

Welcome to the Western Renewables Link (WRL) project update. This update provides information about what's happening in the EES process, a summary of engagement activities during the exhibition period, and news about community benefits projects under way.



Next steps in the planning process

The public exhibition of the project's Environment Effects Statement (EES) closed at 11.59pm on Monday 25 August, marking a significant milestone in the planning and approvals process.

The Minister for Planning has appointed a joint Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC), made up of an independent group of experts, to advise on the environmental effects of the proposed Western Renewables Link Project. The IAC held a directions hearing on Monday 15 September 2025, which included:

- discussing arrangements for the hearing, including the dates and format;
- directions about how the hearing will be conducted and how information will be shared before the hearing, including expert reports;
- discussing site inspections; and
- consideration of procedural issues.

The IAC public hearing will start in the week commencing Monday 27 October 2025 and will extend into 2026 with a break for the Christmas and New Year period.

Detailed information about the public hearing can be found at engage.vic.gov.au/Western-Renewables-Link-IAC.



Engagement during the exhibition period

The project team and technical specialists have been engaging with communities along the proposed route since early July, helping landholders and community members access exhibition materials and speak directly with the project team.

During the eight-week exhibition period, the project team hosted information sessions across the length of the project's proposed route, including at Ballan, Coghills Creek, Melton, Joel Joel, Darley, Lexton, Elmhurst, Brown Hill, and Creswick.

Technical specialists and project team members were available at these sessions to speak to landholders and the wider community about topics such as undergrounding, biodiversity, bushfire and planning matters. There were

also opportunities to use virtual reality technology to view the likely scale of the proposed infrastructure from key locations along the route.

There were also informal pop-up sessions at shopping centres, libraries and community hubs in Beaufort, Hillside, Bacchus Marsh, Melton, Creswick and Stawell.

The project website has recorded more than 12,000 visits and more than 7,500 document downloads during the exhibition period.

Thank you to the many community members who have shared feedback and engaged with us during the exhibition period.

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Families will benefit from a safe and modern new playground at Waubra.



New playground on the way at Waubra

Families will soon be able to enjoy a safe and modern new playground at Waubra thanks to the drive and energy of a passionate group of local mums.

The playground will feature climbing structures, swings, slides designed for toddlers to pre-teens, safety fencing, a BBQ area, and picnic tables.

The Western Renewables Link project has partnered with local groups to identify, plan and deliver the community-led project.

The \$200,000 funding is part of the Western Renewables Link's Community Benefits Program.

AusNet's funding will complement \$27,000 raised by the local community through sheep sales, bingo and trivia nights, and \$100,000 from the Victorian Government's Tiny Towns Fund and the Waubra Wind Farm Community Fund.

The playground project was also backed by local groups including Waubra Kindergarten, Primary School, CWA, Football and Netball Clubs, Mount Bolton Lions Club, Community Hub, and Mothers' Group.

The full story is available at

www.ausnetservices.com.au/news/western-renewables-link-invests-200000-to-help-regional-community-build-new-playground



New mobile towers to target blackspots

More than \$3 million will be invested to build new mobile towers at Lexton, Smeaton and Coimadai to address mobile phone network blackspots, providing benefits to residents and businesses and supporting emergency response.

Funded as part of the Western Renewables Link's development phase Community Benefits Program, the planned installation of the new mobile base stations will provide improved 4G and 5G coverage and follows initial feasibility work undertaken by Telstra, which recognised the need for mobile service improvement in these locations.

Further mobile towers will be considered along the WRL route if the project receives planning approval. AusNet, which has been contracted to plan and build WRL, is working closely with Telstra to identify additional sites that would support communities with poor mobile coverage.

The full story is available at

www.ausnetservices.com.au/news/new-mobile-towers-to-fix-blackspots-in-western-victoria



Want to speak with a member of our team?

You can contact the team on our dedicated number 1800 975 975 or email us at info@westernrenewableslink.com.au.

About the project

The Western Renewables Link is a proposed electricity transmission line that will carry renewable energy from western Victoria to homes and businesses across the state and into the National Electricity Market. The project is critical infrastructure required to unlock the renewable energy potential of western Victoria as a key Renewable Energy Zone and will help to deliver clean and affordable energy to all Victorians.

Find more information online

While the public exhibition period has ended, the EES and draft PSA remain available online for reference on the [project website](#). The website also hosts:

- Project news and updates
- Information for landholders and project neighbours
- Opportunities for businesses and suppliers

More information

Visit the project website westernrenewableslink.com.au for the latest project information.

Contact us

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