

Rye Park Wind Farm

Fact Sheet

6

September
2020

Aboriginal Heritage



Why was the assessment undertaken?

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values can be impacted as a result of the siting of wind turbines and associated infrastructure.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) (contained at Appendix G.6 of the Modification Application Report) was prepared by NGH Pty Ltd to assess the modification of the wind farm development footprint and addition of the external road upgrades development footprint. The ACHA assessed the change in potential impacts on Aboriginal Heritage from the Approved Project to the Modified Project.

An Addendum to the ACHA (Contained at Appendix M of the RTS Report) was undertaken to assess the further modifications to the wind farm development footprint, external road upgrades development footprint and additional development footprint for the permanent met masts as part of the Response to Submissions (RTS) phase of the Project.

What was the approach?

The ACHA was prepared considering the relevant Conditions of the Development Consent and in accordance with the relevant Guidelines including:

- Guide to Investigating, Assessing and Reporting on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in NSW
- Code of Practice for the Archaeological Investigation of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales
- Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010
- National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Aboriginal Objects and Places) Regulation 2010

Fieldwork was undertaken with participants from the Onerwal LALC and Buru Ngynawal Aboriginal Corporation for both the Modified Project and Final Modified Project. Consultation regarding Aboriginal and Cultural Heritage matters in relation to the Project commenced in 2012, with five groups registering their interest.

During the field surveys, the following site types were identified:

- Potential Archaeological Deposits (PADs)
- Artefact scatters (AFT), and
- Isolated finds (IF).

Photo: A Potential Archaeological Discovery (PAD) Site



What did we find and how does it compare to the approved project?

The ACHA found that for the Modified Project, there would be a moderate level of impact upon the archaeology identified at the site, and in-turn a high level of harm would be placed upon the sites within the impacted areas. With the implementation of mitigation measures (discussed below), the Final Modified Project would result in a similar to moderately increased level of harm in comparison to the Approved Project.

Note, this level of harm is referring to the potential destruction of the archaeological context and not the Aboriginal objects themselves. To minimise harm, mitigation measures (discussed below) will ensure the Aboriginal objects are protected.

The Final Modified Project has the potential to impact on 45 sites, 13 more than the Approved Project, as outlined in the table below.

	Approved Project	Modified Project	Final Modified Project	Extent of Change from Approved Project to the Final Modified Project
Archaeological sites potentially impacted (including AFTs, IFs and PADs)	32 sites	42 sites	45 sites	Increase in 13 sites (Avoidance of 16 sites which were to be potentially impacted by the Approved Project and the potential impact to 26 additional sites as result of the Final Modified Project).

The AFTs and IFs found were noted to be of low scientific value, with little research potential to assist in the development of site modelling for the local area.

The PADs identified were noted to be of low to medium scientific value. This range is given because a scientific value (potential to hold intact contextual information regarding past Aboriginal land use) will be confirmed when the site has been subject to archaeological test excavations before construction commences in accordance with the Heritage Management Plan.

What are the proposed mitigation strategies?

As part of the Modified Project, Tilt Renewables are requesting amendment to Appendix 5 (Aboriginal Heritage Items) of the Development Consent to include the additional unrecorded Aboriginal heritage items. The ACHA identifies where these Aboriginal heritage items should be avoided, impacts minimised or salvage excavations works undertaken. For PADs, the ACHA recommends archaeological test excavations to salvage any artefact prior to construction if impacts to these items are unavoidable. For AFTs and IFs, the ACHA recommends salvaging prior to construction.

A HMP will be prepared and will outline suitable measures to manage the impacts of the development on Aboriginal Heritage Items within and outside of the Project Development Footprints.

Further, Tilt Renewables has committed to surveying the area proposed to accommodate the pole locations for TransGrid that has not previously surveyed. This will be done prior to construction.

Assessment against development consent

As part of the Modification Application, it has been requested that an updated schedule of Aboriginal heritage items is to form part of the Modified Development Consent.