

Oberon Men's Shed Q&A Summary

We appreciated the chance to meet the group, listen to your questions, and talk openly about what The Pines Wind Farm may mean for Oberon. Your feedback plays an important role in shaping how we develop the project, and we will continue to share information as it becomes available.

This document summarises the main questions raised on the day across project development, turbines, noise, neighbours and hosts, forestry, safety, decommissioning, and renewable energy.

If you have any further questions, please visit our FAQ and resources page or get in touch with us on 1800 952 319 or contact@thepineswindfarm.com.au. We are always happy to chat.

About the Project

Q: How many wind towers will there be, and how tall are they?

A: We released a draft turbine layout in October 2024 showing around 250 turbines. As more private landholders come forward to host turbines, this number may increase. A new map including private host landholders will be shared in 2026.

Each turbine will be up to 300 metres tall, with a 200 metre tower and blades that reach 300 metres at their highest point.

Q: Who pays for all the towers and ongoing costs?

A: TagEnergy finances, owns and operates the wind farm. All project costs across the lifetime of the project – including construction, maintenance, insurance and decommissioning – are paid for by TagEnergy.

Q: Who owns the turbine parts themselves? Are they sourced from Australia, and if not, where do they come from?

A: TagEnergy will own and operate the turbines and are responsible for the construction cost. Wind turbines are not currently manufactured in Australia. No supplier has been chosen yet for The Pines, although TagEnergy is working with Vestas, a Danish turbine manufacturer, at Victoria's Golden Plains Wind Farm.

Q: Why was the area around Mt David selected for the project?

A: The location offers several important advantages:

- Low native ecological impact, as turbines are located in existing introduced pine plantations
- Strong, consistent wind, allowing significant energy generation

- Close proximity to the Bannaby to Mt Piper transmission line, meaning easier grid connection and less need for new infrastructure

When wind speed doubles, the available energy increases eight-fold, making this a particularly productive site.

Q: How much power can the Maragle transmission line feasibly use? What's the capacity of the line, and will the Pines Wind Farm overload this?

A: The project is currently proposed at around 2000 MW, although this could grow as private landholders join the project. This sits comfortably within the transmission line's capacity, and no overload or curtailment is expected.

Q: What's the total acreage/hectares it will take to install all turbines?

A: We can't say for certain at this point, as the project bounds will depend on the response from landholders, however when we prepare to submit our EIS and other relevant studies for approval by the Australian Government, we will be able to provide an official figure on the number of towers and land that will be used by the project.

Clearance areas will need to be determined individually for each tower however, ballpark figures place it around 2 hectares per turbine pad so, a liberal estimate would be ~500 hectares, plus roads, substations etc.

Stromlo Energy & TagEnergy

Q: Is Stromlo Energy Australian owned?

A: Stromlo Energy is 100 per cent Australian owned and fully staff owned.

Q: Who is TagEnergy?

A: TagEnergy is a clean energy enterprise that owns, develops, builds and operates renewable energy projects across Australia and internationally. The company is backed by European investors and is responsible for owning, constructing and the long-term management of The Pines Wind Farm.

Stromlo Energy is contracted by TagEnergy to manage activities up to the start of construction. This includes commercial land dealings, organising landholding rights with Forestry Corporation of NSW, and managing and submitting the relevant permits and studies to the Australian Government.

Hosts, Neighbours & Land Access

Q: How many private landholders have signed on?

A: We don't share private agreements without landholder consent. A map of participating landholders will be released in 2026.

Q: How do the contracts work for private host landholders?

A: Host landholders receive:

- \$10,000 per year during the development of the project
- \$6,000 per MW per year from the start of construction (based on the number of MW to be installed)

Payments are the same each year because they are based on turbine capacity, not on how much energy is generated.

Q: How and when do you pay a private landowner to have towers erected near their land?

A: Host payments follow the structure above.

Neighbour agreements are different – neighbours do not host infrastructure. They receive:

- \$5,000 upfront
- Additional annual payments from construction, increased per year by CPI, based on how many turbines are near their home

Neighbours can choose higher payments with closer setbacks, or lower payments with greater distance.

Q: Will you need access to my land for construction?

A: We are only allowed access to land whose landholders we have private agreements with, and who have explicitly given consent. If we have not negotiated with you, or you have not given consent to your land being accessed, then we legally cannot enter your property. We never access land without permission.

Q: Will future dwellings be affected by the neighbour agreement, and turbine setbacks?

A: There is nothing in the neighbour agreement which prevents landholders from constructing new dwellings that may be closer to the project.

Environment, Forestry & Land Use

Q: Is there a right to go through the state forests, and if the bill proposed by Andrew Gee passes, how does this affect the project?

A: We currently have a permit that allows us to construct a project within certain areas of the State Forest, and existing legislation allows it. If legislation changes, we would reassess project viability in line with new requirements.

Q: What percentage of farmland/state forest does the project use?

A: Under legislation, Forestry Corporation can only use up to 0.7% of their plantations for wind energy projects in NSW, including The Pines.

The amount of land that will be used by the project is still under investigation, however around two hectares per wind turbine is average for the hardstands around the base of a modern wind turbine. Additional land for roads, substations etc. will also be needed.

Where plantation trees are removed on FCNSW land, they must be replaced two-for-one. Before we construct, Forestry Corporation will harvest and sell merchantable timber.

Q: Will the WWI Memorial Avenue be affected during the construction of the project?

A: We understand its importance and are doing everything we can to find an alternative transport route for the project.

Q: Are there alternative wind turbine designs available to reduce the impact on local wildlife?

A: Vertical axis wind turbines exist for small operations, but there are no large-scale models suitable for a project of this size. We will continue to follow all environmental guidelines to minimise impacts to wildlife, noting that native animals utilise pine forests much less than other habitats.

Q: Will the cabling be underground? How wide will the cabling corridor/transmission line be?

A: The cabling will be underground, with the exception being between far locations like Mt David where an overhead line is needed. We cannot answer how wide the easement will be at this time, but it will be smaller than the existing high voltage transmission line.

Noise, Vibration & Shadow Flicker

Q: How much noise does the turbine make when spinning?

A: NSW has the world's strictest noise requirements for wind farms. In NSW under the wind farm planning guidelines wind farms are restricted 35 dB maximum noise levels when measured immediately outside of non-associated houses.

35 dB limit outside of houses, in comparison to everyday sounds, is like:

- A quiet library or bedroom
- Rustling leaves
- Whispering from about 1.5m away
- A modern fridge or a quiet fan at a low speed

The gentle 'whooshing' sound you sometimes hear from a wind turbine comes mainly from the blades moving through the air and passing the tower. It isn't the generator making noise. If you were standing very close – within about 50m – you might also hear small mechanical sounds like the turbine turning to face the wind.

Q: Do the blades cause vibrations in the air

A: No, the wind turbine blades do not cause meaningful air vibrations that could affect close-by dwellings. Any slight vibrations quickly disappear from the air because of its low density.

Q: Can air vibrations cause turbines to sway, which may make it fall over?

A: Turbines are engineered to sway slightly in strong winds, similar to a high-rise building. This is normal and the strength of the tower and size of the foundation is designed to account for this.

Q: What about shadow flicker, can this be an impact?

A: The NSW wind energy guidelines (restriction) for turbine shadow flicker is 30 hours per year for a neighbouring uninvolved home, which comes out to only a few minutes per day. This effect is felt most around sunrise or sunset depending on the dwelling location with respect to the wind turbines.

Energy, Grid Stability & Power Bills

Q: How are the power bills going to come down because of the project? How many wind towers and additional projects will we need?

A: The Pines Wind Farm will generate around 10 per cent of NSW's electricity needs. When there's more electricity available, prices are pushed down. When old power stations close or new demands are added to the grid, prices tend to rise. Because this project adds such a large amount of new, clean generation, it's expected to put downward pressure on electricity prices in NSW – potentially as soon as it comes online.

For the region, TagEnergy has also put in place an Electricity Bill Credit program, which gives all Oberon residents \$100 off their annual power bill right now. This will increase to \$250 per annum when construction begins and continues for the entire project lifetime. This credit scheme will be in place regardless of the number of turbines constructed and is exclusive to The Pines Wind Farm.

Q: Are wind turbines AC or DC?

A: Modern wind turbines generate variable AC electricity. This is converted to DC, and then back to grid-frequency AC, so it matches the electricity network.

Q: Are the generators alternators?

A: The industry refers to them as generators and the output is typically variable AC, three phase.

Q: Are we aware of Paul Toole's speech on Friday 21 November?

A: Yes. While we invite debate in relation to the electricity sector and encourage everyone to have their say in relation to new projects, we note that several of the points made in Mr Toole's speech are at odds with the NSW wind energy guidelines. These are the regulations that we are required to follow to develop wind energy projects across the state. A copy of the wind energy guidelines is available to the general public at <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/renewable-energy>.

Q: Questions about the South Australian Battery

A: The Hornsdale Power Reserve (the Tesla Big Battery) was built after a state blackout to prevent future system failures. It reacts instantly to stabilise the grid when frequency drops, keeping electricity supply secure.

Q: Where does the BHP copper mine draw its baseline power from if the grid is also being supported by it?

A: BHP's copper operations draw power from the main South Australian electricity network. They also have agreements in place to buy baseload renewable electricity, which helps support the wider grid. You can read more about BHP's latest renewable electricity agreement on their website: <https://www.bhp.com/news/media-centre/releases/2025/09/bhp-powers-ahead-with-third-renewable-electricity-deal-for-copper-sa>.

Safety & Fire

Q: Why was asbestos found in some turbines in Victoria?

A: TagEnergy has been advised by Vestas, its Engineering, Procurement and Construction contractor at the Golden Plains Wind Farm in Victoria, that a supplier has provided internal service lifts with enclosed emergency brake pads that contain trace amounts of asbestos. This does not comply to the specifications outlined in Vestas's supplier agreement.

These lifts are located inside turbine towers and are used by technicians to access the top of turbines for maintenance activities.

Vestas is working closely with the supplier, regulators, and partners to identify, contain, and remove the affected brake pads, and to implement suitable replacements.

The brake pads are housed within sealed units specifically designed to contain brake dust. This design has effectively mitigated the unintended presence of asbestos in the brake materials. Independent hygienists have conducted air quality and surface testing, which confirmed no detection of uncontained asbestos in any affected turbines.

Regulators have been fully briefed and have expressed confidence in the swift and thorough response undertaken by Vestas to safeguard the health, safety, and wellbeing of all personnel and the broader community.

Q: How do we fight the fires that may alight as a result of turbines, and how do we fight fires in the forest?

A: Preparation is the first step: putting in place gravel fire breaks, strategic water storage, automatic reporting of over-heating, and fire suppression systems in turbines. We will also put in place silviculture practices such as removal of ladder fuels in consultation with Forestry Corporation.

Data from Forestry Corporation shows that lightning strikes are the leading cause of fires within these plantations, and the turbines are engineered with conductors from turbine tip to tower base to attract, and safely ground, lightning strikes.

If there is ever a fire in a turbine, fire crews stay at a safe distance to put out any spot fires, with the preparation steps above being critical to keeping fires under control.

Q: Is there a risk of turbines operating on a fire warning red day?

A: Turbines are not at increased fire risk when operating or stopped. There is no reason to shut them down on high fire danger days.

Decommissioning, Turbine Life & Repowering

Q: How old are the turbines being decommissioned now?

A: Early Australian wind farms were expected to operate for around 20 years, but many have lasted longer, for example, Crookwell 1 Wind Farm (1998) is still operating.

Technology and manufacturing standards have advanced significantly since then. Modern wind turbines are built to much higher quality standards and specifications. Vestas now warrants its turbines for at least 30 years, and designs them for an expected lifetime of approximately 35 years.

Q: How old are projects that have been decommissioned in Australia? (taken on notice)

A: Some older projects have now reached the end of their operational life. Salmon Beach Wind Farm operated from 1987 to 2002. Synergy has also decommissioned the Ten Mile Lagoon and Nine Mile Beach wind farms in Western Australia. As part of this work, Synergy donated concrete foundations and road base materials to the Shire of Esperance for local infrastructure projects, refurbished six turbines for use at other wind sites, and donated two turbines to North Metropolitan TAFE for training purposes. It should be noted that these very early projects are not in any way comparable to commercial wind farms today, where manufacturer warranties, and the track record of other commercial projects, mean we can confidently predict turbine life.

Q: Why don't we replace the parts of the turbine instead of decommissioning

A: During operation, we replace consumable parts on the turbines and occasionally upgrade or refurbish certain turbine components. Wind turbine technology has come a long way in the last 35 years, and we expect that it will continue to improve over the next 35 years.

Renewable Energy Alternatives

Q: How are wind turbines better than Nuclear?

A: Wind and nuclear serve different purposes. Australia needs new electricity quickly as coal stations retire, and wind can be built far faster and at a lower cost.

4th December 2025



Nuclear power stations take several decades to plan, approve and build, which means they cannot be delivered in time to replace retiring coal generators.

Nuclear power is also currently illegal in Australia, which means even starting the approval process would require major legislative change before any progress could occur.

If Australia ever chose to pursue nuclear, it would only be possible many years – even decades – after the retirement of most of our existing coal fleet.