

Public record pursuant to s. 39 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*

Proposal title: Kalgoorlie Regional Renewable Energy Project

Proposal description:

The proposal is for the construction and operation of a hybrid renewable energy generation to power the Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines operations. The proposal comprises the installation and operation of a total 336 megawatts (MW) hybrid renewable energy generation, consisting of a 256 MW wind farm including meteorological masts, a 110 MW solar farm, a 300-MW hour battery energy storage system (BESS), underground transmission infrastructure, and supporting infrastructure such as internal and external access roads, communication towers, substations and offices.

Proposal location: City of Kalgoorlie Boulder

Application number: APP-0032412

Date referral received: 12 November 2025

Referrer: Northern Star (EGP) Pty Ltd

Proponent: Northern Star (EGP) Pty Ltd

Potential significant effects: there are potential impacts on: **flora and vegetation** from clearing of native vegetation; **terrestrial fauna** from clearing of habitat and from ongoing collision risk from wind turbines; and **social surroundings** from construction and operation impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage and amenity (noise and visual).

Preliminary key environmental factors: flora and vegetation, terrestrial fauna, and social surroundings

Public comment on referral information:

Do not assess:	0
Assess: a) Referral information	0
b) Environmental review - no public review	0
c) Public environmental review	3
<i>Total submissions:</i>	3

Decision: s. 38G(1) – Not assess – Public advice given

Summary of reasons pursuant to s. 38G(1)(c)

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has decided not to assess the proposal because:

- The EPA considers the likely environmental effects of the proposal are not so significant or unmitigated to warrant formal assessment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act).
- The EPA's decision has been made on the basis of the proponent implementing the proposal in accordance with the Proposal Content Document (PCD), management outlined in the Referral Supporting Document (RSD) and the Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan (BBAMP).
- The EPA has assessed the adequacy of the BBAMP to mitigate fatality risk to birds and bats from operation of the proposal and formed a view that it includes a comprehensive risk assessment and adopted a precautionary approach to

mitigation, including implementing curtailment practices for wind turbines (increasing the cut in speed to 4.5 m/s at night) from the onset of operation during peak bat activity periods which is currently a best practice measure. The BBAMP includes post-construction mortality surveys with triggers that are considered suitable to prompt adaptive management. Reporting against the BBAMP can be included as a non-standard condition in the *Mining Act 1978* approval (refer to public advice below).

- Environmental and social studies were carried out over a Study Area (SA) of 13,191 ha to inform the proposal. The EPA notes that no Threatened or Priority ecological communities (TECs / PECs), Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem, or Threatened flora were identified during surveys and all priority flora records will be protected within exclusion zones with buffers applied. The EPA has considered the relatively small cumulative impact of the proposal on regional vegetation associations, with 96% of pre-European extent retained in each association.
- The EPA acknowledges that construction of the proposal requires a clearing of up to 652 ha, however, is aware that impacts to native vegetation and fauna habitats at a similar scale have been effectively managed by Native Vegetation Clearing Permits (NVCP) issued under Part V, Division 2 of the EP Act.
- The EPA notes that no conservation significant fauna species including Malleefowl, Inland Hairstreak Butterfly (IHB) and conservation significant Short-Range Endemic (SRE) occur within the DE. However, the EPA has considered the relative impact of the proposal on the potential suitable habitats identified within the broader SA of the proposal, with 95.1% of foraging and dispersal habitat for Malleefowl retained (and breeding habitat avoided); 97% of potentially suitable habitat for IHB retained (and host plants/individuals avoided); and 96.8% of high value SRE habitat retained. Furthermore, the EPA has the confidence that potential impacts to Malleefowl can be mitigated through conditions within the NVCP required under Part V, Division 2 of the EP Act, as evident in NVCPs that had been previously granted for proposals with similar impacts.
- The EPA has considered the remote locality of the proposal and the impacts to amenity (both visual and noise) in this context, as well as the proponent's commitment to avoid direct impacts to any identified Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (ACH) sites. Noise generated by the proposal during construction and decommissioning will occur for short-term durations and mostly during daylight hours. Noise modelling predicts that operational noise is not likely to exceed the assigned noise level of 35 dbA at sensitive receivers. Given noise is regulated under the *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997* the EPA is confident that impacts to social surroundings (amenity) from operational noise is not likely to be significant.
- The EPA considers that potential environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposal can be regulated by other decision-

making processes (see subsections below). In addition, the proponent has committed to implementing an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), and a BBAMP. The EPA has taken into account the ability of other decision-making processes (in particular the *Mining Act 1978* approval) to regulate aspects of these plans.

- The EPA has considered cumulative impacts within the Kalgoorlie region with other significant proposals, and considers that subject to regulation set by decision-making authorities, the proposal will result in a small loss relative to the extent of native vegetation in the extensively vegetated region, and therefore, and therefore, the proposal's cumulative environmental outcome is likely to be consistent with the EPA objective for flora and vegetation.
- The EPA does not consider that the proposal impacts will combine or interact in a holistic way which requires assessment by the EPA.
- Given the EPA's decision to 'not assess' this proposal, there will be further opportunity for the public to comment on aspects of the proposal during the public comment period for applications under Part V of the EP Act.

Taking into account decision-making processes under the Mining Act 1978

- Since the proposal is located on mining tenure, a Mining Development and Closure Proposal (MDCP) is required and will be assessed by the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (DMPE).
- In assessing MDCP, DMPE will consider how the proponent has applied the mitigation hierarchy, and what conditions should be prescribed in the *Mining Act 1978* approval. The approval will condition a Mine Closure Plan (MCP) and can condition an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and BBAMP. The EPA considers that potential impacts to flora and vegetation and terrestrial fauna habitats (e.g. from dust, weeds and altered surface water flows) can be effectively managed through an EMP. Given the high standard of the BBAMP, the EPA is confident the risk of mortality to birds and bats due to collision and/or barotrauma from operating wind turbines can be managed through the BBAMP such that the EPA's objective for terrestrial fauna can be met. Furthermore, the EPA is confident that preparation and implementation of a MCP (assessed by DMPE and continually reviewed throughout operations) will ensure rehabilitation and revegetation is conducted to a high standard.
- The *Mining Act 1978* approval also includes standard conditions to minimise impacts to adjacent vegetation, protecting an otherwise largely undisturbed landscape and locally significant vegetation; as well as rehabilitation conditions ensuring the 229 ha rehabilitated and revegetated following construction (and the remaining areas during decommission) is consistent with agreed reference vegetation communities.
- DMPE's assessment will consider aspects including, but not limited to, potential impacts of the project on flora, vegetation and fauna; terrestrial environmental

quality; and inland waters. The MDCP must include a comprehensive risk assessment which identifies all environmental impacts and risks, evaluates impacts and risks, and details management strategies to minimise adverse environmental impacts and mitigate environmental risks. The MDCP must also include detailed information regarding environmental and closure outcomes.

- DMPE may consult with other agencies (e.g. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions [DBCA], WA museum) or other decision-making authorities (e.g. the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation [DWER]) for advice during their assessments.

Taking into account decision-making process under the Part V Division 2 of the EP Act, the Environmental Protection Regulations 1987 (EP Regulations), and the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004 (Clearing Regulations)

- Construction of the proposal requires clearing of up to 652 ha of native vegetation which will result in a 0.5 ha loss of one locally significant vegetation type, 304.9 ha loss of vegetation that is potentially suitable habitat for *Eremophila praecox* (listed as P2 by DBCA), loss of up to two individuals of *Streptoglossa cylindriceps* (unlisted – potential range extension) which is widely distributed throughout Western Australia, South Australia and Northern Territory.
- Given the EPA's decision to 'not assess' this proposal under Part IV of the EP Act, the project will require a NVCP under Part V, Division 2 of the EP Act. The NVCP application may be assessed by DWER or by DMPE as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the departments. Exemptions under the Clearing Regulations may apply where granting of tenements is pending.
- In assessing the NVCP application, DWER will consider how the proponent has applied the mitigation hierarchy and the 10 Clearing Principles outlined in the EP Act, and whether any conditions should be prescribed to manage potential impacts. Offsets can also be prescribed to counterbalance any significant residual impacts to biodiversity values.

Taking into account decision-making process under the Part V Division 3 of the EP Act, the EP Regulations, and the Environmental Protection (Concrete Batching and Cement Product Manufacturing) Regulations 1998

- Construction of the proposal requires a concrete batching plant, a crushing and screening plant, and sewage disposal, one or more of which may require a works approval and licence under Part V, Division 3 of the EP Act if the premise exceeds the production or design capacity specified in Schedule 1 of the EP Regulations.
- In assessing the works approval, DWER will consider how the proponent has applied the mitigation hierarchy, and what conditions should be prescribed in the licence to manage potential impacts to the environment from premise emissions and discharges.

- Potential environmental impacts from concrete batching (e.g. dust, wastewater) will also be managed through operational standards set out in the *Environmental Protection (Concrete Batching and Cement Product Manufacturing) Regulations 1998*.

Taking into account decision-making processes under the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997 (Noise Regulations)

- Operation of the proposal will generate noise over a long-term duration that has the potential to impact noise sensitive receivers by disrupting amenity.
- The Noise Regulations set assigned (allowable) levels for noise received at various types of premises. Should post-construction noise monitoring identify exceedance of assigned noise level at sensitive receivers (set at 35 dbA), the Noise Regulations would require that noise mitigation measures are implemented until the assigned noise levels are met. The EPA is satisfied that the Noise Regulations can manage impacts to amenity from noise, such that the EPA's objective for social surroundings can be met.

Taking into account decision-making process under the Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004, Electricity Act 1945 and the Electricity (Licencing) Regulations 1991 (Electricity Regulations)

- Operation of the proposal requires BESS.
- Control and safety of electrical installations and equipment (such as BESS) is regulated by the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS). The BESS must comply with the *Electricity Act 1945* and Electricity Regulations, and relevant standards and building codes to minimise associated hazards (e.g. fire, explosion, release of hazardous chemicals). The BESS may also require a dangerous goods licence.

Taking into account decision-making process under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914 (RiWI Act)

- Construction of the proposal is likely to impact ephemeral drainage lines intersecting the proposal DE.
- If works obstruct, interfere or destroy the bed or banks of a watercourse within a proclaimed surface water area, a permit under section 11/17/21A of the RiWI Act (bed and banks permit) may be required from DWER. The EPA objectives for terrestrial environmental quality and inland waters can be met through assessment and approval process under the RiWI Act.

Taking into account decision-making process under the Health Act 1911 and Health (Treatment of Sewage and Disposal of Effluent and Liquid Waste) Regulations 1974

- The proposal requires onsite sewage treatment and disposal and will require approval under the *Health Act 1911*. In assessing the application to construct or

install an apparatus for the treatment of sewage, the Department of Health will consider the suitability of the site for wastewater disposal and the proposed design.

Taking into account decision-making processes under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (AH Act)

- The EPA considers the proponent has taken reasonable steps to consult with the Traditional Owners, and has entered into a land use agreement for the Marlinyu Ghoorlie Native Title Claim (WC2017/007). Archaeological and ethnographic heritage surveys have been completed and all known Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (ACH) sites (and other cultural values) occur outside the proposal development envelope and will be avoided.
- The EPA notes the proponent has advised that no direct impacts to registered Aboriginal heritage sites or values are expected from the proposal. The EPA is satisfied that the processes provided for under the AH Act can mitigate potential impacts to registered ACH sites to be consistent with the EPA objectives.

Public advice

Advice to other decision-making authorities

The EPA publishes the following public advice for the benefit of other decision-making authorities to ensure that their statutory decision-making processes achieve and assure environmental outcomes consistent with the EPA's environmental factor objectives:

- To mitigate potential impacts associated with dust, weeds or altered surface water flows, the EPA supports conditions to implement management actions in accordance with an approved EMP as a component of the approval under the *Mining Act 1978*. The EPA expects that the EMP will consider both construction and operational impacts of the proposal on the environment, addressing aspects including, but not limited to, dust, weeds and erosion.
- To mitigate potential impacts to birds and bats associated with operation of wind turbines, the EPA supports conditions to implement management actions in accordance with an approved BBAMP under the *Mining Act 1978* approval. The EPA expects that the BBAMP will include commitments to conduct post-construction monitoring informing adaptive management (including curtailment adjustments if required). The EPA recommends that reporting against the BBAMP is included as a non-standard condition of the *Mining Act 1978* approval.
- The EPA supports the proponents' commitments to avoid impacts to environmental and heritage values through the exclusion of known values from the development envelope, including: conservation significant flora; Malleefowl mounds and breeding habitat; Inland Hairstreak Butterfly host plants; and ACH sites.

- The EPA supports wind turbine design specifications which maintain a 59 m separation between the ground and the rotor swept area, to minimise bird and bat collision risk.

Advice to proponent

- The EPA supports the proponent's commitment to develop a CHMP for the proposal and conduct continuous consultation with the Traditional Owners and other stakeholders throughout the life of proposal to refine the MCP (triennial updates).
- The EPA supports the proponent's commitment for the progressive rehabilitation of temporary disturbance and following the decommissioning of the infrastructure.

Material information considered by the EPA in this decision

The EPA has considered the following material information in making its decision:

- The referral (12 November 2025)
- Referral Supporting Documentation (07 November 2025) and appendices
 - Appendix A – Detailed Flora and Vegetation Survey
 - Appendix B – Reconnaissance Flora and Vegetation Survey (2024)
 - Appendix C – Reconnaissance Flora and Vegetation Survey (2022)
 - Appendix D – Preliminary Environmental Management Plan (2025) (Confidential)
 - Appendix E – Basic and Targeted Fauna Survey (2025)
 - Appendix F – Inland Hairstreak Butterfly Targeted Survey (2025) - (Confidential)
 - Appendix G – Targeted Malleefowl Survey (2025)
 - Appendix H – Malleefowl Mound Analysis from LiDAR Part 2 (2025)
 - Appendix I – Malleefowl Mound Analysis from LiDAR Part 1 (2024)
 - Appendix J – Bird and Bat Impact Assessment (2025)
 - Appendix K – Jalmenus Aridus Impact Assessment (2025) (Confidential)
 - Appendix L – Preliminary Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan (2025)
 - Appendix M – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2025)
 - Appendix N – Glare Impact Assessment (2025)
 - Appendix O – Shadow Flicker Assessment (2025)
 - Appendix P – Noise Impact Assessment (2025)
 - Appendix Q – Initial EMI Assessment (2025)
 - Appendix R – Aviation Assessment (2024)
 - Appendix S – Route Study for WTG Transport (2025)
 - Appendix T – Surface Water Assessment (2025)
- Comments received during the 7-day public comment period.
- Advice from DMPE on its statutory decision-making roles and processes.
- EP Act s.3, s.4, Part IV, Admin Procedures, EPA factor and technical guidance.

Appeals: There are no rights of appeal under the EP Act in respect of this decision.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darren Walsh', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darren Walsh

Chair

Delegate of the Environmental Protection Authority

Date: 16 December 2025