

# Minutes

## Special Council Meeting

**Wednesday 13 August, 2025**  
At 5.00pm

Council Chambers, 39 Bannister Road, Boddington

A vibrant and connected community with excellent lifestyle and employment opportunities in a beautiful natural environment.

## **DISCLAIMER**

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## CONTENTS

1.	DECLARATION OF OPENING.....	4
2.	ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE .....	4
3.	DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST.....	4
4.	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME.....	4
5.	PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/SUBMISSIONS .....	4
6.	REPORTS OF OFFICERS.....	5
6.1	Submission – Alcoa’s Pinjarra Alumina Refinery Revised proposal and Bauxite Mining Operation in the Darling Range for the years 2023 – 2027. ....	6
6.2	Submission on PoweringWA Draft Community Benefits Framework .....	16
7.	ELECTED MEMBERS’ MOTION OF WHICH PREVIOUS MOTION HAS BEEN GIVEN.....	34
8.	URGENT BUSINESS WITHOUT NOTICE WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENT OR MEETING.....	34
9.	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS .....	34
10.	CLOSURE OF MEETING.....	34

## 1. **DECLARATION OF OPENING**

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Wilman People as the Traditional Custodians of the land we are meeting on today, and pay respect to Elders past and present, as well as the continuation of cultural, spiritual, and educational practices of Aboriginal people.

Councillors, to ensure clarity and effective communication during this Council Meeting, I kindly remind you to switch on your microphones when called upon to speak. This meeting will be recorded.

## 2. **ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

### 2.1 **Attendance**

Cr Paul Carrotts	Deputy Shire President
Cr Garry Ventris	Councillor
Cr Lee Lewis	Councillor
Cr Johan van Heerden	Councillor
Cr Hans Prandl	Councillor
Cr Andrew Ryley	Councillor
Mr James Wickens	Executive Manager Development Services
Mr Fabian Houbrechts	Executive Manager Infrastructure Services
Mrs Cara Ryan	Executive Manager Corporate Services
Mrs Kelly Holliday	Executive Assistant (Minutes)
Visitors	5

### 2.2 **Apologies**

Mrs Julie Burton	Chief Executive Officer
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### 2.3 **Leave of Absence**

Cr Eugene Smalberger	Shire President
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## 3. **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Nil

## 4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

## 5. **PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/SUBMISSIONS**

Nil

6. **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

## **6.1 Submission – Alcoa’s Pinjarra Alumina Refinery Revised proposal and Bauxite Mining Operation in the Darling Range for the years 2023 – 2027.**

File Reference:	3.0053
Applicant:	Not applicable
Previous Item:	Nil
Author:	Executive Manager Development and Community Services
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Attachments:	6.1A Draft Submission to the Environmental Protection Authority

### Summary

Council is requested to endorse the combined submission to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for Alcoa’s Pinjarra Alumina Refinery Revised proposal, and the Bauxite Mining Operations in the Darling Range.

### Background

Alcoa currently operates its Huntly Mine and Pinjarra Alumina refinery west of Boddington, with mining progressively moving east and now located within the Shire’s boundaries. Alcoa has released two Environmental Review Documents (ERD) for two proposals which are currently being assessed by the EPA concurrently.

These being the Pinjarra Alumina Refinery Revised Proposal which consists of.

- An increase in alumina production at the refinery.
- A transition of the Huntly mine into the Myara North and Holyoake regions.
- An increase in the rate of mining.
- Clearing of no more than 6,700 hectares (ha) of native vegetation within a 42,415Ha development envelope associated with mining, and an additional 10ha of native vegetation associated with the refinery.

The other proposal is the Bauxite mining on the Darling Range in the southwest of WA for the years 2023 to 2027, which consists of.

- Clearing of native vegetation.
- Establishment of haul roads and other infrastructure and use of existing infrastructure.
- Operations associated with the mining, crushing and screening of bauxite ore.
- Transport of ore including by conveyor.
- Exploration activities.
- Rehabilitation activities.

The outcome of this process is to seek to ensure that the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) develops a set of suitable environmental conditions that will be applied to the proposals should they proceed. The task is for Council to consider the ERD, which is a technical report on the potential environmental impacts that may arise from the proposals.

### Comment

The ERD’s are substantial documents that have been prepared by the proponent in accordance with the requirements of the EPA who have determined that the reports have been prepared in a format that is sufficient for it to be released for public comment.

The Shire of Boddington is supportive of projects which benefit the region's economy. This support is however contingent on these projects ensuring that their environmental and social impacts are fully identified and minimised. The Shire as a member of the Peel Alliance acknowledges the Peel Alliance Policy Position Statement on Mining and Extractive Industries particularly that no further expansion of mining areas in the Jarrah Forrest 1 sub-region until a strategic assessment is complete. It is with this focus that this submission has been prepared.

It is considered that the EPA is the appropriately tasked and resourced body to fully assess the environmental issues at the mine site and refinery to ensure that there are appropriate conditions applied to the project. In this context, the Shire's focus is to satisfy itself that the proposed management measures detailed in the ERD adequately respond to potential residual environmental and other impacts to Boddington and the broader Peel region.

The following factors are considered to be of primary concern and form the basis of the submission:

- While the mine and refinery are an established and operating facility, the proposal requires a significant expansion of the land area that will be impacted. Mature Jarrah Forest is almost impossible to restore to its original state, and clearing of a further 6,700 hectares of native vegetation will have a significant environmental impact. This proposal, considered in parallel to the broader proposal of bauxite mining on the Darling Range, even more native vegetation is proposed to be cleared. Furthermore, the cumulative impacts from other mining activities also occurring in the northern jarrah forest such as the South 32 mine expansion should also be considered.
- Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance species, including Black Cockatoos (Forest Red-tailed, Carnaby's and Baudin's) Woylie, Chuditch, Red Tailed Phascogale, Western Ringtail Possum, Quokka and Numbat.
- The potential impact on nature based tourism, with major walks such as the Bibbulmun track expected to be impacted. As the Peel region transitions away from a mining-based economy in the future, it is vital for the sustainability of the region that it has opportunities for greater economic diversity with tourism one of its competitive advantages and a key future economic driver.
- Social impacts, including air quality, dust emission, noise and visual amenity are expected to negatively impact the community, particularly the community of Inglehope with the Shire of Murray.

The ERD outlines a range of management measures intended to address the identified environmental and social impacts. However, the proposed measures are not considered appropriate, as they fail to adequately address the destruction of key natural habitats or minimise impacts on local communities.

The Shire of Boddington strongly urges the EPA to consider the social and environmental impacts of mining on local communities, particularly in relation to noise, dust, and general amenity. Within Boddington itself, the proximity of mining operations to residential areas has led to ongoing concerns from residents about diminished quality of life. These include excessive noise, dust infiltration, and disruption to daily activities—effects that are both immediate and cumulative over time. This lived experience highlights the importance of establishing substantial buffer zones between mining operations and populated areas and ensuring robust regulatory oversight to mitigate these impacts in any future proposals for the Peel region.

### Consultation

The closing date for public submissions is 21 August 2025.

### Strategic Implications

Aspiration Outcome 4	Planet The natural environment is preserved for the benefit of current and future generations.
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### Legislative Implications

Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

### Policy Implications

Nil

### Financial Implications

Nil

### Economic Implications

Mining boosts jobs and local income but can also lead to long-term economic challenges.

### Social Implications

The impact of mining operation on the community includes excessive vehicle movement, dust and noise.

### Environmental Considerations

The forests and waterways of the Region are environmentally, culturally, economically and socially significant.

### Risk Considerations

Risk Statement and Consequence	As the EPA will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the ERD, the key risk is not meeting community expectations by failing to provide a submission on the proposal.
Risk Rating (prior to treatment or control)	Moderate
Principal Risk Theme	Reputational
Risk Action Plan (controls or treatment proposed)	No further action proposed

### Officer Recommendation and Council Decision

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION: 75/25**

**Moved:** Cr H Prandl

**Seconded:** Cr G Ventris

**That Council authorise the submission contained in Attachment 6.1A to be provided to**



**the Environmental Protection Agency, in relation to Alcoa's Pinjarra Alumina Refinery Revised proposal and Bauxite Mining Operation in the Darling Range for the years 2023 – 2027.**

Carried: **6-0**

For: Cr P Carrotts, Cr G Ventris, Cr L Lewis, Cr J van Heerden, Cr H Prandl, Cr A Ryley

Against: Nil

## Background

Alcoa plans to expand operations at its Pinjarra Alumina Refinery and Huntly Bauxite Mine to increase production and supply of bauxite for export. The key elements of the proposal are:

- Increase alumina production at the Pinjarra Refinery by 5%, from 5.0 Mtpa to 5.25 Mtpa.
- Expand mining operations at the Huntly Mine into the Myara North and Holyoake areas.
- Increase bauxite mining rate by up to 2.5 Mtpa for export to third-party customers.
- Clear up to 6,700 hectares of native vegetation within a 42,415-ha mining development envelope.
- Clear an additional 10 hectares of native vegetation related to refinery expansion.

These actions also run in parallel to Alcoa's broader operational planning under the referral titled "Bauxite Mining on the Darling Range in the southwest of WA for the years 2023 to 2027", currently being assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) under Assessment Number 2385. This proposal includes ongoing operations at Huntly and Willowdale mines under the Ministerial Lease 1SA and is subject to a Public Environmental Review (PER).

## Summary

The Shire of Boddington is supportive of projects which benefit the region's economy. This support is, however, contingent on these projects ensuring that their environmental and social impacts are fully identified and minimised. The Shire as a member of the Peel Alliance acknowledges the Peel Alliance Policy Position Statement on Mining and Extractive Industries particularly that no further expansion of mining areas in the Jarrah Forrest 1 sub-region until a strategic assessment is complete. It is with this focus that this submission has been prepared. The Shire has a number of significant concerns about Alcoa's Proposed Alumina Refinery Revised Proposal and associated mining activities including environmental, social, ecological, and economic impacts.

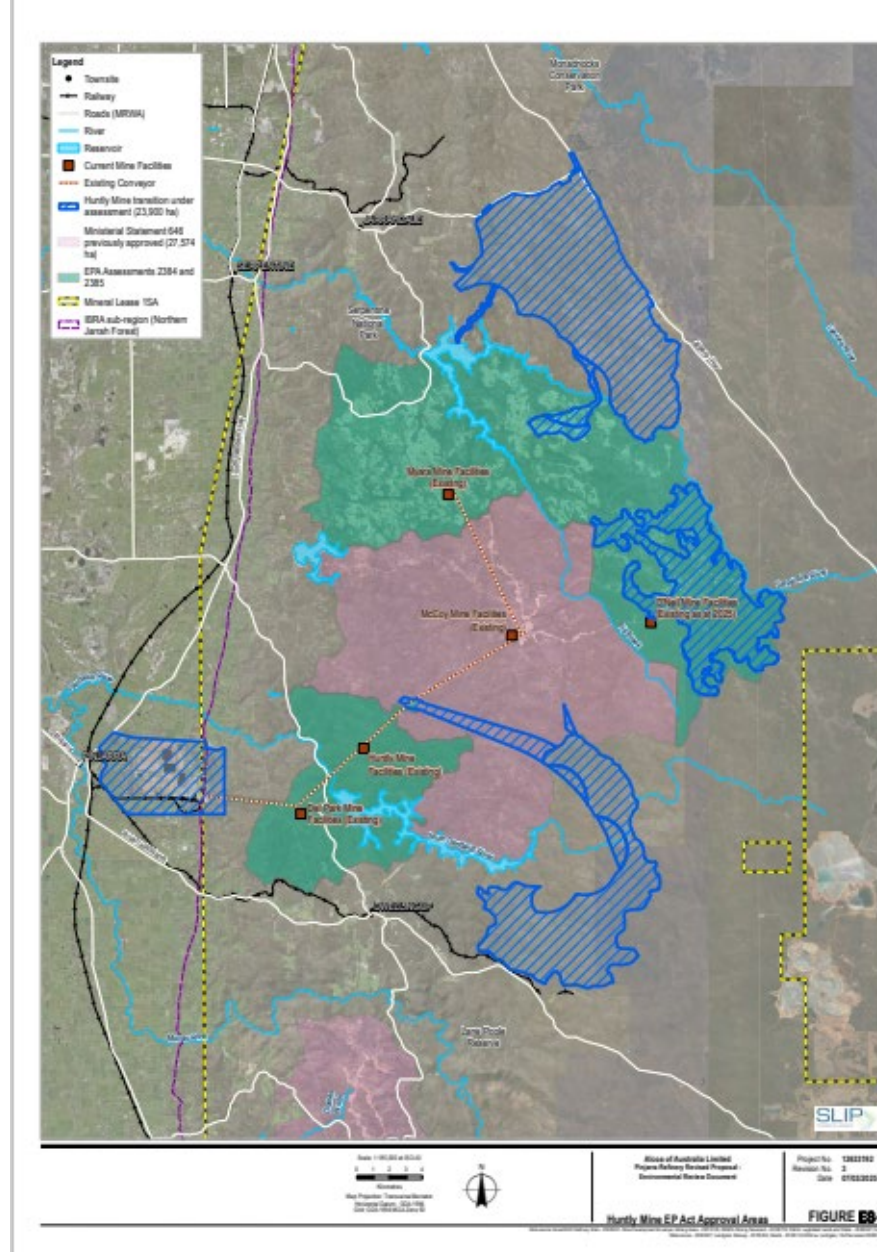
The following factors are considered of primary concern:

1. While the Refinery and Mine is an established and operating facility, the proposal requires a significant expansion of the land area that will be impacted. Mature Jarrah Forrest is almost impossible to restore to its original state, and clearing of a further 6,710 hectares of native vegetation will have significant impact. This is in addition to clearing proposed under Alcoa's EPA referral for the years 2023 to 2027 (Assessment 2385), where Alcoa proposes clearing of native vegetation across a 39,047-ha development envelope in the Darling Range.
2. Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance species including Black Cockatoos (Forest Red-tailed, Carnaby's and Baudin's), Woylie, Chuditch, Red-tailed Phascogale, Western Ringtail Possum, Quokka and Numbat.
3. The potential impact on nature base tourism, with major walks such as the Bibbulmun track expected to be impacted. As the Peel region transitions away from a mining-based economy in the future, it is vital for the sustainability of the region that it has opportunities for greater economic diversity with tourism one of its competitive advantages and a key future economic driver.
4. Social impacts, including air quality, dust emission, noise and visual amenity are expected to negatively impact the community, particularly the community of Inglehope with the Shire of Murray.

## 1. Impact to native vegetation

The Shire of Boddington is increasingly concerned with the protection of this unique ecosystem at a local and regional level. With 6,710 hectares of native vegetation clearing proposed, and a significantly larger area of fragmentation, there are impacts at a local, regional, state, national and global level. It is acknowledged the majority of clearing is not contained within the Shire of Boddington however mining activities are progressively moving east with a significant portion already occurring and proposed in the northwest of the Shire.

Figure 1. Shows and extract from the environmental review document showing the extent of mining progressing east into the Shire of Boddington.



There is a significant risk of biodiversity loss at a local and regional level, and negative climate change impacts on a global scale. Forests remove carbon from the atmosphere, decrease temperature, and reduce rainfall decline. As each local ecosystem collectively contributes

towards global climate change mitigation measures, it is important not to overlook the impact of this proposal as merely being at a local level. This risk can be substantially reduced by avoiding and reducing clearing and forest degradation from inappropriate forest management practices and land use.

It is accepted that bauxite mining is the primary cause of deforestation in Western Australia's Southwest Forests with approximately 62% of the 18,000 hectares of medium-tall forests in WA deforested from 2010 to 2020 being to allow for mining (A Thousand Cuts – Mining in the Northern Jarrah Forests, 2022). The impacts of bauxite mining operations on jarrah forests are not limited to this single proposal. The Environmental Protection Agency in its assessment, is requested to consider the potential cumulative impacts of past, current and proposed activities in jarrah forest, from all mining operators, rather than considering the impact of this proposal in isolation. In particular the recently approved South 32 Worsley Alumina Mine Expansion which includes clearing of native vegetation up to 8,823 hectares within Worsley Mine Development envelope and Alcoa's concurrent 2023–2027 mining referral to the EPA.

Alcoa propose to rehabilitate their mine sites progressively, as mining is complete, but there are many differences between old growth forests and rehabilitated mine sites. It is clear from research and visual inspection that intact forest significantly outperforms rehabilitated mine sites, at least in the short to medium term.

The Shire of Boddington is opposed to any further clearing of native forests for mining purposes.

### **Key Points:**

- Given the extent of overall pressure on jarrah forests, a comprehensive assessment of the cumulative effects should be undertaken by the Environmental Protection Agency, including Alcoa's 2023–2027 Darling Range mining referral.
- Rehabilitated forest does not provide a like for like replacement for old growth forests. The long-term impacts on flora and fauna are unknown.

## **2. Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance**

The subject land area is a key element of a unique ecosystem, with significant animal and plant diversity that are endemic to the region. The impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance species including Black Cockatoo (Forest Red-tailed, Carnaby's and Baudin's), Woylie, Chuditch, Red-tailed Phascogale, Western Ringtail Possum, Quokka, numbat is well evidenced, with the proposal having immediate habitat loss for all fauna species which inhabit the Primary Assessment Area.

The loss and significant alteration to the feeding and breeding habitat for Carnaby's cockatoo, Baudin's cockatoo, and Forest red-tailed black cockatoo, will place further pressure on the ongoing survival of all three species, and therefore their habitat needs to be preserved. The material provided by Alcoa within the Environmental Review documents (both for the refinery expansion and EPA Assessment 2385), states all three threatened species have been recorded in the areas to which the application relates and are known to be present.

All three species of cockatoo's breed in hollows of native trees at least a century old. There is no evidence available that demonstrates the impact of habitat loss and the effectiveness of rehabilitated land, as sufficient time has not passed to monitor breeding patterns in hollow logs versus artificial nesting boxes. Although rehabilitated mine sites provide some food resources from four years on, sufficient time has not yet passed to demonstrate that this provides equivalent food resources to the original forest. It is noted that the material provided

by Alcoa acknowledge there will be direct impacts on matters of national significance through habitat disturbance, habitat loss and potential injury /mortality due to mining operations. Decisions should not be made to allow further clearing until the full long-term impact is evidenced.

**Key points:**

- Until there is robust evidence that more habitats can be lost without significant adverse impact on these threatened species, no further clearing of jarrah forests for mining activities should be approved.
- Comprehensive measures should be put in place, measured and independently monitored to ensure specific actions are taken to protect matters of national significance.

**3. Impact on Tourism**

The Shire of Boddington has reaffirmed its commitment to trails-based tourism activities. The Council Plan 2025 – 2035 includes the following actions that are specifically relevant to this proposal:

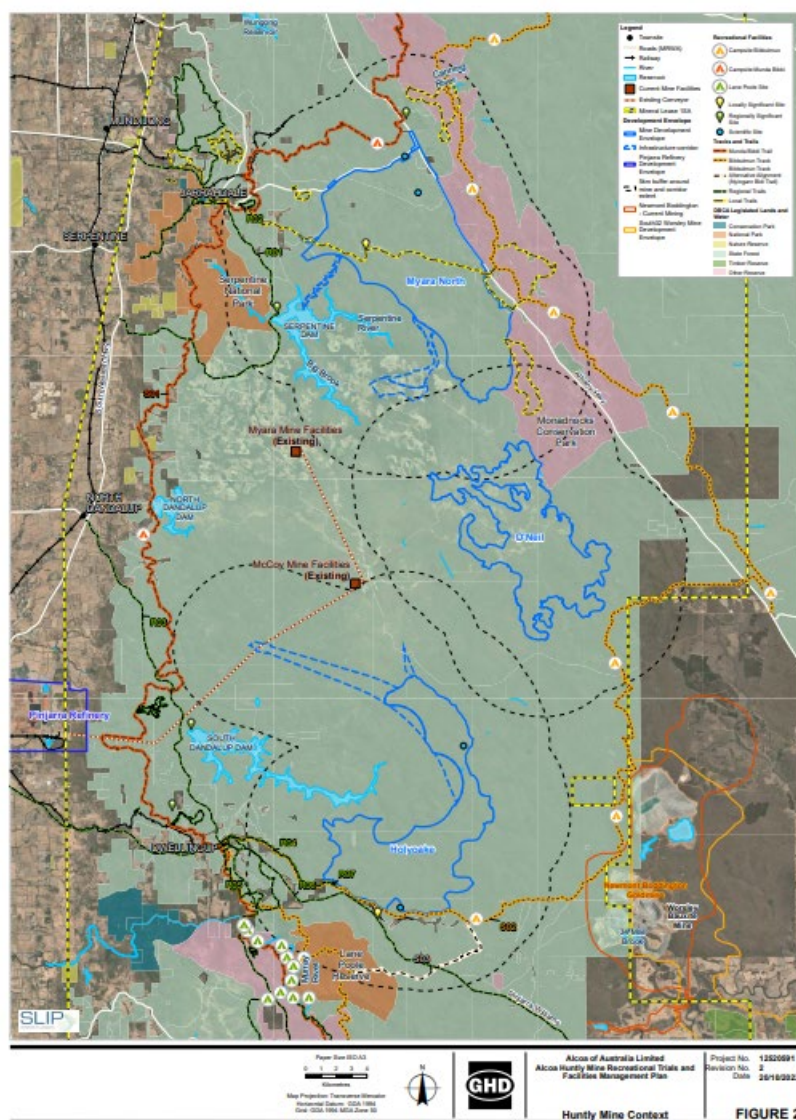
- 11.2.3 Develop the Boddington to Dwellingup Rail Trail Stage 1: Boddington to Tullis Bridge.
- 11.2.4 Develop the Boddington – Dwellingup Rail Trail Stage 2: Tullis Bridge to Dwellingup.

Planning for Stage 1 of the development is underway with upgrade works commencing in 2025/2026.

The trail is proposed along the rail reserve between Boddington and Etimilyn (Dwellingup) and must remain preserved for future development, as it not only an asset of economic importance, but the railway is also an essential element of Boddington and the wider Peel Region's history.

Furthermore, this rail trail between Boddington to Dwellingup will also create a spur trail opportunity from both the Bibbulmun and Munda Biddi Tracks which further enhance the significance of this Rail Trail and economic benefits it will create.

Figure 2 – Shows the proximity of the Bibbulmun Track (Orange and Black trail) to the east of Boddington.



It is acknowledged that this proposal will not directly impact upon the rail reserve or the Bibbulmun track but does encroach close near the community of Inglehope where the reserve and Bibbulmun track are in proximity. However, the Environmental Review documents and specifically the stakeholder register from Alcoa's EPA referral for the Pinjarra Alumina Refinery proposal identifies that the Alcoa lease area to east of Dwellingup and West of Boddington is subject to exploration drilling and confirmed mining is estimated to commence in the Holyoake mine region circa 2030.

The Shire seeks commitment from Alcoa that the Railway reserve between Dwellingup and Boddington will not be impacted from this proposal or any future mining proposals.

### Key Points:

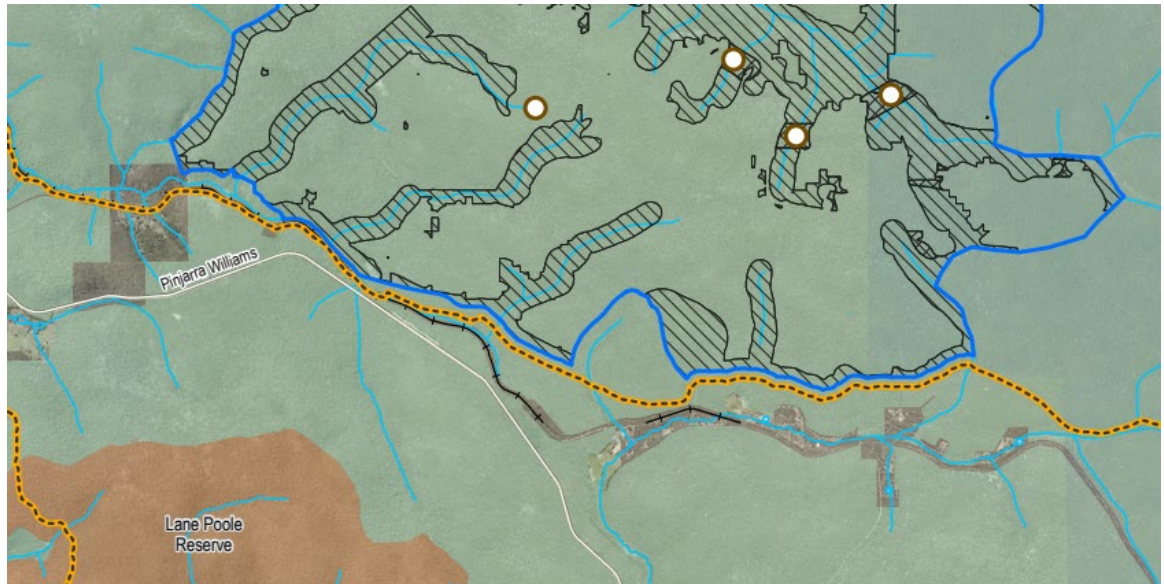
- Due to the imperative to diversify Boddington and the broader Peel Region's economy, full commitment from Alcoa not to impact or restrict access to the rail reserve for walking, cycling or possible equestrian use is requested, in consideration of these proposals.



## Social Impacts

The proposed activities have the potential to negatively impact communities through adverse social impacts such as dust and noise, particularly the small community of Inglehope within the Shire of Murray and located near the Shire of Boddington's western boundary.

Figure 3: Proximity of the Inglehope community to the Holyoake development envelope (blue).



The Shire is aware that the Shire of Murray is advocating for a mine exclusion zone around Inglehope, like the exclusion zone that exists around Dwellingup.

The Chadoora-Inglehope area was once part of the Shire of Boddington, however the boundary was realigned in the late 1990's following a petition of residents requesting a boundary change to include all residents of the Chadoora-Inglehope area within the Shire of Murray.

The Shire of Boddington strongly urges consideration of the social and environmental impacts of mining on local communities, particularly in relation to noise, dust, and general amenity. Within Boddington itself, the proximity of mining operations to residential areas has led to ongoing concerns from residents about diminished quality of life. These include excessive noise, dust infiltration, and disruption to daily activities—effects that are both immediate and cumulative over time. This lived experience highlights the importance of establishing substantial buffer zones between mining operations and populated areas and ensuring robust regulatory oversight to mitigate these impacts in any future proposals for the Peel region.

## Key Points

The Shire of Boddington supports the Shire of Murray's position in advocating for a mine exclusion zone for the community of Inglehope.

## 6.2 Submission on PoweringWA Draft Community Benefits Framework

File Reference:	2.007
Applicant:	Nil
Previous Item:	Nil
Author:	Chief Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Attachments:	6.2A Draft Shire of Boddington Submission 6.2B Joint LGA Submission

### Summary

Council is requested to consider and endorse the Shire of Boddington submission, and a joint local government submission, on the Draft Guideline on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects released by PoweringWA.

### Background

PoweringWA has released a draft Community Benefits Framework (CBF) for public consultation, seeking to provide guidance for the development of equitable and transparent community benefit arrangements in the context of large-scale renewable energy projects. The draft proposes principles, values, and governance models for how developers can share benefits with communities hosting renewable infrastructure. WALGA and a coalition of LGAs, including the Shire of Boddington, have developed submissions outlining concerns and recommended improvements to the framework.

The Draft Guideline on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects, intends to support equitable distribution of value from renewable infrastructure among host communities. This framework aims to formalise what has previously been a voluntary and inconsistent process of community benefit negotiation between developers and regional communities.

The framework responds to increasing pressure from regional communities for long-term benefit guarantees, consistent treatment, and better recognition of the burden these communities carry in facilitating the State's clean energy transition.

The draft proposes voluntary principles, benefit value ranges for wind and solar, optional governance models, and general expectations around timing, engagement, and flexibility, however, it does not establish enforceable mechanisms or statutory responsibilities. Gaps have been identified in enforceability, clarity on value, security of contributions, and the treatment of legacy projects.

As the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) footprint expands and more projects seek connection through the Peel and Wheatbelt regions, the Shire of Boddington may face increased development pressure. Having a clear and equitable community benefits framework is therefore critical for protecting local interests.

The submission period closes on 18 August 2025.

### Comment

The Draft CBF represents a positive step toward supporting communities impacted by large-scale renewable energy projects, including potential future projects in the Shire of Boddington,



however, as noted in the submissions, a number of amendments are needed to ensure the framework is robust, enforceable, and practically beneficial to regional communities.

The Shire of Boddington has been involved through participation in the Country Local Governments Renewable Alliance to develop a collaborative submission with 31 local governments. This joint submission, and a separate Shire of Boddington submission are attached for Council's consideration.

The Shire of Boddington's involvement in large-scale energy discussions has identified several key shortcomings in the current development landscape:

- Lack of mandate: Community benefits remain optional, leaving the onus on Local Governments to negotiate from an often weaker position. This creates risk, administrative burden, and results in variable community outcomes.
- Ambiguous benefit values: The proposed benefit ranges (\$500–\$1,500/MW for wind; \$150–\$800/MW for solar) do not provide adequate guidance or protections. Developers may elect to contribute at the lower end, leaving host communities with disproportionately low compensation for their infrastructure impacts.
- Insecure arrangements: The Draft CBF does not require benefit agreements to be binding or enduring. This is particularly problematic for 30+ year infrastructure with potential changes in ownership. The Shire supports secure, enforceable agreements tied to planning conditions or network access rights.
- Absence of provisions for battery storage: Despite their environmental and infrastructure footprint, battery energy storage systems (BESS) are not currently included in the value guidelines. A benchmark figure of \$150/MWh (as used in NSW) is considered appropriate.
- Governance: The Shire supports flexible governance models but recommends formal mechanisms for trust fund structures and participation by Local Governments where preferred.
- Equity: A nameplate capacity allocation model is supported for projects spanning multiple local government.
- Capacity building: Many small LGAs lack the internal expertise to negotiate complex agreements with multinational proponents. Training and templates should be developed by PoweringWA in consultation with the local government industry.
- Legacy projects: The CBF should outline triggers, such as ownership changes, project expansion or life extension, that would require existing arrangements to be updated to current standards.

Key points from the submission include:

- The need for a fixed minimum benefit rate per MW for wind, solar, and storage projects to reduce negotiation pressure
- Community benefits must be additional to Local Government rates
- Secure, binding agreements (e.g. planning conditions or network access arrangements)
- Investment in local government negotiation training
- Guidance on legacy/existing projects
- Allocation of benefits based on nameplate capacity split across LGAs

Overall, the Shire's submission positions community benefit sharing not as a discretionary "gift" by developers, but as a standard component of social licence, proportionate to impact, and delivered via a secure and transparent mechanism. Endorsing both submissions reduces these risks by advocating for uniformity, transparency and enforceability in benefit design.

### Consultation

The joint submission has been prepared collaboratively with 31 regional local governments.

### Strategic Implications

Aspiration	Performance
Outcome 12	Visionary Leadership and Responsible Governance

### Legislative Implications

While the submission itself does not create statutory obligations, it advocates for State Government action to:

- Introduce legislative amendments or new regulations that make community benefit agreements mandatory for utility-scale renewable energy projects.
- Tie community benefits to planning approval processes and/or Western Power network access licensing conditions.
- Clarify and separate community benefits from rating powers under the Local Government Act.

### Policy Implications

Adoption of the submission may inform future policy development, including:

- Local planning policies on renewable energy facilities.
- Shire-level infrastructure contribution schemes aligned with the Draft CBF.
- Administrative processes for participating in community benefit trust funds or governance models.

### Financial Implications

The submission recommends fixed rates of contribution, which would provide greater predictability in negotiations. There are no direct costs to the Shire from this submission.

### Economic Implications

Clearer benefit frameworks reduce uncertainty and promote faster project approval timelines while supporting local supply chains. The Shire may also benefit from strategic investment in local roads, accommodation, services, or workforce development via developer contributions.

Well-negotiated benefit schemes can help diversify the local economy and position Boddington as a responsible and desirable location for infrastructure development.

### Social Implications

Long-term financial contributions, community engagement requirements, and equitable sharing of benefits can reduce social division in towns affected by renewable infrastructure.

By advocating for secure, inclusive and tailored benefit frameworks, the Shire supports a fairer outcome for all residents, including First Nations communities, neighbours, and vulnerable groups.

### Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Renewable energy projects are integral to decarbonisation, however, they must be implemented in a way that does not burden rural communities.

Strong benefit frameworks can fund environmental rehabilitation, biodiversity offsets, or local emissions reduction initiatives.

#### Risk Considerations

Risk Statement and Consequence	Failure to secure consistent and enforceable community benefit arrangements could lead to community dissatisfaction and reduced social licence. Without a mandated framework, rural local governments like Boddington face reputational, financial, and governance risks. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Host communities may feel neglected or exploited if projects proceed without adequate community return.</li><li>• Lack of secure agreements may result in lost funding opportunities and increased service demand with no compensation.</li><li>• Local Governments negotiating inconsistent deals may be subject to public scrutiny or political instability.</li></ul>
Risk Rating (prior to treatment or control)	Moderate
Principal Risk Theme	Reputational
Risk Action Plan (controls or treatment proposed)	Nil

#### Officer Recommendation and Council Decision

##### **COUNCIL RESOLUTION: 76/25**

**Moved:** Cr H Prandl

**Seconded:** Cr L Lewis

**That Council endorses the attached submissions to PoweringWA on the Draft Community Benefits Framework.**

**Carried: 6-0**

**For:** Cr P Carrotts, Cr G Ventris, Cr L Lewis, Cr J van Heerden, Cr H Prandl, Cr A Ryley

**Against:** Nil



## **Submission from the Shire of Boddington in Response to the Draft PoweringWA Community Benefits Guideline**

### **Introduction and Position Statement**

The Shire of Boddington welcomes the release of PoweringWA's Draft Community Benefits Guideline and the State Government's commitment to enhancing the renewable energy transition through community-focused policies. As a Local Government Authority located in a region of growing interest to the renewable energy sector, the Shire is keen to contribute constructively to shaping a policy that ensures long-term, secure, and equitable benefits for host communities.

The Shire commends the effort to initiate a structured approach but believes the Guideline requires targeted revisions in order to become a practical and enforceable framework that truly supports local communities, especially those in regional and rural Western Australia.

### **1. Set a Uniform, Indexed Community Contribution Benchmark**

The current proposal's broad contribution range presents several challenges for LGAs and risks eroding public trust. The Shire advocates for the adoption of fixed annual contributions per megawatt of installed capacity, in line with the successful NSW model. This approach ensures transparency, certainty, and fairness across all jurisdictions.

Proposed Contribution Rates:

- Wind: \$1,050/MW/year (indexed to CPI)
- Solar: \$850/MW/year (indexed to CPI)
- Stand-alone BESS: \$150/MWh/year (indexed to CPI)

This single-rate model will remove ambiguity, reduce negotiation inequality between LGAs and developers, and offer a more efficient and equitable basis for community benefit schemes.

### **2. Proportional Distribution Based on Installed Capacity Per LGA**

For renewable projects spanning multiple LGAs, benefit allocation should be clearly tied to the distribution of nameplate capacity across each jurisdiction. This will prevent disputes and ensure communities receive support commensurate with their project exposure.

An exception protocol may be necessary where population centres are unevenly impacted despite the geographic distribution of infrastructure, and these cases should be handled collaboratively through developer-LGA engagement.

### **3. Secure Agreements Must Be Standard Practice**

One of the critical shortcomings in current practice is the absence of legally binding guarantees around community benefit arrangements. These contributions should not rely on goodwill or informal commitments. The Shire supports:

- Inclusion of a "Secure" principle within the Guideline
- Use of legally enforceable agreements between LGAs and project proponents
- Potential future integration of community benefit requirements into State and local planning frameworks, and network access agreements

The Shire also calls on PoweringWA to advocate for policy adjustments that enable such security measures to become part of statutory conditions.

#### 4. Remove Implied Links Between Community Benefits and Power Prices

The Draft Guideline inappropriately suggests that community benefit contributions might affect electricity pricing or project viability. Evidence clearly shows these contributions account for less than 0.5% of project revenues and have an immaterial impact on retail prices—roughly 0.1%, based on 2024 benchmarks.

Framing community benefits as a cost driver undermines the legitimacy of these contributions and unfairly positions host communities as a liability in the energy transition.

#### 5. Keep Rates and Community Benefits as Distinct Funding Mechanisms

The Shire of Boddington strongly supports the view that local government rates and community benefit payments must remain separate and unrelated. Rates are a universal obligation on landowners, while community benefits are a form of reciprocal value for the unique impacts hosting renewable infrastructure imposes on rural communities.

Any suggestion in the final Guideline that implies offsets or trade-offs between these two mechanisms must be removed to avoid confusion and misrepresentation of their distinct purposes.

#### 6. Empower LGAs Through Strategic and Negotiation Capacity-Building

It is essential that Local Governments, particularly those that are smaller and less-resourced, are equipped to manage complex negotiations with sophisticated energy developers. The Shire recommends PoweringWA:

- Fund and facilitate statewide negotiation workshops
- Support LGAs in developing long-term strategic frameworks for benefit investment
- Partner with WALGA to build on its Renewable Energy Community Benefits and Engagement Guide as a toolkit for local governments.

#### 7. Strengthen the Emphasis on Early Engagement

The Guideline should more clearly state that early and transparent engagement with both LGAs and community stakeholders is an expectation, not an optional step, for all developers. Building trust early in the project cycle reduces opposition and ensures community benefits are genuinely co-designed and appropriately targeted.

#### 8. Address Legacy Projects with Sensible Triggers

While retroactively applying the Guideline to all existing projects is impractical, the Shire proposes that PoweringWA define clear upgrade triggers requiring review of existing arrangements. These may include:

- Repowering or life extension
- Increases to project capacity
- Material changes to planning approvals or site design

Such trigger points will ensure the principles of the Guideline are phased in over time without disrupting existing contractual arrangements unnecessarily.

### Conclusion

The Shire of Boddington reiterates its support for a clear, consistent and enforceable approach to community benefits. With careful revision, the PoweringWA Guideline can offer a meaningful

and enduring framework for balancing the interests of communities and industry in Western Australia's renewable energy future.

PoweringWA is urged to:

- Adopt fixed contribution benchmarks
- Guarantee benefit security through enforceable mechanisms
- Clearly separate rates and benefit funds
- Invest in LGA capability and strategic thinking

# Joint Local Government Submission

## On behalf of Country Local Governments Renewables Alliance

### *PoweringWA – Draft Guideline on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects (Consultation Paper)*

Approved Version - 25 July 2025

## Overview

Western Australia has an opportunity to set a nation leading standard for community benefits arrangements that benefits local communities, industry and all Western Australians. Developing a robust, WA oriented framework that benefits from the experiences of more advanced jurisdictions is essential to provide industry and local communities with the certainty and confidence necessary to navigate the renewable energy transition.

Local Government Authorities (LGAs) that have contributed to this submission are supportive of the need for a community benefits Guideline that recognises the diverse characteristics and needs of Western Australia's LGAs. The PoweringWA Draft *Guideline* is a welcome start that requires some targeted improvements and a clear regulatory or state policy standing.

This submission by the undersigned LGAs identifies a series of opportunities to improve the clarity and effectiveness of the Guideline prior to finalisation. These include:

- **A single recommended contribution value**

Improving the Guidance on community benefit contribution values by providing a single contribution value benchmark (based on the NSW Guidelines) instead of the wide ranges in the Draft Guideline. This approach will provide better basis for agreement of mutually acceptable terms between LGAs and industry. It will also improve the transparency of the process and reduce the risks to LGAs involved in negotiations on behalf of the community.
- **Allocation of benefits according to the location of nameplate capacity**

Many projects are located in multiple LGAs. The Guideline should include a recommendation that benefits are allocated according to the nameplate capacity located in each LGA. This will provide a simple and transparent basis for allocating benefit contributions between communities.
- **Including Security of benefits arrangements as a key element in the Guideline**

Including a focus on ensuring the security of benefits arrangements is essential for both communities and industry to have certainty over the operating life of these projects. The addition of Secure principle in the Guideline and an explicit expectation that community benefit contributions will be secured by LGA-developer agreements (and/or network access and planning conditions if future policies allow this to occur).

The future security of contributions is essential for communities who need to make long term planning, financial and other decisions. It also reduces sovereign risk for industry.

LGAs are also engaging with Planning Minister and WPCEO to seek practical changes to planning and network access arrangements that can improve security. We request PoweringWA support in achieving these outcomes.
- **Focussing on the opportunities community benefits provide**

Community benefit arrangements should not be identified as a driver of power prices or project viability by the Guideline and these inferences should be removed. Drawing these links is unnecessarily divisive and not supported by the evidence.



The Guideline should focus on the opportunities community benefit arrangements provide for communities, industry and government which far outweigh the minor additional costs.

- **Removing inconsistencies in the discussion of local rates**

Community benefit arrangements should be consistently recognised as additional to rates within the final Guideline.

- **Investing in LGA capability**

A request for PoweringWA to convene workshops to build LGA negotiating capabilities alongside finalisation of the Guideline.

- **Providing advice on existing projects**

Including clear trigger points for existing projects community benefit arrangements to be brought in line with the Guideline in the future will avoid confusion about whether there need to be changes to arrangements for projects that are built, in construction or have approvals.

These recommended improvements reflect the deep, direct and ongoing experience of LGA leaders in negotiating with renewable developers on behalf of their communities. These negotiations have been undertaken without the support of PoweringWA's guidance. The proposed changes will benefit all parties – communities, State and LGAs and industry - if they are incorporated by PoweringWA into the final guideline.

### Local Governments supporting this Submission

This submission has been prepared on behalf and is supported by the following **thirty-one (31)** Local Governments:

- |                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Shire of Beverley       | • Shire Mingenew           |
| • Shire of Boddington     | • Shire of Moora           |
| • Shire of Bruce Rock     | • Shire of Narrogin        |
| • Shire of Brookton       | • Shire of Northam         |
| • Shire of Carnamah       | • Shire of Northampton     |
| • Shire of Chapman Valley | • Shire of Pingelly        |
| • Shire of Chittering     | • Shire of Toodyay         |
| • Shire of Coorow         | • Shire of Trayning        |
| • Shire of Corrigin       | • Shire of Victoria Plains |
| • Shire of Cunderdin      | • Shire of West Arthur     |
| • Shire of Cuballing      | • Shire of Westonia        |
| • Shire of Gingin         | • Shire of Williams        |
| • Shire of Goomalling     | • Shire of Wongan-Ballidu  |
| • Shire of Kellerberrin   | • Shire of Woodanilling    |
| • Shire of Kondinin       | • Shire of York            |
| • Shire of Kulin          |                            |

## Key Points of Feedback

### 1. Replace the Benefit Contribution Ranges with a single recommended contribution and include contribution guidance for BESS projects

The signatories strongly advocate for the adoption of a uniform, fixed-contribution per megawatt (\$/MW) formula for determining community benefit contributions associated with wind energy, solar array, and battery energy storage system (BESS) developments across Western Australia.

In contrast to a variable or range-based contribution model—where proponents negotiate individual outcomes with host local governments—the fixed-contribution model provides clarity, fairness, transparency, and consistency. A **mandated** contribution value would significantly reduce the uncertainty and risks inherent in the current approach proposed under the State’s draft guidelines.

The proposed range-based model creates a situation where local governments and their representatives are placed under unreasonable and unsustainable sovereign and political risk. This risk arises from the perception—often shaped during local election cycles or executive reviews—that a council’s mayor, president, CEO, or negotiating officers have either failed to secure a ‘sufficient’ contribution or have been outperformed by other jurisdictions. This dynamic fosters:

- Public mistrust, especially in communities that may compare outcomes across local governments;
- Accusations of incompetence or, worse, corruption, where negotiations fall short of the upper end of the State’s recommended range;
- Undue pressure on elected members and executives, which can erode public confidence and destabilise local governance;
- Political weaponisation of contribution outcomes during biennial local government elections, CEO contract renewals, or changes in council leadership.

This is particularly fraught given that local governments are often negotiating with multinational corporations possessing vastly greater resources, legal capacity, and experience. The expectation that volunteer elected members or even seasoned CEOs can reliably negotiate top-tier contributions within a range framework is not only unrealistic—it is systemically inequitable and unsustainable.

In contrast, a statewide fixed-contribution approach, as already implemented successfully in jurisdictions such as New South Wales, provides a level playing field. It ensures:

- Predictability for proponents, streamlining project feasibility and budgeting;
- Certainty and consistency for local governments, avoiding reputational damage from perceived negotiation shortcomings;
- Transparency and fairness for communities, who are assured of equitable treatment regardless of where they live;

- Reduced risk of conflict or regulatory scrutiny, as contribution expectations are clearly established in policy and uniformly applied.

Unless there are extraordinary or site-specific extenuating circumstances, the use of a fixed contribution value per MW is a superior model—one that mitigates sovereign and political risk, fosters public trust, and enhances the integrity of renewable energy planning and delivery in WA.

Accordingly, we strongly recommend that the WA State Government adopt a consistent, mandated community benefits contribution value, aligned with the proven New South Wales model, and resist the implementation of loosely defined or negotiable contribution ranges.

This single recommended contribution values aligned to the NSW Guideline<sup>1</sup> and include a contribution for stand-alone Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) would be:

- \$1,050 per megawatt per annum indexed to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for wind energy development
- \$850 per megawatt per annum indexed to CPI for solar energy development
- \$150 per megawatt hour per annum indexed to CPI for stand-alone battery energy storage systems<sup>2</sup>

Setting clear contribution value guidance empowers local communities and industry, creating a firm foundation for agreements that can demonstrate the maturity of interactions between the parties and create mutually beneficial outcomes reflecting the local community and project context.

## 2. Benefit contribution allocations should align to nameplate capacity location for projects that span multiple LGAs

Community benefits should flow to impacted communities. Many renewable energy projects are located within more than one LGA and it is important that there is clarity on how community benefits should be allocated between communities.

The Guideline should include clear guidance that allocation of community benefit contributions should be made on the basis of the proportion of nameplate capacity located in each LGA. For example, if a 10MW project had 4MW in one LGA and 6MW in another then a 40/60 split would be made in the contribution arrangements.

There may be exceptions to this approach for a small number of projects. For example, where significant population areas are located in close proximity to a project but the majority of the project is an adjoining LGA with no nearby towns or more densely settled areas. These exceptions can be resolved by discussion and agreement.

<sup>1</sup> NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure 2024, Benefit-Sharing Guideline: Guidance for large scale energy projects <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-11/benefit-sharing-guideline.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> The consultation paper argues that there is no industry benchmark for BESS projects. In our view, the NSW Guideline has established an industry benchmark for BESS agreements, and this should be included in the Guideline. Not including a contribution for BESS projects will unnecessarily complicate negotiations, creating risks for both parties.

However, for vast majority of arrangements this simple approach to apportioning benefits funds will provide a clear basis for agreement. Inclusion of this expectation in the Guideline will help to avoid unnecessary conflict, competing expectations or time-consuming negotiations between LGAs.

### 3. The Guideline should include a focus on ensuring the security of benefits arrangements for communities and industry

The Guideline should include a focus on ensuring the security of community benefit arrangements to increase certainty for both industry and communities.

Security is essential as LGAs, and communities must have confidence that benefit arrangements (and other commitments to supporting local communities) will actually be enforceable and delivered by industry once approvals are in place. This is essential for long-term statutory management, financial and strategic planning.

Without proper security from the outset, these arrangements could be the subject of renegotiation or change at the discretion of the project owner or LGAs. A lack of security therefore introduces risk for both communities and project owners. In our view:

- Relying on the on-going goodwill of industry over 30-year project lifespans and potentially repeated changes in ownership is an excessive and unreasonable risk to communities. If a project ceases payments, there is no way for this to be addressed unless these arrangements are secure.
- There are also sovereign risks for industry without proper security. New Councils or leaders in LGAs could seek to renegotiate for higher benefit arrangements at their discretion unless arrangements are appropriately secure. Renegotiation may also become a local political issue during election campaigns, leading to local division and uncertainty.

The fundamental insecurity of benefit arrangements has been emphasised in recent project approvals. Currently, community benefit arrangements are only recognised within the advice notes of statutory body assessments. The advice notes are not binding which provides very limited to no security for the future.

We note that community benefit agreements are better secured in other jurisdictions. For example, Voluntary Planning Agreements are utilised in NSW, supported by planning conditions. Community Benefit Agreements have also recently been introduced in Queensland as part of legislative changes.

To address this issue in the Guideline it is recommended that **Secure** be added as an additional principle in the guideline in *Principles for community benefit arrangements* section. This could be drafted as:

- **Secure:** the arrangements for community benefits should be appropriately secured via enforceable agreements between LGAs and project owners to provide certainty for communities and industry over the life of the project. These agreements should wherever possible be integrated within planning approvals and network access arrangements where policies provide the basis for these links to be made.

Whilst security can be supported via community benefits being captured in dedicated legal agreements between LGAs and project owners, this approach brings additional costs. Establishing a requirement within network access arrangements with Western Power is a preferred pathway and consistent with approaches in other jurisdictions.

Specifically, agreement of a community benefits contributions consistent with the Guideline should be made a condition for granting and maintaining a network access licence with Western Power. This would also require the granting of any future network access licenses / agreements to be conditional on the new operator committing to the community benefit arrangement.

We note that *State Planning Policy 3.6 Infrastructure Contributions*<sup>3</sup> could also provide a pathway for creating a nexus within the existing planning framework. However, the requirements for these processes are onerous and SPP3.6 is not commonly utilised by smaller rural local governments, creating a significant burden on LGAs.

The focus on achieving greater security through network access arrangements mirrors arrangements in NSW such as the Renewable Energy Zone Access Scheme and complements existing considerations in the Commonwealth Capacity Investment scheme. By linking appropriate community benefit arrangements to network access and government support, community benefits are placed at the heart of project arrangements and developers have a significant incentive to agree to proper arrangements with communities.

Whilst we recognise that implementing these changes is beyond the scope of the Guideline and PoweringWA's mandate, PoweringWA can play an important role in realising this security through its advocacy for change within government and we request your support.

The Guideline can also support this by recognising the potential for these future security pathways and creating an expectation that - in the absence of the changes recommended above - developers should enter into binding agreements with Local Governments to provide life-of-project security and certainty for host communities.

#### 4. Remove elements of the Guideline that link community benefit contributions to power prices, project viability and sovereign risk

Community benefit arrangements are an insignificant factor in future power prices, are not a material factor impacting project viability and communities are not creating sovereign risk by seeking reasonable benefit arrangements.

It is also unnecessarily divisive to include these inferences within the Guideline. To do so implies that host communities seeking reasonable community benefits are imposing significant costs and risks for industry and the rest of the Western Australian community. In an environment where renewable energy is already very divisive within communities, it is important

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2021-09/SPP\\_3.6\\_Infrastructure%20Contributions\\_Guidelines%20april2021\\_0.pdf](https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2021-09/SPP_3.6_Infrastructure%20Contributions_Guidelines%20april2021_0.pdf)

the WA Government seeks to foster unity and maximise benefits for all Western Australians from the energy transition.

Tables 2 and 3 provide a simple evidence-based review of the significance of community benefit contributions to power prices and project viability, supporting the removal of any negative links to power prices, sovereign risk and project viability in the final Guideline.

**Table 2: Comparative Factors**

Project Type	Indicative annual MWh generation per MW <sup>4</sup>	2024 average SWIS wholesale price/MWh <sup>5</sup>	2024 retail electricity charge (\$/MWh) <sup>6</sup>	Community Benefit Contribution
Onshore wind	3504	\$79.93	\$315.82	\$1,050
Solar	2190	\$79.93	\$315.82	\$850

**Table 3: Community Benefit Significance Assessment**

Project Type	Indicative Annual Generation Revenue/MW	Community Benefit: cost to project owner (\$/MWh)	Community Benefit: % of annual facility revenue	Community Benefit: % of average annual wholesale price	Community Benefit: % of retail energy price
Onshore wind	\$280,075	0.30	0.37%	0.37%	0.09%
Solar	\$175,047	0.38	0.49%	0.47%	0.12%

This simple indicative analysis is based on industry benchmarks. It identifies community benefit contributions as comprising less than half a percent of potential generation revenue and around 0.1% of retail power prices in 2024. They represent a small, fixed additional cost and will only be incurred once projects are operational and generating revenue.

Compared to major cost factors such as project capital expenditure, financing costs, and supporting transmission capital investment, community benefit contributions cannot reasonably be identified as a significant factor impacting either project viability or future power prices.

More importantly, communities hosting renewable energy are making a significant contribution to the future of the energy system, bearing the direct impacts of this change which is industrialising rural landscapes, and they should be justly recognised for that contribution.

<sup>4</sup> Derived based on the midpoint of the relevant capacity factor ranges in the CSIRO GenCost report - [https://www.csiro.au/-/media/Energy/GenCost/GenCost2024-25ConsultDraft\\_20241205.pdf](https://www.csiro.au/-/media/Energy/GenCost/GenCost2024-25ConsultDraft_20241205.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Sourced from the AEMO Wem data dashboard <https://aemo.com.au/energy-systems/electricity/wholesale-electricity-market-wem/data-wem/data-dashboard>

<sup>6</sup> Based on 2024 residential electricity tariff, excluding supply charges <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/energy-policy-wa/household-electricity-pricing>



Rather than framing these contributions as a cost, community benefits should be framed in the Guideline as an opportunity to contribute to the future development of regional communities and create a genuine social licence for the energy transition.

The development of a robust and secure basis for negotiating community benefits is also an opportunity to reduce sovereign risk for developers. If this approach also helps to achieve earlier approvals the reductions in capital costs, smoothing of the energy transition and other benefits has the potential to increase project viability and contribute to lower power prices. These positive impacts could well outweigh the modest additional costs imposed on projects.

## 5. Clarify that community benefit arrangements are additional and are separate to local rates

Community benefit arrangements are necessitated by the limited long-term positive impact the renewable industry will leave for host communities. Unlike other key regional industries such as agriculture, tourism and resources, renewables provide very limited direct economic benefits over their operating life but have on-going material impacts.

Like other State fees, taxes and charges, local rates should be immutably independent of community benefit arrangements. Local rates represent a baseline contribution by all landowners to support community infrastructure and services.

The draft Guideline is inconsistent on this separation and needs clarification.

The statements in first paragraph of Community Benefits section and Role of Rates sections appropriately identify that community benefit payments are additional and separate to any rate obligations. These statements should be retained.

However, the following paragraph in the role of rates section should be removed:

*“Nevertheless, communities and Local Governments should consider the cumulative impact of any change in ratings approach along with any independently negotiated community benefits program. This will ensure commerciality is maintained, sovereign risk is reduced, and that additional revenue is split fairly between hosting councils seeking to recover their costs, and communities seeking benefits for hosting new renewable energy projects.”*

This paragraph undermines the clarity of earlier statements and introduces inappropriate and inaccurate statements. In particular, conflating the payment of rates with the commerciality of projects is inappropriate. There is no evidence to suggest that these relatively minor fixed costs are a material commercial consideration for developers and they are a cost that any land use in the State must pay.

The charging of rates based on State Government statutes by LGAs does not constitute a sovereign risk issue and this reference is similarly inappropriate.

Finally, this paragraph also infers that community benefit funds are a cost recovery mechanism for LGAs. This is completely at odds with the way in which community benefit funds are defined in the Guideline (see for example the *Communities and The Energy Transition* section). The

intent of these funds to provide additional benefits to host communities beyond what local resources – including rates – can provide.

The reference to rates within the criteria for any benefit contribution should be also removed.

## 6. Invest in LGA strategy and negotiation capability

The objective of community benefit contributions is to improve the long-term position of LGAs and their communities. This means, the LGAs involved need to produce a clearly thought through strategy to preserve their infrastructure and facilities for the next 20-30 years. Once this wave of development passes, the communities are unlikely to be supported at anything but the most basic level.

The Guideline should encourage long-term LGA strategic thinking, formulation of legacy projects and outcomes, and consideration of how community benefits funds can be applied and maximised to enable communities to position themselves for the future. A strategic view of how the community will absorb and manage both the immediate development pressure and the future beyond the construction period when new economic activity dissipates, and communities are left to reassemble themselves.

The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) has recently developed a Renewable Energy Community Benefits and Community Engagement Guide<sup>7</sup>. The Guide provides LGAs with a baseline of practical information and processes to consider their local strategy and priorities, engagement with developers and the community, and development of community benefit schemes that work locally.

PoweringWA should build on this initiative and the Guideline by funding negotiation workshops for LGAs. These workshops would assist local leaders in preparing and presenting their expectations/ask to developers, improving face-to-face meeting conduct, issues management, knowledge, and the overall capacity of LGAs to negotiate successfully with developers. With much of the development occurring in small, under resourced rural LGAs, this capability building approach would greatly assist in lifting skills, avoiding delays and improving community and industry outcomes.

## 7. Emphasise the importance of early engagement and genuine consultation

The Guideline should emphasise the importance of early engagement with LGAs by developers and genuine engagement with communities as a foundation for agreeing strong community benefits arrangements. This will allow the communication of key issues between both sides and the identification and understanding of how communities can best utilise contributions and create a foundation for future prosperity as energy generating regions. This is currently mentioned in the Guideline but could be more clearly identified as an expectation of the Government and important pathway to success.

<sup>7</sup> [https://walga.asn.au/getmedia/ea947a1a-fc88-460f-966b-7e55f511d3a2/WALGA\\_Renewable-Energy-Community-Benefits-and-Engagement-Guide.pdf](https://walga.asn.au/getmedia/ea947a1a-fc88-460f-966b-7e55f511d3a2/WALGA_Renewable-Energy-Community-Benefits-and-Engagement-Guide.pdf)



## 8. Provide clearer guidance on community benefit arrangements for existing projects

Whilst the Guideline will provide a framework for improved benefit frameworks for new projects, we note that there are many existing projects (completed, under construction or approved) that have community benefit arrangements that do not align to the guidance provided.

It is not reasonable or feasible that these pre-Guideline community benefit arrangements be renegotiated to align to the new standard.

However, the Guide should note clear triggers for project arrangements to be improved to align to the Guideline. These triggers should include:

- if a project is rescoped and an approval significantly modified
- if turbines, panels or batteries are progressively upgraded to higher capacity (name plate),
- project life extensions (repowering),
- changes to operating approvals.

## Conclusion

The transition to renewable energy presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to deliver long-term social, economic and environmental benefits to Western Australia's regions. The Draft Guideline represents a strong starting point, but it must be refined to ensure **fair, consistent and secure outcomes** for host communities.

As the tier of government closest to the communities impacted by these projects, Local Governments are uniquely placed to facilitate, administer and advocate for lasting community benefit outcomes. However, this role must be supported by a clear, enforceable policy framework that empowers LGAs and sets a minimum benchmark for industry to meet.

The signatory Local Governments call on PoweringWA to incorporate the recommended improvements outlined in this submission, including adopting a fixed-contribution model, embedding benefit security mechanisms, clarifying and distinguishing the independence of community contributions from rates, and supporting LGA capability building.

These changes will foster trust, reduce risk, and enhance the social licence of renewable energy projects across Western Australia. With the right framework in place, community benefits can become a catalyst for strengthening regional communities and ensuring the energy transition delivers for all.

7. ELECTED MEMBERS' MOTION OF WHICH PREVIOUS  
MOTION HAS BEEN GIVEN

8. URGENT BUSINESS WITHOUT NOTICE WITH THE  
APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENT OR MEETING

9. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business, Cr Paul Carrotts, Deputy Shire President declared the meeting closed at 5:04pm.