

ANNUAL COMPLIANCE REPORT



EPBC 2011/6206


Crudine Ridge Wind Farm

25 June 2024



Final

Revision Control

Revision	Date	Issue	Author	Reviewed	Approved	Signature
1	25/06/24	Final/Issued	Z. Jokadar	C.Somerville	C. Somerville	

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DECLARATION OF ACCURACY

In making this declaration, I am aware that sections 490 and 491 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwth) (EPBC Act) make it an offence in certain circumstances to knowingly provide false or misleading information or documents. The offence is punishable on conviction by imprisonment or a fine, or both. I declare that all the information and documentation supporting this compliance report is true and correct in every particular. I am authorised to bind the approval holder to this declaration and that I have no knowledge of that authorisation being revoked at the time of making this declaration.

Signed: 

Full name (please print): CANDICE SOMERVILLE

Position (please print): ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER

Organisation: SQUADRON ENERGY PTY LTD (ABN 13 615 221 559)

Date: 25/06/2024

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1 Project Description

The Crudine Ridge Wind Farm (CRWF) is situated approximately 45 km southeast of Mudgee and 45 kilometres north of Bathurst in the Central Tablelands of New South Wales. The wind farm site covers approximately 1,664 hectares of land which has been mostly cleared for grazing. Areas of scattered remnant woodland exist across the site, and on the elevated ridges to the north, north-east and south. The area is of moderate-to-high elevation (820 m to 1,000 m above sea level, Australian Height Datum (AHD)). The nearest township is Mudgee, which is located to the north along the Castlereagh Highway. Figure 1 shows the Project location and layout.

Development Consent was granted by the NSW Planning Assessment Commission (SSD 6697) on 10 May 2016. This was later modified (MOD 1) on 21 June 2019 to realign the reduction in wind turbines from 77 to 37 and incorporate the revised road design for Aarons Pass Road. A further Modification (MOD 2) to consent was granted on 22 May 2020 to realign construction boundary from turbine A35 to turbine A38. An additional modification (MOD 3) was also granted 21 September 2020 to realign construction boundary to allow for the best alignment of cable trenching.

The Minister for Environment and Energy granted approval of CRWF on 4 April 2017 with conditions covered by EPBC 2011/6206. This was later varied by the Department of Agriculture Water and the Environment on 2 November 2021.

CRWF commenced operations on 20 December 2021. This report has been prepared to meet the requirements of Condition 10 of EPBC 2011/6206, for the reporting period 25 May 2023 – 24 May 2024. The approval holder is: CRWF Nominees Pty Ltd, ACN: 623 533 102.

2 Description of Activities

Activities undertaken at the CRWF during the reporting period included:

- Operation of 37 WTGs;
- Regular maintenance of the WTGs; and access track
- Land management including weed control, bird and bat monitoring, and biodiversity offset management.

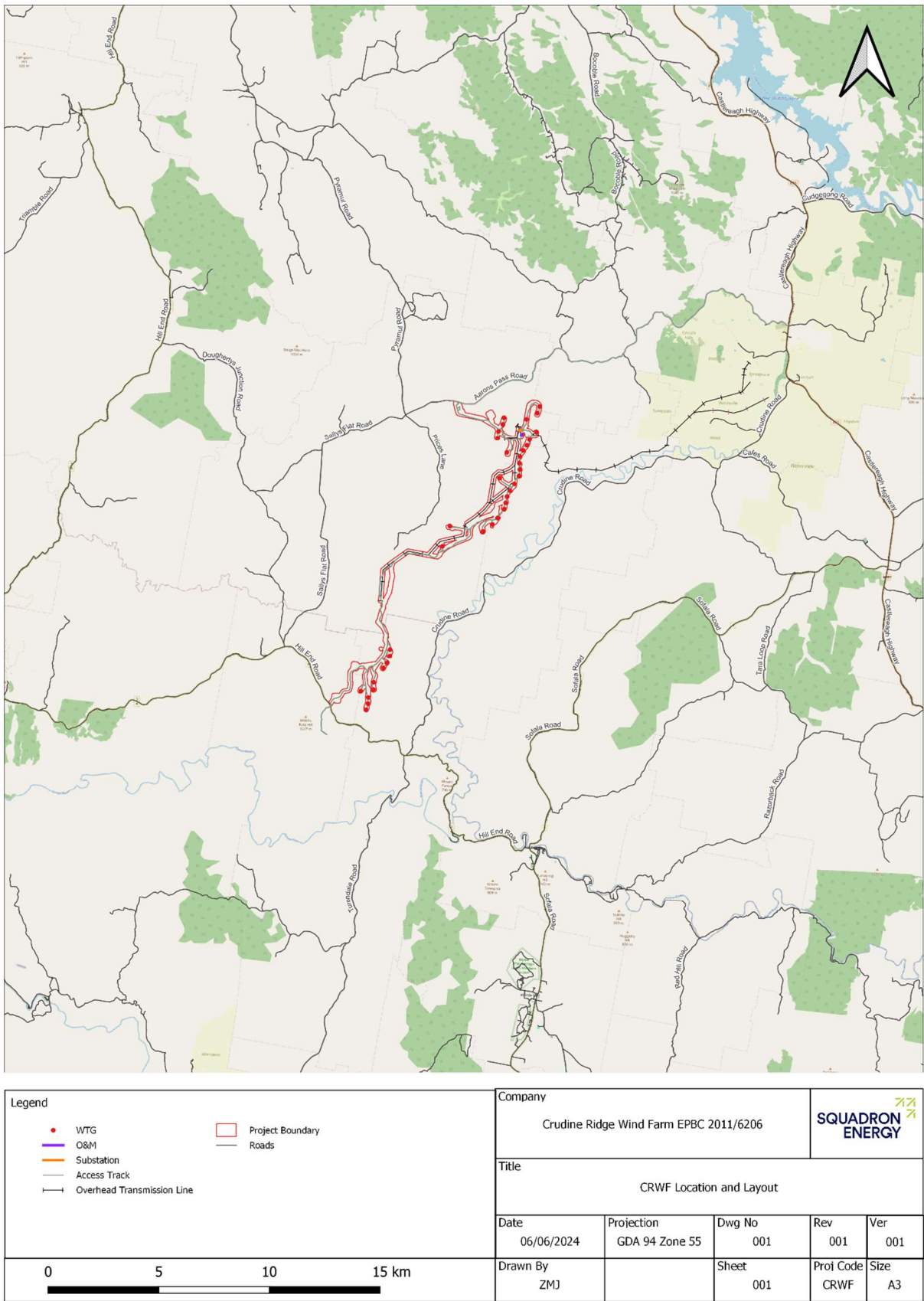


Figure 1 Crudine Ridge Wind Farm Project Location

3 Compliance Report

Table 1 - EPBC 2011/6206 Compliance Status

Condition Number	Condition Description	Compliance Status	Status/Comment																						
1	<p>To minimise the impacts of the action on protected matters, the person taking the action must:</p> <p>a. Implement administrative conditions 1,4, 6, environmental conditions 19 (b)(c) - 23, 41, 42 of the Development Consent where they relate to monitoring, managing, mitigating, avoiding, offsetting, recording, or reporting on, impacts to protected matters.</p> <table><tr><td colspan="2">NSW State Development Consent Condition</td></tr><tr><td>Schedule 2 Condition 1</td><td><i>In addition to meeting the specific environmental performance criteria established under this consent, the Applicant shall implement all reasonable and feasible measures to prevent and/or minimise any material harm to the environment that may result from the construction, operation, or decommissioning of the development.</i></td></tr><tr><td>Schedule 2 Condition 4</td><td><i>The Applicant shall comply with any reasonable requirement/s of the Secretary arising from the Department's assessment of:</i> a) Any strategies, plans, programs, reviews, audits, reports or correspondence that are submitted in accordance with this consent; b) Any reports, reviews or audits commissioned by the Department regarding compliance with this consent; and c) The implementation of any actions or measures contained in these documents.</td></tr><tr><td>Schedule 2 Condition 6</td><td><i>No wind turbines may be greater than 160 metres in height (measured from above ground level to the blade tip).</i></td></tr><tr><td>Schedule 3 Condition 19b</td><td><i>Implement all reasonable and feasible measures to minimise:</i> o impacts on the Small-Purple Pea (<i>Swainsona recta</i>), <i>Acacia meiantha</i> and <i>Pomaderris cotoneaster</i>; o limb-lopping of hollow bearing trees along Aarons Pass Road; o impacts on threatened bird and bat populations; o the approved clearing of native woodland vegetation and fauna habitat, including hollow-bearing trees</td></tr><tr><td>Schedule 3 Condition 19c</td><td><i>If micro-siting wind turbines, ensure that the revised location of the turbine is at least 30 metres from any existing hollow-bearing trees, and where reasonable and feasible, 50 metres</i></td></tr></table>	NSW State Development Consent Condition		Schedule 2 Condition 1	<i>In addition to meeting the specific environmental performance criteria established under this consent, the Applicant shall implement all reasonable and feasible measures to prevent and/or minimise any material harm to the environment that may result from the construction, operation, or decommissioning of the development.</i>	Schedule 2 Condition 4	<i>The Applicant shall comply with any reasonable requirement/s of the Secretary arising from the Department's assessment of:</i> a) Any strategies, plans, programs, reviews, audits, reports or correspondence that are submitted in accordance with this consent; b) Any reports, reviews or audits commissioned by the Department regarding compliance with this consent; and c) The implementation of any actions or measures contained in these documents.	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The administrative conditions referenced in Condition 1a have been implemented.</p> <p>An Independent Environmental Audit was conducted in September 2022, in accordance with the requirements of the Development Consent. The Independent Audit Report (Rev 0, dated 12/09/2022) confirms compliance with these conditions referenced under EPBC Condition 1.</p> <p>The Independent Environmental Audit Report is available on the Crudine Ridge Wind Farm project website.</p> <table><tr><td colspan="2">Compliance status with NSW State Development Consent</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td><i>Current approved management plans are being implemented where measures are relevant to operation activities of the project:</i> EMS v11, dated 1/11/2022, approved 15/11/2022 BMP v6, dated 28/02/2024, approved 03/04/2024 BBAMP 2.6, dated 11/2017, approved 16/11/2017 AHMP v1, dated 08/11/2017, approved 15/12/2017 TMP v10, dated 08/08/2019, approved 13/08/2019 PIRMP dated 31/01/2024</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td><i>The EMS and other management plans identify the relevant environmental and social issues applicable to the wind farm. 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	from any existing hollow-bearing tree, unless the Secretary agrees otherwise.		for Blakely's Red Gum – Yellow Box grassy tall woodland of the NSW South Western Slopes Bioregion (PCT 277)
	Schedule 3 Condition 23 Following approval, the Applicant must implement the measures described in the Biodiversity Management Plan.		19c Micrositing survey and report dated 5/3/2018 and prepared by specialist consultant EcoLogical, verified micro-siting of wind turbines comply with the requirements of Condition 19c
	Schedule 3 Condition 41 The Applicant shall rehabilitate all areas of the site not proposed for future disturbance progressively, that is, as soon as reasonably practicable following construction or decommissioning. All reasonable and feasible measures must be taken to minimise the total area exposed at any time. Interim rehabilitation strategies shall be employed when areas prone to dust generation, soil erosion and weed incursion cannot yet be permanently rehabilitated.		23 Current approved management plans is being implemented were measures are relevant to operation activities of the project: BMP v6, dated 28/02/2024, approved 03/04/2024
	Schedule 3 Condition 42 Rehabilitation Objectives – Decommissioning The Applicant shall rehabilitate the site to the satisfaction of the Secretary. This rehabilitation must comply with the objectives in Table 7.		41 Progressive rehabilitation completed as construction progressed. Rehabilitation inspections completed annually verify areas are well established and self sustaining. 42 No clearing or ground disturbance undertaken in this reporting period.
	b. Notify the Department in writing of any proposed change to the conditions of the Development Consent for which Condition 1a applies, no later than 2 weeks after formally proposing a change or becoming aware of the NSW Government proposing a change.	Not applicable	There was no proposed change to the conditions of Development Consent for which Condition 1a applies during the reporting period.
	c. Notify the Department in writing of any change to the Development Consent for which Condition 1a applies within 2 weeks of a change being finalised.	Not applicable	There was no proposed change to the conditions of Development Consent for which Condition 1a applies during the reporting period.
2	The person taking the action must secure the offset site by entering into a Stewardship Agreement by 10 June 2022, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Minister. The person taking the action must:	Compliant	A formal extension was granted by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for CRWF to enter into a Stewardship Agreement by 31 August 2022. CRWF purchased 674 ha of land for securing the offset site, known as Glen Maye (lots 1 and 2 in DP 1209812). Consistent with the NSW <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act</i> , CRWF entered into a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement (BS0050) on 19 August 2022, for the protection and ongoing conservation management of the offset site in perpetuity.

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	a. Lodge the Stewardship Agreement for registration on the title of the offset site within 6 months of the Stewardship Agreement being entered into.	Compliant	The BSA was registered on title on 12 September 2022, within 6 months of entering into the Stewardship Agreement.
	b. Provide written evidence to the Minister that the Stewardship Agreement for the offset site has been entered into within 10 business days of the agreement being entered into.	Compliant	On 29 August 2022, written evidence was provided to the Minister confirming that the Stewardship Agreement was entered into on 19 August 2022. The written evidence was provided to the Minister within 10 business days of the agreement being entered into.
3	The person taking the action must not clear more than 3.28 hectares of White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland for the development of the proposed action, as defined in Schedule 1 of this approval.	Compliant	A cumulative total of 2.48 ha of White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland has been cleared by the development of the proposed action. No additional clearing of this community has been undertaken during the current reportable period.
4	The person taking the action must not clear known locations of Small Purple Pea (<i>Swainsona recta</i>) within the project area (identified within the Environmental Assessment). The person taking the action must not clear any additional populations of Small Purple Pea (not identified within the Environmental Assessment), without the approval of the Minister.	Compliant	All known locations of Small Purple Pea (<i>Swainsona recta</i>) within the project area (identified within the Environmental Assessment) were marked during construction as no go zones in the field and have not been cleared. All works have been completed within known locations of Small Purple Pea (<i>Swainsona recta</i>) and no known individuals were harmed.
5	The person taking the action must only construct, operate, and replace or upgrade, as necessary, up to 37 wind turbines. The person taking the action must ensure:	Compliant	A total of 37 turbines have been constructed.
	a. The wind turbines are micro-sited in accordance with the micro-siting restrictions in Conditions 7 and 8 of Schedule 2 of the Development Consent.	Compliant	The 37 turbines have been micro-sited in accordance with the requirements of the Development Consent.
	b. They notify the Department in writing of any changes to conditions 7 or 8 of Schedule 2 of the Development Consent, as those changes relate to the micro-siting of any wind turbine, and provide the final layout plan to the Department within 2 weeks of the change being made.	Not applicable	There were no changes to conditions 7 or 8 of Schedule 2 of the Development Consent during the reportable period. Notwithstanding, notification was provided on 28 April 2022 to provide the Department with a revised final layout plan. The notification was for information purposes only as the changes to the Plan do not relate to micro-siting of any wind turbine. The amendments to the Plan were in regards to minor access track amendments, to illustrate the location of a wind monitoring mast and show involved and non-involved residents.

Condition Number	Condition Description	Compliance Status	Status/Comment
	c. They provide the Department with a map showing the location of each wind turbine and information on how the location of the wind turbines are consistent with the micro-siting requirements of the Development Consent. The map and information must be provided to the Department by 31 December 2021.	Compliant	Map and information on how the location of the wind turbines are consistent with the micro-siting requirements of the Development Consent provided to the Department on 20 December 2021.
6	The person taking the action must not construct or place any wind turbines at locations A53, A54, A55, A56, A57, A58, A61, A66, A67, A68, A69, A71, A73, A78, A79, A80, A81, A82, A83, A84 as indicated on Schedule 2 of this approval.	Compliant	These sites have been removed from the approved site layout and have not been constructed.
7	The person taking the action must not construct any additional turbines at a future time in the project site area indicated on Schedule 2 of this approval, except for those referred to in condition 5.	Compliant	No additional turbines have been constructed.
8	Within 30 days after the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must advise the Department in writing of the actual date of commencement of the action.	Compliant	Advice was given to the Minister on 04 June 2018. The commencement of the action occurred on 25 May 2018
9	The person taking the action must maintain accurate records substantiating all activities associated with or relevant to the conditions of approval, including measures taken to implement the management plans, reports, strategies, agreements required by this approval, and make them available upon request to the Department. Such records may be subject to audit by the Department or an independent auditor in accordance with section 458 of the EPBC Act, or used to verify compliance with the conditions of approval. Summaries of audits will be posted on the Department's website. The results of audits may also be publicised through the general media.	Compliant	<p>Accurate records have been maintained substantiating the activities associated with or relevant to the conditions of approval, and impacts on Protected Matters. These are available upon request from the Department.</p> <p>The following reports are required by the conditions of consent and provided on the project's website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPL annual return • EPBC Annual Compliance report • BBAMP annual monitoring report • Independent audits every 3 years. • One off noise operational audit • Aarons Pass Road vegetation clearing report. <p>The approved EMS does not require yearly reporting.</p>
10	Within three months of every 12 month anniversary of the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must publish a report on their website addressing compliance with each of the conditions of this approval, including implementation of any management plans as specified in the conditions. Documentary evidence providing proof of the date of publication and non-	Compliant	<p>The commencement of the action anniversary is 25 May (as notified to the Department per Condition 8).</p> <p>This report addresses compliance with each of the conditions between 25 May 2023 to 24 May 2024 and will be published on the project website. Documentary evidence will be provided to the Department via email.</p>

Condition Number	Condition Description	Compliance Status	Status/Comment
	compliance with any of the conditions of this approval must be provided to the Department at the same time as the compliance report is published.		The compliance report for the 2022 – 2023 reporting period was published on the Crudine Ridge Wind Farm project website on 22/06/2023, within three months of the anniversary of the commencement of the action. On 22/06/2023, CRWF wrote to the Department via email to notify that the report had been published on the project website that day and provided a direct link to the report on the website.
11	Any potential or actual contravention of the conditions of this approval (including contravention of a commitment made in a management plan, program or strategy) must be reported to the Department within 7 days of the approval holder becoming aware of the actual or potential contravention.	Compliant	No potential or actual contraventions with the conditions of this approval or commitment made in a management plan, program or strategy occurred during this reporting period.
12	Upon the direction of the Minister, the person taking the action must ensure that an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of approval is conducted and a report submitted to the Minister. The independent auditor must be approved by the Minister prior to the commencement of the audit. Audit criteria must be agreed to by the Minister and the audit report must address the criteria to the satisfaction of the Minister.	Not applicable	The Minister has not directed an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of the EPBC 2011/6206 approval. Condition 12 is not applicable for the current reporting period.
13	If, at any time after 5 years from the date of this approval, the person taking the action has not substantially commenced the action, then the person taking the action must not substantially commence the action without the written agreement of the Minister.	Not applicable	The Minister granted approval of CRWF on 4 April 2017. The action substantially commenced on 25 May 2018.

4 New Environmental Risks

There have been no significant changes to the activities undertaken on the project site during the reporting period. No new risks to Matters of National Environmental Significance were identified during the reporting period.

Squadron Energy is Australia's leading renewable energy company. Proudly Australian owned, our mission is to be a driving force in Australia's transition to a clean energy future by providing green power to our customers.

We develop, operate and own renewable energy assets in Australia, with 1.1 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy in operation and a development pipeline of 20GW.

With proven experience and expertise across the project lifecycle, we work with local communities and our customers to lead the transition to Australia's clean energy future.

Squadron Energy acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

