

Environmental Assessment



Photograph of the project area

Caring for the natural environment

Australia's electricity market is in transition to clean, renewable sources of energy to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The impacts of climate change, including rising temperatures and severe weather events, are among the greatest threats to biodiversity, threatened species and other wildlife.

Queensland is blessed with both renewable energy resources and habitat for a variety of native wildlife. Increasing renewable energy capacity and biodiversity conservation are both critically important and compatible objectives, it just requires careful planning and management, and the right approach. The project area is within the candidate Central Queensland Renewable Energy Zone, where the wind resource overlaps vegetation (see map overleaf), and minimising impacts to local flora and fauna within the project area is a priority for Ark Energy.

The project team is committed to collaborating with environment stakeholders, ecology specialists, local knowledge holders and host landowners to implement responsible strategies to mitigate construction impacts and a key aim of the project will be to achieve net positive outcomes for biodiversity and key species in the project area over the longer term.

Environmental assessment

Comprehensive and rigorous assessment of the potential environmental impacts – including on flora and fauna species and the environment itself – both within and downstream of the project area is required by both the Queensland and Australian Governments.

Queensland's *State code 23: Wind farm development* requires assessment of potential impacts to avifauna (birds and bats), habitat and corridors, and on-site vegetation.

Requirements include field surveys, species-specific studies, strategies to minimise and mitigate impacts, and preparation of technical reports and preliminary management plans.

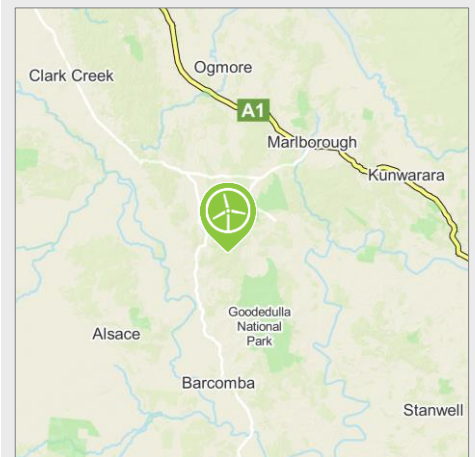
The Australian Government's Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has determined that the proposal will also require assessment and approval under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), with assessment via an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For more information on this please see overleaf.

Environmental assessment for the proposal will involve about two years of work by specialist ecologists and survey teams. It will include regional ecosystem mapping, field studies, surveys across multiple seasons and targeted investigations for key species. The work will incorporate input from scientists, experts, local resource managers and knowledge holders.

As more findings from the ecological assessment work become available the project's design may be refined and modified accordingly to avoid sensitive ecological areas or key habitat for particular species.

Often the rigorous survey work required across a project area for an environmental assessment also provides a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of biodiversity in the area and adds to scientific knowledge for key species.

Location



The Boomer Green Energy Hub project area is made up of large cattle grazing properties in the Central Highlands region of Central Queensland, and is located about 100 km north-east of Rockhampton and 30 km south-west of Marlborough.

The project area is west of Eugene State Forest, Develin State Forest and Goodedulla National Park, and east of Moultrie State Forest. The project will not impact on these protected areas however the environmental impact assessment will take into consideration any key species that use these areas as habitat and might also use parts of the host properties.

With ambitious renewable energy targets to meet necessary carbon emissions reduction targets, an existing 275 kV overhead transmission line crosses the project area, offering comparatively faster connection to the national grid.

Planning & assessment

Queensland Government (wind) Local councils (solar - tbc)

- 1 Site selection, initial concept and preliminary investigations ✓
- 2 Pre-lodgment meeting ✓
- 3 Studies and technical assessments (prescribed by planning requirements) **WE ARE HERE**
- 4 Development application and assessments lodged
- 5 Requests for further information (if required) and response
- 6 Assessment
- 7 Determination

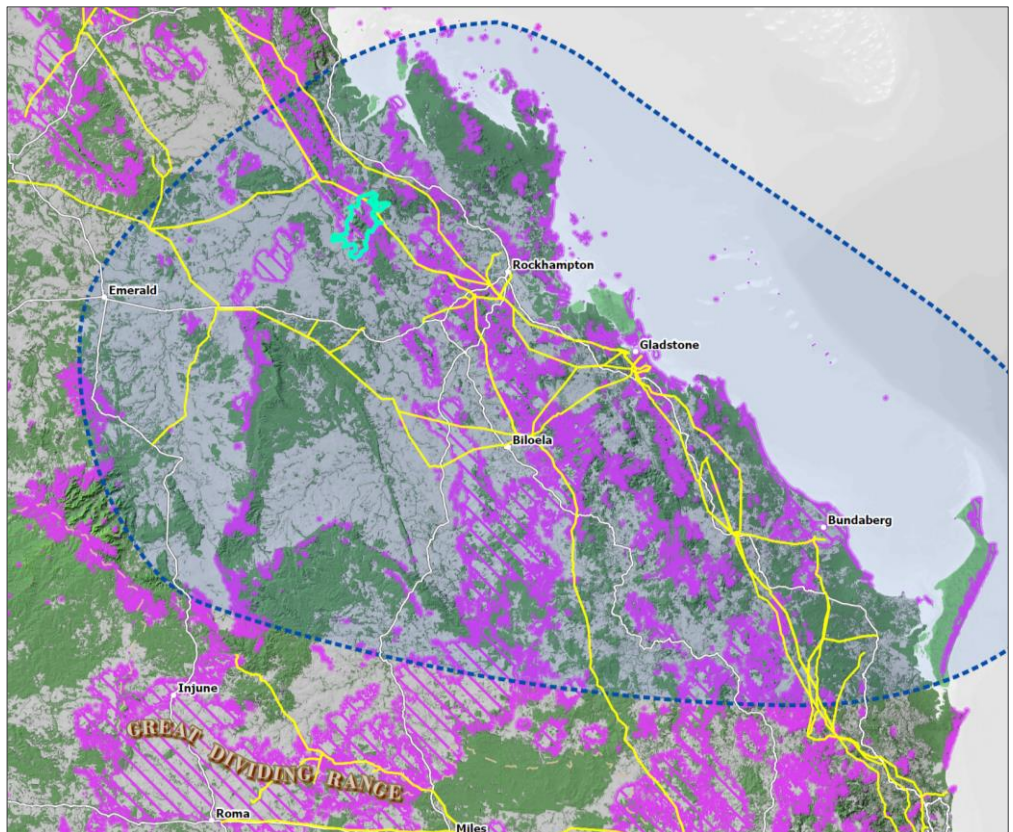


Australian Government

- 1 Referral to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) for review under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) ✓
- 2 Decision and advice on assessment pathway: *Determined a controlled action with assessment by Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). EBPC no 2022/09396.* **WE ARE HERE**
- 3 Assessment work for preparation of EIS
- 4 Draft EIS submitted for adequacy review
- 5 Requests from DCCEEW for further information (if required) and responses
- 6 EIS accepted by DCCEEW and placed on public exhibition
- 7 Response to submissions (if required) and lodgment of updated EIS
- 8 Final EIS submitted
- 9 Determination

Commonwealth assessment

The Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has determined the proposal to be a controlled action under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). This means the proposal will require assessment and approval under the EPBC Act before it can proceed. The EPBC Act protects key areas and species considered Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) and the controlling provisions for the decision are: listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 & 18A); listed migratory species (sections 20 & 20A); Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (sections 24B & 24C); World Heritage properties (sections 12 & 15A); National Heritage places (sections 15B & 15C). DCCEEW will assess the proposal by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS assessment process is rigorous and enables public participation. DCCEEW will provide tailored assessment guidelines outlining detailed requirements for the EIS. After the draft EIS has been lodged and accepted by DCCEEW it will be placed on public exhibition for comment. Ark Energy will then produce a final EIS that takes comments into consideration. Final guidelines for the EIS are due to be issued and will be available from the project's page in the EPBC Public Portal: epbcpportal.awe.gov.au. (EBPC no. 2022/09396).



- Boomer Range Energy Hub
- Central QREZ
- Mean Wind Speed (>7m/s @150m)
- High Voltage Transmission Line
- Highway
- Regulated Vegetation - Remnant

The Boomer Green Energy Hub project area is within the candidate Central Queensland Renewable Energy Zone. The wind resource overlaps vegetation, making balancing the development with conservation of the natural environment an important focus.

More information

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Email - info@boomerhub.com.au

Newsletters – register at arkenergy.com.au/mailling-list-details for email news, or to receive newsletters by post, email your postal address and a request to be added to the mail (post) list.

Website – boomerhub.com.au or scan QR code right



Scan QR code to visit the project website