

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

Minister for Solar Homes

Acting Minister for Planning



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Saturday, 12 January 2019

GOLDEN PLAINS WIND FARM GRANTED PLANNING PERMIT

One of Australia's largest wind farms is a step closer to construction, with Acting Minister for Planning Lily D'Ambrosio today announcing planning permit approval for the Golden Plains Wind Farm.

The Golden Plains Wind Farm, about 60 kilometres north-west of Geelong, would create hundreds of jobs and generate nearly 3,000 gigawatt hours of electricity per year – enough to power more than 400,000 homes.

Once complete the \$1.5 billion project would span up to 17,000 hectares and stop more than 3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from being emitted to the atmosphere each year.

The planning permit approval follows the conclusion of the Environment Effects Statement (EES) by the minister at the end of 2018. The Minister's assessment of the EES supported the project, subject to increasing the turbine-free buffer area to ensure breeding wetlands used by native birdlife are adequately protected.

The decision reflects advice from an independent expert planning panel and may result in a reduction of up to 47 turbines, from 228 to 181, with the number depending on how the proponent chooses to meet environmental restrictions.

The project must now be considered by the federal government for approval.

Proponent WestWind Energy will take around four years to build the project if approved.

The wind farm industry is powering ahead in Victoria with projects under construction at Lal Lal, Moorabool, Murra Warra, Bulgana and Stockyard Hill, delivering thousands of jobs to regional Victoria.

The Andrews Labor Government has increased Victoria's Renewable Energy Target to 50 per cent by 2030, putting more clean energy into the grid, increasing investment and driving down energy prices.

Quote attributable to Acting Minister for Planning Lily D'Ambrosio

"This project will create hundreds of local jobs, reduce greenhouse emissions and generate enough electricity to power more than 400,000 homes -- boosting supply and putting downward pressure on power prices."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"This is a fantastic project which will bring hundreds of jobs to our area, strengthening the renewable energy industry and taking clean power to thousands of homes."