



Clean Energy Council Best Practice Charter Report



Kilara Energy (Kilara) is pleased to submit its 2025 report on progress in response to the commitments made under the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter.



The report shares our ongoing engagement with our flagship project, the Wilan Wind Farm (Wilan), which is being developed in New South Wales.



Kilara Energy's philosophy to engagement

Kilara understands that a broad range of engagement methodologies are necessary for all communities it operates within.

Importantly, Kilara's approach to engagement is guided by the following principles:



Open communication

Being open and honest about project considerations, impacts, and opportunities

Sharing relevant information about the project in a timely and accessible way

Managing stakeholder and community expectations and providing clear information about what levels of influence they have on Kilara projects

Transparency and integrity

Sharing information broadly and establishing and maintaining agreed channels for communication

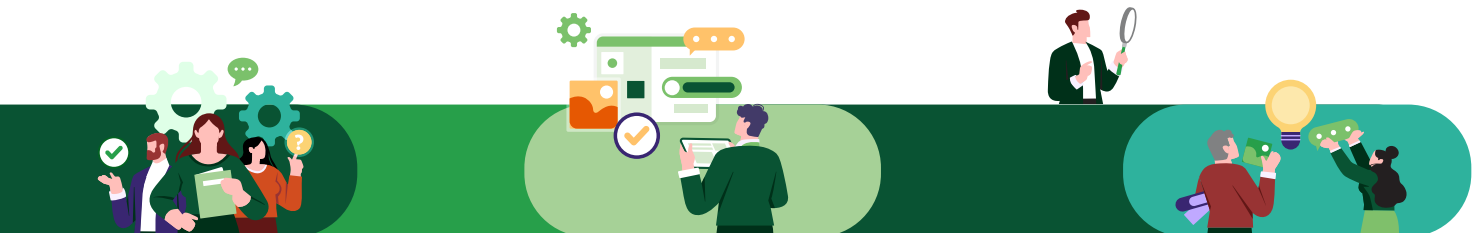
Meeting the public consultation guidelines set out in relevant Acts and regulations, and peak body best practice charters and guidelines

Responding to public feedback openly and transparently

Collaboration

Working to seek mutually beneficial outcomes where feasible

Contributing to positive planning outcomes



Inclusion

Seeking to identify and involve a broad and diverse range of stakeholders in planning and decisions

Engaging a broad cross-section of community members and other stakeholders through a spectrum of traditional and online consultation methods

Understanding community ideas and aspirations for renewable energy solutions and the sustainable and thoughtful integration of these into the regional landscape

Responsiveness

Acknowledging all feedback and demonstrating how and why decisions are being made

Gathering ongoing insights into emerging stakeholder issues and concerns about our projects and the transition to renewable energy more generally

Accountability

Actively seeking diverse opinions and perspectives to broaden understanding of views and assist decision-making

Awareness

Communicating broadly to inform on the project and allow for meaningful community and stakeholder input



The engagement approach for the **Wilan Wind Farm** comprised a mix of activities, including direct, face-to-face stakeholder liaison, the use of digital communication platforms with facilitated participant interactions, online communication portals, conventional media, and recruited sampling and survey methodologies to ensure a broad representation of community feedback was considered.

This adaptive approach has enabled flexibility to anticipate and/or mitigate potential impacts as the Project progresses through its lifecycle.

1. Respectful engagement with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project

Incorporating the values of First Nations landowners

Kilara's approach to First Nations Engagement is underpinned by respect and acknowledgment for local Aboriginal community governance structures and decision-making processes.

From an early stage in the development of the Wilan project, Kilara has dedicated considerable time and resources to establish strong working relationships with key Aboriginal community representative bodies in the region and has maintained regular communication to ensure our team adheres to preferred engagement approaches with members and the broader community.

In parallel to this work, over four years, the Project team has developed a strong and collegiate working relationship with the Nari Nari Tribal Council (NNTC). The experience has been a formative one for the team, which has learned to progress the development of the project in partnership with NNTC in a culturally sensitive manner. The learning experience has been a two-way process in which NNTC has taught the Project team about culture and effective communication with First Nations peoples. In return, the NNTC has had the opportunity to learn and build capacity around renewable energy development.

During the project's formative stages, Kilara Energy and NNTC adopted an approach to First Nations engagement that focused on several key values. These values are ubiquitous in the ongoing engagement and partnership with NNTC and include:

- Recognition of Nari Nari's cultural and environmental stewardship priorities and respect for areas on Gayini (part of the Lowbidgee floodplain, within the southern Murray-Darling Basin) that were not suited to renewable energy as a result of those values;
- Recognition of the value of Nari Nari's contribution of knowledge and skills;
- Openness to engaging with Nari Nari in decision-making and sharing of knowledge and skills;
- Agreement to seek Nari Nari's free, prior, and informed consent; and
- Agreement that Nari Nari should share in wealth creation, above and beyond standard landowner arrangements, as a way of enabling self-determination for the community.

Assessment: Exceeding

2. The provision of timely information and ensuring accessibility and responsiveness in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of a project



The Wilan project has established mechanisms for accessibility and accountability through community feedback, including the management of complaints from community stakeholders.

Key stakeholders were mapped at the commencement of the development process, and appropriate engagement opportunities were identified. The project team used both traditional face to face presence at community events and innovative online engagement and communication tools to reach a greater number of participants where travel can present as a barrier to joining the community input dialogue.

Recurring themes in community feedback have been utilised in developing Shared Benefit Frameworks and/or incorporated into the project design process. For example, in the case of Wilan, community stakeholders made it clear throughout the engagement process that the three key issues in the region include:



Housing shortages



A lack of childcare services



A need to improve accessibility to opportunities for education and employment in the region to enable people to remain in the region over the longer term.

These issues have become a central focus in the planning for the Project's shared benefits framework, which in itself has been co-developed with the community.

With regards to the management of complaints, Kilara has established a Complaints Handling Policy and Complaints Handling Procedure, designed specifically for the Project and informed by the findings of the Office of the Australian Energy and Infrastructure Commissioner and its Community Engagement Review.

Assessment: Evolving

3. Sensitivity to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the development and operation of projects

Utilising a wide range of site studies led by biodiversity and cultural heritage experts, including local Traditional Custodians, the Project team has applied an iterative process to project design at Wilan that is sympathetic to site constraints.

The results and observations of more than three years of fieldwork and insights produced through the engagement process have led to proactive adjustments to the original project area and layout.

Key design considerations to mitigate impacts have included:



Reduction in the project area by 33%

in response to a deeper understanding of important environmental constraints and preparation of the project design has been carefully managed to avoid and mitigate residual impacts.



Reduction in the number of wind turbine locations by 46%

resulting in increased spacings between turbine locations and inclusion of corridors to enable bird flight paths during seasonal events, informed by two years of comprehensive seasonal bird and bat studies across the site.



Inclusion of setbacks and buffers from important habitats

confirmed by extensive flora and fauna surveys on-site.

The resultant design is one that considers important natural and cultural characteristics at the site and will ensure a net positive outcome.

Assessment: Exceeding

4. Minimising impacts on highly productive agricultural land and exploring opportunities to integrate agricultural production

Kilara primarily focuses on wind energy development in regions with relatively sparse populations, underpinned by extensive broadacre cropping or rangeland grazing activities.

Our Wilan project site is a case in point, with the majority of the land under development being extensive grazing lands within which wind energy generation activities are highly compatible and will utilise only two per cent of the total land available.

Projects are designed in consultation with local landowners to ensure complementarity with existing farming operations. The Wilan design process has been an iterative one in which participating landowners have been consulted at every stage of project design to ensure an optimised outcome with respect to existing land uses and values.

Assessment: Exceeding

5. Consulting communities on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options

Kilara has sought to engage with Project host communities in a timely and transparent manner, and at a respectful pace to enable proper processing of the provided information within communities. Kilara has communicated early insights on the potential positive and negative impacts of wind farm lifecycle activities on communities.

Aspects relating to the appearance, noise and public highway impacts that the Project will have in the short, medium and long term have been explained during in-person, pre-organised “think tank” sessions and at more informal (pre-announced in local media) “pop-up” events.

Further community outreach has been achieved by supplementing the more traditional approaches to community engagement with an online engagement interface to enable people to participate without having to commute to a physical venue.

During engagements, Kilara has provided informative, high-quality collateral in the form of physical interpretation boards for in-person interactions and the same high-quality information in online formats.

To obtain primary feedback from stakeholders, proposed turbine locations have been shared with both host and proximate Local Government Authorities and communities during in-person, street side pop-up events.

Due to the project's remote location, it was considered important to utilise technology to provide an informative and user-friendly interface as a means of project “virtual” engagement. A leading provider was identified early in the project development process and engaged to design a Virtual Engagement Room currently in use via the project website.

Similarly, an online and interactive map has been developed that allows participants to identify areas of value.

Assessment: Evolving

6. Supporting the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities

Kilara has worked on several important initiatives during the development of the Wilan Wind Farm that seek to create opportunities for not only mainstream elements for regional economies, but that seek to reach underrepresented groups including First Nations peoples.

Specifically, this includes:



Working with specialist organisations to undertake Indigenous engagement, ensuring wide coverage of Indigenous companies, organisations and individuals.



Developing a comprehensive First Nations procurement strategy to support important objectives around First Nations participation.



Preparing the groundwork for a First Nations employment strategy to be co-designed with our First Nations partners.



Placing expectations on our EPC contractors to engage with shortlisted businesses (in addition to any existing relationships they may have with First Nations businesses).

Assessment: Emerging

7. Creating opportunities for the community to share in the benefits of the Project, consulting on the options available and relevant governance arrangements

Kilara's Wilan Wind Farm project has strategically designed its Community Benefit Fund (CBF) to foster collaboration and empowerment with the community.

Several discrete revenue streams will support different initiatives ranging from one-off small grants to large-scale, co-facilitated legacy developments. Most of the benefit sharing initiatives will be delivered during the construction and operation phases of the project.

Host Landowner Agreements, Voluntary Planning Agreements with three local councils, Community Benefit Funds, and Special Projects funding together make up the key community benefit delivery model for the Project.

Kilara acknowledges that nominating distinct stakeholder groups is critical to developing a fair and equitable CBF enabling benefits to be tailored specifically to each stakeholder groups' needs. Extensive consultation with these groups enables clear identification of relevant themes for support and key areas of focus going forward. In the case of the Wilan project, ongoing engagement with all key stakeholders will enable Kilara to confirm the degree of satisfaction with the CBF and the value of the project's contributions within the region.

A range of channels are used to ensure broad stakeholder participation in developing benefit fund initiatives. The Wilan project is located in a sparsely populated area where distances between population centres have required the stakeholder engagement team to innovate to ensure representative participation. In addition to traditional engagement methods, an integral component of our approach was the online engagement platform 'Recollective', which facilitated meaningful input from community members provided at their convenience.

Building on the information collected through Recollective, the Project team developed and implemented a staged engagement program underpinned by community involvement to find solutions to three key challenges facing the region. The following approach was implemented:

- Analysing the outcomes and key challenges identified by community in previous consultation rounds and researching suitable ways to address the findings in collaboration with community and key stakeholders.
- Seeking in-depth qualitative input from selected community participants on the most suitable ways to address the findings.
- Testing the findings and preferred solutions determined by online community participants with the wider community and key stakeholders.
- Asking participants to refine the preferred solutions in response to feedback from community and stakeholders and prioritise solutions to best meet community needs (see Attachment: WWF Recollective case study).
- Designing a CBF that aligns with community preferences where possible and delivers long-lasting and sustainable economic and social benefits to the region.

Participants' feedback in this innovative community consultation process has been positive, evidenced by the high levels of ongoing and active participation from all recruited participants. One of the most valuable reflections from those involved related to the flexibility of the participation process and the ability to provide more in-depth and thoughtful responses to areas of interest and challenges for the community. Participants agreed that this type of consultation had not been considered by other renewable developers in the area and provided a great platform to coordinate grass-roots perspectives by involving community in the decision-making process underpinning the development of a shared benefits framework.

Kilara will continue to use Recollective to capture insights and contributions from geographically disparate community stakeholders where appropriate. It provides an innovative means for community members to interact on key issues and challenges and collaborate on finding community-centred solutions to local problems. The findings will then be validated through other engagement channels to ensure all community perspectives are considered.

Assessment: Evolving

8. Supporting educational and tourism opportunities where possible and appropriate

The Wilan project has developed several funding priorities that address educational needs across the Project's local region as determined by the community.

These include funding to:

- Support local people to attend the regional TAFE to complete training with a particular focus on trades and childcare,
- Enable the development of locally based wind industry training programs, and
- Develop tailored capacity-building programs for local businesspeople and other aspiring community members.
- These initiatives were conceived by the local community and address issues that people in the region determined as being important.

Assessment: Emerging

9. Ensuring responsible land stewardship over the life of a project and embracing opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and/or agricultural value of the land

Kilara partners with long term asset owners that have a demonstrated commitment to the principals of environmental stewardship. We work with our partners to establish long term strategies for implementation during project operations that enhance local environmental objectives wherever possible.

In the case of the Wilan Wind Farm, this includes:

- Developing pest and weed control programs consistent with those undertaken on neighbouring properties,
- Developing a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the site covering the operational phase activities that ensures ongoing sensitivity to preserving and enhancing local cultural values.
- Clearly articulating relevant commitments to biosecurity protocols with project landowners and preparing a project design consistent with ongoing agricultural activities across the site.

Assessment: Emerging



10. Recycling waste materials where feasible throughout the life of a project and committing to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment/repowering of sites at the end of their operational life

Kilara's commitment to the important objectives of recycling and responsible decommissioning is demonstrated through:

- Clearly stated intentions and requirements around decommissioning and / or repowering on our Agreements for Lease and Lease documentation, including a commitment to decommissioning bonds, and
- A clear emphasis on expectations and requirements relating to recycling in project procurement strategies. The Wilan Wind Farm project will for example, coordinate closely with the Hay Shire Council in utilising its new state of the art, waste management and recycling facility.

Assessment: Emerging



Kilara Energy's head office is on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations. We acknowledge their elders, past, present and emerging.

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