

Banana Range Wind Farm Connection Project

POWERLINK QUEENSLAND

About the project

Powerlink is progressing works to deliver a new transmission line, approximately 44km in length, to connect the Banana Range Wind Farm (BRWF) to the transmission network. The BRWF is a renewable energy development planned by EDF Renewables Australia.

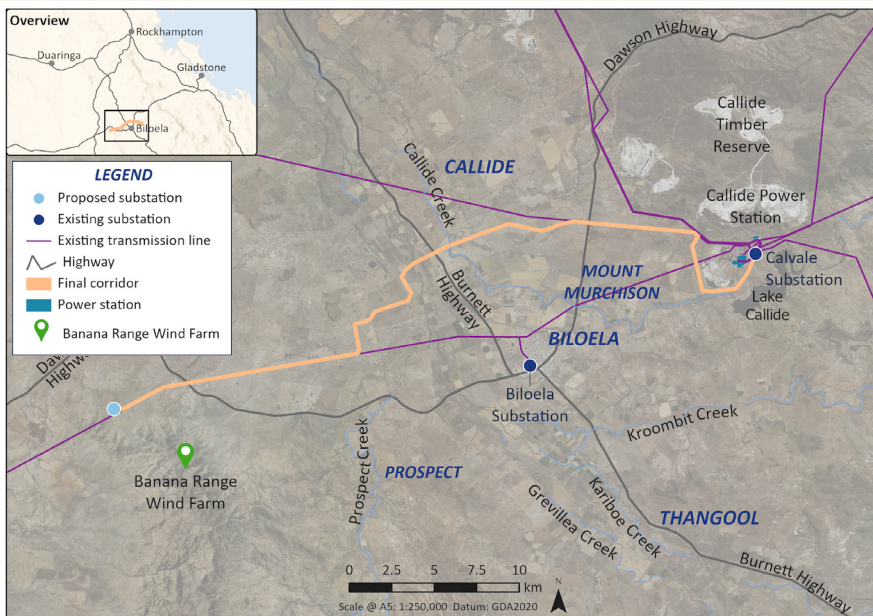
The BRWF Connection Project involves constructing a new 275kV transmission line from the BRWF site at the northern foothills of the Banana Range (about 20km west of Biloela), to Powerlink’s existing Calvale Substation, near Callide Power Station. A new substation will also be constructed at the BRWF site.

Latest update

Since the release of the final corridor in April 2023, the Powerlink Project Team has been meeting with landholders to identify individual site considerations and constraints, and determine any minor corridor changes required before proceeding with environment and planning approvals.

Environmental field studies and preliminary on-ground assessments, including initial Cultural Heritage studies, have been ongoing for over 12 months and are now complete. The findings will be summarised in an Environmental Assessment Report (EAR), which is scheduled to be released for public comment in 2025.

Technical studies and initial construction feasibility assessments are underway. The transmission connection project will move into the detailed design phase in early 2025.



Banana Range Wind Farm Connection Project - Final Corridor

Powerlink acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands and waters of Queensland and in particular, the lands on which we operate. We pay our respect to their Ancestors, Elders and knowledge holders and recognise their deep history and ongoing connection to Country.



Powerlink's role

Powerlink owns, develops, operates and maintains the high voltage electricity transmission network in Queensland. We also provide electricity transmission services, including connecting large electricity generators (such as wind and solar farms), to the transmission network.

EDF Renewables Australia has engaged Powerlink to connect the BRWF to the transmission network. To date, Powerlink's role has involved identifying a transmission corridor in consultation with the community and other stakeholders, working to obtain agreements for easements along the final corridor, undertaking environmental, Cultural Heritage and other technical studies, and progressing work to support environment and planning approvals for the transmission line.

How community feedback has shaped the project

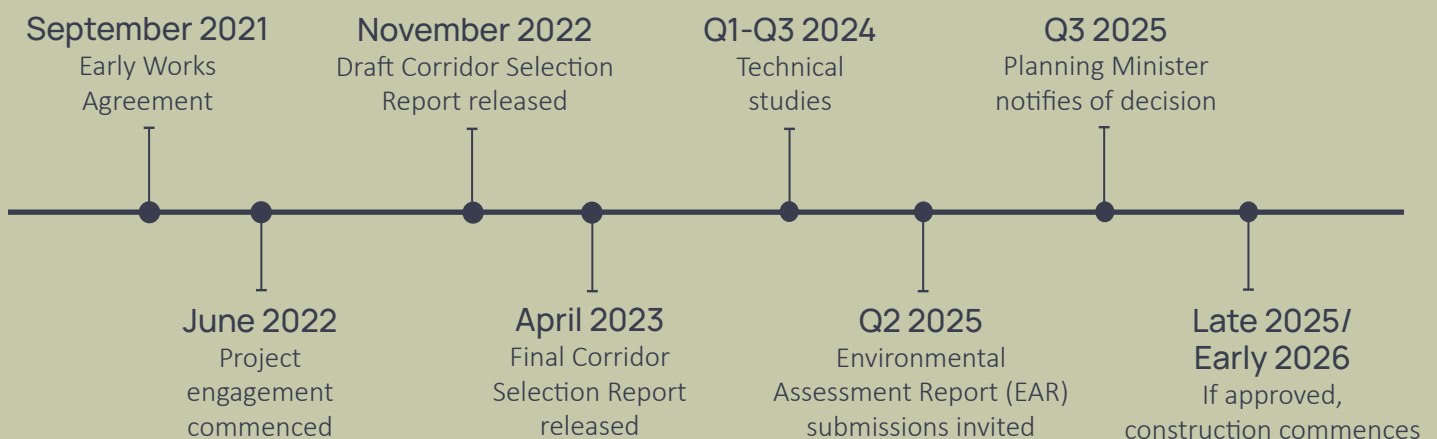
Between June and November 2022, Powerlink engaged with landholders, Traditional Owner groups, the community and other stakeholders to identify the most suitable corridor for the transmission infrastructure. Three rounds of community consultation were held during this time.

We started with a wide study area of around 28,000 hectares. We sought to understand community priorities and how landholders managed their properties and business operations. Three 1km-wide corridor options were identified within the study area, based on feedback and on-ground and desktop studies. Landholders in each corridor option were contacted and community information drop-in sessions held to seek feedback.

A Draft Corridor Selection Report was released in November 2022, formally recommending a corridor and seeking community feedback once again. This was followed by the Final Corridor Selection Report in April 2023, confirming the corridor to be taken forward to further planning and approvals.

All previous reports and project materials are available at powerlink.com.au/banarange, under 'Resources'.

Anticipated timeline



A flexible approach to reduce impacts

The final corridor has been refined to an easement alignment of 60m wide in greenfield areas and 40m where co-location is planned to occur with existing transmission lines. Powerlink has worked with landholders to find an alignment that enables greater coexistence with property uses and our infrastructure. For example, tower plottings have been positioned closer to boundaries or other existing transmission infrastructure, where feasible, to minimise impacts on farming operations.

The final corridor prioritises co-location with existing transmission infrastructure. 'Co-location' is when transmission lines are built side-by-side. This approach can have several benefits compared to separate corridors, including minimising impacts on cropping land by limiting the impacts to one area, and the ability to use existing access tracks for maintenance. Approximately 45 percent of the new line is co-located with existing transmission infrastructure.

We are committed to working with landholders to manage and mitigate impacts of our infrastructure. This means understanding land use and looking at ways to maximise co-use opportunities. While some activities cannot occur on, or near, an easement, many can continue as normal. For example, grazing or growing crops (less than 3.5m high) can generally occur on an easement, providing electrical safety clearance requirements are maintained. For further detail about activities that can occur on an easement, please refer to powerlink.com.au/easements.

Our commitment to biosecurity good practice

We understand that biosecurity is a priority for the Banana Shire community. We have processes in place to avoid spreading weeds, pathogens and diseases between properties or introducing new biosecurity material from outside the local bioregion. Preventative measures are taken to minimise exposure to weeds, such as:

- conducting regular vehicle wash downs
- avoiding travel through areas heavily affected by biosecurity matter
- staying on roads and designated access tracks in work areas
- obtaining weed and seed declarations on any fill material brought onto a property.

Please visit powerlink.com.au/bananarange (under 'Resources') to find out more about Powerlink's systems and processes for managing biosecurity risk, including avoiding the spread of weeds.

Central Queensland Renewable Energy Zones

In April 2024, the *Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Act 2024* (Energy Act) was passed in Queensland Parliament. The Energy Act supports delivery of the government's renewable energy targets and includes a framework to progress the declaration of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) across the state. REZs will help meet our future energy needs by connecting Queenslanders to renewable energy in a coordinated and cost-effective way.

The Callide region in Central Queensland has been identified as the first potential REZ location to be declared under the Energy Act. For more information about REZs, please visit powerlink.com.au/rez.



Working together

Engaging with landholders and communities is an important part of providing our electricity transmission services safely, reliably and cost effectively. This is front and centre as we look at the challenges and opportunities of the new energy future in Queensland.

Powerlink is supporting a new Energy Engagement and Education Advisor (EEEA) role within the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF). The EEEA will facilitate engagement, consultation and education within Queensland's agriculture sector to support the development of policy, projects and initiatives related to renewable energy. They will drive meaningful engagement between the energy sector and QFF's 20 peak body members and 13,000 primary producers they represent, to identify and leverage opportunities relating to agriculture and the renewable energy transition, and identify and mitigate risks facing the sector.

We are also working with government and industry to deliver better outcomes for communities. For example, we are committed to The Energy Charter, which brings together energy organisations from across Australia, to collaboratively deliver initiatives that prioritise customers and communities during this period of significant change.

Support services available

We acknowledge there are many renewable energy projects planned for the region and landholders may be facing a time of uncertainty due to the rapidly changing landscape in the renewable energy market.

For landholders and community members needing support, Powerlink has a professional counselling service available (Rural Health Connect). This is an independent provider and is completely confidential with several sessions provided free of charge.

If you need support, you can book a free session with a psychologist by calling 0493 432 144 or visiting the Rural Health Connect website at ruralhealthconnect.com.au. Select 'EAP' from the services menu and enter the EAP Program Code: 'Landholder Assist'.

About Powerlink Queensland

Powerlink is a Government Owned Corporation that owns, develops, operates and maintains the transmission network in Queensland. We connect Queenslanders to a world-class energy future, providing electricity to more than five million Queenslanders and 241,000 businesses.

We are also responsible for connecting large-scale and renewable energy developments, including wind and solar, and providing electricity to large industrial customers in the rail, mining and LNG sectors.

Contact us

If you have any general questions about the connection project please contact our project team by calling 1800 635 369 (Monday to Friday, 7.30am – 5pm), or emailing cqprojects@powerlink.com.au.

Landholders along and directly adjacent to the final corridor are welcome to contact our Landholder Relations Team by calling 1800 635 369, or emailing landholderrelations@powerlink.com.au.



Please scan the QR code or visit powerlink.com.au/banarangewindfarm to access our project web page.

For enquiries about the Banana Range Wind Farm Project, please contact EDF Renewables on bananarangewindfarm@edf-re.com.au. You can register to receive their email updates at bananarangewindfarm.com.au.