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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS | FEBRUARY 2025

## Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project

These Frequently Asked Questions have been developed to provide landholders, Traditional Owner groups, the community and other stakeholders with further information about Powerlink's Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project.

### About the Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project

#### What is the Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project? (Powerlink's project)

The Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project is a proposed double circuit 275kV transmission line that will connect the Theodore Wind Farm to Powerlink's transmission network. It involves planning and building a new transmission line around 55km in length from the wind farm site (about 20km east of Theodore) to a proposed substation at Mt Benn near Banana. This proposed substation forms part of the Banana Range Wind Connection Project – currently in the planning and approvals phase.

#### What is Powerlink's role?

Powerlink is a Government Owned Corporation that owns, develops, operates and maintains the high voltage electricity transmission network in Queensland. We provide electricity transmission services, including connecting large electricity generators (such as wind and solar farms), to the transmission network. Helping the energy system transition to a lower carbon future is a key focus for Powerlink.

Powerlink manages the process by which renewable energy projects can connect to the electricity grid under the National Electricity Rules.

Powerlink has been engaged by RWE Renewables Australia (RWE) to progress work to connect their proposed Theodore Wind Farm to the transmission network. The project is in the planning phase.

#### What approvals are required for the connection project?

Powerlink's Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project is subject to separate planning approval from RWE's wind farm development.

Powerlink will progress planning approvals for this project through the Ministerial Infrastructure Designation (MID) process. This process is managed by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning with input from other government agencies. Powerlink may also need to seek environmental approval from the Australian Government under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

## What are the next steps for the project?

Following release of the Final Corridor Selection Report (CSR) in February 2025 which identified a final 1km-wide corridor, our project team will look to complete detailed technical studies and ongoing engagement with landholders, Traditional Owners and other stakeholders will continue to inform the final transmission line design.

Powerlink will then prepare an Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) which forms part of the formal MID approval process. There will be a formal community consultation period on the findings of the EAR, expected to take place during 2025.

## When is construction expected to occur?

Subject to approvals, construction is expected to commence in Q2 2026 and be completed in late 2027.

## About the Theodore Wind Farm (RWE's project)

The Theodore Wind Farm is a renewable energy development proposed by RWE. It is planned to incorporate a wind farm with up to 170 wind turbines, a battery storage facility and may also include a solar farm within the project boundary.

## What is the latest update about the Theodore Wind Farm?

In mid-January 2025, the Deputy Premier as Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, The Hon Jarrod Bleijie, exercised his powers under the *Planning Act 2016* to suspend the assessment of three wind farms, including Theodore Wind Farm, currently being assessed in the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) process. This hold on assessments and approvals is for a period of up to four months until 16 May. This change relates only to wind farm projects, and does not alter the planning approval process for electricity transmission projects, including connection projects.

The wind farm is proposed to have up to 170 turbines and retain the existing cattle grazing land use. Timelines and further information on wind farm activities and community benefits are available at [theodorewindfarm.com.au](http://theodorewindfarm.com.au) or by emailing [theodorewindfarm@rwe.com](mailto:theodorewindfarm@rwe.com).

## Transmission corridor selection process

### What area was considered to potentially host the transmission infrastructure?

As part of their initial project planning activities, RWE undertook preliminary desktop analysis and investigations into transmission corridor alternatives from a landholder, environment and constructability perspective, leading to a preferred corridor.

In 2024, RWE engaged Powerlink to progress work to connect their proposed Theodore Wind Farm to the electricity grid, which included consolidating work previously completed by RWE on the project and progressing this work to the next stage. Powerlink subsequently released a Draft CSR in October 2024 that identified a 1km-wide recommended corridor. Following community consultation on the Draft CSR in October and November 2024, Powerlink released a Final CSR in February 2025 that identifies a final 1km-wide corridor.

## What is a Final CSR?

Feedback received from landholders, Traditional Owners groups, the wider community and other stakeholders on the recommended corridor (outlined in the Draft CSR) was collated to identify property and land constraints, as well as opportunities. Adjustments were then made to the recommended corridor where appropriate in response to this feedback.

The Final CSR demonstrates how community feedback received during engagement has informed our planning, alongside technical analysis undertaken to date. We will continue engaging with landholders and Traditional Owners within the final corridor to help shape the final location of the transmission line, which will ultimately be located within a 60m-wide easement alignment.

## Has the corridor changed since the release of the Draft CSR?

Yes. Following feedback received during the Draft CSR's consultation period in October and November 2024, Powerlink has investigated two areas for realignment.

### Northern section

- This realignment occurs in the northern area of the corridor and relates to corridor alignment from the proposed Mt Benn Substation for an approximate distance of 1.3km to the south where it rejoins the original recommended corridor.
- This area is constrained by existing land uses including grazing operations and associated farming infrastructure in the recommended corridor. Taking these identified constraints into consideration, relocating this corridor section to the west significantly reduces impacts in this area.

### Central section

- This realignment occurs in the central area of the corridor surrounding Sawpit Creek.
- This area is constrained by existing land uses including various grazing operations. Following engagement with landholders, an alternative alignment was explored. This also reduces environmental impacts related to crossing Sawpit Creek. These considerations have resulted in this corridor section being relocated to the west.

Overall, the final 1km-wide corridor continues to achieve the least overall impact across social, environmental and economic objectives.

## Why was the final corridor selected?

The final corridor has been selected as it:

- maintains a relatively direct route
- includes the least number of properties, which minimises property-specific impacts
- minimises significant impacts on agriculture, cropping and grazing lands
- is located a considerable distance from existing townships (mainly Banana) and major highways, reducing broad visual amenity impacts
- enhances opportunities for co-existence with existing distribution powerlines and other proposed renewable energy projects in the area, creating less impacts and maximising efficiencies.

## Did RWE consider alternative corridors?

As part of their initial project planning activities, RWE investigated the following corridor alternatives:

- central corridor to the west of Mt Benn
- corridor to the west of Flat Top Mountain.

The decision was made to not proceed with these alternative corridors due to several factors, including:

- preference to maximise co-location opportunities with infrastructure development
- potential corridor impacts on existing agricultural land uses (including mapped areas of strategic cropping land) and wetland areas
- number of waterway crossings
- number of additional properties impacted
- overall corridor length.

## Will additional corridors be required?

The final corridor will ultimately accommodate a double circuit 275kV transmission line within a 60m-wide easement. This transmission line is intended to provide higher capacity to allow future connections where required, subject to capacity demands. With the introduction of this transmission line, at this stage Powerlink does not envisage the need for additional transmission infrastructure being required south of the proposed Mt Benn Substation.

## What type of land is in the final corridor?

The final corridor is located within the Rural Zone under the Banana Shire Council Planning Scheme 2021.

Placement of the corridor within rural zoning is preferential to its placement within residential or open space zoned land because of the social and amenity impacts.

Further, areas used for grazing activities including broadacre cropping are more common further to the west which reflects the flatter topography. As such, the final corridor is not envisaged to significantly impact current grazing activities and will avoid areas used for cropping purposes.

## How else can impacts to agricultural land be minimised?

The final corridor is around 1km wide and will ultimately be reduced to an easement alignment width of approximately 60m. This provides flexibility for Powerlink to work with landholders to determine an easement alignment that minimises property-specific impacts, in particular for farming activities and business operations.

## Project design features

### How tall will the new transmission towers be?

It is likely the new 275kV transmission towers will be up to 60m high, depending on specific-site conditions. This can include consideration of terrain, topography and land use within the final easement alignment, with shorter towers likely on higher ground and taller towers within lower points of the corridor.

### What will be the distance between towers?

Concrete tower pads (which the towers stand on) will typically be 40m x 40m. The distance, or span, between towers will likely be up to around 450m.

### Where will you place the transmission towers?

Powerlink will commence additional detailed technical studies and continued engagement with landholders and Traditional Owners to narrow down the final corridor and determine a 60m-wide easement alignment.

Once the easement alignment is established, Powerlink will work closely with landholders and Traditional Owners to ensure tower design and placement is carefully considered with a range of factors informing final design, such as land use, environment, potential cultural heritage values, access and topography.

### Do transmission line easements need to be cleared of all vegetation?

Wherever possible, Powerlink does not clear the entire easement but rather minimises vegetation removal to that which is required to ensure the safe and reliable operation of and access to the transmission line.

When designing the line, mitigation measures such as selective tower placement and spanning to decrease the amount of required vegetation clearing will be used, particularly in sensitive environments.

## Planning and environmental approvals

### What planning and environmental approvals are required?

Powerlink's Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project is subject to separate planning approval from RWE's wind farm project.

Powerlink will seek planning approval from the Queensland Government, under the Ministerial Infrastructure Designation (MID) process. We may also need to seek environmental approval from the Australian Government under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). We will continue working closely with landholders, Traditional Owner groups, the wider community and other stakeholders as planning progresses.

### Will this project potentially spread weeds onto my property or compromise my property's biosecurity?

We know that effective prevention and management of identified weeds, pests and pathogens is a high priority for landholders. We comply with the *Biosecurity Act 2014* around 'restricted and prohibited matter' and take all reasonable and practical actions to ensure our activities do not introduce or spread biosecurity matter, as per our

general biosecurity obligation. Our Land Access Protocol sets out an agreed approach for how and when we access a landholder's property. Understanding land use, property management and biosecurity plans is key to this process. More information can be found in our 'Managing biosecurity on your property' brochure at [powerlink.com.au/brochures/managing-biosecurity-your-property](http://powerlink.com.au/brochures/managing-biosecurity-your-property).

### How does Powerlink work with landholders to manage biosecurity risk?

Powerlink will work with landholders to identify biosecurity risks on each property. We discuss biosecurity and weed management with landholders during our initial meetings. This helps us understand any biosecurity risks and develop appropriate management measures to avoid spreading weeds, diseases and pathogens. We value our long-term, working relationships with landholders, and maintain communication about biosecurity from a project's planning phase through to construction, operation and maintenance. Our Land Access Protocol provides information on the standards and commitments we adhere to when accessing properties, including for biosecurity management. You can view more information on the Land Access Protocol at [powerlink.com.au/brochures/land-access-protocol](http://powerlink.com.au/brochures/land-access-protocol).

### How does Powerlink consider biosecurity at every project stage?

Transmission projects have multiple levels of governance for managing biosecurity risks. A Biosecurity Management Plan is developed early and is part of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP). The EMP outlines Powerlink's key controls (e.g. biosecurity protocols and vegetation management strategies) to minimise the spread of biosecurity material as part of our activities. The EMP is submitted to the Minister responsible for planning as part of project approvals and is subject to formal public consultation. Once approved, the EMP feeds into the Health, Safety and Environment Specification for contractors, to ensure on-site workers are aware of obligations and commitments.

For ongoing easement access and maintenance, biosecurity requirements are documented in an Environmental Works Plan (EWP). The EWP is the main tool for identifying biosecurity risks at Powerlink sites on a property. It is developed in consultation with each landholder and displays all known biosecurity considerations for a location, and any access requirements or constraints. Powerlink employees and contractors are made aware of biosecurity risks and are provided maps and training to ensure they understand procedures and obligations for site visits. Figure 1 below shows how biosecurity is considered at every stage.

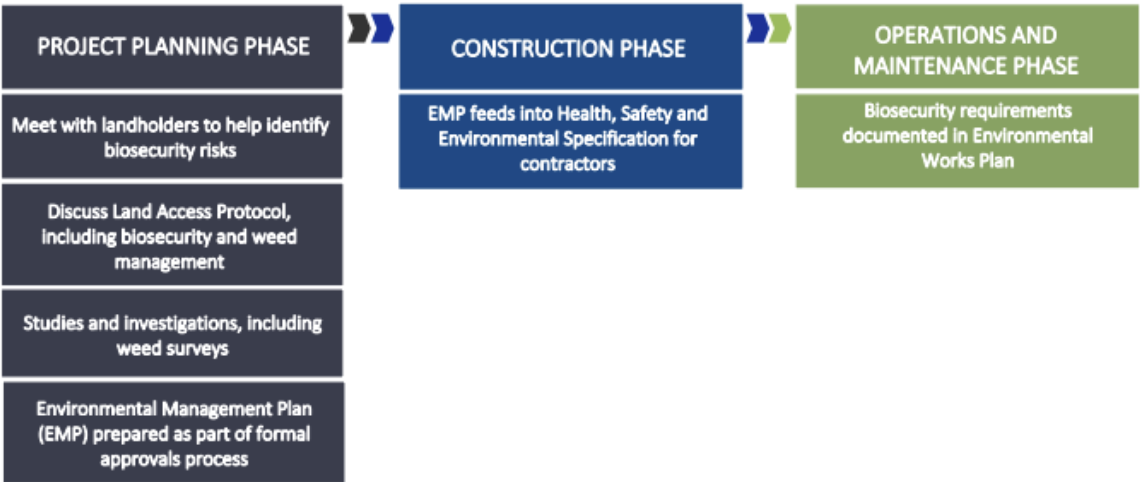


Figure 1 Biosecurity at every stage

## What is Powerlink’s approach to vehicle wash downs?

Powerlink conducts regular wash downs to reduce the risk of spreading weeds, as well as soil-borne pests and diseases, and has dedicated wash down facilities across our transmission network. Our people and contractors are trained to know when and how to conduct vehicle wash downs and comply with the following:

- complete the national standard training, ‘Inspect and clean machinery of plant, animal and soil material’ (AHC BIO201A), on projects or locations where there is a high biosecurity risk
- comply with Queensland Government inspection and wash down procedures
- only carry out wash downs at designated locations
- complete a Biosecurity Declaration Form after completing a wash down and before accessing the next property or biosecurity zone.

## Community consultation

### What are the consultation timeframes for this project?

Landholders, Traditional Owner groups, the community and other stakeholder were invited to provide feedback on the Draft CSR over a five-week consultation period which ended on 29 November 2024.

Based on feedback received, Powerlink then released a Final CSR in February 2025.

Field studies and continued engagement with directly impacted landholders, Traditional Owner Groups, the community and other stakeholders will now progress. Preparations will continue to inform the planning and environmental approvals process for the project as required. Powerlink will continue to engage regularly and transparently as the project progresses.





## How can I provide feedback?

We welcome your feedback and questions anytime on the Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project.

Landholders along the final corridor are also encouraged to contact their Landholder Relations Advisor with any queries or input.

Matthew Allen  
Landholder Relations Advisor  
07 3898 4033  
[theodore@powerlink.com.au](mailto:theodore@powerlink.com.au)

## How can I subscribe to project email updates?

If you would like to receive project updates via email, please email [theodore@powerlink.com.au](mailto:theodore@powerlink.com.au) with your name, email address and 'Theodore Update' in the subject line.



## Further information

For enquiries about the Theodore Wind Farm Connection Project, please call 07 3898 4919 (Monday to Friday, 7.30am – 5pm) and ask for Landholder Relations or email [theodore@powerlink.com.au](mailto:theodore@powerlink.com.au).

## About Powerlink Queensland

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

*We are also responsible for connecting large-scale renewable energy developments, including wind and solar, and providing electricity to large industrial customers in the rail, mining and LNG sectors. Visit [powerlink.com.au](http://powerlink.com.au) or scan the QR code to find out more about Powerlink.*

