



The Eastern Rise Offshore Wind Project acknowledges the Awabakal and Worimi people as the Traditional Custodians of the area in which our proposed Project will be located. We respect their deep and enduring connection to the land, water, air and sky.

Dec 2023



The Eastern Rise Offshore Wind Project is a proposed 1.725 GW floating project off the coast of the Hunter-Port Stephens region of New South Wales



The Project has capacity to generate 1.7 gigawatts, which is enough to power around 825,000 homes with new energy.



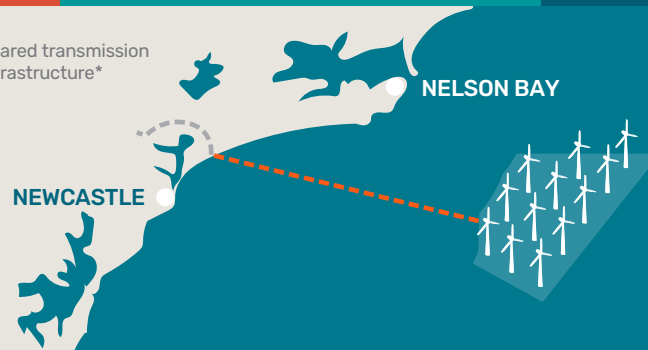
We're considering connecting to the Tomago switchyard to access the energy grid. Our preference is to use shared transmission lines where possible.



The Project is proposed to be located within the Commonwealth Government's declared offshore wind zone, approx. 25-45km off the coast. It will consist of up to 115 floating turbines and three offshore substations.

--- Subsea cable*

---- Shared transmission infrastructure*



*Indicative only, not to scale.

Where is the Project up to?

The Eastern Rise Offshore Wind Project is in the very early stages of planning and assessment, and we're excited about the potential for the Hunter-Port Stephens region.

At this stage the Project does not have any approvals. BlueFloat Energy and Origin Energy have partnered to apply for a Feasibility Licence; an application was made to the Commonwealth Government last month.

In July 2023, the Commonwealth Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, declared the Pacific Ocean off the Hunter region as Australia's second offshore wind zone. Our proposed Project would sit within this declared zone, subject to approvals.

If we are granted a Feasibility Licence, it means we can gather site-specific and regional information to assess the viability of our Project. This includes the potential interactions with the environment and other marine users.

It's important to thoroughly understand the presence, behaviour and movements of marine animals and birds, before the development of offshore wind. We take this responsibility very seriously.

We will continue to consult with the community and stakeholders on our Project, and the planning and assessment phase will continue for many years. The studies that will be done as part of the environmental impact assessment phase, will be available for the community to review and provide submissions.



Proud partners



Project timeline

2022 - 2024

Phase 1

Pre-feasibility studies

Preliminary site studies and desktop assessments

2024 - 2029

Phase 2

Design and approvals

Detailed technical and environmental studies to be conducted if a Feasibility Licence is awarded.

2029
2-3 years

Phase 3

Construction

If the project is environmentally, technically and commercially viable, an application can be made for a Commercial Licence.

2031
30 years

Phase 4

Operations and Maintenance

The operations phase will last for approximately 30 years.

2061
18-24 months

Phase 5

Decommissioning

Further environmental studies may be required. The materials will be recycled/repurposed.

What's needed for the Project to proceed?

We require approval from Commonwealth and New South Wales (NSW) Governments before we build the Project.

This includes approval under the:

- Commonwealth *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021* (OEI Act). This provides the framework for the development, construction, operation and decommissioning of offshore renewable energy projects in Australia. Feasibility Licences are issued under the OEI Act and grant developers access to a site area to begin feasibility studies.
- Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). This is the Commonwealth Government's main environmental legislation and protects matters of national environmental significance. We submitted a referral under this Act and the Minister for the Environment determined that the project is 'a controlled action and needs a full assessment.'
- The process in NSW is yet to be confirmed.

Prior to preparing our Feasibility Licence application, we conducted several desktop studies on potential environmental impacts to help inform our referrals under the EPBC Act 1999.

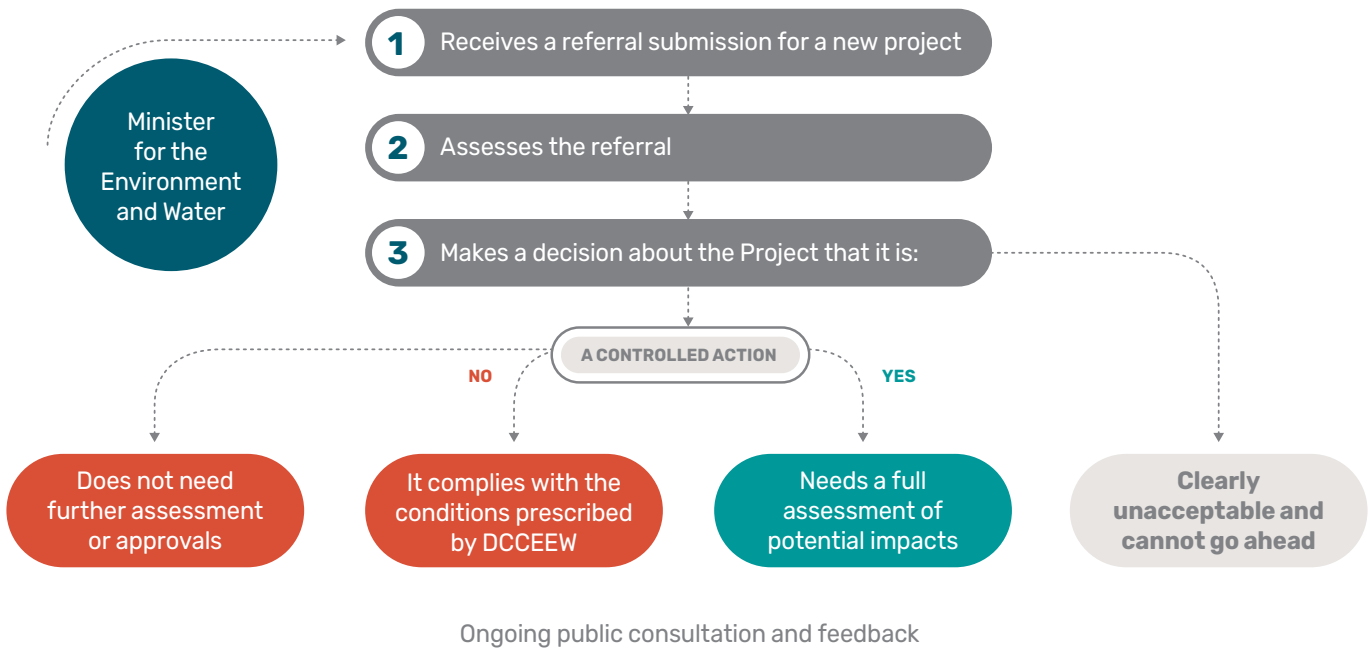
A referral is a written request to the Commonwealth Environment Minister to decide if the Project needs full assessment and approval under the EPBC Act. We have lodged two referrals and received decisions on them.

The first referral is a controlled action and identified that we need to prepare a comprehensive environmental impact statement. The Commonwealth Government decided that the second referral relating to initial marine environmental investigations is not a controlled action, subject to prescribed conditions being complied with by the Project.

These decisions provide more information about the work we need to undertake moving forward.



What is a controlled action and not a controlled action?



Offshore wind fast facts



How does offshore wind work?

Large turbines installed in the ocean are moved by the force of strong winds. The rotation of the turbines turns magnets inside a coil of wire, producing electricity. This electricity travels down through cables in the tower to an offshore substation, where a transformer increases the voltage. High voltage undersea cables then transport the electricity to a land-based substation, where a transformer again adjusts voltage to connect into the existing transmission grid. The electricity is then distributed to homes, businesses and industry.



Will the Eastern Rise Offshore Wind Project take up the entire declared zone?

No, the Project's proposed site area is only a part of the declared zone.



Why here? What other locations have been considered?

The Commonwealth Government has identified six priority areas for assessment for suitability of offshore wind. Two areas have been declared as offshore wind zones, this area off the Hunter coast and one off the coast of Gippsland in Victoria.

The Pacific Ocean region off the Illawarra, the Bass Strait off Northern Tasmania and the Southern Ocean region off Portland have all been proposed. An area off Bunbury, Western Australia has also been identified as a priority area for assessment.



Will I be able to see the wind turbines from the shore?

It's likely the turbines will be visible from various points along the coast. If we are granted a Feasibility Licence, we will complete an environmental impact assessment. As part of this, we will commission a detailed landscape and seascape visual impact assessment.



Will I be able to hear the turbines?

Wind passing through the blades of turbines produces a characteristic sound audible to anyone who is located at a relatively short distance from the turbine. However, the Project will be located more than 25km from the coast. At this distance, noise may be undetectable from shore. As part of the environmental and social impact assessment further investigation will take place to determine actual impacts.



Will this Project affect marine life and seabirds?

If we are granted a Feasibility Licence, we will undertake comprehensive environmental research, surveys and rigorous impact assessments to understand and mitigate the effects of construction and operation on marine life habitats and ecosystems, including birds.

These studies will be made available to the community and open for feedback during the assessment phase of the Project. The information will be used to help inform the Project's development.

It's important to note that a number of approval processes will be undertaken and conditions will need to be met during the Project's development, construction, operation and decommissioning. These are likely to include reporting and continual monitoring of impacts.



Will fishing be permitted around the wind farm?

The ultimate decision on exclusion zones will be determined by the Commonwealth Government and maritime safety authorities. In countries such as the UK, exclusions are only applied during surveys, construction and maintenance.



How are you consulting with the community?

We're proactively engaging with the community by sharing details of our plans and seeking feedback. During the feasibility stage, licence holders must undertake detailed environmental assessments and further stakeholder consultation to advance their specific project proposals. These studies will be made available to the community and open for feedback during the assessment phase of the Project. The results of these studies and community feedback will help inform the design and construction.



How can I work on offshore wind?

The new offshore wind industry will create thousands of jobs and opportunities to develop, construct, operate and maintain offshore wind turbines, substations and other infrastructure. The range of roles will include engineers, marine specialists and trades, including apprentices.

Contractors and subcontractors will employ various workers in management roles and specialised engineers in different areas such as mechanical, structural and marine.

The answers to other questions are available on our website.



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Get in touch

We'd love to hear from you!

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