



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Referral of proposed action

What is a referral?

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) protects matters of national environmental significance (NES), and the environment, in relation to Commonwealth actions, and actions on (or impacting upon) Commonwealth land. The purpose of a referral is to determine whether your proposed action will need formal assessment and approval under the EPBC Act.

Your referral will be the principal basis for the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts' decision as to whether approval is necessary and, if so, the type of assessment that will be taken. These decisions are made within 20 business days.

When do I need to make a referral?

A referral must be made for actions that are likely to have a significant impact on matters protected by Part 3 of the EPBC Act:

- World Heritage (sections 12 and 15A)
- National Heritage places (sections 15B and 15C)
- Wetlands of international importance (sections 16 and 17B)
- Listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A)
- Listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A)
- Protection of the environment from nuclear actions (sections 21 and 22A)
- Marine environment (sections 23 and 24A)
- Protection of the environment from actions involving Commonwealth land (sections 26 and 27A)
- Protection of the environment from Commonwealth actions (section 28)

OR

- actions that may have a significant impact on the environment of Commonwealth land (even if taken outside Commonwealth land)
- actions taken on Commonwealth land that may have a significant impact on the environment generally
- actions by Commonwealth Authorities that are likely have a significant impact on the environment require approval.

You may still make a referral if you believe your action is not going to have a significant impact, or if you are unsure.

To help you decide whether or not your proposed action requires approval (and, therefore, if you should make a referral), read the following documents, available from the Department web site:

- the Policy Statement titled *Principle Significance Guidelines 1.1 – Matters of National Environmental Significance*. Additional sectoral guidelines are also available.
- the Policy Statement titled *Principle Significance Guidelines 1.2 - Actions on, or impacting upon, Commonwealth land, and actions by Commonwealth agencies*.
- the interactive map on the web site—enter a location to obtain a report on what matters of NES may occur in that location.

A staged or component action

An action that is a component of a larger action may not be accepted separately and may require referral of the larger action for consideration under the EPBC Act. Refer to *Fact Sheet 6: Staged Developments/Split Referrals*.

If you want to make a referral for a staged or component referral, contact the EPBC Act Referrals Section (1800 803 772).

Permits

Some activities may also require a permit under other sections of the EPBC Act, whether or not approval is required. Information is available on the Department web site.

Completing the referral form

Completing this form will help ensure that you submit the information required by the EPBC Regulations.

All referrals MUST be published on the Department's web site for public comment (the Department will arrange this) and should generally be:

- readily understood by the public
- no longer than 25 A4-sized, single-sided pages
- typed (main text no smaller than 11 points)
- have clearly legible maps and diagrams
- supplied unbound or electronically.

Provide supporting documentation, such as environmental reports or surveys, as attachments. However, the referral form must contain the core information, so that it provides an adequate basis for public comment and decision-making.

Provide coloured maps, figures or photographs to help explain the project and its location. Aerial photographs, in particular, can provide a useful perspective and context. Figures should be good quality as they may be scanned and viewed electronically as black and white documents. Maps should be of a scale that clearly shows the location of the proposed action and any environmental aspects of interest.

Using the MS Word file to enter your information

You can complete your referral by entering your information into this Word file.

Instructions are provided in green text. If you do not see the instructions you need to reveal 'hidden' text. A toolbar with buttons to turn the instructions on and off should be visible when you open the file.

Normally the instruction text will not print. (If you wish to print a copy of the form with the instructions you will need to select the Options button in the Print dialog and select Hidden text.)

Submitting the referral form

By mail to

EPBC Act Referrals Section
Environment Assessment Branch
Department of the Environment,
Water, Heritage and the Arts
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By fax to 02 6274 1789

- Referrals must be of sufficiently clear quality to be scanned into electronic format.
- Address the fax to the mailing address, and clearly mark it as a 'Referral under the EPBC Act'.
- Follow up with a mailed hardcopy including copies of any attachments or supporting reports.

By email to epbc.referrals@environment.gov.au.

- Clearly mark the email as a 'Referral under the EPBC Act'.
- Attach the referral as a Microsoft Word file and, if possible, a PDF file.
- To ensure file sizes are not too large (below two megabytes), enclose maps and figures as separate files if necessary. If unsure, send a question to the email address.
- Follow up with a mailed hardcopy including copies of any attachments or supporting reports.

What happens next?

The Department will write to you at the end of the 20 business day period to advise you of the outcome of your referral and whether or not formal assessment and approval under the EPBC Act is needed. There are three types of decisions about the referral.

The proposed action is NOT LIKELY to be significant and does NOT NEED approval

No further consideration is required under the environmental assessment provisions of the EPBC Act and the action can proceed (subject to any state or local government requirements).

The proposed action is NOT LIKELY to be significant IF undertaken in specified manner

The specified manner in which you must carry out the action will be identified as part of the final decision. You must report your compliance with the specified manner to the Department.

The proposed action is LIKELY to be significant and does NEED approval

The proposed action is subject to a public assessment process before it can be considered for approval. The level of assessment will be decided at the same time. (Further information about the levels of assessment and basis for deciding the approach are available on the web site.)

If the action is likely to be significant it is called a *controlled action* and the particular matters upon which the action may have a significant impact (such as World Heritage or threatened species) are known as the *controlling provisions*.

Compliance audits

The Department may audit your project at any time to ensure that it was completed in accordance with the information provided in the referral or the stated particular manner. If the project changes, such that the degree of significance could vary, you should write to the Department to advise of the changes, and likely significance, or discuss with the EPBC Act Referrals Section (1800 803 772).

For more information

- call the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Community Information Unit on 1800 803 772 or
- visit the web site www.environment.gov.au/epbc

All the information you need to make a referral, including documents referenced in this form, can be accessed from this web page.

Referral of proposed action

Project title	Grasmere Wind Farm
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1 Contacts

1.1 **Referring party**

Person, agent or agency who is making the referral
Daniel Thompson
Manager Sustainable Development
Electricity Generation Corporation (trading as Verve Energy)
15 – 17 William Street, Perth WA 6000
08 9424 1851
daniel.thompson@verveenergy.com.au

1.2 **Responsible party**

Person responsible for or who will carry out the proposed action.
If same as 1.1, write 'as above'

As above

1.3 **Proponent**

Person responsible for preparing assessment documentation, if approval is required. If same as 1.2, write 'as above'

As above

2 Summary of proposed action

NOTE: You must attach an A4 size map/plan(s) showing the location and approximate boundaries of the area in which the project is to occur. The summary below should encompass any alternative locations, timeframes or activities that are listed in Section 3.2.

2.1	Short description	Installation of a wind farm of 6 wind turbines on the coast, 11km South West of Albany. The location proposed is adjacent to the existing Albany Wind Farm and is essentially an extension of this.						
2.2	Latitude and longitude		Latitude			Longitude		
		location point	degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
		1	35	3	19.1	117	46	51.7
		2	35	2	42.7	117	46	51.4
		3	35	2	42.0	117	46	37.9
		4	35	3	18.5	117	46	38.3
2.3	Locality	11km South West of Albany, Western Australia						
2.4	Size of the development footprint or work area (hectares)	The area where environmental disturbance will occur is approximately 6.6 ha for the construction of roads and wind turbine hardstand areas and 1.2ha for underground cable laying works.						
2.5	Street address of the site	Sand Patch Road, Albany.						
2.6	Lot description	The proposed site is Crown Reserve 13773 which covers approximately 1,500 ha and is vested in the City of Albany.						
2.7	Local Government Area and Council contact (if known)	City of Albany						
2.8	Project life	Estimated to start production in late 2010 and run for approximately 20 years						
2.9	Alternatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	No					
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, complete section 3.2					
2.10	State assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	No					
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, complete Section 3.5					
2.11	Component of larger action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No					
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, complete Section 3.6					

3 Detailed project description

NOTE: The proposal described here is the action(s) on which ALL subsequent decisions under the EPBC Act will be made, including decisions on significance, level of assessment (if needed) and approval (if needed). It is therefore important that the description is complete and includes all components and activities associated with the action, as well as any specific alternatives to be assessed. If certain related components are not intended to be included within the scope of the referral, this should be clearly explained in Section 3.6.

3.1 Description of proposal

Verve Energy proposes installing an additional six wind turbines on the South Coast of Western Australia, adjacent to the existing Albany wind farm which currently consists of 12 turbines. To be known as the Grasmere wind farm, the wind turbines proposed are 3 bladed machines that stand approximately 100m tall to the blade tip and 63m to the central point on the rotor.

The wind farm will comprise a 3.9km gravel access road, the installation of the six wind turbines and the installation of 15km of underground electrical cables that connect back to the Albany substation. The wind turbines require a small hardstand area around the wind turbine to facilitate crane access and the roads that are constructed will be maintained for the life of the facilities to enable maintenance to be performed.

The project has been through a full feasibility study assessing the technical, environmental, social and financial aspects of the project. Key environmental issues identified during this study include the disturbance of flora and fauna, noise and visual amenity. Flora was considered the primary environmental issue and received considerable attention.

Attached to this Referral is a detailed Project Description document which discusses the proposal in full (Volume 1) and provides supporting documentation including all environmental and social studies (Volume 2).

3.2 Alternative locations, time frames or activities that form part of the referred action

The location selected for the wind farm is the most appropriate location in Albany given consideration to the available wind resource, distant to electrical infrastructure, distant to property owners, environmental disturbance, noise issues, telecommunications issues and location of existing wind farm facilities. Extensive environmental assessment work was undertaken prior to the installation of the Albany wind farm and the installation of those facilities was achieved in an environmentally sensitive manner. Verve Energy (then Western Power Corporation) was a finalist in the Banksia Awards, an environment award, for the installation of the existing wind farm. The proposed Grasmere wind farm will be constructed to the same standard as the Albany wind farm, which has been widely accepted by the Albany community and visitors alike.

3.3 Previously considered alternatives and the 'do nothing' case

Verve Energy has considered alternative locations including not installing the wind farm in Albany. The wind farm has been proposed due to the increase in electrical load in Albany whereby the proportion of energy that is supplied to Albany from renewable sources is being reduced over time. The installation of the Grasmere wind farm will increase the proportion of renewable energy supplied to Albany from 55% up to 80%. If the wind farm isn't installed, the amount of renewable energy supplied to Albany will continue to diminish over time and additional fossil fuelled plant will be used to provide this electricity demand. Alternate locations in Albany were assessed and disregarded due to their being a lower wind resource, greater impact on the environment, being in a location that was visually obtrusive or being in closer proximity to existing land owners.

3.4 Context, planning framework and state/local government requirements

The development is inline with the WA State Government's target to increase the proportion of renewable energy generated in Western Australia from the 5% that is currently generated up to

15% by 2020. The project is also consistent with Federal Government policy on increasing the amount of renewable energy in Australia.

The project is consistent with the relevant local planning strategy, with the land being used having the designated purpose of "Recreation, Conservation, Water Resources and Wind Power Generation".

3.5 Environmental impact assessments under Commonwealth, state or territory legislation

A comprehensive submission to the Western Australian Environmental Protection Authority has been made in parallel with this Referral. Included in that submission was an Environmental Management Plan, detailed descriptions of the proposed wind farm design, cable route, construction principles and results of both environmental surveys (flora, fauna, noise, visual amenity, archaeological and ethnographic studies) and community consultation. This information is also attached to this Referral for reference.

3.6 A staged development or component of a larger project

NOTE: The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts may not accept a referred action that is a component of a larger action and may request the person proposing to take the action to refer the larger action for consideration under the EPBC Act (Section 74A, EPBC Act).

If you wish to make a referral for a staged or component referral, read 'Fact Sheet 6 Staged Developments/Split Referrals' and contact the EPBC Act Referrals Section (1800 803 772).

The Grasmere wind farm project is a stand-alone project. Although physically located adjacent to the Albany wind farm, the project has been treated in isolation and environmental issues that may be encountered at the site have been assessed in this context. Hence while flora, fauna, noise and visual amenity studies were completed for the existing Albany Wind Farm, they were again undertaken for the new Grasmere facility.

As the Archaeological and Ethnographic Studies completed in 1999 for the existing Albany wind farm covered the Grasmere wind farm area and the issues involved were unlikely to have changed since, they were relied on again for the feasibility analysis for Grasmere. These studies are attached to this Referral (Quartermaine, 1999; O'Connor, 1999).

4 Affected environment

NOTE: You must attach a map(s)/plan(s) clearly showing the location of the action in relation to any matters of national environmental significance

Figures, maps and drawings of the proposed wind farm are given in the attachments.

4.1 Matters of national environmental significance

4.1 (a) World Heritage Properties

Not applicable. The development is not in a world heritage listed area.

4.1 (b) National Heritage Places

Not applicable. The development is not in a area of national heritage.

4.1 (c) Wetlands of International Significance (Ramsar)

Not applicable. The development is not in a wetland area.

4.1 (d) Listed threatened species and ecological communities

A fauna survey conducted over the Grasmere wind farm area highlighted three species of conservation significance, two vertebrate and one invertebrate species.

- The vertebrate species identified were:

Baudin's Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*) – listed as Endangered at the Federal level.

Carpet Python (*Morelia spilota imbricate*) – listed as a Schedule 4 species at the State level.

- The invertebrate species found was:

Western Archaeid Spider (*Austrarchaea mainae*) – listed as a Schedule 1 species at the State level.

A flora survey conducted over the site highlighted three species of conservation significance,.

Thomasia quercifolia – listed as a Priority 2 species at the State level.

Spyridium spadiceum – listed as a Priority 2 species at the State level.

Melalueca ringens – listed as a Priority 3 species at the State level.

4.1 (e) Listed migratory species

No known migratory species are impacted by the development.

4.1 (f) Nuclear actions

Not applicable. The development does not include any nuclear components.

4.1 (g) Commonwealth marine areas

Not applicable. The development is on land and does not include items or actions that could affect marine areas.

4.2 Important or unique aspects of the environment, if relevant

4.2 (a) Soil and vegetation characteristics

The wind farm site is predominantly coastal heath, inland heath, sedgeland and woodland vegetation. It is in good to pristine condition but well represented along the south coast of Western Australia.

4.2 (b) Water flows, including rivers, creeks and impoundments

No rivers or creeks exist in the project area.

4.2 (c) Outstanding natural features, including caves

The development site is situated on 105m high coastal cliffs to the South West of Albany and will be visible up to 25km away. The area is known for its scenic beauty but similar coastal scenery is protected in National Parks within the area and areas surrounding Albany and those associated with tourism are unaffected by the wind farm. The existing Albany wind farm which sits adjacent to the proposed Grasmere facility has been well received by the local community in regard to visual amenity.

4.2 (d) Gradient

As the site is across a natural landscape, the gradient of the site ranges from 5% up to 50%. Typically roads will be constructed with a gradient of between 5% and 10%.

4.2 (e) Buildings or other infrastructure

The development site is immediately to the West of the existing Albany wind farm, comprising of 12 wind turbines. The development site is to the South of Water Corporation bores which are currently being used to extract water from a groundwater source in the vicinity of the proposed wind farm.

4.2 (f) Marine areas

The wind farm sits adjacent to the Southern Ocean on coastal cliffs. It is unlikely that it will have any impact on marine areas.

4.2 (g) Kinds of fauna

The fauna identified at the Grasmere wind farm site comprises Herpetofauna, avifauna, mammals and invertebrate fauna. The dominant species in each are as follows:

- Herpetofauna: *Elapognathus coronatus* (Crown snake), *Acritoscincus trilineatum* (Southwestern cool skink), *Ctenotus catenifer* (Chain striped heath skink), *Hemiergis gracilipes* (Southwestern mulch skink) and *Limnodynastes dorsalis* (Western banjo frog).
- Avifauna: *Calyptorhynchus baudinii* (Baudin's black cockatoo), *Malurus elegans* (Red winged fairy wren), *Sericornis frontalis* (White browed scrubwren), *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae* (New Holland honeyeater), *Rhipidura fulliginosa* (Grey fantail) and *Zosterops lateralis* (Grey breasted white eye).
- Mammals: *Rattus fuscipes* (Bush rat) and *Tarsipes rostratus* (Honey possum).
- Invertebrate fauna: *Chenistonia tepperii* and *Kwonkan sp.*

4.2 (h) Current state of the environment

The area is covered with native remnant vegetation and includes numerous tracks which are used by bushwalkers and four wheel drive vehicles. The vegetation is in good to pristine condition although four wheel drive use is causing erosion and sand blow-outs. The Bibbulmun Track traverses the site and is being realigned within a corridor between the wind farm and the ocean to allow unimpeded access through the area and views across the ocean.

4.2 (i) Commonwealth Heritage Places and places on the Register of the National Estate

Not applicable.

4.2 (j) Known Indigenous heritage values

An assessment by Quartermaine and O'Connor (1999) found that there are no known sites of significance to Aboriginal people within the wind farm project area.

4.2 (k) Other important or unique values of the environment

The project area is approximately 4.6km West of the Torndirrup National Park. The development will not impact on the National Park and has been designed to be invisible from the premier tourist areas of this Park.

4.2 (l) Tenure of the action area (eg freehold, leasehold)

The land will be leased from the City of Albany for the operational life of the facilities, which is approximately 25 years including construction and decommissioning.

4.2 (m) Existing land uses

The land is currently used for a combination of recreation, conservation, water resources and wind power generation purposes. The area to the East of the development site is an operating 12 wind turbine wind farm (the Albany wind farm). Throughout the area, four wheel drives utilise the area together with bushwalkers, surfers, hang-gliders and recreational fisherman.

4.2 (n) Proposed land uses

It is proposed that the land continue to be used recreationally in conjunction with the new wind farm and for water resources by the Water Corporation. A selection of existing four wheel drive vehicle tracks will be rehabilitated as part of the project, the selection of these made in conjunction with the City of Albany and Department of Environment and Conservation.

5 Nature and extent of likely impacts

5.1 Likely impacts on matters of national environmental significance (NES)

5.1 (a) Likely impact on the world heritage values of a declared World Heritage property

No impact.

5.1 (b) Likely impact on the heritage values of a listed National Heritage place

No impact.

5.1 (c) Likely impact on the ecological character of a declared Ramsar wetland

No impact.

5.1 (d) Likely impact on the members of a listed threatened species or ecological community, or their habitat

A detailed fauna assessment was undertaken for this project (attached, April 2008). The following Schedule and Priority species were recorded and the likely impact is discussed:

- Dibbler (*Parantechinus apicalis*) – Schedule 1 Endangered
Potential Impacts: Unlikely to have a detectable impact on the species due to its wide distribution.
- Western ringtail possum (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) – Schedule 1 Vulnerable
Potential Impacts: Unlikely to have an impact due to its low likelihood of having permanent habitat in the project area.
- Baudin's black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*) – Schedule 1 Endangered
Potential Impacts: Habitat loss of approximately 2.3ha. Not expected to impact on this species due to the nature of the area being unlikely to support significant populations.
- Forest red tailed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii naso*) – Schedule 1 Vulnerable
Potential Impacts: Not expected to impact on the species due to its habitat being in the larger forests of marri, karri and sheoak trees, none of which are in the project area.
- Quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*) – Schedule 1 Vulnerable
Potential Impacts: Not expected to impact on the species as the species is presumed extinct in the region.
- Mains Assassin Spider (*Austrarchaea mainae*) – Schedule 1
Potential Impacts: This spider was found over a 70km area in a survey performed by the WA Museum. As its habitat is very specific, wind farm roads and turbine locations were easily designed to avoid disturbance. It is unlikely that the wind farm will have a significant impact.
- Western Australia pill millipede (*Cynotelopus notabilis*) – Schedule 1
Potential Impacts: Not expected to impact on the species due to it not being known to occur in coastal heath habitats.
- Western brush wallaby (*Macropus irma*) – Priority 4
Potential Impacts: Habitat loss of approximately 6.6ha (3.5ha following rehabilitation).
- Carpet python (*Morelia spilota imbricate*) – Schedule 4, Priority 4
Potential Impacts: Habitat loss of approximately 6.6ha (3.5ha following rehabilitation).

Southern brown bandicoot (*Isoodon obesulus fusciventer*) – Priority 5

Potential Impacts: Habitat loss of approximately 6.6ha (3.5ha following rehabilitation).

5.1 (e) Likely impact on the members of a listed migratory species or their habitat

No impact.

5.1 (f) Likely impact on the environment in part of the Commonwealth marine area

No impact.

5.2 Likely impacts for nuclear actions, actions affecting Commonwealth land or actions taken by the Commonwealth

No impact.

6 Measures to avoid or reduce impacts

The proposed Grasmere wind farm will be constructed to an Environmental Management Plan that takes into account the impact on the construction and operation of the facilities on the environment. This includes issues of;

- Site construction management;
- Vegetation clearing;
- Flora and fauna;
- Weed and soil pathogen hygiene;
- Groundwater contamination;
- Noise management;
- Foundation overburden and topsoil management;
- Rehabilitation;
- Dust suppression;
- Community relation and public safety;
- Aboriginal and archaeological heritage;
- Water resources protection;
- Materials sourcing;
- Fire management; and
- Compliance auditing.

All construction personnel working on the site will be inducted to the Environmental Management Plan and Verve Energy will audit compliance with this plan throughout the project. A copy of the Environmental Management Plan that has been prepared for the Grasmere wind farm is attached to this Referral.

The design of the wind farm has taken into account issues of visual amenity, erosion, vegetation disturbance, fauna disturbance, noise and effects on use of the land. Whilst it is not possible to construct facilities such as a wind farm without having some impact on the environment, all means to minimise this have been considered in the design and equipment selection for this project.

The wind turbine positioning takes advantage of the prevailing wind direction and wind turbines are spaced and positioned to minimise visual disturbance from key viewsheds. This is an important consideration in wind farm micro-siting as visual amenity is one of the key issues affecting the local community in Albany. Whilst it is impossible to hide a wind turbine completely, careful equipment selection and positioning can see the wind farm integrate better with the natural environment. Research has been conducted on what is a more visually appealing design for wind farms and it has been found that fewer, large wind turbines are preferable to multiple, smaller units. Verve Energy adopts this philosophy in its design and has optimised this wind farm size to six wind turbines. Whilst larger turbines are available beyond the 2.3MW units proposed for this facility, the height and blade length of the machine selected for the proposed Grasmere wind farm is consistent with those installed in the Albany wind farm. This is to ensure that visual continuity exists between the two wind farms.

From this design process, the gravel road extension from the Albany wind farm will follow the contours of the land such that the more exposed areas of the landscape are not disturbed and the road is not visible from key viewsheds. Road edges will be rehabilitated following construction of the wind farm as was undertaken with the Albany wind farm. The width of the road required has been minimised and the wind turbine positioning optimised to minimise the length of new road that is required.

Noise modelling has confirmed that the wind farm will not be discernible at the nearest noise sensitive premises (nearby houses) that are approximately 2km from the closest wind turbine. This

noise modelling has also confirmed that noise will not exceed State noise standards at the Hidden Valley campsite along the Bibbulmun track. If noise is still identified to be an issue following installation of the wind farm, the wind turbines proposed have a feature which enables their noise signature to be reduced overnight by lowering the output of the turbines. This can be initiated if required.

The wind farm area will continue to be able to be used by walkers along the Bibbulmun track although a section of the track is proposed to be realigned to position it between the coastline and the wind farm affording uninterrupted views of the coast. Four wheel drive vehicles will continue to be able to access the cliffs and beach areas along North-South tracks, however, some of the East-West tracks will be rehabilitated as part of the project. Access East-West will be facilitated through the use of the gravel road constructed as part of the wind farm works. Rehabilitating some of these existing four wheel drive tracks enables the net amount of vegetation that is cleared for the project to be reduced by an increase in newly vegetated areas in other areas. The loss of some of these four wheel drive tracks is not expected to limit four wheel drive vehicle movements in the area as these vehicles will be able to access other tracks from the wind farm road.

Electrical cables connecting the wind turbines with the Albany substation will follow roads where possible and this will minimise the amount of vegetation clearing required. Backfilling of this trench will aim to return the soil in the same order as it was removed to minimise erosion and facilitate revegetation through the preservation of topsoils.

The wind farm will be constructed over a period of approximately 12 months. Whilst being constructed, Verve Energy will have personnel on site to monitor construction activities and ensure construction takes place in adherence to the Environmental Management Plan. Contractual penalties will be written into all contracts such that a financial incentive exists for contractors to adhere to the Environment Management Plan.

All disturbed sites not required post construction for wind farm operation will be rehabilitated. These areas will be brushed with stored and mulched vegetation (windrowed and set aside during construction) with seed collected from the adjacent biomass directly spread onto this. In the case of areas with significant slope, seed will be used for tube-stocking and planted as a secondary means of long term stabilisation.

7 Conclusion on the likelihood of significant impacts

NOTE: Under the EPBC Act, you must identify in the referral whether or not you believe significant impacts on the matters protected under the Act are likely. If you identify that significant impacts are likely, you must identify the relevant protected matters in section 7.2.

Do you THINK your proposed action is likely to have significant impacts?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No, complete section 7.1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes, complete Section 7.2 |

7.1 Proposed action is NOT LIKELY to have significant impacts

Key reasons

The proposed Grasmere Wind Farm is unlikely to have significant environmental impacts due to:

- Verve Energy being conscious of minimising the environmental impact of the installation and having this as a core driver of the project;
- The existing Albany wind farm which had identical environmental principles applied during construction successfully;
- Verve Energy paying careful attention to equipment selection and wind farm design to minimise environmental impacts;
- Environmental studies having been undertaken to understand the extent of rare and endangered flora and fauna species that exist in the project area, their populations and the likely impacts;
- An environmental management plan having been prepared which identifies the key environmental issues and how these are to be managed on site;
- Each person working on site having been inducted to the environmental management plan and regular audits conducted to ensure compliance;
- Contractual penalties being included in all wind farm contracts if unauthorised vegetation clearing and non-compliance with the environmental management plan;
- The identified rare and/or endangered species habitat being well represented across the project area;
- Verve Energy rehabilitating road verges and some existing four wheel drive tracks in the project area to increase habitat areas for native fauna;
- Only one of the EPBC identified impacts being relevant to the project.

7.2 Proposed action is LIKELY to have significant impacts

Matters likely to be impacted

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 12 and 15A (World Heritage) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 15B and 15C (National Heritage places) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 16 and 17B (Wetlands of international importance) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 18 and 18A (Listed threatened species and communities) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 20 and 20A (Listed migratory species) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 21 and 22A (Protection of the environment from nuclear actions) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 23 and 24A (Marine environment) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | sections 26 and 27A (Protection of the environment from actions involving Commonwealth land) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | section 28 (Protection of the environment from Commonwealth actions) |

8 Assessment approach under the EPBC Act

NOTE: If a decision is made that a proposal needs approval under the Act, the Minister will also decide the assessment approach needed to satisfy the objectives of the Act. While the information you have provided in this referral will be taken into account in making this decision, the final decision rests with the Minister.

Level of assessment

X	Bilateral Agreement applies
	Accredited assessment
X	Assessment on referral information
	Preliminary information
	Public Environment Report
	Environmental Impact Statement
	Commission of Inquiry
	No comment/Not sure

Key reasons

The Grasmere wind farm project is not likely to have a significant environmental impact, as was the case when the existing Albany wind farm was built. The Grasmere project is essentially an extension of the existing facility and identical environmental principles will be applied.

Extensive environmental studies have been conducted on site. These have identified that flora and fauna that exist in the areas will be disturbed as part of the Grasmere wind farm project area but this disturbance will be small and the species involved are well represented across the site. Aside from vegetation disturbance, no other impacts are likely to be significant as part of the Grasmere wind farm project.

Verve Energy takes its environmental responsibilities seriously and has developed an environmental management plan for the project which takes into account the likely environmental issues and management practices for them. All personnel working on site will be inducted to the environmental management plan and regular audits will take place ensuring compliance with this plan.

The Grasmere wind farm is currently under review by the Western Australian Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in relation to environmental approval. It is understood that a Bilateral Agreement between the DEP and the Federal Department of Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts exists in relation to EPBC considerations.

9 Environmental history of the responsible party

NOTE: The EPBC Act Regulations provide for the environmental history of the party proposing to take the action to be taken into account when deciding the assessment approach for actions that need approval under the Act.

	Yes	No
<p>9.1 Does the party taking the action have a satisfactory record of responsible environmental management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Yes, provide details <p>Verve Energy has an excellent record of environmental management, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Never receiving an environmental prosecution; Being accredited to AS/NZS ISO14001:2004 in terms of its Environmental Management System; Having dedicated professional environmental staff; Having a Corporate Environmental Framework & Policy which states an intention to adhere and comply with all Federal and State Environmental Legislation; Being a member of the Greenhouse Challenge Plus; Having a Carbon Policy and a long term strategic plan of carbon neutrality; Having an Energy Management Policy for lowering internal electricity use; Actively supporting community groups in the environment area; and Having demonstrated environmental sensitivity and compliance with commitments at all project sites developed over the last ten years. 	X	
<p>9.2 Is the party taking the action subject to any proceedings under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Yes, provide details 		X
<p>9.3 For an action for which a person has applied for a permit under the EPBC Act, is the person making the application subject to any proceedings under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Yes, provide details 		X
<p>9.4 If the party taking the action is a corporation, will the action be taken in accordance with the corporation's environmental policy and planning framework?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Yes, provide details of environmental policy and planning framework 	X	

Verve Energy has a Corporate Environmental Due Diligence and Management Framework which provides a systematic approach to environmental management while satisfying the need to be able to demonstrate environmental due diligence.

This Framework describes the environmental responsibilities within Verve Energy and how the monitoring and reporting of issues relating to environmental management will occur. Importantly, the Framework also establishes the companies Environmental Management System in line with ISO4001, what this System is for and how it is to be used.

The Framework also describes relevant environmental legislation (both State and Federal).

10 Information sources and attachments

10.1 References

"Grasmere Wind Farm. Project Description and Updated Environmental Assessment. Volume 1 of 2 – MAIN TEXT", Verve Energy, June 2008.

"Grasmere Wind Farm. Project Description and Updated Environmental Assessment. Volume 2 of 2 - APPENDICES", Verve Energy, June 2008.

"Report on an Ethnographic Survey of the Proposed Albany Wind Farm", R.O'Connor, April 1999.

"Report on a Preliminary Archaeological Investigation for Aboriginal Sites, Albany Wind Farm Project", Gary Quartermaine, April 1999.

10.2 Reliability of information

This information has been collated and presented by and with the authority of Verve Energy. It may be relied upon to the limitations expressed within the reports attached.

All relevant studies were undertaken by professional and qualified experts in their field.

The flora surveys were carried out by Ecologia Pty Ltd utilising the services of botanists Christina Cox, Caroline McCormick, Joshua Gilovitz and Amy Capobianco as well as taxonomists Cate Tausse and Kristina Lemson. Surveys at the wind farm location were undertaken in November 2007 while those for the proposed underground cable route April 2008.

Fauna surveys were carried out by Biota Environmental Sciences Pty Ltd between the 7-16 November 2007. Fauna expertise utilised were Roy Teale, Jason Alexander and Luke Lovell. The WA Museum also provided advice on identification.

In a separate study conducted between March and May 2008, the WA Museum also provided expert advice in relation to the population distribution and habitat identification of the Mains Assassin Spider. Dr Mark Harvey and Michael Rix performed these surveys and identification work including DNA sequencing.

Noise studies for the wind farm were performed by SVT Engineering Consultants Pty Ltd, who has previously undertaken similar work for the Albany, Coral Bay, Hopetoun and Bremer Bay wind farm projects in Western Australia.

Visual amenity assessment and wind farm micro-siting were performed by Dr Paul Ebert of WorleyParsons, Perth. Previously Dr Ebert has performed similar work on wind farms at Albany, Esperance, Bremer Bay, Hopetoun, Rottneest Island, Mumbida (near Geraldton), Coral Bay and Denham.



Community consultation was entirely performed by Verve Energy.

10.3 Attachments

You must attach	figures, maps or aerial photographs showing the project locality (section 2)	✓
	figures, maps or aerial photographs showing the location of the project in respect to any matters of national environmental significance or important features of the environments (section 4)	✓
If relevant, attach	copies of any state or local government approvals and consent conditions (section 3.4)	
	copies of any completed assessments to meet state or local government approvals and outcomes of public consultations, if available (section 3.5)	
	copies of any flora and fauna investigations and surveys (section 4)	✓
	technical reports relevant to the assessment of impacts on protected matters and that support the arguments and conclusions in the referral (section 4 and 5)	
	report(s) on any public consultations undertaken, including with Indigenous Stakeholders (section 4)	✓

11 Signatures and declarations

NOTE: Providing false or misleading information is an offence punishable on conviction by imprisonment and fine (Section 489, EPBC Act).

Project title		Grasmere Wind Farm
11.1	Party who prepared the referral	I declare that the information contained in this form is, to my knowledge, true and not misleading. I request that the person named in 11.3 below (if any) be designated as the proponent for the action.
	Signature	
	Date	18 July 2008
	Full name	Daniel Thompson
11.2	Party who is responsible for action	I declare that the information contained in this form is, to my knowledge, true and not misleading.
	Signature	
	Date	18 July 2008
	Full name	Daniel Thompson
11.3	Proponent (complete only if different from 11.2)	I, being the person nominated in Section 1.3 of this referral form as the nominated proponent (or agent acting on behalf of), agree to be designated as the proponent for the action described above if it is decided that the action requires approval under Part 9 of the EPBC Act.
	Signature	
	Date	
	Full Name	

If the referring party is a small business (fewer than 20 employees), estimate the time, in hours and minutes, to complete this form (include your time reading the instructions, working on the questions and obtaining the information and time spent by all employees in collecting and providing this information).

Hours	Minutes