



VISUAL IMPACT

Wind turbines are large features in the environment, reaching up to 280 metres from the base of the wind turbine to the tip of the blade.

We acknowledge that wind turbines do impact the landscape and that that impact is subjective, depending on the viewer. We will work with communities to understand local priorities and to ensure our wind farms have the lowest impacts possible.

As part of any planning permit application, Spark Renewables will engage a qualified landscape architect to undertake a comprehensive assessment of potential impacts on landscape character and visual amenity.

We will work with nearby neighbours of the project to fund tree planting and visual screening. We are keen to engage with community members to discuss how this program would work.



END-OF-LIFE & DECOMMISSIONING

Planning for land rehabilitation and decommissioning is part of the wind farm approval process. The long-term planning for the removal and replacement of wind turbines and ancillary equipment is included in each landowner agreement, as well as stipulated in conditions of consent by planning authorities.

Once the wind farm is at the end of its operational life, it would either be repowered (once the necessary approvals are obtained) or the wind farm infrastructure would be decommissioned and removed. The project specific decommissioning activities would be detailed in a decommissioning management plan to be agreed with the relevant planning authority and other stakeholders.

Decommissioning activities:

- Disconnection from electrical grid.
- Wind turbines and all ancillary equipment removed and materials recycled where possible.
- All above-ground components removed and site rehabilitated to former condition.
- Underground cabling and concrete turbine footings typically remain in the ground (below ploughing depth) unless it is economical to remove and recycle.
- Access roads, gates and fencing may be removed and land rehabilitated, unless required by the landholder.

Wind Farm Impacts

Frequently Asked Questions





BIRDS, BATS, FLORA & FAUNA

Spark Renewables engages specialist consultants to undertake detailed flora and fauna surveys to determine the ecological attributes of the land.

We aim to minimise the impact on flora and fauna by designing projects to be constructed outside areas of high conservation significance and adopting control measures during the construction process.

During the detailed design, wind turbines will be micro-sited to minimise the potential impact on flora and fauna habitat, and turbine heights are selected to minimise the overlap between rotor swept area and bird flight heights.

Other mitigation measures include preparing management plans, identifying 'no-go zones' within the project site and conducting pre-clearance surveys.

Spark Renewables also consults with government environmental departments throughout the development, construction and operational stages of projects, as well as local non-government organisations.

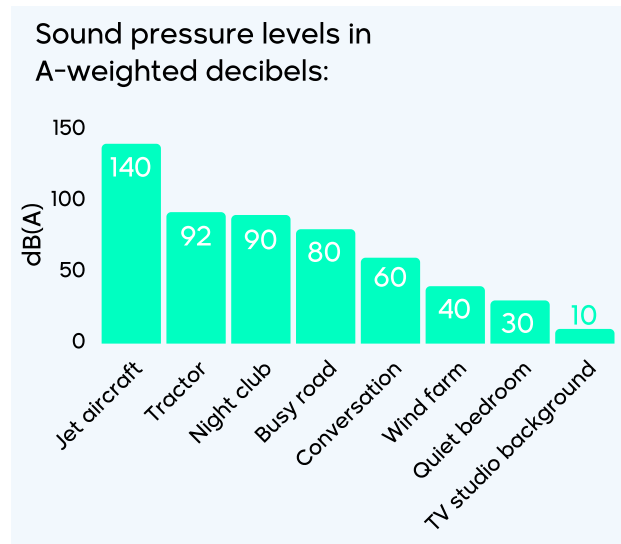


NOISE & HEALTH

Before it can operate, a wind farm has to demonstrate that noise levels at neighbouring residences will meet strict noise guidelines. These guidelines are designed to ensure that noise from a wind farm is not intrusive for the average person.

As part of any planning permit application, Spark Renewables will complete a comprehensive assessment of noise levels at all nearby houses in accordance with the NSW Wind Energy: Noise Assessment Bulletin (December 2016). These guidelines are some of the most stringent in the world, with a noise objective that is 5 dB(A) lower than Victoria, South Australia and New Zealand.

In NSW, wind turbine noise must not exceed 35dB(A) or the background +5dB(A) outside of neighbouring dwellings, whichever is greater.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

Spark Renewables is committed to the involvement of Traditional Custodians in surveys, project design and planning, and guaranteed ongoing access to sites of significance.

Wind farm developers are required to assess whether the relevant site has the potential to have heritage value. Conducting a risk assessment and landscape character and utilisation modelling prior to any field studies is essential to ensure that potential areas of importance to Aboriginal people are identified.



TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & DUST POLLUTION

Spark Renewables will have a detailed traffic management plan in place to ensure safety and minimise noise and dust pollution.

Transport routes into the site will be designed to minimise impacts on population centres and local residents. The traffic assessment will note any road upgrades required for the project. Spark Renewables will pay for these upgrades, and any repairs required due to traffic impacts.

If the project receives Development Approval, a full Traffic Management Plan will be compiled in consultation with local councils and relevant government departments.