

ENVIRONMENT EXPERTS ADVISE ON A\$650 MILLION VICTORIAN WIND FARM DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE BROLGA

26 July 2016 | Australia, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney
News

Herbert Smith Freehills has advised Trustpower on all environmental aspects of its proposed A\$650 million Dundonnell Wind Farm in western Victoria which recently received planning approval from the Victorian Government.

The project, which will have up to 96 turbines, is developed by Trustpower closely together with landowners who support having wind turbines on their properties.

Victorian Government approval followed the project being subject to an environmental effects statement (EES) which was publicly exhibited and then subject to an independent public inquiry last October.

A key environmental issue was ensuring the wind farm's design included appropriate buffers from wetlands used by brolga, a protected bird species in Victoria.

Lead Herbert Smith Freehills partner Tim Power said as part of the brolga impact assessment, Trustpower and its expert ecologists trained local landholders on how to systematically observe and collect data about the species.

"Thousands of hours of data on the brolga flight, breeding and flocking behaviours was sourced by two local landholders and collected and used in the technical impact assessment undertaken by Trustpower's ecologists," Tim said.

"I am thrilled Victoria's Minister for Planning has approved the Dundonnell Wind Farm. Trustpower and its people worked extremely hard to come up with an outstanding project that will make an important contribution to achieving Victoria's and Australia's renewable energy goals.

"It is a fantastic example of an energy company partnering with local land owners who wish to have turbines on their property, and enlisting their support to collect important data about the presence and patterns of behaviour of protected bird species.

"I have no doubt this information greatly assisted Trustpower and the Minister in determining that the project's effects on broilga were acceptable," he said.

Herbert Smith Freehills senior associate Zachary Tyler and solicitor Jennifer Meek also worked on the project.

The firm has the leading renewables legal practice in Australia, with particular expertise in all aspects of acquisition, development and project financing of large-scale wind and solar projects.

About Herbert Smith Freehills

Operating from over 26 offices across Asia Pacific, EMEA and North America, Herbert Smith Freehills is at the heart of the new global business landscape providing premium quality, full-service legal advice. We provide many of the world's most important organisations with access to market-leading dispute resolution, projects and transactional legal advice, combined with expertise in a number of global industry sectors, including energy, natural resources, infrastructure and financial services. www.herbertsmithfreehills.com

Follow us on Twitter @HSFlegal