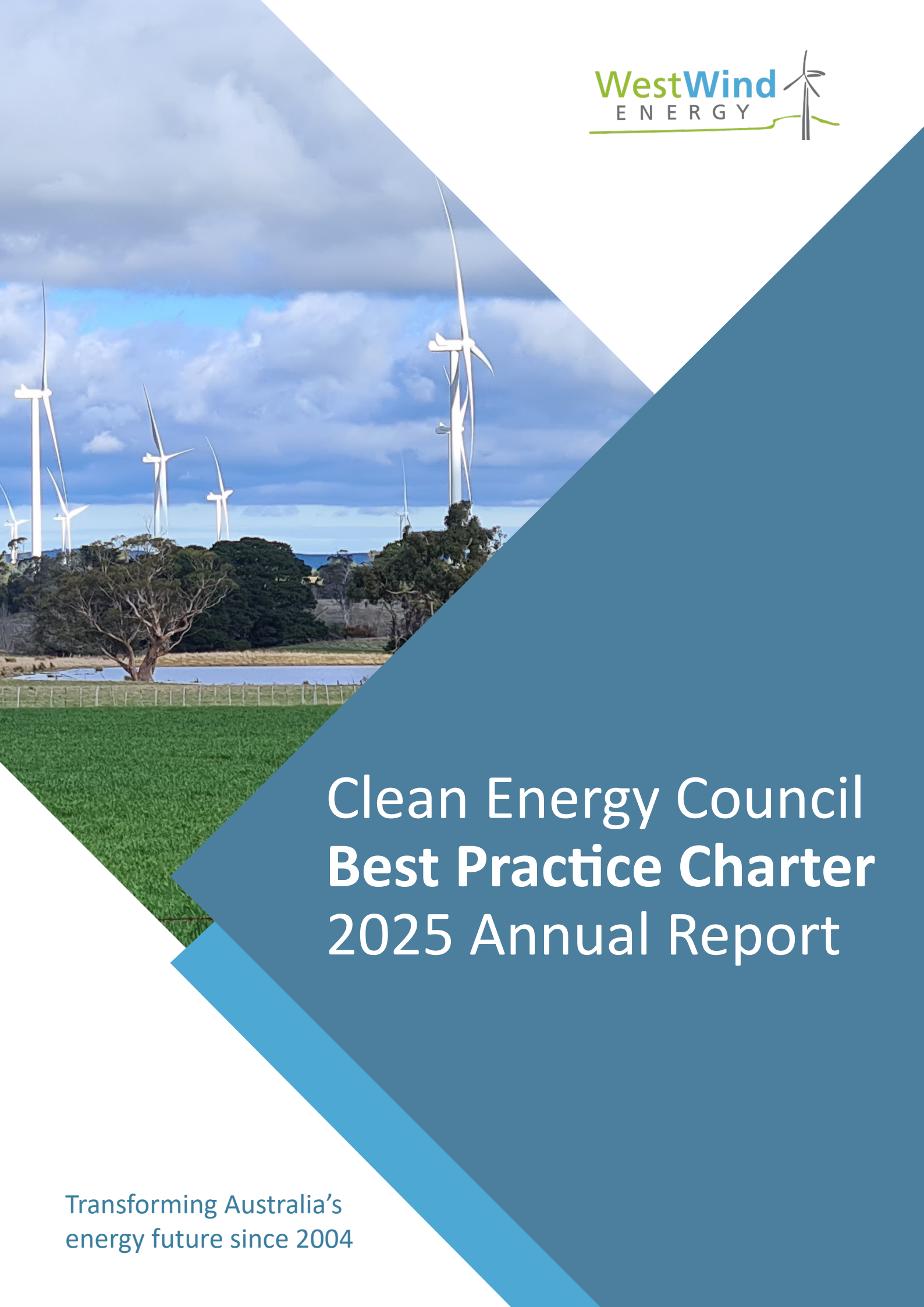




Clean Energy Council Best Practice Charter 2025 Annual Report

Transforming Australia's
energy future since 2004

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Our communities

WestWind Energy acknowledges and sincerely thanks our host landholders, neighbours, and community members for their ongoing support and collaboration in developing renewable energy projects.

Contact

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Cover image: Lal Lal Wind Farm, Victoria

About this Report

Established in 2004, WestWind Energy is a leading wind energy developer in Australia. With more than 2 GW of projects already operating or under construction, WestWind Energy is advancing an impressive 9 GW pipeline of projects in development across Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland.

WestWind Energy is committed to engaging respectfully with our project communities, being sensitive to environmental and cultural values, and making a positive contribution to the regions where we operate.

In July 2018, we committed to the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter. This report details our performance against the 10 Charter commitments over the 12 months to June 2025.



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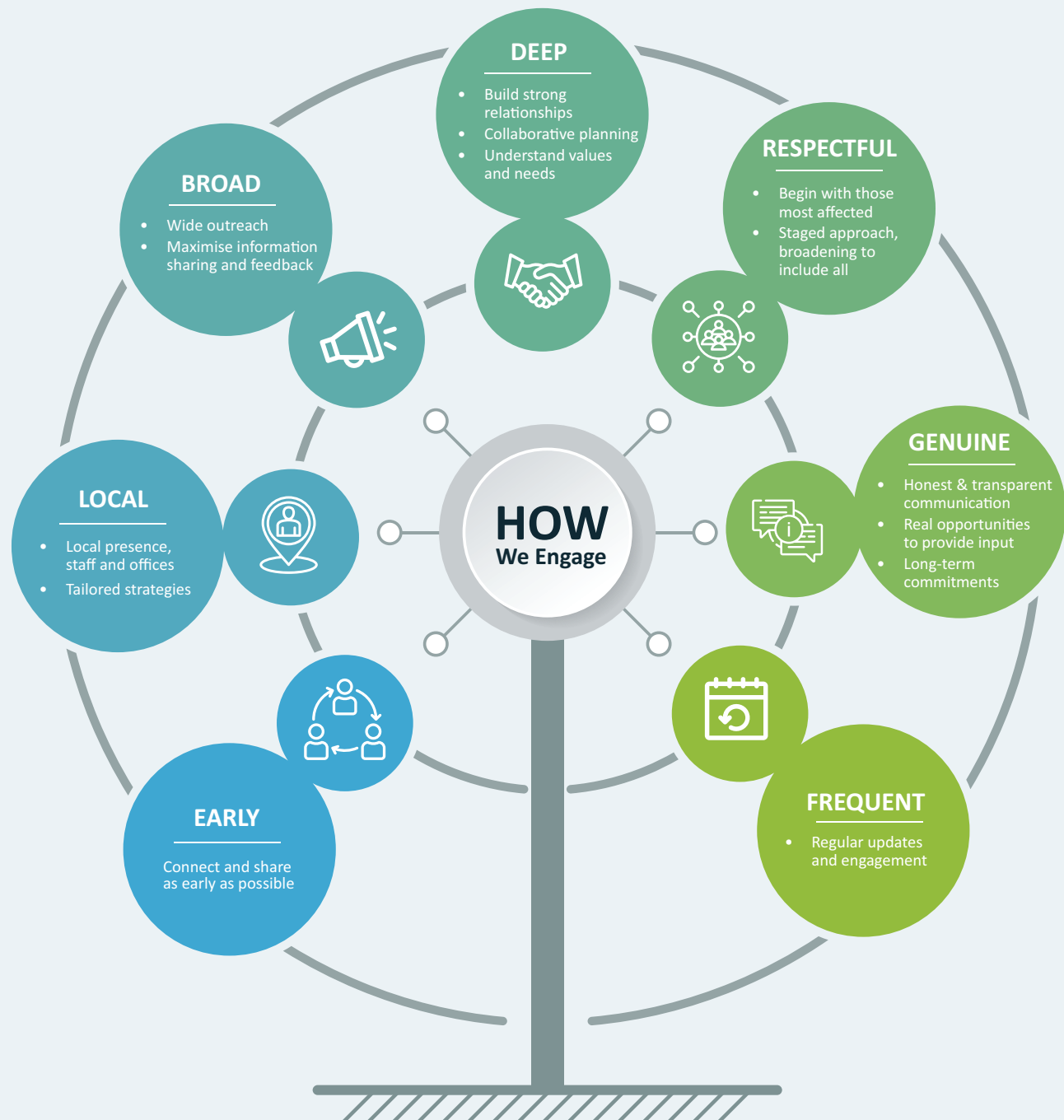


How we engage

Landholders, their neighbours and their communities are at the heart of our project planning.

By listening to and incorporating their values in our projects, we aim to deliver the best outcomes for all.

Figure 1: How we engage



Respectful

COMMITMENT 1: We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before finalising the design of the project and submitting a development application.

WestWind recognises the importance of engaging the local community, including Traditional Owners, to ensure their values are meaningfully incorporated in project planning before development applications are submitted.

To upskill staff on engaging with Traditional Owners, WestWind engaged First Nations owned and operated

GIRA Advisory to deliver training sessions on meaningful engagement with First Nations Communities in early 2025.

WestWind has also drafted its first Reconciliation Action Plan – a key action from our First Nations Engagement Strategy.

Case study 1: Tangible and intangible values assessed at Warracknabeal Energy Park

Warracknabeal Energy Park is located on the unceded lands of the Wotjobaluk Nation, with Traditional Owners represented by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC). Tangible cultural heritage values have been assessed across the project site, with Aboriginal Places expected to be registered through the Cultural Heritage Management Plan.

We also recognise the potential impact on intangible cultural heritage values - such as changes to the visual landscape and areas connected to traditional Wotjobaluk stories and oral histories. These will be assessed through a Cultural Values Assessment (CVA).

Currently being prepared, the CVA will map and record intangible values to deepen understanding and provide a valuable resource for both Traditional Owners and the project. BGLC has expressed a preference for this cultural mapping approach over a conventional report.

Over the past two years, WestWind has been meeting with the Traditional Owners several times each month to build relationships, share project updates, and ensure their perspectives are fully considered. WestWind is committed to developing a benefit sharing model with the BGLC and maintaining a close relationship throughout the project lifecycle.



Representatives from BGLC and WestWind visit Warracknabeal Energy Park site

Timely, accessible, responsive

COMMITMENT 2: We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the lifetime of the development.

Being present in the local community is one of the key ways we understand and respond to local community feedback and concerns. As projects progress, we employ local staff and make them available in local offices to address questions and issues directly.

This local hands-on approach is in place for all of our progressed projects including Bottle Tree Energy Park, Warracknabeal Energy Park, Normanville Energy Park, Wilkur Energy Park and Wimmera Renewable Energy Solutions.

We understand continuity is important for small communities and aim to have local engagement staff involved across the project's lifespan.

This approach was successfully demonstrated at Golden Plains Wind Farm, where owners TagEnergy retained WestWind's personnel to continue engagement functions during the construction phase.

Case study 2: Building stronger connection through tailored local solutions in Kerang

In the early stages of development, Normanville Energy Park has been supported by a dedicated local staff member in Kerang since August 2024.

Local feedback about renewable energy projects trying to 'buy support' through sponsorships rather than really addressing community needs resulted in a highly tailored, place-based approach for the project.

Today, WestWind staff are strengthening connections and awareness by regularly volunteering at the Kerang Neighbourhood House Soup Kitchen (pictured), and providing personalised presentations for local community groups including the Men's Shed, Neighbourhood House, Rotary Club, Lions Club and Kerang Progress Association.



WestWind staff cooking for Kerang Soup Kitchen



Sensitive

COMMITMENT 3: We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the design and operation of projects.

Protecting biodiversity, cultural and landscape values is critical to a project's acceptance. We are committed to delivering a sustainable energy future by avoiding or minimising impacts wherever possible.

This means project designs often undergo many iterations to address these considerations.

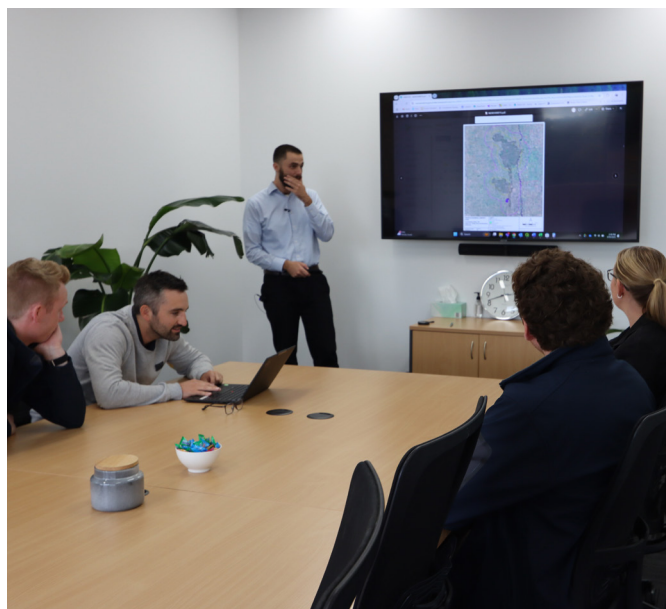
Case study 3: Hundreds of design updates refine Warracknabeal project layout to minimise impact

Design development for Warracknabeal Energy Park has been ongoing since 2017. Central to this approach is avoiding potential environmental impacts and, where avoidance is not possible, minimising them to protect environmental and social values.

As a result, there have been 22 major iterations of the turbine layout and more than 200 minor updates to ancillary infrastructure designs, including access tracks and underground electrical reticulation.

Key considerations informing the design include environmental constraints, input from Traditional Owners, community and stakeholder feedback, and minimising impacts on landholders and agricultural activities.

As technical assessments and consultation findings emerged, the project design has been continuously refined and improved. Public exhibition of the Environment Effects Statement for Warracknabeal Energy Park is expected in mid-2025.



WestWind staff working on Warracknabeal Energy Park design



In harmony

COMMITMENT 4: We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land where feasible, and explore opportunities to integrate continued agricultural production into the project.

Throughout a project's development, we work closely with each host landholder to design the layout to avoid impacts on highly productive agricultural land.

This often involves multiple design iterations, relocating turbines and access tracks, and improving drainage to support farming needs.

When complete, wind farms occupy only about 2% of the site, leaving most of the land available for ongoing agricultural use.

Livestock grazing and cropping can continue right up to the edge of turbines, hardstands, and access roads.

The impact of renewable projects on agricultural productivity is often greatly overstated.

We have created dedicated resources for landholders and the community on this topic – visit WestWind's [Host Landholders](#) webpage to learn more, and watch videos about [Farming with Turbines](#) and [Farming with Transmission](#).



Video resources developed to highlight compatibility of farming and renewable energy projects



Consultative

COMMITMENT 5: We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the development, and on the mitigation options where relevant.

We actively consult the community on potential visual, noise, traffic, and other project impacts, as well as on mitigation options. We do this through discussions, surveys, and formal Social and Economic Impact Assessments.

We encourage residents to share their views and work with expert consultants to understand and address concerns.

Mitigation measures include maintaining a local presence, providing factsheets, offering VR and augmented reality visual assessments, conducting pre- and post-construction noise monitoring, and detailed traffic and road analyses.

Additionally, project mock-ups are shared at consultation events to help the community understand how the project may look from various viewpoints.



Staff interacting with community member at a local event in Roma



Providing local opportunities

COMMITMENT 6: We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities wherever possible.

With an expected 40,000 additional clean energy workers needed in Australia by 2030, we're actively encouraging students to explore renewable energy, engineering, and real-world science applications.

Alongside attending industry job fairs and careers days, our team regularly visits schools and community groups to present on renewables and future employment opportunities. We also offer a children's activity booklet, valued school resources, and are developing new STEM materials.

In May 2025, as part of supporting Bottle Tree Energy Park, students at Roma State College received working turbine kits to inspire curiosity and hands-on learning. At the other end of the spectrum, we also engaged young children at Roma's annual Under 8's Day with fun, wind-based activities.

We've also hosted and presented to high school groups in regional Victoria, including for Warracknabeal Energy Park.



Warracknabeal students visit to project office on Careers Day

Case study 4: Showcasing renewable energy jobs at Western Victorian Careers Expo



Student experiencing a VR tour of a wind turbine at the Western Victorian Careers Expo

With high regional youth out-migration, renewable energy employment is of great interest to these communities. Preparing future workers is a key focus for WestWind in our project areas.

Staff present to local schools and networks and attend events like the 2025 Western Victorian Careers Expo in Horsham - country Victoria's largest, attracting over 2,000 attendees from 28 different schools.

WestWind's stand featured staff with wind farm experience, a Careers Guide outlining roles, videos showcasing job opportunities, a VR turbine experience from Vestas (pictured), and White Card training giveaways.

Many conversations were had with students as well as careers and business class teachers regarding presentations in schools.

Benefit sharing

COMMITMENT 7: We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the development, and consult them on the options available, including the relevant governance arrangements.

Since WestWind began operating, we have been committed to sharing the financial benefits of our projects with the communities where they are based.

In addition to Host Landholder payments, we offer Neighbour Benefit Schemes, Community Benefit Schemes and, for some projects, also pay Council rates. These are all to ensure the local community benefits from our projects.

Community benefit funding is often overseen by a representative Community Reference Group (CRG), made up of local residents and stakeholders.

Watch this [video](#) about community benefit sharing via the CRG for Golden Plains Wind Farm in Victoria.



Golden Plains Wind Farm CRG member talks about shared benefits

Figure 2: Community benefits sharing



Case study 5: Community survey informs benefit sharing for Wilkur Energy Park

In May 2025, WestWind distributed a survey to the local community near Wilkur Energy Park, near Birchip in northern Victoria. The survey was widely promoted and achieved a strong response from more than 100 local residents, with 70% living within 30km of the project site.

While it was important that the questionnaire provided the opportunity for locals to share their questions or concerns about the project, the focus was on discovering what the community saw as priority areas for the community benefit funding available from the project (around \$200,000 per year).

Priorities were mixed and included community health and wellbeing, community facilities, local sport and recreation, education and training, and local jobs. There were also suggestions about supporting local business, affordable housing, providing scholarships and cheaper electricity.

Notably, several respondents suggested working with a specific local charity organisation. These insights will be highly valuable when we form and set the direction for the project's Community Reference Group.

Supporting education and tourism

COMMITMENT 8: We commit to using the development to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.

In addition to educational support outlined above under Commitment 6, we would also like to highlight WestWind's dedication to building stronger, thriving communities by supporting local cultural and tourism activities.

This commitment includes sponsoring and participating in major community events such as the Wentworth Junction Rally in NSW (pictured), Roma Races, Christmas in the 'Beal (Warracknabeal), Mildura Field Days, and Cobar's Spooky Spring Fair.



Wentworth Junction Rally 2024

Case study 6: Sculptures support attracts amazing art and tourism for Roma



Sculptures Out Back Committee members feature in WestWind video

Through Bottle Tree Energy Park, WestWind has been proudly sponsoring Roma's Sculptures Out Back initiative almost since it started.

Now in its fifth year, Sculptures Out Back is a thriving arts tourism event that brings more than 30,000 visitors to the region each year. It is considered outback Queensland's premier outdoor sculpture exhibition.

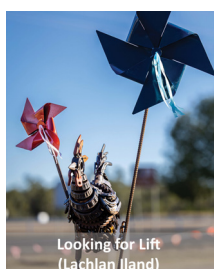
WestWind's valued relationship with this notable arts event led to the Committee introducing the WestWind Acquisitive Wind Prize in 2025 – aimed at celebrating the power and beauty of the wind.

The new category attracted many amazing entries, with the category won by Rod Buckland from Toowoomba with his work Autumn Whispers (pictured) reflecting the changing season.

When communities come together through events like Sculptures Out Back, it helps towns thrive on many levels - culturally, socially, and economically. Watch our [video](#) on this amazing local initiative and its committee.



Autumn Whispers - Winner
(Rod Buckland)



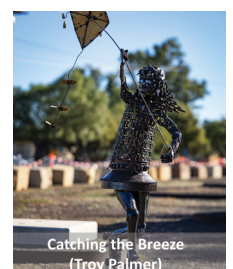
Looking for Lift
(Lachlan Iland)



Mesmirising Sunflower
(Grant Hall)



Silent Breeze
(Michael Gibson)



Catching the Breeze
(Troy Palmer)

Entries in 2025 Sculptures Out back inaugural Acquisitive Wind Prize

Responsible land stewardship

COMMITMENT 9: We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the development and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological and cultural value of the land.

We passionately demonstrate responsible land stewardship throughout the life of the development, and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological and cultural value of the land.

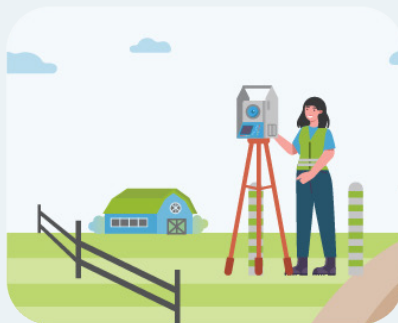
Biodiversity and cultural heritage assessments are undertaken for all projects during the planning phase to ensure we understand site-specific values and can manage them appropriately.

We proactively design our projects using the mitigation hierarchy to avoid or minimise impacts, such as prioritising disturbed land over bushland areas. Where impacts are unavoidable, we implement offset areas to address them.

Finally, we maintain ongoing collaboration with Traditional Owners to ensure their long-term involvement. An example of this is highlighted in Case Study 1.



Projects are proactively designed using the mitigation hierarchy



Responsible decommissioning

COMMITMENT 10: At the end of the project's design or permitted life we will engage with the community on plans for the responsible decommissioning, or refurbishment/repowering of the site.

While consultation at the time of decommissioning is critical, we believe discussions should begin early in a project's development.

WestWind includes conditions in our commercial lease agreements to ensure landholders know from the outset that a decommissioning fund will be established, providing assurance that the wind farm will be responsibly decommissioned.

Case study 7: Addressing decommissioning myths

To address community misinformation around decommissioning costs - as well as potential resulting landholder uncertainty - we undertook a targeted campaign on the topic in the past year. We also refined our approach to decommissioning in our landholder agreements.

Addressing myths at the hyper-local level was essential so communities had factual responses to counter misconceptions and, also, to reassure landholders.

Our multi-pronged education campaign included a dedicated FAQ section (online and in print) on decommissioning, a supporting video, factsheet, social media posts, and print ads in local papers.

Learn more:

- Visit our [FAQs](#) web page and open the Decommissioning section
- Watch [What happens at the end of a wind farm's useful life?](#)



Decommissioning video - part of WestWind's campaign to address decommissioning myths



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