

**Attachment 2****For Public Notice via Internet****REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*****Project name:** Willatook Wind Farm**Proponent:** Willatook Wind Farm Pty Ltd**Description of Project:**

The Willatook Wind Farm Project (the proposal) is located in south west Victoria, approximately 250 km west of Melbourne, within the Moyne Shire Council. The proposal is approximately 45 km south of Hamilton and 22 km to the north of Port Fairy.

The proposal consists of up to 83 wind turbines connecting to the on-site substation through a combination of approximately 109 km of underground cabling and 4.5 km of overhead transmission lines. An overhead transmission line will then connect the on-site substation to the existing Tarrone Terminal Station, which adjoins the southern portion of the site. The proposal also includes approximately 60.4 km of new access tracks, five lattice tower wind monitoring masts and upgrade approximately 9.2 km of existing tracks. Temporary infrastructure associated with construction of the proposal includes a construction compound (with office facilities, parking and toilet facilities), laydown areas, concrete batching plants and a potential on-site quarry.

The proposed wind farm has a total capacity of approximately 400 MW and would produce approximately 1,400 GWh of electricity each year, with an operational life of approximately 25 years. The nominal wind turbine specifications are; 4.8 MW wind turbine class, maximum tip height of 220 m above ground level, wind turbine rotor in the order of 160 m in diameter, and a lower rotor sweep minimum of 41 m from natural ground level.

**Decision:**

The Minister for Planning has decided that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) **is required** for the Willatook Wind Farm proposal, as described in the referral accepted on 5 October 2018.

**Reasons for Decision:**

- The proposal has the potential for a range of significant effects including on:
  - i. Threatened fauna listed under both the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), particularly brolga and southern bent-wing bat.
  - ii. Threatened flora listed under both the FFG Act and EPBC Act.
  - iii. Geoheritage and geoscience values of the area.
  - iv. Visual amenity values of the area.
- The proposal has the potential for cumulative adverse effects, in particular on biodiversity and amenity values, due to the three operating wind farms within 20 km (Macarthur wind farm is less than 3 km) and the three approved wind farms within 10 km.
- Assessment of potentially significant effects is necessary to ensure their extent, significance and related uncertainties are sufficiently investigated. This includes

examining the scope for further avoidance and minimisation of effects via feasible siting, design and operational alternatives for key components of the proposal, as well as evaluating their effectiveness and acceptability in the context of residual environmental risk.

- There are other potential effects on the environmental and social setting, including for cultural heritage and surface water, although these are unlikely to be significant providing they are addressed and mitigated consistent with existing statutory requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, *Water Act 1989* and *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
- An EES would enable a single integrated and transparent process for consideration of potentially adverse effects of the proposal, which would inform relevant statutory decision-making, including under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

**Date of Decision:**

27 DEC 2018