



Capital II Wind Farm Preferred Project Report

April 2011



THE PREFERRED PROJECT REPORT

The Proponent is seeking development consent for the construction and operation of a preferred project layout which consists of 41 wind turbine generators (WTG's). The preferred project layout is wholly within the assessed area and has been designed to avoid and minimise the environmental constraints identified through the environmental assessments and submissions.

The preferred project layout was motivated by submissions received during the public exhibition of the Environmental Assessment. The Proponent has made several key design changes which can be seen in the preferred layout, as well as a modified Statement of Commitments in response to the concerns of the community and public agencies.

The preferred layout is shown in **Figure 1** to **Figure 3** of this report. The changes to the layout are identified in **Figure 4** of this report in which elements of the modified layout are shown overlapping the original Layout 'A'. **Figure 5** and **Figure 6** show the vegetation map from Appendix D of the EA Figure 2a and identified rocky outcrops overlaid on the new Preferred Layout.

The project application sought consent for two separate layouts; being Layout 'A' incorporating 55 WTGs and Layout 'B' incorporating 31 WTGs. Each layout had the same general footprint with the difference being the number and capacity of WTGs. The majority of site infrastructure; including most access roads and service areas; would remain unchanged regardless of the original proposed layouts or number of WTGs. The scope of the environmental assessment considered the construction of 55 WTGs, as a worst case scenario, and associated infrastructure. As the preferred project proposes only 41 WTGs that are wholly contained within the footprint of the original proposal, no further environmental investigations are necessary.

Upon review of the submissions received during the public exhibition period, it was noted that concern was raised regarding a number of potential issues. Where possible, the proponent realigned the infrastructure, keeping within the development footprint that was subject to the environmental assessment. As part of the response to the issues raised, the modifications include:

- (i) **Reduction of the number of wind turbine generators from a maximum of 55 to 41.**
Fewer WTG's will reduce the visual presence of the project and minimise the development footprint.
- (ii) **Relocation of access roads to avoid disturbing the potential native grassland.**
After consultation and a site visit with DECCW, as well as further consultation with the landowner, it was decided that the preferred access track to the southern section of the site would be relocated. The original access track started from the existing Capital WTG No. 23 and went down a gully to the proposed wind turbine A32 or B21. This area has the potential for native grassland (as identified by DECCW representatives on a site visit). Consequently, the preferred layout deleted the proposed access track. Access to WTGS E24 – E41 will now be provided by an existing access track between WTG No. 27 and E30. By using the existing track, this option would reduce the likely impact to the land by avoiding the need to create a new track. Further, DECCW has indicated that it is their preference for the proponent to use the existing track.



- (iii) **Relocation of wind turbine generators to further minimise the disturbance to agricultural land.** The small modification of the wind turbines along the centre of the project site (E14 – E19) was to utilise the existing access track thereby reducing the area to be disturbed. Therefore the need to create a new access parallel to the wind turbines (A19-A28 & B12-B17) as in the original proposal was eliminated.
- (iv) **Relocation of wind turbine generators to ensure avoidance of impact on items of archaeological significance** was made certain while designing the new preferred layout and will be avoided with any future micro-siting.

Reducing the number of WTGs from 55 to 41 has substantially reduced the area of land that will be disturbed, resulting in more than 10 hectares of land being preserved, compared to the original proposal. Overall, the preferred project has reduced the area of land to be disturbed from 57 hectares to 37 hectares which can be seen in the updated Table 6 in Attachment C of the Submissions Report. This supersedes Table 6 on page 81 of the Environmental Assessment which was based on the original Layout A.

The area of potential native grassland that may be disturbed is estimated to be 0.94 hectares based on the Preferred Layout in **Figure 1**. This is a conservative figure accounting for the partial encroachment from works associated with the three turbines numbered E7, E8, and E9. Due to future optimisation and micro-siting of each turbine, the Proponent commits no greater than 2 hectares of the surveyed native grassland in **Figure 5** be impacted. The final location of infrastructure will be surveyed prior to construction to determine the actual area of native grassland impacted and an offset area reflective of the quality of vegetation will be designed as compensation. Following the pre-construction surveys, the area of offset required will be identified and will be reserved in perpetuity, after further consultation with DECCW and the involved landowners.

The Proponent is committed to retaining the current condition and environmental integrity of the site, with particular consideration to those areas of significance. The Proponent has prepared an amended preferred layout, which is designed to have the flexibility during the detailed design and optimisation of the project, but commits the final layout to remain consistent with the outcomes of the Environmental Assessment and all stated commitments as well as the final conditions of consent. Following pre-construction surveys, a final layout which will generally align with the preferred layout will be provided to the Department of Planning in conjunction with the Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Figures

Figure 1 – Capital II Wind Farm – Preferred Layout (Sheet No. 1/3)

Figure 2 – Capital II Wind Farm – Preferred Layout (Sheet No. 2/3)

Figure 3 – Capital II Wind Farm – Preferred Layout (Sheet No. 3/3)

Figure 4 – Capital II Wind Farm – Plan Overlay Layout A & Preferred Layout

Figure 5 – Capital II Wind Farm – Preferred Layout & Flora Survey

Figure 6 – Capital II Wind Farm – Preferred Layout & Flora Survey (with Aerial)