

Mallee Wind Farm

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER #3

MARCH 2024

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Information

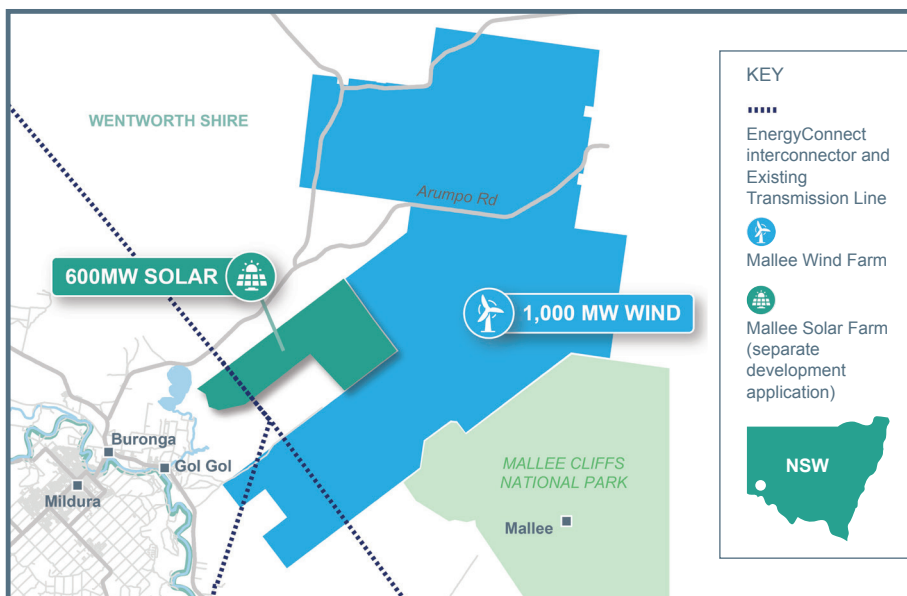
The Mallee Wind Farm is a proposed 1 gigawatt (GW) wind and battery energy storage project located in the Wentworth Shire of New South Wales. The Wind Farm is proposed to be adjacent to the Mallee Solar Farm, a separate project also being developed by Spark Renewables. The two projects represent Spark Renewables plans to invest in the region and in the development of the Mallee Renewable Energy Hub.

The Mallee Wind Farm would utilise wind turbine generators and a battery energy storage system to store and dispatch electricity to the National Electricity Market ("the Grid"). Based on preliminary outcomes of key environmental assessments, the refined design comprises:

- **129 wind turbines, with a supporting network of substations and electrical cabling.**
- **A battery energy storage system to store and discharge electricity.**
- **A temporary workers accommodation facility.**
- **Internal access tracks from the local road network and minor works to the road network to facilitate safe movement of oversize overmass vehicles.**

Further information on the Mallee Wind Farm is available at the following website: <https://sparkrenewables.com/mallee-wind-farm/>

Attend a drop-in session at the Midway Centre, 6 Midway Drive Buronga, on 10 April 2024 between 3-6pm.



Key Facts



Planning Status
Preparing EIS



Generation Capacity
Up to 1 gigawatt (GW) with battery energy storage to provide firming



Annual Power
Up to 450,000 houses powered annually*
Offsetting up to 2 million tonnes of CO2 emissions annually**



Grid Connection
The project will connect to the National Electricity Market via new transmission infrastructure constructed as part of Project EnergyConnect



Community Benefits
Establishment of a community benefit sharing program to support the local community



NSW



*Based on household consumption of 6700kWh/year

**National Greenhouse Accounts Factors (DCCEW, 2021)

Environmental Impact Statement and Social Impact Assessment

The proposed Project is a State Significant Development and requires a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement to be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI).

Umwelt Environmental and Social Consultants have been engaged by Spark Renewables to prepare the EIS, including a Social Impact Assessment. There are a number of additional assessments that will be undertaken as a part of the EIS including:



Aboriginal Cultural Heritage



Aviation



Biodiversity



Bushfire



Contamination



Cumulative Impacts



Electromagnetic Interference



Historic Heritage



Noise and Vibration



Shadow Flicker



Socio-economics



Soils



Surface Water and Flooding



Surrounding land uses



Transport and Traffic



Visual Amenity



Waste



Community Engagement to date

In August and September 2022, Umwelt met with a number of stakeholders to obtain community views on the Project. These stakeholders included:

-  Community members who attended a Community Information Session
-  Local government representatives
-  Local community, environmental and special interest groups

Other community engagement activities that have been held for the Project include:

-  A community information session was held by Spark Renewables at Buronga Midway Community Centre in August 2022
-  Spark Renewables hosted an information stall at the Mildura Field Days in May 2023
-  Spark Renewables held a community information session for the Mallee Solar Farm at the Buronga Midway Community Centre in January 2024



What we have heard so far?

Stakeholders were asked to consider potential Project impacts, both positive and negative to inform the SIA and broader environmental assessment program. Some of the key outcomes of consultation are summarised below.



Surroundings

Various concerns were raised in relation to the social impacts that the Project may have on local surroundings including impacts relating to:

- Visual amenity and scenic value
- Local flora and fauna, including migratory birds
- Social amenity due to noise from construction and operations management of waste and rehabilitation post decommissioning.



Livelihoods

Community members and key stakeholder groups welcomed the positive impact of the Project in relation to reduced energy costs, and the potential the Project may bring in relation to local employment and business procurement and training / skills development.



Community

Increased population growth in the locality was welcomed, with few stakeholders concerned that the Project would impact on community composition and cohesion.



Culture

Potential impacts to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage were raised as a key concern for various key stakeholder groups during consultation, with impacts to both tangible and intangible heritage noted. An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment process has commenced including consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties. Additionally, Spark have engaged with Aboriginal stakeholders regarding the project including participation planning.



Accessibility

Stakeholders raised concerns around the potential lack of accessibility to accommodation and housing given the need to accommodate an incoming workforce, particularly given existing seasonal workforce change and a lack of available accommodation.

Planning Process



Proposal announcement

Project announced to industry, government and community



Scoping report

Community consultation and preliminary technical studies undertaken



SEARs issued Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)



EIS and SIA preparation

Community engagement and technical studies to inform the EIS and SIA



EIS Submission and Exhibition

Public exhibition for agency and community comment



Response to submissions

Addressing comments and issues raised about the EIS in a Response to Submissions report



Assessing the proposal

Assessment and recommendation by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure



Determination of the proposal

The Minister for Planning or the Independent Planning Commission decides the proposal



Community benefits

Spark Renewables is in the early stages of developing a community benefit-sharing program for the Project and is interested in understanding ways in which the Project could contribute more positively to the local area. If you would like to provide feedback on how benefits of the Project could be enhanced, please get in touch using the contact details below.

How can I be involved?

Should you wish to be involved in future consultation activities to support the preparation of the SIA and/or would like further information on the Project, please contact us below.

Alternatively, you can have input by:

Completing a short survey by scanning the adjacent QR code:



OR

Come along to the Mildura Field Day and speak to the Spark Renewables Team, on 17 & 18 May 2024

We would like to thank all community members that have participated in the program to date. We look forward to further input as the Project progresses.

Contact



Call us toll free at
1300 271 419

Email
info@malleewindfarm.com

Sign up to community newsletters on our website at
www.malleewindfarm.com

Spark Renewables is a member of the Clean Energy Council (CEC) and a signatory to the CEC's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Developments.



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