

# LETTER OF SUPPORT: WOOROORA STATION WIND FARM RAVENSHOE

Dear Minister Plibersek,

Cc Federal Government Representatives, Queensland State Government and Tablelands Regional Council

I hereby express my support of the Wooroora Station Wind Farm project (**the project**) in Ravenshoe. I am writing in my personal capacity, although I am also the current Chair of Wabubadda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (**Wabubadda AC**), which is the Registered Native Title Body Corporate (or PBC) that represents the native title rights and interests of the Jirrbal People on whose country the Wooroora Station Wind Farm is proposed to be built.

I have watched the native title proceedings of Jirrbal People unfold and evolve over many years, most notably since 2012, and then more intensively since 2022 when I was elected to the Board of Directors for Wabubadda AC. Because of that history I can confirm that the proponents Ark Energy have engaged in thorough and appropriate consultation and engagement with relevant Jirrbal people. I have attended meetings where information has been shared and this assisted me to build an understanding of the project, its potential outcomes and social license. Most importantly I have witnessed debates of Jirrbal people who have made considerable arguments for and against the project and I have participated in the voting processes that brought about acceptance and approval of the project in Jirrbal country, albeit not without conditions. I believe those conditions have been met by the proponent and that the approval of Jirrbal people, through the designated process, is valid and current.

Further, I acknowledge the comprehensive assessment and iterative design process that considers and avoids impacts to the maximum extent achievable. There has been a considered and measurable response to findings and feedback to develop workable compromises with meaningful benefit for all parties. The most recent example of this has been a reduction in wind turbines. There is clear investment and collaboration on strategies and commitments for repair and rehabilitation of the site where clearing is required, including comprehensive and strategic offsets with management regimes (weed, fire, feral pests) to improve habitat as a direct result of the project. A portion of responsibility for maintenance, rehabilitation and improvement of the site post construction, falls to the Jirrbal people by cultural default. In my personal and elected capacities I undertake to be diligent in my responsibility as a Jirrbal traditional owner, and actively encourage others to make the same commitments.

A capital investment of \$700 M, including an estimated \$200M direct and indirect expenditure in the region (Kennedy electorate) is significant and an investment in the Far North Queensland community that I welcome. The creation of 250-300 jobs during the construction period and 15-20 ongoing full-time jobs for maintenance and operation is also welcomed and is no small gesture for the region.

The financial, training and employment benefits for First Nations Peoples through the Jirrbal Peoples Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) and the nature positive plan is commendable in my opinion and I support Ark Energy's contribution to capacity building and opportunities for ecological rehabilitation / restoration projects as well as the Community Benefit Program of \$500,000 p.a. (indexed to CPI) from the start of construction and for the life of the wind farm.

Further, significant positive impacts will assist in transitioning Queensland to a greener energy future with:

- ~ 294 MW towards Queensland's renewable energy targets and to put downward pressure on electricity prices.
- Nature positive plan to achieve conservation benefits for key species and net gains for biodiversity.

I wholeheartedly support the project in our community and encourage the Federal Government to approve this large scale project for the benefit of our region.

Yours sincerely



Mareshah Bowie

Jirrbal Traditional Owner

19 February 2024