



The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
Minister for Industrial Relations

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DECISION NOTICE

I refer to my decision made on 8 April 2025 to exercise my ministerial powers and call in the development application by Moonlight Range Wind Farm Pty Ltd as trustee for Moonlight Range Trust 3, a wholly owned subsidiary of Greenleaf Renewables Pty Ltd for a Wind farm (up to 88 wind turbine generators and ancillary infrastructure including a battery energy storage system (BESS)) and Clearing native vegetation on land at Morinish and Morinish South.

Please be advised that on 22 May 2025, I decided to **refuse** the development application under the *Planning Act 2016* (the Planning Act).

Ministerial call in details

Date call in notice given: 8 April 2025

Date of decision: 22 May 2025

Details of decision: **Refuse** the development application for a development permit for:

- Material Change of Use – for a wind farm (up to 88 wind turbine generators and ancillary infrastructure including a battery energy storage system (BESS))
- Operational work – Clearing native vegetation

Reasons for decision: See schedule 1 to this Decision Notice

Matters considered

The following matters were considered in making my decision:

- Ministerial Briefing Note (MBN25/620) and attachments, including
 - Planning Assessment Report, prepared by officers of the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDIP) and attachments including a human rights assessment
 - Draft decision notice.

Property details

Street address: 317 Connor Road; 3242, 4099 & 4407 Rosewood Road; 520 Donovan Road, Morinish South, QLD, 4702
4099 Rosewood Road; Rosewood Road; 541 A Pierce Road,

Morinish, QLD, 4702

Real property description: Lot 18 on LN1841; Lot 4363 on SP271515; Lot 23 on P4090; Lot 8 on PN191; Lot 10 & 24 on PN244; Lot 12 on PN256; Lot 4 on PAK40203; Lot 21 on PN53; Lot 13 on PN382; Lot 2 & 16 on PN218; Lot 2229 on PAK40117; Lot 99 on PN260; Lot 11 & 28 on PN244; Lot 1917 on PAK40156; Lot 2 on RP618120; Lot 9 on PN191; Lot 1 on PN214; Lot 15, 16 & Lot 17 on PAK40179; Lot 2228 on PAK40116.

Application details

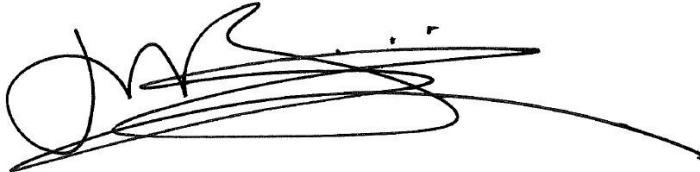
Original assessment manager: Chief Executive administering the Planning Act
Date application properly made: 1 May 2024
Level of assessment: Code assessment

Appeal rights

A person may not appeal against the Minister's decision on a call in under the Planning Act.

If you require any further assistance, please email ministerial.callin@dsdilgp.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jarrod Bleijie', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JARROD BLEIJIE MP
DEPUTY PREMIER
Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
Minister for Industrial Relations

Schedule 1

Reasons for decision

The reasons for the decision are:

1. This development application called in under the *Planning Act 2016* (Planning Act) is for the following aspects of development:
 - a. Material Change of Use for a for a wind farm (up to 88 wind turbine generators and ancillary infrastructure including a battery energy storage system (BESS))
 - b. Operational Work for the clearing of native vegetation.
2. Based on the assessment carried out in the planning assessment report, I consider the whole of the development application should be refused.
3. The development proposal is for:
 - a. A wind farm comprised of 88 wind turbine generators up to 280 metres in height with ancillary infrastructure including a BESS, five collector and one main substations, overhead transmission lines and access tracks.
 - b. The wind farm would result in a construction workforce of 300 workers (over 2 – 3 years) and ongoing workforce of 10 workers (although does not propose on-site workforce accommodation).
 - c. The wind farm is expected to generate 450 megawatts of electricity per annum.
 - d. The subject site is comprised of 22 freehold and two leasehold premises located in Morinish and Morinish South, 40km west of Rockhampton, with a total site area of 22,232.2 hectares and approximate development footprint of 1,269 hectares.
 - e. The application includes a total disturbance footprint of 1,263 ha (approximately 5.8% of the total site area) which includes the clearing of 434.1 ha of regulated vegetation.
4. On a call in I may consider any matter I consider relevant in deciding the application pursuant to section 105 of the Planning Act.
5. DSDIP's assessment informs the following which I accept:
 - a. Wind farm development is of importance to the State. Providing safe, reliable and affordable energy is vital to the needs of communities and the development and supply of renewable energy provides an opportunity to minimise greenhouse gas emissions.
 - b. However, the nature of development for a wind farm means it has the potential for adverse impacts on individuals, communities and the natural environment.
 - c. Mitigating and managing the potential for adverse impacts is of importance to the State, and wind farm development will only be considered appropriate where unacceptable adverse impacts on individuals, communities and the environment do not arise from the development.
 - d. Accordingly, comprehensive assessment of wind farm proposals is required in order to ensure the design, siting, construction, operation and decommission of wind farms do not result in unacceptable impacts.
 - e. Furthermore, wind farm developments must identify and quantify the social impacts of a project, both positive and negative, and ensure plans are in place to manage these impacts.
 - f. Given the nature of the potential impacts, wind farm development must be informed by community and local government engagement.
6. Having regard to these matters, it is my view that ensuring community and local government engagement in wind farm assessment and early identification and

management of social and community impacts are of key importance in the assessment of wind farm development in the State.

7. I therefore consider I should be satisfied that these matters have been addressed before wind farm development can be approved to proceed.
8. DSDIP's assessment informs the following, which I accept.
9. The application as lodged with the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) was subject to Code assessment and was subject to assessment against the State Development Assessment Provisions (SDAP) (version 3.0) in effect at the date the application was properly made. In particular SDAP State Code 16: Native vegetation clearing and State Code 23: Wind farm development applied to the development.
10. On 5 December 2024, SARA approved the application subject to conditions following the code assessment against version 3.0 of SDAP and consideration of version 3.1 of SDAP which came into effect prior to the decision. The decision notice issued by SARA approving the development subject to conditions records that the proposed development complies (with the imposition of conditions) with the relevant assessment benchmarks in SDAP.
11. DSDIP's assessment provided to me for the purposes of this decision informs that the proposal complies subject to conditions, with the assessment benchmarks in SDAP versions 3.0 and 3.1. However I consider these assessment benchmarks are outdated and do not take account of broader matters of interest for the State and therefore I consider this assessment against SDAP versions 3.0 and 3.1 should be given limited weight.
12. Since the SARA assessment was undertaken the following changes have been introduced to the framework for assessing wind farm development in Queensland:
 - a. On 3 February 2025 the *Planning Regulation 2017* (Planning Regulation) was amended to prescribe that wind farm development is subject to impact assessment, enabling public input into the assessment process;
 - b. On 3 February 2025 the new SDAP State code 23 for wind farm development (version 3.2) commenced. The new State code:
 - i. Confirms that wind farm development will only be appropriate where unacceptable adverse impacts on individuals, communities and the environment do not arise;
 - ii. Prescribes new performance outcomes (POs) to require specific assessment of the following in wind farm development:
 - The impacts of off-site workforce accommodation on surrounding communities and townships including on services, housing supply and community facilities (PO17)
 - The impacts of the development on infrastructure and services including social infrastructure, communications networks and essential infrastructure (PO23)
 - The impacts of the wind farm on communities and individuals (PO26)
 - Enhanced requirements for decommissioning (PO27 – PO30).
 - c. On 1 May 2025 the *Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025* (the Social Impacts Bill) was introduced into Parliament to require major renewable programs to build social licence by demonstrating how projects will deliver long-term benefits for affected communities. The changes seek to ensure that local governments are supportive of the development proposal and provide agreement that the community impacts have been addressed prior to lodgement of the application.

13. DSDIP has further identified and I accept:

- a. Advancing the purpose of the Planning Act requires taking account of short and long-term environmental effects of development (including social, economic, aesthetic and cultural conditions) and providing opportunities for community involvement in decision making.
- b. The following relevant State interests under the State Planning Policy 2017 (SPP):
 - i. Planning for liveable communities and housing, specifically the State interests in Housing supply and diversity and Liveable communities which requires that planning ensures that decisions about appropriate development support the housing, employment, education, infrastructure, and other needs of the community. Planning should support positive and innovative responses to current and future challenges, and ensure development outcomes will benefit Queensland's communities in the long-term;
 - ii. Planning for infrastructure, specifically energy and water supply which requires consideration of broad matters with respect to the location and delivery of renewable energy infrastructure.
- c. The *Central Queensland Regional Plan 2013* (Regional Plan) which identifies the following relevant matters for the region:
 - i. Strong growth in the region and increases in a non-resident workforce population drives demand for housing and construction, retail trade, and services and utilities, including education, health care, electricity and water (Chapter 3 – Overview (Regional Economy)).
 - ii. Specifically, the number of non-resident workers in the region contribute significantly to the impacts of population growth overall including pressure on housing and amenities, as well as commercial and social services to maintain liveable communities (Chapter 4 – Providing certainty for the future of towns).
 - iii. Growing and fluctuating non-resident workforces across the region are putting pressure on all spheres of community infrastructure in the Central Queensland region which in turn is impacting on the liveability of local communities. The priority outcomes for community infrastructure in the regional plan are to support community infrastructure needs including optimising the use of existing assets to improve community liveability (Chapter 5 – Community infrastructure).
 - iv. The regional plan identifies that an uptake of short-term tourist accommodation by temporary and non-resident workers can create issues regarding availability and price of accommodation and deterring tourism (Chapter 6 – Economic Growth – Tourism).

14. The assessment undertaken by DSDIP informs the following, which I accept:

- a. I received 554 representations in response to the proposed call in notice, of which 508 representations were received from individuals (rather than companies or organisations). Of these 508 representations, a total of 142 representations were received from local residents in vicinity to the site the subject of the application including Gracemere and Rockhampton (being the towns proposed for the applicant's associated workforce accommodation).
- b. 88 percent of the local resident representations (i.e. 88% of the 142 received) objected to the proposal and supported the call in.
- c. The objections to the proposal raised concerns about matters including:

- i. Community and social impacts, as the workforce will strain the existing housing and short-term accommodation supply, impacts of fly-in/fly-out workers on regional towns and minimal community benefit of the project;
 - ii. Lack of consultation, as the application did not undertake sufficient community consultation prior to lodgement;
 - iii. Environmental interests related to impact on the matters of national and state environmental significance, being impact to fauna and flora habitats; contamination impacts; bushfire hazard; and amenity impacts, specifically noise, vibration and shadow flicker impacts.
15. The assessment by DSDIP concludes the application is not supported by appropriate strategies to address workforce accommodation and impacts and other community and social impacts arising or that may arise from the development having regard to the following matters which I adopt:
- a. The applicant states the region is facing a critical housing shortage and specific workforce accommodation is required to be delivered to accommodate the construction and operational workforce for the project. The applicant has developed a preliminary construction workers' accommodation strategy that identifies potential workforce accommodation opportunities and the applicant has been pursuing third party provider delivery of two accommodation sites in Rockhampton and Gracemere.
 - b. However the applicant's material confirms there is no certainty that the proposed workforce accommodation can be delivered at sites in Rockhampton and Gracemere and be available for the construction and operation workforce generated by the development. Accordingly the applicant has not demonstrated that appropriate accommodation can be provided to support the project.
 - c. Where no off-site workforce accommodation is delivered, reliance on existing housing in nearby regional centres would be required, however I accept the applicant's submission that there is insufficient capacity in the existing accommodation available in the region. I therefore consider the application has not adequately sought to mitigate against the adverse impact on housing supply for the region.
 - d. The applicant's material identifies that the project workforce can increase the demand for local services including clinics, hospitals, police and emergency service. However the representation material has not substantiated the increase in demand with an assessment of the existing capacity in the health care and emergency services network in Rockhampton and Gracemere where the workforce accommodation is proposed.
 - e. Furthermore, any strategies proposed in the application to be implemented rely on matters to be addressed post approval of the application. As the proposed policies and procedures are not clearly identified as part of the application and representation material, there is no certainty for DSDIP that the potential community impacts the representation material identified will be appropriately mitigated or remediated.
16. Further, DSDIP's assessment concludes that the wind farm proposal cannot be supported on the basis of the following matters which I adopt and which I accept are of key importance to establishing wind farm development and therefore must be demonstrated before an approval can issue:
- a. The applicant states it has undertaken a range of stakeholder engagement including with host landowners, adjoining landowners, traditional owners, the local government, special interest groups, community stakeholders and the Federal and State Governments. However I consider the community engagement undertaken by the applicant has been minimal and insufficient to understand and address any community feedback. It is noted that the community feedback was predominately

neutral or negative, however there has been no evidence or information from the applicant to identify concerns raised and how these have been addressed in the proposal.

- b. Instead the representations that I received evidence that the project has not acquired overriding community acceptance. The representations evidence concerns relating to community impacts including the impact of insufficient workforce accommodation, increased pressure on community infrastructure (schools, childcare providers and health care providers) and that there is no infrastructure upgrades proposed to be delivered by the applicant.
 - c. Further, the application does not provide evidence of local government agreement on the measures and commitments to manage and counterbalance social impacts including workforce management, housing and accommodation, local business and industry procurement, as well as health and community wellbeing.
 - d. Specifically, the Rockhampton Regional Council (the Council) identified in third party advice comments during the SARA assessment that further information is required to understand the impacts of construction workers residing in existing accommodation options in townships across the region.
 - e. The applicant has not sufficiently demonstrated the commitment to the stated community benefits, including the establishment of a community benefits fund of at least \$100,000 annually throughout the 35 year project life. Notably, the applicant has identified that agreement with the Council on long term community impacts and benefits for the project will only be sought pre-construction.
17. For the reasons above, I consider that the application fails to demonstrate compliance with SDAP State code 23 version 3.2 namely the Purpose, PO17, PO23 and PO26.
18. I consider that the nature of the matters of non-compliance are not such that conditions may be imposed to remedy the non-compliance.
19. Accordingly, the application should be refused to the extent it is for a material change of use for a wind farm.
20. I am of the view that refusal of the application is consistent with the purpose of the Planning Act, the SPP and the regional plan, as well as the intent of the Bill.
21. I consider the balance of the application relating to operational works for the clearing of native vegetation should also be refused.
22. DSDIP's assessment which I accept, concludes that the proposed operational works for native vegetation clearing complies with SDAP State code 16 (version 3.2). However, the application provides that the clearing was not intended as a standalone activity and was to facilitate components of the wind farm development including the turbine generators, access tracks and electrical infrastructure.
23. In these circumstances, as the wind farm development component is recommended for refusal, I do not support any proposed clearing of native vegetation on the premises and the operational works component should also be refused.
24. A human rights assessment has been undertaken for the recommended decision. I am satisfied that the decision is compatible with human rights under the *Human Rights Act 2019* because it only limits any relevant human rights to the extent that is reasonable and demonstrably justifiable in accordance with section 13 of that Act.
25. The reasons for my decision, including the findings on material questions of fact are based upon the matters and evidence contained within the MBN25/620 and all attachments including the assessment report prepared by DSDIP.

Matters considered in making the decision

Prior to making my decision on the development application, I was provided with:

- a Briefing Note (MBN25/620) and attachments, including:
 - Planning Assessment Report, prepared by officers of DSDIP and attachments
 - Human rights assessment.

I am informed that the following matters were considered in undertaking the assessment of the development application in the Planning Assessment Report:

- *Planning Act 2016*
- *Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025*
- State Planning Policy 2017 (SPP)
- Central Queensland Regional Plan 2013 (regional plan)
- SDAP, version 3.0 (State codes 16: Native vegetation clearing and 23: Wind farm development)
- SDAP, version 3.2 (State code 23: Wind farm development)
- Representations on the proposed call in of the application.