

Hillview Energy Hub

Newsletter #3 2025



We'd like to thank our Hillview Energy Hub neighbours who met with the team during August and September.

For those neighbours who were unable to meet with us, you are still welcome to provide feedback.

These conversations have been valuable in helping us better appreciate what matters most to you. Your input helps shape our Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and guides our long-term planning to better reflect your priorities, concerns, and interests.

This newsletter provides a summary of what we heard during our most recent engagement, as well as what you can expect from us next.

How we engaged

We understand that our neighbours and community members are time-poor, so we provided a range of ways to participate. Recent engagement activities included:

- Letters and brochures for neighbours within an 8 km radius of the site
- Preparing an 8-page booklet summarising technical studies and opportunities for input
- Online and hard-copy surveys
- Door-knocking neighbours within 5 km of the site
- Community meeting with neighbours within 5-8km of the site in Uralla
- One-on-one briefings at a time convenient to you
- Seeking briefings with local community groups
- Updating our website with project information and feedback options

Through these activities, we engaged in person with over 30 local residents, while many more accessed information via our website hillviewenergyhub.com.au and completed surveys.

What we heard

We've had some really valuable conversations, and several common themes have come through. Below, we've shared a summary of what we heard, along with how we're responding and what's happening next.

THEME	WHAT WE HEARD	OUR RESPONSE
 Visual Changes	Views ranged from enthusiasm about the attractiveness of turbines, to ambivalence (as they may become less noticeable over time), through to strong concerns that they are unsightly and diminish landscape values.	As part of the Development Application process, Visual Impact Assessments are required to assess the level of visual impact the project will have on residences and public view points. Information about the process is included at the end of this newsletter.
 Roads & construction traffic	Neighbours are concerned about the impact of construction vehicles on local roads, which are already in poor condition, and the associated increase in traffic and noise during construction.	We are consulting with EnergyCo and Council to establish transport routes and road maintenance processes during construction. Please let us know if you have suggestions we can investigate as part of this process.
 Meaningful community benefits	There is strong interest in ensuring community benefits support lasting projects such as medical services and educational opportunities. Subsidies for energy bills were also suggested.	The allocation and administration of community benefit funds as part of the New England REZ is still being established. However, we are committed to developing a benefit scheme, in consultation with Uralla Shire Council, EnergyCo and the broader community.
 Property values	Some neighbours expressed concern about the potential effect the project will have on property values.	An independent report commissioned by the former NSW Office of Environment and Heritage concluded that based on the available data – wind energy developments do not impact the property values of rural properties used for agricultural purposes. The findings of this report are consistent with those of a previous study undertaken by the NSW Valuer General. More information can be found in the Renewable Energy Planning Framework - Frequently Asked Questions available through Planning NSW.
 Biodiversity and native vegetation	There is a preference for biodiversity offsets to be delivered locally to enhance corridors and reduce fragmentation. It was also suggested that a coordinated offset strategy across all Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) projects could be developed in collaboration with EnergyCo.	This is helpful information for us to be aware of, and we will be working to deliver offsets locally.
 Wind farm noise	Some residents are concerned about the potential for wind turbine noise, while others noted that turbines are quieter than expected.	In NSW a noise limit of 35 decibels (db), or an increase of only 5 decibels above background noise levels is permitted during both the day and night. For comparison a whisper is 25dB and a refrigerator is 55dB. A detailed noise study will be conducted to ensure that the project will meet all regulatory requirements.

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 Workforce accommodation and services	Residents recognised the potential strain of a large, short-term workforce on local services, particularly health. Some also noted that new accommodation could become a lasting community benefit if coordinated across proponents and led by Council.	We will continue to engage Council and EnergyCo regarding managing and mitigating the impacts of the workforce influx during construction. Our current plans include onsite accommodation for the workforce during construction. We recognise both Uralla Shire Council and the community have a desire for a longer-term solution within the township. We will work with both EnergyCo and the Uralla Shire Council, to understand how a coordinated, REZ-wide accommodation solution could provide longer-term benefits and meet the needs of the construction workforce for the projects.
 Support for renewable energy	Several neighbours highlighted their own use of renewable energy, such as solar-powered pumps, and some expressed support for wind and solar farms operating alongside traditional farming practices.	

Visual Impact Assessments

As visual change was the most discussed topic during our engagement sessions, we have outlined below how the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure assesses visual impact, and what this may mean for you.

Under NSW's Wind Energy Guideline; Technical Supplement for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment, residences within about 8 km of proposed turbine locations are assessed as part of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

This assessment considers the "Visual Sensitivity" of a location and the "Visual Magnitude" of the project's appearance. A visual impact rating is then determined, ranging from "very low" to "very high":

"Very low" and "low"	Turbines are visible, but either largely obscured or in the distance, not causing a significant visual impression. These ratings require no further investigation.
"Moderate"	Turbines clearly noticeable but would occupy only a section of the mid-field view. These ratings do not require onsite detailed assessment.
"High" and "very high"	Several turbines are clearly visible, and form a significant visual impression.

This involves a specialist photographing views from the residence and superimposing turbine locations into the landscape—similar to the example shown here.

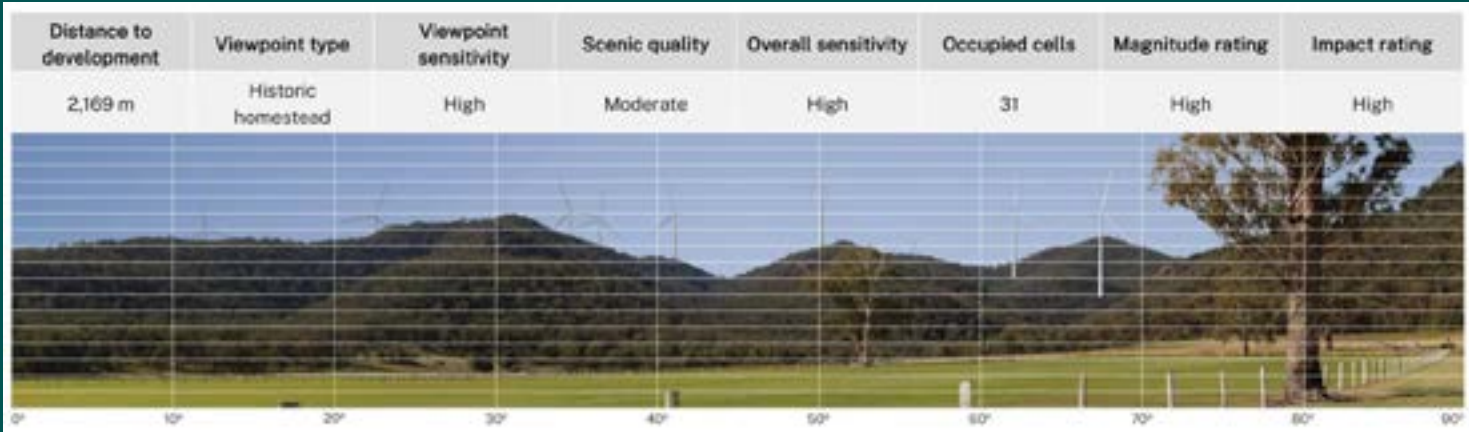


Figure 1 Example of photomontage and risk assessment process (source Wind Energy Guideline Technical Supplement for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment)

We are currently reaching out to residents whose properties have been identified as having a high or very high visual impact, to arrange a follow-up assessment.



Did you know?

Upon decommissioning, 85–94% of a wind turbine's weight is able to be recycled.

This recovery rate is well above the national average for commercial and industrial waste streams (57%) and exceeds the National Waste Policy Action Plan target of 80% by 2030.

Recycled turbine materials have been used to build bike shelters and sound barriers along highways, among other things.

We are committed to establishing a structured fund that accumulates during operation. These funds are set aside to ensure decommissioning costs are fully covered.



Future engagement activities

We are still preparing our EIS.

The community is welcome to provide feedback to us via email, completing a survey, or we can arrange to have a conversation.

We will be holding further activities in Uralla and will let you know about the details closer to the date.

Want to provide feedback now?

Please email us or visit the website hillviewenergyhub.com.au or give us a call.

hillviewenergyhub.com.au



Hillview Energy Hub was established by renewable energy developer ACE Power.

Recently, ACE Power was acquired by Tag Energy, the owner and operator of Australia's largest Wind Farm, Golden Plains in Victoria.

This acquisition delivers to Hillview Energy Hub expertise in the construction and operation of wind farms, complementing ACE Power's specialisation in early-stage development.

The transition has been carefully planned to preserve project momentum and local relationships as ACE fully integrates into TagEnergy.

The project team led by Clancy Bowman will remain the same, as will all points of contact.

[tagenergy](https://tagenergy.com.au)