SYNERGYRED SCOTT RIVER WIND FARM FEASIBILITY

SOCIAL VALUES ASSESSMENT REPORT

January 2025 Update

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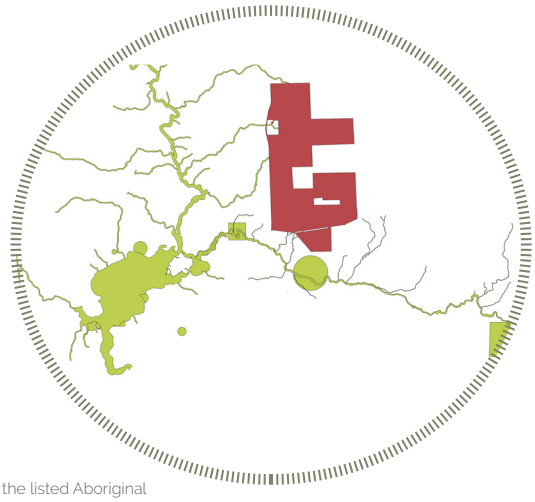

The adjacent figure shows in green the listed Aboriginal Heritage Sites, 2024 and the waterways that mark the ancient borders of this country.
Source: DPLH Heritage Data QGIS

We acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation as the Traditional Owners of this place and pay our respects to the elders past and present who have cared for this country and its people, and upon which we have the opportunity to learn and work.

The area for this study sits on the traditional lands of the Wardandi and Bibulumin/Piblemen Peoples of the Noongar Nation. We acknowledge and pay our respects to the elders of these peoples and acknowledge their ongoing connection to these lands and waters.

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1. BACKGROUND

Synergy Renewable Energy Developments (SynergyRED), a wholly owned subsidiary of Synergy, is in the process of investigating and developing future renewable energy assets with the intent of helping the WA Government to transition to net zero emissions by 2050. SynergyRED has delivered a range of renewable projects for both Synergy and Bright Energy Investments (BEI)*, including the Warradarge Wind Farm and Greenough River Solar Farm expansion.

In the lead up to the retirement of the Collie Power Station in late 2027 and Muja Power Station in 2029, SynergyRED is investigating the feasibility of developing a wind farm in Scott River, Western Australia, with the intent to connect to the South-West Interconnected System (SWIS).

Electricity from the proposed wind farm would feed into the Beenup substation in Scott River, which connects to homes and businesses in Augusta, Scott River, Molloy Island, Alexandra Bridge, Karridale, Hamelin Bay, East Augusta, and Forest Grove. The remaining electricity from the proposed wind farm would flow along the transmission line to Manjimup, Collie and the rest of the energy grid.

This proposal would see the construction and operation of up to 20 wind turbine generators up to a final tip height of 250m, and associated infrastructure.

The area chosen sits on the traditional lands of the Wardandi and Bibulumin/Piblemen Peoples of the Noongar Nation. The site is in proximity to the recently rehabilitated BHP Beenup Titanium Minerals site, in the catchment of the Scott and Blackwood rivers, and in cattle grazing, and dry land dairy farming areas.

The low-lying Scott Coastal Plain is a gently undulating landscape with a high winter water table and sandy/duplex soils that serve to create a Palusplain and series of scattered wetlands through the area.

The findings of this report are based on the project description of the proposed wind farm in Scott River provided by SynergyRED.

Considerable work has been done by BHP, Syrinx Environmental and several leading universities to define the "stocks of natural assets" in Scott River. These references have been drawn up to provide some initial context into what the likely impacts, challenges and opportunities maybe for this proposed project in this location.

Further secondary research included desktop analysis of State Government registers, DataWA GIS Databases, published reports and ABS Census Data 2021.

This analysis is supplemented by a series of qualitative in-depth interviews with community members representing local organisations and subject matter experts, and the findings of a publicly available digital survey. This survey was also offered in hard copy at all SynergyRED community consultation sessions.

This report summarises the findings of the independent Social Values Assessment, in line with global best practice and Synergy's Social Value Framework, for the proposed wind farm in Scott River.

2. STUDY OBJECTIVES

In March 2024, SynergyRED commissioned Place.ID to undertake a Social Values Assessment to deliver to the intent of Synergy's Social Value Framework and to support the engagement and decision making for the feasibility stage of the proposed wind farm in Scott River.

The Social Values Assessment Process will help guide future engagement (sharing and listening) and understanding of the local and regional context (as illustrated in Figure 1a). These are crucial steps to establish a baseline for the social licence throughout the life of the project.

The objectives of the Scott River Wind Farm Social Values Assessment are to:

- summarise research and evidence gathered to identify key social impacts (both negative and positive) that may result from the proposal, specifically:
  - community and stakeholder engagement perceptions
  - workforce management
  - housing and accommodation
  - local business and industry procurement
  - community health & wellbeing
- prepare a consistent, comprehensive and suitable summary of social values suitable for the anticipated regulatory submissions.

*'BEI is a joint venture between Synergy, Construction and Building Unions Superannuation, and DIF Capital Partners.'

3. METHODOLOGY

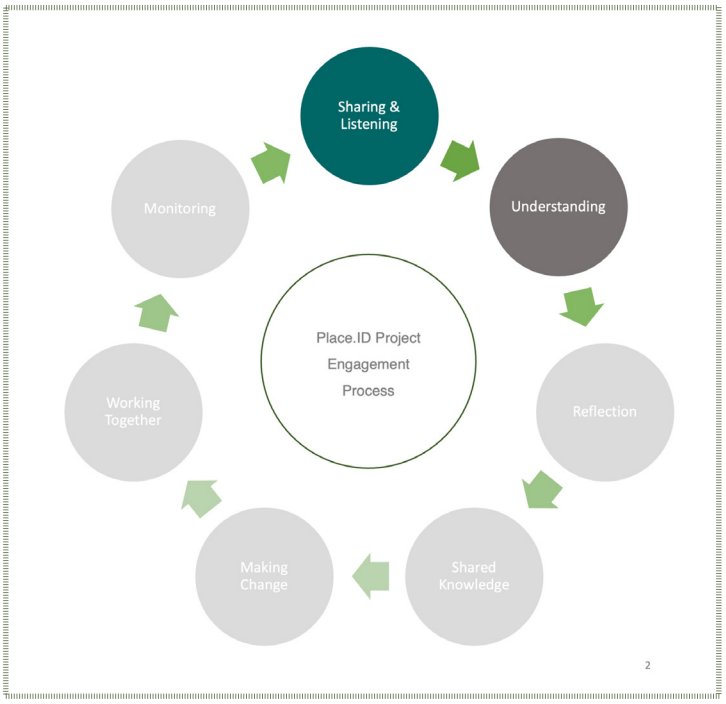


Figure 1a. Place.ID's Project Engagement Process

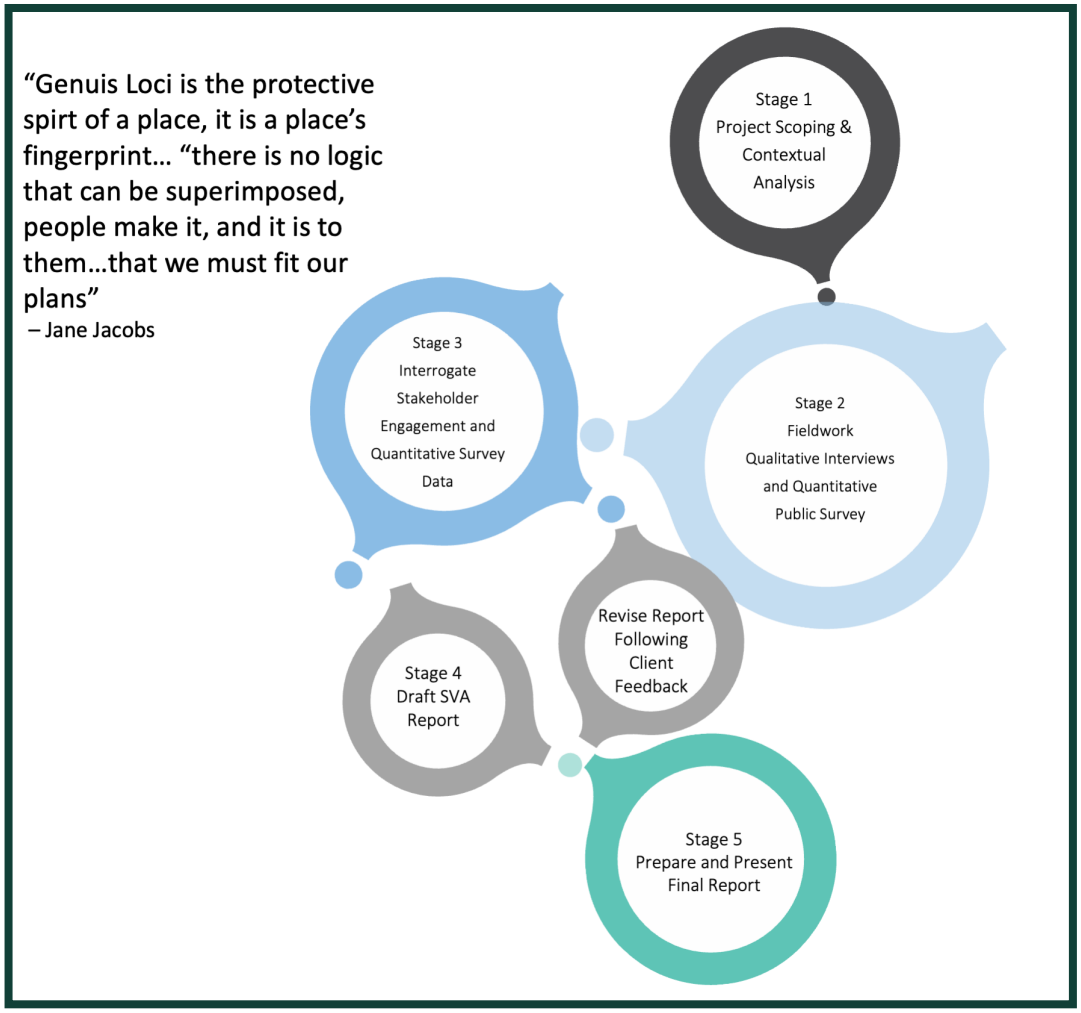


Figure 1b:. Project Methodology

The methodology for this social values assessment uses qualitative and quantitative research techniques, supported by secondary research, to provide a suitable evidence base for decision-making.

The stages undertaken across this project are outlined in Figure 1b and described on the following pages.

3.1. Determine the Context

An initial site orientation and a community profile update (including ABS Census 2021 profiling, geospatial assessment, secondary research, project and qualitative data) was conducted to set the context for the assessment. This provided valuable demographic data that will help determine actual community impacts (illustrated in Appendix 2). This also served as a useful comparison to how the various stakeholders and community define themselves and their perceived needs.

A workshop was also held with the SynergyRED project team leaders to gauge project understanding, status, identified opportunities and constraints, and define the project's key stakeholders and associated communities within the study area.

3.2. Engagement

An engagement strategy was established, in close consultation with SynergyRED and their representatives, to actively recruit and involve property owners and represented stakeholders in the study. This included identification of community leaders and relevant associations, stakeholder mapping, collateral development, and channel confirmation to introduce the study and invite participation.

The stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted of part of the initial scoping workshop to ensure there was a diversity in opinion, background, interests and landholdings. Additional stakeholders who specifically asked to be interviewed for the study were also included. A full list of study invitees and participants is attached as Appendix 1.

A publicly accessible digital survey was developed and ran live from 15 March 2024 to 30 April 2024. A QR code linking to this survey was promoted online, through social media, at all SynergyRED community consultations, to the project's email database, and on a project brochure that was sent to 5,000 homes in the Augusta-Scott River area. The survey was also available in hard copy format at all SynergyRED community consultation sessions.

Engagement in this context related to engagement around the Social Values Assessment component of work (in line with Place.ID's project engagement process (illustrated in Figure 1a), and was established to complement the existing and ongoing engagement work being conducted by SynergyRED.

3.3. The Survey Instruments

A qualitative in-depth discussion guide (attached in Appendix 3) and a publicly available quantitative survey (attached in Appendix 4) was designed to incorporate a set series of identified social value indicators relevant to this proposed project. These were developed following a review of relevant national guidelines, the SynergyRED's Project Leaders workshop, context analysis, desktop research on likely project impacts, and consideration of Synergy's Social Value Framework.

Questions within the survey instruments focused on delivering a holistic and comprehensive assessment of how perceptions around the energy transition, the importance placed on certain social value indicators and confidence in SynergyRED's ability to deliver benefit or mitigate any potential impacts to drive project decisions into the future.

These questions were complemented by a digital geo-spatial questionnaire tool, which was set up to help define nodes/clusters of perceived values and likely impacts and benefits.

3.4. Fieldwork

Following stakeholder identification and mapping, a cross selection of stakeholders was identified to ensure a representative viewpoint of the identified indicators could be achieved. A list of 30 stakeholder organisations were determined and approached to involve a key spokesperson from each representative group, with the objective of achieving a total of 20 in-depth interviews (IDIs).

A total of 20 in-depth interviews were achieved from the initial sample of 30. In addition, a workshop meeting was held with 8 volunteer fire brigade members (representing a range of landowners and local business leaders).

The quantifiable perception survey achieved a statistically significant sample at the 95% confidence level, with a less than 5% margin of error. This framework allows for future tracking of perception data and comparison over time. A total of 257 stakeholders visited the survey site, with a statistically significant response rate of 125 fully completed surveys achieved. Up to a total 156 respondents completed the overall project ratings and indicator questions, and then opted out of completing the full survey. This provided a confidence interval at 0.074 with a standard error of 0.04.

The publicly available survey was complemented by an observational study of the proposed site location and study area during the week starting 22 April 2024.

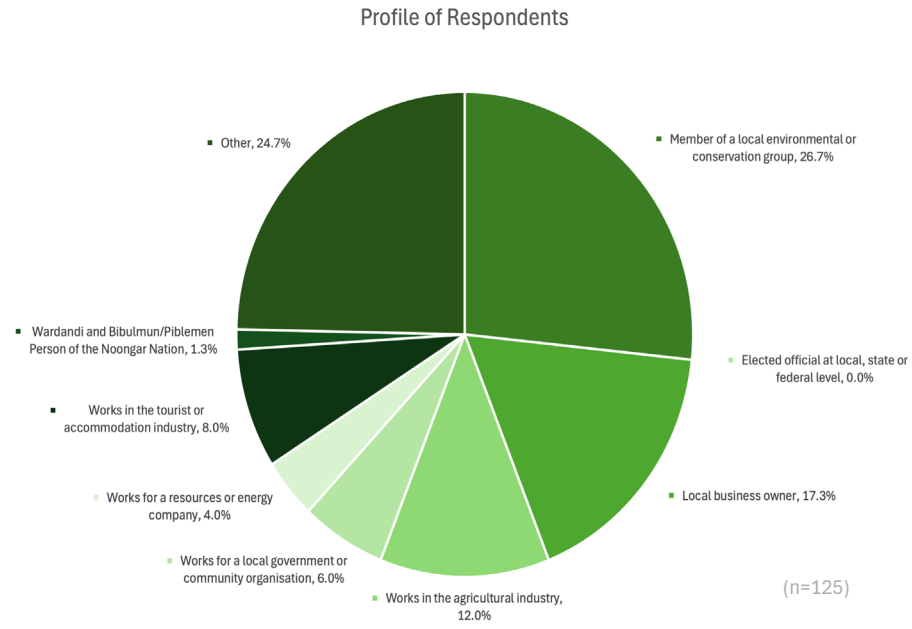
3.5. Analysis

Once all aspects of the fieldwork were complete, qualitative and quantitative analysis was undertaken using appropriate data entry, coding and analysis processes, as guided by the Market Research Society of Australia, IPA2, Social Impact Assessment Guidelines QLD and the Department of Planning and Environment NSW.

This analysis included identification of the social values associated with the study area, in relation to the proposed wind farm in Scott River. As this social values assessment is established as an initial baseline, the primary purpose of the considerations is designed to inform project decisions during the feasibility stage, recognising that many of the project decisions and therefore quantitative input data to complete a full social impact assessment are yet to be finalised.

This social values assessment report is a baseline, based on desktop research and community engagement including fieldwork. At the time of writing this report several elements of Synergy's environmental, technical and heritage assessments are still underway, and therefore have not been considered in this report. Recommendations made in this report are based on the findings of the fieldwork and secondary research for further interrogation as project considerations progress and further decisions are made.

It is recommended that this social values assessment baseline be updated in the subsequent phases of project development.



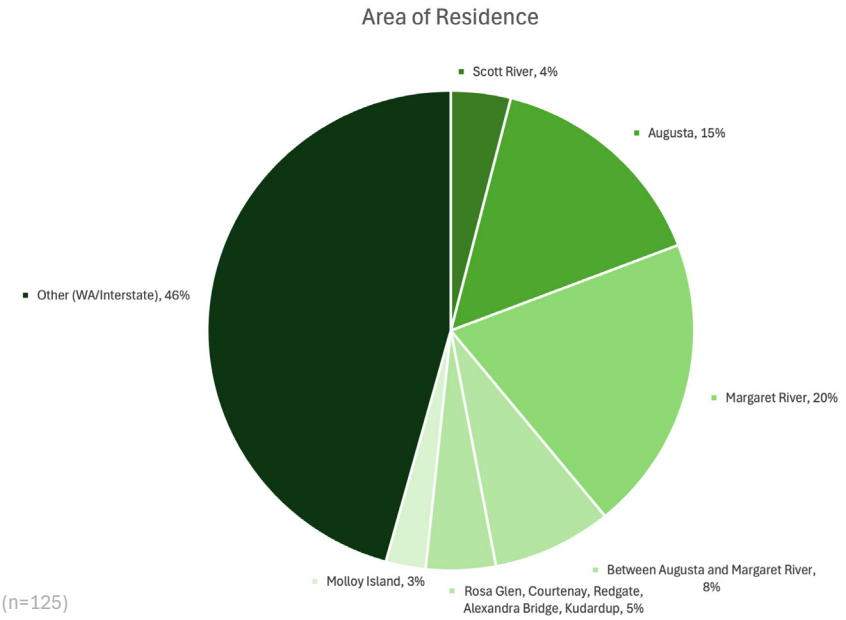


Figure 2a + b Survey Respondent Profiles

4. SOCIAL PERORMANCE GUIDING FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

Social value is one of Synergy's corporate strategic pillars, formalised with the launch of the organisation's first internal Social Value Framework in late 2023. A full list of Synergy's Social Performance Commitments and Approach, as provided by the organisation on 31 July 2024, is outlined in Section 4.1.

The Framework provides a structured approach to integrating social value considerations into SynergyRED's decision-making processes. In the context of future energy projects, Synergy aspires not only to comply with regulatory standards but actively seeks to contribute to net positive social, environmental and economic outcomes for the people of Western Australia; that is, to deliver social value.

This social values assessment is a strategic tool which aims to provide insights into the unique set of values that contribute to a community or place identity, the net benefit that a project may bring to different stakeholders. It also ensures the social baseline of the project area and broader implications are understood to address any community concerns. It is intended to act as a resource and guide that can be updated as project decisions are firmed up into the future.

This report is structured in the light of the primary project driver being positive energy provision and regeneration for the State of Western Australia, the local contextual drivers, and the communities' expressed priorities in terms of their perceptions around social values of the area, and their confidence in SynergyRED's ability to manage any potential impacts on these values.

It is intended that this structure help appropriately guide decision-making within the context of SynergyRED's proposed project and Synergy's Social Value Framework. That said, the generic indicators of the standard Social Impact Guidelines, for example as per the requirements set out by the NSW and Queensland Governments, have also been considered and included as part of this assessment.

The key social values considered and described within this report are:

- Decarbonisation and the energy transition, i.e. the social value associated with the project's contribution to Synergy's strategy and decarbonisation goals, including energy affordability and equity,
- Community population, demographics and cohesion,
- Environmental stewardship – as the environmental values that drive attachment to place. In the social context, environmental values as considered in terms of how a community derives their income, how they perceive themselves and the world around them, and associated activities relating to experiencing and understanding the natural environment. In this instance, socio-environmental impacts include impacts on tourism, recreation and access to nature. It also addresses the priority issues raised in the fieldwork in terms of expressed values of local importance around water, flora and biodiversity, fauna, soils, fire and sense of place.
- Cultural and Indigenous heritage i.e. heritage as it pertains to registered heritage sites, along with relevant contextual comments provided by local historians, community leaders and community members participating in the study.
- Resilient, prosperous communities in terms of decision-making systems, land tenure, roads and transport, power and telecommunications, community service provision and way of life.
- Thriving, diverse, equitable, and inclusive community and workforce in terms of industry sectors, employment, ability to derive an income, and fair and ethical supply chains.

In addition, this report considers and addresses as appropriate Synergy's Social Value Framework, Environmental Factor Guideline – Social Surroundings (EPA, 2023), Position Statement: Renewable Energy Facilities (WA Planning Commission, March 2020), Social Impact Assessment Guideline and supplementary material (Queensland Government, 2018), Social Impact Assessment Guideline and Technical Supplement (DPHI, 2023) and Social Impact Assessment: Guidance for Assessing and Managing the Social Impacts of Projects (International Association for Impact Assessment, 2015).

Although not strictly required under approval conditions, this social values assessment is being completed as best practice to firstly understand, and subsequently manage/mitigate impacts and improve benefit return, to the communities within which SynergyRED operates.

It is recommended that performance against these commitments and framework is reported annually within Synergy's Annual Report.

4.1. SUMMARY OF SYNERGY'S SOCIAL PERFORMANCE APPROACH

Provided by SynergyRED on 31 July 2024

Social performance is the way Synergy maximises the benefits communities experience during project planning, construction and operation, while minimising disruptions. The social performance approach aligns with Synergy's social value strategic pillar and internal Social Value Framework. This framework identifies Synergy's social value priorities and provides a structured approach to integrating social value considerations into Synergy's decision-making processes.

In the context of this project, Synergy not only aims to mitigate any negative impacts, as described throughout this document, but to contribute to net positive social, environmental, and economic outcomes for the people of Western Australia. Positive outcomes are partially realised through activities such as social procurement, local employment, social investment and stakeholder engagement.

Social procurement
Social procurement involves making procurement decisions that benefit Synergy and society, by taking into consideration environmental, social and economic impacts over the entire life cycle of a product or service.

Synergy has developed an internal Social Procurement Standard which sets out requirements for incorporating social procurement considerations into all procurement activities. This standard aligns to Synergy's social value framework and the Western Australian government's Social Procurement Framework. Additionally, as a Government Trading Enterprise, Synergy complies with the requirements of the WA Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy (APP) and Western Australian Industry Participation Strategy (WAIPS).

WAIPS requires Synergy to request participation plans (PPs) from contractors for procurement activities over $1 million in metropolitan areas or $500,000 in regional areas. Tenders above these thresholds require tenderers to submit a PP as part of their response. Tenderers must identify how fulfilment of a contract will generate designed economic benefits and demonstrate the means for provision of a full, fair and reasonable opportunity to local industry. Unless an exemption is obtained, the PP requirement must be included in Synergy's evaluation criteria, weighted at a minimum of 10% of the qualitative evaluation criteria. Synergy has also incorporated aspects of the Western Australian Buy Local Policy 2020 (WABLP) into its procurement processes, including providing mechanisms to source directly from regional businesses and allowing tenderers to apply regional price preferences.

The APP sets a target of awarding four per cent of new contracts or stand-alone purchase orders ($50,000 or more) to Aboriginal owned businesses. Synergy is committed to providing employment pathways and subcontracting opportunities for small to medium Aboriginal owned businesses in the delivery of Synergy contracts. Conditions and targets are attached to applicable contracts to ensure these opportunities are realised. Our second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) outlines and advances these commitments to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

In addition to local and Aboriginal supply chain opportunities, Synergy is committed to encouraging procurement from social enterprises and women-owned businesses.

Local employment
Synergy is committed to maximising local employment opportunities while mitigating any negative impacts on local labour draw or skills shortages. Synergy adheres to the Priority Start Policy (PSP), a WA state government policy that applies to Synergy's sourcing activities and contracts for building construction, civil constriction and maintenance with a value of $5 million (including GST).

The PSP supports the WA government's Plan for Jobs commitment to maximise opportunities for apprentices and trainees on all major state government funded building, construction and maintenance contracts. It ensures a sustainable construction trades workforce for WA by increasing the overall numbers of apprentices and trainees in the building and construction industry. Contractors awarded a PSP-applicable contract must meet a target training rate across the combined Western Australian construction trades workforce of their company and all sub-contractors used for the contract.

Social investment
Synergy recognises the importance of social investment in creating positive value for communities. The internal Social Investment Standard outlines requirements for community investment and social purpose partnerships. Social investment initiatives relevant to the project include:

1. Community Giving Fund: An annual program offering grants of up to $10,000 for initiatives that align with Synergy's social value Priorities and positively impact the communities in which they operate. Initiatives in the project area are strongly encouraged to apply.
2. Volunteering: Synergy staff can apply for two days volunteer leave annually. Groups and teams may also volunteer with Synergy's social purpose partnerships, community giving fund recipients, or Synergy spirit charities.

In addition to initiatives which are most relevant to the project, Synergy's social investment activities extend to benefit Western Australia as a whole, including the following:

1. Synergy Spirit: Synergy's employee charity program, allowing employees to make pre-tax contributions to up to four chosen charities. Synergy provides an annual financial contribution to the four charities.
2. Social Purpose Partnerships: Synergy has established long-term, collaborative commitments with not-for-profit organisations such as the STARS Foundation, which aims to improve the health, education and employment outcomes for Indigenous girls and young women in Western Australia.

Stakeholder engagement
Synergy's vision for stakeholders is to provide a consistent, fact-based, and transparent engagement process. To achieve this, Synergy's people need to be proactive, accessible, present, collaborative, and consultative.

Synergy has appointed a highly skilled stakeholder engagement team that supports the future energy projects, including this project. Synergy adheres to the IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) guidelines, widely considered best practice. The IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum defines the public's role in community engagement programs. It recognises that different levels of participation are legitimate based on various factors, such as goals, time frames, resources, and decision concerns.

The spectrum is applied by Synergy's stakeholder engagement team to this project as follows:

1. **Inform**: Share project details, impact assessments, and benefits with the community.
2. **Consult:** Seek feedback on turbine locations, visual impact, and noise concerns.
3. **Involve:** Collaborate on Mitigation strategies, wildlife protection, and community benefits.
4. **Collaborate**: Work jointly on design, land use planning, and economic opportunities.
5. **Empower:** Involve stakeholders in decision-making regarding project aspects, where feasible.

5. STUDY AREA

The *genius loc*i of place, and the social values of a community, are deeply linked to its specific locality and the social, economic and environmental attributes that drive human activity. Defining the study area assists to clarify this spatial context for both analysis purposes and understanding.

The study area for this assessment sits directly within the Scott River and Blackwood River Catchments area, which cover a total area of approximately 64,276 ha. The catchment areas stretch from Molloy Island to Jangardup Road north-west of Lake Jasper.

Approximately 43% of the total catchment area is farmland which includes dairy, beef, sheep and blue gum plantations. The remaining area of this catchment is comprised of reserves (53%) and unallocated crown land, identified as rich in biodiversity (The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

Figure 3 highlights the current area identified for the location of the proposed wind farm in Scott River. This area, as evidenced by the ariel photographs in Figure 3 and 4, and DPIRD land capability definitions in Figure 15, is an established rural agricultural area, sitting in low lying country between two significant reserves – The Scott River National Park and Pagett Nature Reserve.

The proposed wind farm in Scott River is located south of the Brockman Highway between Scott River Road, Dennis Road and north of the Scott River. This site is being investigated by SynergyRED due to the strong south-westerly winds, that blow during the evening periods and the warmer months when electricity demand is high, the existing transmission line from the Beenup substation, and the pre-existence of substantially cleared land.

The adjacent human populations sit primarily outside this catchment. These include the settlements of Scott River (within the catchments), East Augusta, Augusta, Molloy Island and Kudardup. These communities are governed by the Local Government jurisdiction of Augusta-Margaret River. This jurisdiction is considered the broader community for regional context.

This location is evident in both Figure 3 and 4. Figure 3 shows the proposed turbine locations across land boundaries. Figure 4 shows the total proposed project area overlaid across the aerial photograph of the region. Here, it is evident that the project sits on primarily cleared agricultural land, between forested areas and natural watercourses.

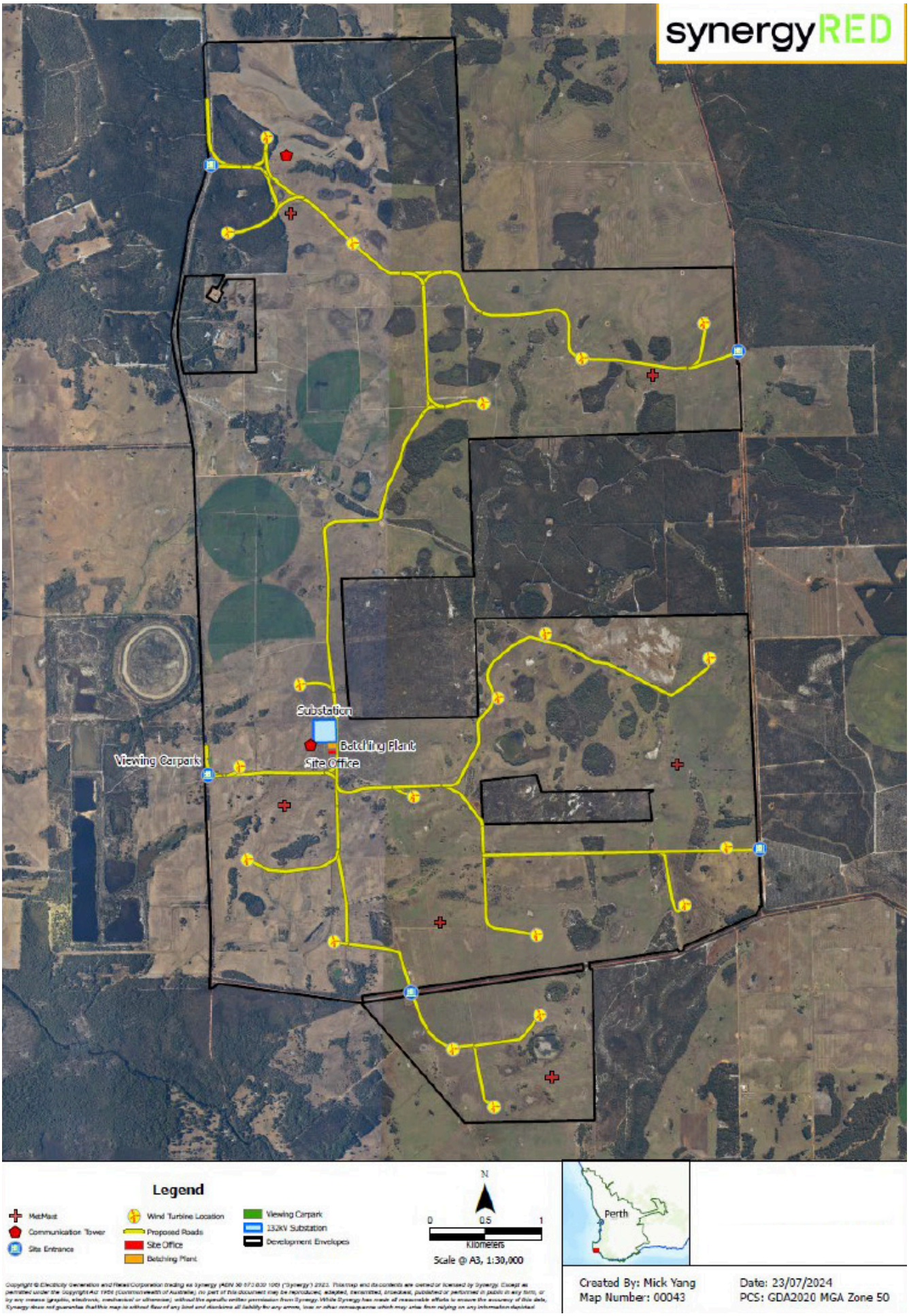


Figure 3. SynergyRED Map of Proposed Wind Farm in Scott River

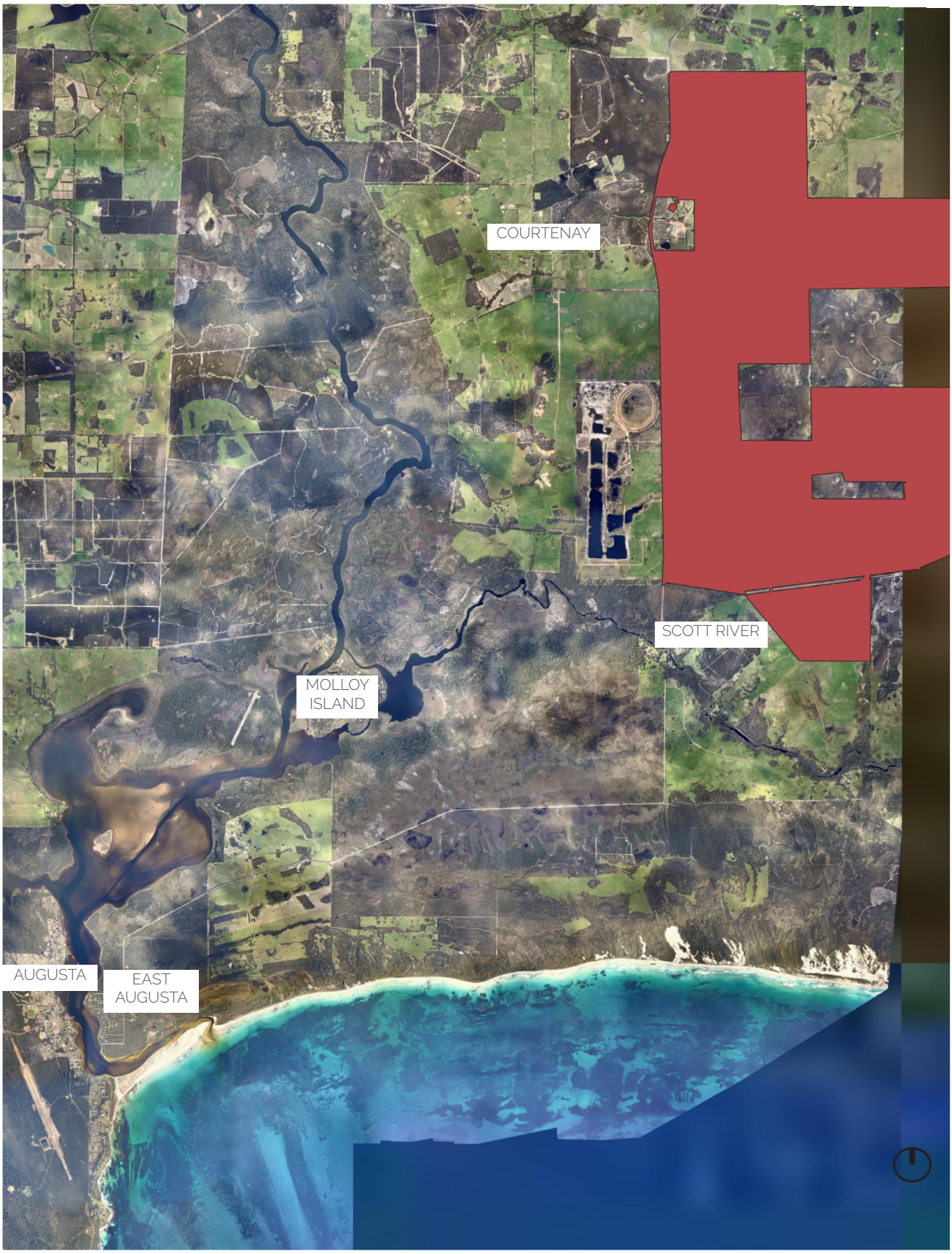


Figure 4. Project Study Area and Identified Communities of Consideration

Scale 1:50000 @A2

6. DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL VALUES & COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

The Place.ID model of assessing social values and community attitudes tests community perceptions across a series of core social, economic and environmental value indicators/attributes. This enables determination of:

- the most important perceived social values for this region,
- differences in attitudes between different communities, and stakeholder groups, and to
- identify any perceived gaps between the social values identified (as high on the importance scale) and community perceptions in SynergyRED's ability to manage these to their benefit, or detriment.

The Place.ID Social Values Matrix provides a useful overview to set priorities for assessment and decision making. It also sets a baseline in terms of stakeholder confidence that can be measured over time.

The matrix set out as Figure 5, highlights the most important perceived social values to the outside of the chart. All these values are marked by the average score of out of 5, where 1= not at all important and 5=extremely important.

The region's biodiversity of native flora and fauna, water values (such as rivers, wetlands and swamps), unique bird life, preserving what is unique about the area, being able to visit the forest and national parks, environmental conservation and restoration of cleared land, peace and quiet, and being able to see the clouds, horizon and sky were all marked with an average of greater than 4 out of 5. These responses reflect the environmental locality between the nature reserves and water catchments, its isolation and scenic viewpoints.

The Social Values Matrix also shows the community's confidence in SynergyRED's ability to manage any impacts on these social values to their benefit. Generally, an average level of confidence was seen with most values scoring an average of between 2.92 and 3.41 out of 5 (where 1 is not manageable at all and to the community's detriment and 5 is extremely well to community benefit). The lowest scoring social values in terms of confidence to manage were preserving what is unique about this area, unique bird life, peace and quiet and Aboriginal history and culture.

Creation of local employment opportunities, water management and access to the forests and national parks were seen as indicators that SynergyRED was more likely to be able to be managed positively.

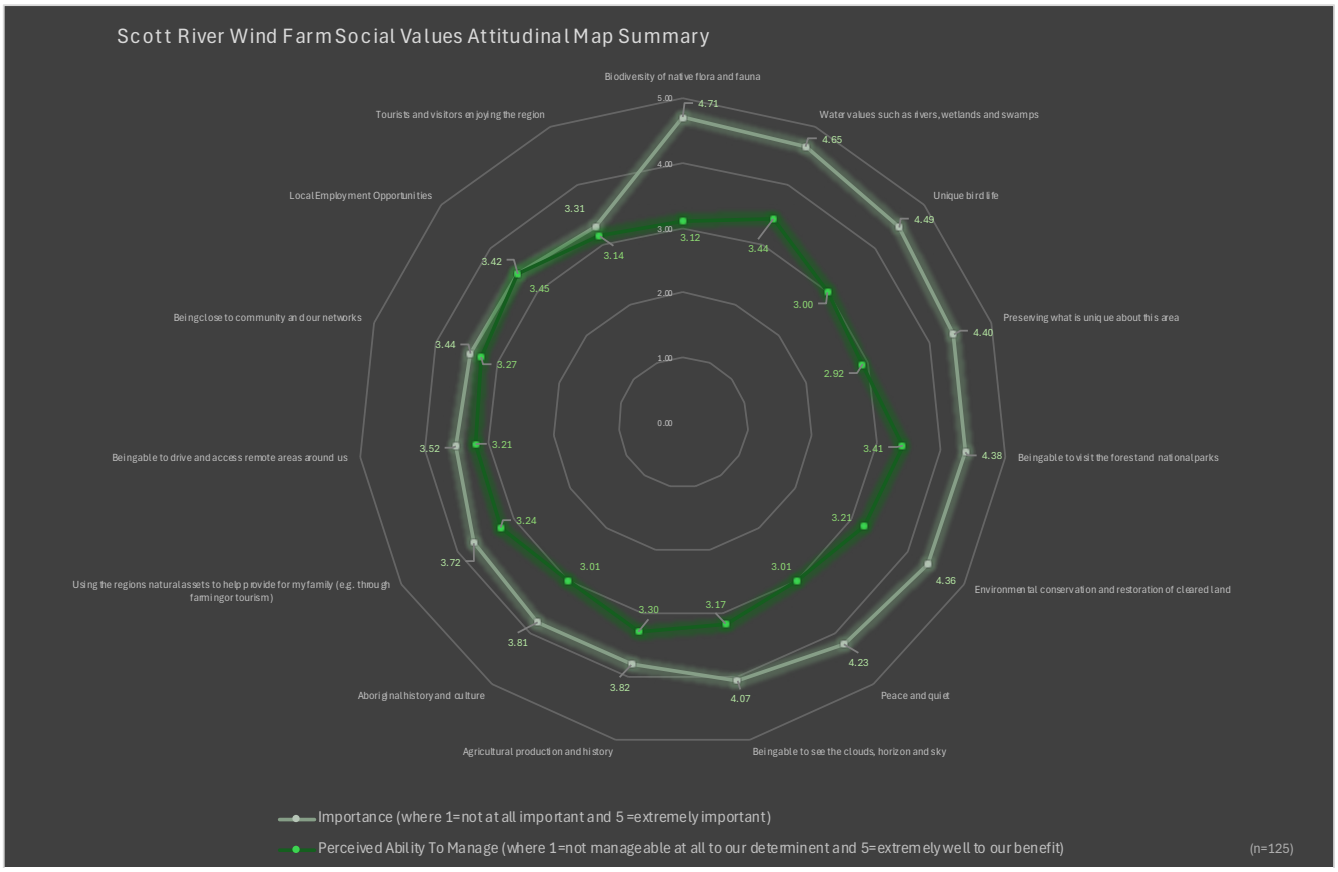


Figure 5. Scott River Wind Farm Social Values Attitudinal Map Summary

6.1. VALUING THE ENERGY TRANSITION

The contribution of the proposed wind farm project in Scott River to a positive energy transition and more sustainable future is its core social deliverable for Western Australia. However, the perceived value of that energy transition by the associated communities within the study area is currently quite a polarising issue, as evidenced in both the qualitative and quantitative fieldwork results.

Half (50.3%) of the quantitative survey respondents were extremely supportive of the proposed wind farm project in Scott River understanding and commenting on its value and need. At the opposite end of this support, were around a third (32.5%) of remaining respondents who were primarily not supportive (rating at a level of support between 0 and 2 out of 10). This is illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 7 shows how these ratings also differ across the differing communities – with those closer to the project showing a lower positive rating than respondents who lived further afield.

Those who fully support a transition to renewables voiced support for SynergyRED's proposed investment in renewables as part of the decarbonisation journey and saw this project as an important part of this transition with strong sustainable benefits. Those who reject climate change as a principal were vocal in their position with similar comments being consistently cited, for example there is "*no need for renewable energy..this proposal represents an unnecessary investment, power will be further unreliable, inconsistent and is driven by a piece of large physical infrastructure that is a nonrenewable resource with no clear link to recovery of cost.*" (IDI, 2024)

In addition to the transition, access to a reliable power source for the future was raised as a significant local issue driving perceptions. For the remote communities of Scott River, Molloy Island and East Augusta obtaining access to a consistent and suitable power source was cited by both the local government representatives, community members and landowners. This was evident in the community desire for a direct and tangible offset benefit of the energy transition at a local level. Suggestions included requests for a rebate, or actual uplift to local power infrastructure direct to residents and landowners in the region as an offset for the installation of the wind farm in the area.

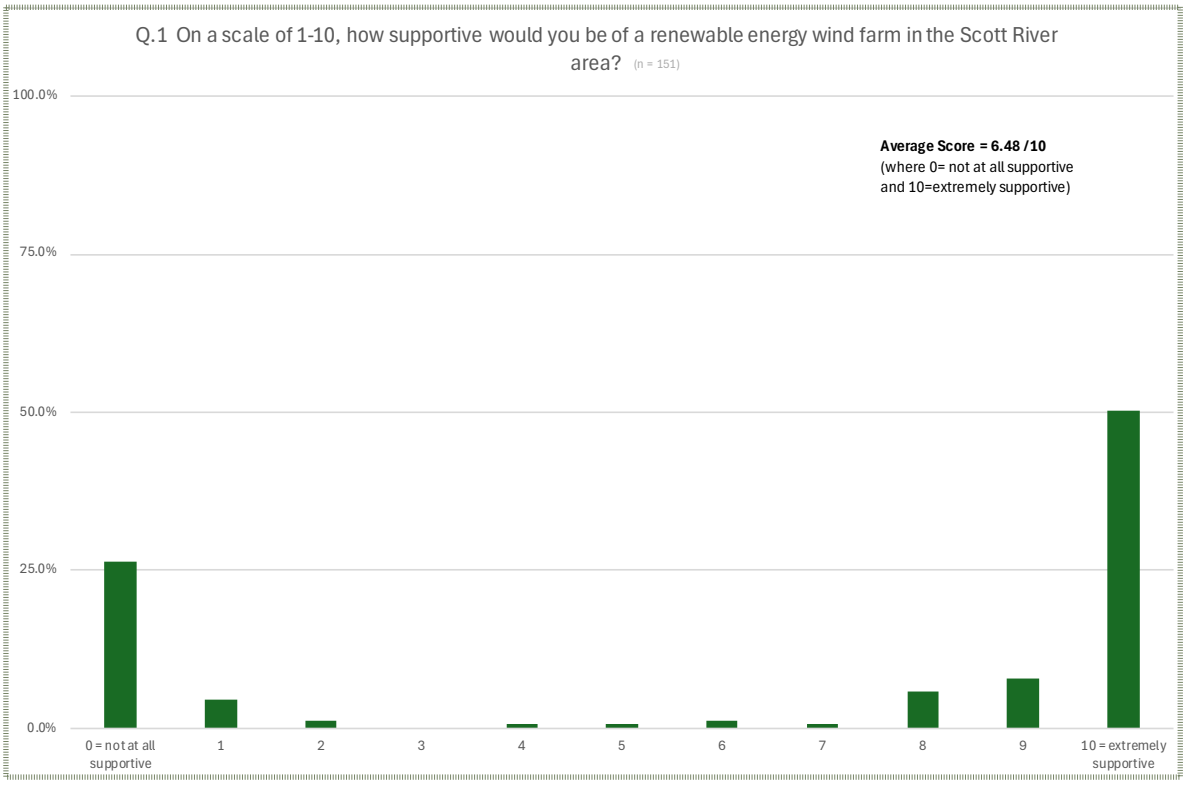


Figure 6. Scott River Wind Farm Overall Support for the Project

"This region produces the milk, the beer, the wool, the timber, and produce for the whole State, producing the electricity from the wind around us creates a positive warm feeling. It's about putting back and sharing the resources around us." (IDI 2024)

"This community is a small footprint producing a lot for the State, the power requirements should be delivered to benefit this community, rather than us trying to fuel the whole State."
In-depth Interview (IDI) Participant 2024

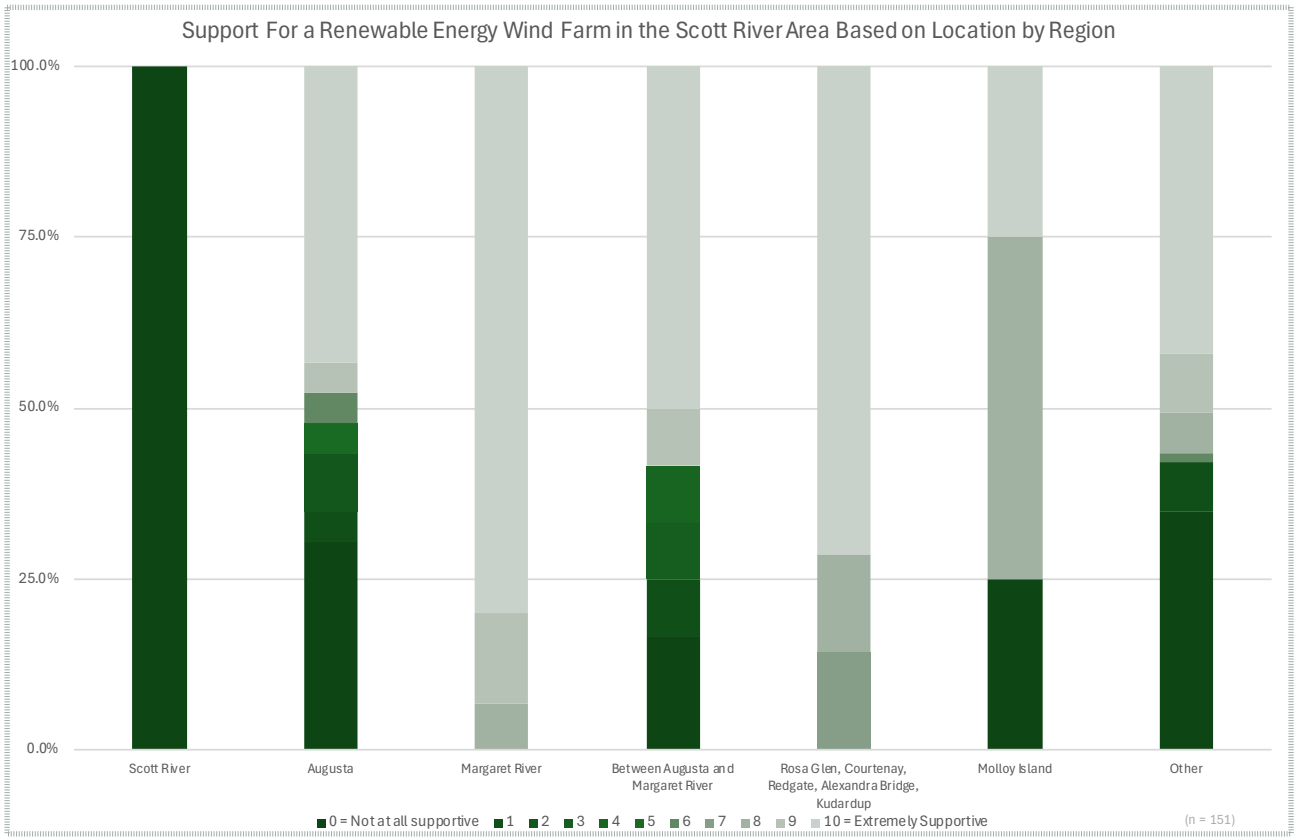


Figure 7. Scott River Wind Farm Overall Support for the Project by Locality

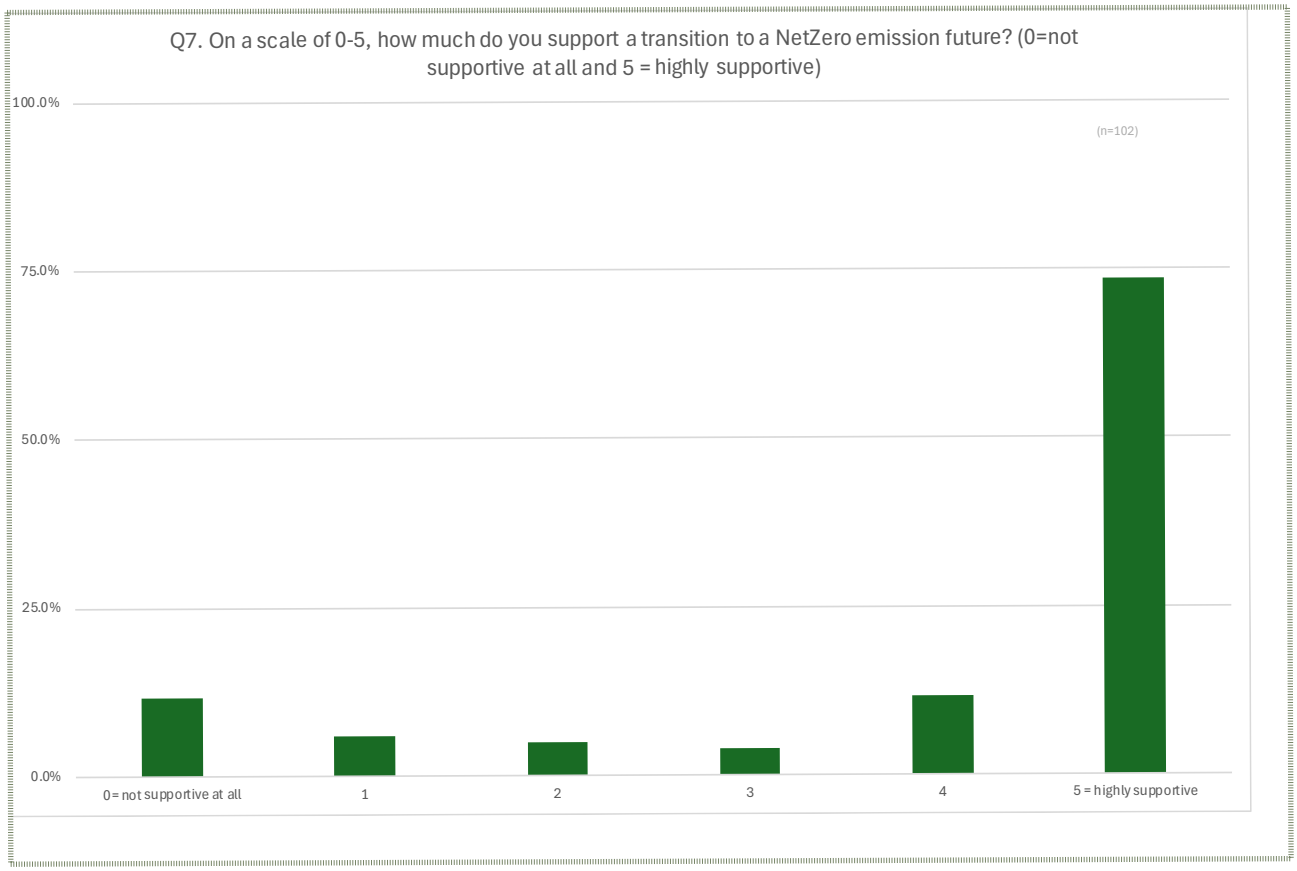


Figure 8. Support for a NET Zero Energy Transition

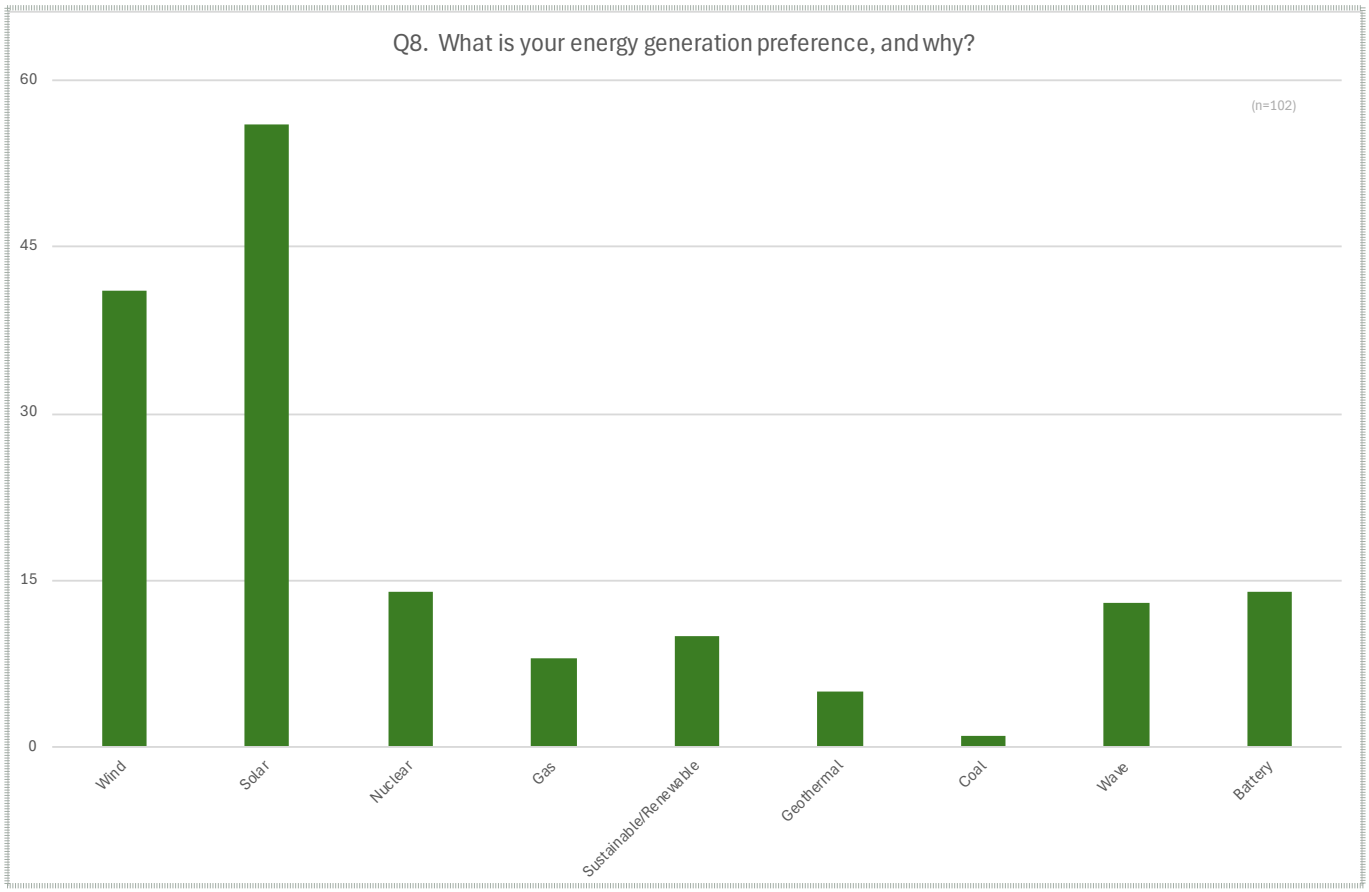


Figure 9. Overall Energy Preferences

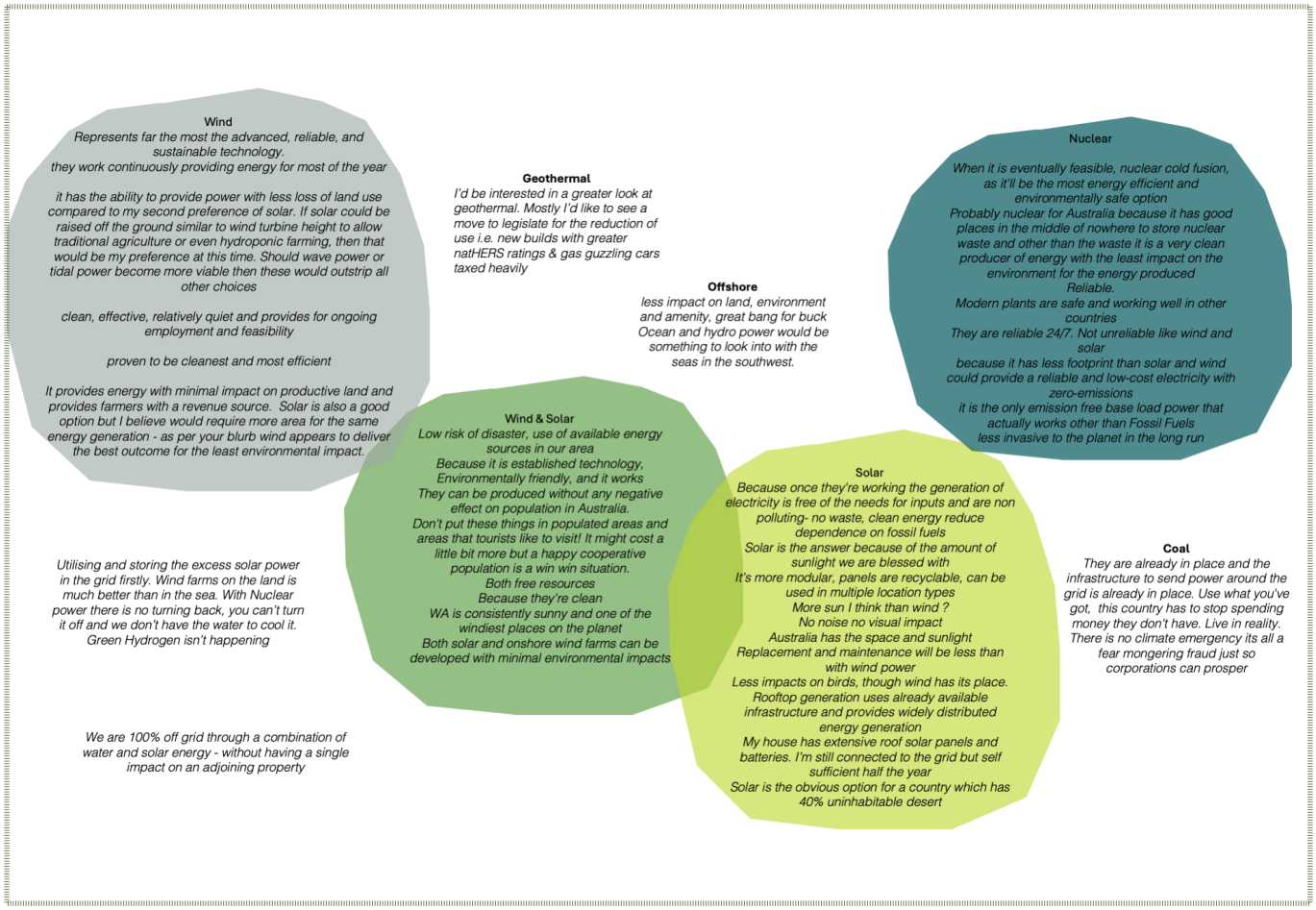


Figure 10. Reason for Energy Preference

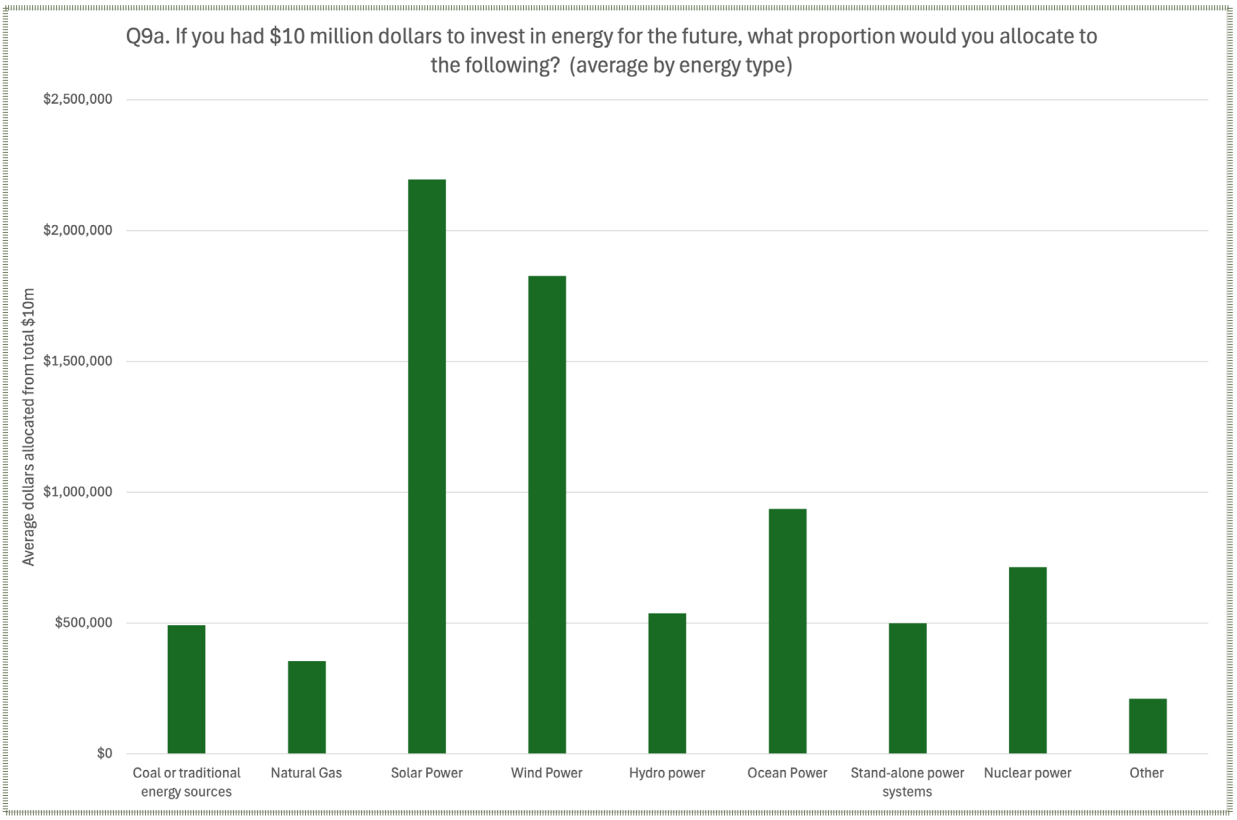


Figure 11a. Investing in Energy for The Future

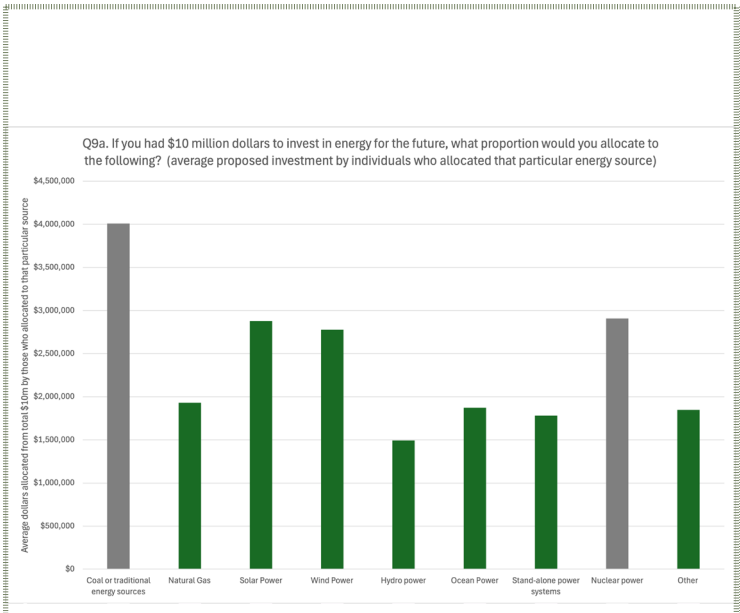


Figure 11b. Investing in Energy for The Future

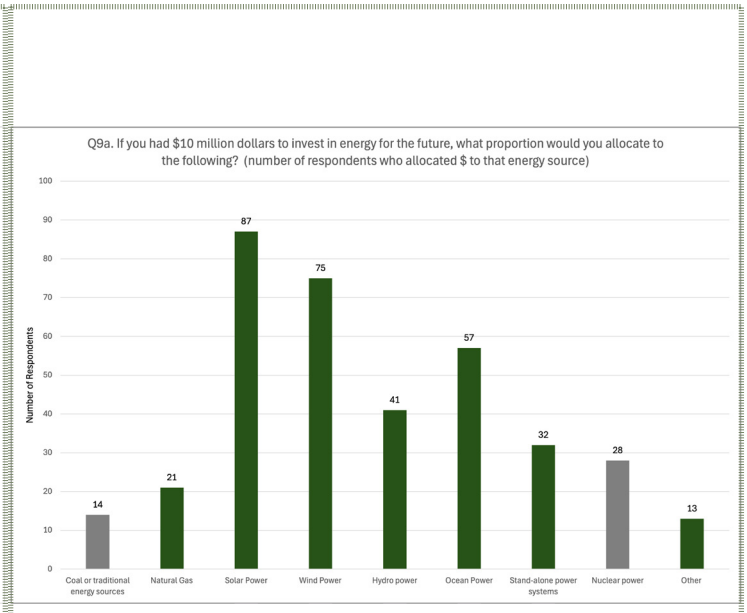


Figure 11c:. Investing in Energy for The Future

Note: Figure 11a-c were designed as an illustrative exercise to highlight preferences for energy sources for the future and consider the impact this preference had on attitudes. This was determined by requesting an allocation of an amount they would personally invest in a particular energy source from a total of $10 million.

Figure 11a shows the results to this question by the average imaginary dollars allocated to each energy type across all respondents.
Figure 11b refers to the average dollars allocated by individuals who had allocated some imaginary dollars to that particular energy source.
Figure 11c illustrates this number of individuals who chose to allocate imaginary dollars to the particular energy source.

The figures show a strong preference for investing in renewable energy for the future, however this preference is often spread across a number of different renewable energy sources - noted as "*not putting all eggs in one basket*" (IDI 2024). While those who chose to invest in more traditional energy sources, such as coal and nuclear, tend to allocate their preferred investment dollars exclusively to these traditional sources.

6.2. THE COMMUNITY – POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

"The community here is changing a lot, particularly in last 10-20 years, it is much more diverse, a growing population, academically trained, less willing to listen to outspoken opinions or aspects of those opinions that are more practical." (IDI 2024)

The demographic profile of a community and the movement of individuals in and out of a community is a strong determinant of community stability, cohesion and social values. The Augusta-Margaret River region has experienced an 18% growth in population between the ABS Census in 2016 and 2021. This has implications for not only infrastructure, accommodation and service provision to meet this growing demand, but also how the community define and see themselves, their lifestyle and their sense of cohesion.

Scott River itself has a small and relatively isolated population of around 46 residents. The area, originally populated by the Wardandi and Bibulumin/Piblemen Peoples of the Noongar Nation, was colonised around 1830 by Thomas Turner and other colonial settlers. Many of these earlier settlers abandoned the region due its isolation (Augusta Historical Society 2001).

Many of the current Scott River landowners are the decedents of post war allocations, and the subsequent drive into the region for agricultural industry development during the 1960s and 1970s. During interviews the current landowners note that their families are intergenerational farmers whose identity is very much linked to the nature of how they derive their income i.e. dairy and beef grazing, plantation timber and horticulture.

Currently each land holding in Scott River houses an average of 3-4 accommodation units on each property. The residents tend to be members of the landowners' families or from nearby properties, representing up to 35 total contractor and permanent employees. (IDI 2024)

Adjacent to the Scott River region sit a further two relatively isolated communities in East Augusta (population 41) and Molloy Island (population 163). These communities have around 54 and 150 permanent private dwellings respectively. Molloy Island is only accessible by a local barge, which contributes to its isolation. The island is said to contain around 275 rural blocks (around 225 houses, half of which are not permanently occupied) (IDI 2024).

Unlike Scott River residents for these two adjacent communities, their identity is not derived from how they draw their income, rather their choice of lifestyle in a remote part of the world. This lifestyle, the positive climate and the natural environment are also said to be driving the population growth across the broader region, as evidenced in the quote below from the qualitative fieldwork.

"The sense of community and its connectedness is so important. You see this through high levels of volunteering, the engaged community from one end of the spectrum of views to the other, and the diversity of the community from so many international travellers, migrants, families, and all those people who come, attracted to the natural beauty of this region." (IDI 2024)

This emphasis on the natural environment, its climate, and the lifestyle it offers is evident in the high importance placed by respondents on environmental values such as water, forests, flora, fauna and preserving what is unique to this area, as illustrated in Figure 5. The close link between social values, identity and the natural environment are explored in next section. This link has implications for both SynergyRED's project decisions, but also the projects engagement strategy, its perceived transparency, and the communities' expressed desire for involvement in decision-making and environmental studies/monitoring/activity.

Across the inlet, the township of Augusta is the closest regional center, home to around 1,211 individuals. The profile of Augusta shows a community of primarily elderly residents (with 42% of the population aged over 70 years), and a slightly higher proportion of female residents than the other townsite communities. This community is described by its residents as "*community-minded, volunteer-orientated and willing to work together – whether it is to fight a fire, join a club activity or fixing up the main street. It is just the way they are!*" (IDI 2024).

It is clear, from the in-depth interviews and qualitative feedback in the publicly available survey, that there are expectations in the Augusta community around active participation, whether that is seen to be part of the community through the establishment of an office in the town or building close networks. These expectations are relevant considerations for SynergyRED's community giving and employee volunteering programs.

The age and gender profile, the growing population and associated pressure on local infrastructure, and the industries from which the population derive their income, are also an important consideration for project decisions around accommodation for the construction workforce.

Table 1 provides a summary profile from the latest census data of the communities under consideration, based on the full profile provided as Appendix 2. Figure 12 illustrates the population density across these potentially impacted communities. This figure shows a low population density around Scott River, and surrounds, with population density concentrated at Molloy Island, Augusta and Margaret River.

Table 1: Summary of Population and Demographic Indictors for Potentially Impacted Communities

	Scott River	East Augusta	Molloy Island	Augusta (townsite)	Augusta. Margaret River. Local Governmen t Area	Residents identifying as Indigenous with the Augusta-Margaret River Local Government Area
Total Population	**46**	**41**	**163**	**1,211**	**16,791**	**231**
Median Age	34	52	63	63	42	26
Gender Ratio (M: F)	1: 0.9	1: 0.8	1: 0.9	1: 1.1	1: 1	1: 1
Median Personal Income (weekly)	843	474	486	541	785	599
Median Family Income (weekly)	1,874	1,125	1,075	1,145	1,871	1,609
Median Rent (weekly) [1]	$200	$150	$275	$280	$350	$350
% Unemployed	9.4%	12.5%	4.0%	1.3%	2.8%	7.8%
Permanency - Lived at same address 5 years ago	46%	41%	90%	59%	58%	40%
Average Household Size	1.9	2.1	1.7	1.9	2.5	2.9
Indigenous %	0	0	0	1.0%	1.3%	

ABS 2021 Community Census Data

Notes:

- Forty-Two Percent (42%) of the population of Augusta are aged over 70 years.
- Domain Real Estate Data shows a year-on-year annual increase in median rentals of 19.3% in the Augusta-Margaret River Region, with March 2024 median rent sitting at $680 per week.

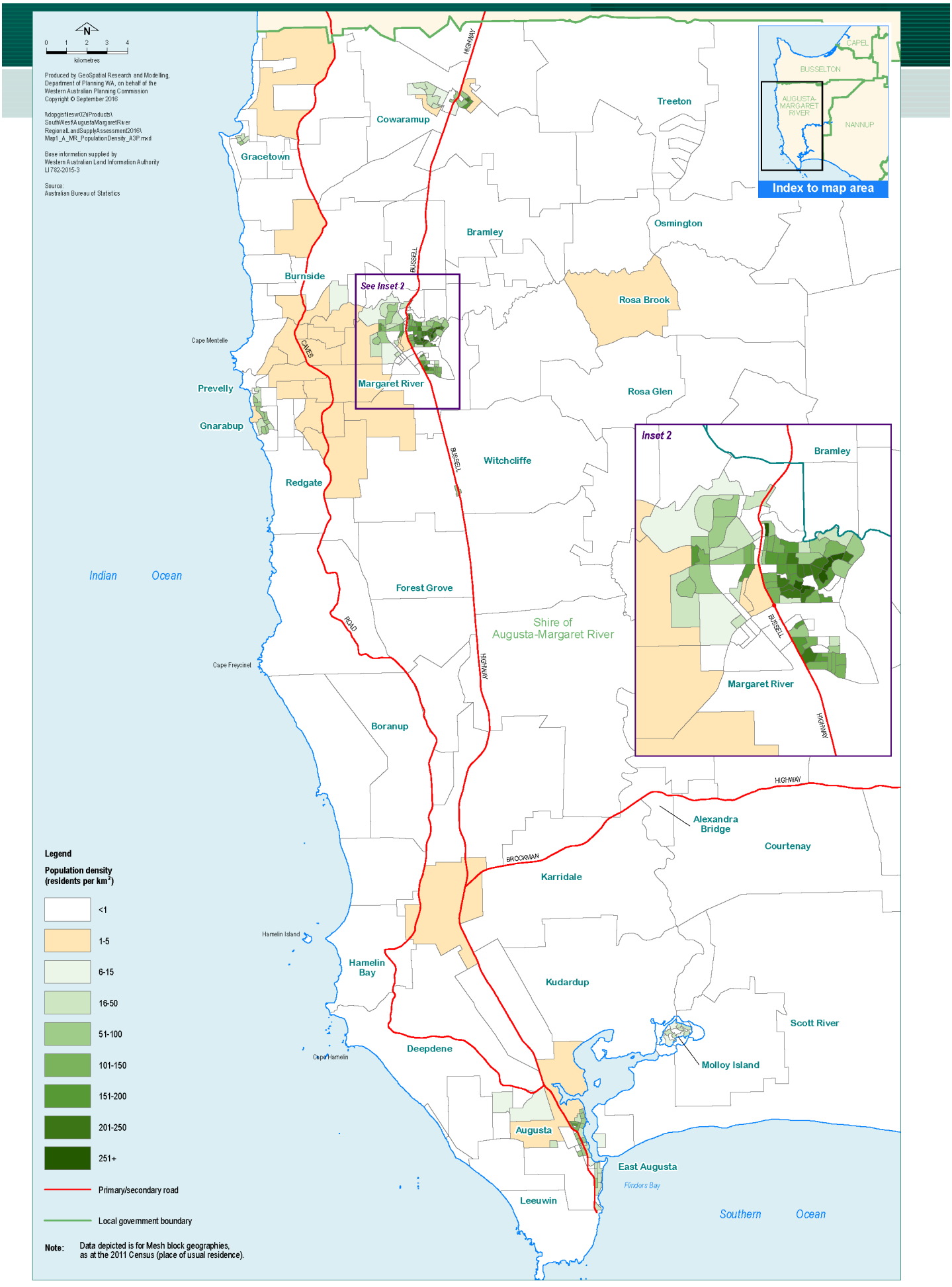


Figure 12. Map of Regional Density

6.3. ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

"The environment out here is magic, quiet, beautiful waterways, where there is nothing but the sound of birds, you can't change that." (IDI 2024)

The International Association for Impact Assessment notes that good practice of social impact assessment accepts that social, economic and biophysical impacts are inherently and inextricably interconnected. This report considers environmental values and sense of place in the context of how they feed into the social identity of the human population, as discussed in Section 6.2, the way the individuals within the community derive their income and the opportunities to experience nature or participate in cultural and recreational activities.

In the case of this region, the environmental values contained within the natural landscape, its forests, flora, fauna and water networks are cited as the important values for this human population, and drivers of both attachments to place and visitation. This is evident in the secondary research, qualitative and quantitative fieldwork. The high level of attachment to these values indicate that any actual or perceived impact on these environment values will be the most challenging for the project to manage into the future.

The compatibility between particular social and/or ecological goals will have distributive implications for whose interests are realised in environmental decision-making, particularly where the perceived risks to producing goals are not actually aligned with the nuanced aspirations of the community. This process of bounding social aspirations into impacts is an inclusive and deliberative exercise to provide evidence against the values of a human community to make claims about which people's priorities are being represented (or not) in environmental decision-making.

For example - the value of a river for swimming, relates to both the social and biophysical attributes of a river, such as water clarity, water depth, and the number of swimmers per year, the tourists it attracts, the promotion or recognition of it when describing the region as part of its identity, and the sense of visual amenity or calm it provides. Any actual environmental impact on the river must be considered from all these social perspectives, and not just the biophysical. This example from the International Association for Impact Assessment, is relevant in both the role and perceived value of water, the views and landscape, the forests, the flora and fauna of this region in terms of tourism visitation, calm and peace and quiet provided to its residents and visitors, and sense of place for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members.

The broader region is situated within the Southwest of Australia, which is one of 36 internationally recognised biodiversity hotspots (Shire of Augusta Margaret River Annual Report 2024). A biodiversity hotspot that has at least 1,500 native vascular plant species found nowhere else on Earth, with around 70% of this original vegetation already lost. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River's Community Strategic Plan 2033 (2015) identifies "*valuing the natural environment*" as one of its key goals with a subsequent outcome being "*healthy waterways and foreshores*" and a key strategy identified as developing "*partnerships to maintain and improve the quality of beaches, waterways, rivers, and wetlands*" (AMRS, 2015 p. 20). Qualitative interviews with the Shire and other stakeholders confirm the critical environmental values of the region as its biodiversity (flora and fauna), its fertile soils, its waterways and wetlands and the way these contribute to a unique sense of place. The adjacent Shire of Nannup's Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 (Shire of Nannup 2017) also identifies a key focus action item around protecting "*our amazing nature, magnificent forests, managed bushland, rivers, agriculture and our pristine coastline*".

The localised environment of the proposed wind farm in Scott River consists of predominantly undulating to near flat land that has been cleared for agricultural use. However, it is also known to contain a State and Nationally listed Threatened Ecological Communities, known as the Scott River Ironstone Association, that will need to be managed, primarily along the road reserves and in some small clusters on private properties. This is discussed further in Section 6.3.2.

The local area's geomorphic wetlands, ironstone floral communities, rivers and waterways are directly valued by this community and provide a level of benefit in each of the traditionally identified eco-system services. This is despite the area's remoteness and the shared understanding of the flow-on effects or endpoints, as evidenced by the secondary research, qualitative and quantitative fieldwork.

The legacy of the BHP Beenup Titanium Mineral Sands mine is evident in its profile among participants in the qualitative and quantitative fieldwork. In some ways, it appears to have raised understanding of the natural values in the region. However, the short-lived mine has also created some skepticism that significant developments could have a greater impact than initially anticipated or shared by the developer. For many fieldwork participants, it is cited as a cautionary tale of misunderstanding the area's acid sulfate soils and changing market conditions following significant infrastructure construction, or investment.

The Beenup Case Study on the restored wetlands, established in collaboration with the WA Botanical Gardens and Park Authority, Syrinx Environmental, and the community representatives that were part of the Beenup Consultative Group, draws attention to the localised natural environment in Scott River, its wetlands and bird life. This case study points to the opportunity to create values following the negative impact to the local ecosystem created by the mine construction and associated infrastructure (Meney, K et al 2023).

6.3.1 WATER

"From the cooling effect of the Southern oceans to the surface water that makes our soils rich, to the ground water and aquifers, and the inlet and rivers, water is what makes this region so special." (IDI 2024)

Over three quarters (77%) of respondents in the online survey rate water values, such as rivers, wetlands and swamps, as extremely important. This was the second highest importance score in the online survey results after biodiversity.

The qualitative fieldwork indicated that this is being driven by an increased recognition of water as a critical resource in a drying climate, a noticeable drop in ground aquifers "*that just aren't recharging*" and exacerbated attention across the recent dry summer that has seen water being ported into new subdivisions, like Witchcliffe, and localised heath and shrubland being so impacted.

Water is seen as both a natural asset and an important resource for both the local community and the associated agricultural activity. The Scott River and its associated water catchment is cited in the secondary research, qualitative and quantitative fieldwork as a significantly high environmental value in terms of provisioning, regulating, cultural and support services.

The DPIRD 2001 report notes that these areas across the broader Scott River Plain are highly valued for the diversity of functions and values that they provide including the provision of habitat for flora and fauna, biofiltering of sediments and nutrients, flood mitigation, groundwater discharge and erosion control and form corridors that link areas of native vegetation with conservation values (DPRID 2001).

Culturally, the waterways of the region hold significant attachment to the local Indigenous, Traditional Owners and non-Indigenous residents. The waterways serve as sources of amenity, cultural recreation, and home to the natural values of flora and fauna that are consistently rated as high on the importance scale of social values in the region.

The proposed location for the project would be in a high-water table location, subject to seasonal inundation. There is an expressed concern around potential failure of footings which is seen to potentially cause infrastructure failing and subsequently impact access to agricultural properties in the region.

Local landowners suggest dewatering maybe needed during construction to install foundations. They gave examples of fence posts requiring installation in waterlogged soils requiring a depth of 3-4m.

Water is an expressed emotive issue for the local communities, and a detailed water management plan and associated considerations will be required for the project to address this environmental value moving forward.

6.3.2 FLORA

Biodiversity of native flora and fauna received the highest impact score in the quantitative online survey, with 78% of respondents citing it as 5/5 extremely important. In addition, when considering the gap between how important the attribute is to the community and the perceived ability to manage any negative impacts, this gap was the largest of all the indicators assessed.

In the area, there are three vegetation associations (open Jarrah, Marri, Paperbark woodlands, sedgelands/grasslands and heath) with less than 30% of their pre-European extent remaining. As noted in Section 6.2, the Scott River Plain contains two Threatened Ecological Communities, that being the Scott River Ironstone Association Threatened Ecological Community, and the Federal Coastal Saltmarsh Threatened Ecological Community (also a State Priority Ecological Community - and one Priority Ecological Community (salt marsh).

Ironstone occurrences tend to be along the roadsides or on private properties across Price Road, Payne Road, Tutunp Road, Oates Road, Williamson Road, Dennis Road and Governor-Broome Road (Groundwater Consulting Services 2008).

The ironstone communities are closely related to groundwater. The periodic inundation prevents locally occurring plant communities from growing, and results in the specialised community having dominance. The major threats to the community are vegetation clearing, grazing by introduced herbivores, weed invasion, hydrological change, too frequent fire, and dieback disease caused by Phytophthora species (DBCA Facts Sheet).

Additional threats include pumping of groundwater that induces groundwater levels to fall in the aquifer beneath the ironstone, and changes in water quality (salinity or contaminants) in areas up-gradient from a community, such that poorer quality groundwater flows beneath the community (Groundwater Consulting Services, 2008 for Department of Conservation and Land Management).

Vegetation and biodiversity are a key value held by survey participants. Any potential impacts to these values should be a key priority for the project to consider and manage.

"We have to do our best to preserve what little is left, and a significant amount of what is left is on the private properties in Scott River." (IDI 2024)

6.3.3 SOILS

Fertile soil is a critical issue for the local community, and the success of their agricultural pursuits in Scott River. Much of the Scott River Coastal Plain is identified as having a high to moderate risk of Acid Sulfate Soils, occurring within 3m of the natural surface.

Although Acid Sulfate Soils are naturally occurring soils, when they are disturbed and exposed to the air, they can cause issues associated with acidification. These soils are commonly found in low-lying land bordering the coast or estuarine and saline wetlands and freshwater groundwater-dependent wetlands throughout Western Australia.

This issue was raised in both the qualitative and quantitative fieldwork, with suggestions to give due consideration to the peatland areas, water table and soils, for access road design, foundations, drain blocking and re-wetting areas.

The depth of a wind turbine foundation is dependent on soil conditions, geotechnical assessment and design requirements, but is likely to be approximately five metres deep. Anecdotal evidence from local landowners is that this depth is likely to be below the high-water table, and close to the swamp and valley floor.

"The fertility of the local soils on the Scott River Coastal Plain is what has drawn many agricultural landowners to the region and driven the attention around more intensive horticulture and agriculture in the region." (IDI 2024)

6.3.4 FAUNA - BIRDS & BATS

""So many critters out there, there are those tiny sugar possums, the plovers, the black swans and all those wetland birds." (IDI 2024)

The online survey highlights the importance of local fauna to the community identity and sense of place – in particular concern for birds and bats were highlighted by interview respondents. Seventy percent (70%) of respondents in the online survey cited the unique bird life as one of the most important attributes of the Scott River Region, rating it 5/5 on the importance scale.

Attachment to local fauna is cited as an important social value for the community, and local conservation groups in the area. The Scott River Action Plan also highlights the importance of protection of local fauna within the study area to maintaining a sense of place. Some 26 species of fauna are listed as threatened, priority or under protection within the Catchment. Threatened and priority fauna species in the area, as referenced in The Scott River Action Plan, include three Black Cockatoo species, the Rainbow Bee-eater, the Australian Fairy Tern, the Western Ringtail Possum and the White-bellied Creek Frog.

There are several local community and conservation action groups within the region dedicated to the protection of black cockatoos and any potential impacts on these species, and others, and this will need to be managed carefully.

Feedback from the two interviews with Bird Life Australia scientists note that impacts of wind turbines on birds will depend on the surrounding habitat complexity, typography, wind flow, arrangement and nature of turbines and the associated species in the area (IDI 2024). These are currently being explored by SynergyRED in independent Environmental Impact Assessments, and some suggestions for mitigation from Bird Life Australia have been provided in Section 8.7.

6.3.5 FIRE

Concern over fire in the Scott River area was raised in both the qualitative and quantitative components of the study. Reference was made to the area being a fire risk area, with references to the 1961 fires, and losses also experienced in the 1986 and 2018 fires. The low lying sedgelands, cleared paddocks and dry grasses are seen to exacerbate fire spread and fuel load. Access for water planes during a fire incident and storage of water onsite were raised by not only the local fire brigade members but also other participants in the qualitative and quantitative fieldwork.

"Fire roars through those plains and flatlands, we need to understand how close we can get... the strip between the River and the Turbines will be important to ensure we can get air support in close and have permission to fight fires in that low shrubland if we need it." (IDI 2024)

6.3.6 SENSE OF PLACE

Sense of place is defined by "the lens through which people experience and make meaning of their experience in and with place." It can refer to positive bonds of comfort, safety and wellbeing engendered by a place, a home and a dwelling, as well as fear or dysphoria in other contexts. It also includes the distinctiveness or unique character of particular localities and regions" (Foote, K, Azaryahu, M 2009).

As noted in Section 5 and Section 6 the qualitative and quantitative fieldwork shows that the draw to the immediate proposed project area is the agricultural activity, along with its remoteness, silence, its flora/forests, fauna and its quiet water. Its flatness, openness and wide skies are a significant part of the unique character of place. For some interviewed, this openness does create a sense of fear or isolation, but in the main those who call it home are attached to this social value. These are similar attributes found amongst the residents surveyed from Molloy Island.

For those in the larger community centres, such as Augusta, the sense of place described is more closely associated with the people, the community cohesion and activities. The clubs, the ocean for swimming, or watching whales, the inlet for fishing and boating, the built form, the places that people gather, its colonial history and the forests for driving through or adventuring were all mentioned as important social values that contribute to a sense of place.

Those interviewed and those participating in the survey rated peace and quiet (55%) and preserving what is unique about this place (62%) as 5/5 being extremely important attributes of the region. While 35% and 41 % respectively of respondents indicated these could not be managed at all (1/5) or managed to the region's detriment.

Preserving what is unique about the area, and its sense of place will be one of the most challenging areas for SynergyRED to positively manage its social impacts moving forward. The supporting qualitative in-depth interview analysis suggested this is primarily driven by perceived impacts on amenity – both visual and noise. Figure 13a and b show the areas of perceived value, while the verbatim responses provided in relation to why respondents selected and pined these points. These spatial illustrations and comments serve to reinforce the findings of this section.

The Albany Wind Farm is noted as an example by some respondents as having impacted the sense of place, in a positive rather than negative way. It was stated in the context of creating a positive tourism asset, and positively contributed to a unique sense of place on the hill in Albany. This could be a positive reference for this proposed project.

Work is being done by SynergyRED to profile both the visual and noise impacts of the project. Participants in both the qualitative and quantitative stages of the study, highlight a strong interest in viewing the outcomes of these studies. In particularly, noise and light impacts for residents of Molloy Island, and visual impacts from the Hill View Road Lookout in Augusta, the Augusta Hotel and other local and tourist viewing areas.

This perceived impact is exacerbated by the fact that one of the core values noted in the study is the attraction of the area due to its "*openness,*" "*remoteness,*" "*quiet*" and "*night sky*".

Suggestions of how this could be mitigated were provided by respondents to the quantitative online survey and in the qualitative fieldwork. These are listed under Section 8.

"The uniqueness of this area – the whole lot – there is a lot of get your head around, looking out over the Scott River National Park, you may not see it all but when you are out in the field a lot you are so aware of the environment, how special it is and how it needs protection." (IDI 2024)

Note: Verbatim comments listed in the text boxes adjacent to Figure 13a and 13b were provided by the digital online survey respondents as the reason for why they placed a pin of value on the spatial map. The comments in the upper text box relate to the heat map that shows the density of pins dropped in a certain location in the vicinty of the project area, while the comments in the lower text box relate to the green dots provide the points at a broadscale.

"My Important Places" are marked with a point any areas that have an important value to respondents with a qualitative description associated with each point.

Blackwood and Scott River. Recreational, spiritual and environmental value
Camping areas
Wetlands of heightened environmental sensitivity.
Molloy island community
Old BHP mine
Significant tree
The river is an important biodiverse area for native flora and fauna, local wildlife and the agricultural uses for the surrounding areas.
Molloy island, bird migration
Do not feel sufficiently qualified to comment DBCA have mapped rare flora & fauna in the area
Aboriginal groups know of historically significant sites
Farmers know of productive farm land area
Place of beauty and historical value .
I live, farm, breathe, look, walk, swim, shop and relax at the marked areas in peace.
These are places where I feel calm and connected to my home
The whole place is important with significant connection to the land.
I spent time at all these places with work or in my own time on days off and have the potential to at some point live in a few of these places
It is where I live and where our business is located
Best beaches, surfing, fishing and forest in the world!
This is where I live, work and play
The beautiful clear view across the countryside
A place frequently visited
Many memories made by the ocean with family
We want our adult children to be part of the last remaining farming communities left in the Augusta Margaret River shire.
These are locations I regularly find Wedge-tailed Eagles and all 3 Species of Black Cockatoos to photograph.

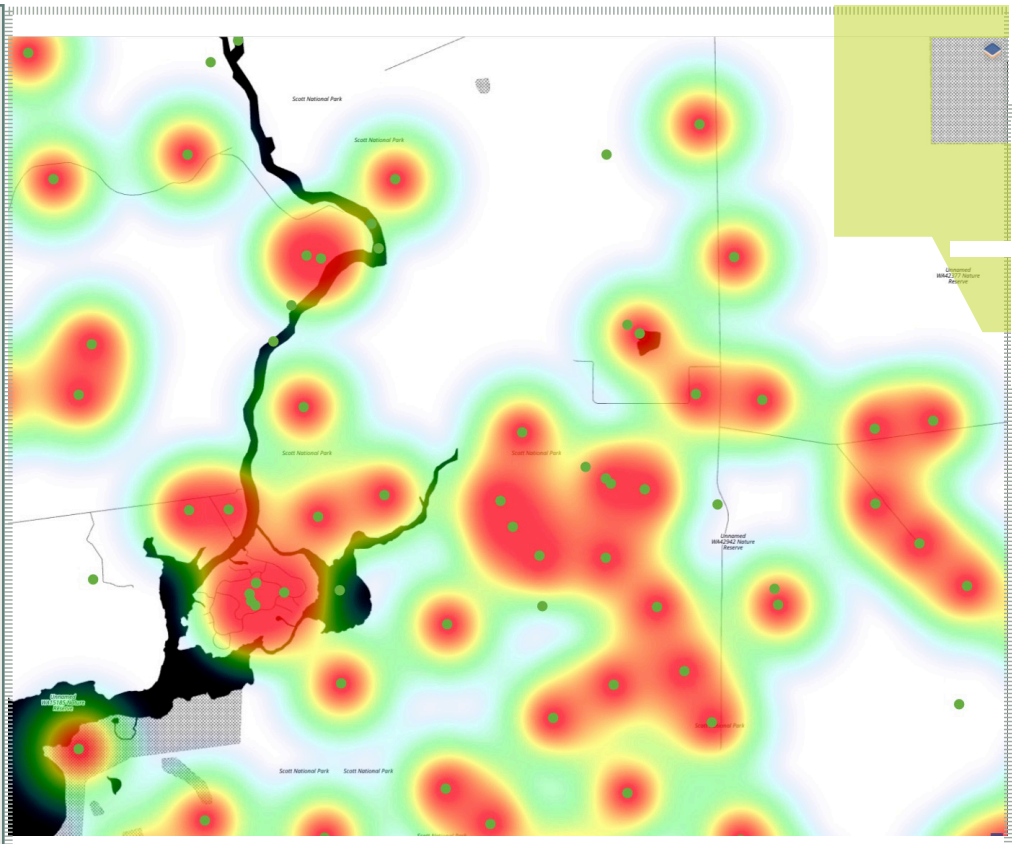


Figure 13 a.Community Survey Spatial Analysis on Places of Perceived Value in the vicinity of the project area

The coastal heath is relatively untouched and important for biodiversity.
The Blackwood and Scott Rivers are important to the region and past use has led to deterioration.
The view from Augusta hotel and the view from Hillview lookout are important places to view the area from, and where, no doubt, the turbines will be most prominently viewed from in Augusta.
Prevelly and Redgate are my favourite beaches
Augusta Light Station is registered on the National Heritage List
White Point and Black Point are beautiful wild places
They are where I regularly go
Love swimming and snorkling/Walking in forests
National Parks along Leeuwin Coast, Blackwood River & remnant forests. Important as they are integral to our living as well as that of the flora and fauna.
Generally natural bushland including rivers and streams are important to rehabilitate and maintain.
The places chosen around Augusta are because of their extreme beauty of natural coastlines
We live in this area, own properties in locations where the pins have been dropped and also spend significant time and recreate in other locations.
Corner of Brockman Highway and Scott River Road. Remnant bushland.
The whole of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park and coastline
Cape to Cape is important to me in terms of conservation, biodiversity and recreation.
Spiritual, environmental cultural significance
The Scott National Park and Scott River system are important habitat for wildlife.
The whole coastline, Capes, forest areas, bush corridors, remnant vegetation - protect biodiversity.
That's where we live/Home
Our forests are unique and under threat from dramatic climate changes and we must protect them
All these places offer scenic views, access to our clean seas, walking trails and recreational activities
Forest & beaches

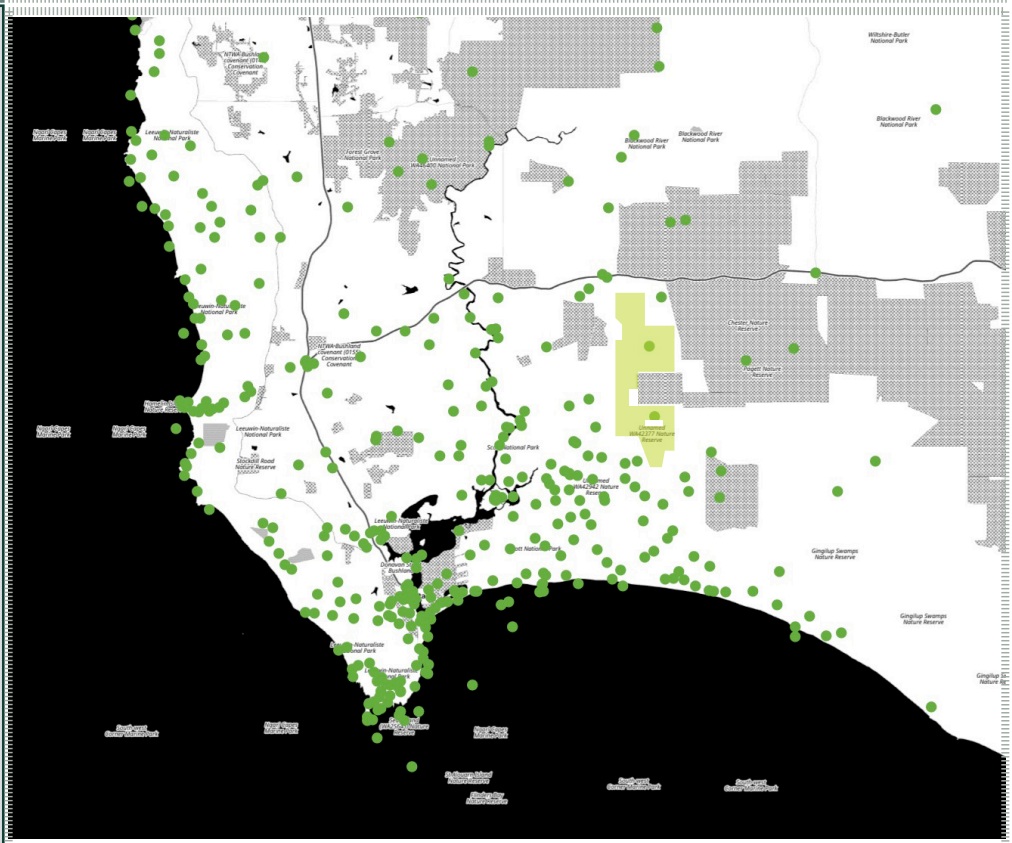


Figure 13 b. Community Survey Spatial Analysis on Places of Perceived Value across the region

Proposed location area for Scott River Wind Farm

6.4. CULTURE & HERITAGE

6.4.1 INDIGENOUS CONNECTIONS

Almost half (46.7%) of respondents to the quantitative survey noted Aboriginal heritage and culture as an extremely important local value.

The Wardandi and Bibulumin / Piblemen Peoples of the Noongar nation are the Traditional Owners of the Scott River Catchment. The area is covered by the South West Boojarah Indigenous Land Use Agreement as part of the South West Native Title Settlement, which formally recognises Noongar people as the Traditional Owners of the south-west region. The South West Boojarah region is supported by the Karri Karrak Aboriginal Corporation and umbrella group, the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council.

The Traditional Owners west of the Blackwood River are the Wardandi and east of the Blackwood (including Scott River) are the Pibelmen. Archaeological evidence suggests that humans were in the area by 48,000 BP. Hearths, bones, stone artefacts, campsites, painted hand stencils, a Peppermint 'killing stick', the Kybra rock engravings, and several other Aboriginal sites on the Scott Plain reveal the culture of the first inhabitants in the region (The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

Under the Settlement process led by the South-West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC), the Southwest Boojarah #2 Indigenous Land Use Agreement has been negotiated with the Wardandi-Pibelmen people. The Undalup Association and the Bibelmen Mia Aboriginal Corporation (BMAC) are two current Aboriginal entities that speak culturally on behalf of this Country (The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

A register of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites kept by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage lists several sites of Aboriginal significance in the vicinity of this study area, see Figure 6. The waterways are spiritually, culturally and economically important to Wardandi-Pibelmen people including as spiritual reference points, campsites, food collection, and water supply, and this is clearly illustrated in Figure 14 (The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

Figure 14 indicates that the study area sits outside any registered or noted sites and mirrors the findings of SynergyRED's initial heritage surveys. However, feedback from Karri Karrak during the fieldwork process notes that the visual and significant infrastructure change to the region and its landscape, may impact Traditional Owner's sense of place.

Ongoing consultation and engagement with Karri Karrak and Traditional Owners via the Cultural Advice Committee through subsequent stages of the project feasibility will assist to confirm the social values and a path of partnership moving forward.

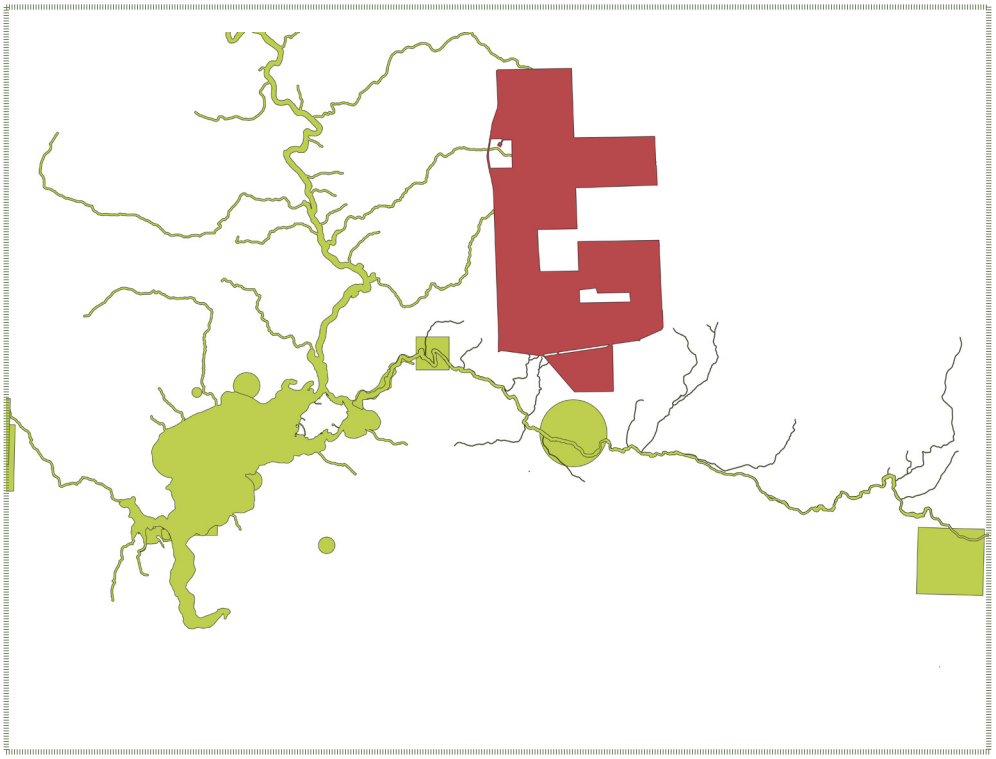


Figure 14. QGIS Aboriginal Heritage Places DPLH 0001

"This is going to significantly change the landscape and country down there, and our Traditional Owners need to be involved in that conversation." (IDI 2024)

6.4.2 COLONIAL CONNECTIONS

Colonial connection to the Scott River region was limited to early explorations by the Turner and Bussell families, along with some fledgling farming and timber milling activity. The pre-colonial landscape was originally dominated by a series of vegetated wetlands, with low dense heath and pockets of tall open forest on more drained areas. Water logging and other challenges of this landscape limited access and desirability for Scott River for a permanent settlement. This assisted in the preservation of the natural environment and protection of its ironstone flora communities and other natural values discussed in Section 6.3.

Those who took up farming in the area in the 1900s used the catchment primarily for dairy grazing, but it wasn't until post war that the area was cleared for primary agriculture. Several local intergenerational families remain in the area since this time, and they have contributed to the colonial history of this remote place. This contribution primarily took place post war, and then again through the growth period in 1960s and 1970s. The Scott River, Warner Glen and Karridale communities do have a shared and collective history of this area, which primarily relates to the commercialisation of the natural assets of the region via agricultural endeavour.

Molloy Island and East Augusta were granted title in the mid 1800s but were only developed for residential housing and a community from the mid 1970s and 80s. Molloy Island had its historic roots in a failed possum farm in the 1920s and was left vacant for many decades, until the recent lifestyle driven residential development.

The other relevant chapter in the historical context of the region was the early 90s efforts by BHP to develop a titanium mineral sand mine adjacent to the study area. Despite a $280m investment, commercial and technical issues forced the mine closure, and its extensive rehabilitation.

This colonial history supports the investment in the region, and use of natural assets in a sensitive way to deliver commercial benefit. It is an isolated region that has historically seen a balance and restoration in the natural environment post human activity.

There is a potential net benefit gained from this project in relation to building on the colonial history of dairy farming in the region to prepare it for the future. Several local landowners and commercial stakeholders interviewed cited the opportunity from a landowner rental contribution as a potential passive income that has the potential to improve borrowing capacity to reinvest in secondary processing and take the local agricultural industry into the future.

"This is land that has been in my family for generations, I want to retire here or have the option to capitalise off the investment my family has made in the land here."
(IDI 2024)

6.5. RESILIENT & PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES

6.5.1 DECISION-MAKING SYSTEMS

"Include the people affected in the discussions. Reassure local people that wind farms are nothing to be feared. Explain the economic benefits and efficient use of land for multiple purposes." (Survey Respondent 2024)

Local decision-making systems are those that enable a community to contribute and determine their own future. There are several local decision-making systems that contribute to the governance and protection of the community, and its environment, in the face of change. These include:

- Local Government – who has two main responsibilities to the community that relate to this project. Firstly, the preparation and implementation of a district planning scheme, including development control, under the Planning and Development Act 2005, which allows Councils to control the use and development of land by way of the planning approval process. Secondly, the provision and maintenance of the local road system in accordance with the Local Government Act, provides Councils with an ability to limit or control heavy vehicle transport on its road system.
- Western Australian Planning Commission - under the Planning and Development Act 2005, the Commission has responsibility for determining applications to subdivide freehold land and is required to make recommendations to the Minister for Planning on proposed town or district planning schemes and amendments thereto. In addition, the Commission carries a regional and strategic planning function.
- Department of Primary Industries and Resource Development and the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation under the Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945, has control over the clearing of land or actions that may cause land degradation.
- Department of Water & Environmental Regulation - the Commissioner has the responsibility of managing the State's water resources, including the assessment and approval of applications for water bore licenses. Approvals can be given for limited periods and may contain specific conditions designed to protect the environment and the water resource.
- The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) administers the Environmental Protection Act 1986. Projects referred for assessment under the EPA Act, are independently assessed by the EPA and determination is made whether the activities proposed are significant or not. The EPA prepares a report for the Minister of Environment for any significant projects, and the Minister makes the ultimate determination including the setting of any conditions.
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions - the Department is responsible for the management of State forests, national parks and nature reserves, and for the protection of rare and endangered species.
  (Scott Coastal Plain Land Use Strategy 1996).

These regulatory and management authorities provide appropriate levels of governance to contribute to the development of management plans and monitoring across the proposed project lifecycle. They also offer opportunities for local stakeholders to be actively involved the decisions being made in the region.

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) is the Australian Government's central piece of environmental protection legislation. It provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places — defined in the EPBC Act as "matters of national environmental significance." The EPBC Act also provides guidance about acid sulfate soils (The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

There are also three pieces of State legislation that protect environmental values and that are relevant to the Scott River Catchment. These are the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984. The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 provides for the listing of threatened native plants (flora), threatened native animals (fauna) and threatened ecological communities that require greater protection (The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) set its priorities for declared pests by a declaration under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 (BAM Act). It is the landholders' legal obligation to manage/control invasive species (weeds and feral animals) on their land and this governance would apply to SynergyRED's activities on land within the designated area. Under the Act, there is a greater responsibility for the community and industry to identify, prioritise, and control established biosecurity threats (The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

These regulatory and decision-making bodies should provide re-assurance to landowners, stakeholders and the broader community that there are appropriate decision-making and governance structures in place to address raised concerns. As noted above for members of the community associated with the BHP Beenup Titanium Mine's model of engagement and subsequent closure, there is some skepticism about these decision-making bodies' ability to protect the natural environment in the face of industry pressure. That said, the BHP Beenup Consultative Group model that sought to actively involve stakeholders in decision-making was well received by the broader community and serves as a positive example for managing engagement processes over the lifecycle of a project in this region.

6.5.2 LAND TENURE

Strengthening the governance and security of land and housing tenure is an important part of building resilient communities.

The Scott Coastal Plain has been identified by the Western Australian State Planning Strategy 2050, as being an agricultural area of state/ regional significance. As such, its productive agricultural capacity is seen as the primary focus of secure land tenure in the region, and under the State Planning Strategy is to be protected against inappropriate subdivision or development.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and other government agencies continue to investigate the region to capitalise on these natural assets for further food cultivation and secondary processing, biomass and more innovative dairy agricultural solutions (IDI 2024, DPIRD 1996, The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

Any impact that restricts agricultural lot sizes, or usable land area, is noted to impinge on the productive capacity of the land by restricting the operational flexibility and by reducing the scale and viability of the farming enterprise. Subdivision is also noted by the State Planners to lead to speculative pressures and artificial increases of land values. In turn these effects may limit the financial capacity of that landowner to carry out the appropriate land management procedures.

In both the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River Town Planning Scheme No. 11 and the Shire of Nannup Town Planning Scheme No. 1, the privately owned land within the study area is currently zoned "Rural". These schemes allow for a wide range of uses to be permitted at the discretion of the Council, some requiring prior public advertising. Figure 17a and b shows the growth and shifts in land planning over the respective periods and by number respectively, highlighting both shifts in land tenure and increases in dwelling numbers at a regional level.

The Scott River Catchment is approximately 64,276ha, of which approximately 43% (27,000 ha) is farmland, 53% (34,700 ha) reserves, and 3% unallocated Crown land (UCL) (DWER 2019 land use data). There is a total of 53 properties used for agriculture or lifestyle purposes in the Catchment. There are six dairy farms, one dryland and five both irrigated and dryland. Three of the six dairy farms are managed by four family-owned businesses. One corporate company manages the remaining three farms. The other industries are beef and sheep, blue gum plantations, and native vegetation (White, 2012 and Whitfield, 2019 in The Scott River Action Plan 2020).

Most of the private land holdings on the Scott Coastal Plain are much larger in area than those in other parts of the South West. The lots north of the Scott River and east of Scott River Road are between 600ha and 1,200ha in area and few at around 50ha. Most of the holdings are family owned, and some have two or more lots forming the total farming enterprise. The large lot sizes, relatively low land values and minimal land speculation pressures in this area have provided a favourable basis for developing large scale agricultural enterprises. The placement of 40ha centre pivot irrigation systems throughout these lots have improved the productivity of the restrictions placed on the region by lot boundaries, streamlines, remnant vegetation, poorer soils or other constraints. To the west of Scott River Road, the lot sizes are generally in the range of 40ha to 200ha, with a few smaller lots. South of the Scott River the lot areas are much more variable, ranging generally from 100ha to 500ha. Several land holdings consist of a few much smaller lots (Scott River Action Plan 2020).

In the area known as East Augusta, on the eastern bank of the Hardy Inlet and at the end of Scott River Road, there is a precinct of about 50 lots around 4,000m2 to 8,000m2 in area (DPIRD 1996).

Land in the area has been tightly held since the 1960s as evidenced by property turnover data. Risks to land tenure and enterprise include the deep leached sandy soils and high-water tables, combined with the widespread applications of high levels of fertilisers that could lead to nutrient overload in the adjoining waterways, and a loss of important ecological habitats and recreational areas (DPIRD 1996).

Those landowners interviewed felt that there is significant opportunity to increase the value derived from the land through secondary processing, plantations and horticulture opportunities, however these opportunities are constrained by limited infrastructure, water, power, telecommunications and accommodation. This was supported by the aforementioned findings of the DPIRD study.

The proposed wind farm in Scott River will have a positive financial benefit on the host property owners and the passive income from wind turbines is seen as way to improve resilience and debt proof property for future investment borrowings.

The requirement for buffer zones associated with the wind turbine locations are perceived as a negative to land tenure security and capitalising on the land in the eyes of some landowners – particularly adjoining neighbours who perceive that they will not receive the passive income contribution for hosting the turbine. There will be a requirement to work with neighbours to ensure any plans for their property aren't affected by the proposed wind farm, or appropriate compensations for any required adjustment to their plans or compliance with certain building conditions is addressed.

Distances from wind turbines to dwellings is primarily based on noise compliance. A dwelling describes an existing or proposed building used for residential or accommodation purposes, that is, a building used for a 'noise sensitive purpose' as defined in the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997. Figure 16 shows the number of buildings across the Scott River and Molloy Island areas and demonstrates a low dispersal of buildings across the proposed project area.

"Access to land in Scott River is already a challenge, it is tightly held, wedged between national parks and state significant habitats, the perched water table and over 30% of wetland areas are on the farms. These are all excluded out of arable land, The proposed buffer is an additional issue that inhibits productivity and negatively impacts land value, and that is a key driver for me." (IDI 2024)

As per the Western Australian Planning Commission's Position Statement on Renewable Energy Facilities (2020), a buffer zone is required at a calculated distance between wind turbines and habitable dwellings. This distance is calculated based on noise modelling studies and landowner/neighbour agreements. In all cases, SynergyRED note that the priority is in ensuring that noise is compliant.

To maintain noise compliance throughout the life of the proposed wind farm in Scott River SynergyRED offer landowners and neighbours an annual fee to maintain a buffer zone around each wind turbine. This buffer zone limits the construction of new habitable dwellings within the zone.

There are no sensitive land uses i.e. those that are residential or institutional in nature such as a hospital, school or aged care facility where people live or regularly spend extended periods of time that would be compromised under the proposal land use by the proposed wind farm in Scott River.

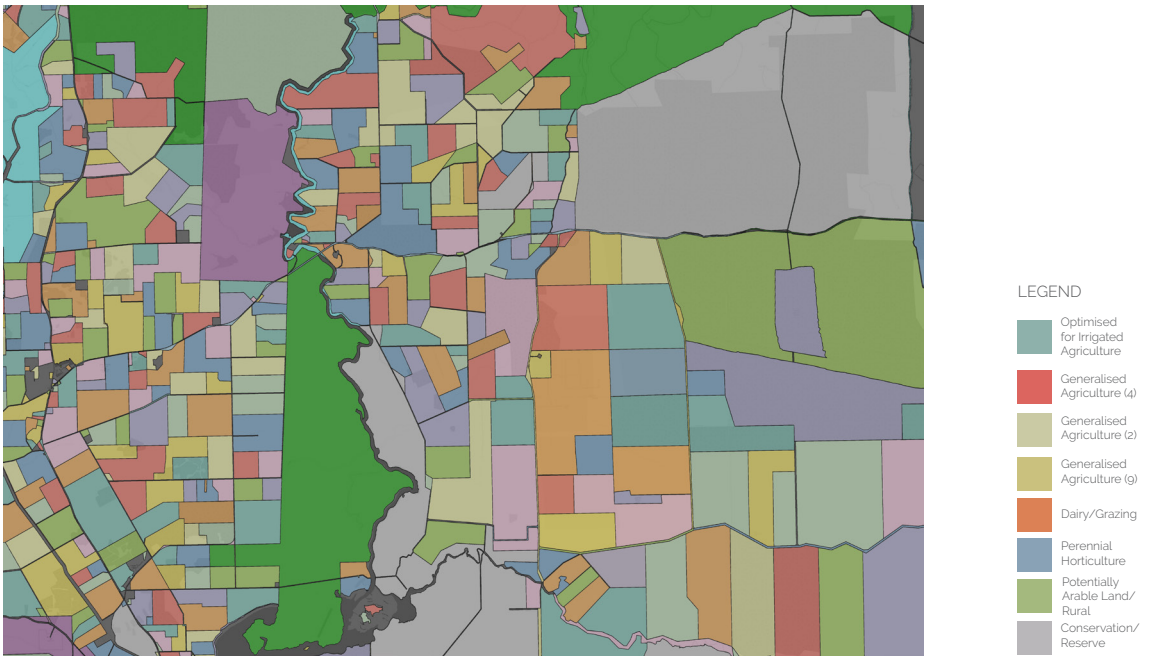


Figure 15. Land Capability across the Proposed Wind Farm in Scott River Area is classified by DPIRD as Rural Agricultural Scale 1: 50000 @A2

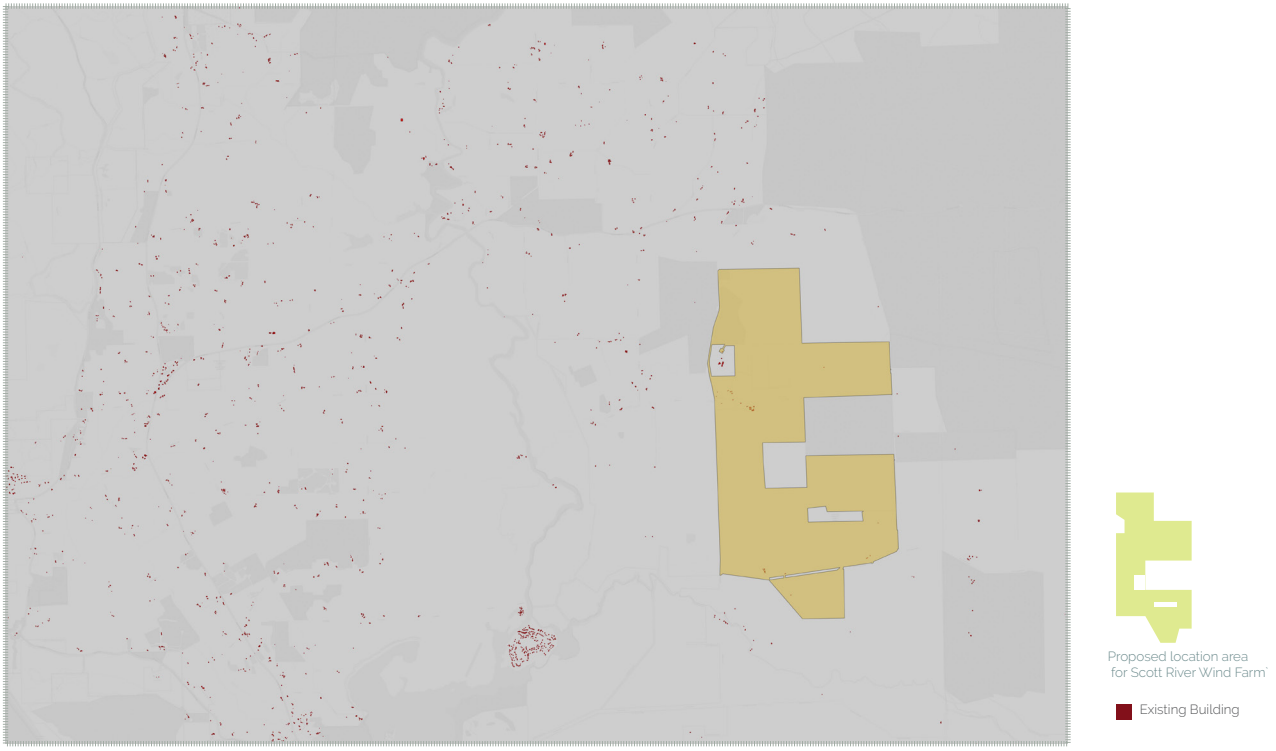


Figure 16. Study Area and Existing Buildings (Buildings_of_WA_DPIRD_084) - Scale 1: 50000 @A2

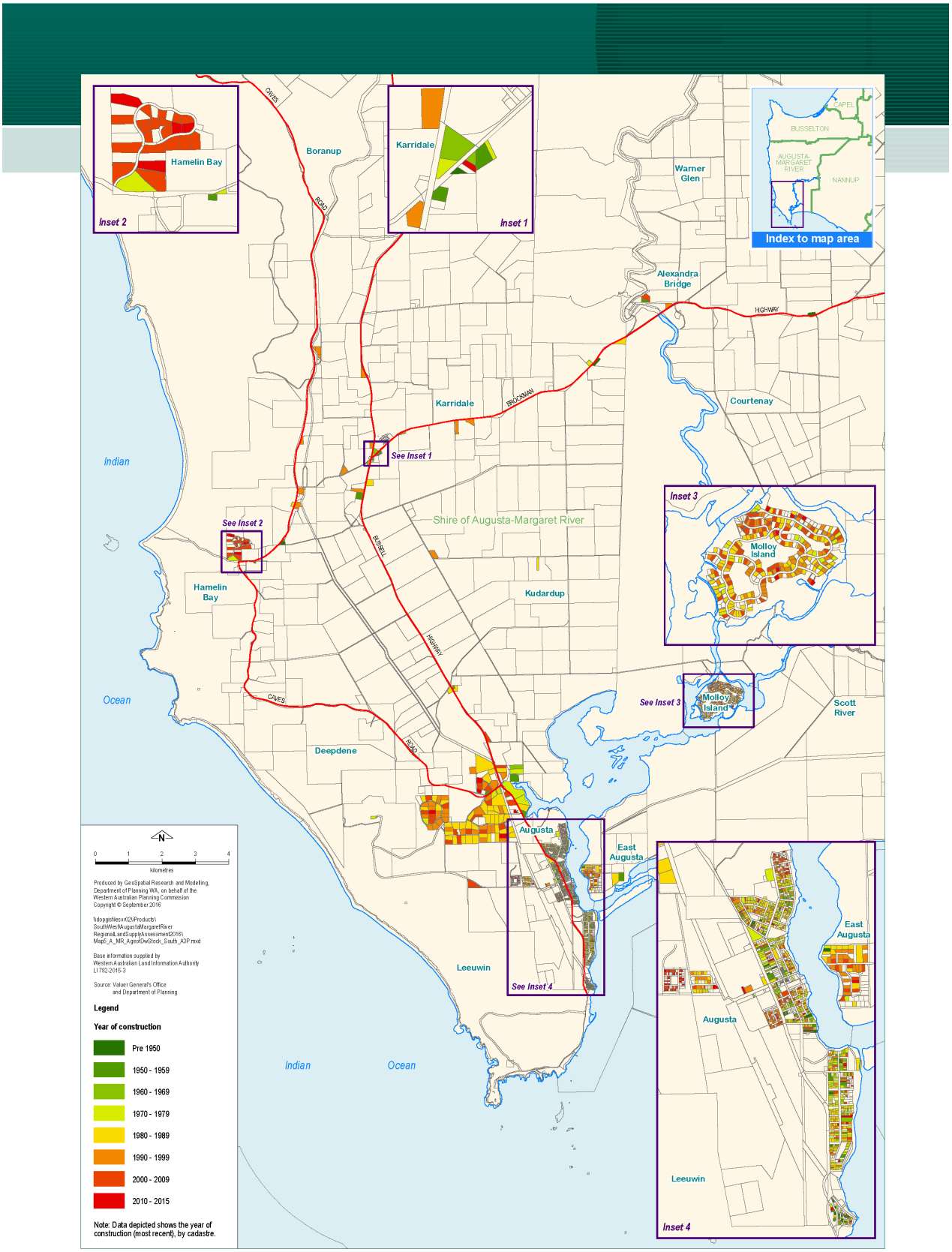


Figure 17a. Town Centre Land Planning and Period of Dwelling Construction

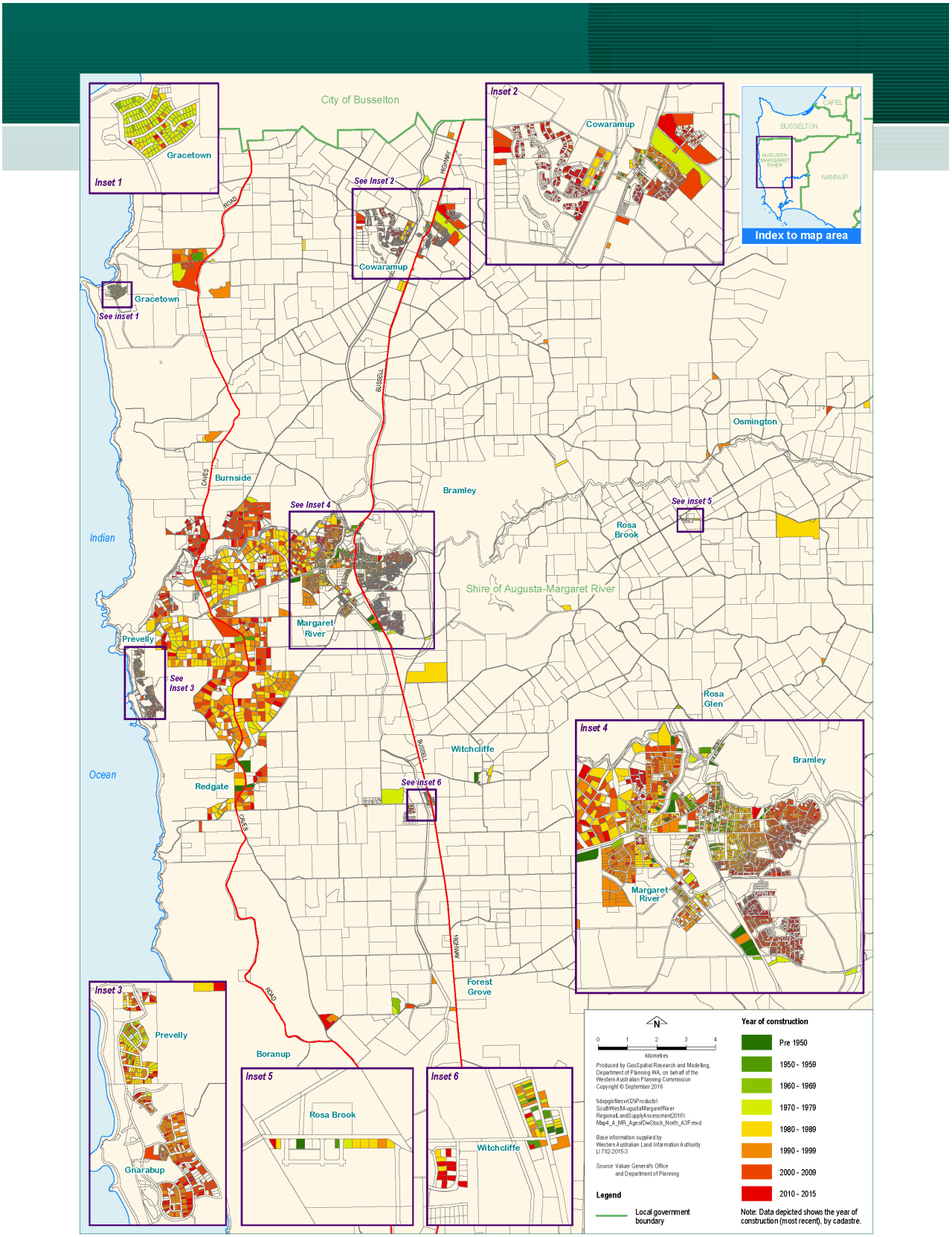


Figure 17b. Town Centre Land Planning and Period of Dwelling Construction

6.5.3 ROADS & TRANSPORT

In Australia, resilience in transportation is a critical indicator for a community to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to changing conditions, and withstand, respond or recover from disruption, particularly given the regional or rural nature of many communities across the country (Infrastructure Australia 2024).

The Scott River Catchment is remote and serviced primarily via Sues Road and Brockman Highway. The development of the BHP titanium mineral sands mine resulted in the reconstruction of parts of Brockman Highway, Black Point Road and Scott River Road, and the construction of Sues Road to the north.

Apart from a short section of Milyeanup Coast Road, all other roads in the study area are either graded earth roads or dirt tracks. One of the major constraints to road construction and upgrading in this area is the lack of road base materials within a reasonable haulage distance, as most of the materials reserves are located within the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and are generally not available for road purposes (Scott River Action Plan 2020).

A recent report by Monaghan, as cited in the referenced DPIRD Report shows that historically agricultural property movements in Scott River for supplies coming in, or stock/produce going out can generate up to 680 trucks per annum for the dairy farmers, 592 per annum for horticulture, and 2,083 per annum for farm forestry.

Consideration of these traffic movements, seasonal tourism visitation movements and natural constraints on access road construction will need to be incorporated into SynergyRED's decision making around traffic and transport in and out of the study area.

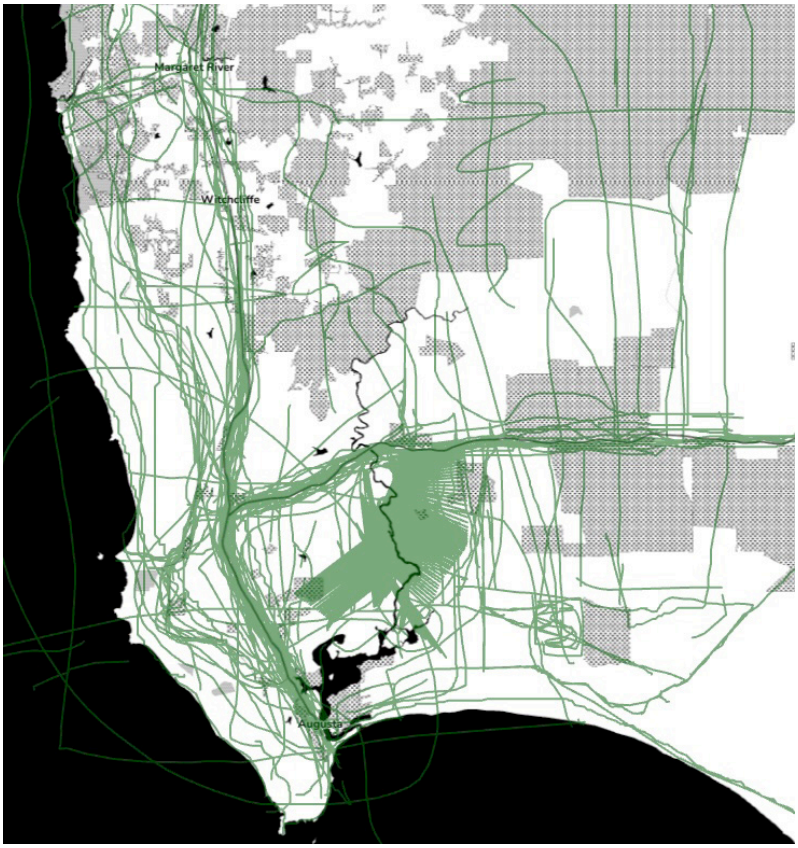


Figure 18. Indicative Primary Transport and Connection Arteries, as identified by respondents in the geospatial survey,

"The famers will lose feed or ability to get milk trucks in and out if they don't manage transport and roads use effectively." (IDI 2024)

6.5.4 POWER & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

""This region has always struggled with access to power, phone and basic utilities. Anything Synergy can do to help this would be well regarded." (IDI 2024)

Like transport corridors, power and telecommunications are essential infrastructure to maintain and generate future proofed resilient and prosperous communities.

Agricultural properties in the region are currently limited to single phase (240 volts) power supplies, which is sufficient to operate an irrigator, but a bore pump requires three phase (415 volts). There is a considerable cost saving in using appropriate electricity supplies, rather than diesel fuel, to power the plant associated with irrigated horticultural production (Monaghan 1999, as cited in the referenced DPIRD Report).

The landowners interviewed from in the study area have expressed a strong desire to connect to three phase power supplies. The Scott River Action Plan notes a preliminary estimate by Western Power to extend a suitable transmission line from the Beenup sub-station to the eastern sector of the study area. This is illustrated in Figure 19, page 37.

Currently, most of the properties in the central and western sections of the study area are connected to the Telstra cable phone system, but those in the east mostly rely on radio or satellite connections. Mobile telephone coverage is very limited. Those interviewed from Scott River and Augusta expressed a strong desire for an improved telecommunications service.

There may be an expectation on SynergyRED to work with Western Power or other utilities to improve power and telecommunications provisioning during construction, and operational stages of the proposed project.

6.5.5 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Remote settlements of less than 1,000 people in Western Australia are diverse in nature and present different challenges for government authorities, service providers, residents, commercial operators and funding agencies. Local service provision in remote settlements is governed by DPLH's Remote Services Level Guidelines, which looks at supply systems, networks, difficulties in access, size and technical knowledge/capacity.

In the Scott River region, local landowners and residents of these towns use the social infrastructure (schools, health and community facilities, commercial and civic facilities) in the larger surrounding towns such as Augusta, Witchcliffe and Margaret River. These are generally accessible and the communities at a scale that enables more appropriate provisioning of these services.

The Scott River Action Plan defines provision of community services from a common point at the Scott River township via the junction of Milyeannup Coast Road, Fouracres Road and Governor Broome Road, noting it is 70km to regional centre of Nannup, 60km to the township of Augusta, 68km to Margaret River, 81km to Pemberton and 84km to Manjimup. A small roadside shop, the Nillup General Store, exists on the north side of Brockman Highway, near the junction of Scott River Road.

The nearest regional hospital is at Augusta. The hospital includes a 24/5 Emergency Department, allied and general health services including mental health and telehealth services (WA Country Health 2024). All other regional community services are located within Augusta or Margaret River.

With increased population during construction and potential visitation to the proposed wind farm in Scott River as a tourist attraction, there is an implied implication amongst local stakeholders that this will see an increasing local population and in turn create the catalysts to improve local service provision.

However given the small scale of predicted impact in terms of population impact and flow on demand, this is unlikely to be a noticeable net benefit, nor a negative impact in terms of pressure on these services.

"There is so much pressure on facilities and infrastructure with growing population increases, slowing of subdivision development times and lag in services catch up to be ready." (IDI 2024)

6.5.6 WAY OF LIFE

"Windfarms are obviously not without landscape and visual impacts, however the Scott River location is able to accommodate impacts without adversely compromising way of life, or significant landscape values, as opposed, for example, to wind turbines on the coastal fringe or Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge." (IDI 2024)

Part of the definition of a resilient and prosperous community is a strong, healthy and active community that has a clear purpose and a collective spirit. There is no established townsite in the immediate study area. In most instances, the Scott River 'community' is defined, by those interviewed for this assessment, as their own intergenerational family members residing on a family property, rather than a traditional definition of a community of different families and social structures residing within a common location.

This differs outside the Scott River Region, for example the Molloy Island Community, who note their strong sense of community spirit, and connection to their broader social structures of adjacent neighbours and residents. While in Augusta, 'community' is described, in both the qualitative and quantitative fieldwork as the wider township, its residents and its visitors.

The way of life within the Scott River area is described, as work and agriculturally focused, related to activity as part of 'farm life,' with a strong sense of ongoing learning and volunteering. For those in East Augusta and Molloy Island, the way of life is connected to activities on the water, nature and "peace and quiet."

In the township of Augusta, as noted in Section 6.2, community cohesion, sports and recreation and volunteering within the community drive this way of life.

In terms of the proposed wind farm in Scott River, and any potential impacts on the way of life in the region, the visual amenity, lights, noise and activity were cited as the main concerns with any changes introduced. Over sixty percent (60%) respondents to the online survey noted "preserving what is unique about this area" as an extremely important attribute of the region, and over fifty percent (50%) also rated "peace and quiet" as extremely important.

The proposed wind farm in Scott River does have the potential to drive some division in attitudes within the local community. This relates to the current high-profile nature of the project locally and the divided and public positions on the net benefit or negative impacts of the project.

This is evident in the overall support results for the project that are currently polarised at either edge of the perception spectrum in both the online survey and reflected in the analysis of the in-depth interviews. This will require careful management by the SynergyRED project engagement team.

Figure 19. Map of Proposed Transmission Line, provided by SynergyRED

6.6. THRIVING, DIVERSE & EQUITABLE ECONOMY/WORKFORCE

"The DPIRD report has highlighted the importance of agriculture in the region with advantages of water, high water table, soil health, the future for income generation in the area has to be agriculture and a diversity of agriculture." (IDI 2024)

Socio-economic considerations for productive human settlements relate to having an ability to derive an income, access to a thriving, diverse and equitable economy and workforce, and to have an active supply chain providing necessary goods and services. Delivery of this requires energy, appropriate infrastructure and a compatible range of industries/occupations/activities to provide livelihood and work for those currently employed in the energy industry or those currently outside the sector who may need additional skills, training or pathways if to benefit..

The proposed wind farm for Scott River will bring some employment opportunities, local procurement and the provision of improved regional infrastructure. The challenge will be ensuring the proposal is compatible with the existing agricultural productivity and tourism visitation, that the human settlements within the region are not only heavily reliant upon, but from which they also derive their sense of identity, history and community cohesion.

6.6.1 INDUSTRY SECTORS

The Shire of Augusta-Margaret River note its core industry sectors as tourism, agriculture, construction and manufacturing, noting "*tourism has just taken over agriculture in the region, followed by construction and manufacturing which primarily relates to wine making.*" (IDI 2024)

The total gross value of agriculture in the Scott River region is approximately $19.2 million, with a total value add $28 million (DPIRD Scott Coastal Plain – A Strategy for a Sustainable Future).

In addition to the agricultural activity described earlier, there are several other emerging and growth industry sectors around the Scott River Region. These include Abalone fishing and tourism. In the tourism sector, growth is being seen in boutique accommodation, remote camping and forestry, water-based activities and whale watching.

Wherever possible demonstrated compatibility between wind farms and agricultural activity, as well as nature-based tourism will need to be shown, and the evidence shared with local stakeholders and the broader community by the SynergyRED's engagement and access negotiation teams.

6.6.2 EMPLOYMENT

Employment opportunities are relatively low within the study area and are predominately related to agricultural management and trade/ farm hand roles. The proposed wind farm in Scott River introduces the opportunity to increase access to specialised and technical staff that may have some complimentary skills in terms of equipment or infrastructure maintenance on the rural properties.

Providing local employment opportunities is seen as the strongest area in which SynergyRED could deliver to this value to the community's benefit, with around a third (38.2%) rating it as 5 extremely well (to our benefit).

A full economic profile in terms of qualifications, industry of employment and employment numbers for each of the communities assessed is provided in Appendix 2.

Current Activity in Scott River Region	Employment per 100 ha	Area (ha)	Total Employment
Dairying (year-round workforce)	2	1,750	35
Horticulture (largely seasonal March to May)	50	450	225
Other (including Plantations)		5,000	30
Accommodation Provision			
Permanent Workforce			37
Seasonal Workforce			90
Total Beds			127

Table 2: Summary of Activity, Employment and Local Accommodation Provision in Scott River

"Employ local and look to local involvement in maintenance and blade restoration." (IDI 2024)

"It is a good thing for jobs, expenditure, and the local economy." (IDI 2024)

6.6.3 ABILITY TO DERIVE AN INCOME

"Compensate all local property owners in Scott River for their losses." (Survey Respondent 2024)

The ability to derive an income refers to one's earning capacity and the source from which that earning is drawn.

The impact on the agricultural landowners and the ability to derive an income is discussed in Section 6.5.2, 6.5.3 and Section 6.6.1 around land tenure and economic diversity. This risk is relatively low with respect to any negative impacts on the ability of the local community to derive an income, unless there are construction or operational impacts that have a flow-on impact to water quality, soil degradation, or fire. These will need to be managed carefully through appropriate management plans as noted in Section 6.3.1 to Section 6.3.3.

Several respondents in the qualitative fieldwork discussed the positive flow on that regular income for hosting a wind farm on a property has in terms of improved borrowing capacity for further capital investment.

A few respondents noted a potential negative impact for those wishing to capitalise through sub-division of their property. These are discussed above under land tenure, and as per the Western Australian State Planning Report for the region, sub-division and property price speculation are being restricted and controlled through efforts within the planning system, rather than being impacted by this proposed project.

6.6.4 SUPPLY CHAIN

As noted in Section 6.5.3 to Section 6.5.5, this proposed project can improve local supply chains through improved energy access, road and transportation link uplifts, procurement of local contractors and enabling passive income to local dairy farmers to invest in secondary processing and other value add propositions.

Synergy's obligations with regards to Western Australian industry participation and other government local procurement supply policies, the extent to which expenditure may be allocated, the types of supply chain opportunities and the availability of such goods and services in the region are outlined in Section 4.1 Summary of Synergy's Social Performance Approach.

Care will need to be taken during construction to ensure increased traffic does not interfere with agricultural transport to local properties, to avoid impacting their access to efficient supply chains.

"The ability to get equipment and feed in and milk/cattle trucks out, plus cattle movements is critical, and the roads aren't good." (IDI 2024)

7. PROJECT IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS

SynergyRED is aiming to determine the feasibility of a proposed wind farm in Scott River. Section 6 of this report detailed the social values held in high importance to the local communities, and areas of concern in SynergyRED's ability to manage any impacts on these values to the communities' detriment or benefit.

The following project description outlines the current project model being considered under this feasibility stage. It provides the baseline for the recommendations made in Section 8. Already several project decisions have considered the findings of this study and SynergyRED's ongoing engagement with local stakeholders and community members.

7.1. Project Description

The proposed 100MW onshore wind farm in Scott River is approximately 15 km north-east of the Augusta townsite in the south-west region of Western Australia (Figure 3). It is proposed to consist of up to 20 wind turbines and associated infrastructure and will connect into the South-West Interconnected System (SWIS) via the existing 132kV transmission line between Beenup and Manjimup. The proposed onshore wind farm is located on predominantly cleared freehold land used for farming and adjacent road reserves.

The design and layout has not yet been finalised. The indicative development footprint, shown in Figure 3 and 4, has been informed by discussions with landowners as well as in consideration of advice and any constraints identified from the various technical studies conducted in support of the proposed wind farm in Scott River.

The final layout will be determined through a comprehensive tender process. The turbine manufacturer will be selected by SynergyRED, who will then confirm the specifications of the wind turbines (including make, model, etc.) and the resulting final development footprint. This will be based on further detailed technical studies (e.g., geotechnical investigations) to ensure compliance with relevant international and national standards, guidelines, and site-specific constraints related to environment, heritage, and planning requirements. It is recommended that this tender process includes demonstration of how the final proposed layout will address the barriers and constraints raised in this social values assessment.

7.2. Project Scale and Size

The proposed wind farm in Scott River currently includes a maximum of 20 wind turbines, with a total maximum capacity of up to 100MW. The indicative turbine locations have been selected to maximise energy production whilst minimising impacts on the surrounding environment.

The overall height of the turbines (combination of hub height and blade length) shall not exceed 250m, as per the turbine design parameters being considered:

- Max blade length 90m.
- Tower/hub height between 80 to 164m.
- Turbine tip height between 150 to 250m.

The final turbine design and layout will be dependent on several factors including market conditions, cost of construction, availability of wind turbine infrastructure and the capacity of the existing 132kV power line. The cabling between the wind turbines will be underground and follow the roads as much as possible to minimise clearing and impacts on landowners.

Visual amenity, noise, impacts on the environmental values of biodiversity, flora and fauna, and the way of life in this remote region should be factored into decision-making around project size and scale.

7.3. Other Associated Infrastructure

Other associated infrastructure will include the substation, operations, and maintenance buildings, 4km transmission line, roads, and cabling. Foundations for each turbine will vary depending on the imposing load, ground conditions, construction methodology, and drainage requirements of the site. The depth of the foundation depends on a range of factors including turbine type, ground conditions and the unique Scott River geology. Traditional turbine foundation depth is generally around 4-5m. .

During construction up to six wind monitoring towers (meteorological masts or 'met masts') will be installed to obtain accurate wind speed measurements from the prevailing wind directions. Following commissioning up to three of these met masts will remain throughout operations (Figure 2). The met masts are required to be located a certain distance from nearby turbines and their locations will be confirmed at the detailed design phase to ensure that accurate measurements can be obtained throughout the life of the project in accordance with international standards. Met masts will be installed to the height of the turbine hub height (maximum height of 164m).

A microwave communication tower, with a height of 100m, would also be installed to enable the wind farm substation to communicate with Western Power operations remotely.

If the project is deemed feasible and environmental and regulatory approvals achieved, construction is anticipated to take up to 24 months. Project schedule and commencement time will be impacted by approvals timing and a conservative outlook on scheduling is being considered.

The physical construction of associated infrastructure, any clearing activities, gravel and concrete sourcing and production, operational use and construction activity (timing, location, access, visibility and noise) and accommodation of the construction workforce will have impact on the social values outlined in this report. Consideration should be given to clarifying these impacts as project decisions are made.

7.4. Project Water Requirements

Two 200kL water tanks and four 45kL water tanks will be installed to support construction and operational water requirements, including Emergency Services in the event of a bushfire either onsite or externally. This would likely be sourced elsewhere, purchased and ported in. There is a possibility that any dewater collected during construction, if treated appropriately to a suitable quality, maybe able to also be used during construction.

Water sourcing, provisioning, use, de-watering, treatment, and storage are of prime interest to all stakeholders and members of the broader community. It is an attribute with a high social value and the value placed should be factored into decision making, and engagement strategy development.

7.5. Clearing Requirements

The proposed project would involve little vegetation clearing as project infrastructue and associated activities will be located in previously cleared areas. Clearing of any previously disturbed or undisturbed areas will need to factor in the high social value placed on the ironstone flora communities, bird life and other fauna and visual amenity. Again, this should be factored into decision making, and engagement strategy development.

7.6. Land Access and Buffer

A cleared area of approximately 40-70m around each turbine will be required to maintain vehicle access. This area would not be usable for farming. A buffer zone of up to 100m would be in place around each turbine that would limit built construction within this area, with farming activities still permissible on this land.

There would be two main site access points into the wind farm to achieve safe access and minimise community disruption during the construction stage, as well as reducing the extent of local roads required for delivery of turbine components. The site would also include three additional emergency services access points to allow easy access to and movement around the site.

On-site access roads will be designed to utilise existing roads or disturbance as much as practicable to limit impacts on the environment and existing agricultural activities once the wind farm is fully operational. The internal site access roads will be private roads only accessible to the landowners, and Synergy and its contractors.

It is anticipated that up to 30 km of gravel capped roads will be required, with the following design criteria and mitigation measures applied to mitigate potential impacts:

- Access road widths will typically be approximately 5-6m wide, with some portions proposed to be wider to accommodate turning circles for cranes, trucks, and other construction/delivery and emergency vehicle requirements.
- Turning areas and passing bays will be constructed where necessary.
- Roads are not proposed to be sealed and will be constructed from locally sourced aggregate/gravel.
- Drainage channels will be located on either side of the road as necessary.
- Culverts will be installed to maintain flows across the site.

These access roads will remain permeable and unsealed to allow for improved water penetration and minimised impact.

Minor works will be undertaken at these entrance points to facilitate the entry of large vehicles, including blade transport trucks and emergency services. This would typically involve widening of the road surface area and gates. Intersection works will be defined through the detailed design phase following turbine procurement and confirmation of blade length, and in consultation with the Shire.

Again, any access point or road construction, whether on previously disturbed or undisturbed areas, will need to factor in the high social value placed on the ironstone flora communities, bird life and other fauna and visual amenity. That said, improved access does have flow on benefits for the agriculture and wherever possible a net benefit to loss ratio should be applied.

Clearing, water management, and location of turbines and access decisions should be discussed openly with stakeholders and factored into project team and contractor inductions, as well as the engagement strategy.

7.7. Workforce and Employment

The Proposal is expected to require a workforce of up to 150 personnel at peak construction periods. The construction period is expected to take 18 to 24 months. It is anticipated that construction workforce will be accommodated at existing facilities in surrounding towns and localities, with no construction camp or temporary onsite accommodation currently proposed as part of this Proposal.

Once operational, it is anticipated that approximately five full time wind farm technicians who reside locally will be required throughout the life of the project, working day shift only and will be on call during weekends. These on-site personnel will be responsible for reporting, monitoring, and some maintenance of the wind turbines. Where required, an additional expert maintenance technicians would be engaged.

There will be several additional offsite personnel and contractors who will perform Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) coordination, turbine performance monitoring and licensing compliance, wind farm reporting and remote resetting and controlling.

There may be local supply chain opportunities for maintenance and refurbishment work during the project's operational lifetime. These would be sourced in line with SynergyRED's procurement processes and policies.

Again, as noted in Section 6.6 any local employment or procurement opportunities will have a positive net flow of improved access to workforce participation, skill development and income. A few respondents in the quantitative survey provided feedback that opportunities for technical, environmental, health and safety training could also be provided by SynergyRED to the broader community to increase this opportunity and benefit. Other participation requests around environmental surveying, rehabilitation and monitoring were also made.

Care will need to be taken in decisions relating to accommodation of the construction workforce during peak times to ensure any negative impacts on the community's perception of safety, cohesion, and pressure on supply or pricing is managed.

7.8. Tourism Opportunity

A wind farm viewing area that can accommodate up to six vehicles will be developed off Scott River Road to ensure a safe pull over area where tourists can stop and observe the turbines and learn about renewable wind energy.

This would be a positive net benefit to the local community, and one that offers an opportunity for active community participation in decision-making and engagement.

7.9. Project Lifecycle Considerations

The proposed wind farm in Scott River would have an operational life of approximately 30 years. Once the operational life of the wind farm comes to an end, the wind farm can be repowered by replacing the wind turbines, or wind turbine components to extend its life, or decommissioned with land returned to its previous state, or as agreed by the landowner.

Leaving a minimal footprint in this remote and natural environment is a core value expressed by local stakeholders and community members. Active engagement and involvement in project lifecycle planning, monitoring and rehabilitation should be factored in early in the project feasibility process.

Clarification on the lifecycle implications of wind farms compared with other energy sources has been requested by participants in this study.

8. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. ENERGY TRANSITION

This proposed project has a significant net positive actual impact in terms of the transition to renewable energy for Western Australia's future, generating up to 100MW of power which would be contributed to the grid.

Electricity from the proposed wind farm would feed into the Beenup substation in Scott River, which connects to homes and businesses in Augusta, Scott River, Molloy Island, Alexandra Bridge, Karridale, Hamelin Bay, East Augusta and Forest Grove. The remaining electricity from the proposed wind farm would flow along the transmission line to Manjimup, Collie and the rest of the energy grid.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

1. Providing neutral, accurate and timely information that sets out a relative comparison of the proposed project against different future renewable options in terms of lifecycle renewal, power consistency, carbon footprint, supply and cost may help moderate any polarisation of the debate within the community.

2. Consider financial support, or donation of technical expertise, to flagged projects around biomass, a micro-grid project or technological uplifts to elevate power supply or support through passive investment diversification, as recommended by DPIRD and the Dairy Industry Association, to show direct benefit flowing into the community.

8.2. POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

The provision of appropriate accommodation, infrastructure and community services to support this growing population is somewhat limited, and pressure is evident in increasing rental and housing prices, government agency feedback and current investment into these areas within the community (Infrastructure WA 2022, Shire of Augusta Margaret River Annual Report 2024).

As such any population shift, or demographic change, is often shown to be more significantly felt in a smaller community, than comparatively within a larger regional centre where adequate services and infrastructure are already in place to service a larger population (Cheshire, Lynda, et al 2014).

In addition, any impact on the perceived values of "isolation," "peace" and "close-knit" nature of this community will be felt. This potential impact was raised by community members in both the qualitative and quantitative stages of the study.

That said, given the small operational workforce, this project would not have a noticeable impact on the demographic profile of the community, except during construction. The addition of up to 150 construction workers during peak construction, whose industry profile tends to show a greater proportion of young males within it (Master Builders Australia 2024), will sit differently within the ageing demographic of Molloy Island and Augusta, and other small population clusters distributed through the area.

The size of construction workforce may put pressure on social cohesion, accommodation, rental prices, utilities and services within the region, although it is noted that this is a short-term impact (Carrington, et al 2016, Scott and Hogg 2015, Lockie, Stewart, et al 2009, Bush and Lipari 2015, Chapman, Janine, et al, 2020, Pidd, K, et al, 2019, Shire of Augusta Margaret River Annual Report 23/24). This potential impact was considered a concern by several community members in both the qualitative and quantitative stages of the study.

Positive flow-on social benefit could be achieved through income contribution to accommodation providers, advice or suggestions on appropriate training or pathways to access employment within Synergy or the energy sector for the local workforce, local procurement and increased participation in social, sporting and recreation clubs.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

3. Any project decisions relating to accommodation of the construction workforce should consider:
   - Potential impacts on the region's smaller, tourism-based communities,
   - Potential impacts on communities such as Augusta whose demographic profile differs significantly from that of the profile of the construction workforce, as referenced in Section 8.2,
   - Potential impacts on rental housing, or holiday accommodation, that is already under pressure and where additional pressure may negatively impact residents, and visitors, in terms of rising prices, or reduced supply.
   - A commitment to achieve a greater diversity in the profile of the construction, and operational, workforce would reduce social impacts historically associated with construction workforces in regional areas.
   - The potential of a construction camp was raised by the local government, and some landowners, as an opportunity to address this pressure. Early investigations suggest that an accommodation camp may not be financially and commercially viable. Synergy should explore and continue to test the market should the project progress to the next stage. Other mitigation strategies could include recommended accommodation zones, behavioural management, policies and communication strategies.

8.3. ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

The primary impact on environmental values and stewardship for this project are around water, visual amenity, flora and fauna. A full assessment of impacts on social and environmental values for these indicators will require project location, transport routes and construction decisions to be finalised.

However, the baseline provides a snapshot in time to help guide project feasibility decision making and design of mitigation strategies to minimise any potential negative social impacts.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

4. Recognise the importance of water, soils, ironstone floral communities, and conservation significant flora and fauna unique to this area, and, wherever possible, avoid the areas noted as high value through the quantitative survey results, and through SynergyRED's commissioned environmental and visual impact studies and assessments.

5. Support local volunteer and care groups to ensure that ongoing protection and restoration of the natural assets continues.

6. Ensure induction protocols include recognition of important flora and fauna values, expected behaviours are articulated in response to these, and weed mitigation control for vehicles entering the site is in place to assist in protection of local flora.

8.4. WATER

Changes in surface water flows from placement of infrastructure and any impact on already degraded water supplies was raised as a concern by several participants in both the qualitative and quantitative stages of the study.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

7. Develop a project management plan to manage any potential impacts to groundwater and acid sulfate soils.

8. Support local volunteer and care groups to ensure that ongoing protection and restoration of the natural waterways will continue.

9. Consider social values around water in any project decisions relating to dewatering requirements, clearing, access road or footing installation.

10. Ensure induction protocols include recognition of values, expected behaviours, and control for spills/discharges.

8.5. FLORA

The Scott River Region's sensitive flora communities, and the role they play in regional biodiversity is an important consideration for the proposed windfarm in Scott River. The following recommendations were provided by technical experts of the Wildflower Society and local conservation groups.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

11. A management plan be developed to manage any potential impacts on ironstone communities, waterlogged soils, and surface water flows to address community concerns around these values.

12. Support local volunteer and care groups to ensure that ongoing protection and restoration of the natural flora and fauna is seen as valued.

13. Ensure induction protocols include recognition of flora values through visual guides, controls for clearing and vehicle and transport protocols.

14. Priority actions include appropriate management and monitoring for weed control and spread of dieback disease, in line with standard industry practice in flora and biodiversity protection.

8.6. SOILS

SynergyRED has completed preliminary geotechnical investigations and is progressing detailed geotechnical investigations to adequately characterise the site, including the location of potentially acid sulfate soils. SynergyRED would submit an acid sulfate soils management plan to the Department of Water and Environment Regulation for approval prior to construction.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

15. Develop management plans outlining the proposed management strategies, and a comprehensive monitoring program, to ensure impacts on the downstream environment are appropriately managed.

16. Investigate as part of the feasibility study alternative foundation types, construction timing, and dewatering methodologies.

17. Consideration of corrosion in choice of foundation materials and associated steel infrastructure.

8.7. FAUNA

The following recommendations are based on the information and secondary research provided by Bird Life Australia in relation to minimising potential impacts on identified priority species of birds and bats. They should be considered against SynergyRED's Environmental Impact Assessment conclusions and appropriate messages provided to stakeholders and community as project decisions are finalised.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

18. Effort be made to avoid areas between forest or waterways (as birds will cross the turbine areas to move between fragments), and along forested ridge or waterways (as these are often used as navigational aids by birds and bats, abutting forest or remnants (as increased foraging activity along edges).

19. Reduce the attractiveness of turbine areas for birds and bats by minimising perching opportunities (e.g. guy lines) and lighting.

20. Provision of "passive" visual cues may enhance the visibility of the rotor blades enabling birds to take evasive action in due time. (May et al 2020).

21. Once built, ongoing management to reduce bird deaths during periods of high risk may be necessary, such as during peak foraging activity times and poor weather conditions (rainy, foggy, poor visibility).

22. Understand appropriate flight patterns through the environment studies and where possible establish fauna buffer zones to minimise collision hazards. This can be determined based on high habitat value features (e.g. hollow bearing trees or raptor nests) and biological and species specific information.

23. Lighting at operation and maintenance facilities should be on sensors, hooded and directed to minimise skyward illumination.

24. Funding scientific research to address information gaps and areas of uncertainty, i.e. barotrauma, low and high-speed rates of movement for bats, modeling work based on microbat activity periods/weather conditions. Information should be passed into the public arena to assist in future assessments.

25. Appropriate timing of construction activities to minimise impacts to birds and microbats, i.e. outside of known nesting periods.

8.8. FIRE

Fire in this region would have potentially catastrophic consequences to human life, property and emergency services. Studies conducted by SynergyRED to date demonstrates a low fire risk resulting from this proposed project, and note fire suppression and other risk management procedures will be in place.

Improved private access roads will allow better access for emergency services in case of fire, and provide additional fire breaks. Dedicated water tanks at the proposed wind farm can also be used in the event of a fire (SynergyRED).

Aerial firefighting is generally not impacted by a wind farm, with aircraft generally able to avoid the wind turbines in a similar manner to other obstacles such as power lines and communications towers. However, within the volunteer fire fighting community, interference with aerial firefighting activities is seen to be a perceived impact that is seen to potentially result in increased destruction of native vegetation and habitat during fire events. This may need to be worked through with DFES and as part of a local fire management plan.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

26. Ensure appropriate fire monitoring and prevention protocols around ignition sources are in place during construction and operations.

27. Install wind turbines with fire detection and fire suppression systems to prevent significant fires.

28. Employ a robust fire management plan for the proposed project to mitigate risks, in consultation with Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

29. Work with local volunteer fire brigades to ensure local protocols are employed, and all staff onsite are inducted to local nuances relating to fire risk.

30. Maintain appropriate levels of water for emergency response events as highlighted in the current project planning detailed in Section 7.4.

8.9. SENSE OF PLACE

The vast openness, peace, quiet, agricultural activities, forest, natural waterways and flora and fauna in the Scott River area are all contributing social values to maintaining a sense of place in the region. The scale of turbines, their layout and visibility/noise can be seen as a hinderance to this sense of place, or as in the case of Albany and many other European communities can be a value add contributing to a sense of place and pride over time.

Van Der Horst and Vermeylen in their LA Journal Article "Beautiful Eyesores" comment on this new way of seeing the aesthetics of wind energy turbines in remote areas in terms of functional and iconic landscapes. This balance will need to be sought, and communicated, as the proposed wind farm for Scott River moves forward in planning.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

31. Monitoring and finding appropriate controls for light emissions/shadow flicker and noise that may impact on the sense of remoteness, quiet and night sky.

32. Explore creative solutions around the aesthetic of the wind turbines – suggestions made by interview respondents include impressive artist murals and design. Wayfinding signage that described the art or the future of energy may assist to promote the infrastructure as a tourism asset and minimise negative perceptions. This may assist to create a greater net positive benefit. This would need to be done in a collaborative way with the community and professional artists to realise the benefit.

8.10. INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

SynergyRED, via consultants, have completed Aboriginal Heritage Surveys of the area in January 2024. The survey was conducted in accordance with the Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement under the South West ILUA to determine whether Aboriginal sites existed, and if any such sites would be impacted by the proposal. The survey was completed with local Elders nominated by the Karri Karrak Aboriginal Corporation.

A draft of the report provided to Synergy by the Heritage Consultant from the completed survey indicates no previously unrecorded Aboriginal sites were identified. The draft report also advises that SynergyRED can proceed with the proposed activities within the survey area with no regulatory approval required under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, excepting the portion of the survey area that remains unsurveyed and the ID20434 Blackwood River and ID22928 Scott River Aboriginal heritage sites. See Figure 14.

There was a request to avoid the identified specific tree at the intersection of Sues Road, Chester Road, and Brockman Highway, as well as the cultural protection of raptors, ospreys, and the wetlands and waterways.

Further discussions with Karri Karrak Aboriginal Corporation brought forward the following recommendations.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

33. Engage with Karri Karrak Aboriginal Corporation as the project moves from feasibility into planning to actively involve the local Indigenous community via an established set of consultation protocols for the life of the project.

34. If the project moves from feasibility to planning, to engage with Karri Karrak and the cultural representatives regarding opportunities for culturally appropriate interpretative material, employment and contracting opportunities.

35. Ensure all inductions and engagement protocols are in place prior to any commencement of works, potential clearing or accommodation/infrastructure activity.

8.11. COLONIAL HERITAGE

The local history and heritage of this region demonstrates social values of persistence, perseverance and an attachment to commercialising natural assets for greater community good, such as food supply, recreation and tourism-based activities.

There is an opportunity for the proposed wind farm in Scott River to demonstrate these core values in terms of provision of clean energy for the future, respecting and caring for the natural environment and persevering to deliver a win-win project for the local community and state.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

36. Ensure the proposed wind farm in Scott River adds another level of demonstratable economic activity to the region in terms of energy provision, as well as potential for investment in the historic dairy industry to sure up its future.

8.12. RESILIENT AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES

The Federal Government defines community resilience and prosperity as the long-term wellbeing of a community and its ability to recover from, adapt and thrive in the face of change (Marinucci 2024). These changes are generally considered to be natural, economic or human made influences, pressures and disasters. This is generally the product of appropriate decision-making systems, land and housing security, connections and access and infrastructure provision, all of which are described in Section 6.5.1 to Section 6.5.6.

SynergyRED's proposed wind farm in Scott River adds resilience to the wider community through power generation and energy transition. However, at a local level the direct and tangible visibility of this contribution is not recognised locally.

Given the low operational workforce numbers and minimal impact on adequate provision of health and community service infrastructure, these are not discussed within this social values assessment. Further consideration of health and community service impacts should be considered if additional projects in the region were added into the future and contributed to cumulative impacts.

8.13. DECISION-MAKING SYSTEMS

The qualitative and quantitative fieldwork results have highlighted a strong expectation by local stakeholders and community members to be informed of, and actively involved in, decision making related to the proposed wind farm in Scott River. The suggestions to minimise negative impacts of the proposed wind farm in Scott River included demonstrating values around flexibility, transparency, humility and listening, educating and engagement, explaining energy generation and future technologies, being actively involved in clearing, monitoring and rehabilitation work associated with the project and involvement in decision making. See Figure 20a and b.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

37. Work to increase the community's faith in engagement and positive benefit decision making to help create a resilient and prosperous community through efforts and consistency to educate, inform and proactively demonstrate benefit across each stage of the project lifecycle.

38. If the project moves through the feasibility stage to a planning stage, ongoing consultation and application of any of the recommended/suggested mitigation strategies will need to be provided to those affected stakeholders. This will be the basis in which the community and stakeholders will feel they have had a say in the decisions that affect them.

8.14. LAND TENURE

Decisions relating to final locations for the proposed wind farm in Scott River turbines and associated infrastructure would have an impact on local landholdings and potential compensation income flow-ons. These will need to be managed not only from a commercial perspective, but also through recognising the social value attachment to land and its use and the financial gains for some landowners over others in region.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

39. Positive benefit can be realised through landowner rental agreements relating to the placement of the proposed wind farm in Scott River Turbines on private land, and there is an opportunity to demonstrate good faith and fairness through these negotiations.

40. Clarify the terms of the buffer restrictions and the definition of dwelling within the broader landowner community, particularly where it relates to sheds, workshops, proposed accommodation and other infrastructure on an adjacent property.

41. Consider power offsets, or additional benefits, for adjacent or affected landowners, not just those hosting a wind turbine as part of the landowner's agreement.

8.15. ROAD & TRANSPORT NETWORKS

Construction and operational activities will have implications for the road network and will need to be considered in mitigation management. Timing, and planning to reduce impacts on existing traffic on these remote roads will need to be factored into planning given the impact any congestion will have on access to local rural properties and essential transport for the agricultural industry and local supply chains.

Increased truck movements may increase the risk of collision on remote roads which would be classified as a project safety risk and should be managed as such.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

42. Access road planning should include considerations around drainage, permeability, protection of the ironstone roadside flora communities, tourism and agricultural traffic movements on the remote roads around the site, and safety.

43. A Traffic Planning and Management System is recommended to be developed to avoid key supply chain routes for dairy and feed trucks in and out of Scott River Region, particularly during construction.

44. Where possible, construction and turbine movements to be managed outside peak regional tourism seasons and key agricultural seasons.

8.16. POWER & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

SynergyRED are undertaking an Electromagnetic Interference study to identify issues and potential mitigation strategies if required. Liaison with other utility providers in the region will continue during subsequent project phases.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

45. Consider an advocacy approach on behalf of the local community with partnering utilities and service providers to improve power and communications into the Scott River Catchment.

8.17. COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

46. SynergyRED could encourage local procurement of goods and use of local community services, as well as employee volunteering, to both direct employees and contractors, under Synergy's Social Values Framework to improve economic return to the local community and encourage investment in these core services.

8.18. WAY OF LIFE

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

47. Care should be taken in the engagement strategy to ensure the community is not publicly pushed into a position of support or against the project, which may contribute to polarisation within this close-knit community. Rather discussion should focus on discussing the potential impacts and benefits, and how these can best be managed with community input.

48. Consideration of the way of life and demographics of the differing local settlements should be considered in decisions relating to accommodation of construction and operational workforces.

49. Contribution with respect to Synergy's benefit funding and social performance commitments should be made in line with existing community values and way of life.

8.19. INDUSTRY SECTORS

The economic footprint for the operational project area is small based on workforce size, and predicted local economic impact, as such, careful consideration of compatibility and ways to reduce impact on existing economic industries such as agriculture and tourism, should be at the forefront of the feasibility assessment for this project.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

50. Considerations to minimise negative impacts such as potential congestion on transport routes during construction, competition for seasonal workers, access and amenity issues and impacts on agricultural productivity in final positioning of the turbines will require ongoing engagement and transparent project decision making in subsequent stages of the project.

51. Provision of the tourism viewing point and managing any restricted access to camping areas, forest or waterways will also ensure a positive legacy is left for the local tourism industry.

8.20. EMPLOYMENT

The impact of the introduced employment for the proposed wind farm in Scott River is relatively low with respect to the operational workforce. The construction workforce may have an impact on either local draw, or an introduced workforce from out of the region. This impact will be dependent on SynergyRED's final procurement strategy for the project once it moves into the planning phase.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

52. Efforts to employ locally will be defined by SynergyRED's Buy Local, Aboriginal Procurement Policy and WA Industry Participation Plans (WAIPS) is encouraged.

8.21. SUPPLY CHAINS

Care will need to be taken during construction to ensure increased traffic does not interfere with agricultural transport to local properties, to avoid impacting their access to efficient supply chains.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

53. Local procurement ensures incomes derived provide a direct local economic benefit that is multiplied through the region to a greater extent than if it is taken outside the region. This can be quantified once the proposed wind farm in Scott River procurement strategy is in place.

54. Implement appropriate management plans to manage risk to water, soils or land clearing that may impact on agricultural enterprises.

55. Introduce positive procurement strategies for local construction, maintenance, operations and technical teams.

Figure 20a. Summary of Survey Respondents Suggestions for Social Benefit Realisation

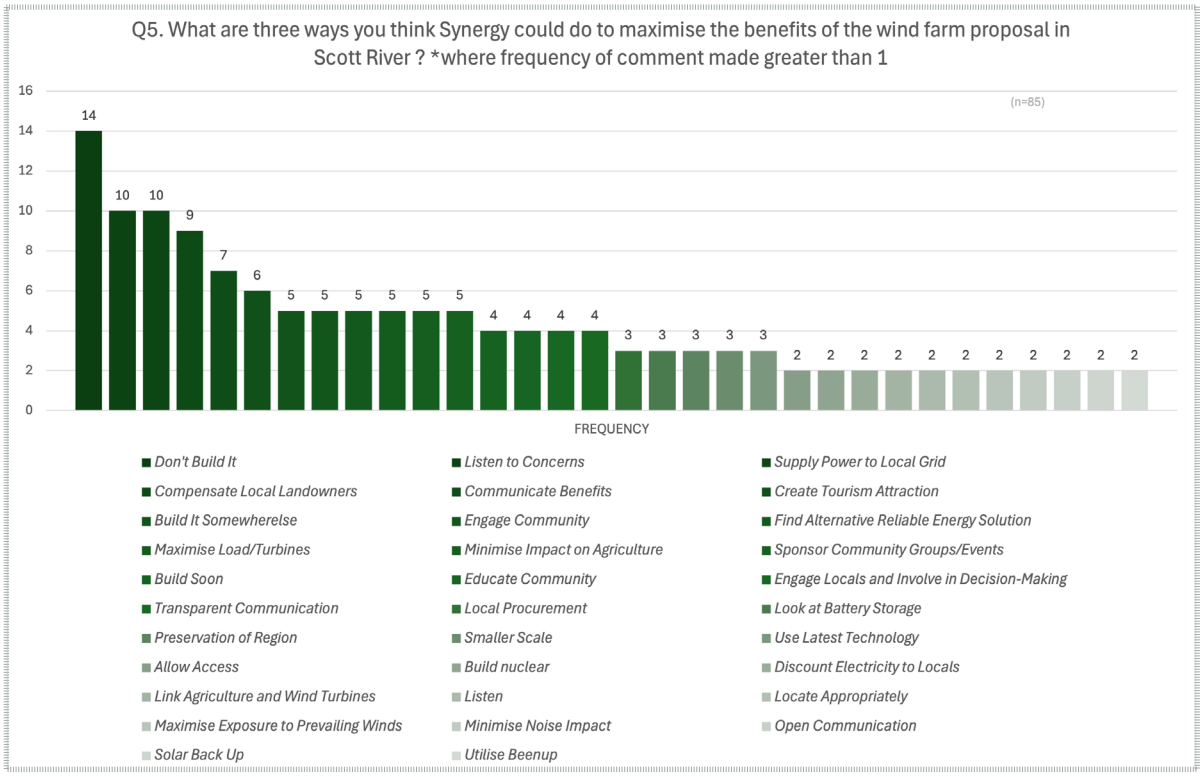
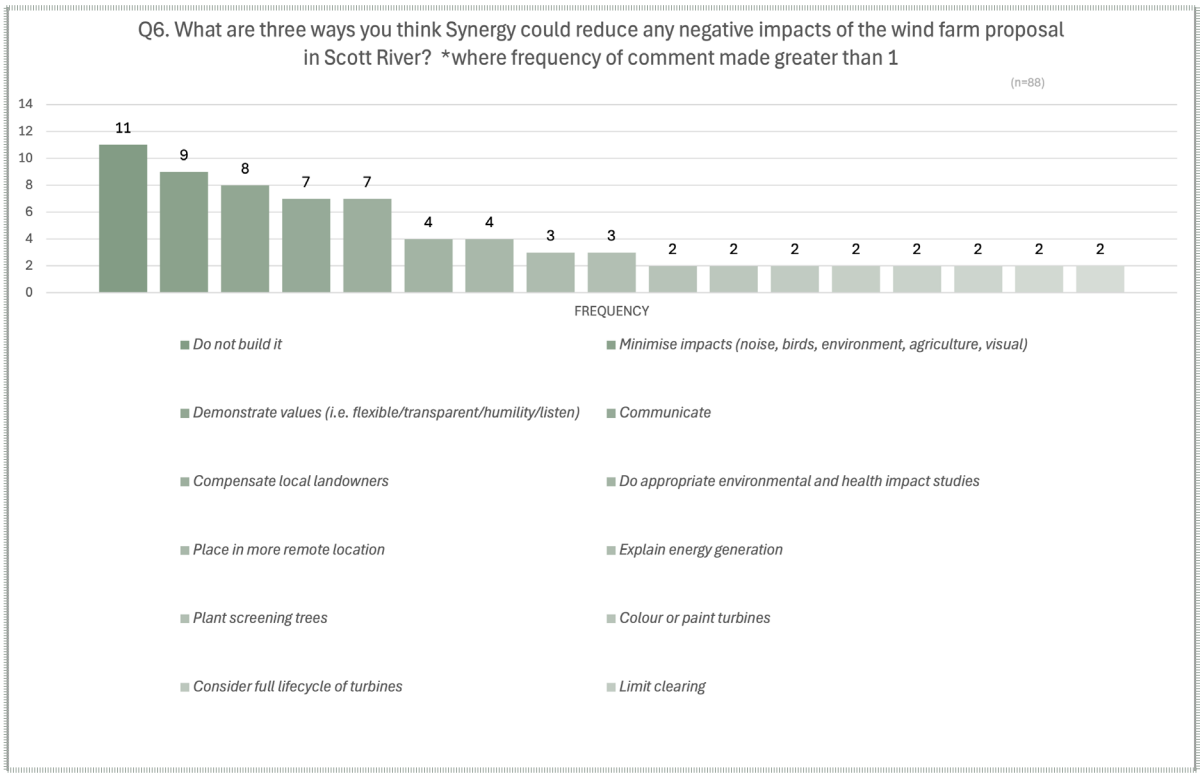


Figure 20b: Summary of Survey Respondents Suggestions for Social Impact Reduction or Mitigation



8.22. ADDITIONAL LIFECYCLE CONSIDERATIONS

Understanding the full project lifecycle and long-term carbon footprint of the proposed wind farm in Scott River was raised, by stakeholders and the local community, in relation to understanding the full picture of the proposed projects impacts.

As per the Section 7 project description, the proposed wind turbines have a typical life span of around 30 years. It is understood that parts, including blades, may need to be replaced, if they are damaged, before end-of-life.

SynergyRED notes that approximately 85 percent of a wind turbine (by weight) is commonly recycled in Australia. This includes the steel tower and valuable metals in the generator. While wind turbines blades are not yet commonly recycled, a variety of reuse products have been trialed including bridges, poles, sound barriers, bus stops, roofs and farming equipment. The industry is working to make turbine blades more easily recyclable.

Several residents and stakeholders questioned the estimation on the SynergyRED Fact Sheet that a wind turbine takes only six to nine months to pay back the carbon footprint required for its production, transport, construction, maintenance, dismantling and disposal. This estimation is referenced to Vesta Energy 2024, and should be clarified further, along with full lifecycle information, in future consultation and engagement work undertaken by SynergyRED.

Recommendations for Mitigation/Benefit Realisation

56. A full lifecycle assessment should be completed for the wind turbines and associated infrastructure as the project potentially moves from feasibility to planning. This could include the considerations summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: A Summary of Recommendations Provided by Project Lifecycle Stage

Planning & Feasibility

- Invest in pre-construction phase surveys and monitoring for birds, bats and habitat to improve knowledge of breeding populations in area.
- Continue engagement with local landowners, Traditional Owners, transport and infrastructure agencies, local environmental groups, community representatives and accommodation providers.
- Establish ongoing performance management indicators, monitoring and reporting frameworks across the project lifecycle.
- Consider demonstration of this proposal against other future energy solutions.

Construction

- Implementation of mitigation and benefit realisation measures identified during construction and operations phases.
- Detailed and considered engagement with local landowners and community on proposed transport and access routes.
- Plans to minimise clearing and ensure construction workforce is appropriately inducted and aware of obligations to minimise impacts in high-risk areas identified in this report.
- Considered and effective water management strategies in place – particularly in relation to dewatering and acid sulphate soil risks.
- Assess and manage traffic congestion, truck collision risks and interference with local supply chains.
- Consider recommended accommodation zones, behavioural management strategies and local employment to reduce potential risks and impacts.
- Confirm latest technology to minimise bird or bat impacts in turbine procurement.

Operations

- Consider energy consistency in low wind scenarios.
- Fire mitigation and management plans in place.
- Local procurement and maintenance contracts with local benefits quantified.
- Water management plans are in place and monitored.
- Bird and bat sensors and or management strategies in place.
- Weed control and vehicle access procedures are in place.

Replacement & Lifecycle Renewal

- Maintain focus on recycling and life cycle renewal for the turbines and associated infrastructure.
- Focus on supporting new and emerging technologies to find appropriate re-use and re-cycle opportunities for the turbine blades.

9. CONCLUSION

This report intends to provide a baseline understanding of the social value drivers for the proposed wind farm in Scott River in the context of the remote, rural and agriculturally based community in Scott River, and human settlements in the immediate surrounds.

The Scott River and associated communities of the Augusta region embody a rich tapestry of social, cultural, and environmental values that resonate with local community members and visitors alike. These areas are celebrated for their unique natural landscapes, including pristine waterways, biodiversity, and agricultural heritage, which contribute to both individual well-being and community identity.

The connection between people and place is evident through the region's recreational opportunities, agricultural activity, and strong sense of community stewardship. However, these values face challenges from increasing development, environmental pressures, and shifting demographics. Balancing sustainable development with the preservation of these social values is essential to ensure that future generations continue to experience and cherish the unique character of Scott River and Augusta.

Through collaborative planning, inclusive decision-making, and proactive management, stakeholders can safeguard the region's cultural and environmental integrity, enhancing its role as a vibrant and meaningful place and one that may play an important role in the state's transition to a new energy future. This assessment underscores the importance of aligning social values with long-term regional strategies to foster resilience, equity, and sustainability in these treasured parts of Western Australia.

If the proposal for the wind farm in Scott River progresses to subsequent stages in the approvals and project planning processes, impacts on these social values can be quantified and a monitoring/reporting base established for the project's lifecycle.

APPENDICES

1. LIST OF STAKEHOLDER ORGANISATION WHO PARTICIPATED IN AN INDEPTH INTERVIEW

1. **Augusta Hotel & First National Real Estate**
2. **Augusta Historical Society/Museum**
3. **Augusta Library**
4. **Augusta Margaret River Clean Community Energy (Partner)**
5. **BirdLife Australia**
6. **BHP Billiton**
7. **Cape to Cape Bird Group (linked to Birdlife Australia)**
8. **Kudardup Bush Fire Brigade**
9. **Karri Karrak Aboriginal Corporation**
10. **Karridale Agencies**
11. **Lower Black Land Conservation District Committee**
12. **Scott River local farmer 1**
13. **Scott River local farmer 2**
14. **Scott River local farmer 3**
15. **Scott River local farmer 4**
16. **Molloy Island Reserves Friends Group**
17. **Molloy Island Homeowners Association**
18. **Shire of Augusta- Margaret River - President**
19. **Wildflower Society of Western Australia - SW Division**
20. **Pelican Post**

2. AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS COMMUNITY PROFILE GRAPHS

SCOTT RIVER WIND FARM FEASIBILITY SOCIAL VALUES ASSESSMENT

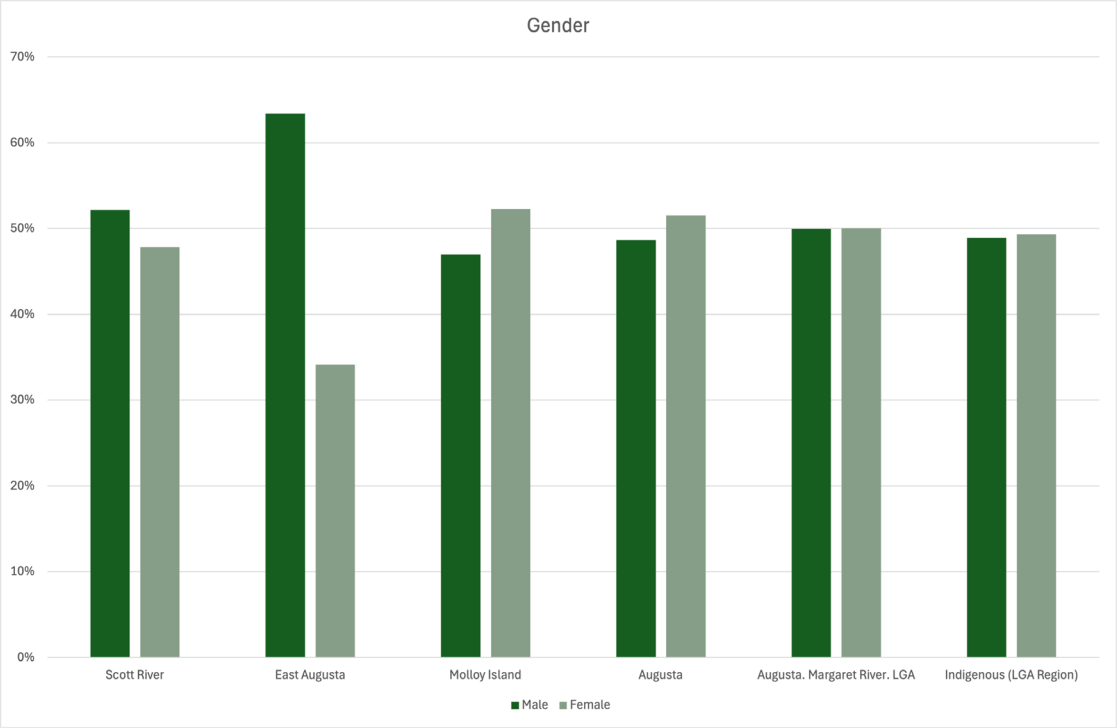
APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY PROFILES

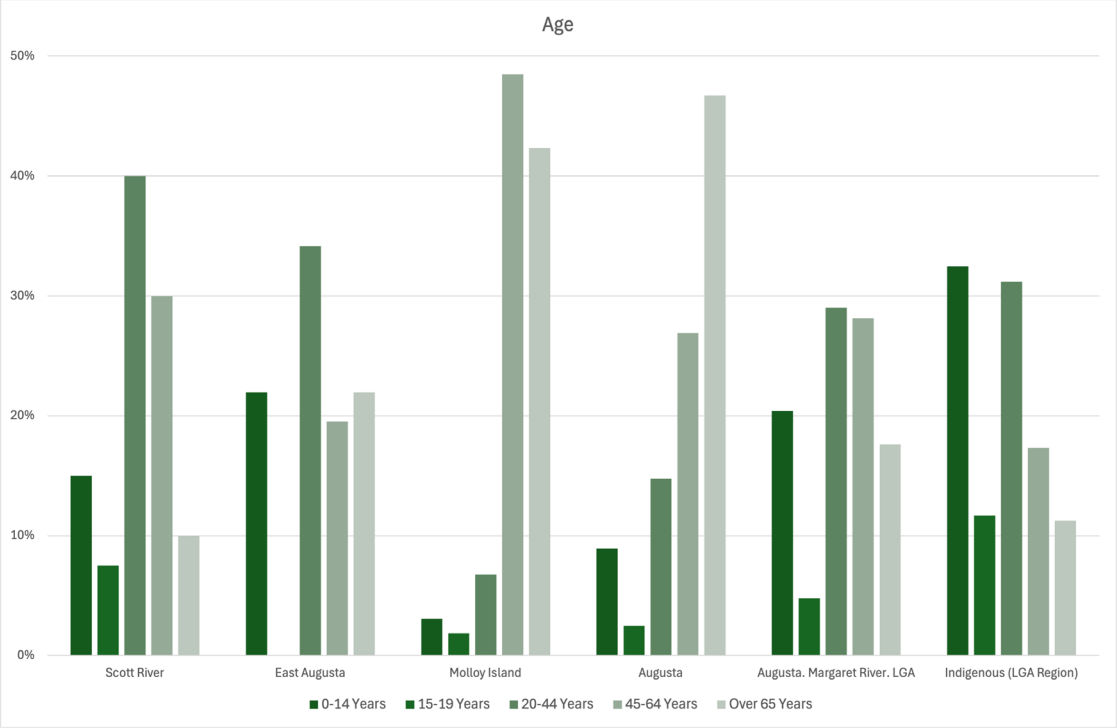
Source: ABS 2021 Community Census Data

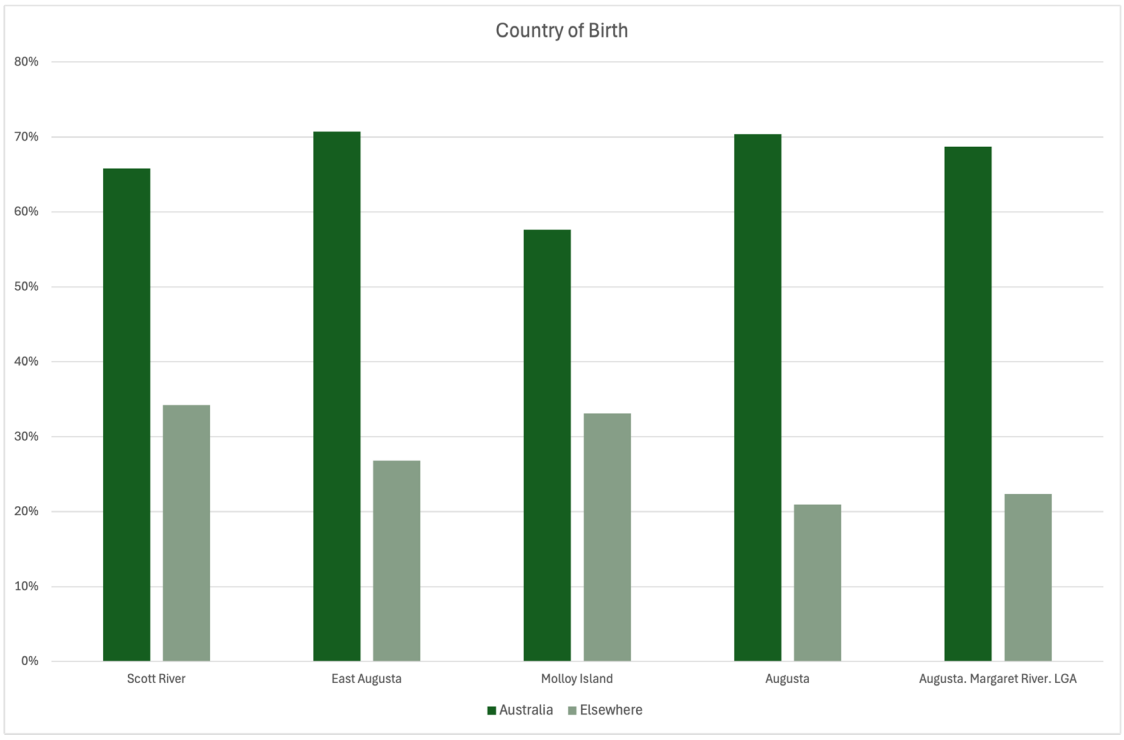
	Scott River	East Augusta	Molloy Island	Augusta	Augusta. Margaret River. LGA	Indigenous (LGA Region)
Total Population	**46**	**41**	**163**	**1,211**	**16,791**	**231**
Median Age	34	52	63	63	42	26
Median Personal Income (weekly)	843	474	486	541	785	599
Median Family Income (weekly)	1,874	1,125	1,075	1,145	1,871	1,609
Median Rent (weekly)	$200	$150	$275	$280	$350	$350
% Unemployed	9.4%	12.5%	4.0%	1.3%	2.8%	7.8%
Permanency - Lived at same address 5 years ago	46%	41%	90%	59%	58%	40%
Average Household Size	1.9	2.1	1.7	1.9	2.5	2.9
Indigenous %	0	0	0	1.0%	1.3%	

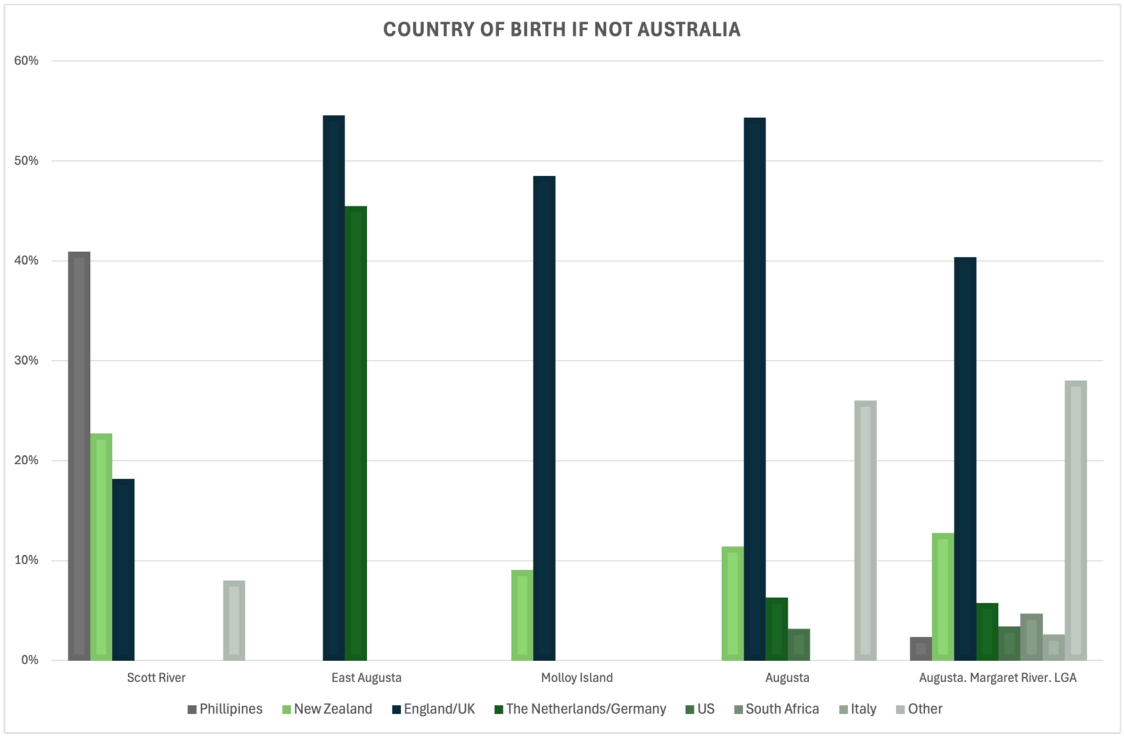
SOCIAL PROFILE

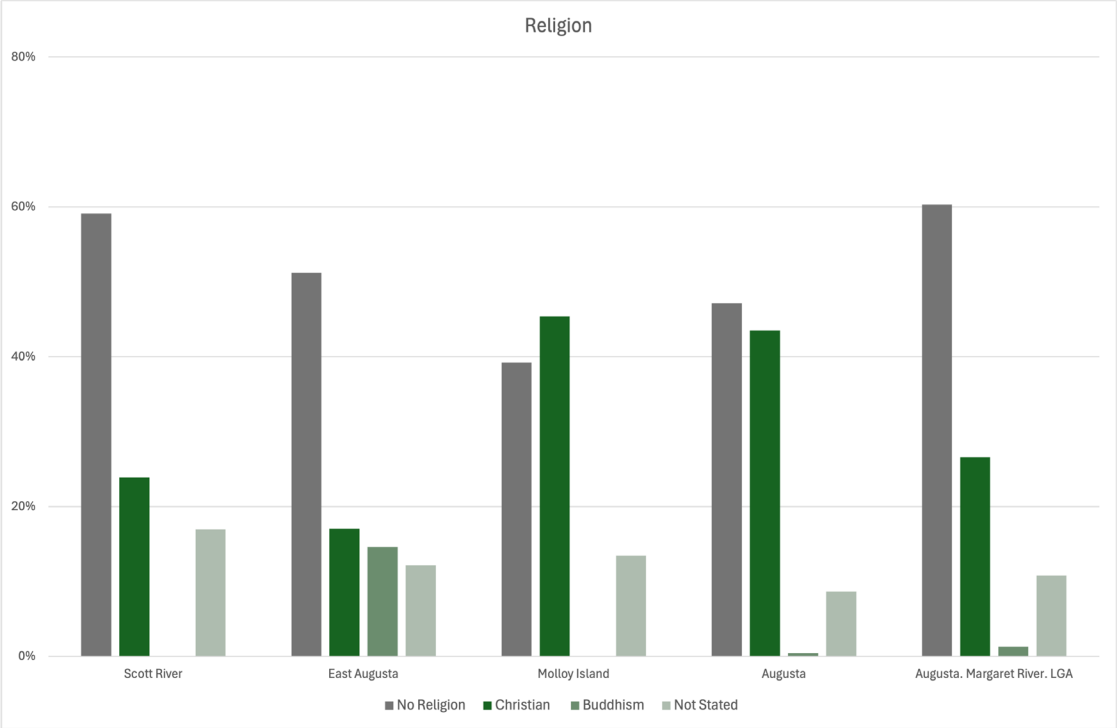
(source: ABS 2021 Community Census Data)

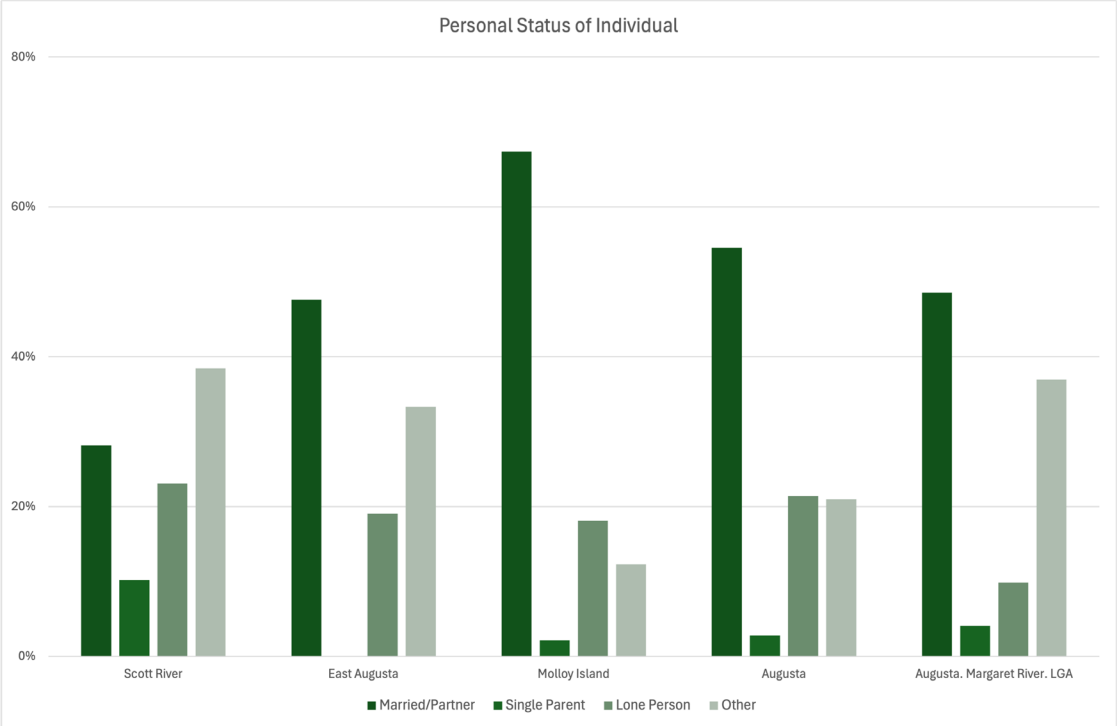


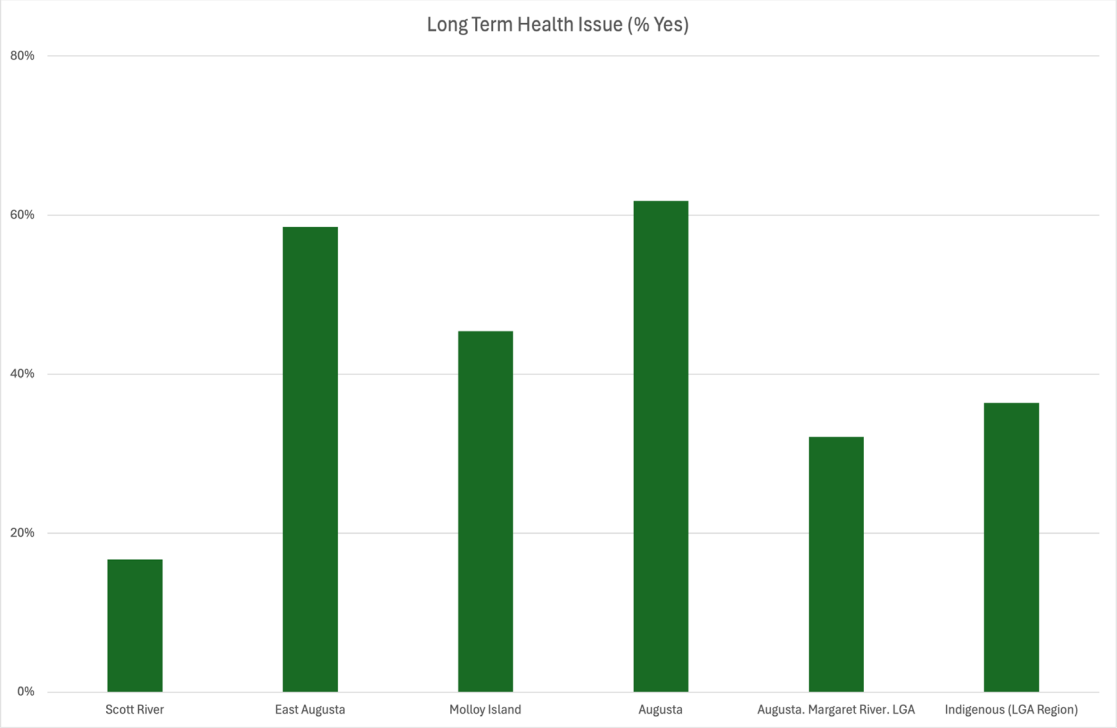


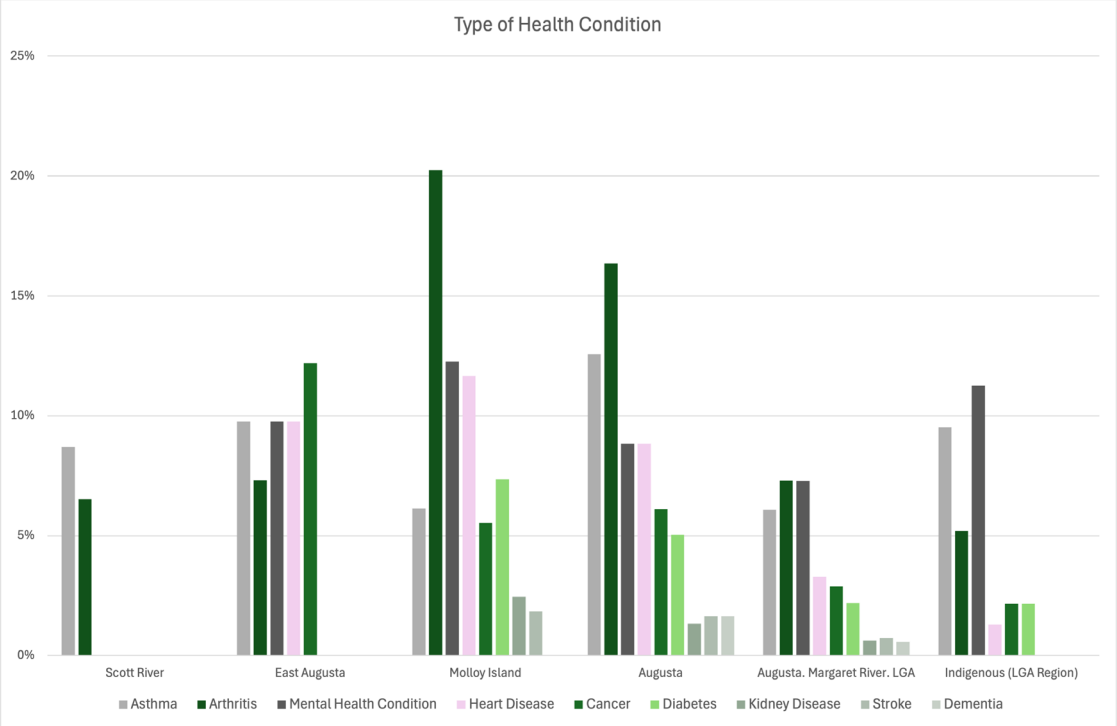

Country of Birth
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Australia
Elsewhere

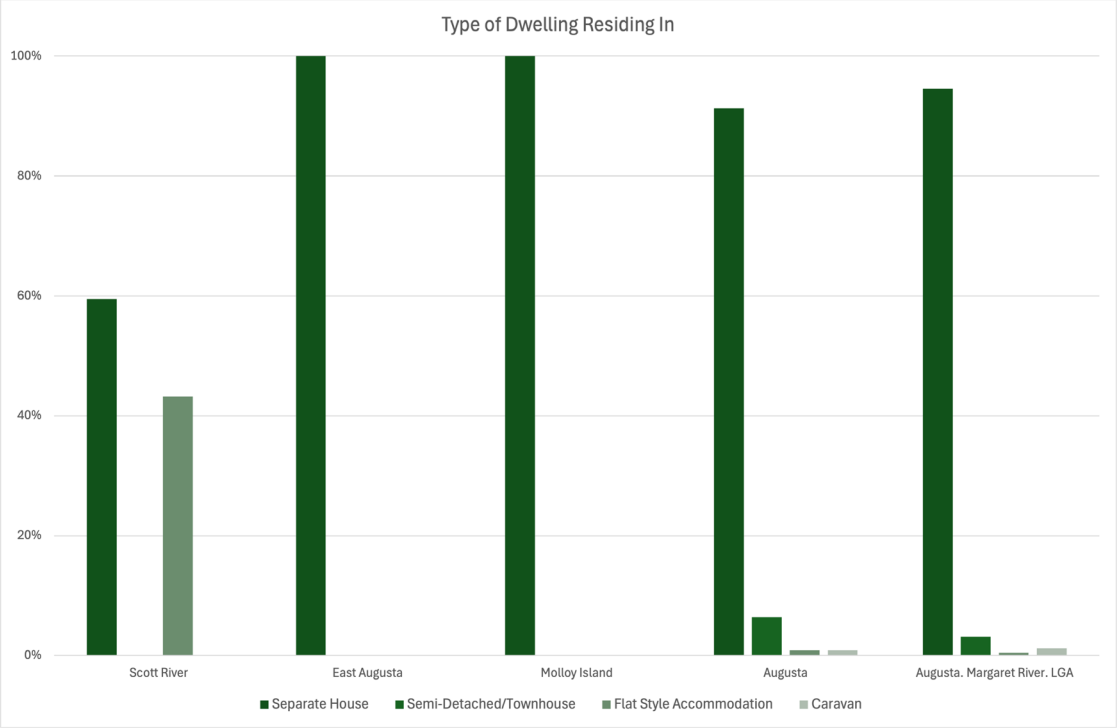

COUNTRY OF BIRTH IF NOT AUSTRALIA
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Phillipines
New Zealand
England/UK
The Netherlands/Germany
US
South Africa
Italy
Other


Religion
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
No Religion
Christian
Buddhism
Not Stated


Personal Status of Individual
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Married/Partner
Single Parent
Lone Person
Other

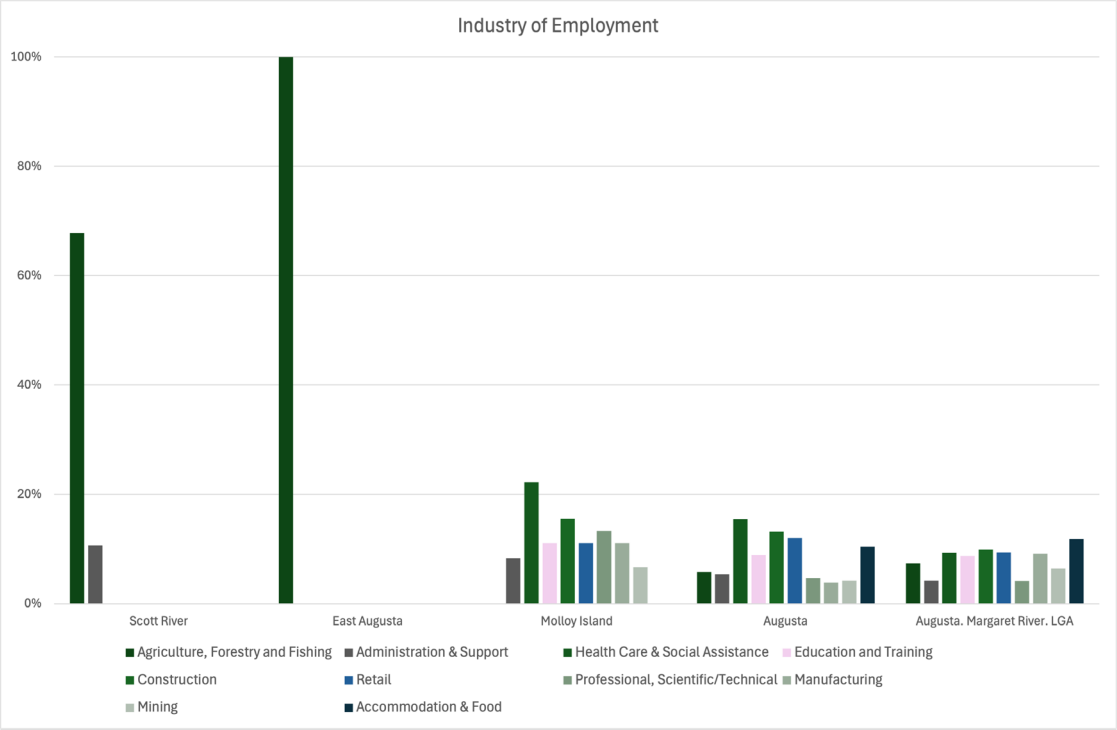

Long Term Health Issue (% Yes)
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Indigenous (LGA Region)

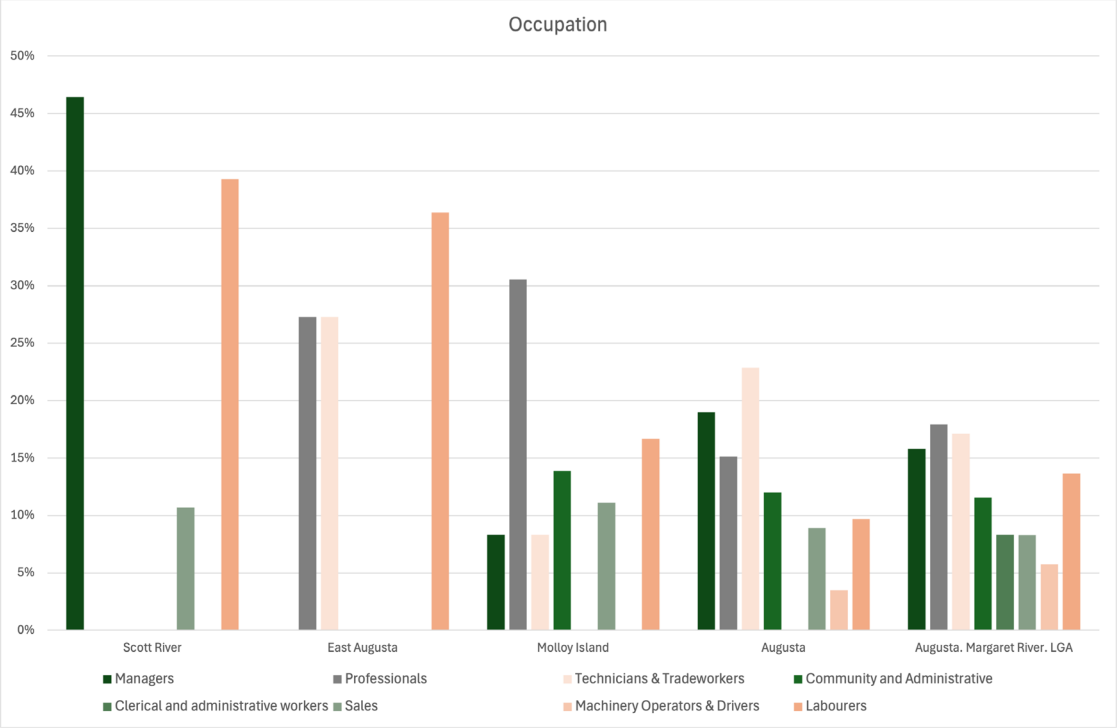

Type of Health Condition
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Indigenous (LGA Region)
Asthma
Arthritis
Mental Health Condition
Heart Disease
Cancer
Diabetes
Kidney Disease
Stroke
Dementia

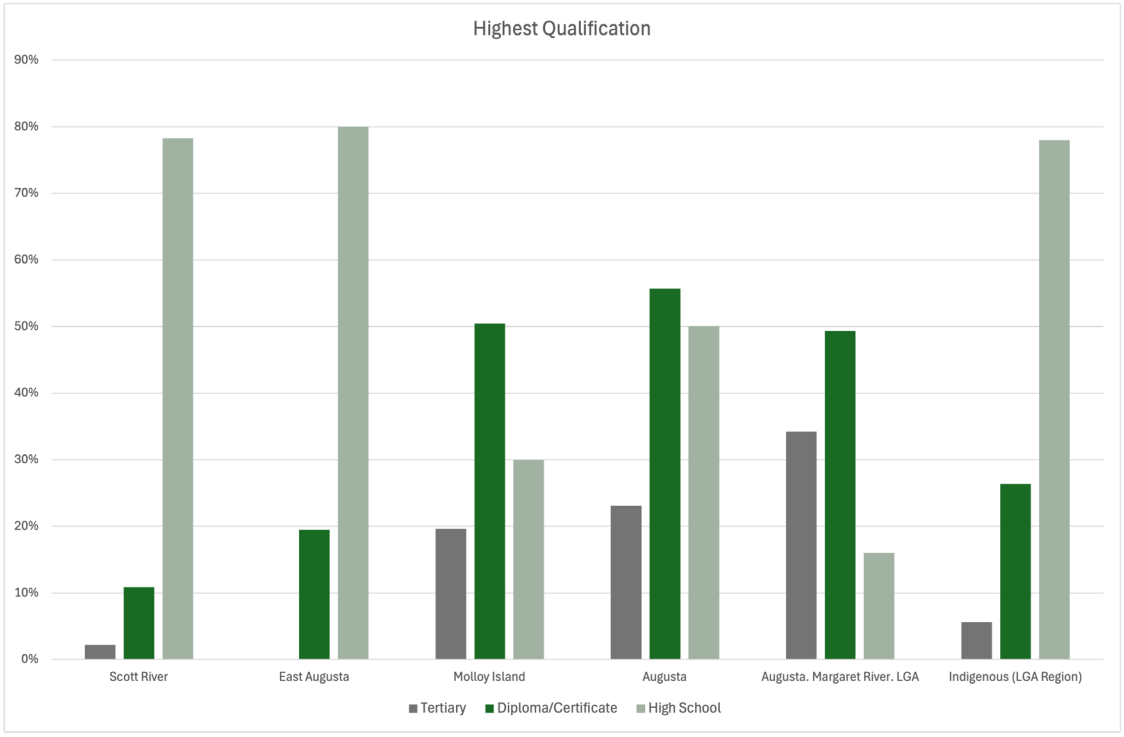

Type of Dwelling Residing In
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Separate House
Semi-Detached/Townhouse
Flat Style Accommodation
Caravan

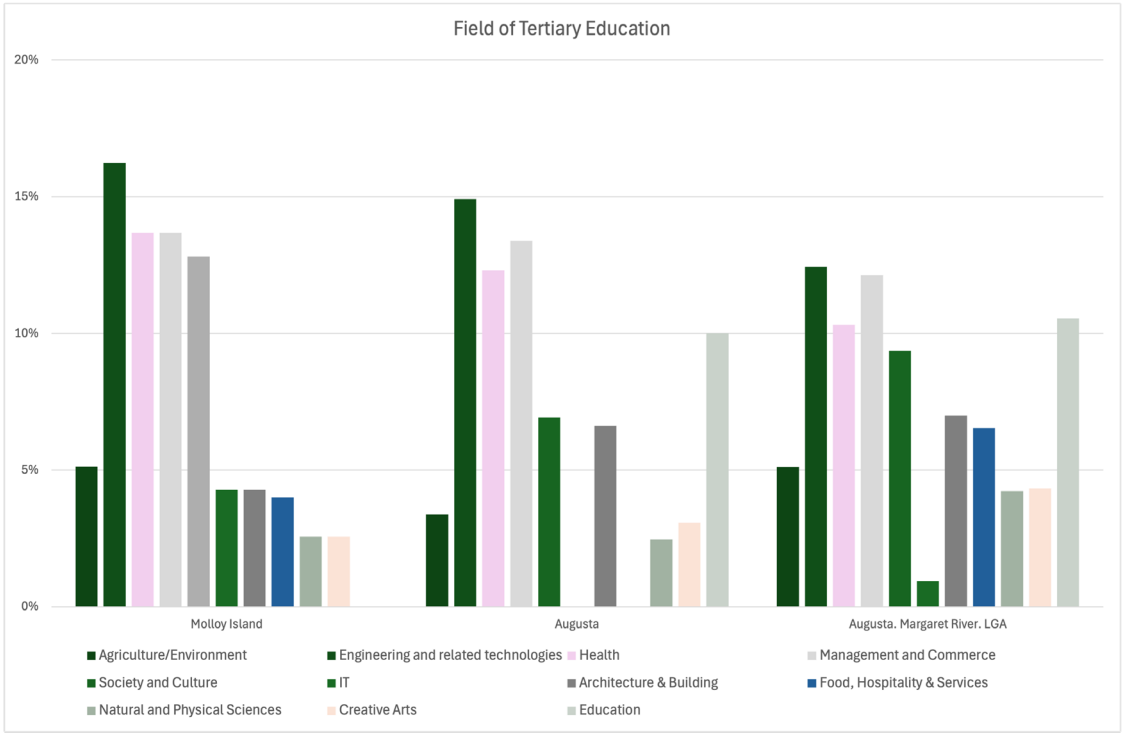
ECONOMIC PROFILE

(source: ABS 2021 Community Census Data)






Highest Qualification
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Scott River
East Augusta
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Indigenous (LGA Region)
Tertiary
Diploma/Certificate
High School


Field of Tertiary Education
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
Molloy Island
Augusta
Augusta. Margaret River. LGA
Agriculture/Environment
Engineering and related technologies
Health
Management and Commerce
Society and Culture
IT
Architecture & Building
Food, Hospitality & Services
Natural and Physical Sciences
Creative Arts
Education

3. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

Synergy Wind Farm Feasibility

INDEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

YOUR VIEWS & PERSPECTIVES

WIND FARM FEASIBILITY SOCIAL IMPACT QUESTIONNAIRE

Your views will form part of an independent social impact assessment that will directly assist with the project feasibility and future decision making. There are no right or wrong answers, we are simply interested in your perspectives.

Q1. Firstly, I'd like to understand more about your connection to the region? How long have you lived here? Why did you choose to live here? Do you volunteer for any organisations in the region?

Q2. How do you derive your income? What is this reliant on e.g. people, land, environment, transport?

Q3. How many people do you employ? And where do you draw them from?

Q4. What do you think are the most significant issues facing this region into the future?

Q5. What do you think are the most important attributes of this area to you?

Q6. Please share any other thoughts you might have on the most important attributes to keep or protect in the Scott River area.

Q7. Are you aware of the Synergy Wind Farm Feasibility Study for Scott River?

Q8. Do you have any initial thoughts around the proposal – either concerns or positive benefits?

IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Q9. Based on your understanding to date, are there any things you think Synergy could do to maximise the benefits of the wind farm proposal in Scott River?

1.

2.

3.

Q10. Based your understanding to date, what are three ways you think Synergy could reduce any negative impacts of the wind farm proposal in Scott River?

1.

2.

3.

Q11. On a scale of 0-5, how much do you support a transition to a NetZero emission future? (0=not supportive at all and 5 = highly supportive)

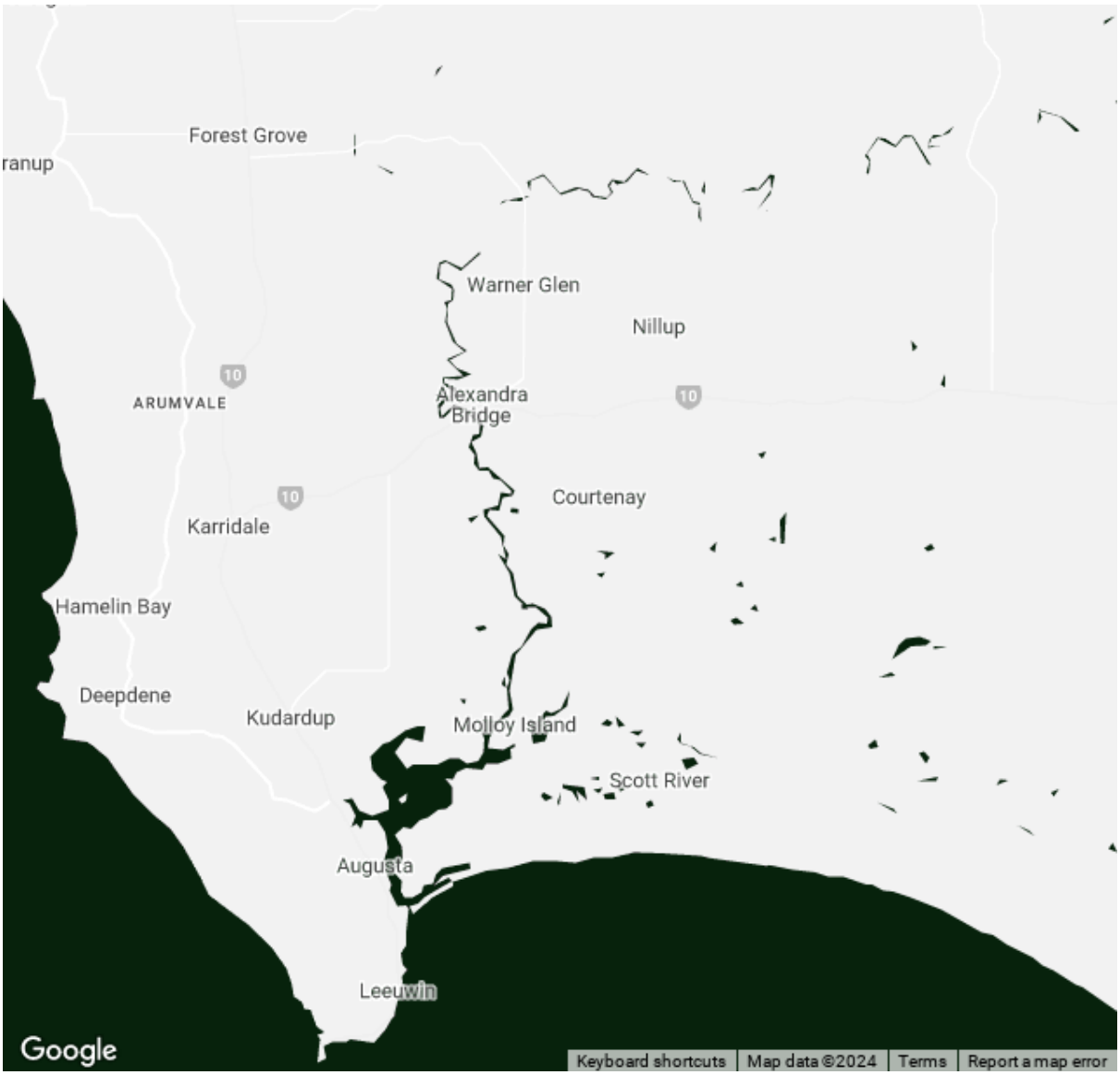
Enter a value between 0 (Not at all Supportive) and 5 (Highly Supportive)

Q12 What is your energy generation preference, and why?

PLACES OF IMPORTANCE

Q10a. Please indicate on the map any places that have an important value to you.

Q.10b. Briefly describe why you have chosen these points and what makes them important to you.


Forest Grove
ranup
Warner Glen
Nillup
ARUMVALE
10
Alexandra Bridge
10
Courtenay
10
Karridale
Hamelin Bay
Deepdene
Kudardup
Molloy Island
Scott River
Augusta
Leeuwin
Google
Keyboard shortcuts
Map data ©2024
Terms
Report a map error

ROUTES & ACCESS

Q11.Please draw on the map the main routes you would travel for across this region for work or recreation.

Q.12 In conclusion, is there anything else that we haven't discussed that you think is important in understanding the social and economic drivers of the region?

4. ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE FRAME

YOUR VIEWS & PERSPECTIVES

WIND FARM FEASIBILITY SOCIAL IMPACT QUESTIONNAIRE

Your views will form part of an independent social impact assessment that will directly assist with the project feasibility and future decision making.

There are no right or wrong answers, we are simply interested in your perspectives.

Q.1 On a scale of 1-10, how supportive would you be of a renewable energy wind farm in the Scott River area?

Not at all supportive — Highly supportive

5

Q2a. In thinking about the Scott River area, how important are the following attributes to you ? (1 = not at all important and 5 = extremely important)

Agricultural production and history ---

Local biodiversity of native flora and fauna ---

Peace and quiet ---

Being able to visit the forests and national parks ---

Preserving what is unique about this area ---

Local employment opportunities ---

Unique bird life ---

Being close to community and our networks ---

Environmental conservation and restoration of cleared land ---

Tourists and visitors enjoying the region ---

Using the regions natural assets to help provide for my family (e.g through farming or tourism) ---

Water values such as rivers, wetlands and swamps ---

Aboriginal history and culture ---

Being able to see the clouds, horizon and sky ---

Being able to drive and access remote areas around us ---

Other (please specify below) ---

Q2b. Please share any other thoughts on the most important attributes to keep or protect in the Scott River area

Q3a. Thinking about a proposed wind farm consisting of up to 30 wind turbines in Scott River, how would you rate the likely impacts on the following identified attributes? (1= not manageable at all (to our detriment) and 5 = manage extremely well (to our benefit)

Being able to see the clouds, horizon and sky ---

Tourists and visitors enjoying the region ---

Being close to community and our networks ---

Environmental conservation and restoration of cleared land ---

Water values such as rivers, wetlands and swamps ---

Being able to visit the forests and national parks ---

Being able to drive and access remote areas around us ---

Peace and quiet ---

Biodiversity of native flora and fauna ---

Local employment opportunities ---

Other (please specify below) ---

Preserving what is unique about this area ---

Unique bird life ---

Using the regions natural assets to help provide for my family (e.g through farming or tourism)

IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Q5. What are three ways you think Synergy could do to maximise the benefits of the wind farm proposal in Scott River?

Q6. What are three ways you think Synergy could reduce any negative impacts of the wind farm proposal in Scott River?

Q7. On a scale of 0-5, how much do you support a transition to a NetZero emission future? (0=not supportive at all and 5 = highly supportive)

Not at all Supportive — Highly Supportive

3

Q.8 What is your energy generation preference, and why?

Q9a. If you had $10 million dollars to invest in energy for the future, what proportion would you allocate to the following?

$0 / $10,000,000

0

Coal or traditional energy sources

$0

Natural Gas

$0

Solar Power

$0

Wind Power

$0

Hydro power

$0

Ocean Power

$0

Stand-alone power systems

$0

Nuclear power

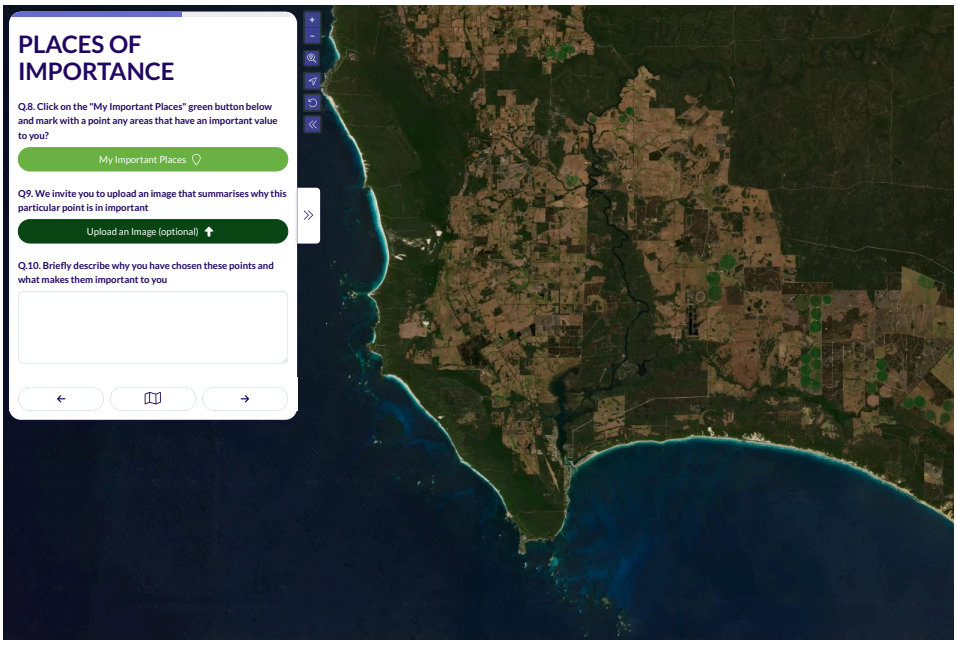
$0

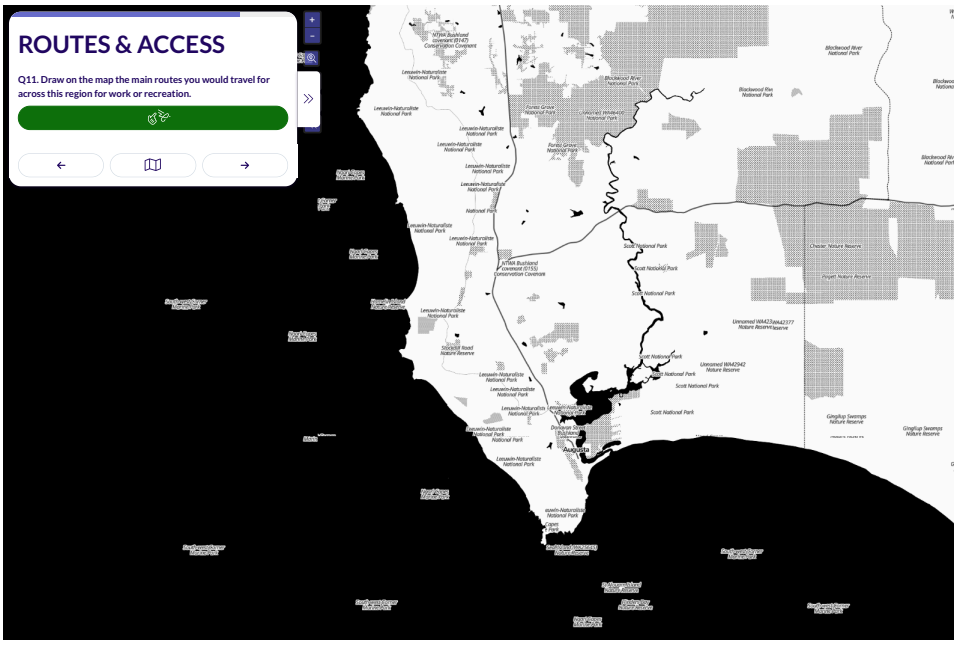
Other (please specify below)

$0

Q9b. If you selected 'other' please write your response here

2 / 5

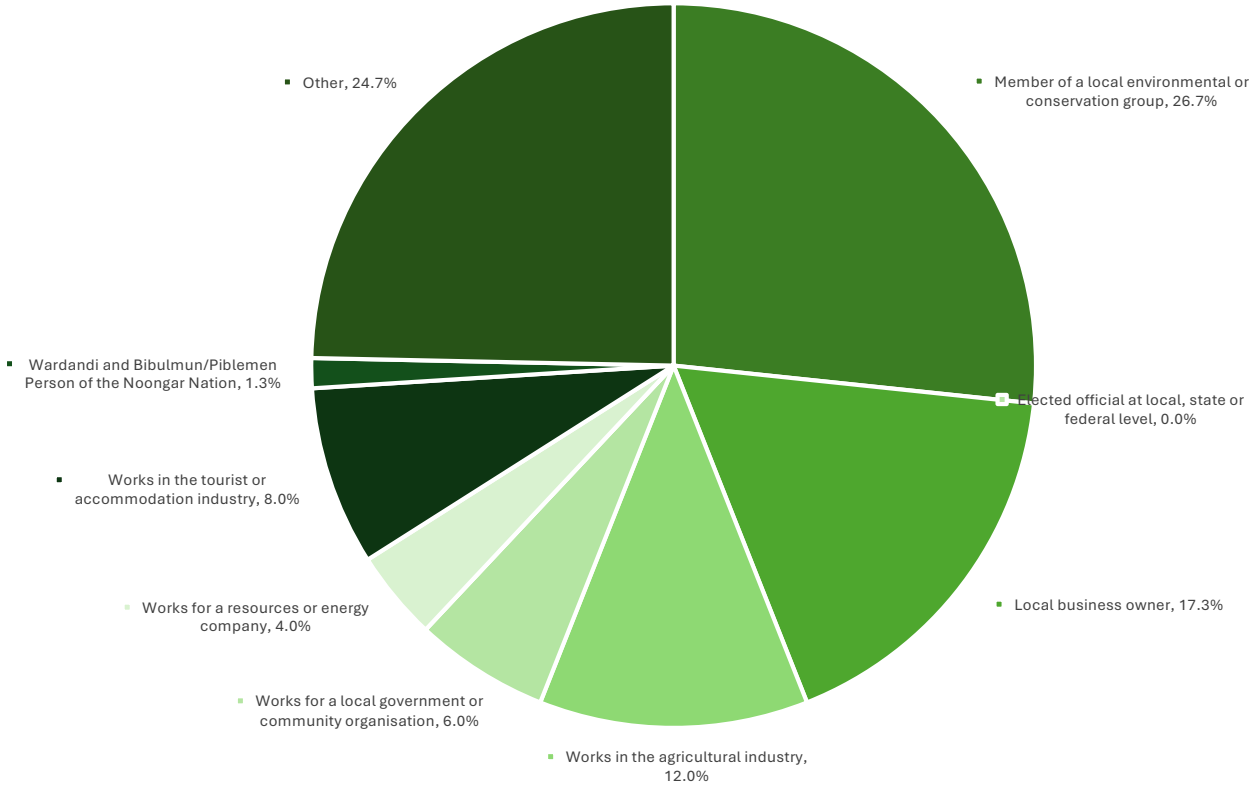

PLACES OF IMPORTANCE
Q.8. Click on the "My Important Places" green button below and mark with a point any areas that have an important value to you?
My Important Places
Q9. We invite you to upload an image that summarises why this particular point is in important
Upload an Image (optional)
Q.10. Briefly describe why you have chosen these points and what makes them important to you


ROUTES & ACCESS
Q11. Draw on the map the main routes you would travel for across this region for work or recreation.
Augusta
Scott National Park
Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park
Blackwood River National Park
Chesser Nature Reserve
Gingilup Swamps Nature Reserve
5 km

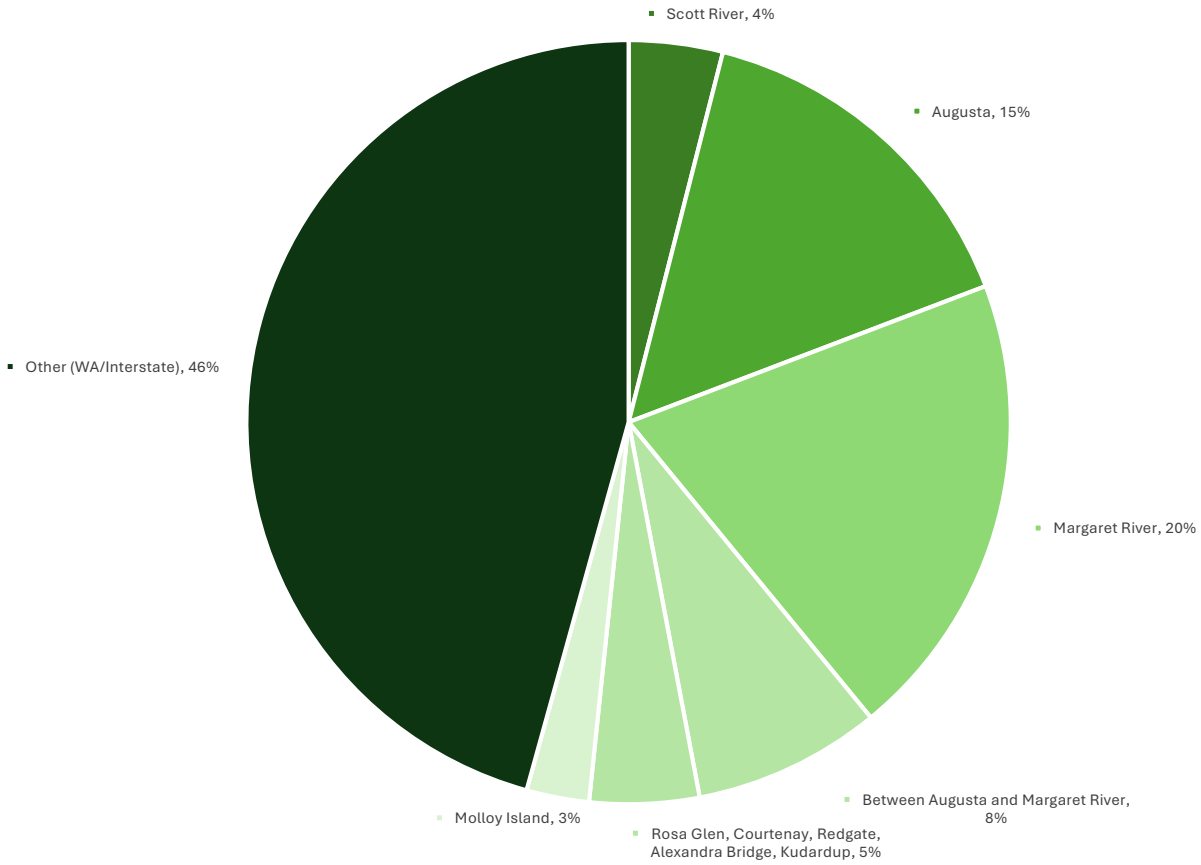

Synergy Wind Farm
Preview
If you would like to receive updates about the feasibility assessment progress and outcome, please provide your email address, or contact details, below.
SUBMIT

6. ADDITIONAL ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Profile of Respondents



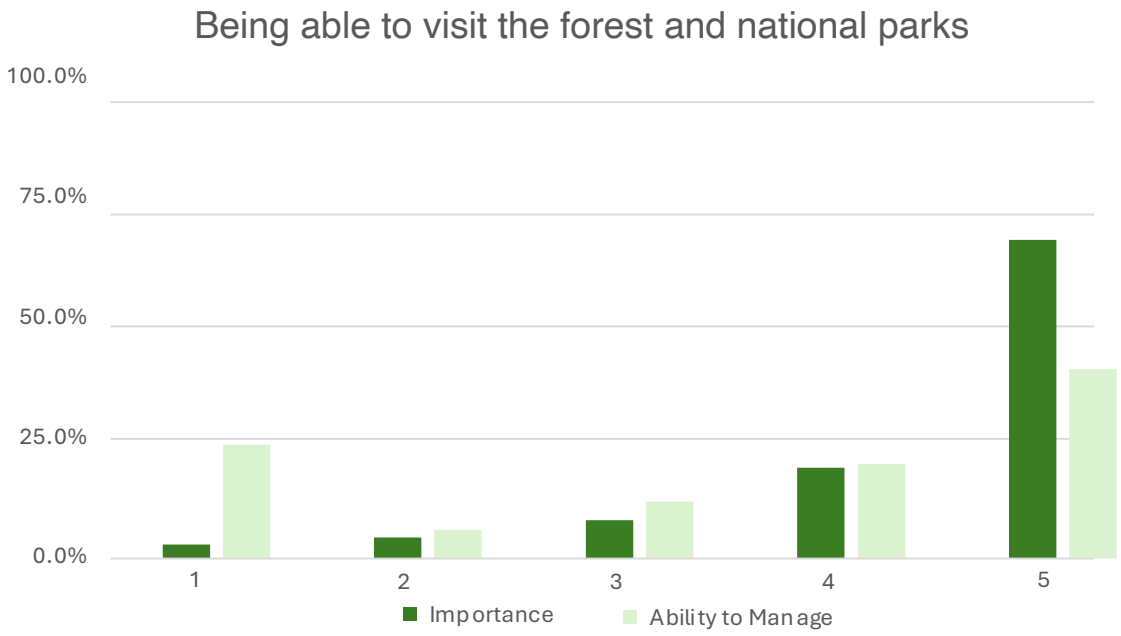
Area of Residence



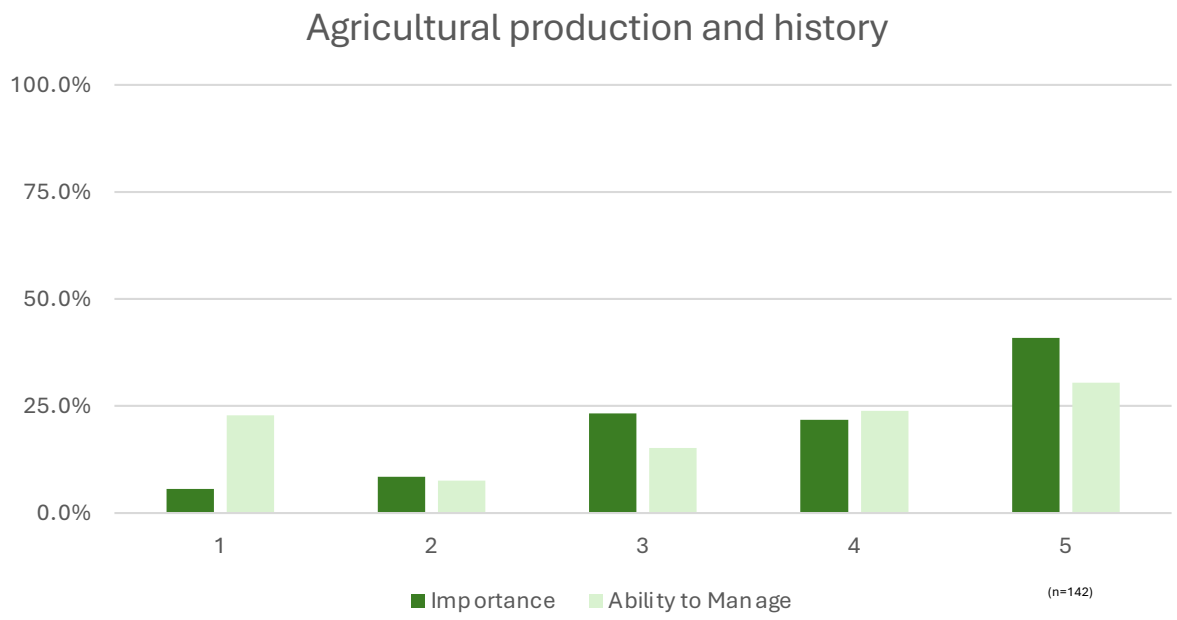
Place.ID Social Values Matrix Frequencies

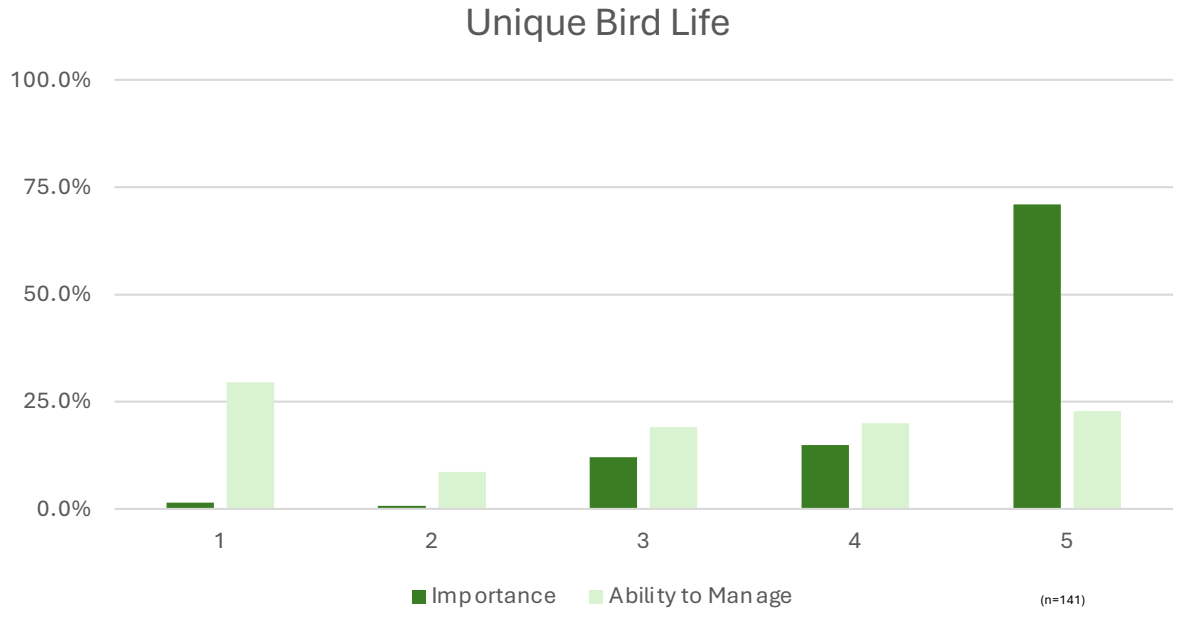
Q. In thinking about the Scott River area, how important are the following attributes to you ? (1 = not at all important and 5 = extremely important)?

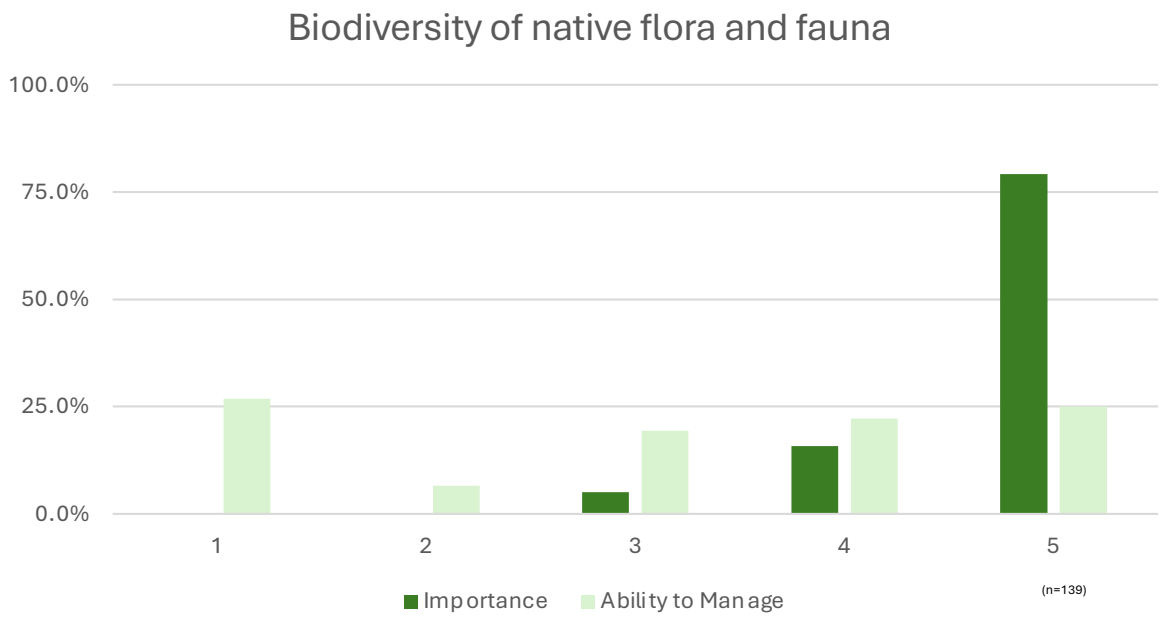
Q. Thinking about a proposed wind farm consisting of up to 30* wind turbines in Scott River, how would you rate the likely impacts on the following identified attributes? (1= not manageable at all (to our detriment) and 5 = manage extremely well (to our benefit)

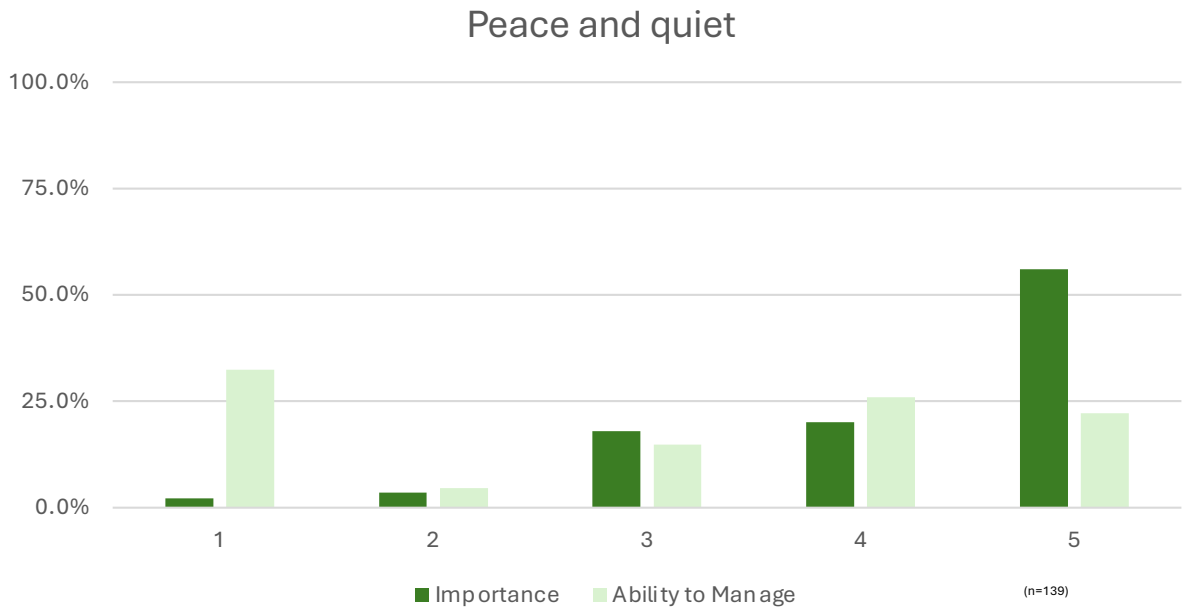


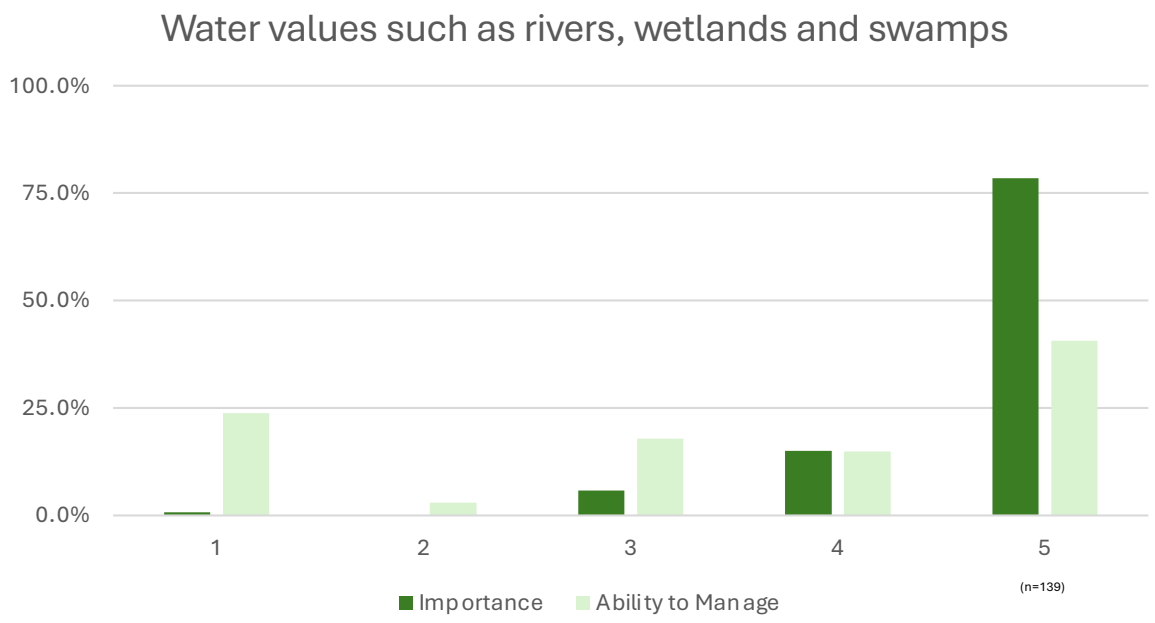
*Note: This question was asked as part of the community survey released in March 2024. This was prior to the scope of the proposed wind farm being reduced from a maximum of 30 turbines to 20 turbines to cater for transmission line capacity.

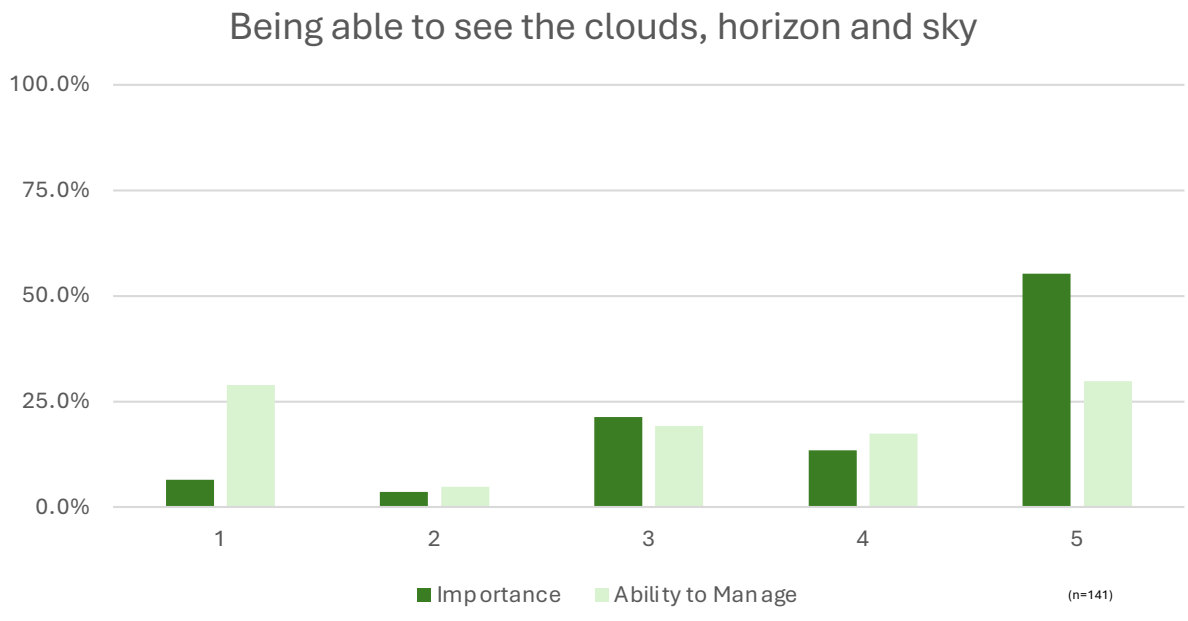

Agricultural production and history
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=142)

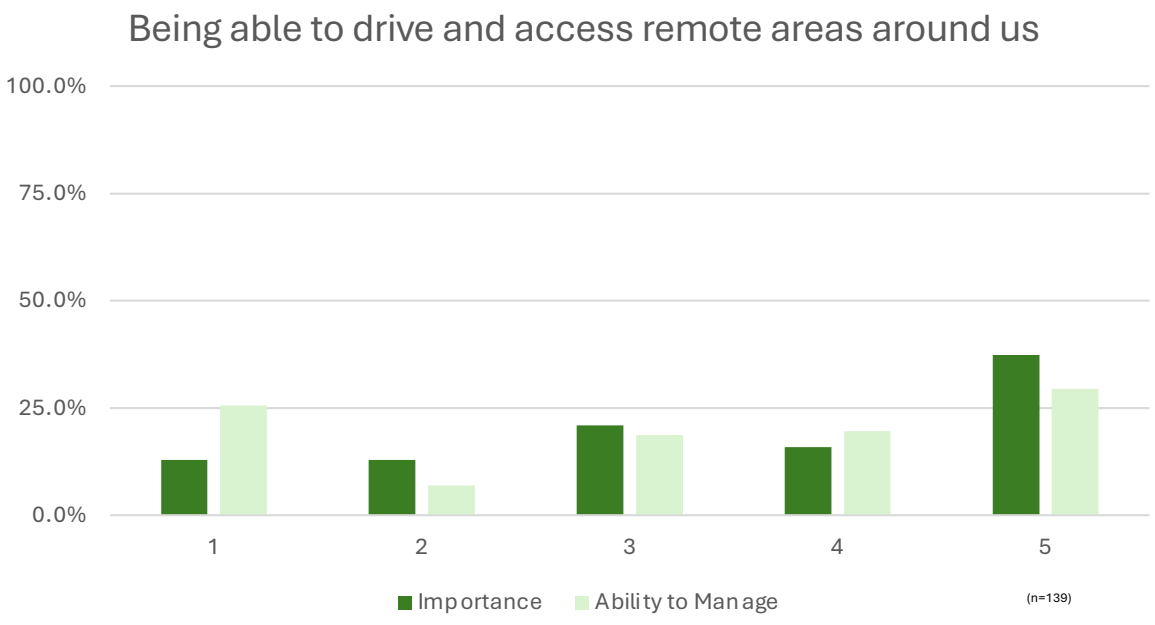

Unique Bird Life
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=141)

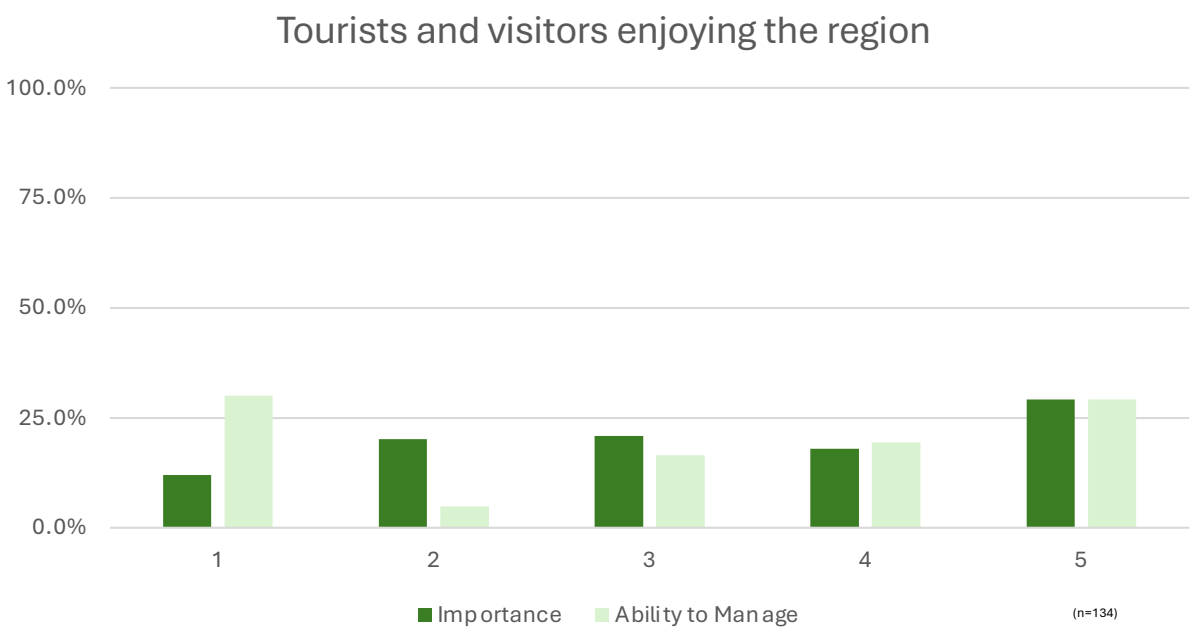

Biodiversity of native flora and fauna
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=139)

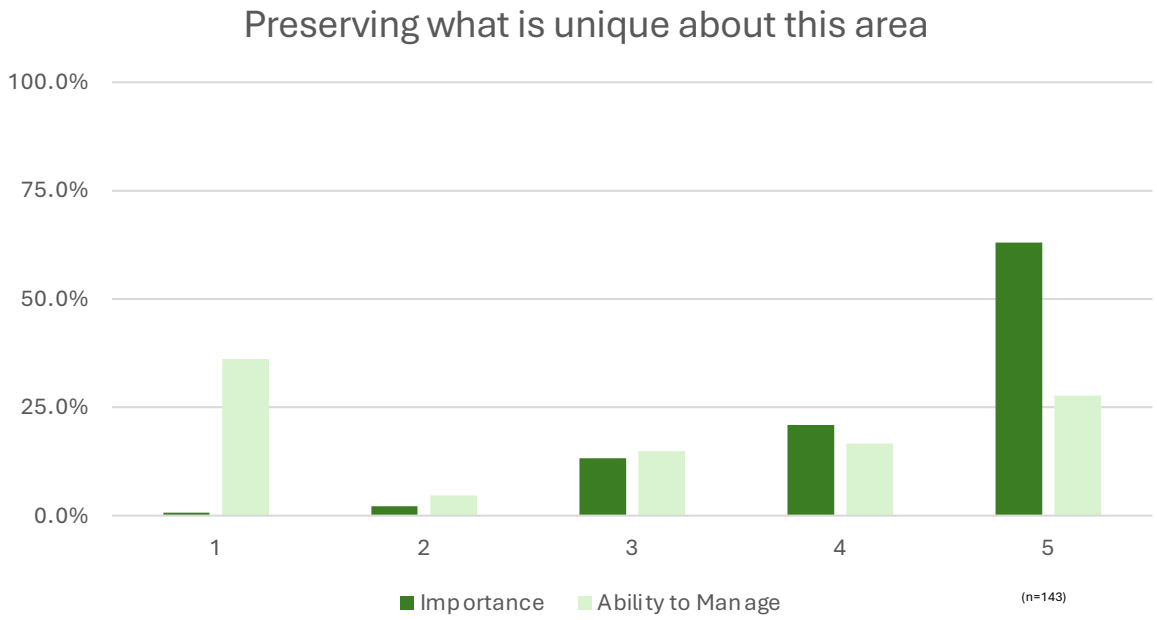

Peace and quiet
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=139)

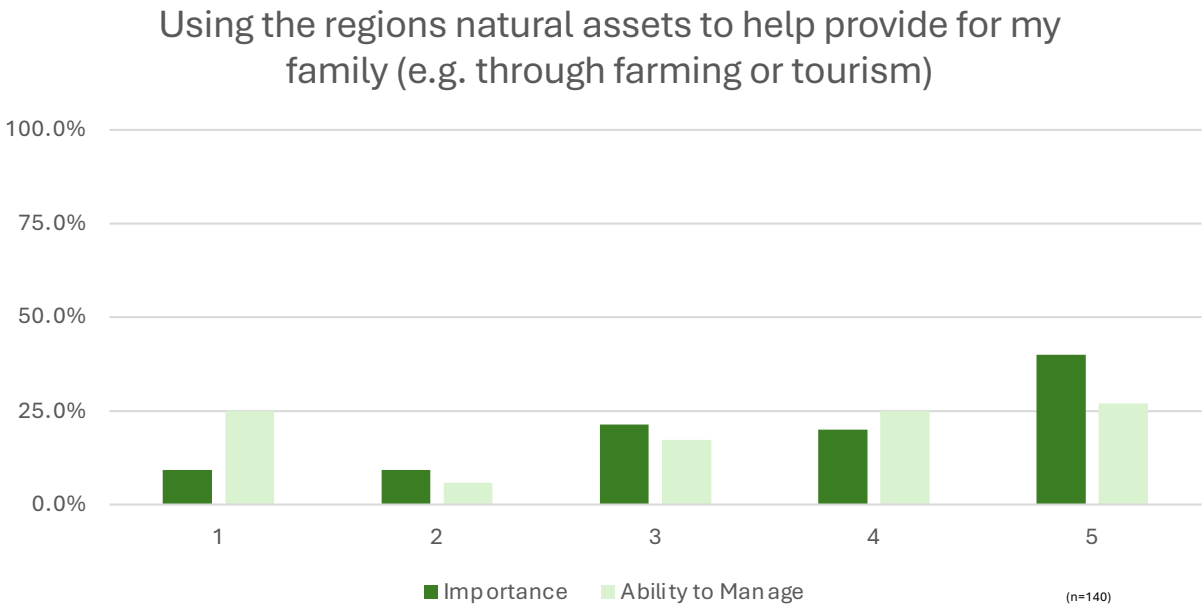

Water values such as rivers, wetlands and swamps
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
(n=139)
Importance
Ability to Manage

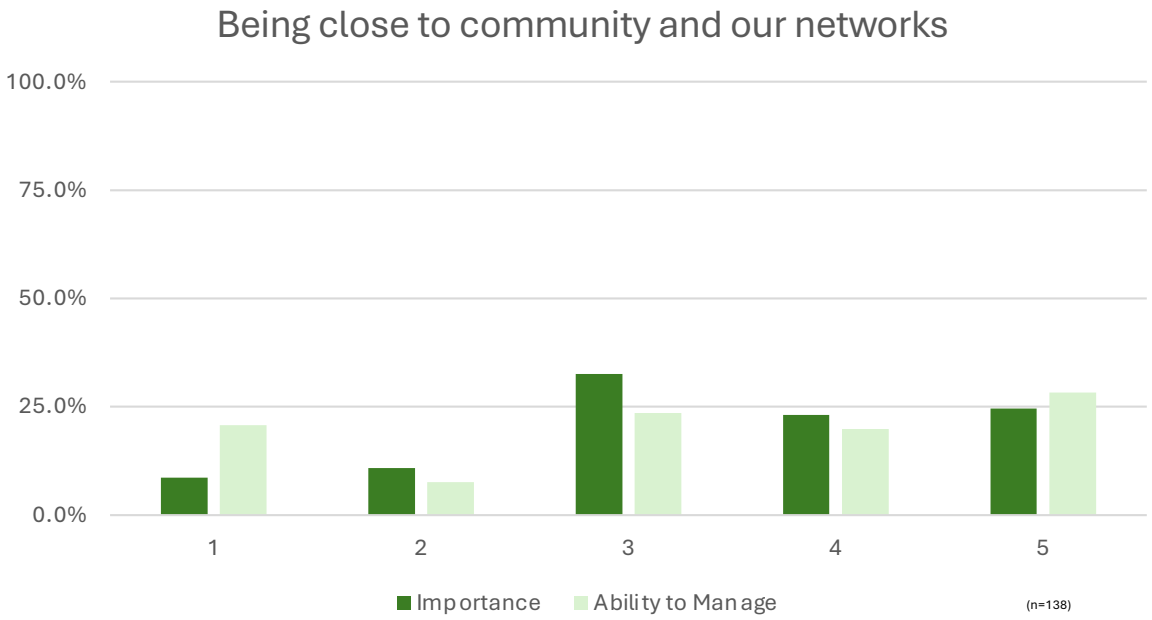

Being able to see the clouds, horizon and sky
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
(n=141)
Importance
Ability to Manage

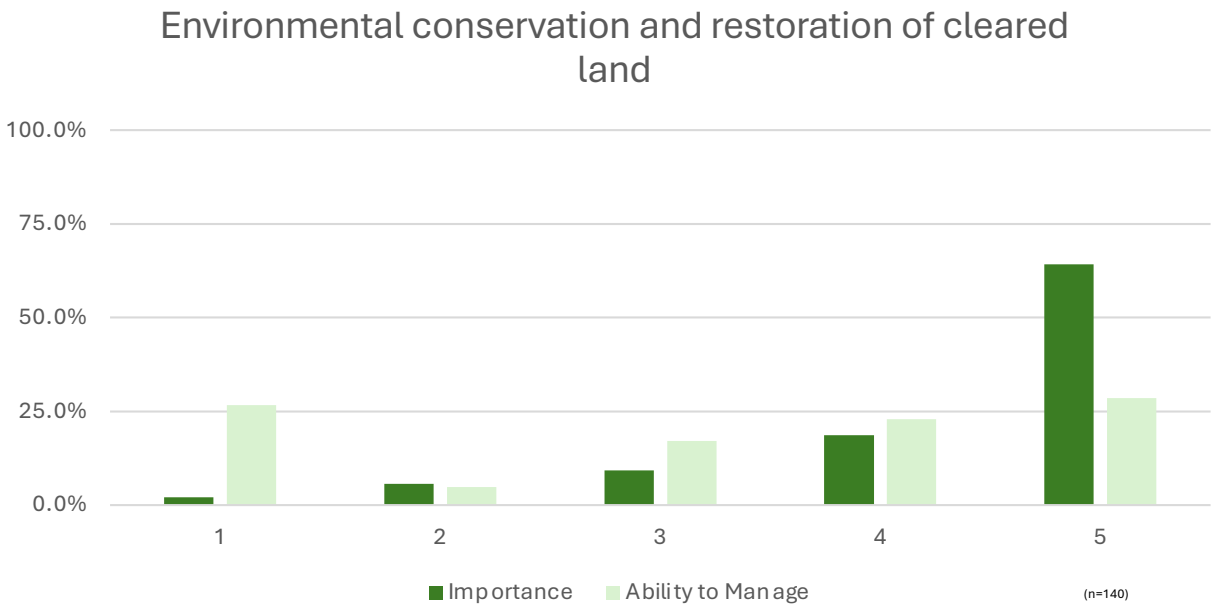

Being able to drive and access remote areas around us
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=139)

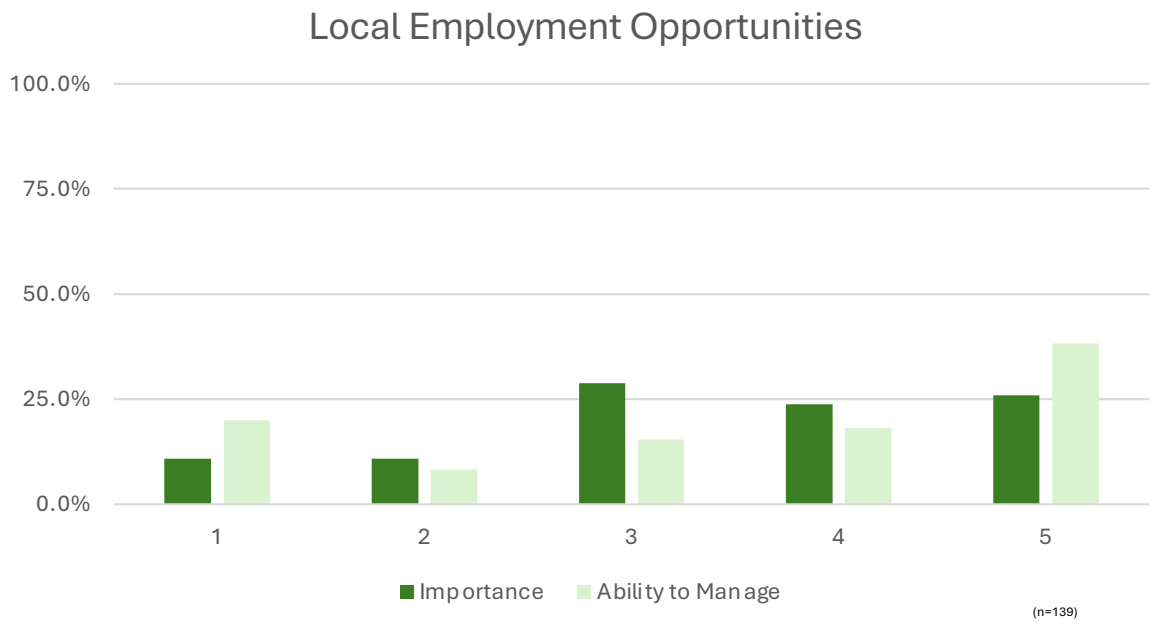

Tourists and visitors enjoying the region
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=134)

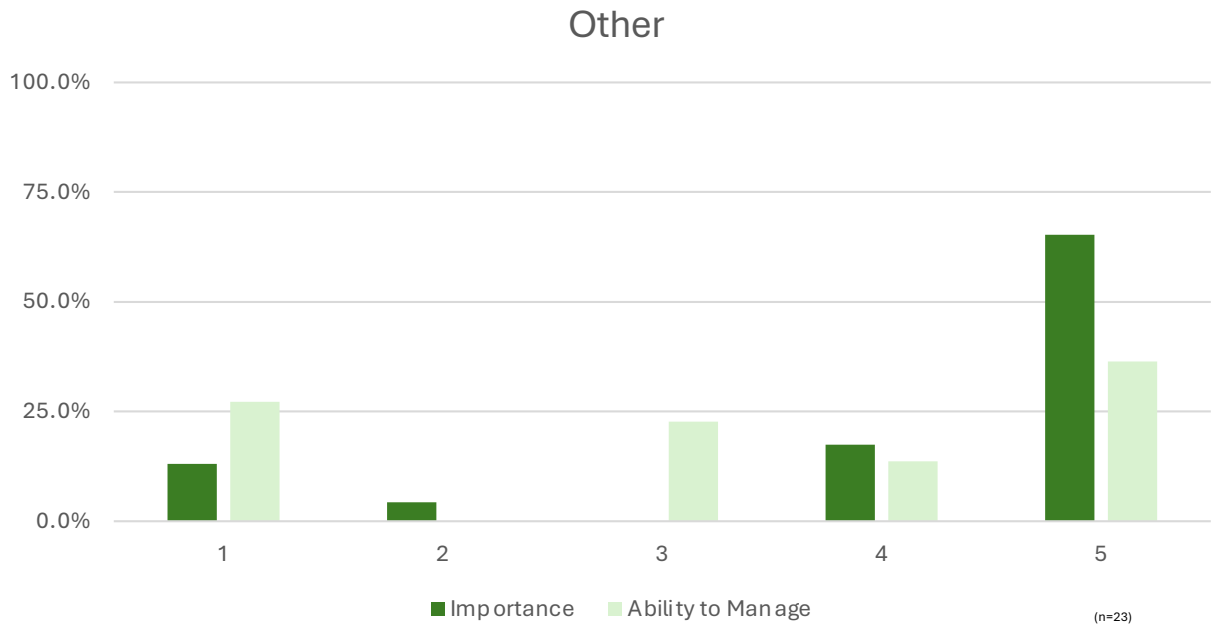

Preserving what is unique about this area
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=143)


Using the regions natural assets to help provide for my family (e.g. through farming or tourism)
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=140)

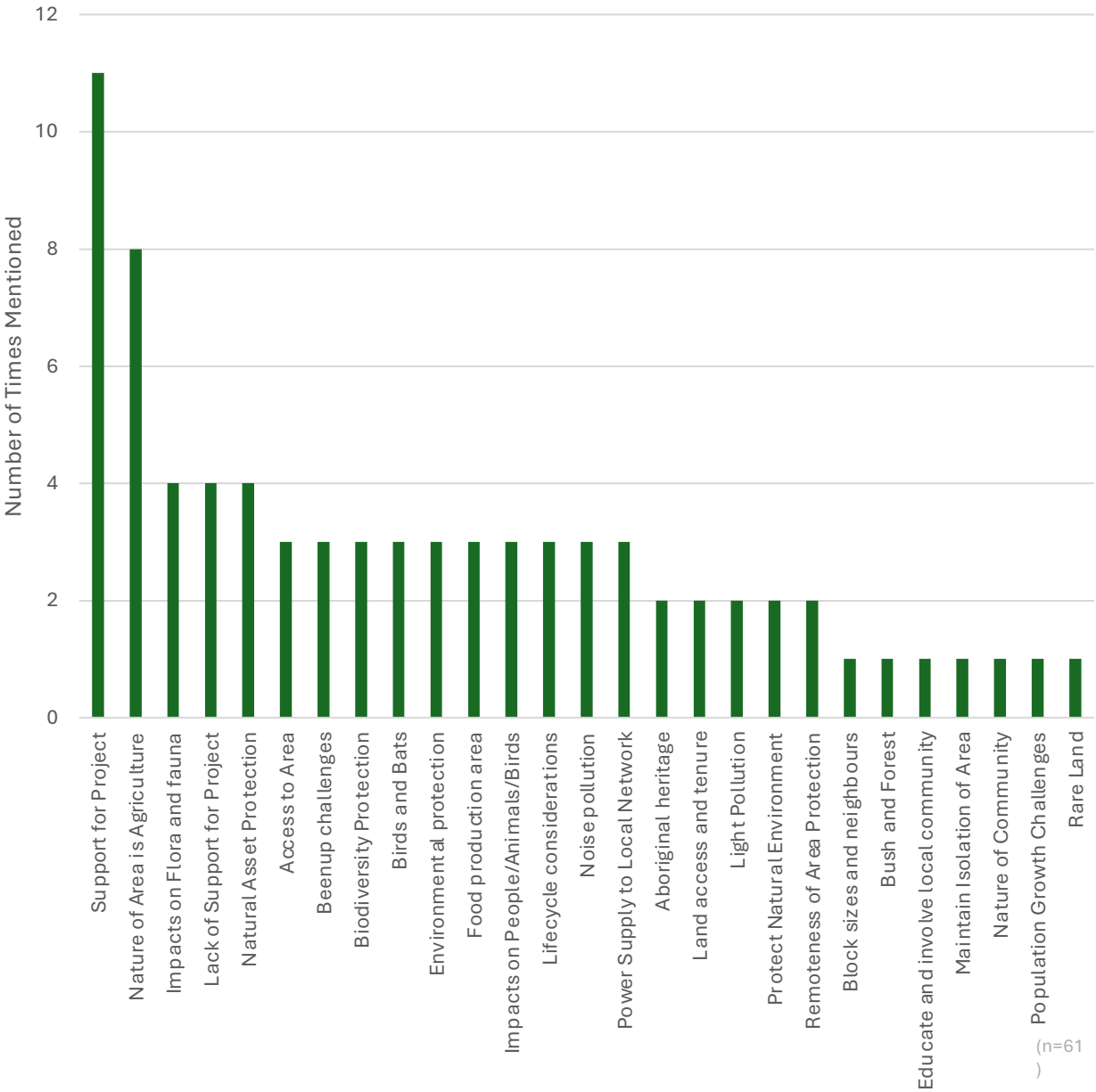

Being close to community and our networks
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=138)

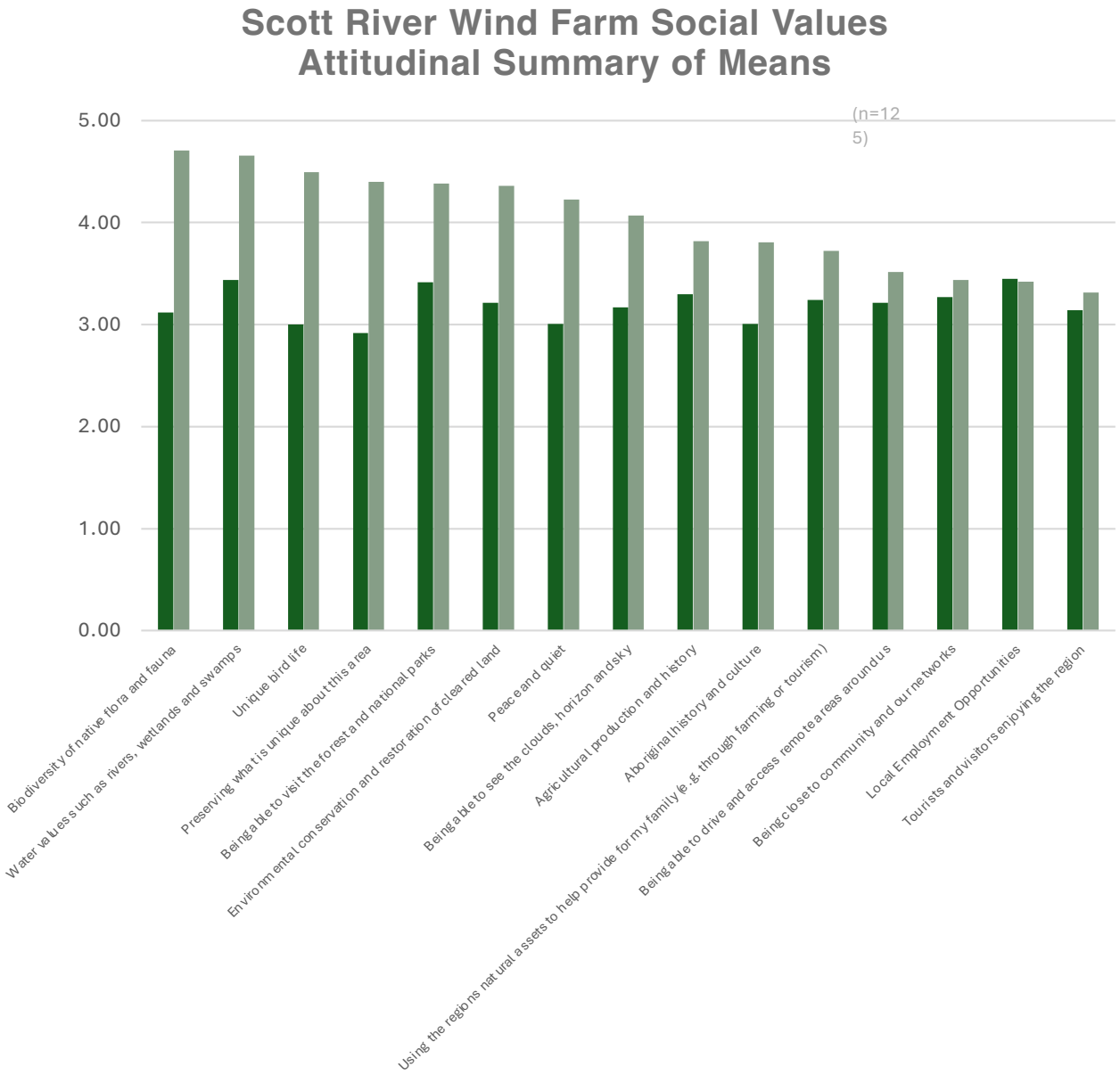

Environmental conservation and restoration of cleared land
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=140)


Local Employment Opportunities
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=139)

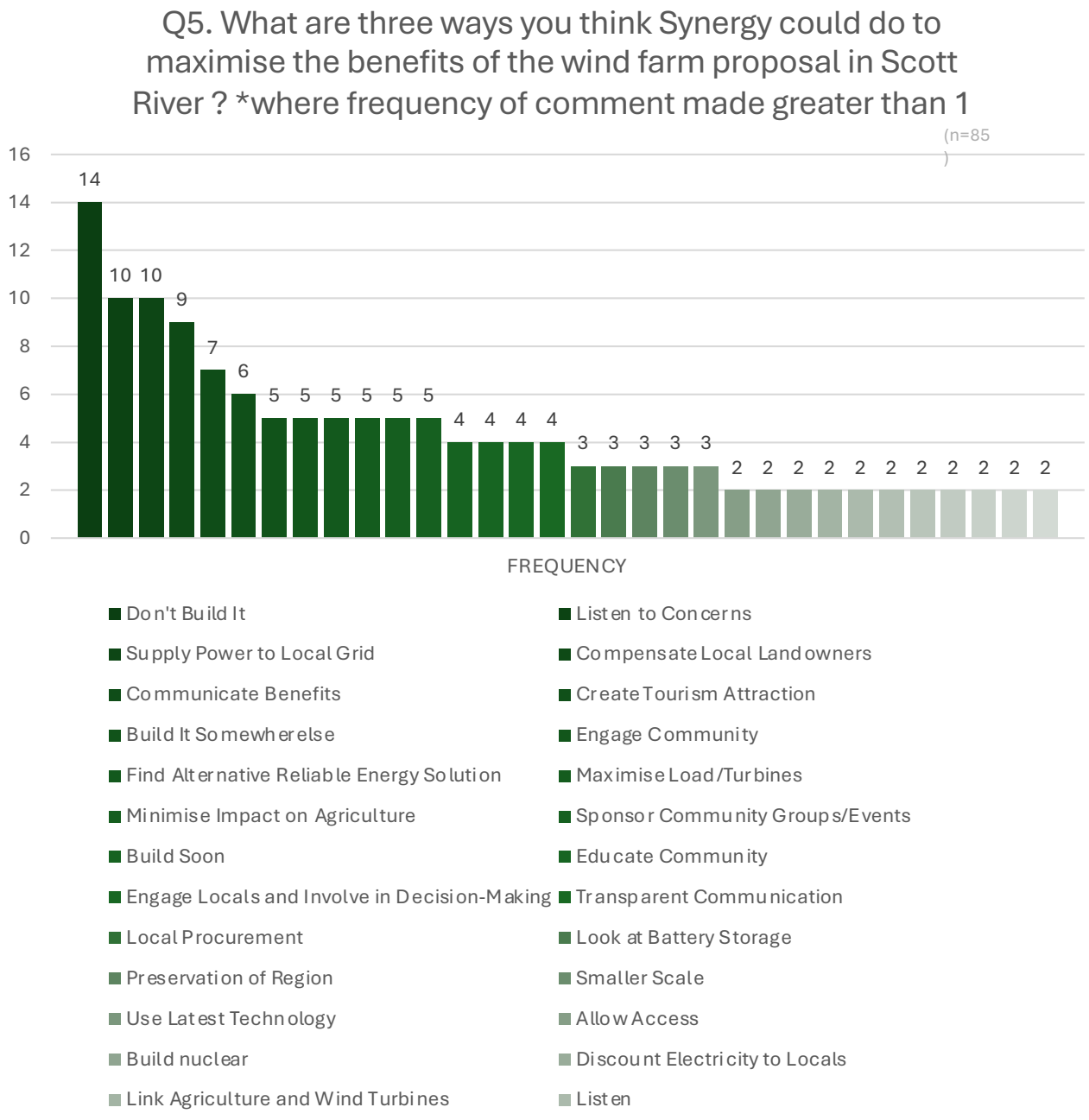

Other
100.0%
75.0%
50.0%
25.0%
0.0%
1
2
3
4
5
Importance
Ability to Manage
(n=23)

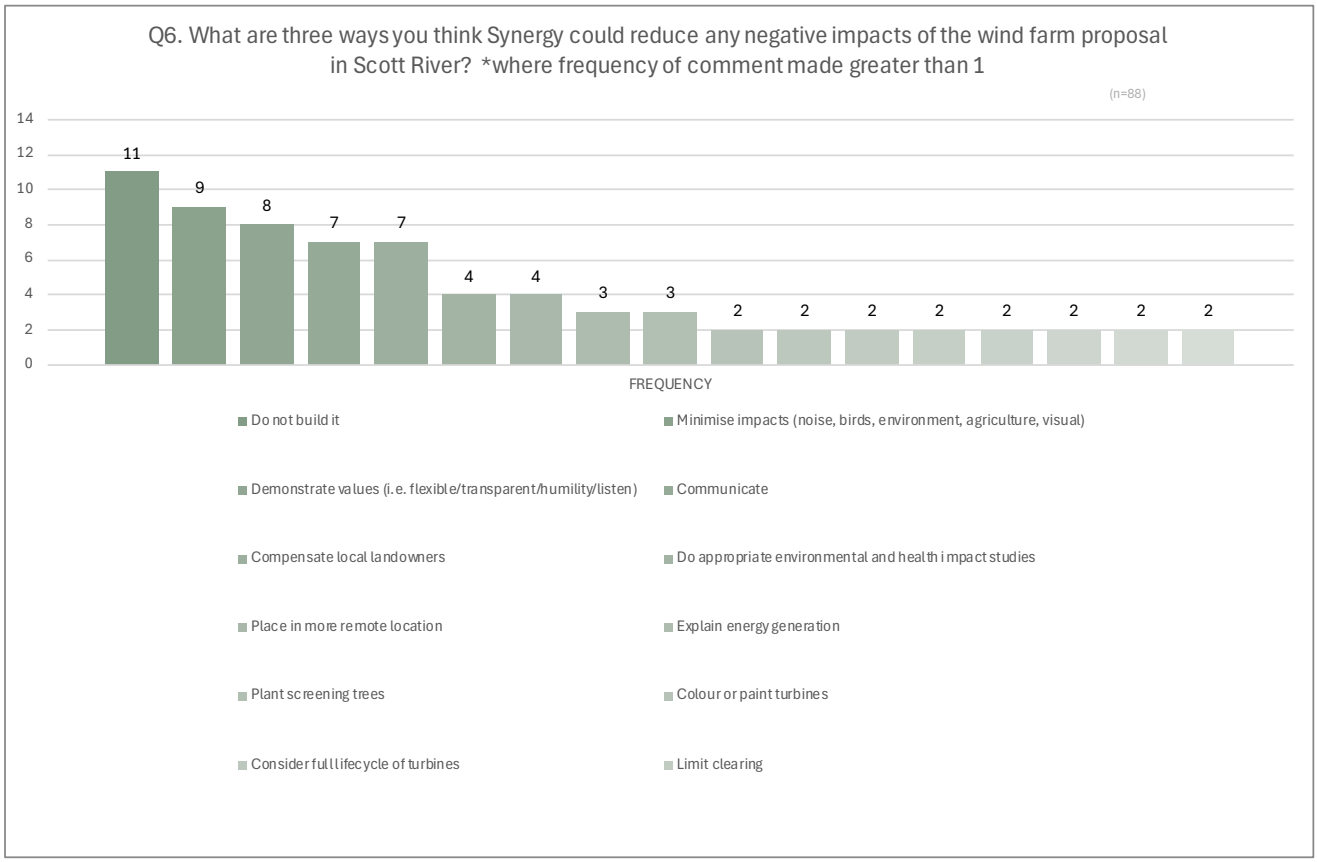
Frequency of Coded 'Other' Responses to Social Values and Project




Scott River Wind Farm Social Values
Attitudinal Summary of Means
(n=125)
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
0.00
Biodiversity of native flora and fauna
Water values such as rivers, wetlands and swamps
Unique bird life
Preserving what is unique about this area
Being able to visit the forest and national parks
Environmental conservation and restoration of cleared land
Peace and quiet
Being able to see the clouds, horizon and sky
Agricultural production and history
Aboriginal history and culture
Using the regions natural assets to help provide for my family (e.g. through farming or tourism)
Being able to drive and access remote areas around us
Being close to community and our networks
Local Employment Opportunities
Tourists and visitors enjoying the region
Perceived Ability To Manage (where 1=not manageable at all to our determinent and 5=extremely well to our benefit)
Importance (where 1=not at all important and 5 =extremely important)

SUGGESTIONS FOR MANAGING IMPACTS/BENEFITS




Q6. What are three ways you think Synergy could reduce any negative impacts of the wind farm proposal in Scott River? *where frequency of comment made greater than 1
(n=88)
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
11
9
8
7
7
4
4
3
3
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
FREQUENCY
Do not build it
Minimise impacts (noise, birds, environment, agriculture, visual)
Demonstrate values (i.e. flexible/transparent/humility/listen)
Communicate
Compensate local landowners
Do appropriate environmental and health impact studies
Place in more remote location
Explain energy generation
Plant screening trees
Colour or paint turbines
Consider full lifecycle of turbines
Limit clearing

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