

PLANNING and ENVIRONMENT ACT
GOLDEN PLAINS PLANNING SCHEME

PERMIT NO. PL-SP/05/0321-1

ENDORSED PLAN

Sheet 1 of 10

Hannah Scott

Signed:

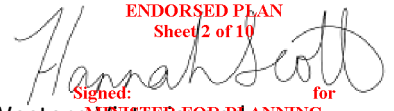
for

MINISTER FOR PLANNING

Date: 21 JANUARY 2026

Mt Mercer Wind Farm

Complaint Evaluation and Response Plan


Signed: _____ for
Mt Mercer Wind Farm Pty Ltd
Date: 21 JANUARY 2026

1 Introduction and Purpose

Mt Mercer Wind Farm (**MMWF**) is located approximately 30km south of Ballarat in Western Victoria, and consists of 64 wind turbines with a total capacity of 131MW. The wind farm is operated by Mt Mercer Wind Farm Pty Ltd (**MMWFPL**).

This plan identifies management processes to be applied where complaints arise as a result of the operation of the wind farm, except noise associated with the operation of the wind turbines. Complaints arising from noise associated with the operation of the wind turbines is specifically addressed under the Mt Mercer Wind Farm Noise Management Plan and has its own procedure.

All Complaints received from the community are recorded and MMWFPL will endeavour to respond in a timely and courteous manner. Pursuant to this plan MMWFPL is committed to:

- providing an accessible, open and transparent complaint handling process;
- ensuring all Complaints are managed fairly, sensitively and efficiently; and
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of MMWFPL in complaint handling, including how complaint data is recorded, analysed and reported.

1.1 Application

MMWFPL is responsible for the implementation and management of this Complaint Evaluation and Response Plan (**CERP**) in accordance with its obligations under the Planning Permit.

The CERP has been developed in accordance with AS 10002:2022 – Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations and the *Privacy Act 1998* (Cth).

A copy of this CERP is available on the MMWF website, located at <https://mtmercerwindfarm.com.au/>

1.2 Definitions

Complainant means the person or entity, or their authorised representative, who lodges a Complaint in accordance with this CERP.

Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about MMWF related to its operation, staff, or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. For clarity, a Complaint to which this CERP relates excludes Feedback, which will not trigger an investigation process.

Complaints Register means the electronic record of Complaints, responses and rectifications maintained by MMWFPL.

Compliance Officer means the MMWFPL staff member(s) responsible for receiving the Complaint, maintaining the Complaints Register, reviewing the CERP and recommending changes to the Board of MMWFPL.

Feedback means opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern to or about MMWF, its operation, staff or handling of a complaint. Feedback may be managed as a Complaint at the discretion of MMWFPL.

Invalid Complaint has meaning given in section 3.8.

Planning Permit means Planning Permit PL-SP/05/0321-1 issued for MMWF, as amended from time to time.

Repeat Complaints means those Complaints that have been received by MMWFPL on previous occasions, and so will be handled with the process set out in section 3.7 of this CERP.

PERMIT NO. PL-SP/05/0321-1
ENDORSED PLAN
Sheet 3 of 10
MINISTER FOR PLANNING
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Unreasonable Conduct has meaning given in section 3.6.

1.3 Responsible Parties

The Board of MMWFPL has overall accountability for addressing Complaints and ensuring that each Complaint is dealt with in accordance with this CERP. When required, the Directors of MMWFPL will be responsible for engaging specialised technical consultants and advisors.

2 In an Emergency

Some issues must be dealt with urgently. These generally relate to imminent safety issues, emergency situations and property damage.

For life threatening situations, call 000. Imminent safety issues and emergency situations should be reported to the relevant local authority (i.e. SES, Police, Ambulance or Fire authority).

3 Managing Complaints

MMWFPL acknowledges that anyone has the right to lodge a Complaint, and MMWFPL endeavours to answer all Complaints promptly, respectfully and objectively. MMWFPL values Feedback and is committed to continuous improvement of this CERP.

MMWFPL is committed to making the CERP process accessible and user friendly, and can provide flexible methods for lodging Complaints where required. This may include liaising with a support person or family member of a person who may require additional assistance to make a Complaint.

3.1 Method of Complaint to MMWFPL

Complaints can be raised by a person, company, or community group by several means, via the following contact details:

Phone: 1800 853 668 (toll free number which allows messages to be left and requests the caller to detail the reason for the call and provide return contact details).

Email: mtmercer@foresightgroupau.com

Mail: Mt Mercer Wind Farm Pty Ltd
c/o Foresight Group
Suite 1, Level 1, 150 Collins Street, Melbourne Victoria 3000

Any changes to the above details will be published on the MMWF website.

3.2 Method of Complaint to Golden Plains Shire Council

The local municipality for the MMWF is the Golden Plains Shire Council. MMWFPL may receive enquiries or complaints from time to time which, following investigation, may not relate to MMWF and may be more appropriately directed to the Council or other regulators.

The Golden Plains Shire Council may be contacted using the details below:

Phone: 1300 363 036 After Hours Phone: (03) 5220 7111
National Relay Service: 133 677 (for hearing/speech impaired)

Email: enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

Mail: PO Box 111, Bannockburn, Victoria 3331

In person at the Bannockburn Customer Hub: 2 Pope Street, Bannockburn, Victoria 3331 or the Smythesdale Customer Hub: 19 Heales Street, Smythesdale, Victoria 3351. See Council website

(<https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au>) for current office hours.

3.3 Method of Complaint to the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner

The Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (**Commissioner**) is an independent role created by the Australian Government, reporting to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy. A key role of the Commissioner is to receive complaints from concerned residents regarding proposed or operating wind farm facilities, large scale solar farms, energy storage facilities and new major transmission projects.

The Commissioner's role in complaint handling is a facilitation role only. The Commissioner will not formally recommend particular solutions to disputes, arbitrate complaints or provide formal advice. The Commissioner may, however, suggest possible solutions for consideration by the parties.

The Office of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner may be contacted using the details below:

Phone: 1800 656 395
Email: aeic@aeic.gov.au
Mail: PO Box 24434
 Melbourne VIC 3001

3.4 Confidentiality

Personal information collected during the Complaint management process will be held in accordance with the *Australian Privacy Principles* set out in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

3.5 Logging Complaints

When a Complaint is received, certain minimum information will be required before MMWFPL can commence its assessment of the Complaint. This information is listed in the table at **Appendix A**, which MMWFPL uses to document the details of a Complaint.

If the minimum information is not provided, MMWFPL will contact the Complainant to obtain the required information. If the relevant information is still not provided, MMWFPL may be unable to process the Complaint (see Invalid Complaints process in section 3.8 below).

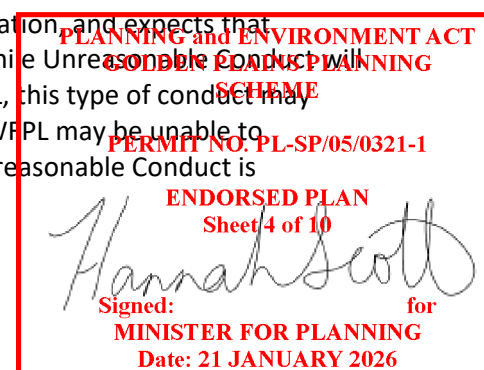
MMWFPL will maintain a Complaints Register. The Complaints Register will include a summary and details of any Complaints received, information received from the Complainant, copies of all correspondence and records of all discussions with the Complainant and copies of any information, reports or findings provided by MMWFPL.

MMWFPL will promptly provide status updates about the assessment of a Complaint to a Complainant on request. The Complaints Register and complaints response process will be provided to the responsible authority on request.

3.6 Unreasonable Conduct by Complainants

If a Complainant makes unreasonable demands or engages in behaviour in a manner that is wholly unreasonable (for example, by making threats of harm to MMWFPL staff or third parties or by using abusive language or unreasonable aggression), this conduct may be considered 'Unreasonable Conduct'. MMWFPL will keep a record of Unreasonable Conduct.

MMWFPL is committed to treating all Complainants with respect and cooperation, and expects that MMWFPL staff and contractors will receive the same treatment in return. While Unreasonable Conduct will not necessarily preclude valid Complaints from being addressed by MMWFPL, this type of conduct may impede the information gathering, assessment and resolution process. MMWFPL may be unable to progress resolution of the Complaint in accordance with this CERP where Unreasonable Conduct is impeding that process.



3.7 Repeat Complaints

Occasionally, operational wind farm projects receive multiple complaints from the same Complainant, sometimes over a long period of time. Where multiple Complaints have been received by MMWFPL from a Complainant and those Complaints have previously been addressed in accordance with this CERP, MMWFPL may treat any new Complaints received from that Complainant as Repeat Complaints.

For Repeat Complaints, MMWFPL will conduct an initial assessment of new Complaints in accordance with Stage 2 of the Complaint Response set out below at section 3.8(b), which may include a site inspection to identify unusual site conditions or maintenance issues.

If unusual site conditions or maintenance issues are identified, further investigation will be undertaken and will be dealt with in accordance with Stages 3 and 4 as described below.

If no substantive new site conditions or maintenance issues have been identified and the Repeat Complaint relates to a property or properties which have previously been thoroughly investigated (in MMWFPL's opinion, acting reasonably) and compliance with the Planning Permit has been demonstrated, the Repeat Complaint will be closed. The Complaint will be marked as "closed" in the Complaints Register and the Complainant will be issued with a brief response confirming the outcome of the investigation.

3.8 Complaint Response

When a Complaint relating to the operation or maintenance of the wind farm is received, MMWFPL will follow five main stages of Complaint Response:

- Stage 1 – Receipt of Complaint and Preliminary Screening
- Stage 2 – Evaluation and Response
- Stage 3 – Implementation of Corrective Measures
- Stage 4 – Close out of the Complaint
- Stage 5 – Analyse and Review

3.8.1 Stage 1(a) – Receipt of Complaint

When MMWFPL receives a Complaint via telephone, email or letter, it will check that the minimum information has been provided. In the case of a Complaint made by telephone, the caller will be asked to provide the minimum information by the Compliance Officer.

If a Complaint is received by telephone during out of office hours, MMWFPL will attempt to call back the following day to obtain details of the Complaint, unless the caller leaves sufficient details to allow MMWFPL to process the Complaint.

MMWFPL may contact the Complainant to request additional information if required.

MMWFPL will register the Complaint in the Complaints Register in accordance with section 3.5.

MMWFPL will advise the Complainant of the Complaint reference number assigned to their matter. Multiple Complaints received from the same Complainant will be grouped under one reference number.

Within three (3) business days of receiving the Complaint, MMWFPL will send written acknowledgement of receipt of the Complaint to the Complainant, either by email or letter.

3.8.2 Stage 1(b) – Preliminary Screening

All Complaints received by MMWFPL will undergo preliminary screening.

MMWFPL will review the Complaint to determine whether it is valid for further assessment.

If MMWFPL determines that a Complaint is valid, assessment of the Complaint will progress to Stage 2.

Repeat Complaints



If the Complaint is characterised as a Repeat Complaint, it will be managed in accordance with section 3.7 above.

Invalid Complaints

Complaints that do not appear to relate to the operation of MMWF may be considered 'invalid'. A Complaint may be considered to be an Invalid Complaint where, for example, a shadow flicker Complaint is made but the turbines were not operating during the time of the stated Complaint, or where the Complaint concerns an issue that is not within the scope of the MMWF project.

MMWFPL may also be unable to assess a Complaint if the Complainant has failed to provide adequate information. Information required for MMWFPL to assess a Complaint is set out in **Appendix A**.

If a Complaint is determined to be invalid, MMWFPL will contact the Complainant in writing, within ten (10) business days after receipt of the Complaint, to advise that the Complaint has been assessed to be invalid. MMWFPL will also advise of the grounds on which the Complaint has not been accepted. The Complaint will then be marked as "closed" on the Complaints Register.

3.8.3 Stage 2 – Evaluation and Response

MMWFPL will conduct an initial assessment of the Complaint based on the information provided to assess the Complaint and determine the next steps: Early Resolution, Internal Assessment or Further Investigation.

Where practicable, MMWFPL will attempt to resolve all Complaints within ten (10) business days of receiving the Complaint. When this is not possible, for example when Further Investigation or corrective actions are warranted, the Compliance Officer will notify the Complainant that further time is required. MMWFPL will maintain communication with the Complainant during the evaluation process.

Early Resolution

Where possible, the Complaint will be resolved by the relevant front-line staff. Early Resolution applies where a Complaint is able to be resolved at short notice (e.g. by providing further information to the Complainant etc.).

If the Complaint cannot be resolved during the initial contact (e.g. telephone call), written correspondence will be sent to the Complainant as soon as practicable to detail MMWFPL's response.

Internal Assessment

Where Early Resolution is not possible, an internal assessment will be undertaken as soon as practicable to determine whether MMWFPL is able to address the Complaint. Consideration will be given to the nature of the Complaint, whether it is an isolated occurrence and whether MMWFPL is able to resolve the issue without further investigation.

Where MMWFPL receives multiple Complaints from a single Complainant, MMWFPL may consolidate those Complaints into one investigation report.

MMWFPL may determine that it is unable to resolve the Complaint and may close the Complaint after notification to the Complainant as soon as practicable after making that assessment.

Any corrective measures required will be undertaken in accordance with Stage 3.

Further Investigation

In the event that MMWFPL determines that further investigation of a Complaint is required, it will commence the investigation as soon as practicable, including engaging a specialised technical consultant, if required. If a consultant is engaged, an investigation report will be produced and will be shared with the Complainant. MMWFPL will keep the Complainant informed of the status of the investigation.



Upon completion of the investigation, MMWFPL will advise the Complainant in writing of the outcome of the investigation and any corrective measures which may be required, as soon as practicable. If no corrective measures are required, the Complaint will be closed out in accordance with Stage 4.

3.8.4 Stage 3 - Implementation of Corrective Measures

In the event that corrective measures are required following investigation of a Complaint, MMWFPL will, within twenty (20) business days after notifying the Complainant of the outcome of the investigation, provide a schedule for the implementation of any corrective measures to the Complainant.

MMWFPL will ensure that corrective measures are implemented in accordance with the schedule and once completed, will notify the Complainant in accordance with Stage 4.

3.8.5 Stage 4 - Close Out of the Complaint

General

MMWFPL will provide written confirmation to the Complainant when a Complaint is closed, and mark the Complaint as "Closed" on the Complaints Register.

MMWFPL Record

At the close out of a Complaint, MMWFPL will keep a record of the steps taken to address the Complaint, the outcome of the Complaint and any undertakings or follow-up action that may be required.

Corrective Measures

MMWFPL will confirm in writing to the Complainant once implementation of any corrective measures is complete. MMWFPL will then record in the Complaints Register that the Complaint is "closed".

Unreasonable conduct

Evidence of any unreasonable Complainant conduct will be also kept on record.

3.8.6 Stage 5 – Analyse and Review

Complaints will be analysed to identify systemic, recurring and single incident problems and trends. If it is identified that there are significant recurring Complaints received from different Complainants, MMWFPL will consider available solutions or measures to reduce or eliminate future recurrence of the identified issue, and implement those measures where reasonably practicable.

3.9 Other resolution processes

If a Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the response received or MMWFPL's management of the Complaint, the Complainant may escalate the Complaint to the Board of MMWFP for further consideration, or to an external body. The Complainant can also contact the Commissioner (section 3.3).

In some circumstances, a matter which has been the subject of this complaint resolution process may progress to formal dispute resolution or adjudication. In those circumstances, the complaint resolution process under this CERP will be terminated to enable the matter in dispute to be determined in accordance with the formal process.

4 Document History and Status

4.1 Revision History and Document Control

The CERP is a controlled document maintained by the Board of MMWFPL.

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Sheet 7 of 10**

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The Compliance Officer will review the CERP and recommend changes to the Board of MMWFPL as required. Any changes to the CERP must be reviewed and approved by the Board of MMWFPL and submitted to the Minister for Planning for review, approval and endorsement prior to implementation.

4.2 Distribution of copies

Distribution of the CERP has been made to the following parties. Printed copies are uncontrolled documents.

Copy	Party
1	Mt Mercer Wind Farm Site Manager
2	Mt Mercer Wind Farm Pty Ltd
3	Department of Transport and Planning
4	Golden Plains Shire Council
5	Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner

This Plan will be made available to all MMWFPL employees. All employees handling Complaints will be provided with training to appropriately receive, record and resolve Complaints.



Appendix A – MMWF Complaint Evaluation and Response Plan: Complaint information to be recorded

The purpose of this table is to ensure MMWFPL captures and records relevant details of the Complaint and Complainant. Where boxes are marked with an asterisk (*), this denotes the minimum information that is required by MMWFPL in order to allow the Complaint to be assessed. If the minimum information is not provided, MMWFPL may not be able to accept the Complaint for assessment.

Information Required	Details
1. Date and time Complaint lodged*	
2. Name of Complainant*	
3. Address*	
4. Contact details: Home or mobile phone number* Email address	
5. Complaint Reference Number (to be communicated to the Complainant)	
6. Location of Complaint* Any applicable property reference number if connected to a noise testing location	
7. Date and Time of Complaint incidence*	
8. Duration of Complaint incidence*	
9. Description of the Complainant's concerns	
10. Prevailing Weather Conditions (if relevant) Wind, temperature, rain, etc.	
11. Outcome sought by Complainant	
12. Any support requirements needed by the enquirer or Complainant	
13. The process of investigation to resolve the Complaint	See Appendix B.
14. Any other relevant information	

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