



NEOEN

MINOR CHANGE APPLICATION

Mount Hopeful Wind Farm

FINAL

May 2023

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Prepared by
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on behalf of
Neoen Australia Pty Ltd

Report No. 7053/R29
Date: May 2023



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1.0 Introduction

This report has been prepared by Umwelt (Australia) Pty Ltd (Umwelt) on behalf of Neoen Australia Pty Ltd (Neoen) in support of a minor change application for the Mount Hopeful Wind Farm Project (the Project) in accordance with Section 78 of the *Planning Act 2016* (Planning Act).

On 17 June 2022, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) approved a Development Permit for a Material Change of Use (Wind Farm) and Operational Work (Native Vegetation Clearing) for the Project subject to conditions (2109-24892 SDA). The approved Project provided for the development of a wind farm containing up to 97 wind turbine generators (WTGs) and ancillary infrastructure with a nameplate capacity of approximately 700 megawatts (MW).

Refinements to engineering and constructability assessments resulted in further optimisation of the Project, including a reduction in the proposed number of turbines and amendments to the infrastructure layout and disturbance footprint.

Table 1-1 provides an overview of documentation that has been prepared in support of this minor change application.

Table 1-1 Documentation in Support of Minor Change Application

Document	Overview
Appendix A	Maps showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The layout of the proposed minor change to the Project. A comparison between the layout approved by SARA in June 2022 and the proposed Project changes.
Appendix B	Responses to State Code 23 and State Code 16.
Appendix C – Appendix L	Technical assessments of the proposed Project changes.
Appendix M	Supporting material to accompany the minor change application including Owner’s Consent, DA Form 1 and correspondence from Department of Resources.

2.0 Proposed Changes

Following the initial approval in June 2022, Neoen have made changes to the Project’s infrastructure layout and disturbance footprint to reflect further engineering and constructability assessments of the Study Area.

These Project changes have resulted in an amended design that has optimised the location of wind turbines and associated infrastructure, resulting in a smaller Project that now incorporates up to 63 WTGs and ancillary infrastructure as shown in **Appendix A**. The proposed changes are considered to constitute a minor change as defined in Schedule 2 of the Planning Act and are discussed in further detail in **Section 3.0** of this report.

2.1 Summary of Project Design Changes

A summary of the proposed changes to the Project are outlined in **Table 2-1**.

Table 2-1 Summary of Project Changes

Project Element	Description of Proposed Project Change
Project Study Area and Involved Landowners	The proposed Project change does not result in a change to the Study Area or any involved landowners. The Project is still proposed to be developed across the same 17 freehold land parcels described in the initial Planning Report.
Development Corridor and Disturbance Footprint	<p>The Project change includes an updated Development Corridor and Disturbance Footprint resulting from the design optimisation works. The changed Development Corridor and Disturbance Footprint provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the removal of 34 WTGs and minor changes to retained WTG locations the removal and realignment of some access tracks and underground and overhead electrical reticulation minor changes to the location and extent of ancillary infrastructure. <p>Materially, the Development Corridor, Disturbance Footprint, and infrastructure proposed to be developed for the Project remains generally consistent with that previously approved in June 2022. This can be seen in a comparison of the previously approved design with the changed design (Appendix A).</p> <p>Whilst the Project has not materially changed from that previously approved, it is important to note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Development Corridor has been reduced from 1,975 hectares (ha) to 1,346 ha. This constitutes a 629 ha reduction in the Development Corridor for the Project. The Disturbance Footprint has been reduced from 1,332 ha to 875.3 ha. This constitutes a 456.7 ha reduction in the Disturbance Footprint for the Project.
Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs)	<p>The Project change has involved a reduction in the number of WTGs for the Project from ‘up to 97’ to ‘up to 63’ (Appendix A).</p> <p>Whilst the Project change has removed 34 WTGs from the layout, the location of WTGs that remain within the development footprint are generally consistent with the layout approved in June 2022. Further, the maximum clearing extent for WTGs remains consistent with that previously approved by SARA in June 2022.</p> <p>The anticipated WTG dimensions, including maximum tip height and blade length, have not changed for the Project.</p>

Project Element	Description of Proposed Project Change
Meteorological Masts	<p>The Project change retains 10 permanent meteorological masts in the layout, which is consistent with the design approved by SARA in June 2022.</p> <p>The location of several permanent meteorological masts has been changed (Appendix A); however, their design and clearing extent remains unchanged and their distribution across Project parcels is generally consistent with the design approved in June 2022.</p>
Access Tracks and Site Access	<p>The reduction in WTGs for the Project has resulted in a reduction in the extent of access tracks required to service the Project (Appendix A). The proposed Project changes have included several minor amendments to the alignment of waterway crossings to ensure that the design crosses waterways at a generally perpendicular angle. This measure has been included in the updated design to further reduce the extent of vegetation clearing and soil disturbance within riparian areas for the Project. Importantly, the design parameters previously utilised to determine the construction and operational widths for access tracks remains generally consistent with that previously approved by SARA in June 2022.</p> <p>The two site access points in the proposed Project change remain unchanged from the June 2022 design.</p>
Electrical Reticulation and Grid Connection	<p>The proposed change to the Project has resulted in a reduction in the extent of electrical reticulation required to service the Project; however, the proposed Project changes makes provision for a mix of underground and overhead electrical reticulation and is shown in Appendix A.</p> <p>The amended design makes provision for an additional substation to service the southern portion of the Project and approximately 5 km of 275 kV transmission line to connect the substation to the grid (Appendix A). Whilst the substation connection is new, it is noted that the previous Planning Report flagged that ‘up to six’ substations may be required for the Project. Further, the new substation has been sited within an area containing Category X (non-remnant) vegetation and is co-located with other Project infrastructure to minimise fragmentation impacts.</p> <p>Further, the design parameters previously utilised to determine the construction and operational widths for electrical reticulation and 275 kV transmission lines remains generally consistent with that previously approved by SARA in June 2022.</p>
Project Construction and Operational Infrastructure	<p>Construction and operational infrastructure included within the proposed design change remains generally consistent with the design approved by SARA in June 2022 and is shown in Appendix A. The design change makes provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a site operations and maintenance facility • three temporary concrete batching plants • three temporary construction laydown areas and one construction compound • a 9.87 ha temporary accommodation facility for the Project’s construction workforce (up to 450 people). • Temporary workforce accommodation has been included in the proposed design change in response to further investigations undertaken for the Project, which has identified that nearby centres are unlikely to have the capacity to accommodate the construction workforce required for the Project. Furthermore, the temporary workforce accommodation addresses health and safety concerns for the construction workforce driving long distances to and from the nearest town.

2.2 Native Vegetation Clearing Impacts

The proposed changes have resulted in a significant decrease in impacts on native vegetation clearing required for the Project, most notably reducing the overall impact on Category B vegetation from 548.50 ha to 519.94 ha. The overall impacts of the disturbance footprint for the proposed Project changes, calculated using the Regulated Vegetation Management Map v6.06 under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*, are shown in **Table 2-2**. Further detail regarding the ecological impacts of the proposed changes are provided in **Appendix E** and **Appendix F** of this report.

Table 2-2 Native Vegetation Clearing Impacts

Regulated Vegetation Type	Approved Extent of Vegetation Clearing – Development Corridor (ha)	Proposed Extent of Vegetation Clearing – Disturbance Footprint (ha)	Proposed Extent of Vegetation Clearing – Development Corridor (ha)
Category X	703.03	546.52	817.69
Category R	6.19	3.63	5.59
Category C	-	3.50	4.14
Category B Total	548.50	323.89	519.94
Category B – Least Concern	548.50	323.82	519.85
Category B – Of Concern	-	0.07	0.08
Category B – Endangered	-	-	-
TOTAL	1,973.30	877.55	1,347.36

2.3 Updated Technical Assessments

Several technical assessments for the Project have been updated to reflect the changes described in **Section 2.1**. These updated technical assessments are summarised below, and a summary of the Project’s compliance against State Code 23 and State Code 16 is attached to this report as **Appendix B**.

2.3.1 Aviation

An updated Aviation Impact Assessment (AIA) Report has been prepared by Aviation Projects for the revised Project layout and is attached to this report as **Appendix C**.

The updated AIA confirms that the blade tip elevation of the highest WTG (WTG52) will not exceed 828 metres (m) Australian Height Datum (AHD). This is a reduction in the blade tip elevation of the highest WTG from the Project layout approved by SARA in June 2022, which was 844 m AHD. Further, the AIA confirms that the changed Project layout will infringe PANS-OPS surfaces and may infringe on Radar Terrain Clearance Chart (RTCC) surfaces. These impacts were previously documented in the AIA prepared for the existing Project approval.

The updated AIA confirms that the changed Project layout remains compliant with PO1 and PO2 of State Code 23.

2.3.2 Electromagnetic Interference

An updated Electromagnetic Interference (EMI) Assessment Report has been prepared by WSP Australia Pty Ltd (WSP) for the revised Project layout and is attached to this report as **Appendix D**.

The updated EMI assessment prepared by WSP was informed by an updated search of the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) Database, which identified an additional 41 new towers within a 30 km boundary of the Project. Whilst there were a number of new towers within 30 kms of the Project, no new operators were identified within a 10 km boundary of the Project, and therefore further engagement was not deemed necessary to inform the preparation of the updated EMI assessment. Further, the updated EMI assessment confirms that the Project changes to not introduce any near field exclusion zone impacts or 2nd fresnel zone impacts.

The updated EMI assessment confirms that the changed Project layout remains compliant with PO3 of State Code 23.

2.3.3 Shadow Flicker

Appendix 2 of the *Planning guidance State code 23: Wind farm development February 2022* (the State Code 23 Planning Guidance) states that a detailed shadow flicker assessment is not required for residences beyond a distance of 265 m x the maximum blade chord width for the selected WTG model.

The maximum blade chord width of the WTGs proposed for the Project is 5 m, equating to a shadow flicker assessment distance of 1,325 m. A 1,325 m buffer has been applied to the updated Project layout, as shown on **Figure 2-1**, which demonstrates that the Project changes remain compliant with PO4 of State Code 23 and further detailed shadow flicker assessment is not required.

2.3.4 Ecology

Between 2019 and 2023, extensive field survey programs have been undertaken by Umwelt to document vegetation communities, fauna habitat values, and bird and bat utilisation across the study area . Furthermore, several targeted surveys have been undertaken to document the extent and distribution of Queensland and Commonwealth listed threatened flora and fauna species.

The updated Flora and Fauna Impact Assessments assesses the impacts associated with the Project and confirms there are no changes to the outcomes of the significant residual impact assessments for the Matters of State Environmental Significance (MSES) that occur within the Development Corridor.

Updated ecological reporting has been prepared for the Project change to confirm compliance with PO5 of State Code 23: Wind Farm Development (State Code 23) and State Code 16: Native Vegetation Clearing (State Code 16). The updated Flora and Fauna Impact Assessments are attached to this report as **Appendix E** and **Appendix F** respectively.

In addition to the above, a Preliminary Fauna Management Plan (**Appendix G**) and Preliminary Vegetation Management Plan (**Appendix H**) have been prepared in support of the Project and to comply with Condition 12 of the approval package received by SARA in June 2022.

2.3.5 Traffic and Transport

An updated Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) Report has been prepared by Access Traffic Consulting (Access Traffic) for the revised Project layout and is attached to this report as **Appendix I**.

The updated TIA identified that the construction phase would introduce the majority of traffic volumes and impacts associated with the Project, with only negligible traffic volumes and impacts expected to occur during the operational phase. Based on the forecast traffic volumes, both the construction and operational phases of the Project are expected to have a minor impact to the surrounding road network. Further, the TIA notes that off-site traffic impacts during the construction phase may be further mitigated due to the possible installation of an onsite temporary accommodation facility provided for in the updated Project layout.

In addition to the above, a preliminary pavement impact assessment of the road network was also undertaken for the construction phase of the Project. The results of the assessment indicate that the heavy vehicle movements associated with the development of the Project is expected to lead to negligible increases in pavement loadings on the majority of the state-controlled road network, with calculated values of loading increase generally below the typical 5% increase trigger threshold.

The updated TIA confirms that the Project changes remain compliant with PO6 and PO13 of State Code 23.

As the WTG specifications, site access, and receiving port for the Project have not changed from the initial Project approval, an updated Transport Route Assessment is not considered necessary for this minor change application.

2.3.6 Stormwater and Drainage

Owing the nature of the Project footprint changes, and the conceptual nature of the stormwater management plan and concept erosion and sediment control plan previously prepared to satisfy PO7 and PO8 of State Code 23, no further updated specialist assessments of stormwater and drainage are considered necessary. Assessments prepared by Umwelt in support of the original development approval are still considered to be relevant and appropriate for the purposes of this minor change application.

2.3.7 Landscape and Visual Amenity

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) was prepared by LatStudios for the Project layout approved by SARA in June 2022 to demonstrate compliance with PO9 of State Code 23. LatStudios have prepared a Technical Note for the revised Project design that confirms that the updated layout will have a landscape and visual impact 'of equal or lower significance' to the previously approved layout. Further, the technical note confirms that the findings of the LVIA previously prepared by LatStudios remains valid for the changed Project layout; therefore, the Project is considered to remain consistent with PO9 of State Code 23. A copy of the Technical Note provided by LatStudios is attached to this report as **Appendix J**.

2.3.8 Acoustic

A 1,500 m buffer has been applied to the updated Project layout, as shown on **Figure 2-2**, which demonstrates compliance with the separation distances established by PO10 of State Code 23.

An updated Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has been prepared by Sonus Pty Ltd (Sonus) for the revised Project layout and is attached to this report as **Appendix K**. The updated NIA includes predictive noise modelling for the updated Project layout in accordance with the methodology established by the State Code 23 Planning Guidance. The updated NIA confirms that the updated layout remains compliant with the noise criteria established by PO11 and PO12 of State Code 23.

2.3.9 Construction Management

Traffic-related construction impacts of the Project changes have been considered through the updates to the TIA attached to this report as **Appendix I**. Owing the nature of the Project footprint changes, and the preliminary nature of construction management documentation previously provided to demonstrate compliance with PO13 of State Code 23, no further updates to existing reporting are considered necessary. Assessments prepared by Umwelt in support of the original development approval are still considered to be relevant and appropriate for the purposes of this minor change application.

2.3.10 Bushfire Management Plan

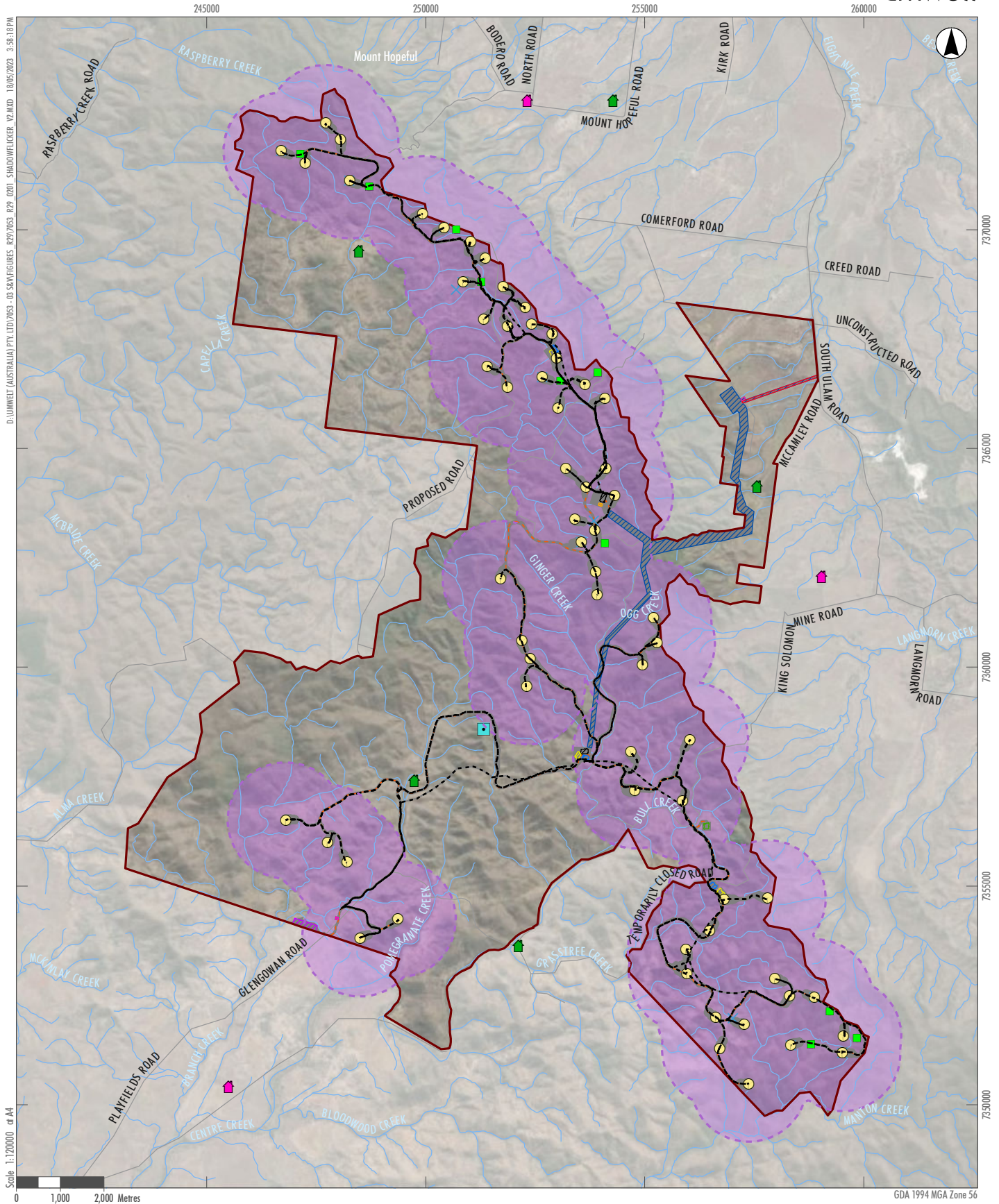
Whilst not required under State Code 23, Neoen have engaged Land and Environment Consultants Pty Ltd (LEC) to prepare a Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) for the Project. The BMP is attached to the report as **Appendix L**.

The BMP confirmed that the Project is within a combination of medium, high and very high potential bushfire intensity areas and the 100 m wide potential impact buffer from these areas. The BMP identifies asset protection zones (APZs) for ground infrastructure based on the requirements of the State Planning Policy bushfire prone area overlay code. Further, the BMP identifies mitigation measures to be implemented to minimise bushfire risk during the construction and operational phases of the Project.

The BMP confirms that with the implementation of all identified mitigation measures the Project will comply with the requirements of the SPP.

2.3.11 Approval Conditions

A review of the development approval conditions has been undertaken and no substantial changes are warranted as part of this minor change request. As such, it is requested that SARA as assessment manager make administrative changes only to the conditions of approval.



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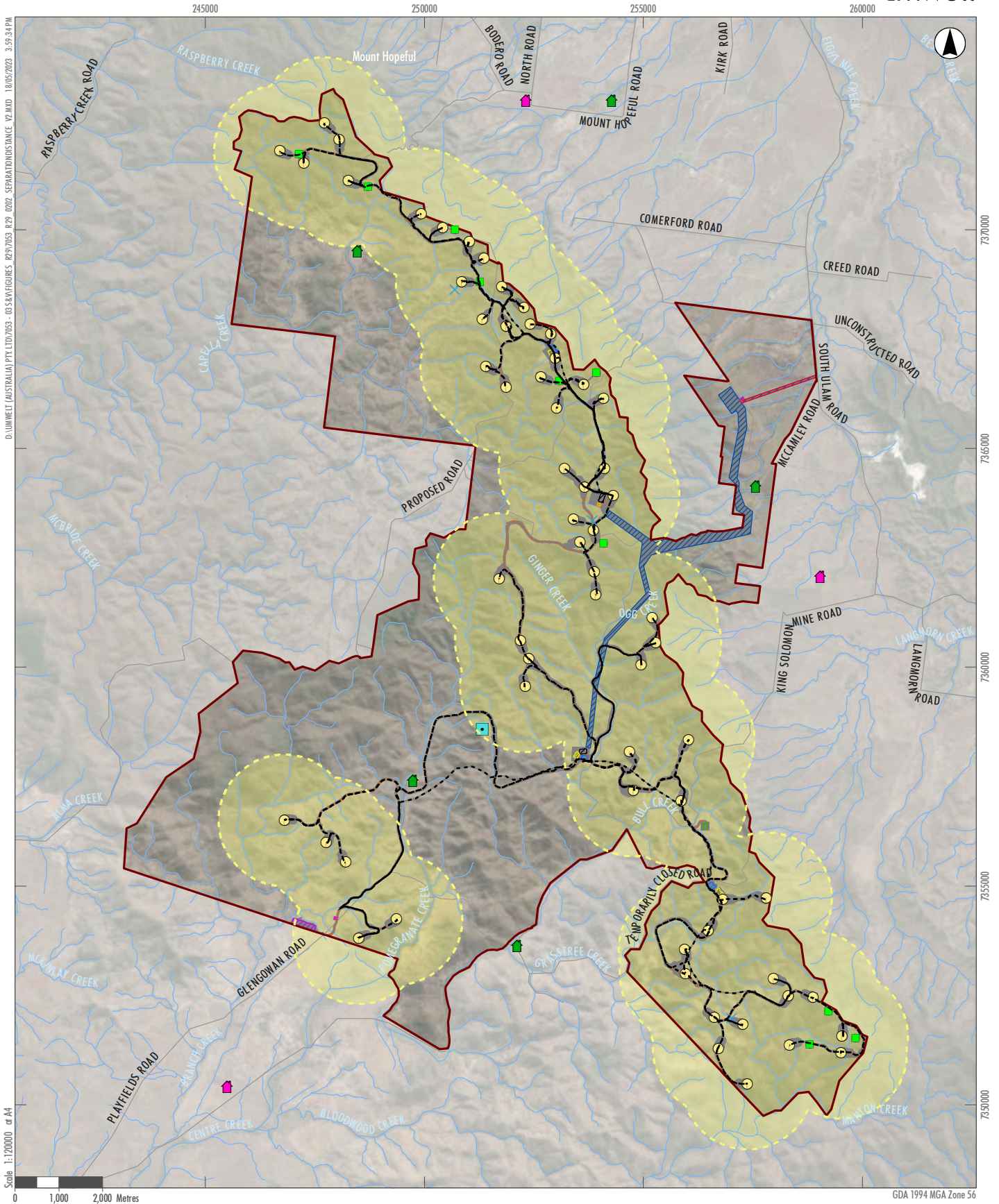
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FIGURE 2.1

Potential Shadow Flicker

- Legend**
- Study Area (16,757 ha)
 - Development Corridor (1347 ha)
 - Existing Met Mast
 - Involved Dwelling
 - Uninvolved Dwelling
 - Extent of Potential Shadow Flicker
 - Proposed Project Infrastructure
 - Overhead / Underground Cabling
 - Access Roads
 - Turbines
 - Permanent Met Masts
 - Temporary Met Masts
 - Grid Connection Easement
 - Access
 - Compound
 - Concrete Batching Plant
 - Temporary Accommodation Camp
 - Laydown
 - Operation and Maintenance Area
 - Site Entry
 - Substation
 - Transmission Infrastructure

Image Source: ESRI Basemap (2023) Data source: QLD Spatial (2023)
 NB: Layout is Indicative Only



- Legend**
- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Study Area (16,757 ha) | Turbines | Temporary Accommodation Camp |
| Development Corridor (1347 ha) | Permanent Met Masts | Laydown |
| Existing Met Mast | Temporary Met Masts | Operation and Maintenance Area |
| Involved Dwelling | Grid Connection Easement | Site Entry |
| Uninvolved Dwelling | Access | Substation |
| Extent of Separation Distances (1500m) | Compound | Transmission Infrastructure |
| Proposed Project Infrastructure | Concrete Batching Plant | |
| Overhead / Underground Cabling | | |
| Access Roads | | |

FIGURE 2.2

Separation Distances

3.0 Statutory Provisions

Chapter 3, Part 5, Division 2, Subdivision 2 of the Planning Act prescribes the process, responsibilities, and requirements for changing development approvals after the appeal period lapses.

Under Section 78 of the Planning Act, a person may make a change application to change a development approval to the responsible entity for the application. Change applications must be made in accordance with the requirements established under Section 79 of the Planning Act. Minor change applications are assessed and decided in accordance with Section 81 and Section 81A of the Planning Act respectively.

For a change to be accepted as a ‘minor change’, the proposed change must comply with minor change definition prescribed under Schedule 2 of the Planning Act:

minor change means a change that—

(b) for a development approval—

(i) would not result in substantially different development; and

(ii) if a development application for the development, including the change, were made when the change application is made would not cause—

(A) the inclusion of prohibited development in the application; or

(B) referral to a referral agency, other than to the chief executive, if there were no referral agencies for the development application; or

(C) referral to extra referral agencies, other than to the chief executive; or

(D) a referral agency, in assessing the application under section 55(2), to assess the application against, or have regard to, a matter, other than a matter the referral agency must have assessed the application against, or had regard to, when the application was made; or

(E) public notification if public notification was not required for the development application.

3.1 Substantially Different Development

Schedule 1 of the Development Assessment Rules (DA Rules) provides guidance to assist applicants and assessment managers to determine whether a proposed change to a development is considered to constitute ‘substantially different development’. An assessment of the proposed Project changes against the criteria established under Schedule 1 of the DA Rules is provided in **Table 3-1**.

Table 3-1 Compliance with Substantially Different Development Criterion

DA Rules Schedule 1 Criteria	Compliance
Involves a new use.	<p>Complies. The proposed Project change does not introduce or facilitate a new use.</p>
Results in the application applying to a new parcel of land.	<p>Complies. The proposed Project change does not apply to a new parcel of land.</p>
Dramatically changes the built form in terms of scale, bulk and appearance.	<p>Complies. The proposed change does not dramatically change the built form of the Project in terms of scale, bulk, and appearance. Materially, the Project remains for a wind farm, and the location of retained WTGs is generally consistent with the layout approved by SARA in June 2022. Whilst the proposed change does reduce the number of WTGs associated with the Project from that previously approved, it is noted that the existing approval was for 'up to 97 WTGs'. Further, the design criteria for the WTGs and ancillary infrastructure have not changed from that previously approved by SARA.</p>
Changes the ability of the proposed development to operate as intended.	<p>Complies. The proposed Project change does not alter the ability of the wind farm to operate as intended.</p>
Removes a component that is integral to the operation of the development.	<p>Complies. The proposed Project change does not remove a component that is integral to the operation of the wind farm.</p>
Significantly impacts on traffic flow and the transport network, such as increasing traffic to the site.	<p>Complies. As described in Section 2.3.5, the proposed Project has been determined by an RPEQ to have an overall negligible impact on the traffic network during both the construction and operational phases. The proposed changes are expected to result in a reduction of construction traffic particularly as a product of the temporary construction accommodation facility. It is expected that traffic during the operational phase of the Project will remain largely unchanged from that previously approved by SARA.</p>
Introduces new impacts or increases the severity of known impacts.	<p>Complies. The proposed Project change does not introduce new impacts or increase the severity of known impacts. Several technical assessments have been prepared for the proposed Project change that confirm compliance with this criterion and are summarised in Section 2.3 of this report. The proposed change will result in a reduction in vegetation clearing from the original development approval, including a reduction in the clearing of Category B remnant vegetation from 548.5 ha to 323.9 ha.</p>
Removes an incentive or offset component that would have balanced a negative impact of the development.	<p>Complies. The proposed Project change does not remove an incentive or offset component that would have balanced a negative impact of the Project.</p>
Impacts on infrastructure provisions.	<p>Complies. The proposed Project change does not impact on the provision of infrastructure.</p>

3.2 Remaining Planning Act Criteria

An assessment of the proposed Project changes against the remaining criteria established under (b) (ii) (A) – (E) of the minor change definition is provided in **Table 3-2**.

Table 3-2 Compliance with Planning Act Criterion

Planning Act Criterion	Compliance
(A) The inclusion of prohibited development in the application.	Complies. The proposed change does not result in the inclusion of any prohibited development.
(B) Referral to a referral agency, other than to the chief executive, if there were no referral agencies for the development application.	Complies. The original development application did not trigger any referral agencies and the proposed change will not trigger the need for any additional referral agencies.
(C) Referral to extra referral agencies, other than to the chief executive.	Version 3.0 of the State Development Assessment Provisions (SDAP) came into effect in February 2022. The code provisions have not been significantly changed between the previous and current versions.
(D) A referral agency, in assessing the application under section 55(2), to assess the application against, or have regard to, a matter, other than a matter the referral agency must have assessed the application against, or had regard to, when the application was made.	An assessment against State Code 16 and State Code 23, version 2.6, has been undertaken in consideration of the proposed Project changes. The proposed changes will maintain compliance with SDAP. A copy of the code responses is provided in Appendix B .
(E) Public notification if public notification was not required for the development application.	Complies. The original development application did not require public notification as the development was code assessable. The proposed change will not alter the design to require public notification.

3.3 Supporting Materials

To support the timely lodgement and assessment of this Minor Change application, Owner’s Consent, DA Form 1 and correspondence from Department of Resources that the Relevant Purpose Determination is still suitable is provided within **Appendix M**.

4.0 Conclusion

This report has been prepared on behalf of Neoen to support a requested change to the development approval issued for the Mount Hopeful Wind Farm Project (2109-24892 SDA). The proposed Project changes will not result in substantially different development and is considered to comply with the relevant minor change criteria established under Schedule 2 of the Planning Act.

The Project's design and layout has been refined and optimised based on the consideration of engineering and constructability assessments of the Study Area. The Project remains generally consistent with the layout approved by SARA in June 2022; however, the changes result in a significant reduction in impacts on regulated vegetation when compared with the existing approval.

The proposed changes represent a positive change that ensures that the Project appropriately responds to onsite constraints, whilst optimising overall Project efficiency, and delivers an outcome that remains compliant with the overall purpose and intent of State Code 23 and State Code 16. It is recommended that SARA, as Assessment Manager, favourably consider the application.