

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

Proposal title: Tathra Wind Farm

Proposal description: The proposal is for the development of an onshore renewable energy facility and involves the construction and operation of up to 140 wind turbines, generating up to 1,000 MW, up to 500 MW of solar power generation, battery energy storage system with capacity of up to 500 MW, and associated supporting infrastructure. The proposal is located approximately 15 km east of the town of Eneabba in the Mid West region of Western Australia. The proposal will connect into the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) via the existing 330 kV transmission line that intersects the development envelope.

Proposal location: Shire of Carnamah, Mid West

Application number: APP-0032384

Date referral received: 28-11-2025

Referrer: Synergy Renewable Energy Developments Pty Ltd

Proponent: Synergy Renewable Energy Developments Pty Ltd

Potential significant effects:

There are potential impacts on flora and vegetation from the clearing of 3.44 ha; terrestrial fauna from ongoing risks of collision with wind turbines; inland waters from alteration of surface water flows, groundwater abstraction; and social surroundings from construction and operational noise, dust, vibration, and visual amenity.

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

Referral Examined, preliminary investigations and inquiries conducted. Proposal not to be assessed under Part IV of the EP Act – 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 that the likely environmental effects of the proposal are not so significant or unmitigated as 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 and management measures outlined in the Referral Information and appendices.
- The EPA notes that the mitigation hierarchy has been applied and impacts on native vegetation is limited to 3.44 ha within a 15,847 ha development envelope. Based on the small extent of the proposed clearing of native vegetation, and small increase to the

impacts to land systems, the cumulative impacts of the proposal are not likely to be considered significant.

- The EPA notes that several priority flora species, a Threatened Ecological Community, and potentially groundwater dependent vegetation will be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposal. The EPA considers that the likely impacts on Flora and Vegetation can be managed appropriately through the proposed mitigation measures and under other decision-making processes (see subsections below):
 - Avoiding impacts on all recorded Threatened Flora
 - The proposal is unlikely to cause significant impacts on priority flora, taking into consideration the number of individuals to be impacted within the DE, regional distribution, and populations within CALM Act lands vested for the purpose of conservation.
 - Minimising the impacts on the critical habitat buffer of the 'Assemblages of the organic mound springs of the Three Springs area' Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) to 0.33 hectares in the form pruning/trimming of vegetation adjacent to an existing track (0.08 ha) and maintenance of the vegetation clearance from overhead power lines (0.25 ha). These impacts are unlikely to cause significant impacts on the buffer of this TEC or alter its biological diversity and ecological integrity
 - Minimising the impacts on mapped groundwater dependent vegetation (GDV) to 0.51 hectares, noting the proposal is unlikely to impact it due to the distance between the target aquifers and the rooting depth of the GDV.
 - The EPA considers that impacts on flora and vegetation can be effectively managed by Native Vegetation Clearing Permits issued under Part V, Division 2 of the EP Act and licences under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act).
- The EPA notes that several conservation significant fauna species, including black cockatoos, migratory species, and the peregrine falcon, may be impacted by the proposal. The EPA considers that the likely impacts on Terrestrial Fauna can be managed appropriately through the proposed mitigation measures and under other decision-making processes (see subsections below):
 - Trees with suitable breeding hollows or potential hollows at the preferred angle for black cockatoo species will be avoided. The EPA considers that impacts on 97 potential breeding trees and foraging habitat for black cockatoo species can be effectively managed by Native Vegetation Clearing Permits issued under Part V, Division 2 of the EP Act.
 - The proposal presents an ongoing risk to avifauna, including conservation significant fauna species, from collision or strike with turbines, which may result in fauna mortality. The EPA has assessed the adequacy of the Preliminary Bird and Bat Adaptive Management Plan (BBAMP) to mitigate mortality risk to birds and bats from operation of the proposal. The EPA notes that the Development Approval conditions for the proposal require the implementation of an appropriate BBAMP prior to the commencement of operations.

- The EPA notes that groundwater abstraction of approximately 500,000 kL per annum during construction is proposed. The EPA has considered the temporary nature of the proposed abstraction and the groundwater availability from the target aquifers, as well as the construction of several creek crossings. The EPA has confidence that impacts to Inland Waters can be managed through the assessment processes under the RiWI Act and the requirement for a s17 bed and banks permit, a 26D licence for the construction or modification of a well, and a s5C licence to take surface water or groundwater.
- The EPA has considered the potential impacts to amenity (visual and noise) and from electromagnetic interference, as well as the proponent's commitment to avoid direct impacts to any identified State or Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites. Noise modelling predicts that noise may exceed the assigned noise level at several sensitive receivers, however the proponent has committed to complying with the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997 (Noise Regulations). Given noise is regulated under the Noise Regulations and the Development Approval for the proposal includes a condition for an updated Noise Impact Assessment to demonstrate that the proposal can comply with the Noise Regulations, the EPA is confident that impacts to social surroundings (amenity) from operational noise is not likely to be significant.
- The EPA considers that potential ongoing risks of impacts on terrestrial fauna from the construction and operation of the proposal can be regulated under other decision-making processes (see subsections below). The proponent has proposed further measures, including minimum separation distances between turbines and wetland habitats and waterways to minimise direct and indirect impacts.
- The EPA considered cumulative impacts of the proposal with other activities within the area. The proposed clearing represents a small increase to the cumulative clearing of native vegetation within the local area and is not considered to cause any additional fragmentation. The EPA considers that the impacts from the proposal are unlikely to contribute to additional cumulative impacts which would undermine achievement of EPA's objectives.
- The EPA does not consider that the proposal impacts will combine or interact in a holistic way which requires assessment by the EPA.

Taking into account decision-making processes under Part V of the EP Act (clearing permit)

- The impacts associated with the clearing of native vegetation, including direct impacts on fauna habitat, can be assessed and regulated under Part V Division 2 (Clearing) of the EP Act.
- The proponent will submit an application to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) for a permit to clear the vegetation under Part V Division 2 (Clearing) of the EP Act.
- In assessing the application, DWER will consider the application of the mitigation hierarchy and the ten clearing principles outlined in the EP Act, whether any conditions should be prescribed to manage potential impacts to vegetation, and whether environmental offsets are required to mitigate the residual impacts of the proposal.

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

- The proposal has the potential to impact on inland waters, particularly Warradarge Creek and the Yarragadee aquifer, from the installation of crossings and temporary groundwater abstraction activities during construction.
- The impacts associated with groundwater abstraction and the construction of crossings can be regulated under the RiWI Act through a s17 bed and banks permit and a 26D licence for the construction or modification of a well, and s5C licence to take surface water or groundwater.

Taking into account decision-making processes under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act)

- The operation of the proposal has the potential to impact on terrestrial fauna, including fauna species listed as threatened under the BC Act, from the ongoing risk of collision or strike with turbines which may result in fauna mortality.
- The impacts associated with the potential mortality of threatened fauna species, including Carnaby's black cockatoo, can be regulated under the BC Act through a s40 authorisation to take and disturb threatened fauna.
- The proposed clearing includes up to 0.33 ha of vegetation associated with the 'Assemblages of the organic mound springs of the Three Springs area' Threatened Ecological Community, listed as Critically Endangered under the BC Act.
- The impacts associated with the clearing of vegetation associated with a Threatened Ecological Community can be regulated under the BC Act through a s45 authorisation to modify a Threatened Ecological Community.

Taking into account decision-making processes under the Planning and Development Act 2005 (PD Act)

- The construction and operation of the proposal has the potential to impact on the environmental, social, and visual amenity values within the local area.
- The EPA notes that the Development Approval for the proposal was approved on 9 December 2025 and includes conditions to manage potential impacts relating to electromagnetic interference, blade glint and shadow flicker, noise, traffic, and bushfires.
- A Preliminary BBAMP has been prepared to monitor and manage ongoing risks to terrestrial fauna from operation of the proposal. The Development Approval includes a condition requiring the preparation and implementation of a BBAMP, to the satisfaction of the local government, upon advice from relevant environmental authorities.

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 includes a battery energy storage system (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 (Licencing) Regulations 1991*, and relevant standards and building codes to minimise associated hazards (e.g.

fire, explosion, release of hazardous chemicals). The BESS may also require licencing under the *Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004*.

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

- The proposal is located within the Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) area. The EPA considers the proponent has taken reasonable steps to consult with the Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation (YSRC), the representative body for the Yamatji People.
- An Aboriginal Heritage survey undertaken in consultation with the YSRC determined that no registered Aboriginal heritage sites or lodged Aboriginal places intersect the Development Envelope and therefore the proposal is unlikely to disturb Aboriginal cultural heritage from clearing and construction activities. An ethnographic heritage survey has occurred and the proponent has committed to incorporating the recommendations from the resulting report.
- 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 direct impacts to registered Aboriginal heritage sites to be consistent with the EPA objectives.

Public advice

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:

- The proponent's Proposal Content Document specifications about the size and purpose of the clearing and the mitigation hierarchy are material to ensuring the proposal is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment.
- The EPA supports the assessment and regulation of the native vegetation clearing under Part V Division 2 (Clearing) of the EP Act to ensure the environmental outcome of maintaining biological diversity and ecological integrity is achieved. The EPA expects that this process will minimise the extent of flora and vegetation and terrestrial fauna habitat impacted by the proposal.
- To mitigate potential impacts on terrestrial fauna associated with the operation of the windfarm, the EPA supports the implementation of a BBAMP to manage impacts to bird and bat species. The BBAMP should ensure the environmental outcome to maintain biological diversity and ecological integrity is achieved. The EPA expects that this process will ensure that the ongoing impacts of wind turbine operations to fauna are managed over the lifetime of the proposal.
- Authorisation under the RiWI Act should ensure the environmental outcome to maintain the hydrological regimes and quality of groundwater and surface water so that environmental values are protected is achieved.
- To mitigate potential impacts associated with operation of the windfarm, the EPA supports the implementation of noise management measures to manage impacts to social surroundings. The EPA recommends that assessment and regulation of impacts on

social surroundings under the PD Act, including the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997 (Noise Regulations) and other related guidelines, should ensure the environmental outcome to protect social surroundings from significant harm is achieved. The Operational Noise Management and Monitoring required under the Development Approval should include consideration of the potential for modulation at sensitive receptors and appropriate mitigation measures to ensure compliance with the Noise Regulations. The EPA expects that these processes will ensure that the ongoing impacts of wind turbine operations to social surroundings are managed.

- If one is required, an assessment and regulation of Aboriginal cultural heritage under the AH Act and other related guidelines should ensure the environmental outcome to protect social surroundings from significant harm is achieved.

Material information considered by the EPA in this decision

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

- Tathra Wind Farm – Referral of a proposal under s.38 of the EP Act (28 November 2025)
- Tathra Wind Farm – Proposal Content Document
- Tathra Wind Farm – Referral Supporting Document, including Appendices A-V
- Comments received during the 7-day public comment period
- Advice – DWER’s Environmental Noise Branch
- Advice – DWER’s Mid West Gascoyne Region Branch
- EP Act s.3, s.4, Part IV, Admin Procedures, EPA factor and technical guidance
- Tathra Wind Farm Development Application – Conditions (approved 9 December)

Appeals: Decision not appealable.



Darren Walsh

CHAIR

Delegate of the Environmental Protection Authority

Date: 5 January 2026