



Fact sheet

Wind Farms

Developing a wind farm

How is a site selected for the wind farm?

Before selecting a site for a wind farm, we carry out assessments to help us determine the project's size and feasibility. We check if there is enough wind, what the size of the wind farm could be, proximity to and condition of the grid, planning and environmental constraints, proximity to dwellings and sensitive locations, amongst many other assessments.

Once a site has been identified and landowners have confirmed their willingness to host infrastructure, we engage the community and key stakeholders as part of an ongoing consultation process.

What planning approvals do wind farms need?

A wind farm development requires a range of planning approvals from government. The approval process will consider the size, location, and potential planning, social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with the project.

State government involvement in planning and environmental approvals varies from state to state. State planning legislation will designate the threshold for when the local or state planning authority becomes responsible for development approvals and will dictate the planning process.

Depending on the state, a development application may take a couple of years to prepare. An approval decision can take anywhere from six months to a couple of years.

Approval at the Commonwealth level is needed when projects are deemed to affect matters of national environmental significance as listed under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

What type of studies will be carried out?

To understand and optimise the social, environmental, and ecological impacts and benefits of our projects, we will undertake a variety of assessments to inform our design, including in relation to:

- Agriculture
- Aviation, if applicable
- Bushfire and other fire hazards
- Cultural heritage
- Environmental and ecological studies, including fauna and flora, bat and bird, and target species (for example, vulnerable and threatened species)
- Hydrology
- Landscape and visual impact
- Noise
- Topographical survey
- Traffic and transportation
- Wind monitoring.

Connecting to the grid

The National Electricity Market (NEM) operates on an interconnected power system from Far North Queensland to Tasmania and South Australia which is commonly referred to as the 'grid'.

Like all large generators, wind farms connect to high-voltage transmission lines to ensure the electricity they generate can be efficiently transported to areas where it is used. New wind farms generally seek to connect to the grid in areas that have the ability to accept the large volume of power generated or in 'renewable energy zones' designated by government authorities.

How long does it all take?

A wind farm typically takes 5 years to develop and 2-3 years to build, depending on its size. Once operational, the wind farm's expected operating life is typically 30 years, excluding the time required to decommission.

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