inform the Minister's assessment of the Project's environmental effects. The Minister's assessment of the Project will make recommendations about whether the environmental effects of the project are acceptable and will inform statutory decision-makers responsible for issuing environmental approvals for the Project.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