

Pottinger Wind Farm

Independent Planning Commission Briefing

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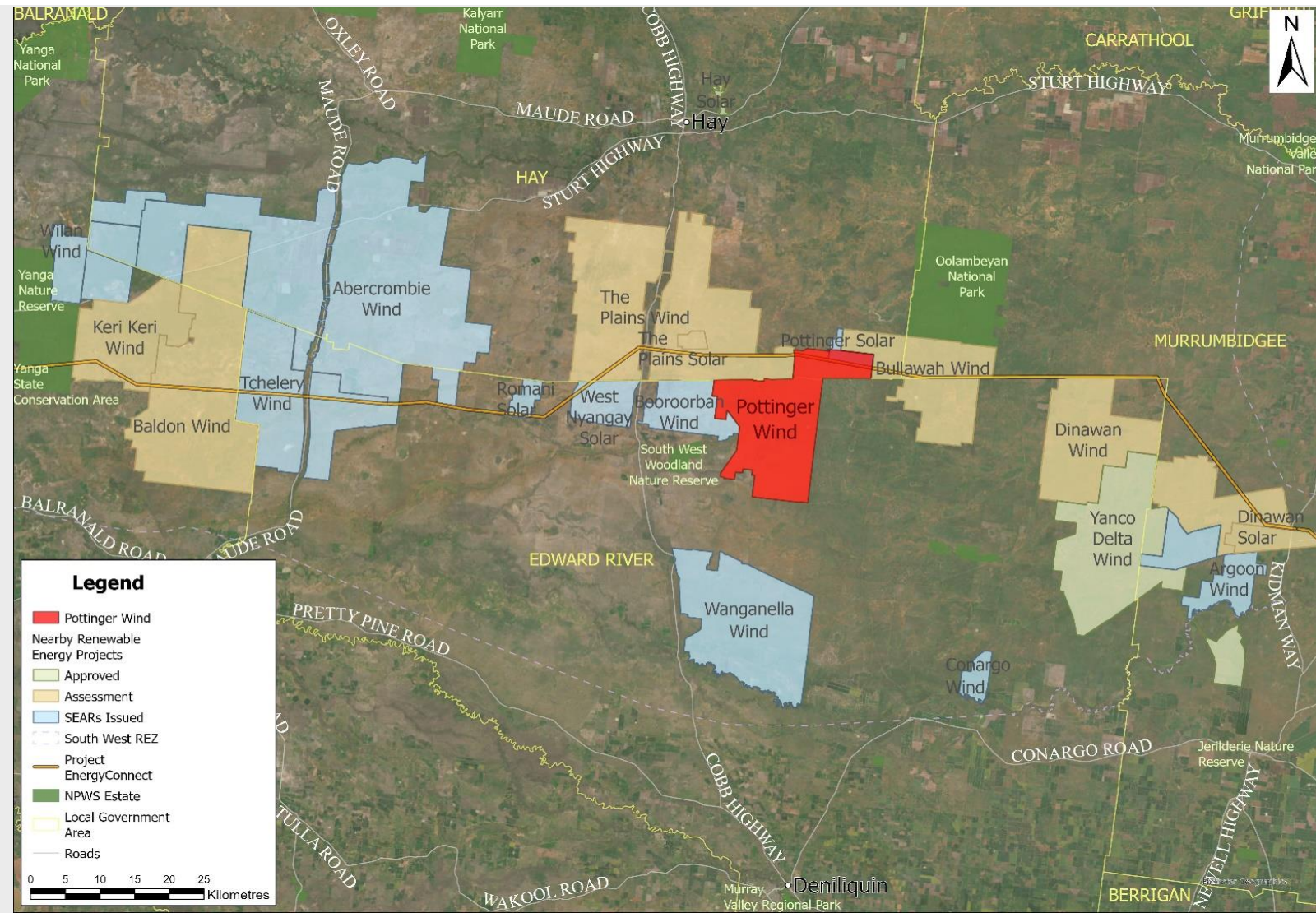
May 2025

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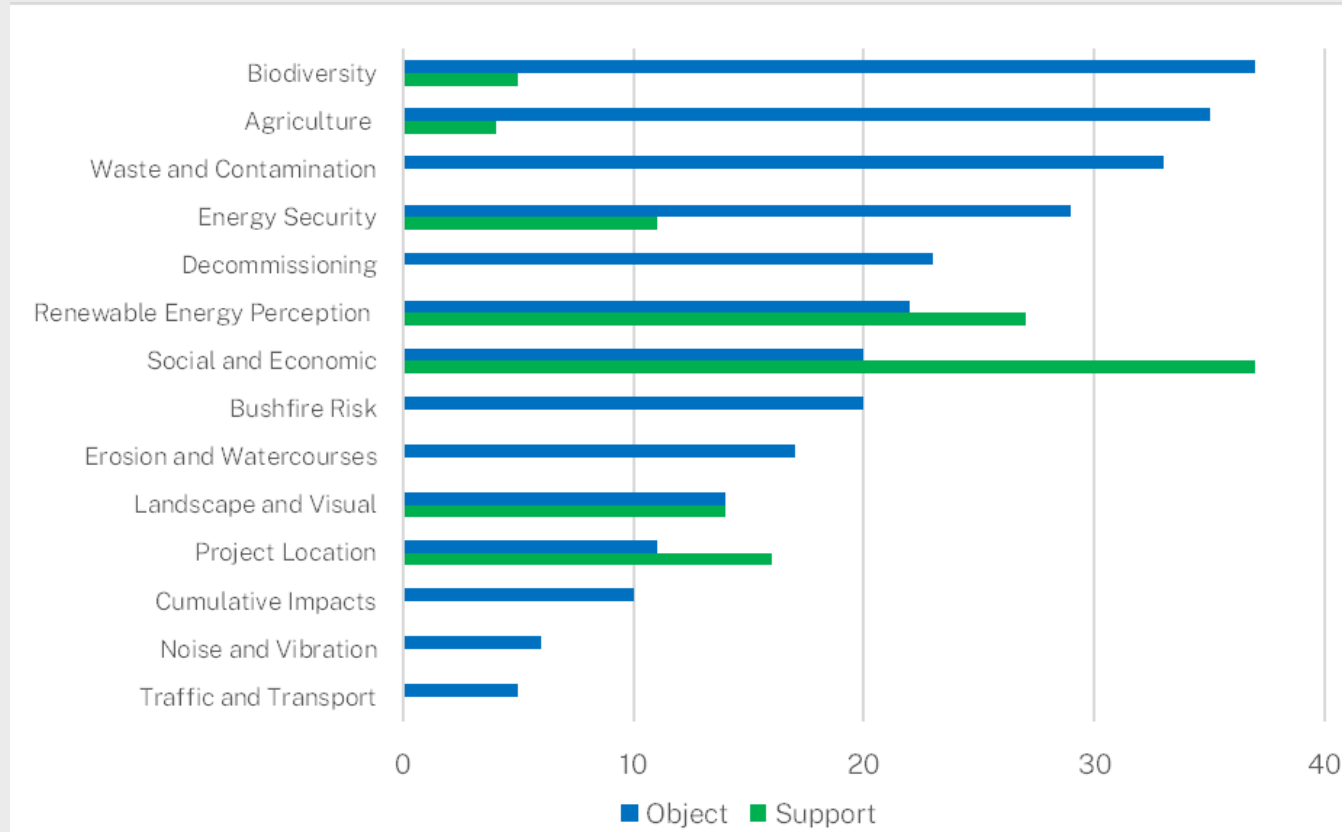
Strategic and Regional Context / Energy Context

- Proposed 247 turbine layout
- Generating capacity of 1,300 MW
- 60 km south of Hay within the Hay Shire and Edward River LGAs
- Within the declared South West Renewable Energy Zone (SW REZ)
- Connection to the Project Energy Connect transmission line (under construction)
- Received access rights for 832 MW



Community Engagement & Public Submissions - EIS

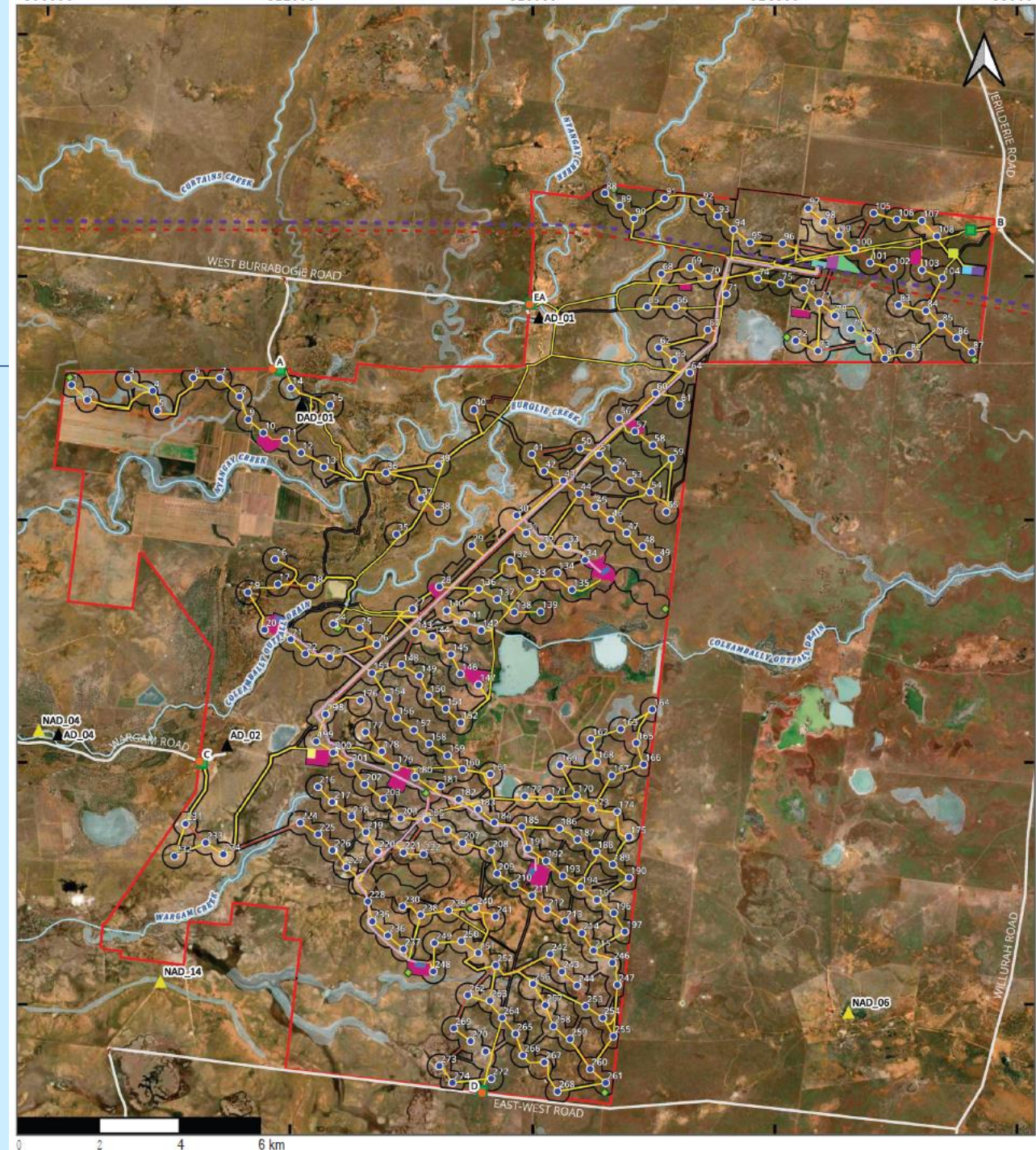
- Public Exhibition of EIS – 7 June 2024 to 4 July 2024
- 158 unique public submissions (out of 161 total):
 - 83 objecting to the project
 - 75 in support
- Advice from 20 government agencies
- Submissions from Hay Shire Council and Edward River Council (both host councils), and comments from Broken Hill Council (non-host, road upgrades)
- The most common matters raised in public objections were:
 - biodiversity,
 - agriculture,
 - waste and contamination, and
 - energy security



EnergyCo were invited to comment on project and draft conditions and are supportive of project

Key Issues

- Energy transition
- Biodiversity
- Traffic and Transport
- Visual



Energy Transition

- Up to 1,300 MW generating capacity that would power about 593,000 homes
- Consistent with the *NSW Climate Change Policy Framework* of net zero emissions by 2050
- Project would play an important role in:
 - Increasing renewable energy generation and capacity
 - Firming the grid by including 500 MW / 2,000 MWh of energy storage
 - Contributing to the transition to a cleaner energy system as coal fired generators retire
- Project received access rights to connect to a new Project Energy Connect transmission network in South West REZ

Biodiversity



Native vegetation:

- Approximately 1,022 ha of native vegetation at the project site would be cleared:
 - Within the project site:
 - 864 ha (85%) of non-threatened shrubland and grassland;
 - 24 ha (2%) of woodland in moderate to good condition;
 - 35 ha (3%) of DNG;
 - For Broken Hill road upgrades 4.56 ha native vegetation would be cleared with 0.33 ha (7%) of planted non-threatened shrubland.
- Threatened ecological communities (TEC): 11.94 ha would be impacted, including:
 - 0.38 ha out of 15.47 ha of Myall Woodland (EEC under the BC Act and EPBC Act)
 - 11.54 ha out of 1,002.64 ha of Sandhill Pine Woodland (EEC under the BC Act)
 - 0.02 ha out of 0.19 ha of *Acacia melvillei* shrubland (EEC under the BC Act)

Flora and Fauna species:

- Within the project site: four flora and three fauna species were recorded and two assumed present (grey snake and Austral pillwort) out of 12 candidate threatened species ;
- Within the Broken Hill road upgrades: none were recorded but five (1 flora and four fauna) were assumed present out of eight candidate threatened species.

SAll impacts

- One candidate species at risk of SAll, the plains-wanderer (endangered under the BC Act and critically endangered under the EPBC Act):
 - 2.67 ha of impact to mapped important habitat (offset via 170 species credits);
 - An additional 10.16 ha of suitable plains-wanderer habitat would be impacted;
 - Proposed mitigation: 13 ha of plains-wanderer habitat would be secured in a non-credit generating Biodiversity Stewardship Site;
 - DPHI doesn't consider the impact to be SAll;
 - BMP includes a condition to minimise impacts to plains-wanderer and ensure an additional 13 ha of habitat is managed for nature positive offset benefits;

Bird and Bat strike

- Risk assessment resulted in one group of six turbines (WTG16-WTG21) as “very high” risk and 28 turbines as having a “high” risk of blade strike or barotrauma impacts
- The risk assessment was based on a draft policy from 2023 that has not been finalised and incorporates some conservative assumptions in calculating the relative risk associated of blade strike and barrier effects for bird and bat species;
- The recommended conditions require a BBAMP and Applicant has committed to include a smart curtailment strategy as part of this plan.

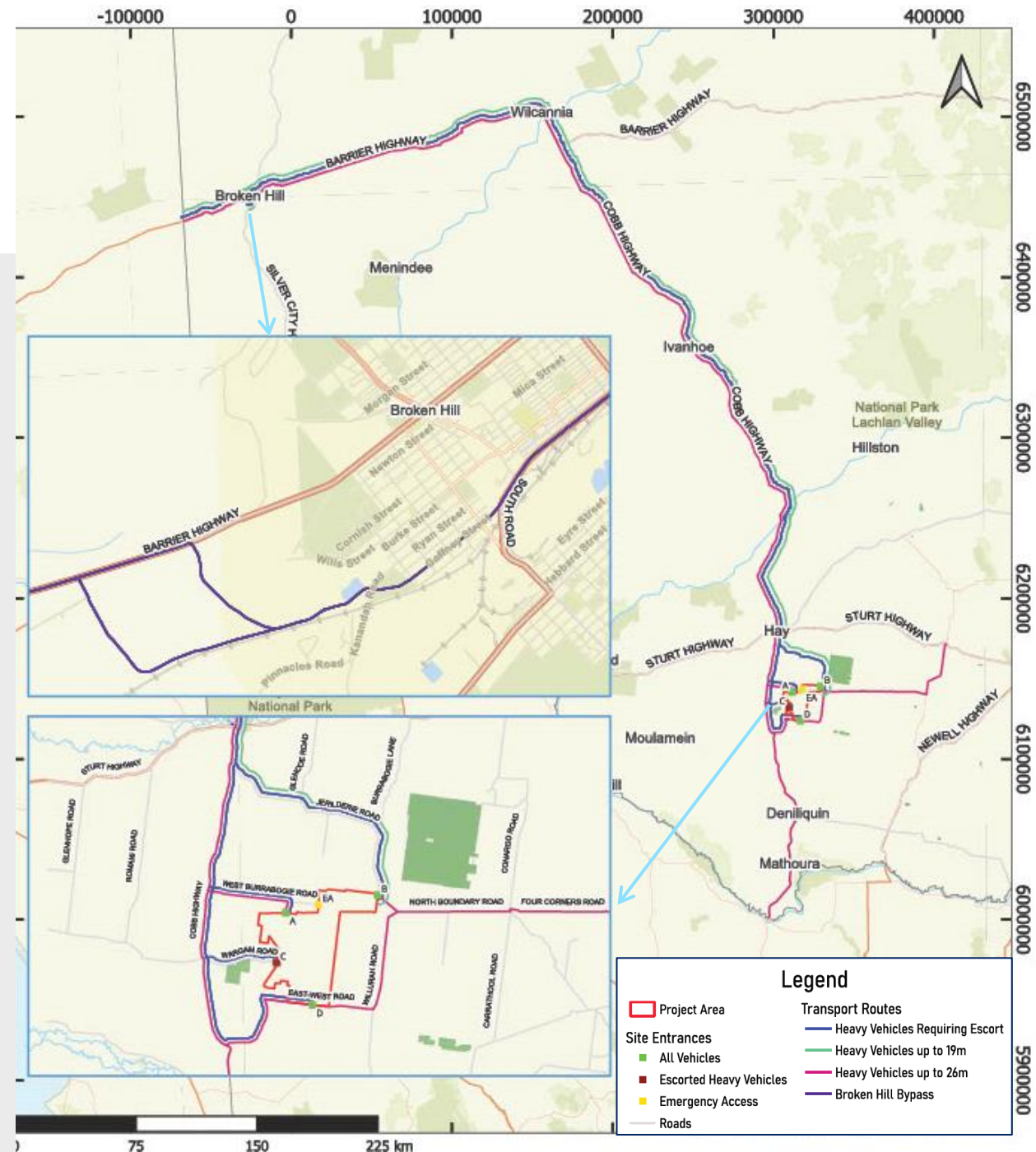
Biodiversity

Conditions:

- Offset requirements : 23,130 ecosystem credits and 31,906 species credits.
- Prepare and implement a Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan in consultation with NSW DCCEEW CPHR and AG DCCEEW;
- Prepare and implement the BMP, including an additional 13 ha of plains-wanderer habitat;
- The Applicant may seek the agreement of the Planning Secretary (following consultation with NSW DCCEEW CPHR) to reduce the credit requirements to allow for:
 - micro-siting and further minimisation of biodiversity impacts during the detailed design;
 - additional surveys for species assumed present;
- Concurrence will be required in accordance with Section 7.14 of the BC Act prior to determination.

Traffic and Transport

- Two routes proposed:
 - For OSOM vehicles (upgrades required): from Port of Adelaide travelling to the site from north along the Cobb Highway
 - For non-OSOM heavy vehicles (limited upgrades required): travelling from north, south and east to the site
- Four site entrances and one emergency access, with access from the Cobb Highway:
 - Site entrance A off West Burrabogie Road;
 - Site entrance B off Jerilderie Road;
 - Site entrance C off Wargam Road;
 - Site entrance D off East-West Road via Warwillah Road;
 - An emergency access EA off West Burrabogie Road.
- Conditions requiring TMP and repair of damage on public roads
- Transport Strategy for OSOM route



Visual Impacts

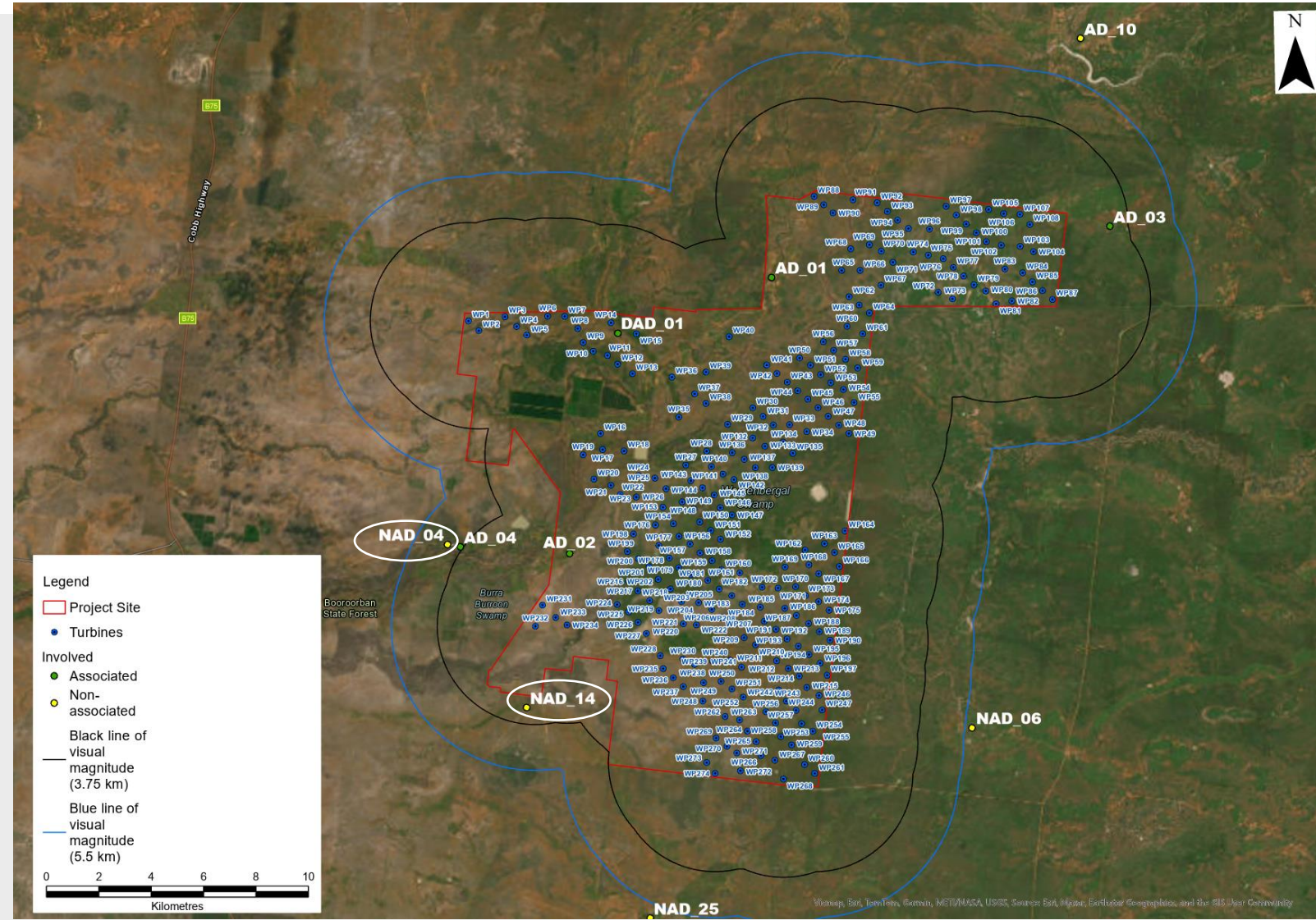
Public Viewpoints- 20 public viewpoints – project unlikely to significantly impact scenic values of existing landscape

Private Receivers- Very few non-associated residences surrounding the project:

- 1 non-associated residence (unoccupied dwelling NAD_14) within 3.75 km of turbines (black line);
- 1 non-associated residence (NAD_04) within 5.5 km (blue line)
- Visual performance objectives met at all non-associated receivers

Aviation Hazard Lighting

- Aviation Lighting Plan proposes to light 95 of the 247 turbines.
- CASA reviewed and supported the lighting plan.



Other Matters

- Heritage
- Noise and Vibration
- Soil and Water
- Hazards and Risks
- Social and Economic
- Aviation safety
- Decommissioning
- Cumulative impacts

Non-Aboriginal heritage

- No non-Aboriginal heritage items listed on Commonwealth, National or State Registers are located within or surrounding the project site.
- The Broken Hill road upgrades on the curtilage of locally listed heritage item that Council confirmed the project would not adversely impact.

Aboriginal Heritage

- 117 Aboriginal heritage items were identified within the project site/development corridor. No sites within the Broken Hill Road upgrades area.
- Archaeological test excavations were not undertaken at the request of Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs). Heritage NSW requested the Applicant to prepare a Draft Test Excavation Methodology in consultation with RAPs which was completed and supported by Heritage NSW.
- During the detailed design, the Applicant has committed to the mitigation hierarchy of avoid, minimise and mitigate and complete archaeological test excavations of Potential Archaeological Deposits (PADs) that are subject to remaining unavoidable impacts.

Recommended conditions:

- prepare an Addendum ACHAR prior to commencing works that could directly or indirectly impact the heritage items and include:
 - mitigation measures, including avoidance or salvage;
 - detailed justification where the final project layout is not able to avoid impacts;
 - revised list of Aboriginal heritage items that would be protected, salvaged and relocated.

Noise and Vibration



- No non-associated receivers would experience exceedances of the noise management level as per the EPA's *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (ICNG)
- Construction traffic noise would comply with the *NSW Road Noise Policy 2011* at all receivers
- Operational noise levels would not exceed the Department's Wind Energy: Noise Assessment Bulletin criteria of 35 dB(A) at any non-associated residences
- Under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*, the project would be subject to an Environmental Protection Licence issued by the EPA, which includes strict noise limits
- Recommended conditions:
 - restrict works to standard construction hours;
 - require Applicant to minimise noise during construction by implementing mitigation measures as per ICNG;
 - require Applicant to monitor and minimise construction vibration

Soil and Water

- The Applicant would micro-site infrastructure where possible to avoid impacts to waterfront land.
- Recommended conditions require the Applicant to ensure that all works on waterfront land and within watercourses comply with relevant policies and guidelines.
- The project site is subject to flooding. Flood modelling was based on the 5% and 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) and the Extreme (probable maximum flood or PMF) events. The average flood depths across the project site are up to 0.3 m during a 1% AEP event, with a peak flood depth of 4.5 m within ponded areas in an 1% AEP event.
- The Applicant has committed to elevating critical ancillary infrastructure (BESS, substation and switching station) above the PMF level.
- The Department's recommended conditions requires the preparation and implementation of an Emergency Plan including a flood emergency response procedures, in consultation with RFS and the NSW State Emergency Service.
- The Applicant committed to prepare an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan prior to the commencement of construction to ensure erosion control measures are implemented in accordance with the relevant requirements in the 'Blue Book'.
- The Department considers that any erosion and sedimentation risks associated with the project can be effectively managed by complying with the relevant requirements in the Blue Book.

Hazards and Risks - Bushfire

- The project site is mapped as bushfire prone land by the RFS.
- The Applicant has committed to:
 - establish a 10 m Asset Protection Zones around each wind turbine, wind monitoring masts, compound for the operation and maintenance facilities, including substations, in accordance with RFS's *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019*;
 - the provision of on-site water supply for firefighting purposes, and appropriate bush fire emergency and evacuation plans
- The Department's conditions require the Applicant to prepare a Fire Safety Study and Emergency Response Plan consistent with the recommendations in RFS's *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019*.

Hazards and Risks – Aviation Safety



- Airservices Australia advised that the maximum height of turbines would affect the lowest safe altitude (LSALT) for air routes H247 and W762, and the 25 nm Minimum Sector Altitude (MSA) instrument procedure at Hay Aerodrome.
- The Department has recommended a condition in consultation with Airservices requiring the Applicant to consult with Airservices Australia and request an amendment to the identified air routes at least seven months prior to the commencement of construction.
- Aviation Obstacle Lighting Plan in accordance with the NASF Guidelines recommended to light 95 turbines. CASA supported the plan.
- Recommended conditions require an aviation hazard lighting to comply with CASA's recommendations.

Social and Economic



- Benefit to the community through 900 construction jobs, expenditure in the local economy by workers who would reside in the area.
- Injection of \$2.2 billion in capital investment into the NSW economy.
- The Applicant would enter into a voluntary planning agreement (VPA) with both Councils - \$893 per MW generation capacity installed with a 50% split between each Council, per year for the duration of the project. This equates to an annual contribution of up to \$535,500.
- An additional \$158 per MW would be allocated to a dedicated First Nations Fund.
- An on-site workforce accommodation camp is proposed (430 beds).
- Conditions require Accommodation Camp Management Plan in consultation with Councils and include a provision of health and medical services and an Accommodation and Employment Strategy to investigate options for prioritising the employment of local workers for the construction and operation of the project

Decommissioning

- The Department has developed standard conditions for wind farms to cover decommissioning, including clear decommissioning triggers and rehabilitation objectives.
- Additionally, the Department has provided guidance on how host landowner agreements should consider refurbishment, decommissioning and rehabilitation in the NSW Wind Energy Framework's Negotiated Agreement Advice Sheet.
- Project infrastructure would be suitably decommissioned, either at the end of the project life or if the project is not operating for more than a year (18 months), and the site appropriately rehabilitated to a standard that would allow the ongoing productive use of the land.

Cumulative Impacts

- Potential for construction of the project to coincide with proposed Bullawah Wind Farm (adjacent), The Plains Wind Farm (adjacent), Dinawan Wind Farm and Dinawan Solar Farm (25 km east from the project site)
- The Applicant has committed to co-ordinating construction activities with other projects where possible
- The Transport Assessment conducted a cumulative impact review of adjacent approved developments using common traffic routes (The Plains Wind Farm and Yanco Delta Wind Farm). The review found that there is spare capacity on the Cobb Highway and Kidman Way to cater for estimated future traffic volumes
- The Applicant proposes a temporary workers accommodation camp within the project site to facilitate the project and would therefore not compete with surrounding projects for accommodation

Recommended Conditions

- Condition Approach
 - Outcomes focused
 - Role of Compliance and EPA through Environment Protection Licence
- Micro-siting
 - No turbines is moved more than 300 m from the relevant GIS coordinates;
 - Turbines are at least 40 m away from Strahler stream order watercourses; or not any closer to the Strahler stream order watercourse;
 - Turbines are at least 500 m away from an existing location of White-bellied Sea eagle active nest;
 - Turbines are at least one times the tip height of the turbines away from the Project EnergyConnect easement.
- Transport Strategy –for OSOM vehicles route in consultation with TfNSW, EnergyCo, relevant Councils and other SSD renewable energy projects in the South West REZ
- Emergency Plan –in consultation with RFS and NSW SES
- Accommodation Camp Management Plan and Accommodation and Employment Strategy in consultation with Councils

Evaluation

- Suitably located in the SW REZ, with good wind resources and connection to the Project EnergyConnect transmission line.
- Impacts can be managed through the recommended conditions of consent.
- Assists in transitioning the electricity sector from coal and gas, consistent with NSW policy.
- Has capacity for 1,300 MW of clean electricity generation, powering 593,000 homes, saving over 2,277,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year.
- Achieves an appropriate balance between efficiency of the wind resource and minimising potential impacts on surroundings.
- Stimulates economic investment, providing flow-on benefits to the local community.