



# **Lal Lal Wind Farms**

## **Noise Complaint Investigation and Response Plan**

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**Lal Lal Wind Farms Nom Co Pty Ltd**

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## Revision History

Rev	Reason for Revision	Date	Prepared	Reviewed	Approved
V1			TW		

## Circulation

Rev	Name Company, position	Reason for circulation	Date Issued	No. of copies
V1	ERM Australia	Planning and Social Consultants to provide input to ensure that permit condition requirements and best practice for community engagement are met.	07.09.2018	
V2	Marshall Day Acoustics (MDA)	Ensure that the plan aligns with noise monitoring technical expectations and provide comment on ERM's advice		
V3	LLWFs	Collate all comments and provide additional advice to meet community expectations as per consultations with third parties		
V4	ERM Australia	Provide further comments as per discussions with LLWF and MDA.		
V4	Moorabool Shire Council, web and CRG	For review	11.12.2018	

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## 1. Introduction

Lal Lal Wind Farms has established a Noise Complaint Investigation and Response Plan (the Plan) in accordance with the requirements of Condition 27 of Planning Permit number PL-SP/05/0461/C. The Plan is designed in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014 – *Guidelines for complaint management in organisations* and to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning. Lal Lal Wind Farms will implement and comply with this Plan for the duration of the operation of the wind farms.

## 2. Permit Compliance Summary

The purpose of this document is to describe the Complaints Investigation and Response approach by which Lal Lal Wind Farms will process noise complaints associated with Lal Lal Wind Farms. This section outlines how the Plan satisfies the requirements of Condition 27 of Planning Permit PL-SP/05/0461/C.

**Table 1: Permit Conditions**

No	Condition information	How/Where Addressed
27	Before the first turbine is commissioned, the permit holder must prepare a Noise Complaint Investigation and Response Plan to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning. The approved plan must be published on the wind farm operator's website.	Section 4.7
27	The plan shall be designed in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZ 10002:2014 – <i>Guidelines for complaint management in organisations</i> and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A process of investigation to resolve the complaint</li><li>• A requirement that all complaints will be recorded in an incidents register<sup>1</sup></li><li>• How contact details will be communicated to the public</li><li>• Telephone number and email details for complaints and queries</li><li>• Details of appropriate council contact telephone number and email address (where available)</li></ul>	Section 4.7
27	A table outlining complaint information for each complaint received including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The complainant's name</li><li>• Any applicable property reference number if connected to a background testing location</li><li>• The complainant's address</li><li>• A receipt number for each complaint which is to be communicated to the complainant</li><li>• The time, prevailing conditions and description of the complainant's concerns including the potential incidence of special audible characteristics</li><li>• The process of investigation to resolve the complaint</li></ul>	Section 4.5

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<sup>1</sup> Discussions with DELWP have confirmed that the terms 'incident register' and 'complaints register' are interchangeable for the purpose of this plan. For the purposes of investigating and responding to complaints, a complaints register will be established to record and track all complaints received.

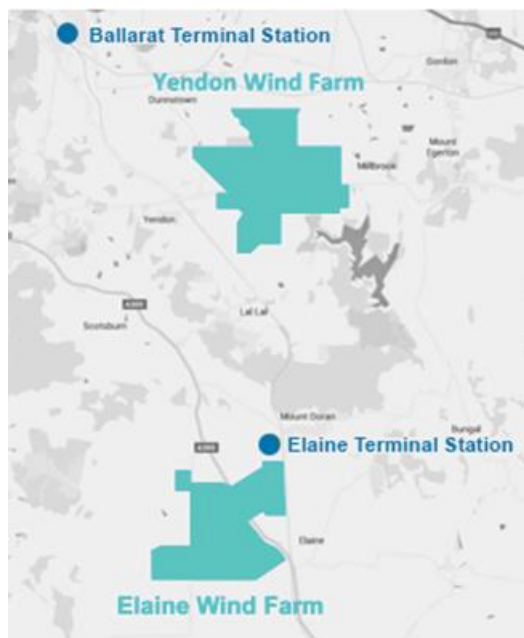
27	A report including a reference map of complaint locations and outlining complaints, investigations and remediating actions to be provided on an annual basis to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning	Section 5
27	The register and complaints response process shall continue for the duration of operation of the wind energy facility and must be made available to the Minister for Planning upon request	
27	The wind energy facility operator must implement and comply with the Approved Noise Complaint Investigation and Response Plan for the duration of the operation of the wind energy facility	

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### 3. Overview of the Project

Lal Lal Wind Farm is approximately 2,100 hectares in area located on land at Elaine and Yendon, within Moorabool Shire. The two components of the wind farm are located approximately 9 km apart and are respectively 25km and 17km southeast of Ballarat. Refer to Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Lal Lal Wind Farms Locality



The Lal Lal Wind Farm was approved by the Minister for Planning under Planning Permit number PL-SP/05/0461 on 30 April 2009. The permit allows for the *'use and development of the land for a Wind Energy Facility comprising a maximum of 60 wind turbines and their associated infrastructure and other works...'*

The Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) approved amendments to the planning permit (PL-SP/05/0461/A, PL-SP/05/0461/B and PL-SP/05/0461/C) on 20 March 2017, 23 April 2018 and 27 September 2018 to allow for increased turbine heights and a reduction in the number of turbines (amongst other things).

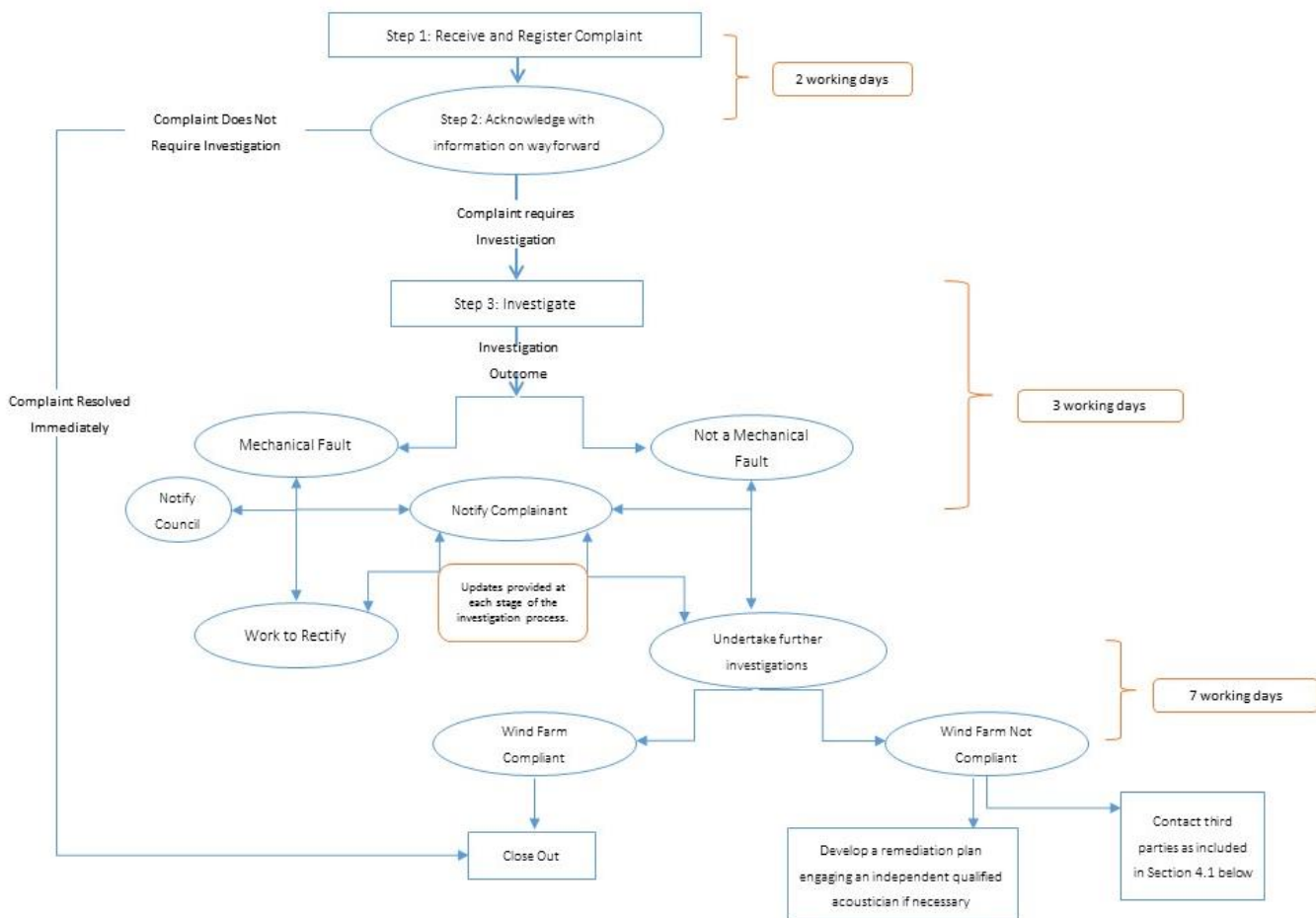
The Lal Lal Wind Farm will have a generating capacity of approximately 220MW. This is enough to power approximately 95,000 homes per year. The project is estimated to save 780,000 tons of carbon dioxide each year.

The area's strategic location will allow the wind farm to generate and export power to the national electricity market through an existing 220kV power line in proximity to the site that falls within Elaine, and an existing 66kv above ground transmission line that runs through the Yendon section.

## 4. Procedure for Receiving, Investigating and Responding to Noise Complaints

A complaints process involves receiving, responding to, and addressing complaints received by the project stakeholders and the community. Lal Lal Wind Farms will receive and respond to noise complaints according to the procedures set out in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Complaints Investigation and Response Mechanism



### 4.1 Receipt of Noise Complaints

#### Lodging a Complaint with Lal Lal Wind Farms

It is recommended that Lal Lal Wind Farms be contacted in the first instance to seek to resolve any noise issues. Noise complaints can be lodged by:

- **Phone:** by calling the freecall 24/7 community hotline on 1800 187 183
- **Email:** by contacting project staff on [info@lallalwindfarms.com.au](mailto:info@lallalwindfarms.com.au)
- **In person:** by visiting the Buninyong Information Centre (Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8.30am to 12.30pm)
- **On the Lal Lal Wind Farms Website** at <http://www.lallalwindfarms.com.au/contact/>

### Lodging a complaint with Moorabool Shire Council

Moorabool Shire Council is the responsible authority for administration and enforcement of this planning permit. Contact can be made through the following options:

- Phone: 5366 7100
- Email: [info@moorabool.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@moorabool.vic.gov.au)

Pursuant to Condition 10 of the Planning Permit, Council will be adopting the following approach should they receive a complaint relating to Lal Lal Wind Farms:

*a) After consideration of the views of the complainant and the wind energy facility operator, determine if a dispute exists with a dispute being defined as a matter remaining unresolved after application of the complaints management plan;*

*b) If a dispute is not identified, advise the complainant and the wind energy facility operator that the provisions of the complaint management plan should be utilized; and*

*c) If it is determined that a dispute exists, determine if there is a breach of the permit and if such a breach exists take action to enforce compliance with the permit. In determining whether a breach exists the responsible authority may require the wind energy facility operator to:*

*i) Commission a suitably qualified expert to provide an opinion as to whether a breach exists; and/or*

*ii) Conduct compliance testing.*

### Lodging a complaint with other government departments

The following government departments can assist with noise complaint resolution:

- **Office of the National Wind Farm Commissioner**
  - Website: <https://www.nwfc.gov.au/>
  - Email: [nwfc@environment.gov.au](mailto:nwfc@environment.gov.au)
  - Post: PO Box 24434 Melbourne VIC 3001
  - Telephone: 1800 656 395
- **Environment Protection Agency (EPA)**
  - Website : <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/get-involved/report-pollution>
  - Phone: 1300 372 842
  - Email: [contact@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:contact@epa.vic.gov.au)
  - Post: GPO Box 4395 Melbourne Victoria 3001
- **Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP)**
  - Website: <https://www2.delwp.vic.gov.au/>
  - Phone: 136 186
  - Online: <https://www2.delwp.vic.gov.au/our-department/contact-us>
  - Post: P.O Box 500 East Melbourne VIC 8002

### Noise Complaints Received by Third Parties

If a complaint is received from Moorabool Shire Council, DELWP or the EPA or any other organisation or individual, Lal Lal Wind Farms will consult to obtain additional information regarding the noise complaint by liaising with the abovementioned third parties as required. If the noise complaint relates



to the operations of Lal Lal Wind Farms and the complainant consents for Lal Lal Wind Farms to investigate, then the complaint will be registered and investigated in accordance with the procedure outlined in Figure 2. If the noise complaint does not relate to the operations of Lal Lal Wind Farms, then the complaint will not be registered by Lal Lal Wind Farms and will be referred back to the third party for resolution.

EPA refers all noise complaints for wind farm facilities to the Wind Farm Commissioner who has a specific complaints procedure for wind farm noise.

#### Escalating a Complaint Internally with Lal Lal Wind Farms

Complaints can be escalated internally to the Lal Lal Wind Farms Asset Manager. Contact details of the Asset Manager can be provided upon request.

#### 4.2 Timing of Responses to Complaints Received

Lal Lal Wind Farms will investigate noise enquiries and complaints in a timely manner. Noise Complaints will be registered within 2 working days of receipt of all information necessary to commence an investigation and contact will be made with the complainant during that time frame to organise a meeting if necessary. Complaints will be investigated within 3 working days of registration to determine if the noise issue is due to a mechanical fault.

If the noise issue is due to a mechanical fault, Council and the Complainant will be notified and works will be undertaken to rectify the matter. The complainant will be updated daily on the progress of the works until a resolution is achieved.

If the noise issue is not due to a mechanical fault, further investigations will be undertaken and updates will be shared with the Complainant(s) daily on the progress of the investigations.

Where the source of the complaint is not deemed to be a mechanical fault then a further investigation will be carried out in accordance with Section 4.5 below and if the wind farm is found not to be operating in accordance with the Noise Management Strategy (NMS) under which the Noise Compliance Testing was carried out then a remediation plan will be implemented as soon as possible and no later than 7 working days from determining the non-compliance.

Investigations may require:

- Visits to the Complainant's property.
- Consulting internal staff or contractors, including senior management when required;
- Examination of Wind Farm SCADA data to determine compliance with the NMS or for evidence of any maintenance issue or mechanical defect.
- Further noise monitoring.
- Contacting external stakeholders.

Lal Lal Wind Farms will endeavour to investigate and close out a complaint within 14 working days from acknowledgement. However, when this is not possible, Lal Lal Wind Farms will notify the complainant that further time is required and provide the complainant with regular updates on progress to resolution.

#### 4.3 Complaint Documentation Procedure

Details of the noise complaint will be recorded in the Incidents Register as shown in Table 2 below and in the stakeholder database Consultation Manager (or an equivalent), with each complaint being

allocated an incident number. The complaints documentation procedure will include a set of standardised information to ensure an efficient and succinct process.

The following details will be recorded in the incidents register:

- Allocation of a unique reference number
- Name(s) of person or people lodging the noise complaint (including contact details of any referral body)
- Address and location of the dwelling including property reference if applicable.
- Details of how best to contact the person lodging the complaint
- The time and date of when the complaint was lodged will also be recorded.
- Noise complaint description:
  - Times and dates of the noise
  - Description of the noise noting if special characteristics are involved (tones, impulses, grinds, bangs etc)
  - Does the noise relate to the operations of the wind farm?
  - Does the noise relate to the operation of the wind farm under certain weather conditions?
- Details of the investigation and outcome
- Details of the response
- Name of person managing the investigation

It is important to note that the personal details of complainants will only be made available to those involved in the resolution of the complaint in question.

Stakeholders will have the option to lodge an anonymous complaint. Complainants will be made aware that it will not be possible for Lal Lal Wind Farms to follow up on anonymous complaints. Anonymous complaints will be logged and reported with other complaints to understand potential issues and trends, and to facilitate continuous improvement.

A Formal Complaints Form (Annex B) has been developed to support the collection of complaints.

#### 4.4 Noise Complaint Incidents Register

Noise complaints will be documented in the Incidents Register and in Consultation Manager, as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Incidents Register, Noise Complaints**

Incident number	Date and time	Name	Property reference	Property address	Contact details	Weather conditions, prevailing conditions including SAC's	Complaint Description including audible characteristics)	Investigation outcomes	Response Action	Actioned by/ Date of Completion/ Complainant Satisfaction/ Link to associated docs

## 4.5 Noise Complaint Investigation Procedures

Lal Lal Wind Farms will investigate the noise complaint in the following manner:-

Lal Lal Wind Farms will determine if the noise issue is related to a maintenance or mechanical fault. Lal Lal Wind Farms will proceed according to the timeframes provided in Section 4.2 and the grievance mechanism included in Figure 2 above.

Where the noise complaint is not related to a maintenance issue or mechanical defect, Lal Lal Wind Farms will undertake the following investigations:

- Determine if noise compliance testing has been carried out at the complainants dwellings or conducted at a nearby dwelling which is closer to the wind farm.
- The operational status of the wind farm will be compared with the NMS
- The weather conditions at the time of the complaint will be recorded and if applicable so will any potential change in local conditions that may result in modified results such as changes in vegetation or installation of new noise sources such as pumps or air conditioners.
- Where Lal Lal Wind Farms is found to be operating in accordance with the NMS which prevailed at the time of the Noise Compliance Testing, a summary of these investigations will be provided to the complainant and no further action will be taken.
- Where Lal Lal Wind Farms is found not to be operating in accordance with the NMS then, a remediation plan will be drawn up and operations shall be modified accordingly and a summary of the above investigations and actions shall be provided to the complainant.
- Details of the complaint will be recorded in the complaints register (no further action required).
- In all other circumstance a review of the Noise Management Strategy will be undertaken and the predicted noise levels at the complainants location determined.
- Where the predicted noise levels do not exceed 40dB a summary of the investigations and copy of the Noise Management Strategy will be provided to the complainant, and the above will be recorded in the complaints register (no further action required).
- Where it is deemed that special audible characteristics are present and the predicted noise levels, including any penalty, would indicate that there is the potential for a breach of permitted noise levels then an investigation will be undertaken by a qualified independent acoustician. Where the investigation demonstrates a breach of permitted noise levels then a remediation plan will be produced and implemented in accordance with the timescales outlined in this plan and to the satisfaction of the Minister for Planning.
- If any modifications to the NMS are made then compliance testing will be undertaken in accordance with the endorsed Noise Compliance Test Plan and a report submitted to the Responsible Authority.

The applicable noise limits in accordance with NZD 6808:2010 are defined as 40 dB  $L_{A90}$  or the background noise level ( $L_{A90, 10min}$ ) plus 5dB, whichever is greater. If special audible characteristics are shown to be present then a penalty of up to 6dB(A) should also be added.

## 4.6 Informing the Community about the Noise Complaint and Investigation Response Plan

A variety of methods will be used to ensure that stakeholders are aware of the avenues for lodging a complaint. Details will be placed in the following locations throughout construction and operation:

- Local newspapers;
- Moorabool Shire Council office;
- Community bulletins;
- Signage at the main entrance to the project site which will be visible to the public; and
- Project website.

An outline of LLWF's general approach to management of noise complaints will be provided to the community and this will include information about

- Where noise complaints can be lodged
- How noise complaints can be made
- When complaints can be made
- Timescales for acknowledgment and resolution of complaints
- Information to be provided to the complainant
- How the outcomes of investigations will be reported back to complainants
- The contact details of the relevant government agencies or authorities

## 4.7 Roles and Responsibilities

Lal Lal Wind Farms Community Engagement Manager (LLWF CEM) is accountable for ensuring all complaints are managed in accordance with this Plan. LLWF CEM will be assisted by other nominated personnel as required.

The principal responsibilities of the LLWF CEM will be to:

- Inform stakeholders about the complaints process. It will be important that stakeholders are aware and can readily access the process;
- Record stakeholder complaints (both verbal and written) and seek resolution within the specified time periods;
- Maintain contact with the third parties receiving complaints to determine whether noise complaints have been lodged in relation to the operation of Lal Lal Wind Farms.
- Maintain regular contact with complainants and other stakeholders during the investigation process;
- From time to time, review the complaints received to assess any reoccurring issues to support continual improvement; and
- Prepare the compliance reports (as mentioned in Section 5).

## 5. Annual Report Issued to the Minister for Planning

An annual report will be provided to the Minister for Planning including a reference map of complainant locations, investigation process and remediating actions.

This annual report will include the following information:-

- An outline of noise complaints received during the 12 month period;
- Complainant locations outlined on a map;
- Investigative actions undertaken to resolve the noise complaint;
- The remediating actions undertaken in response to the complaint investigation; and
- Any additional information relating to the complaint investigation and response process. =

## 6. Noise Complaint Investigation and Response Plan Standard Reference

Complaints will be managed in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZ 10002:2014- *Guidelines for complaint management in organisations*.

## 7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Acknowledge	Recognition that a complaint has been received.
Complainant	A person, organisation or their representative (including clients, consumers, service users, customers, etc.) making the complaint.
Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem relating to Global Power Generation Australia. This may result when a member of the public believes that Global Power Generation Australia has: done something wrong, failed to do something it should have done, and/or acted outside legislative requirements or planning conditions.
Complaints Register	A stakeholder data management system used to record complaints.
Investigation	An inquiry undertaken to ascertain facts and detailed to inform the resolution of a complaint.
Noise Management Strategy (NMS)	The curtailment strategy which defines the mode of operation of the turbines to ensure compliance with permitted noise limits. This will be stated in the Noise Compliance Test Report.
SCADA	Supervisory control and data acquisition ( <b>SCADA</b> ) is a control system architecture that uses computers, networked data communications and graphical user interfaces for high-level process supervisory management.
SAC	Special Audible Characteristics such as tonality, impulsiveness or excessive amplitude modulation