



9 September 2024

ATTENTION: Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure

PROJECT: Baldon Wind Farm | SSD-40138508

Re: Submission for Exhibition for State Significant Development Application | Baldon Wind Farm (SSD-40138508) | Sturt Highway, Moulamein

Please find below Edward River Council's (ERC) submission in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and supporting information for the Baldon Wind Farm development (SSD-40138508).

It is understood that the development is proposed to be located within the Hay and Murray River Local Government Areas and sits adjacent to the Edward River Council Area. The Project is proposing the construction, operation and decommissioning of approximately 180 wind turbines (up to 300m in height), battery storage and associated infrastructure, and will connect into the national electricity grid. Please be advised that Council has no objection to the proposed development and provides the following comments and advice for consideration during the assessment of the project.

Impact on Flora and Fauna

The Project is proposed within an area of rich flora and fauna where biodiversity values, habitats and environments extend into the Edward River council area. The EIS claims the project has potential to cause Serious and Irreversible Impacts (SAIL) on species which includes the critically threatened Plains Wanderers *Pedionomus torquatus*. Significant consideration should be given to the immediate, cumulative, and unknown impacts on existing habitats, corridors, and potential alienation; and the flow-on effects that extend beyond the Project footprint for all flora and fauna.

Presence of Cultural Heritage

Thorough consideration should be given to the presence and findings of significant Aboriginal Cultural Heritage items, including relics, artefacts and burial sites within the project and surrounding areas, and where these culturally significant areas extend into the Edward River area. The appropriate management, consultation and processes should be carried out during the construction and ongoing operation of the project to ensure that the immediate and surrounding Local Indigenous Communities are adequately consulted, and places of cultural significance are appropriately protected.

Visual and Landscape Impact

Visual and landscape impacts have potential to significantly change and alter the existing characteristics, liability, and amenity of the regions unique riverine and agricultural setting. The cumulative impact of the wind farm development and surrounding renewable projects should be thoroughly considered, having regard for the immediately affected landholders and the wider community.

Accommodation and resources

Extensive consideration should be given regarding the proposed workforce during construction, operation and during decommissioning. The EIS identifies approximately 400 staff will be required during construction and 35 ongoing operational staff; therefore, the location of the on-site accommodation will need to be considered to ensure the accommodation camp/s are well-located, and are outside hazard areas (flood, bushfire, etc) where possible. Consideration for essential services, including stormwater and runoff, on-site septic systems, potable water supply, electricity connection, firefighting provisions and the like will need to be provided to ensure the development has adequate services due to the remote locality of the Project and current contains on existing services in the region. An accommodation camp should be available on site to service both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the project as demand requires given the current housing shortages in the surrounding LGAs.

Bushfire

Bushfire risks associated with the construction and operation of the development are very generally covered in the EIS. Of specific concern is the Bushfire Prone Land areas consisting of large expanses of grassland and the remoteness of these areas. Adequate resources would be required to protect these areas and the properties of adjoining landowners in the event of fire outbreak. The availability of adequate resources, available fire personnel and response times due to travel distances, could be catastrophic in the event of a fire outbreak. A site-specific plan should be provided for consideration.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned Officer or the Development Services team on 03 5898 3000.

Yours sincerely



Maddison Gunter
Town Planner