

# Bowmans Creek Wind Farm



Photomontage showing what the Bowmans Creek Wind Farm would look like from Sandy Creek Rd, McCullys Gap.

## Project approved

On 6 February 2024, the NSW Independent Planning Commission (IPC) approved the Bowmans Creek Wind Farm, to be developed approximately 10 km east of Muswellbrook in the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone.

The IPC found that the project is consistent with the Federal and NSW Government's strategic planning and energy frameworks and will assist in the energy transition. In its reasons for the decision, the IPC noted the site is suitable for renewable energy development given its location within the Hunter-Central Coast REZ, proximity to existing electricity transmission networks, topography, wind resources, access to the regional road network, and avoidance of major environmental constraints.

The IPC's *Statement of Reasons for Decision* is available on the project website, the NSW Government's Major Projects portal and here: <http://tinyurl.com/bddukx8k>

## Assessment process

The State significant development (SSD-10315) application was lodged with the then NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) in 2021. The project originally comprised of 60 wind turbines and was later reduced in response to community concerns to 56 wind turbines with a generation capacity of 347 MW.

After receiving more than 50 unique submissions objecting to the application during the public exhibition of its environmental impact statement (EIS) in 2022, the DPE completed its assessment of the project in November 2023 and referred it to the IPC for determination. The DPE recommended that the IPC grant development consent subject to the conditions in its recommendation. The IPC Panel met with key stakeholders, conducted a site inspection and locality tour, held a public meeting and received further written submissions.

After consideration the IPC granted consent, subject to conditions which seek to prevent, minimise or offset adverse impacts, and to ensure ongoing monitoring and management of any residual impacts. The conditions strengthen the environmental and social management of the development and address concerns raised by the community and stakeholders. They include limiting the development to a maximum of 54 wind turbines and 335 MW, visual impact mitigation measures, noise monitoring, managing traffic and transport in consultation with the local community, and decommissioning and rehabilitation of the site at the end of the project life.

Documentation for the project's assessment and determination is available from the Bowmans Creek Wind Farm page in the NSW Government's Major Projects portal at: [www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/bowmans-creek-wind-farm](http://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/bowmans-creek-wind-farm).

## Location



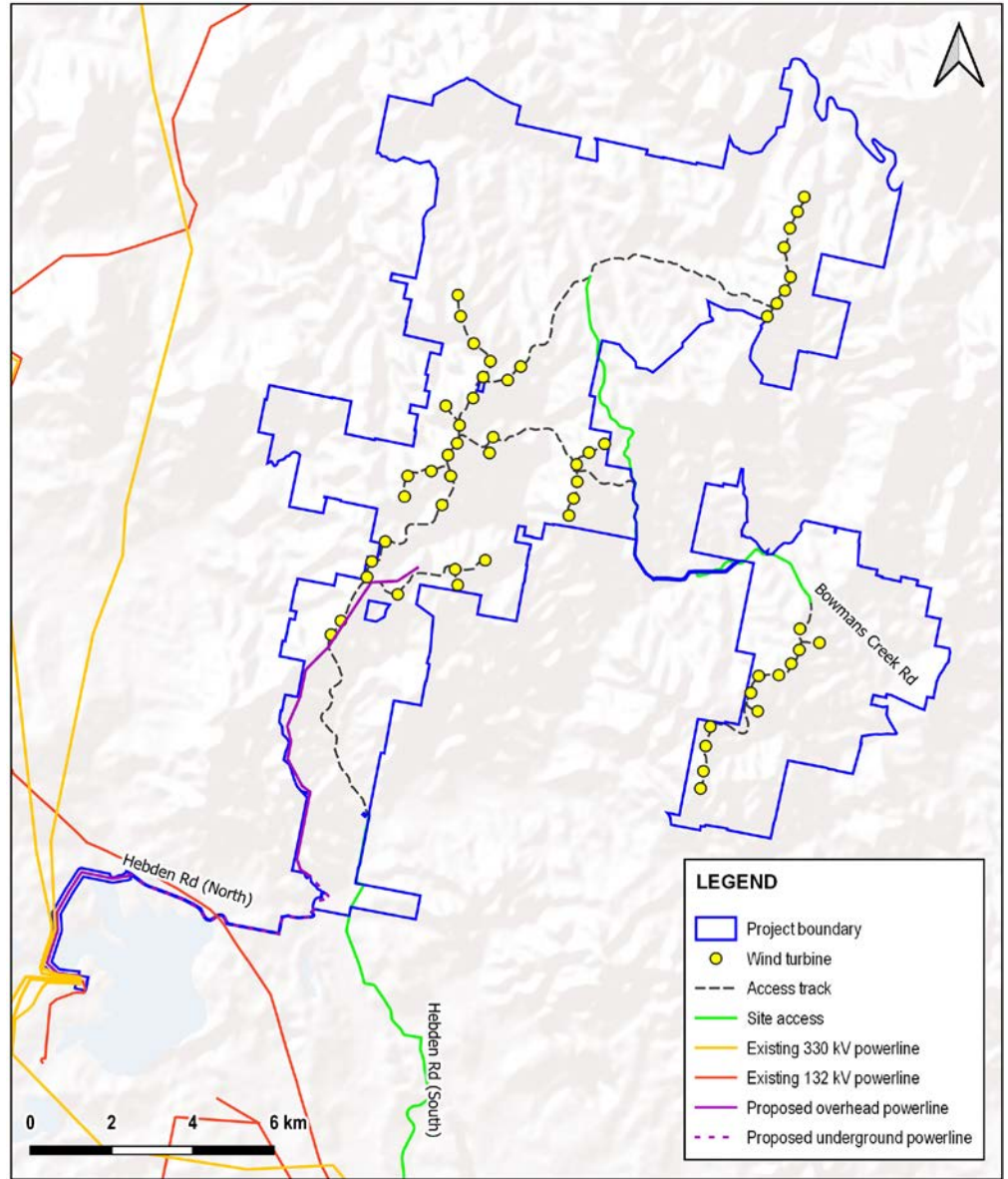
The project area for the Bowmans Creek Wind Farm is about 10 km east of Muswellbrook and located within the NSW Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone.

- 54 wind turbines.
- Capacity of up to 335 megawatts.
- Expected to create more than 200 direct and indirect jobs in the regional area during construction, and 30 direct and indirect jobs during operation.
- Estimated to generate \$179 million in the regional economy, through direct and indirect expenditure, value-add and household income.
- Significant community benefit funds from the start of generation and for the life of the wind farm.
- Neighbour benefit program.

Utility-scale wind farms in NSW are considered State Significant Development and assessed by the NSW Government.

- 1 Site selection and preliminary investigations ✓
- 2 Initial concept and consultation ✓
- 3 Referral to the Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) for review under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). ✓
- 4 Scoping Report submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) ✓
- 5 Determination on EPBC Act referral by DCCEEW - controlled action with assessment under bilateral agreement (EPBC Number: 2020/8631) ✓
- 6 Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) issued by DPE ✓
- 7 Studies, assessments, design ✓
- 8 Design completed, finalising EIS ✓
- 9 Development application (DA) and EIS lodged with DPE ✓
- 10 DA and EIS on exhibition for public comment ✓
- 11 Response to submissions ✓
- 12 Responses to requests for further information (RFI) ✓
- 13 Assessment by DPE ✓
- 14 Referral to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) ✓
- 15 Determination by the IPC - **Approved** ✓
- 16 Determination by DCEEW ✓

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### Next steps

The project is a controlled action under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) so must be approved under the EPBC Act before it can proceed. The EPBC Act assessment has been completed by the NSW Government under a bilateral agreement, however final approval is required from the Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). In accordance with the bilateral process DCCEEW will make its decision within the statutory timeframe based on the recommendation and report from the NSW Government.

Conditions of approval set by the IPC must be completed prior to commencing construction. Post approval development activities are currently in progress.

### More information

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Register for newsletters - [arkenergy.com.au/mailling-list-details](http://arkenergy.com.au/mailling-list-details)

Website - [bowmanscreekwindfarm.com.au](http://bowmanscreekwindfarm.com.au) or scan QR code right



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