

Kerrs Creek Wind Farm

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS: OUTCOMES SUMMARY - AUGUST 2024



This document provides a summary of the key topics discussed during the community information sessions held in Euchareena on 31 July 2024 and Molong on 1 August 2024.

Approximately 30 community members attended a drop-in session from 2-5pm and/or a presentation and Q&A session from 5-6pm at Euchareena and around 50 community members attended at Molong.

Information shared with the community at the sessions, including posters and presentations, has been made available on the project website here: <https://www.kerrscreek-renewableenergy.com/news/>

The main topics raised by community members at the sessions were:



VISUAL



ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACTS



PROPERTY
IMPACTS



TURBINE HEIGHT
& LIGHTING



COMMUNITY
BENEFITS



DECOMMISSIONING

NEW FAQs

New FAQs have been developed to address concerns raised during the sessions.

Can the 28-day public exhibition period be extended?

No. This is a NSW government process dictated by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021. Individual developers of projects within New South Wales are required to adhere to this process and flexibility to extend public exhibition periods is not available.

Do the blades need replacing during the life of the project?

Wind turbine blades are typically designed to last the design life of the turbine which is 25 to 30 years.

QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Some questions raised during the sessions were taken on notice and required further investigation by the project team:

Can aerial fire fighting still occur on a wind farm?

The NSW Government Draft Wind Energy Guideline (November 2023) states that "Aerial firefighting can continue to be undertaken around wind turbines if appropriate strategies, emergency management systems and communications protocols are in place.

Applicants must develop and implement a bushfire management plan that includes response strategies such as shutting down and positioning turbine blades to facilitate aerial access."

You can view the full guideline here: <https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/draftplans/under-consideration/draft-energy-policy-framework>

"In January 2017, a bushfire started on a paddock near the Waterloo Wind Farm in South Australia ... the wind farm's turbines did not present a hazard to aerial firefighting and the turbines were clearly visible to the pilots involved in operations." (Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council Limited, Wind Farms and Bushfire Operations, 2018).

Can RES indemnify neighbouring landowners against future increases in insurance premiums that are directly attributable to the wind farm?

Current landholders hosting or neighbouring existing renewable energy projects have not experienced changes to their existing farm insurance. The Insurance Council of Australia states 'insurers have not experienced cases where farmers have been unable to obtain insurance because their neighbours are hosting transmission lines/renewable energy projects'. The Insurance Council of Australia has not seen evidence of premium rises or the need for higher levels of liability coverage. The experience of landholders hosting or neighbouring existing renewable energy projects has not seen a rise in premiums or a need for increased public liability insurance.

Have any studies been done showing the visual value of wind farms?

In July 2020 a peer-reviewed article was published in the Australian Planner that focused on visual impacts and community acceptance of wind farms in Australia. The study found that the community is very tolerant of the visual impact of wind farms. 18 wind farms in NSW, Victoria and South Australia were included in the study.

You can view the abstract and full peer-reviewed article here: [\(PDF\) A survey of the visual impact and community acceptance of wind farms in Australia \(researchgate.net\)](#)

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Concerns raised about the preliminary environmental report which shows only six hollow trees and ephemeral creeks never run dry.

Figure 3.1 in the Preliminary Biodiversity Report (PBR) shows six survey points for hollow bearing trees (survey effort). This was the effort that was completed by our environmental consultants during the initial survey and to inform the Scoping Report. The PBR is clear on the need for further assessment during the EIS phase for suitable habitat for specific species, most of which rely on hollow bearing trees.

The Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM), requires ecologists to assess hollow bearing trees when assessing vegetation condition in woody vegetation, typically through BAM plots within those areas. There are likely to be many more than six hollow bearing trees identified through this process. They are also required to assess scattered trees. Further scattered tree assessments will be undertaken during spring to include all scattered trees within the project disturbance footprint.

The information about ephemeral streams was taken from state mapping that was used to inform the Scoping Report. Information within the Scoping Report to date has stated that the named creeks (Weandra Creek, Mubrigyn Creek, Curragurra Creek, Shephard Creek and Muddy Creek) within the Project Area are “largely ephemeral or semi-permanent”. These creeks were subject to further assessment during the EIS phase through the aquatic ecology assessment conducted to assess key fish habitat within these waterways. The assessment has described the waterways as:

The waterways of the Project area range from ephemeral drainage lines to creeks with intermittent overland flow and semi-permanent trickle flow likely derived from seeps and springs. Flow within the larger waterways (third, fourth and fifth order) is likely to be largely intermittent, with higher flows expected for relatively short duration (in the order of days to weeks) following rainfall and runoff in the catchment. However, subsurface interflow in permeable sediments above relatively impermeable layers is likely to express at the

surface forming seeps or springs, resulting in semipermanent trickle flows.

What is the distance assessed from turbine location for environmental impacts?

Our environmental consultants are assessing direct and indirect biodiversity impacts 100 metres from the location of all project infrastructure including turbines.

As the degradation of turbines occurs is the surrounding environment, waterways and soil, monitored for microplastics and other pollutants?

Wind turbine blades’ protective coatings are non-toxic and contain negligible amounts of BPA. The blades are specifically designed to have high resistance to weathering to minimise degradation over time. You can read more about this here: <https://cleanpower.org/resources/microplastics-and-bpa-in-wind-turbine-blades/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Here are links to studies that the project team referenced when answering community questions during the sessions:

Wind turbines pay back life cycle carbon emissions in less than 2 years, NZ study finds: <https://reneweconomy.com.au/wind-turbines-pay-back-life-cycle-carbon-emissions-in-less-than-2-years-nz-study-finds/>

Greenhouse gas and energy payback times for a wind turbine installed in the Brazilian Northeast: <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/sustainability/articles/10.3389/frsus.2022.1060130/full>

Wind energy in NSW: <https://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/nsw-plans-and-progress/major-state-projects/shift-renewables/wind-energy>

Electricity Price and Demand - Australian Energy Market Operator: <https://aemo.com.au/energy-systems/electricity/national-electricity-market-nem/data-nem/data-dashboard-nem>

CONTACT THE TEAM

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In planning for Australia’s clean energy future, RES acknowledges its rich history.

We pay our respects to the Wiradjuri people, the Traditional Custodians of Country on which the Kerrs Creek Wind Farm Project is proposed.

We recognise their ongoing connection to land and waterways and pay our respects to Elders past and present.