

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. Typically, 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 Government 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.

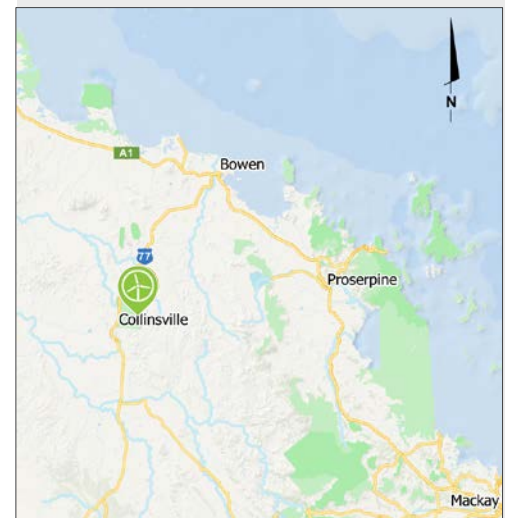
The proposal will also be referred to the Australian Government's Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) for review under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The EPBC Act protects key areas and species considered Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). Based on the referral DCCEEW will determine the appropriate pathway for the Commonwealth's environmental assessment.

Environmental assessment for the proposal will involve 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 Collinsville Green Energy Hub project area is made up of large pastoral properties located near Collinsville and about 80 km south-west of Bowen.

It is within the Northern Queensland Renewable Energy Zone, one of the key regions in Queensland identified as optimal for new renewable energy generation. The project would involve ~280 wind turbines and solar with an estimated output capacity of ~3 GW.



Planning & assessment

Queensland Government

- 1 Site selection, initial concept and preliminary investigations **WE ARE HERE**
- 2 Pre-lodgment meeting with the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA)
- 3 Studies and technical assessments (prescribed by SARA State code 23)
- 4 Development application and assessments lodged with SARA
- 5 Request from SARA for further information (if required) and response
- 6 Assessment
- 7 Determination



Australian Government

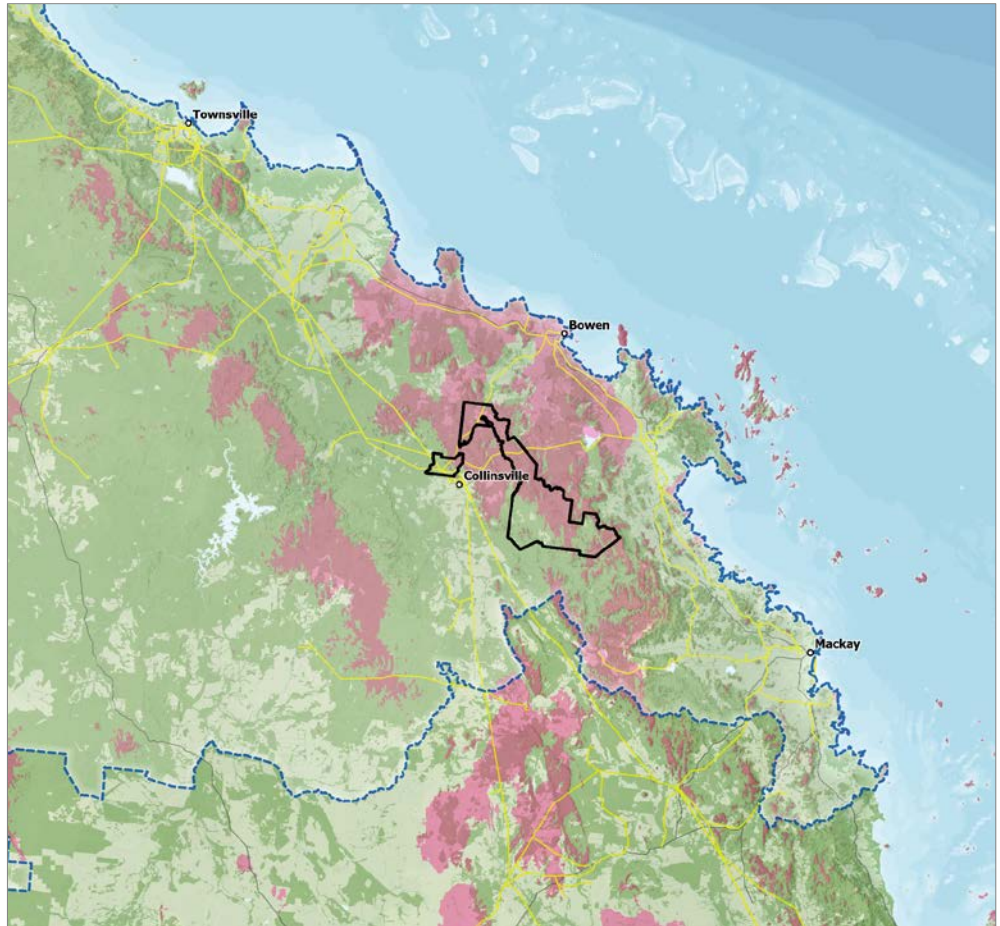
- 1 Referral to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) for review under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) **Est Q1 2024**
- 2 Determination and advice on assessment pathway
- 3 Preparation of assessment
- 4 Draft assessment submitted for adequacy review
- 5 Request from DCCEEW for further information (if required) and response
- 6 Assessment accepted by DCCEEW and placed on public exhibition
- 7 Response to submissions (if required) and lodgment of updated assessment
- 8 Final assessment submitted
- 9 Determination

Environmentally responsible development

The wind resource generally overlaps with vegetation, so avoiding and minimising ecological impacts is an important focus during the planning phase.

Ark Energy's approach is to:

- Iterate the project design as more information becomes available, to avoid and minimise environmental impacts to the maximum extent achievable.
- Consult with ecology stakeholders and workshop solutions where required.
- Find workable compromises with meaningful benefit.
- Invest and collaborate on strategies and commitments for repair such as rehabilitation of the initial construction disturbance.
- Develop strategic environmental offsets with tailored management regimes such as fire management, and weed and feral pest control, to improve habitat values.
- **Focus on nature positive outcomes**



- ▭ Collinsville Project Boundary
- Highway
- Electricity Transmission Lines
- Mean Wind Speed (>7m/s @150m)
- ▭ Northern REZ
- ▭ Regulated Vegetation - Remnant

The Collinsville Green Energy Hub project area is near Collinsville and south-west of Bowen in North Queensland. The wind resource overlaps vegetation, making balancing the development with conservation of the natural environment an important focus.

More information

Visit - Collinsville Green Energy Hub Information Centre, 47 Railway Road, Collinsville. Please check the website/window for open times.

Tel - 1800 731 296

Email - info@collinsvillehub.com.au

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

Website - collinsvillehub.com.au or scan QR code right



Scan QR CODE to visit the website