Cannie Wind Farm

EES Consultation Plan

July 2025

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Acknowledgement of Country

In planning for Australia's clean energy future, RES acknowledges its rich history. We pay our respects to the Wamba Wamba, Barapa Barapa and Wiran Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which the project is proposed. We recognise their ongoing connection to land and waterways, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations

Name	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CCC	Community Consultative Committee
CEC	Clean Energy Council
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Commonwealth)
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (Victoria)
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EE Act	Environment Effects Act 1978
EES	Environment Effects Statement
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
ERM	Environmental Resources Management Australia Pty Ltd
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
FFG Act	Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
GW	Gigawatt
HV	Heritage Victoria
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
CWF	Cannie Wind Farm – The Project
LGA	Local Government Area
MW	Megawatt
P&E Act	Planning and Environment Act 1987
PPS	Public Participation Strategy
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
RES	RES Australia Pty Ltd (the Proponent)
REMPLAN	Community profiling platform
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone
RNE	Register of the National Estate
TRG	Technical Reference Group
VHI	Victoria Heritage Inventory
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register
VIC	Victoria
VNI West	Victoria New South Wales Interconnector West

Definitions

Name	Description
Landholders	Landholders are defined as owners of land that RES has an interest in, or is pursuing an interest in, for the purposes of development, access, transmission etc.
Neighbours	For the purpose of this Plan, the Project's neighbours are considered to be: • Landholders with property immediately adjacent to the project site; • Users of local roads and infrastructure near/adjacent to the project site; • Any other stakeholders living, working, or who are regularly within 5km of the project.
Community	For the purposes of this Plan, the community is defined as any person, group, or business who lives/is based within, or has a connection to the geographic area surrounding the proposed project site, within an approximate radius of 20km. This includes the communities of: - Bael Bael - Beauchamp - Budgerum East - Cannie - Dingwall - Fairley - Kerang - Lake Charm - Lalbert - Mystic Park - Normanville - Oakvale - Pine View - Quambatook - Reedy Lake - Sandhill Lake - Tittybong - Tragowel - Tresco - Wandella
Area of Social Influence	The area of social influence is an identified area where potential social impact has been identified based on the unique qualities of the project, community and context of the development.
Borealis	Stakeholder management database

1 Introduction

This Consultation Plan outlines the communication and engagement activities and program that will be delivered by RES Australia Pty Ltd (RES) as part of the Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the Cannie Wind Farm. EES engagement will be integrated with the overall program of community and stakeholder engagement for the Project.

It is a requirement of the Ministerial Guidelines for Assessment of Environmental Effects under the Environmental Effects Act 1978 that a Consultation Plan is prepared for projects that trigger an EES.

Specifically, this plan outlines how RES will inform, consult and respond to Traditional Custodians, the community, project neighbours, key stakeholder groups and participating landowners during the EES development and assessment phases. As part of the EES process, there will be ongoing opportunities for community input into the project.

The Consultation Plan clearly outlines how RES will:

- inform the public about the proposed project and program of EES studies
- seek targeted input from stakeholders during preparation of the EES to:
    - identify issues of potential concern
    - obtain local knowledge on existing conditions
    - understand perceptions of potential effects
    - gain feedback on measures that might provide reasonable responses to stakeholder concerns (including potential refinement to the proposal)
- respond to stakeholder input.

As the project progresses, activity schedules within this plan will adapt to address emerging issues and stakeholder needs.

As signatories to the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Projects, RES is committed to engaging respectfully with communities, being sensitive to cultural values and making a positive contribution to the regions where it operates. In RES' experience, early and ongoing transparent engagement and a clear benefit sharing approach are crucial components to fostering social license for a renewable energy project.

This Plan aims to continue proactive communication and engagement with stakeholders and the community that has already taken place during earlier development phases, enabling their feedback or concerns to be clearly understood and integrated into project design and decision making.

This plan has been prepared to reflect RES's commitment to best practice stakeholders and community engagement using guidance provided by government and industry including:

- CEC's Best Practice Charter (CEC, August 2021)
- CEC Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry (CEC, June 2018)
- Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria (DELWP, July 2021)
- Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria – Policy and Planning Guidelines (DELWP, November 2021)
- Preparing an EES Consultation Plan Advisory Note (Department of Transport and Planning 2024)

2 Project Overview

The proposed Cannie Wind Farm Project comprises the development and construction of a large-scale wind farm in northern Victoria, approximately 25 km west of Kerang, in Gannawarra Shire. A transmission line connection from the wind farm to VNI West and a battery energy storage system (BESS) also form part of the development. Figure 1 shows the location of the wind farm within the surrounding district and Figure 2 provides an overview of the Project components.

The Project will generate up to 1300 MW and deliver renewable, low-cost energy to the national grid, and contribute to the Victorian Government's renewable energy targets of 65% of electricity by 2030 and 95% by 2035. The Project's battery energy storage system will also contribute to Victoria's energy storage target of 2.6 GW by 2030 and 9 GW by 2040)

The Project will indicatively consist of:

- Up to 174 wind turbine generators (WTGs) across 17,000 ha of land
- Up to 200MW / 800MWhr battery storage capacity for the wind farm
- Underground and overhead electrical reticulation throughout the wind farm
- Temporary construction site offices, concrete batching plant, construction vehicle parking areas, and material laydown areas for the construction phase
- Onsite substations for connection into the new VNI West transmission network and 500 kilovolt (kV) substations as well as electrical connections for the turbines, operation and maintenance facility, storage facilities, and vehicle parking areas.
- Access tracks for construction and maintenance of the turbines will be constructed to link all turbines to access points throughout the project site.
- 500 kV transmission to link the Project to the proposed VNI West with the route still under investigation.
- Possible temporary onsite quarry (still under investigation)

Within the wind farm site boundary there are 23 participating landholders owning various parcels. The predominant land use is broadacre cropping and grazing. *Figure 1 – Cannie Wind Farm location*

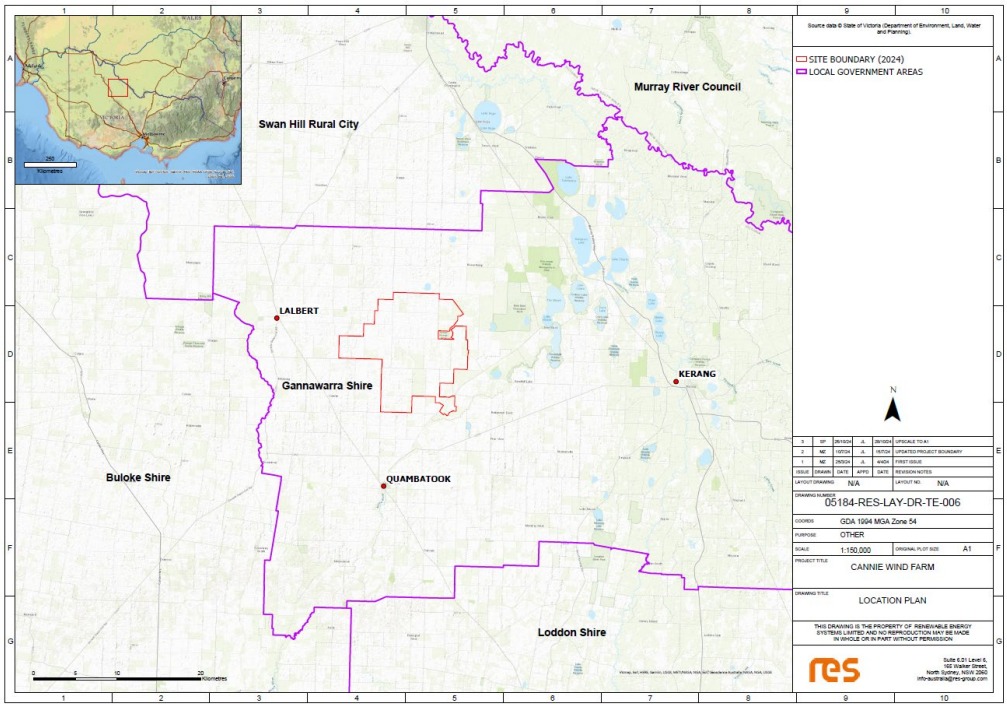
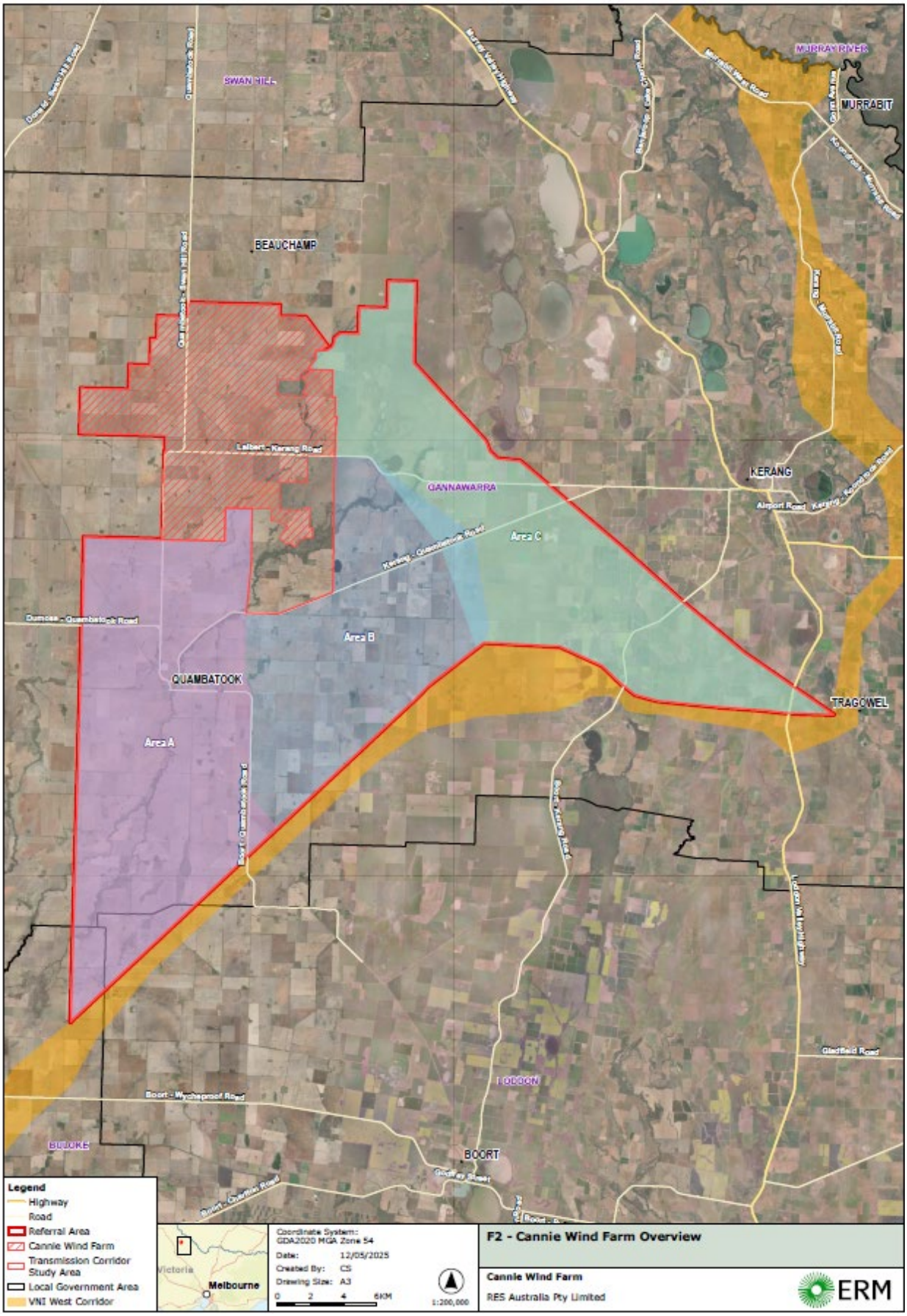


Figure 2: Project overview and components



2.1 About RES

Established in the United Kingdom in 1981, RES expanded into the Australian market in 2004 and operates in 24 countries. The company's mission is to provide affordable renewable energy across the world, from wind (on-shore and off-shore), solar, energy storage and transmission and distribution services. RES has developed a total project portfolio of 27 GW and supports 41 GW of operational assets.

RES currently manages over 2.5GW of renewable energy assets in Australia (wind, solar and BESS) and delivers asset management and operation and maintenance services across 30 sites. RES has over 180 expert staff in offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Wollongong, Wagga Wagga and Rockhampton.

In Australia, RES' recent projects include Emerald Solar Farm in QLD, Murra Warra Wind Farm in VIC, Ararat Wind Farm in VIC and Dulacca Wind Farm in QLD.

3 Assessment Pathway

3.1 Planning Pathway

A Ministerial planning application for the Project will be lodged with the Victorian Minister for Planning and will be assessed against the Planning and Environment Act 1987, the Victorian Planning Provisions, The Gannawarra Planning Scheme and the Guidelines for Development of Wind Energy facilities in Victoria. Through this process DTP will coordinate engagement with statutory stakeholders to inform the outcome of the application process, and to inform any conditions of approval (if granted).

On 23 May 2024 RES referrals were accepted under the Environment Effects Act 1978 (EE Act) and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). Ahead of this process RES undertook preliminary environmental and heritage assessments to understand both the potential impacts and opportunities the Project would presents to local communities and the environment. The referral decisions are outlined below.

3.1.1 EES

On 25 September 2024 the Minister for Planning determined, under section 88(3)(a) of the EE Act that an EES is required for the following reasons:

- The project has the potential for a range of significant and complex effects that require assessment. In particular
    - Threatened species and communities listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act) and the EPBC Act
    - Ecological values of the project area's immediate and adjacent terrestrial and aquatic environment; including groundwater dependant ecosystems, native vegetation, threatened species habitat and the Kerang Lakes Ramsar Site; and
    - Tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage
- There is uncertainty about the extent and magnitude of potential effects related to, noise, visual and amenity, shadow flicker, blade glint, blade throw, electromagnetic interference, historic heritage, soils, traffic and socioeconomic values that also require further assessment.
- The project has the potential for cumulative adverse effects on local and regional environmental values in the context of existing and proposed wind farms within the broader region
- An EES is warranted to enable integrated assessment of the environmental effects of the project and to inform decision-making for the required approvals. The EES will evaluate feasible, relevant alternatives, including opportunities to avoid and/or minimise potential significant effects through alternative layouts, designs and the effectiveness of proposed mitigation and management measures.

- Integrated assessment via the EES process would inform relevant statutory decision-making, particularly under the Planning Environment Act 1987, FFG Act and Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

Procedures and requirements were also outlined including the submission of an EES study program and consultation plan by RES; convening of an interagency Technical Reference Group (TRG) and the preparation of EES scoping requirements by DTP. The subsequent EES will be exhibited for public comment and an inquiry will be appointed to consider the environmental effects of the proposal.

TRG membership will be drawn from government agencies, regional authorities, municipal councils and registered Aboriginal parties (RAPs) that have a statutory, policy or technical interest in relation to the project. The TRG will meet regularly according to the study program and schedule to provide comment on EES technical studies and review the study and consultation plans.

Traditional Custodians, local community and stakeholder groups will be engaged to provide feedback on the project throughout the EES process. Their feedback will be considered by RES in technical investigations informing the preparation of the EES and in the process of refining the project design.

The final EES documents and supporting technical studies will be submitted for Minister for Planning for consideration. The Minister will invite agencies and members of the public to comment on the EES and be heard at an EES Inquiry. Public submissions, Inquiry presentations and the subsequent Inquiry panel report will be considered by the Minister when preparing the final assessment on the acceptability of the environmental effects and making a decision on the Planning application.

3.1.2 EPBC

On 20 August 2024 DCCEEW determined that the proposed development of the wind farm and associated infrastructure was a controlled action under section 75 of the EPBC Act and that further assessment is needed before a decision can be made on whether or not approval can be granted under the EPBC Act. The decision was due to the potential for the development to have significant impact on the following matters protected by the EPBC Act:

- Listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A)
- Listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A)

The ecological character of a declared Ramsar wetland (section 16 & section 17B) including the habitat and life cycles of native species in the Kerang wetlands.

The Commonwealth Minister's delegate determined that the Project will be assessed via an accredited process under the Bilateral Assessment Agreement with Victoria. Under this agreement, the Victorian Minister for Planning's assessment of the environmental effects of the Project, will be provided to the Commonwealth Minister to inform an approval decision under the EPBC Act.

The EES process is accredited to assess impacts on matters of national environmental significance (MNES) under the EPBC Act through the Bilateral Assessment Agreement between the Commonwealth and Victoria. This arrangement removes duplication by enabling a single, integrated assessment process to examine the project's likely impacts and inform statutory decisions. At the conclusion of the EES process, the Commonwealth Minister or their delegate will decide whether the project is approved, approved with conditions, or refused under the EPBC Act, having considered the Minister for Planning's assessment under the EE Act.

3.2 State Policy Setting

Victoria's current renewable energy targets legislated in the Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017 are 25% by 2020 (achieved), 40% by 2025, 65% by 2030 and 95% by 2035. Energy storage targets have also been announced of at least 2.6 GW storage capacity by 2030 and 6.3 GW by 2035.

In November 2020, the Victorian Government announced plans for significant investment in the development and establishment of six Renewable Energy Zones (REZs), including the Murray River REZ in north west Victoria. In February 2021, the Renewable Energy Zones Development Plan Directions paper was released as a plan to unlock 10 GW of new renewable energy capacity in Victoria, taking the total capacity across Victorian REZs to 16GW.

VicGrid has been established by the Victorian Government to deliver the first Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) by 31 July 2025, which will set the long-term strategic vision for the development of the state's Renewable Energy Zone. Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines for developing the VTP and the draft REZ Community Benefit Plan were released for public comment in mid 2024.

4 Project timeline

The proposed timeline for the project and the EES process are outlined below, noting that this is subject to change dependant on the progress and results on technical studies, community feedback, planning application decision timelines and construction considerations.

Table 1: Project Timeline

Timing	Project Milestones	EES Process	Actions/ Outcomes
September 2023 – August 2024	Early engagement and project design	Pre EES referral	• Desktop studies • Preliminary assessments • Constraints mapping • Iterative design • Project public launch • Neighbour & community engagement • Key stakeholder engagement
July 2024	Lodge EES and EPBC referral	EES referral	• Referral documentation prepared and lodged
September 2024	EES/EPBC determination	Ministerial Decision	• Determined an EPBC Controlled action • Determined that an EES is required
December 2024 - June 2025	Submit EES study program and Consultation Plan	EES scoping	• Study program and consultation plan drafted for DTP consideration • DTP prepares and advertises draft scoping requirements • DTP established TRG • Minister issues EES scoping requirements • RES communicate scoping requirements to the community and key stakeholders
May 2025 – August 2026	Finalise design and study reports	EES Preparation	• Study program implemented • Technical reports drafted

			• TRG meetings to consider technical reports and EES chapters • Integrated EES and broader community engagement implemented • Feedback used to optimise project design and minimise impacts
August 2026	Submit EES and Planning application	EES Submission	• Final EES report, appendices and summaries submitted by RES • Planning Application submitted by RES • RES communicates that submission has occurred with community and key stakeholders
Q4 2026	Public notification of EES and Planning application	Agency and Public Submissions	• Notification actions completed as per DTP advice by RES • RES communication with the community and key stakeholders about process, timing, information accessibility and feedback mechanisms
Q4 2026	RES addresses submissions at Inquiry/Panel Hearing	EES Inquiry	• Submission addressed by RES • RES communication with the community and key stakeholders about process, timing, information accessibility and feedback mechanisms.
Q4 2026	EES Inquiry report received; Ministers Assessment issued; Ministers decision on Planning Application received.	Ministerial Assessment and Approval	• Minister will determine the Planning Application with appropriate conditions once receiving the inquiry/panel report and advice on the Planning application • RES communicates decision to community and key stakeholders
Q4 2026 – Q2 2027	Complete any further work required to comply with Ministerial assessment and/or planning application requirements	EES/Planning Approval Conditions Compliance	• RES to complete studies/reports etc to comply with preconstruction planning approval conditions or other ministerial directions including secondary consents and EPA permissions • RES to develop a construction focused community and stakeholder engagement plan including complaints management process
Q2 2027	Notice to Proceed	EES/Planning Approval Conditions Compliance	• DTP and Local Government determine that all conditions are met and construction can proceed
2028 - 2031	Construction	Planning Approval Compliance	• Construction is carried out • Engagement and communication plan implemented

			• Operations engagement and communication plan developed
2031	Operation	Planning Approval Compliance	• Construction completed to comply with requirements • Testing completed • Project given permission to supply electricity to the grid

5 Engagement Approach

RES recognises the importance of early and ongoing community and stakeholder participation throughout a project's lifecycle and aims to build trusting relationships between the project team, the community and broader region. At the beginning of the development phase of all RES projects, a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) is developed. Actions in the CSEP are implemented and the plan is regularly reviewed. Cannie Wind Farm has a detailed CSEP that has profiled the community; mapped stakeholders and their interests; outlined engagement stages, method, tools and activities; and outlined procedures for complaint management and recording stakeholder interactions. This Consultation Plan draws heavily on the CSEP and forms a sub plan to it.

5.1 Increased stakeholder expectations

Overall, community and stakeholders' expectations regarding involvement in the decision-making process for infrastructure projects continue to rise. In many cases, this stretches far beyond traditional consultation topics of site locations, environmental management, and impact mitigation to incorporate advanced concepts such as climate change, increasing social value and benefit-sharing.

The Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner's 2022 recommendations for community consultation for renewable energy projects suggest that:

"Effective community consultation and engagement is essential for large-scale renewable energy and transmission projects to gain widespread support and earn the 'social license' to operate within the community. To be effective in community engagement, it is vital to actually 'engage the community' and involve the community wherever possible in the design and execution of programs related to the project (but not the project itself)."

The report also states that "community opposition has contributed to the delay, cancellation or mothballing of more than $20 billion of infrastructure projects in the last decade."

In recent years the establishment, growth and success of not-for-profit activist-based organisations such as GetUp, 350.org, Friends of the Earth, Quit Coal, the Australian Youth Climate Coalition and counterAct demonstrates that community campaigns can deliver significant disruption and change.

Increasingly, governments are encouraging community participation in decision making through initiatives such as the Engage Victoria portal and more stringent community engagement requirements for renewable energy projects, as signalled by VicGrid's recent work on the Victorian Transmission Plan.

Together, community and government initiatives have resulted in increased stakeholder involvement and empowerment across all stages of the project lifecycle.

Jacobs and Simetrica's 2020 thought leadership paper, Before and beyond the build, A blueprint for creating enduring social value at scale through infrastructure investments, traces changes in community expectations over time, stating that "in 2020, we expect more from our private sector business leaders and hold companies to higher standards relating to their social impact and contribution to social value."

These expectations mean that effective engagement is critical to good stakeholder management.

In north west Victoria and the Mallee region large infrastructure proposals, such as mineral sands mining and the Victorian New South Wales Interconnector West transmission line project have resulted in a negative sentiment about rural land use change. Engagement for the Cannie Wind Farm EES needs to be sensitive to any negative cumulative impacts of change on nearby rural communities. Both the Normanville Energy Park (WestWind) and the Meering West Wind Farm (Virya) proposals are in close proximity to the Cannie Wind Farm boundary and the transmission connection corridor options. They will also be engaging with the local

community during the Cannie Wind Farm EES process, so clear messaging and targeted engagement will be important to minimise consultation fatigue.

5.2 IAP2 Approach

RES in Australia has a dedicated Community Engagement Team and First Nations Partnership Team, comprising specialists trained in best practice methodologies under the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2).

The IAP2 Federation has developed the Public Participation Spectrum (PPS) to assist in defining the community's role in any public participation process. The PPS identifies stakeholders in respect to their impact on project decision making – from low to high – and determines an appropriate engagement response – inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower – as shown in Figure 3.

RES recognises that the IAP2 core values and the IAP2 public participation spectrum should inform all engagement strategies.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influencedthe decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovationin formulatng solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Figure 3: IAP2 public participation spectrum

The majority of RES' engagement interactions with stakeholders will fall within the inform, consult and involve categories of the IAP2 spectrum. Some stakeholders will require collaboration. We anticipate that the range of engagement opportunities that we will utilise will result in stakeholders feeling empowered.

5.3 Engagement Principles

RES' commitment to best practice stakeholder engagement aligns with our company values of passion, accountability, collaboration and excellence and our vision to be a Power for Good – creating a future where everyone has access to affordable zero carbon energy.

As a founding signatory of the Clean Energy Council's (CEC) Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Development 2018, we believe in effective, clear and transparent community engagement. Our engagement principles follow the IAP2 spectrum and reflect our experience implementing DPE's Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects.

RES is committed to the following:

Figure 4: Engagement principles

RES has a dedicated and experienced team which can draw on its learnings from other projects in Australia to establish respectful relationships with local communities. In this way, RES aims to foster social licence to plan, construct and operate projects, striving for best practice, and early engagement with communities to develop an understanding of the community and the project's stakeholders. We understand that no two communities are the same and our investment in early engagement allows us to tailor our communications approach to the community we are working in. In turn, this supports the ability for communities and local stakeholders to participate in and inform project planning and development. RES acknowledges that a robust community and stakeholder engagement process can further inform the assessment process and project technical studies to bring about positive project and community outcomes.

RES's engagement approach is based on the following commitments:

- Keeping the community informed throughout the pre-planning development phase of the Project.
- Providing clear and timely information on how and when they can participate in decision making and the level of influence their feedback has on the project.

- Allowing the views of local stakeholders to inform project planning and design (as far as practicable) and listening and responding to any concerns raised.
- Providing access to up-to-date information on project progress and demonstrate (where applicable) how the design of the Project has been adapted to take account of community participation and the findings of feasibility studies.
- Use learnings from all projects to inform future engagement activities as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.
- Ensuring engagement is inclusive and accessible for stakeholders with diverse backgrounds and abilities, which could include different ages, genders, sexual orientations, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, religions, and physical, mental, and cognitive abilities.

6 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

The Consultation Plan design enables community members (especially impacted stakeholders) to be part of the project planning and development process with opportunities to ask questions and engage in a meaningful way. The following table maps stakeholder groups, individual stakeholders and their relevant interests and concerns. A community profile was developed as part of the CSEP development. This is summarised in Appendix A.

Table 2: Stakeholder groups

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders	Level of engagement (IAP2)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Potential interests and concerns
Host landowners	Landowners with the potential to host infrastructure, have already been engaged regarding infrastructure hosting options, or have agreed to host infrastructure	Collaborate	High	High	Land holder consultation, access to private land, noise, visual amenity, health and safety, construction disruption, remuneration
Immediate neighbours	Neighbouring properties within a 5 km radius of a potential project location	Involve	High	Medium	Neighbour consultation, noise, visual amenity, property values, health and safety, impact of construction, traffic
Surrounding community	Community members who live or have an interest in the area of social influence of the Project, as identified in Section 3.2.	Inform	Medium	Medium	Community consultation, community wellbeing, economic benefits / impacts, impacts of construction traffic, health and safety, visual amenity, land use, sponsorships and community benefit programs
First Nations communities	Wamba Wamba Traditional Owners, Barapa Barapa Traditional Owners; Wamba Wamba Local Aboriginal Land Council; Barapa Country Aboriginal Corporation; Barapa Land and Water; Wiran Aboriginal	Collaborate	High	High	First Nations consultation, impact on Aboriginal social, historical, scientific and aesthetic objects or values, economic benefits / impacts, impacts of construction traffic, health and safety

	Corporation; Mallee District Aboriginal Services; Kerang Aboriginal Community Centre; First Peoples State Relations; Registered Aboriginal Parties and Aboriginal groups, VIC Aboriginal Heritage Council, Aboriginal Affairs VIC and Native Title Service Provider for Aboriginal Traditional Owners				
Local community organisations and businesses	Quambatook Community Development Association; Quambatook Amity Club; Quambatook Community Development Association Inc; Quambatook Lions Club; Quambatook Resource Centre; The Quambatook Historical Centre Inc; Quambatook Fire Brigade; Quambatook Swimming Pool (Community owned); Quambatook Men's Shed; North West Ag; Quambatook District Share Shop Inc ; Quambatook Hotel; Quambatook Stores and LPO; White and Coote Quambatook; Quamby Car K.W.A.P. & Coffee; Quambatook Caravan Park; Quambatook Tractor Pullers Assoc; Quambatook Heritage Working Machinery; Kerang Traders Inc; Kerang Branch Country Women's Association; Lake Charm Landcare; Lalbert Landcare Group; Quambatook Landcare Group; Fairley Bael Bael Sand Hill Lake Landcare; Lake Charm Mystic Park Lions Club; Kerang	Consult	Medium	Medium	Community consultation, community wellbeing, business opportunities, social and economic impacts, environmental impacts, local Indigenous and European heritage objects and values; sponsorships and community benefits

	Neighbourhood House; Kerang Progress Association; Tragowel Progress Association Inc.				
Special Interest Groups	Trust for Nature; Sustainable Living in the Mallee Inc; Bendigo and District Environment Council; VFF; Mine Free Mallee Farms; Northern Plains Conservation Alliance; Victorian Plains Wanderer Operations Team; Cassinia Environmental.	Consult	High	Medium	Environment, economic and social impacts and benefits
Local Councils, State and Federal elected members	Gannawarra Shire Council - Mayor Cr Garner Smith; CEO Geoff Rollinson Swan Hill Rural City Council – Mayor Cr Stuart King; CEO Scott Barber. Buloke Shire Council Loddon Shire Council Member for Murray Plains (Vic), Peter Walsh MP (NATS) Member for Mallee (Fed), Dr Anne Webster MP (NATS)	Involve	High	High	Community consultation, community wellbeing, impact on local residents and businesses, economic benefits, impacts on local roads and infrastructure, transmission infrastructure

State and Federal agencies	DTP, DEECA, DCCEEW, EPA, Parks Vic, Agriculture Victoria, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Civil Aviation and Safety Authority, Regional Development Australia, Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner, Kerang Ambulance Service; Kerang Fire Brigade; Quambatook Police Station; Kerang Police Station; Kerang State Emergency Service.	Involve	High	High	Community consultation, project approval, regulatory compliance, environmental impact
Local schools, religious organisations, clubs training organisations, health and community services	Kerang & District Pre School; Kerang Christian College; Kerang Primary School; Kerang South Primary School; Lake Charm Primary School; St Joseph's Primary School Kerang; Kerang Technical High School; CVGT; Madec Jobs Australia; Murray Mallee Training Company Ltd; Kerang District Health; Northern District Community Health; Kerang Mental Health Care Group; Headspace Swan Hill; Kerang Medical Clinic; Fitzroy Street Medical Clinic; Kerang Probus Club; Quambatook Senior Citizens; Kerang Senior Citizens; U3A Kerang & District Inc;; Quambatook Bowling Club; Quambatook Golf Club; Lalbert St Marys Football Netball Club; Lalbert Golf Club; Quambatook Lawn Tennis Club; Lake Charm Tennis Club; Wandella Cricket Club (Kerang).	Consult	Low	Low	Community wellbeing, economic benefits, community involvement and events, local sponsorship

Local media	Swan Hill Guardian; Gannawarra Times The North West Farmer; Mixx FM 98.7; ABC Radio Mildura-Swan Hill, online and Facebook (104.3 FM)	Inform	Medium	Low	Community discontent / protests, safety concerns, environment or heritage impacts, project milestones
National / state / local media	ABC TV, news and radio; Channel 9, 10 and 7; SBS; The Age; Hearld Sun; The Australian.	Inform	Medium	Low	Community discontent / protests, safety concerns, environment or heritage impacts, project milestones
Utilities	Electricity and gas, Water, Telecommunications providers, NBN	Consult	Medium	Low	Utility provider consultation, project approval, regulatory compliance, environmental impact, signal interference.
Industry	Construction industry, freight industry, agriculture, retail, transport	Consult	High	Medium	Industry consultation, environmental impact, impact of construction, traffic

7 Consultation Methods and Schedule of Activities

Engagement will be tailored according to individual stakeholder groups' needs and preferences, the type of information being conveyed, and the level of feedback required.

The engagement of stakeholders will include a combination of:

- **Involvement:** to facilitate stakeholder involvement in the identification of issues/impacts, areas of interest/concern and strategies to address the issues raised. Furthermore, to understand community sentiment and track this over time as a risk mitigation tool.
- **Informing:** to improve knowledge and awareness of RES, its activities, the Project, and key issues/impacts as they arise.

Various methods will be used to involve the different stakeholder groups based on the type of information being conveyed, level of feedback required, understanding of stakeholder needs regarding engagement, and identified stakeholder engagement preferences. The range of engagement methods that **may** be used are identified in Table 3 below. This includes existing or previous mechanisms utilised by RES as well as possible additional mechanisms. A detailed engagement implementation plan will be developed and regularly updated following the EES scoping requirements being issued.

RES will adapt engagement methods to ensure engagement is inclusive and accessible for stakeholders with diverse backgrounds and abilities, which could include different ages, genders, sexual orientations, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, religions, and physical, mental, and cognitive abilities. This will include producing materials in different languages or formats and tailoring face to face or online engagement methods to improve accessibility where required.

7.1 Engagement Methods

Table 3: Engagement Mechanisms

Collateral	Description and purpose
Letters	• Letter of introduction • Letters to impacted residents (immediate neighbours and surrounding community) • Invitations to community drop-in sessions, pop-ups and other meetings
Door knocking	• Informal 'dook knocking' to provide information (interactive), to provide a 'face' of the project, opportunity for members of the public to pose questions, project team to visually share results of technical studies, and collect community feedback. This is particularly method will be employed for transmission line engagement.
Project updates/newsletters	• Project introduction and overview • Regular updates about project development and construction, as required and when new information is available, or leading up to community engagement events. Updates are delivered as hard copy by unaddressed newsletters; emails, website and addressed letters. Updates will also be available as hard copy at the Cannie Office.

Collateral	Description and purpose
Media releases	• Major project milestones • Holding statement/s based on key messages addressing relevant issue or concern
Emails	• Email database compiled during early community engagement and scoping phase (updated regularly) • Targeted project update emails • Upcoming impacts (construction) • E-newsletters and invitations to events
Website	• Platform for the wider community engagement may include: • Project documentation, as relevant to the development application • Project overview • News stories and videos of project in the community • Construction updates • Fact sheets • Community Consultative Committee information and minutes, if applicable • Opportunities (eg, employment, community benefits, etc) • Contact details • Feedback and complaint form
Fact sheets	• Draft and publish series of fact sheets and FAQ's (to be available online on Project website as well as hard copies to be made accessible via mail or at the local Project Office).
Advertisements / flyers	• Invitations to community information sessions • Promote project opportunities such as community benefits • Notify of upcoming construction impacts
Social media	• Project milestones and updates • Good news stories • Photos
Project briefings	• Formal project briefings to key stakeholders and government agencies, including branded project PowerPoint deck
Personal meetings / interviews*	• Introduce the Project and team • Listen to individual concerns, interests, issues and gather preliminary feedback, scope potential impacts and opportunities – including sensitivities – to inform mitigation strategies, key messages and engagement approach and build understanding of engagement preferences
Community information and feedback sessions	• Drop in/pop-up sessions to provide information, engage with community, answer questions • Information booth/stall at local events (eg, field days, shows)

Collateral	Description and purpose
Community Consultative Committee (CCC)	A CCC will only be established if there is a desire from the community to be involved in this more formal approach to engagement and is usually set up in late stage development or once planning application has been received and construction is about to commence. A CCC can assist to: • Facilitate dialogue between community, stakeholders and the project team • Listen to concerns, interests, issues and feedback, scope potential impacts and opportunities to inform mitigation strategies, key messages and engagement approach and build understanding • Participate in the planning and development of the Project • Promote project opportunities such as community benefits • Provide regular updates about project development and construction to key stakeholders
Site tours	• Organised stakeholder tours of the Project site • Introduce the project and team • Celebrate project milestones
Local Project Office	• A local Project Office has been established in Kerang and is utilised by Project staff. Meetings with community members can be made by appointment.

*Personal meetings may include small groups, noting that the focus of these meetings is to understand and scope local concerns, interests, issues, and priorities, rather than provide information on the project.

The table below outlines the mechanisms that are planned to be used to engage the key stakeholder groups.

Table 4: Engagement tools and mechanisms

Key Stakeholder Group	Tools and mechanisms						
	Letters	Project updates / fact sheets	Media release	Emails / website	Project briefing	One-on-one meetings	Community sessions
Local Government		○		○	○	○	
State Government				○	○	○	
Federal Government				○			
Traditional Owners		○	○	○	○	○	○
Host landholders	○	○		○		○	○
Neighbours (within 5km)	○	○	○	○		○	○

Key Stakeholder Group	Tools and mechanisms						
	Letters	Project updates / fact sheets	Media release	Emails / website	Project briefing	One-on-one meetings	Community sessions
Community groups		○	○	○	○		○
Wider community		○	○	○			○
Local businesses		○	○	○		○	○
Local media		○	○	○			

7.2 Enquiry and Complaints Management

We have established a Project phone number, email (info@cannie-windfarm.com) and website (https://www.canniewindfarm.com/) to manage enquiries, feedback and complaints.

All contact through these channels – including enquiries, feedback and complaints – will be recorded and managed through a centralised CRM database. The CRM database will house contact details for email and newsletter subscribers.

The Community Engagement team will be responsible for managing enquiries and complaints, and logging the following information in the project database:

- contact's name and details
- nature of the enquiry/complaint
- response provided, action required and resolution timeframes
- closure of enquires and complaints.

All interactions with stakeholders or the community will be recorded promptly and consistently.

Enquiry and complaint response timeframes are provided in the table below.

Table 5: Response timeframe

Type of complaint	Response timeframe
Urgent complaints during construction phase (ie, safety worker behaviour, noise, etc)	Within 24 hours
All other complaints	Within 2 business days
Enquiries and feedback	Within 5 business days

All complaints will be dealt with using strict privacy protocols and in accordance with the RES *Complaints Management System – Australian Development Projects.* Complaints can be made anonymously, however as anonymous complaints cannot be addressed directly with the complainant, they will usually be treated as feedback about the Project and investigated as such. A separate complaint handling procedure will be developed for construction and operation.

7.3 EES Consultation Schedule

7.3.1 Broad whole of project community engagement activities during EES and Planning Application phase.

Timing	Objectives	Planned activities
EES and Planning Application Development		
September 2024 – August 2026	• Provide an ongoing local engagement presence • Provide project updates via established communication channels • Provide opportunity for engagement with Project team • Provide opportunity for stakeholders and community to raise concerns and provide feedback and consider feedback in project design • Inform community on what aspects of the Project can be influenced by the community • Build positive sentiment across local media, and with local community • Identify opportunities to build social licence including community sponsorships • Co-design local benefit sharing opportunities with local community	• Provide information and contact via the Kerang Project Office / Community Liaison Officer • Meetings/briefings (online or face to face) as required with key stakeholder groups (eg LGA) • Fact sheets and FAQ's on issues of importance to community and interest groups (on website and hard copy) • Neighbour letters/emails at key milestones and when new information is available • Project update newsletters (indicative Aug 2025, Oct 2025, Feb 2026, June 2026) • Website updates (ongoing) • Project email account and 1800 number • Social media content (pending the establishment of RES social pages) • Media releases and advertising for key milestones and events • Community information sessions (indicative August & November 2025, March & July 2026). • Market stalls/event popups (Kerang & Quambatook) where possible. • Provide sponsorships to meet local community needs • Timely responses to enquiries • Interviews with key stakeholders as a part of the Social Impact Assessment impact assessment (SIA) • Online survey with questions on social and amenity impacts; benefit sharing as part of the SIA • Develop Community Benefits framework in collaboration with community through surveys, meetings and public comment on an options paper

Timing	Objectives	Planned activities
		• Consider feedback from community and key stakeholders and track how feedback has been used to modify the Project • Investigate the establishment of a Community Consultative Committee or similar if there is community support.
September 2024 - July 2025	• Identify key stakeholders with an interest and influence on the Project, particularly in the transmission line investigation area • Provide channels for landowners and other stakeholders to contribute feedback on the proposed transmission line route	• Landowner engagements for grid connection corridor (by Costello Group and RES staff) to negotiate access deed/land agreements • Bespoke engagement with neighbours and key stakeholders of the preferred transmission line route
November 2024 – and ongoing	• Develop collaborative relationships with First Nations groups • Co-design local benefit sharing opportunities with Traditional Custodians • Provide opportunities to raise concerns and provide feedback on project design and potential impacts.	• Cultural Awareness training • Walks on Country • Codesign workshops and discussions to map out benefit programs (e.g. training, employment, grants, procurement). • Bespoke engagement processes to gather and consider feedback on project design • Provide support to local organisations through sponsorships and in-kind assistance.
EES and Planning Application Notification and Inquiry		
Q4 2026	• Provide clear information about the process and timelines • Ensure the EES and Planning application documents are easily accessible • Provide opportunities for stakeholders to ask questions about the development /enquire about the process	• Addressed letters • Newsletter • Advertising • Website updates • Community Information sessions/popups stalls • Key stakeholder meetings/briefings (eg LGA) • USBs • Reports • Email box and 1800 number

7.3.2 Targeted activities to inform EES technical studies and Planning Application Phase

Technical investigation	Key stakeholders	Engagement method	Engagement timing
Blade Throw	Project neighbours	Online & face to face meetings	Jun -Jul 25
Historic Heritage	Heritage Victoria Gannawarra Shire	Online & face to face meetings Field visits	Jun -Jul 25
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	Wamba Local Aboriginal Land Council; Barapa Country Aboriginal Corporation; Wiran Aboriginal Corporation; First Peoples State Relations.	Online & face to face meetings Field visits	Mar 24 – Feb 26
Aviation	Gannawarra Shire Swan Hill Rural City Airfield operators	Online & face to face meetings Property visits Emails and letters	Mar 24 – Sept 25
EMI	CFA Trigonometrical stations (DEECA, Geoscience Australia) Telstra, Optus, Vodafone Internet service providers, NBN Co.	Online & face to face meetings	Nov 24 - Sept 25
Land Use Planning	Gannawarra Shire DTP Goulburn Murray Water (irrigation) Agriculture Victoria Resources Victoria Mining Companies (Mineral Sands)	Online & face to face meetings Field visits Emails and letters	Nov 24 – Sep 25
Surface Water	GWMWater North Central CMA Goulburn Murray Water EPA	Online & face to face meetings Field visits	May 25 -Jan 26
Groundwater	GWMWater North Central CMA Goulburn Murray Water EPA	Online & face to face meetings Field visits	May 25 -Jan 26

Socio-Economic	Project neighbours Local businesses General Community Service Organisations & Community Groups Gannawarra Shire Swan Hill Rural City Health Services First Nations	Surveys Community Information sessions Letters/emails Newsletters Online & face to face meetings Project Office	May 25 – Mar 26
Traffic and Transport	DTP Gannawarra Shire Swan Hill Rural City	Online & face to face meetings Field visits	Feb 24 – Sept 25
Ecology	DEECA Park Victoria Trust for Nature Local environment groups and peak bodies First Nations VPOT Gannawarra Shire	Online & face to face meetings Community information sessions Field visits	Feb 24 – May 26
Landscape and Visual	Gannawarra Shire Project neighbours	Online & face to face meetings Community information sessions Property visits	Nov 24 – Nov 25
Noise & vibration	Gannawarra Shire EPA Project neighbours	Online & face to face meetings Community information sessions	Nov 24 – Jan 26
Bushfire (and emergency management)	CFA FFMV Local brigades and SES Gannawarra Shire	Online & face to face meetings	May 25 – Mar 26
Shadow Flicker, Glint & Glare	Project neighbours	Online & face to face meetings	Nov 24 – Nov 25
Soils	DEECA Agriculture Victoria North Central CMA EPA		May 25 – Jan 26

8 Stakeholder and Community Engagement undertaken to date

RES launched the Project publicly in January 2024 with neighbour letters, a newsletter, media release and community information sessions in Quambatook and Lake Boga. All communications and engagements are recorded in Borealis, the CRM RES uses for record keeping, reporting and analysis. Engagement from the start of the project to 22 October 2024 is summarised in the following outputs from Borealis.

Borealis holds the contact and interaction details for 318 individuals, 159 organisations and 575 communications related to the Cannie Wind Farm.

Figure 5: Summary of communications

Communication and engagement has been focused on general information about the project to neighbours and the general community in nearby towns and locations; land holder communications about the potential transmission line route; and with agency and conservation groups about biodiversity and other environmental matters. Figure 6 outlines the subject categories discussed during engagement.

The first round of community information sessions was held in February 2024. Most people who attended sought general information about the Project such as its location, wind turbine size, timing and how construction occurs. Topics raised by participants included:

- The construction process and how wind farms operate
- Environmental considerations and referrals, including impacts on native grasslands and the Plains Wanderer
- Accommodation for workers
- Job and supplier opportunities
- Community benefits e.g., sponsorships and grants
- Landowner payments and neighbour shared benefit schemes
- Turbine noise and visual impact
- Impacts on cropping near turbines and along powerline easements
- Weed management and biosecurity
- Rural property valuations and insurance
- Bushfire management
- Water usage and water sources for construction
- Impacts on air services

RES has also been working with local community groups to sponsor and support community programs. RES has recently opened a Project Office at the Kerang Neighbourhood House to increase local interaction within the community.

The range of engagement methods used by RES is outlined in Figure 7. Emails, phone calls, property visit, in person meetings have dominated, as well as unaddressed mail out of 2 newsletters to over 900 properties (which is only recorded as one interaction in the Borealis data) and emails of newsletters to over 40 local organisations.

The stakeholders that have been consulted most extensively (as represented in Figure 8) are landowners along the potential transmission line route, staff at Gannawarra Shire and Swan Hill Rural City; Project neighbours and State government agency personnel. Engagement with First Nations groups, local businesses, environment groups, emergency services and mining companies has also commenced.

Figure 6: Communication subject categories

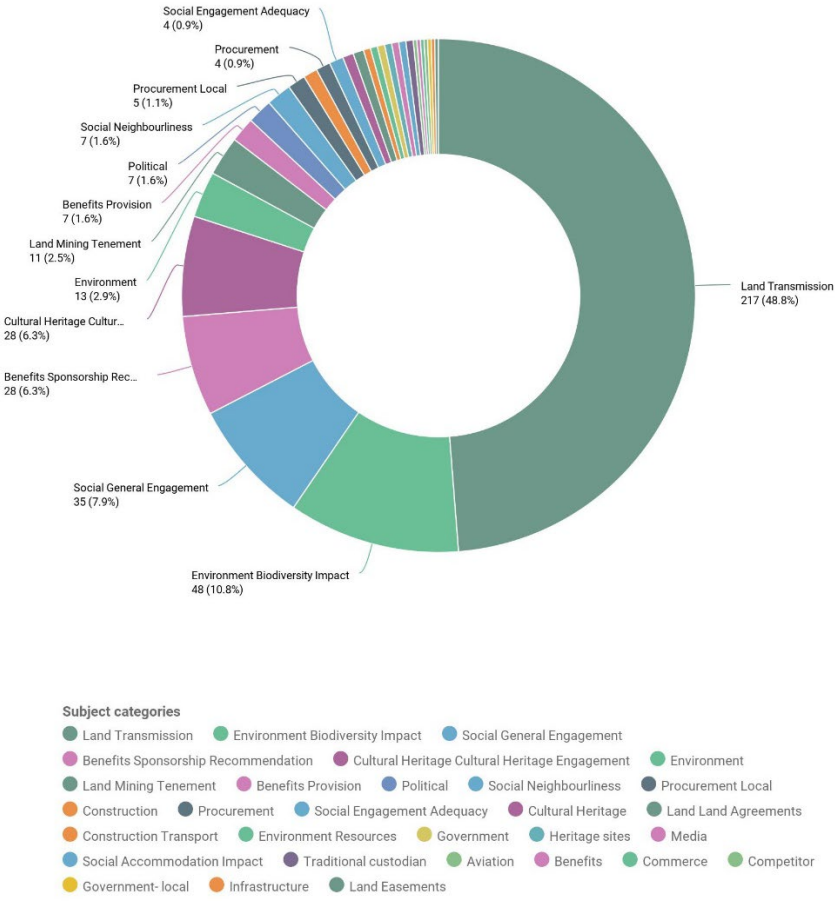


Figure 7: Communication Methods

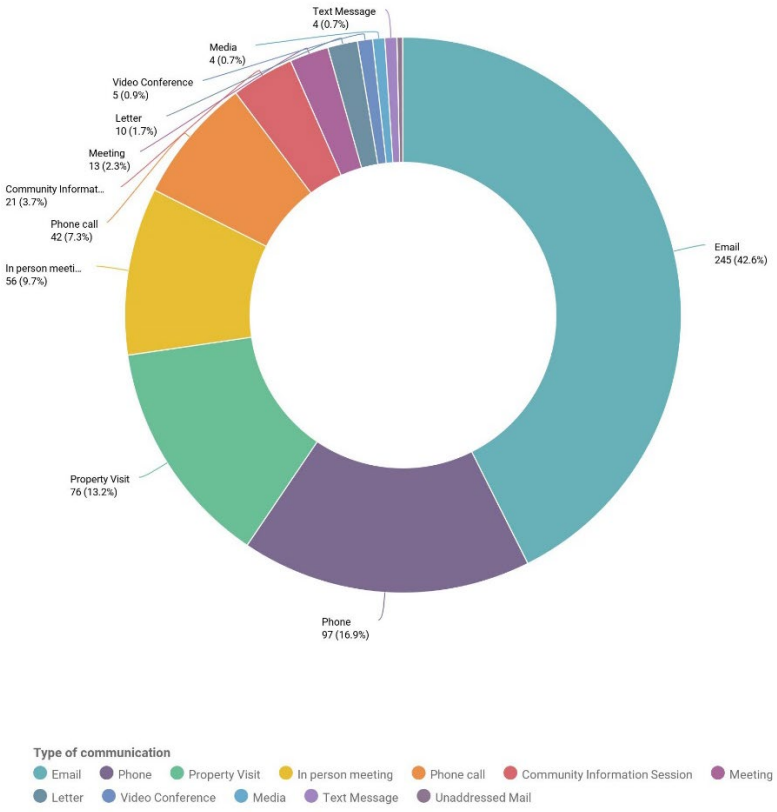
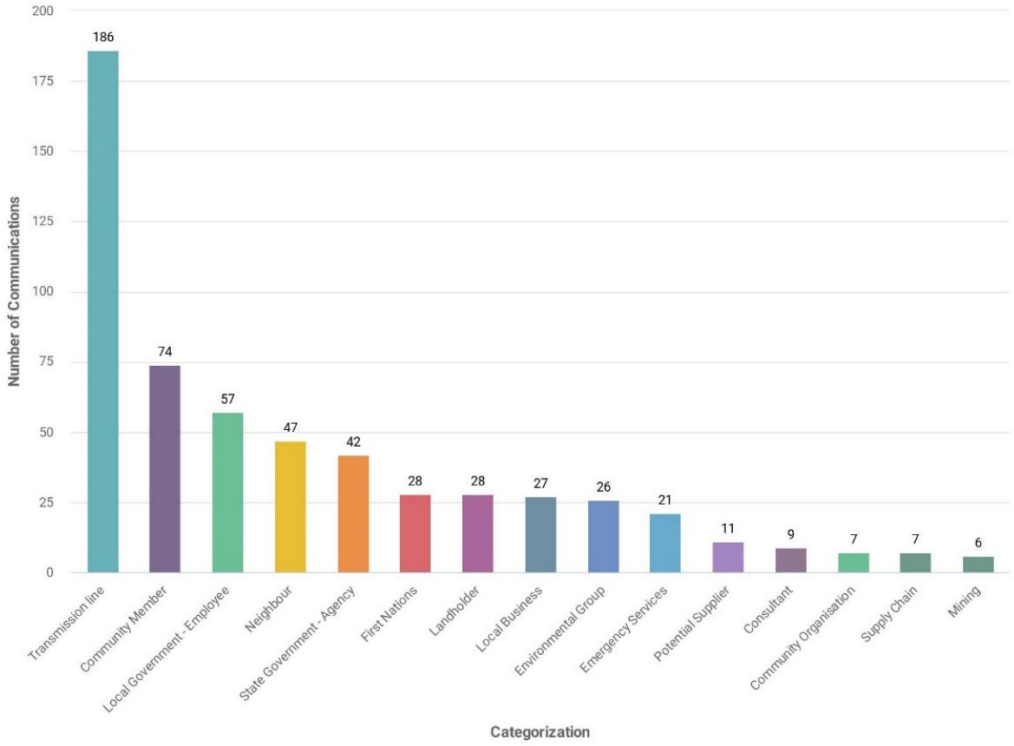


Figure 8: Top 10 types of stakeholders consulted



9 Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

A dedicated stakeholder database, Borealis, has been established for the Project. It is a secure, cloud-based Community Relationships Management (CRM) platform with superior reporting and mapping features. The stakeholder database is being used to track stakeholders, engagement events, and relevant information gained throughout the pre-planning, EES and planning approval assessment phases for the Project.

This database includes a detailed register of communications, recording the contact details of stakeholders, summaries of each consultation or contact with the stakeholder, and any actions that may arise from these meetings and has a mechanism to allow information to be stored confidentially, in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988. This database will continue to be updated and maintained through the development phase of the project, including the EES process, to ensure consistent tracking and recording of all community or stakeholder engagement activities and outcomes, with potential use and application for later stages of the project.

Information that is recorded includes:

- Activity details (including stakeholder engaged, attendees, time and place, mechanism used)
- Discussion points
- Summary of key outcomes, including any actions
- Stakeholder contact details
- Preferences for future engagement.

Data captured in Borealis will be used to monitor engagement trends and report on community sentiment, issues and outcomes. Identified sentiment, issues or impacts can also be mapped to identify spatial patterns.

Example of the reporting capabilities of Borealis using data already captured for engagement on the Cannie Wind Farm are show in Figures 6, 7 and 8. Borealis also captures various other engagement dimensions including sentiments and communication over time as seen in Figure 9 and 10 as examples.

Figure 9: Weekly communications

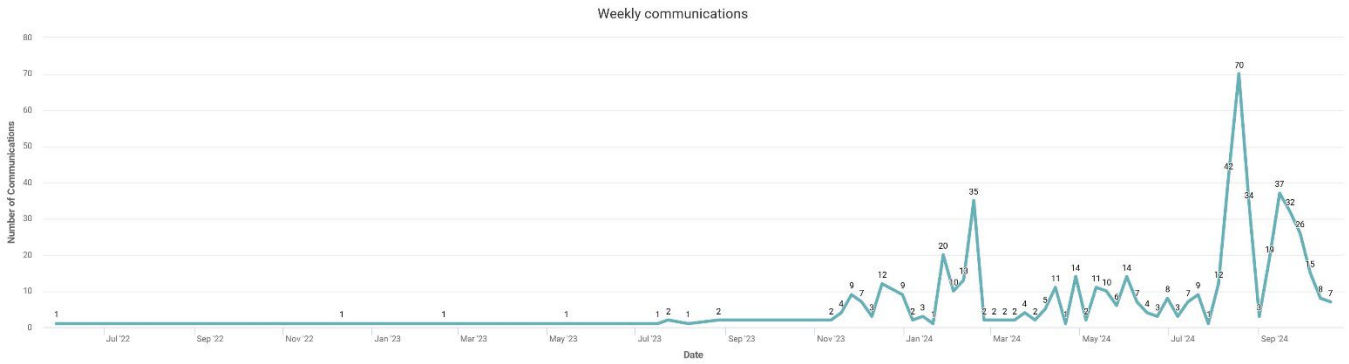
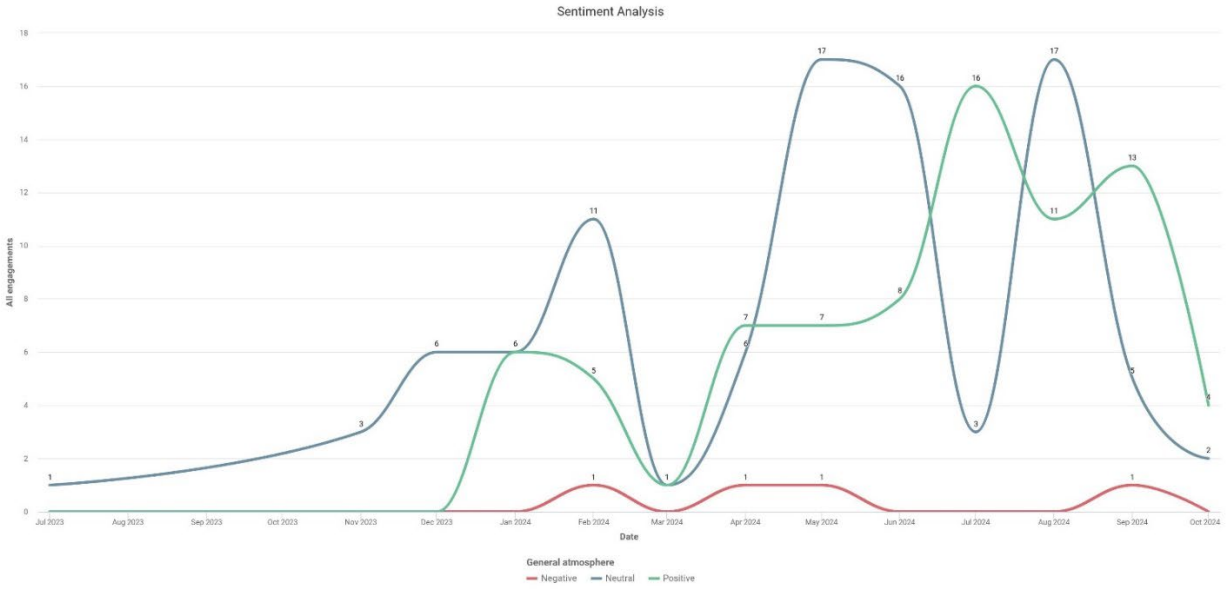


Figure 10: Sentiment analysis



Appendix A: Community Profile

Community profile and demographics

Cannie Wind Farm is located within Gannawarra Shire Council and borders on Swan Hill Rural City Council.

The area of social influence for the Project includes:

- Gannawarra LGA including the main service centre of Kerang
- Southern parts of Swan Hill Rural City LGA including Swan Hill from the perspective of transport routes, supply chains, employment and workers accommodation
- There are 19 ABS localities (SAL) within approximately 10 km of the wind farm boundary and within the transmission line investigation corridor. This includes the localities of Bael Bael SAL20098, Beauchamp SAL20180, Budgerum East SAL20374, Cannie SAL20465, Dingwall SAL20759, Goschen SAL21076, Kunat SAL21407, Lalbert SAL21451, Mystic Park SAL21865, Ninyeunook SAL21948, Normanville SAL21961, Oakvale – SAL22003, PineView SAL22076, Quambatook SAL22131, Sandhill Lake SAL22231, Tittybong SAL22524, Tragowel SAL22568, Tresco SAL22579, Tresco West SAL22580.

This area of influence will be further refined as Project planning proceeds, particularly with reference to the transmission line corridor.

All demographic data is from the ABS 2021 Census, collated using REMPLAN unless otherwise stated.

Gannawarra Shire overview

Figure 1 :Gannawarra Shire Local Government Area

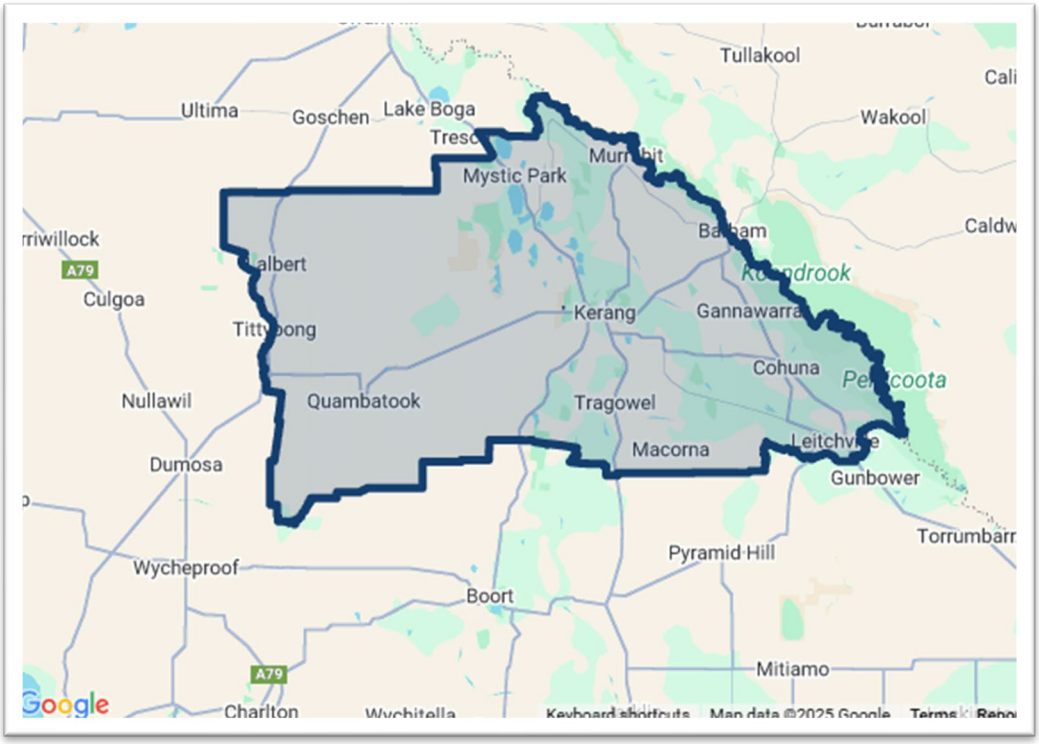


Table 1– Gannawarra Shire LGA – Demographic summary

ABS 2022 Estimated Residential Population:	**10,531**
ABS 2021 Census Place of Usual Residence Population:	**10,683**
Annualised Population Growth Rate (2016–2021):	**0.3%**
Land Area (ha):	**373,759.79**
Census Population Density (persons / ha):	**0.03**
Median Age:	**52 years**
Median Personal Weekly Income:	**$590 ($30,737 pa)**
Labour Force Participation Rate:	**50.51%**
SEIFA index of disadvantage	**952**
SEIFA ranking	**169 out of 547 LGA***

*There are 378 LGAs in Australia which are less disadvantaged

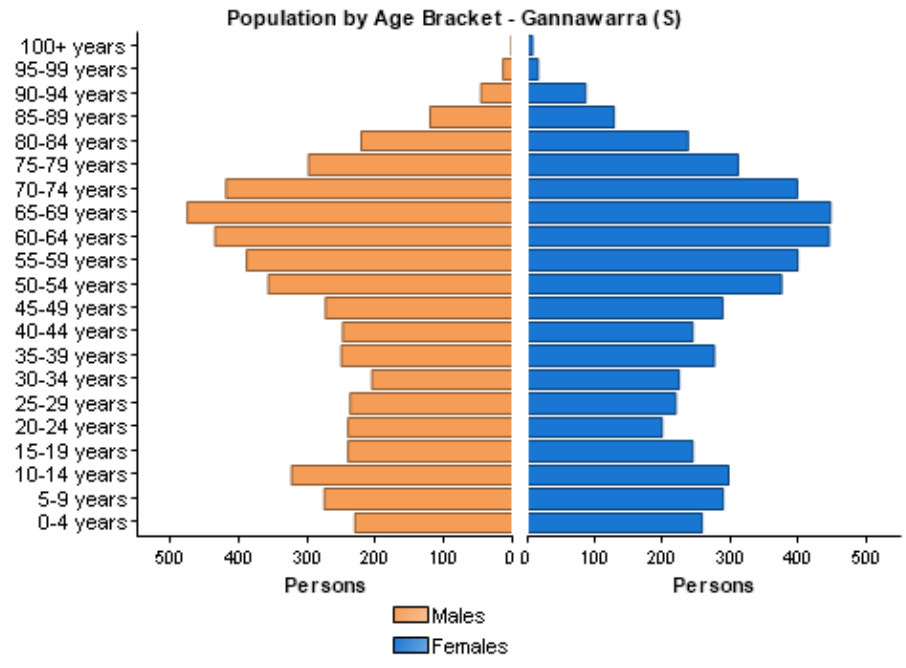
Settlements

The main towns in Gannawarra Shire are Kerang (3960 people) and Cohuna (2415 people), Koondrook (1101 people) opposite Barham on the Murray River. Other towns include Leitchville, Macorna, Quambatook, Lalbert, Lake Charm, Mystic Park and Murrabit.

Population by Age and Gender

The single largest age cohort in Gannawarra Shire is “65-69 years” with 925 people representing 8.66 percent of the population. The median age is 52 years and the overall ratio of males to females is 1 to 1.01. The population pyramid in Figure 5 shows the aging profile of the population. The dominant age of the population needs to be considered when selecting engagement methods with the local community.

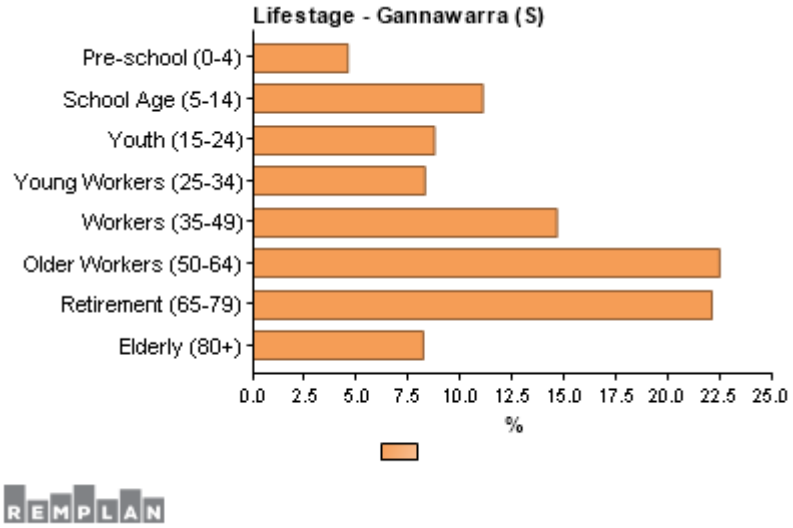
Figure 2: Gannawarra Shire Population Pyramid



Population by Life Stages

Understanding the population by life stage provides valuable insights into the region's requirements for amenity, services, infrastructure, investment, education, workforce and employment opportunities. The largest life stage group in Gannawarra Shire is “Older Workers (50-64)” representing 22.5% percent of the overall population. A similar percentage of the population is in the retirement age bracket. This is significant for construction workforce planning, considering construction is not likely to begin until 2029 and the older working cohorts will be approaching retirement.

Figure 3: Gannawarra Shire Population by Life Stages

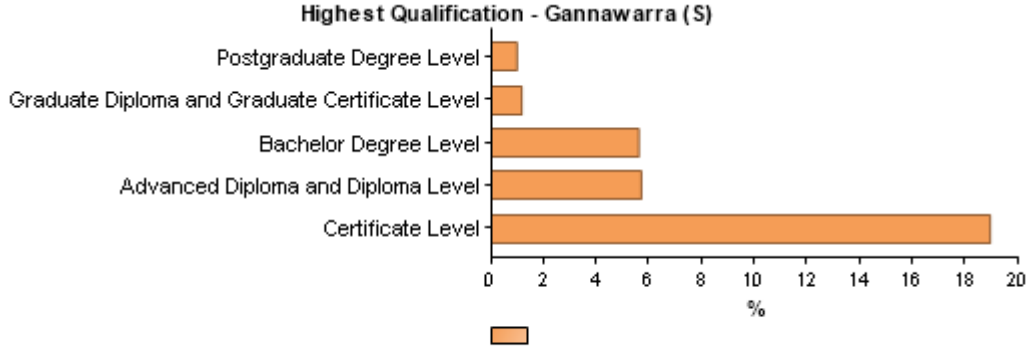


Education – Highest Qualification

Education levels across the community are a key indicator of the propensity of residents to be engaged in the work force, and are also an important factor influencing levels of relative social wellbeing in the region.

In Gannawarra Shire, the largest “highest qualification attained” cohort is “Certificate Level”, representing 18.9% percent of the overall population. This reflects the rural and agricultural industries that dominate the region.

Figure 4: Gannawarra Shire Population – Highest Qualifications

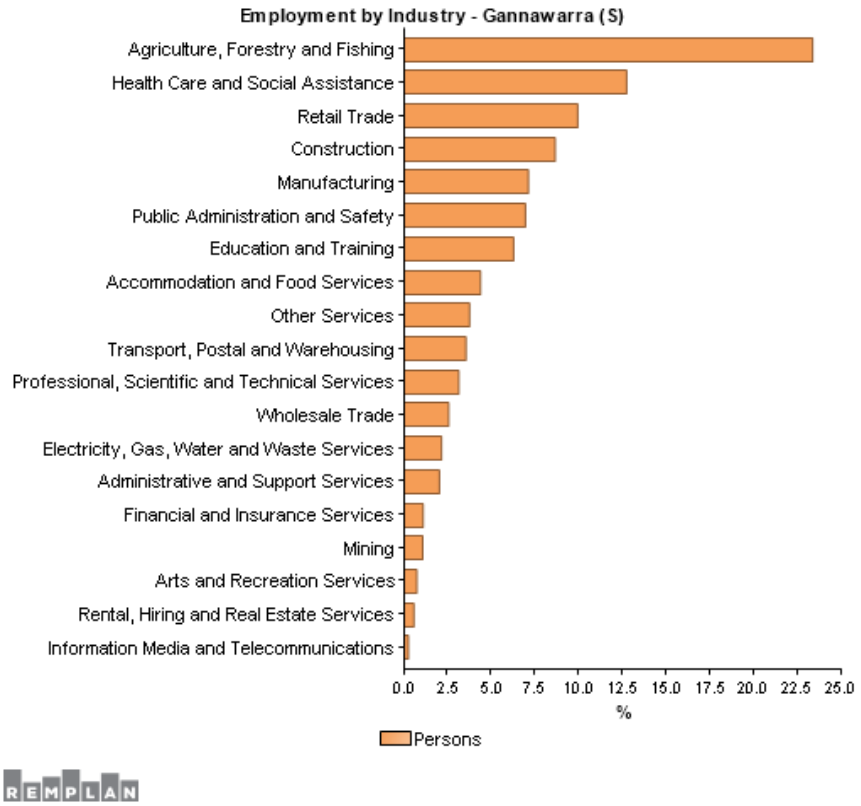


Employment

From 2016 to 2021 the number of working residents increased by 12 (0.3% percent).

The largest industry sector of employment is Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, representing 23.4% percent of total working residents. Health care and retail were the second and third highest employers, with construction and manufacturing ranking 4th and 5th , employing approximately 656 (15%) people in the Shire. There was 3.5% unemployment on census night, which equates to 160 people, with 102 looking for full time work and 58 looking for part time work *(https://profile.id.com.au/gannawarra/employment-status)*.

Figure 5: Gannawarra Shire Population – Employment by Industry



Home ownership and dwelling type

It is estimated that 78.0% percent of residents own their home, either outright or with a mortgage, this is higher that the rate in Victoria (68.3%)

From 2016 the rate of home ownership has increased by 6.0% percent.

In Gannawarra Shire, 92.7% percent of dwellings are separate houses. From 2016 the dwellings that have increased the most are medium density, with 87 new dwellings over this period, reflecting an increase of 48.3% percent.

Staff at both Gannawarra and Swan Hill LGAs have highlighted the tight rental market, upward pressure on rental costs and lack of accommodation available for a construction workforce.

Swan Hill Rural City LGA - Selected demographics

Swan Hill forms a major service centre for the region. Construction of a wind farm on the LGA boundary could impact on housing, workforce availability, transport routes, supply chains and neighbour amenity.

Figure 6: Swan Hill Rural City Local Government Area

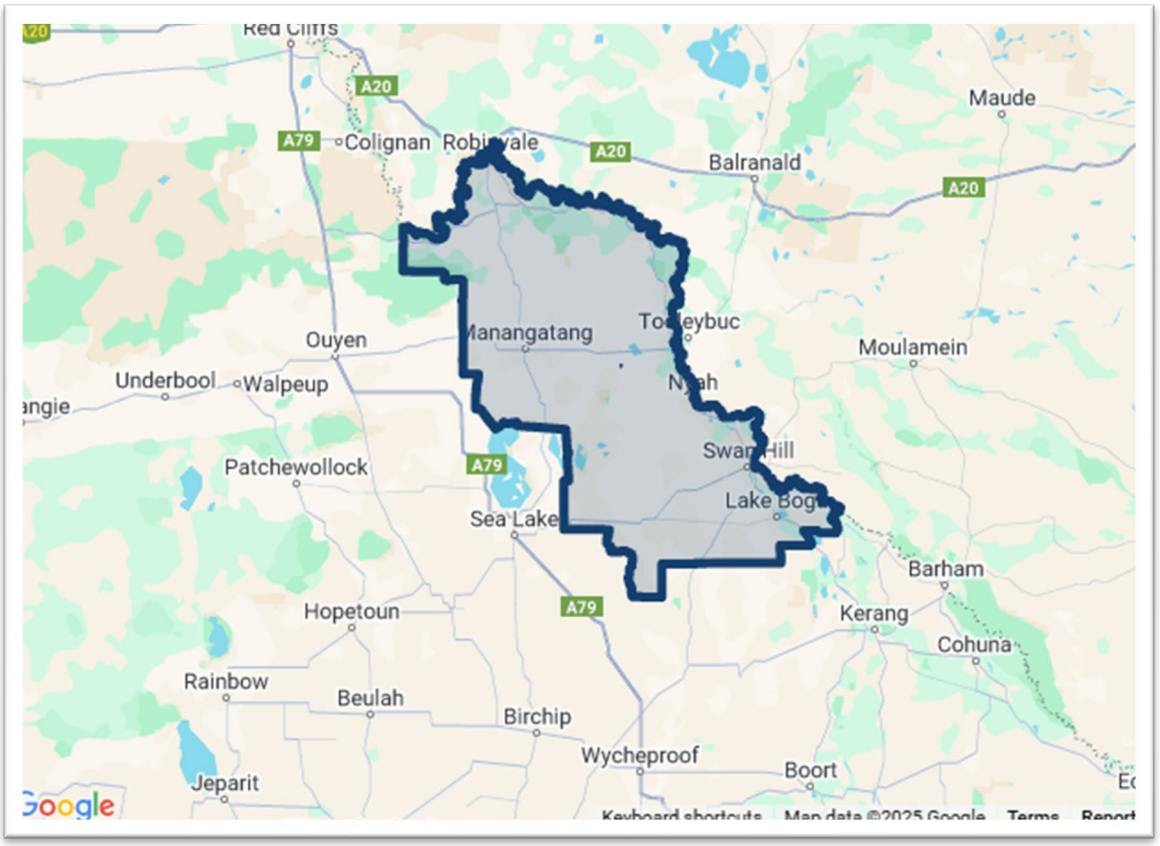


Table 2: Swan Hill Rural City LGA – Demographic summary

ABS 2022 Estimated Residential Population:	**21,225**
ABS 2021 Census Place of Usual Residence Population:	**21,403**
Annualised Population Growth Rate (2016–2021):	**0.8%**
Land Area (ha):	**611,553.73**
Census Population Density (persons / ha):	**0.03**
Median Age:	**39 years**
Median Personal Weekly Income:	**$715 ($37,204 pa)**
Labour Force Participation Rate:	**58.75%**
SEIFA index of disadvantage	**941**
SEIFA ranking	**135 out of 547 LGAs***

*There are 412 LGAs in Australia which are less disadvantaged

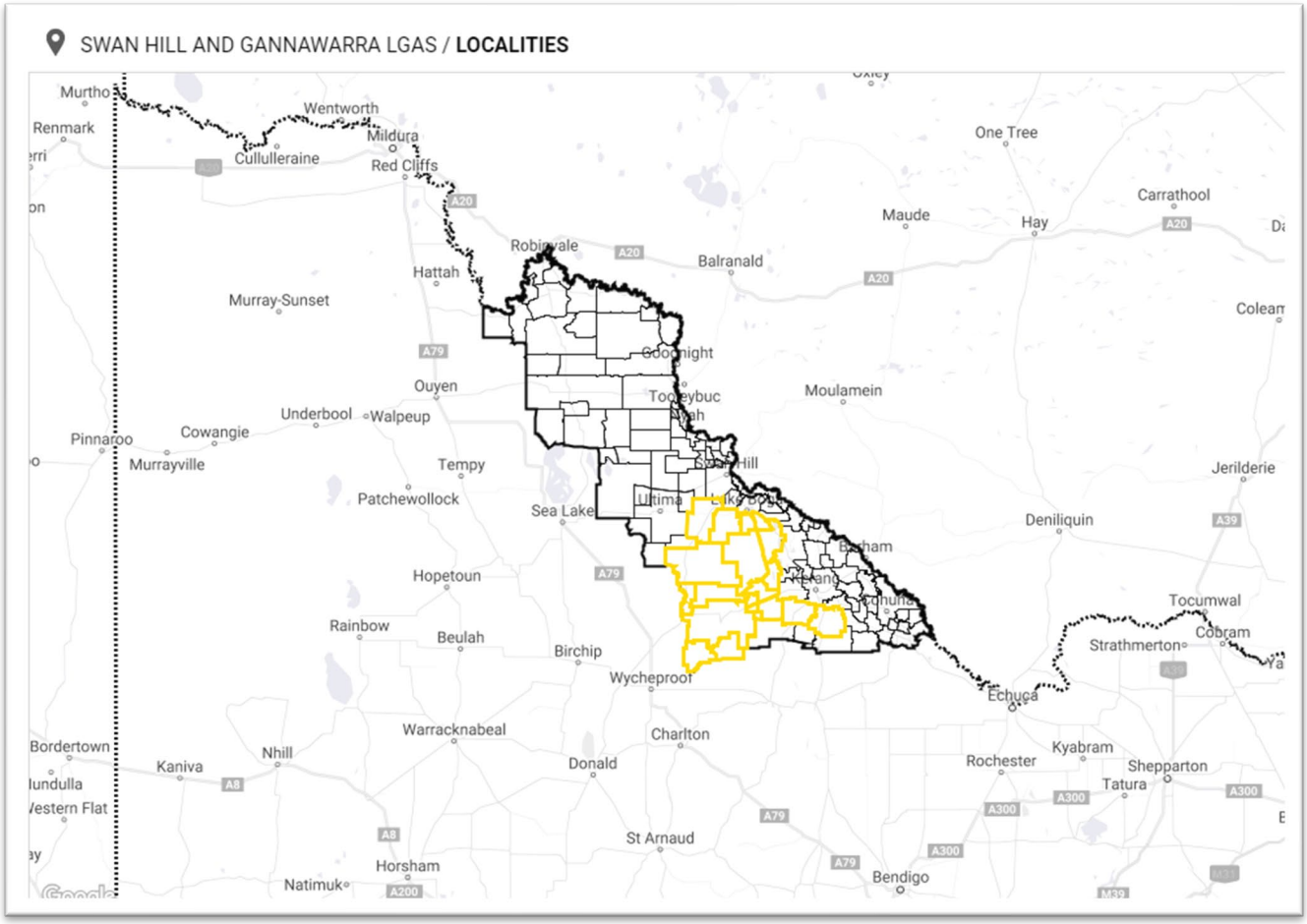
Swan Hill Rural City has about double the populations of Gannawarra Shire. It has a younger age profile compared to Gannawarra Shire with the single largest age cohort being “30-34 years” with 1,569 people

representing 7.33 percent of the population. Similar to Gannawarra Shire the largest life stage group is Older Workers (50-64) representing 19.0% percent of the overall population. However Workers and Younger Workers (25 – 49) together make up 32% of the population, amounting to 6865 people. This presents a greater opportunity for local workforce recruitment in 2029.

Similar to Gannawarra Shire, by far the largest cohort of qualifications is at the certificate level at 16.5%. Employment is dominated by the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industries, with healthcare, retail and education/training forming the 4 largest industries above construction and manufacturing.

Selected localities

Figure 7: ABS Localities in close proximity to the Project boundary



Together, the selected localities around the wind farm boundary and transmission line investigation area have a population of 1312, which is only 4.1% of the total population of the two LGAs, however forms 22.33% of the land area of the combined LGAs. The population of the area has declined since 2016 from 1364 or 4.4%. This indicates a very low population density in most areas around the wind farm, which will assist in mitigating amenity impacts. The main nearby towns and settlements are Quambatook to the south (229 people in SAL), Lalbert to the west (138 people), Mystic Park (212) to the north east, Tresco (162) and Tresco West (153) to the north.

The largest 5 year age bracket is 60 – 64 year olds making up 10.8% of the population (142 people). The largest life stage cohort is older workers (50 – 64) at 26.3% (345 people), with 15.9% in the retirement age bracket (65 – 79) and the same percentage of workers aged 35-49.

45.5% of workers in the area are employed in Agriculture, while 9.1 % are employed in healthcare or social assistance. 1.9% of people were unemployed looking for either part time or full time work. An aging workforce focused on agriculture coupled with a low unemployment rate will result in difficulties if trying to source workforce from the local area.

50.8% of people (273) recorded their highest qualification as Certificate level, with 11.7% with a Bachelor Degree and 15% with a Diploma or Advanced Diploma.

Opportunities and Challenges

Table 3 outlines the key challenges and opportunities for the Gannawarra Shire and the area of social influence around the wind farm acquired from the review of ABS Census data, other secondary sources of data and RES' understanding developed during the development of other wind farm projects in Australia. These are categorised under the framework of human, social, economic and physical capital.

Table 3 - Opportunities and Challenges

Capital	Opportunities	Challenges
Human	• Low population density around the development site • Opportunity to support further education and employment • Opportunity to retain and bring younger people into the community through wind farm development	• Higher rates of educational and occupational disadvantage compared to majority of LGAs in Australia • Lower rates of tertiary education than the general populations. • Limited local tertiary education options • Aging population/older population profile (median age 51 vs 38 in Victoria) • Low population growth and population decline in smaller centres.
Social	• High rates of youth engagement in the selected localities (2.2% disengagement) • Community cohesion evidenced by higher rates of volunteerism (almost double the rate in Victoria) and lower rates of population mobility. • Some localities have a high level of socio- economic advantage eg Normanville, Ninyeunook and Pine View • Opportunity to increase youth engagement in the Shire and Kerang	• Lower rates of youth engagement in Kerang (14.3% disengagement) and Gannawarra Shire (10.9% disengagement) • Socio economic disadvantage in the Shire and certain localities e.g. Kerang township; Tragowel, Mystic Park and Dingwell • Access to health services • Difficulty in attracting and retaining General Practitioners, Allied health staff and specialists • Difficulty in attracting other skilled professionals to the region eg town planner, engineers, teachers.

Economic	• Region has strong and diverse industries including agriculture, health and education. • Lower cost of living (rent/mortgage payments). • Opportunity to improve economic disadvantage through wind farm development	• Workforce availability • Potential for labour force competition with agriculture during construction • Lower median weekly incomes in Gannawarra LGA compared to Swan Hill and Victoria • Increasing age profile of the population leading to decrease in skilled employee base • More economic disadvantage compared to the majority of LGAs in Australia.
Physical	• High rates of home ownership • Low rent and mortgage payments • Opportunity to support upgrades to community facilities and infrastructure in disadvantages rural towns and localities	• Housing availability • Clustering of renewable energy developments and transmission • Road safety and road upgrades • Limited public transport options

Potential Social Impacts and Benefits

Possible impacts and benefits have been identified against eight social impact categories. Impacts have been identified from this preliminary social baseline assessment and RES 'experience of perceived and actual social impacts of other renewable energy projects. This assessment is generic and not based on primary data from research and community surveys. A full social impact assessment will be conducted as part of the development application process.

Table 4 - Preliminary Identification of Social Impacts

Impact category	Possible impacts
Way of Life	• Changes to land use • Changes to residential amenity due to noise or visual impact • Increased noise, dust and traffic during construction • Increased road safety risk due to heavy vehicle traffic
Community	• Intergenerational equity and the effects of climate change • Local benefit sharing opportunities • Support for infrastructure upgrades • Rates payable to Local Government to use for services and infrastructure • Changing sense of community and sense of place • Changing community cohesion • Increase population especially during construction
Accessibility	• Construction workforce accommodation and housing • Impact of competition on cost and availability of housing • Increased utilisation of local services, infrastructure and facilities by construction workforce • Access to properties and public spaces • Availability of local air services

Culture	• Changes to the cultural values of the community • First Nation cultural sites and customs • Support and benefits for First Nations communities
Health and wellbeing	• Physical, emotional or mental health effects of the Project including perceived levels of public safety • Impact on health services • Support for health service expansion
Surroundings/ Environment	• Visual changes to the rural character • Increase in industrial infrastructure • Effects on local flora and fauna or natural environments • Effects on water availability and quality • Waste management
Livelihoods	• Opportunities for employment • Competition for skilled workers • Local procurement • Workers spending in local businesses • Compensation for land acquisition and leasing • Neighbour shared benefits • Perceived impacts on property values, rating and insurance
Decision-making systems	• Ability of community members/ groups to engage in consultation processes and decision making • Capacity of local government to support application and regulatory processes before and during development • Accessibility of complaint and grievance processes
Cumulative Effects	• Change in rural character of the region from clusters of renewable energy development and transmission lines • Matters relating to other development projects nearby or being constructed at the same time e.g. heavy vehicle traffic; worker accommodation; landscape impacts

Appendix B – Communication examples

Newsletters

Newsletter 1 February 2024 - https://www.cannie-windfarm.com/media/mnyn45ny/cannie-newsletter_-feb-2024_final.pdf

Cannie Wind Farm Project

COMMUNITY UPDATE FEBRUARY 2024

res power for good

In planning for Australia's clean energy future, RES acknowledges its rich history. We pay our respects to the Wamba Wamba and Barapa Barapa Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which the Cannie Wind Farm Project is proposed.

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

up to 1300 MW Capacity | up to 200 TURBINES Capacity | Battery Storage under investigation | 600,000+ HOMES supplied with electricity | $1200 M Investment | 500+ Jobs during construction

PROJECT SUMMARY

RES is proposing to develop the Cannie Wind Farm (the Project), approximately 25 kilometres northwest of Kerang, in the Gannawarra Shire Council area, within the Victorian Murray River Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). The wind farm will connect with the proposed Victoria - NSW Interconnector West (VNI-West) Transmission Network Project.

The proposed Project would cover approximately 17,000 hectares of privately owned land, with the wind farm to co-exist with existing farming activities.

The Project will be assessed under Victoria's Planning and Environment Act (1987) with a decision made by the Minister for Planning. An Environmental Effect Statement (EES) may be required under Victoria's Environment Effects Act (1978). Approval under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999 (EPBC) will also be sought.

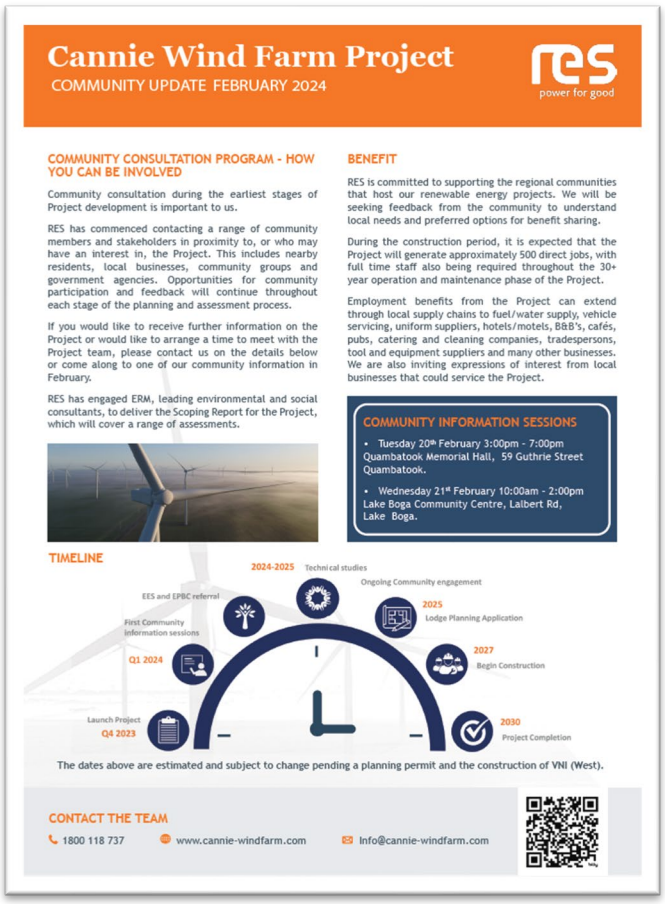
The Project is currently in the scoping phase which includes preliminary environmental and social assessments. An EES referral to the Department of Transport and Planning (DPT) is planned for March 2024.

RES has commenced initial feasibility studies for the proposed Project and worked with local landholders to establish a project footprint. RES is also seeking input and feedback from the local community on the Project as part of its planning and development process.

WHO WE ARE

RES is the world's largest independent renewable energy company, active in 14 countries around the globe.

Establishing operations in Australia in 2004, RES leveraged global knowledge and talent to develop projects in the early phases of the renewable energy industry in Australia, including Taralga Wind Farm in New South Wales, Ararat Wind Farm in Victoria and Emerald Solar Farm in Queensland. More recently, RES has successfully developed Murra Warra Wind Farm in Victoria and Dulacca Wind Farm in Queensland



Cannie Wind Farm Project

COMMUNITY UPDATE FEBRUARY 2024

res power for good

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROGRAM - HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

Community consultation during the earliest stages of Project development is important to us.

RES has commenced contacting a range of community members and stakeholders in proximity to, or who may have an interest in, the Project. This includes nearby residents, local businesses, community groups and government agencies. Opportunities for community participation and feedback will continue throughout each stage of the planning and assessment process.

If you would like to receive further information on the Project or would like to arrange a time to meet with the Project team, please contact us on the details below or come along to one of our community information in February.

RES has engaged ERM, leading environmental and social consultants, to deliver the Scoping Report for the Project, which will cover a range of assessments.

BENEFIT

RES is committed to supporting the regional communities that host our renewable energy projects. We will be seeking feedback from the community to understand local needs and preferred options for benefit sharing.

During the construction period, it is expected that the Project will generate approximately 500 direct jobs, with full time staff also being required throughout the 30+ year operation and maintenance phase of the Project.

Employment benefits from the Project can extend through local supply chains to fuel/water supply, vehicle servicing, uniform suppliers, hotels/motels, B&B's, cafés, pubs, catering and cleaning companies, tradespersons, tool and equipment suppliers and many other businesses. We are also inviting expressions of interest from local businesses that could service the Project.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

- Tuesday 20th February 3:00pm - 7:00pm Quambatook Memorial Hall, 59 Guthrie Street Quambatook.
- Wednesday 21st February 10:00am - 2:00pm Lake Boga Community Centre, Lalbert Rd, Lake Boga.

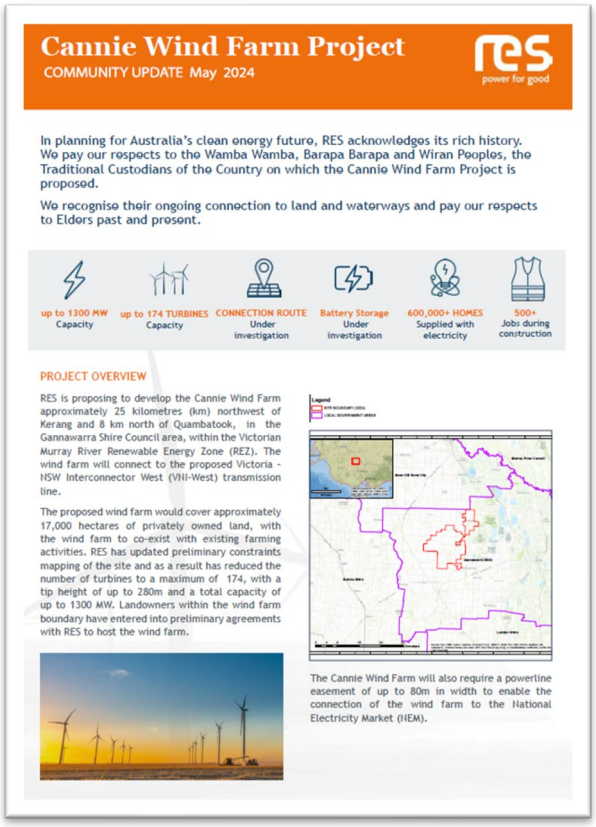
TIMELINE

The dates above are estimated and subject to change pending a planning permit and the construction of VNI (West).

CONTACT THE TEAM

1800 118 737 | www.cannie-windfarm.com | Info@cannie-windfarm.com

Newsletter 2 - May 2024 - https://www.cannie-windfarm.com/media/oxbd30xc/cannie-newsletter-may-2024-3-page-web-version.pdf



Cannie Wind Farm Project

COMMUNITY UPDATE May 2024

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In planning for Australia's clean energy future, RES acknowledges its rich history. We pay our respects to the Wamba Wamba, Barapa Barapa and Wiran Pooplos, the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which the Cannie Wind Farm Project is proposed.

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

up to 1300 MW Capacity | up to 174 TURBINES Capacity | CONNECTION ROUTE Under investigation | Battery Storage Under investigation | 600,000+ HOMES Supplied with electricity | 500+ Jobs during construction

PROJECT OVERVIEW

RES is proposing to develop the Cannie Wind Farm approximately 25 kilometres (km) northwest of Kerang and 8 km north of Quambatook, in the Gannawarra Shire Council area, within the Victorian Murray River Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). The wind farm will connect to the proposed Victoria - NSW Interconnector West (VNI-West) transmission line.

The proposed wind farm would cover approximately 17,000 hectares of privately owned land, with the wind farm to co-exist with existing farming activities. RES has updated preliminary constraints mapping of the site and as a result has reduced the number of turbines to a maximum of 174, with a tip height of up to 280m and a total capacity of up to 1300 MW. Landowners within the wind farm boundary have entered into preliminary agreements with RES to host the wind farm.

The Cannie Wind Farm will also require a powerline easement of up to 80m in width to enable the connection of the wind farm to the National Electricity Market (NEM).

Cannie Wind Farm Project

COMMUNITY UPDATE May 2024

res power for good

Environmental Referral

Following on from recent Community Information Sessions in Quambatook and Lake Boga, RES has submitted a referral to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) under the Environmental Effects Act (1978).

The referral covers the wind farm development area, as well as a study areas for the location of a high voltage powerline to connect the wind farm to the proposed VNI-West transmission network.

When the referral is live on the DTP website we will let you know via the local newspapers and updating the News section of our website.

We encourage you to view the referral application and contact us using the email or phone number below, if you have any questions or comments.

Powerline Investigation Area

RES has identified 3 broad study areas for investigations relating to the high voltage powerline route from the wind farm site to a connection point with the proposed VNI West transmission line. The 3 study areas are displayed on the attached map.

Potential routes and impacts will be discussed with landowners in these areas to inform the most suitable route. RES does not have compulsory acquisition powers to secure a powerline easement. The Cannie Wind Farm connection will be located with the agreement of landowners and permission will be sought from landowners prior to any proposed site assessments.

During these investigations RES and our consultants will conduct the following studies to determine the most appropriate route that minimises visual, environmental, cultural, social and land use impacts:

- Environmental constraints mapping and ecological studies.
- Land use investigations such as agricultural practices.
- Cultural heritage assessments.
- Visual assessments.

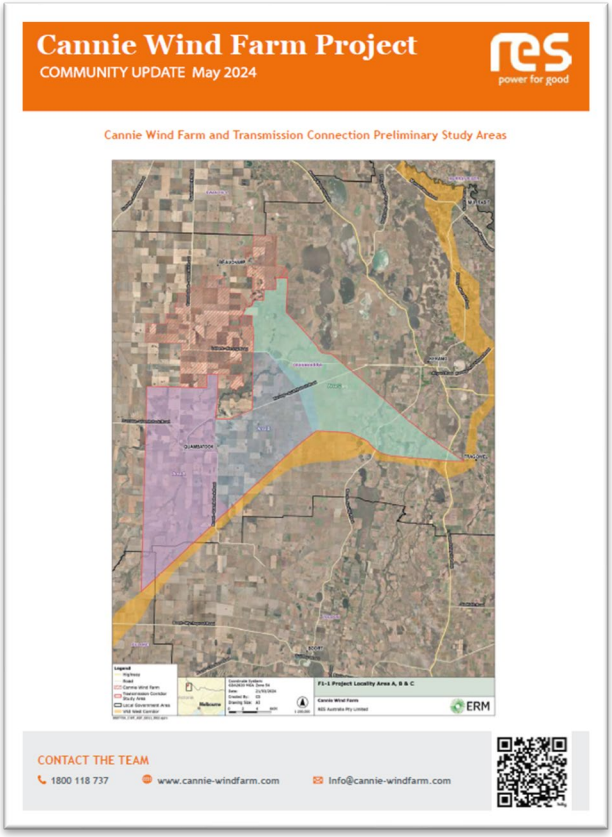
We are keen to hear from landowners in these study areas to understand the constraints to, and opportunities for powerline development in the area. We will begin community consultation in these study areas shortly.

If you would like to stay informed about the Project via email please register your details using the form on the "Contact Us" section of our webpage or send us an email using the details below.

Who are we:

RES is the world's largest independent renewable energy company, active in 24 countries around the globe.

Establishing operations in Australia in 2004, RES leveraged global knowledge and talent to develop projects in the early phases of the renewable energy industry in Australia, including Taralga Wind Farm in New South Wales, Ararat Wind Farm in Victoria and Emerald Solar Farm in Queensland. More recently, RES has successfully developed Murra Warra Wind Farm in Victoria and Dulacca Wind Farm in Queensland



Cannie Wind Farm Project

COMMUNITY UPDATE May 2024

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Cannie Wind Farm and Transmission Connection Preliminary Study Areas

CONTACT THE TEAM

1800 118 737 | www.cannie-windfarm.com | Info@cannie-windfarm.com

Media Releases

30 January 2024

Proposal seeks wind energy development

By Peter Bannan
pbannan@theguardian.com.au

THE renewable-energy company behind a planned wind farm in the Gannawarra Shire will hold community information sessions next month.

RES (Renewable Energy Systems) has proposed the Cannie Wind Farm, about 25km west of Kerang and 10km north of Quambatook.

It would feature up to 200 turbines and a capacity of 1.3 gigawatts across 17,000 hectares of land that is predominantly used for grazing and cropping.

Cannie Wind Farm is expected to generate enough electricity to supply about 800,000 Victorian homes.

RES said it had started technical and environmental studies of the project area and intends to lodge an Environmental Effects Statement and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation referrals in the first quarter of 2024 and a planning permit application in 2025.

The company anticipated construction to start in 2027 and to be operating in 2030.

"This timing is dependent on the commissioning of the VNI West transmission line," RES said in a statement.

"RES has engaged with potential participating landowners and Traditional Owners and has written to neighbours with project information and contact details."

The company will hold two community information sessions on February 20 and 21.

"If developed, the Cannie Wind Farm will deliver significant local benefits within the region through local employment opportunities and benefit-sharing programs with the local community," the company said.

RES said the site was ideal for a renewable-energy development.

This included good wind resources, interface with the proposed VNI West line, proximity to transport access with minimal impact to local roads and access to major roads, consideration for distance buffering (2km) of wind turbines to the nearest non-involved dwellings and potentially low environmental impacts (the site has minimal tree and shrub coverage and has been historically heavily grazed and cropped).

A wind farm is proposed between Kerang and Quambatook, featuring more than 200 turbines.

11 June 2024

Wind farm steps

By Peter Bannan
pbannan@theguardian.com.au

DEVELOPERS of a proposed wind farm near Quambatook have submitted a referral to the Department of Transport and Planning under the Environmental Effects Act.

RES is proposing to develop the Cannie Wind Farm about 25km west of Kerang and 8km north of Quambatook.

The wind farm has the potential for up to 174 turbines and a capacity of 1.3GW, with a connection route to the proposed VNI West transmission line to transmit electricity from the project into the national electricity grid.

In a statement last week, RES said an update had been distributed to neighbours and people within the connection study area to inform them of the progress of the development.

"Following on from recent community information sessions in Quambatook and Lake Boga, RES has submitted a referral to the Department of Transport and Planning under the Environmental Effects Act (1978)," a spokesperson said.

"The referral covers the wind farm development area, as well as a connection study area for the location of a transmission line to connect the wind farm to the proposed VNI West transmission network."

The spokesperson said the referral could be viewed online at www.planning.vic.gov.au.

RES said potential routes and impacts would be discussed with landowners in these connection study areas to determine the most suitable route.

"RES does not have compulsory acquisition powers to secure a powerline easement," the spokesperson said.

"The Cannie Wind Farm transmission line connection will be located with the agreement of landowners and permission will be sought from landowners prior to any proposed site assessments."

RES has identified three broad study areas for investigations relating to the powerline route from the wind farm site to a connection point with the proposed VNI West transmission line.

RES said during these investigations it and consultants would conduct studies to determine the most appropriate route that minimised visual, environmental, cultural, social and land use impacts, including environmental constraints mapping and ecological studies, land use investigations such as agricultural practices and cultural heritage assessments, and visual assessments.

The community can make direct contact with the project team at info@cannie-windfarm.com or 1800 118 737.

Solar project work begins

CONSTRUCTION of another large-scale solar plant has begun, with fencing having been erected at the site south of Kerang.

The Old Echuca Road site will comprise 53,766 modules and produce 37MWp (megawatt peak).

A spokesperson for developer British Solar Renewables said 3000 trees and shrubs would be planted around the perimeter of the project.

"This is over and above minimum requirements and double the amount required under the DA (development application)," the spokesperson said.

"We are exploring other strategies to improve biodiversity across the site."

According to BSP, it would enhance local infrastructure, including upgrading the bellmouth intersection off Lodden Valley Highway for improved accessibility and safety.

The plant was projected to generate enough clean and reliable energy to offset the annual consumption of about 16,000 homes and save 66,380 tonnes of CO2-equivalent emissions annually.

The Old Echuca Road site will comprise 53,766 modules and produce 37MWp (megawatt peak).

The developers were also exploring sustainable land management practices, including sheep grazing, to manage grass and weed growth within the solar farm.

Gannawarra Council executive manager of economic development Roger Griffiths said renewable energy projects added diversity to the economy, creating new jobs and business potential.

"It increases the shire's investment profile and brings new development to the area, and substantial rates revenue will be generated through the development of these projects," Mr Griffiths said.

"Business leverage will be a great benefit to all the businesses throughout the shire.

"The ability to supply goods and services to the large-scale solar projects will allow other businesses to grow and flourish in the area."