



# Willatook Wind Farm Newsletter I

September 2010

## *Introducing the proposed Willatook Wind Farm*

### **WIND PROSPECT WA PTY LTD AND THE WIND PROSPECT GROUP**

Wind Prospect is a leading independent wind energy developer, constructor and operator, working in Australia, UK, Ireland, France, Canada, USA and China. The Wind Prospect Group has over 18 years of successful development experience within the industry and has been involved in over 2,500 MW of approved wind farms, in terms of development, construction, operation and commercial services. Further information about Wind Prospect can be found at [www.windprospect.com.au](http://www.windprospect.com.au).

### **THE PROPOSED WILLATOOK WIND FARM**

Wind Prospect is currently undertaking a feasibility analysis of the potential to develop and construct a wind farm over an area between Hawkesdale and Orford in south-west Victoria. The area is predominantly cleared land used for cattle and sheep farming although some of the properties are also used for dairy farming and cropping.

The proposed Willatook Wind Farm development would comprise up to 190 wind turbines with up to 102 metre hub height, up to 112 metre rotor diameter, resulting in a total of up to 152 metres from ground to blade tip. Other associated infrastructure includes new access tracks and underground cabling and other electrical infrastructure and temporary work compounds. Existing roads and tracks around and through the site may also need upgrading to enable suitable access to the site. The maximum site capacity would be up to 350MW. It is expected that the wind farm would operate for at least 20 years.

Wind Prospect has begun to gather detailed site information regarding the project area and the impact assessment and would like to share this information with the local community. Two open days will be held at the end of October/early November to provide an opportunity for the community to learn more about the proposed project and to provide input to the development process. The events will be advertised locally in early October, or if you are interested in attending the open day you can contact Wind Prospect to be added to the mailing list. We very much look forward to meeting more of the local community and hearing your views.



Predicted view of the Willatook Wind Farm looking ESE from the intersection of the Woolsthorpe-Heywood and Hamilton-Port Fairy Roads.

## DRIVERS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION IN AUSTRALIA

In 2009, the Australian government amended the existing Renewable Energy Target (RET) scheme to deliver on their commitment that 20 per cent of Australia's electricity supply will come from renewable sources by 2020. To achieve this target, it is expected that renewable energy technologies will need to generate about 45,000 GWh in the year 2020.

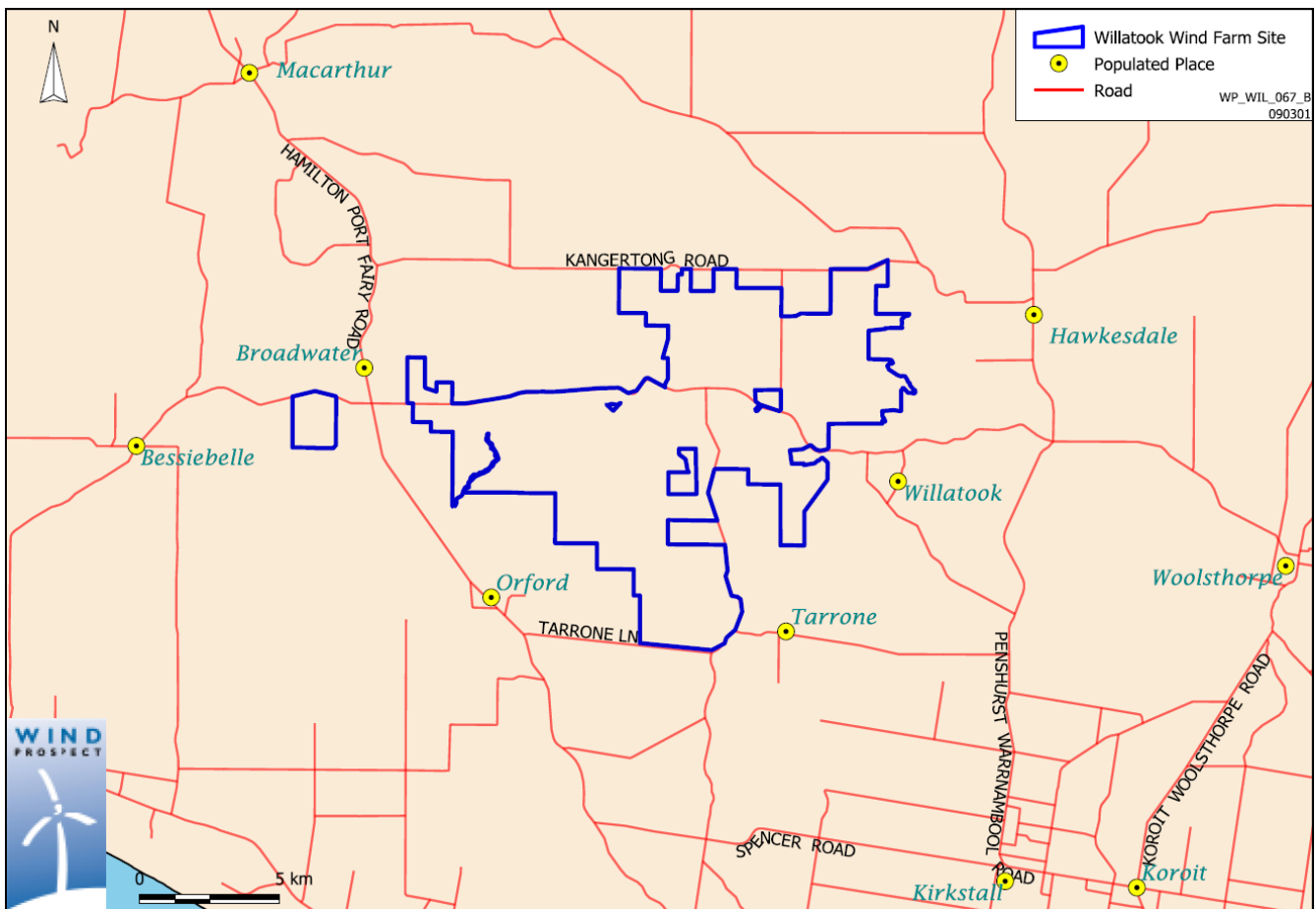
Renewable energy currently contributes about 7 per cent to Australian electricity generation with wind energy representing 1.5 per cent of generation. As one of the most feasible and economic renewable energy technologies currently available in Australia, it is expected that wind energy will contribute a significant portion of the RET target. It is expected that the proposed Willatook Wind Farm will produce up to 1,000 GWh per year. This is enough energy to power approximately 180,000 average Victorian households.

## WHY WIND?

- Wind energy is one of the most feasible, clean and economic renewable energy technologies currently available in Australia
- The development of wind farms helps to meet our ever growing demand for power
- Utilising wind energy increases our diversity of energy sources thereby increasing our security of electricity supply
- Generating clean, renewable energy reduces our emissions, contributes to positive climate change action and assists in achieving our emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol
- Wind energy integrates very well with a hydro-electric dominated power system OR gas system – the two sources of energy complement each other

## WHY THE WILLATOOK AREA?

In addition to a strong wind resource, an ideal wind farm site would be close to transmission infrastructure, not contain areas of ecological, landscape or heritage sensitivity, be appropriately zoned with a relatively low density of dwellings in the area and contain an open and unobstructed landscape with good road access. Preliminary assessment shows that the Willatook area meets many of these criteria. A successful wind farm development also benefits from a supportive local community. We hope to gain such support throughout the development of this project.



## ASSESSMENT RESULTS SO FAR

- **Wind monitoring:** A wind monitoring program commenced in June 2009 and indicates the presence of a viable wind resource in the area.
- **Ecology:** A detailed ecology assessment is currently being finalised and has confirmed our initial assessment that the site is suitable for a wind farm development. It is expected that all areas of sensitivity including some significant flora and habitat for some significant fauna will be avoided, or where unavoidable, impacts reduced to acceptable limits.
- **Heritage:** A heritage testing program over the site is now complete and a complex Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is currently being prepared for submission to Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV). Five sites of Aboriginal significance were identified, all of which will be avoided. No areas of non-Aboriginal, historical significance were identified.
- **Traffic & access:** An assessment of traffic and access impacts is near completion. It is expected that widening will be required at some corners and access point locations during the construction phase although impacts to significant flora are expected to be avoided.

Other assessments that have been completed to date include effects on communications and shadow flicker. The results of all the assessments undertaken so far will be presented during the open days.

## ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO COME

An aviation risk assessment and a noise assessment are currently underway and a landscape assessment will commence shortly. The noise assessment will require background noise monitoring at locations selected by the noise consultant.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

There are many potential community benefits resulting from wind farm projects including:

- Increased demand for regional goods and services during the construction phase.
- The creation of temporary jobs during the construction phase and a small number of permanent positions during the wind farm's operational life.
- Establishment of a Community Fund for access by local residents for community based projects.
- Additional energy supply to meet growing demand.
- Potential attraction to people visiting the Willatook area and surrounding towns.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

A referral as to whether an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) is required will be submitted to the Minister for Planning who will determine whether an EES is required or whether a standard permit application process is followed. An EPBC referral will also be prepared and assessed by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. Both possible planning processes involve the completion of numerous feasibility investigations, discussion with appropriate stakeholders and consultation with the local community.



## PROPOSED TIME LINE

- September 2010 - Traffic & access assessment complete;
- October 2010 - Ecology complete; CHMP complete; aviation assessment complete; EES & EPBC referrals
- November 2010 - Community open days, noise & landscape assessments complete; AAV decision
- December 2010 - Submission of EES or standard permit application to the Minister for Planning

## HAVE YOUR SAY

We are very interested to hear your views of the proposed Willatook Wind Farm. Feedback allows us to identify potential improvements or community concerns regarding the design or other aspects of the proposed wind farm and informs our decision-making process during project development.

Opinion surveys will be distributed at open days, whilst surveys can be completed online at any time on the project website - [www.willatookwindfarm.com.au](http://www.willatookwindfarm.com.au). Alternatively, Wind Prospect staff in Melbourne can be contacted in relation to this project using the contact details provided below.

Once a planning application is submitted, the application will be publicly notified and any member of the public will be able to provide a written submission to the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development. The submissions are taken into account in the decision making process.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Willatook Wind Farm:

[www.willatookwindfarm.com.au](http://www.willatookwindfarm.com.au)

Wind Prospect:

[www.windprospect.com.au](http://www.windprospect.com.au)

Clean Energy Council:

[www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au](http://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au)

Wind Energy Policy and Planning Guidelines, Sustainability Victoria:

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/2052-wind-energy-policy-and-planning-guidelines.asp>

Auswind Best Practice Guidelines:

[http://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/cec/resourcecentre/reports/Past-Reports/mainColumnParagraphs/0/text\\_files/file21/bestpracguidelines06.pdf](http://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/cec/resourcecentre/reports/Past-Reports/mainColumnParagraphs/0/text_files/file21/bestpracguidelines06.pdf)

Wind Energy Myths and Facts, Sustainability Victoria:

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/2148-wind-energy-myths-and-facts.asp>

Wind turbines and health, National Health and Medical Research Council:

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/new0048.htm>

Wind farms and property prices:

NSW Valuer General - [http://www.ipma.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/117621/t0L51WT8.pdf](http://www.ipma.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/117621/t0L51WT8.pdf)

USA - <http://eetd.lbl.gov/ea/ems/reports/lbnl-2829e.pdf>



## HOW TO CONTACT US



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