

The background of the cover features a large, semi-transparent image of a white wind turbine on the right side. The left side shows a landscape with a body of water reflecting the sky, which is filled with soft, white clouds. A horizontal bar with a green-to-grey gradient is positioned above the landscape image.

Wind Farms and Landscape Values Consultation Report

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Project Brief

This report provides a summary of community consultation and feedback from the national consultation process conducted between February and April 2007, as part of the development of a national assessment framework for assessing impacts of wind farms on landscape values. It identifies the key areas of support and agreement as well as issues of concern and areas requiring further work and clarification. It has been written to provide the Project Steering Committee with information about the process and outcomes of the consultation and to input into the development of the national assessment framework.

The brief for the project placed an emphasis on community consultation in the development of the framework. It makes particular reference to:

- Wide ranging regional & metropolitan consultation to seek feedback on the appropriateness of draft methodologies.
- Credibility & authority will depend on the extent of consultation

The project brief posed a number of challenges for the design of an effective consultation process within the project resources:

- To deliver a broad-based acceptance of a framework and get an agreement about the 'role' of consultation in informing the decision making process, given the diversity of views and experiences amongst participants. Some communities have had limited experience of wind farm development while others have a history of conflict and highly politicised decision-making processes. In addition views vary at different levels of government in the different states regarding the role of local communities in decision-making on major projects.
- Defining the communities of interest (e.g. existing residents, non-resident land owners, visitors, heritage and environment groups, indigenous communities) and securing their involvement in a process that will not immediately impact on them at the local level. In particular the challenge of supporting a broad-based involvement to ensure that a range of views are represented.
- Containing the scope of the consultation to the issue of 'landscape values' when people's interests and concerns about wind farms are likely to be much broader.
- Establishing trust and willingness to engage in productive dialogue in those communities where there has been a history of conflict, trust has been damaged or where people are feeling disenfranchised.
- Implementing an efficient process to gain broad-based input on a national basis in a relatively short period of time.
- Providing an appropriate balance between the presentation and development of ideas from existing knowledge and research and listening responsively to the experience and views of local communities.

In addressing the objectives of the project brief and the challenges it posed, a multi-faceted approach to consultation and feedback was developed and implemented. The approach is described in the following section of the report.

2 Approach

2.1 Consultation Techniques

In response to the project objectives and the issues/challenges identified for the consultation process, the consultancy team work with the Project Steering Committee and the Expert Advisory Panel to design a multi-faceted approach to the national consultation. All involved agreed that the following principles should inform our approach:

- Target and actively engage with a range of interests to test the framework against a range of views; the emphasis should not be just on numbers, rather on the diversity of views represented.
- Provide open and accessible opportunities for all interested parties to provide feedback on the proposed framework in a non-confrontational way.
- Provide opportunities for written feedback.

The consultancy team advised against large public meetings that are likely to work against the participation of those who are less confident or feel their views may differ from others in their community.

The agreed approach included the following elements:

- Roundtable discussions involving invited local community leaders, interest groups and opinion leaders to participate in a discussion of key project topics. These were designed to support the involvement of diverse groups of people to give the framework a good 'work out' over a couple of hours, testing emerging ideas about the proposed framework against local experience and knowledge. The emphasis was on the quality of the discussion and actively seeking a broad representation of views, rather than attracting large numbers of people in attendance.
- A publicly advertised open information and feedback session ('community open house') for all interested parties to provide information about the project, ask questions and make comments.
- Project information and feedback opportunities available on-line via the websites of Auswind and the ACNT.
- A more detailed account of the implementation of the consultation process including promotion of the sessions and invitees to roundtables.

Each of these techniques provided a different kind of opportunity to explore the project themes from individual and group perspectives, to understand real life experiences of landscape values assessment and wind farm development, to explore issue of difference and conflict and where possible establish common ground. The input from each different technique has contributed equally to our consideration of the development of the National Framework for Landscape Values Assessment.

2.2 Implementation

At the request of the joint clients the consultation was planned to take place in the capital cities of each state and nominated regional locations with an experience of wind farms development. In consultation with industry representatives the following locations were chosen¹:

Victoria:	Melbourne, Crowlands, Meeniyan (South Gippsland)
NSW:	Sydney, Glen Innes, Queanbeyan
SA:	Adelaide, Burra, Millicent
QLD:	Brisbane, Atherton
Tasmania:	Hobart, Scottsdale, Smithton
WA:	Perth, Albany, Geraldton

¹ The number of locations was determined by the scope of the project resources.

In each location contact was made with local government and industry representatives to identify appropriate contacts to gain a diverse representation of views for the round table discussion, locate accessible community venues and utilise local promotional opportunities for the open community session. Representation was sought from a range of interests including: resident associations, heritage and environment groups, business, farming and tourism associations, indigenous communities, land care groups, landscape guardian groups, local government, state government, landscape professionals and community organisations (e.g. CWA).

A detailed summary of the planning and implementation of the consultation process is provided in *Appendix 1: Summary of Consultation Process*. *Appendix 5 Consultation Materials* contains copies of most of the materials used at the consultation sessions. *Appendix 6: Horizon Lines* includes three examples of a 'horizon line' exercise that was conducted at most of the roundtables. This involved recording responses from the participants to the request: Name two qualities you value about the landscape in this area. The responses were written by a study team member on a large sheet of paper on which a horizon line had previously been drawn. The profile of the horizon line was intended to have some resemblance to the local landscape (e.g. it might have included a mountain range or a coastline).

2.3 Capital City Format

In each of the capital cities, the target groups for the round table discussions included regulatory authorities, local government and peak bodies (eg. MAV, Planning Institute, Council's of National Trusts). The two hour discussions were generally held over lunch and guided by a series of prepared questions covering the following topics (see discussion guide in *Appendix 5*):

Landscape Values: scoping our understanding of landscape values in the light of existing regulatory frameworks and assessment tools.

Community Involvement in the Assessment of Landscape Values: discussion of the relationship between professional expertise and local knowledge, characteristics of a fair and accountable process, scoping communities of interest and defining the role of communities in landscape assessment.

Potential Impacts of Wind farms on Landscape Values: discussion of observed impacts on landscape values (positive and negative), processes for understanding the significance of impacts, tools for supporting the understanding of impacts.

Mitigation of Impacts: discussion of mitigation measures in action, discussion of community involvement in determining mitigation measures.

National Assessment Framework: presentation and discussion of a draft summary table of the National Assessment Framework, identification of strengths and challenges of the framework in relation to current practice, issues for implementation, relationship to state and local government planning and regulation processes.

Community Consultation: testing of current best practice industry guidelines in relation to community consultation, identification of characteristics of 'successful' community processes.

Attendance at the capital city sessions ranged in numbers and diversity of participants. There was interest from state and local government, the National Trust, regulatory authorities, landscape guardian groups, landscape professionals, Planning Institute of Australia and the wind industry.

Following the roundtable discussion a public information display was set up for a 2.5 hour period. Project team members were in attendance at the displays to answer questions, record feedback and discuss the project with attendees. The information materials included the following:

- A visual display consisting of six information banners covering the key themes of the project.
- An audio-visual loop presenting the six key discussion themes and information about the project consultation.

- Copies of project information and the full draft National Assessment Framework to read at the display (or for attendees to take with them).
- Feedback sheets with a series of prompt questions for participants to document their thoughts and ideas.
- Reply paid envelopes available on request for feedback sheets to be returned.
- Multiple copies of information were provided for attendees to take with them and circulate following the sessions. Hard copies of all background documentation were available on request.

Attendance at the open house sessions was lower in the capital cities than the regional areas, with less direct experience for people to draw on. A number of non-resident land owners did attend these sessions who would not otherwise have taken part in the regional discussions.

2.4 Regional Format

In the regional areas we were aware that local interest was likely to be spread across a range of groups, including resident associations, heritage and environment groups, business, farming and tourism associations, indigenous communities, land care groups, landscape guardian groups, local government, landscape professionals and community and cultural organisations (e.g. CWA). Through contacts at the local level the project manager endeavoured to invite a diverse range of these interests to each regional round table. Attendance and interest in these sessions varied. The areas which had experienced more wind farm development were generally more interested in the process, and in some cases groups requested involvement or additional representation at the round table. In these cases we tried to achieve a balance in representation to meet our objective of bringing a diversity of views to the discussion.

The two hour discussions were generally held over lunch and guided by a series of prepared questions covering the following topics (see discussion guide in *Appendix 5*):

Landscape Values: understanding the ways in which local communities interpret the significance of their landscape and landscape values, scoping the issues of importance and discussing changes in the landscape.

Community Involvement in the Assessment of Landscape Values: discussion of local experience of consultation regarding landscape values assessment, the relationship between professional expertise and local knowledge, characteristics of a fair and accountable process, scoping the potential communities of interest (e.g. current residents, visitors, non-resident owners, future generations, traditional owners).

Potential Impacts of Wind farms on Landscape Values: discussion of the observed impacts of wind farms on landscape values (positive and negative), tools for communicating possible impacts, understanding the significance of impacts.

Mitigation of Impacts: discussion and experience of mitigation measures, discussion of community involvement in determining mitigation measures, capturing views on the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

National Assessment Framework: presentation and discussion of draft framework for a National Assessment Framework, identification of strengths and challenges of the framework in relation to community experience, issues for implementation, the role of community consultation, relationship to local government planning and regulation processes.

Community Consultation: understanding community experience of consultation process with wind farms development; testing of current best practice industry guidelines in relation to community consultation, identification of characteristics of 'successful' community processes.

Following the roundtable discussion the venue was set up with the same information displays described above for the capital city sessions. Attendances were strongest in locations where there had been a more extensive history of community involvement in

wind farms development and where there was strong interest in the process and the future application of the framework. In areas with less experience and involvement the attendances were lower.

2.5 Written Feedback

As described above provision was made for people to provide written feedback on the key project topics and the draft National Assessment Framework. At the time of writing, written responses had been received from around the country.

The nature of this written feedback varied from brief contributions in response to the feedback sheet available during the consultation process to lengthy submissions on particular topics. (A summary of this written feedback is provided in *Appendix 3: Collation of Written Feedback* and quotations from this feedback have been incorporated through this report.)

3 Process Evaluation & Learnings

3.1 Strengths of the Process

In reviewing the consultation for this project there are a number of positive factors that can be identified about the process and the outcomes:

- The process enabled us to establish common ground amongst a diverse range of stakeholders and test the framework in different regulatory and political environments.
- Overall there were diverse inputs to round tables, including developers, guardian groups, local government, environment groups, land owners, tourism operators, artists, indigenous organisations, state government and planning professionals.
- Roundtables were conducted in a spirit of active listening to minimise conflict and allow all views to be heard. Positive feedback from some participants included that this was the first time they felt heard on the issue. The structure of the sessions enabled a mix of guided discussion on key topics and feedback on the draft National Assessment Framework.
- With the support of Commonwealth government staff in the larger sessions, we were able to provide information and engage in dialogue with significant numbers of people over a 2.5 hr period. This included the use of team members in the open house sessions to attend to people one-on-one and have more in-depth conversations.
- Use of a range of techniques aided and broadened participant involvement. Many people utilised the audio-visual material as well as took away copies of written material. On-line resources also supported involvement after the sessions had occurred and provided access to information for those who could not make a particular location.
- Positive feedback was received regarding the mix of techniques and alternatives used to public meetings. Many said they found public meetings intimidating and would not have attended if it had been offered.
- Quality and range of information products enabled flexibility for people to be involved in their own time.
- Local networks were utilised for identifying key contacts, venues and catering to support the process.
- Open house technique allowed even participation in a non-threatening environment.

3.2 Challenges & Learnings

There were many challenges in planning an implementing a nationwide consultation process on limited resources, about a sensitive issue in a relatively short space of time.

- Managing the history of conflict and frustration in some locations. There was suspicion and cynicism about the process based on previous experiences with the wind industry and government planning processes.
- In some locations it was difficult to get reliable contacts and identify potential invitees. This led to some challenges in managing the invitation lists and participation to maintain a balance of inputs. Where multiple groups representing a particular view existed in one location we sought to manage participation in the roundtable to avoid any particular view dominating the discussion.
- In some locations there was the expectation of a public meeting or forum at which people could speak in front of others in their community to put their views forward. Some individuals were not satisfied that the information and feedback session gave them the opportunity to have their views 'heard'.
- The scoping of the discussion was in many cases an issue: the siting of wind farms is a more complex issue than just landscape values. Some people wanted to discuss a wider range of thoughts and concerns (eg. viability of renewable energy).
- The process was resource intensive over a relatively short space of time, and limited the lead-in time for some sessions to follow-up on local contacts and invitees. The project manager was travelling to support the individual sessions and undertaking administration and planning for coming sessions whilst 'on the road'.
- As with all consultation processes the successful participation of less vocal, more marginalised groups (e.g. young people) requires support and a developmental approach that was difficult to offer within the time and resources available.
- In communities where attendances were low it is difficult to determine the reasons for this lack of involvement. In some locations the reason appeared to be a culture of relatively low expectations regarding community consultation and involvement. It included a sense that decisions are made at a higher level and communities have limited capacity and opportunity to influence decisions. In other locations there was a feeling that wind farm development is not yet a 'hot topic' for the local community and that people either have not yet been impacted or are satisfied with the processes and outcomes that have been delivered at the local level.

4 Summary of Feedback

The comments and feedback from the consultation sessions and written feedback sheets are summarised on a national basis below using the key themes from the discussion guide. Written notes and feedback in relation to each session are provided in *Appendix 2: Collation of Workshop Notes*, *Appendix 3: Collation of Written Feedback* and *Appendix 4: List of Submissions*. In general we have looked for the areas of support, the issues of concern/disagreement and any new ideas that can inform the refinement of the National Assessment Framework.

4.1 Understanding Landscape Values

'The value of a place lies in memory – the unique qualities of a landscape are what stay with you and what you vision when trying to recall that experience.'

'The way you can see yourself as part of it – it's more than a "where I live", it answers the question of "where I live".'

'Areas that are relatively unchanged by agricultural/urban development are becoming increasingly rare so must have a high value.'

'For me a wind farm gives a site landscape value as a reminder that as a species we can be the caretakers of the earth.'

'Immense social and economic value – the more landscapes we lose to development the more valuable the remainder.'

'Landscape values are in the eye of the beholder. For farmers landscape "value" cannot be separate from landscape use.'

'Spiritual sense of belonging and being part of it in every essence, be it memories, a love of natural beauties with wildlife flora and fauna. To know that it will continue to exist.'

[The definition of landscape values used in this project appears in the National Assessment Framework.]

Areas of Agreement/Support

- Landscape values should include both **visual and non-visual elements** of the landscape. Examples included memories, smells, spiritual connections, cultural relationships community and productive uses.
- It was agreed that both **'natural' and modified landscapes** can have value, although there was strong support for the protection of areas that had experience less modification (referred by some as 'wilderness' areas).
- Consideration needs to be given to the ways in which **people use and interact with the landscape**, including access for various kinds of recreation and enjoyment, traditional indigenous uses and productive uses.
- There was general agreement that **landscapes have been modified over time** through human intervention and/or acts of nature; there were varying views about the negative and positive implications of these interventions on landscape values (see below).
- In responding to the question of **"What elements of the landscape have value for you?"**, there was general support for the following: viewlines, vegetation and habitats, areas that are used and enjoyed, scenic amenity, sensory perception, topography, geology, spiritual and cultural connections, productive value, existence value, sense of space and sense of familiarity.
- It was generally agreed that consideration should be given to both the **economic / productive value** of the land and its pure **existence value** (for now and for future generations).
- The **issue of scale** was also important to the discussion with a number of different examples of landscape values on a grand scale (e.g. mountain ranges and seascapes) and more intimate views of landscape value including "the view from my kitchen window".
- There was a strong view that landscapes can be **a public asset** and are not just of value to the landowner when in private hands.
- There was strong support for the notion that landscape values should be **defined by those who know and appreciate a particular area**.

It was agreed that there are a range of values of landscapes that are not just visual. Participants mentioned ecology and biology, community values, Indigenous and economic values. The Burra Charter was also referred to; it lists the following values:

Aesthetic
Historic
Scientific
Social
Spiritual

Issues of Concern/disagreement

- There was considerable discussion, but no agreement regarding a preferred approach to **rating the 'significance' of landscapes**. Ideas included uniqueness/rarity, level of public support, placing an emphasis on the views of 'local' people, professional assessment and land value. Concern was expressed

about any approach based solely on a particular quantum of support for any particular value.

- Some people felt it was difficult for people to identify landscape values as there was a sense that many aspects of the landscape are taken for granted and **some things are not valued until they are lost**.
- A number of areas were discussed as having **'high' or special value**, and some people suggested that areas such as the coast, wilderness areas and iconic landscapes should be identified as unique and protected from any development.
- The **cumulative impact of change** on landscape values was discussed, particularly the impact of development along the Australian coastline. Some people expressed concern that incremental change will mean that landscape values are compromised over time.
- The value and impact of various **human interventions** was discussed. In some areas positive interventions were identified (e.g. the work of land care groups in Gippsland) and in other areas intervention was seen as having a negative impact on landscape values (e.g. the timber industry in Tasmania). It was suggested by some that just because a particular landscape has been modified, it should not be considered of lesser value.
- Some people felt that there is a need to **balance local landscape values with global values and concerns** (local environment vs. global environment). There was some discussion with respect to the protection of local values without consideration of a broader global protection of landscapes and environment.
- The future value of a landscape also needs to be considered — value not yet discovered or known. Need to use the precautionary principle.

Ideas for Consideration

- Many participants suggested that an **assessment of landscape values should be independent of and conducted prior to any intervention**.
- It was proposed that **areas of special significance be identified and protected** from any intervention (e.g. wilderness areas, natural coastline, special views).
- In a number of different sessions it was suggested that **artists and photographers can help people to interpret and understand landscape values**.

4.2

Community Involvement in Assessing Landscape Values

'Communities have a unique perspective – the one that describes “where I belong” but it’s not just one view – there are many – how do you truly develop a “living” view.'

'Direct and detailed consultations, opportunities to provide input about specific values perceived and how they would like to see them either protected or the impacts minimised.'

'Should be extensive community development. This has not been the case to date with wind turbine projects well underway before community is consulted – then it just looks like (and probably is) a token gesture.'

'Those who are of the land and work within the land have a totally different view from professionals and local communities.'

'Local communities and councils should be widely consulted and should have a “majority say” in the placement of wind farms. The wind companies should not be permitted to offer contracts until the consultation process has been completed.'

'This is where the problem lies “professionals” who are so called learned in what is of value. They need to truly listen to what is coming from the heart of the people.'

Areas of Agreement/Support

- There was strong **support for the role of local knowledge and community involvement** in the identification of landscape values. It was felt by many that

"... the community is paramount, political processes rise and fall based on community views." (Brisbane roundtable)

- There was support for the role of professionals in landscape values assessment to broaden community views, provide information, tools and guidance in understanding the landscape, but primarily to **draw out local knowledge and interpret community defined values**. This was described as an iterative process of sharing knowledge and developing ideas about what the values and significance might be in any particular area. "Professionals classify the landscape, the user perceives the landscape and its values." (Albany roundtable)
- There was also support for the **notion of 'objective' and 'subjective' values**. The view was expressed that geological, scientific, indigenous and heritage values can be documented through objective evidence, whilst values such as scenic beauty are more subjective and difficult to assess without drawing on local knowledge.
- There was a high level of agreement regarding the **role of local government** as the initial point of contact with local communities, and the importance of early engagement at the local level.
- With respect to the question of 'Who should be involved?' there was general support for the **scoping of community participation** in relation to who might be impacted by any future development of a particular area and who might hold an attachment to the particular place. There was considerable discussion about 'distance' not being the only indicator of people's level of interest in or attachment to a particular place. Different communities of interest were identified for consideration: current residents, past residents, non-resident land owners, visitors and tourism operators, indigenous community/traditional landowners, likely future visitors.
- In discussing who should be involved it was agreed that this will be determined by scale. It was agreed that it was important to identify marginalised groups and different groups and ensure that they have an opportunity to participate.

Issues of Concern/disagreement

- It was acknowledged that it can be **difficult to involve communities in consultation processes** about issues that seem abstract and disconnected from people's immediate lives, that often the threat of change or loss is a trigger for people to take an interest. Examples of processes in most states were put forward with concerns about cynicism, consultation fatigue and even in some areas a culture of disenfranchised communities. The process of engaging communities in managing change was discussed with concern that some communities resist any change and that people require good information and early involvement if they are to trust any process of consultation.
- The **independence of professionals** engaged in landscape values assessment was a particular issue of concern. Many people felt that independent and accountable assessments were not possible when the 'expert' was engaged by the developer. This discussion also included issues in relation to the integrity of information provided and processes used to involve communities in decision making. Some concern was expressed about the professionals available to conduct landscape values assessments from the point of view of skills sets (e.g. ability to engage communities), lack of independence and respect for local knowledge.
- Concern was expressed regarding the **lack of consistency and rigour** in landscape values assessment, with a lack of clarity about the roles of different levels of government, communities and professionals in the process. Most people wanted to see a stronger role for local government (see above). Concern was expressed that for communities to trust the role of local government there must be an open flow of information and clear parameters for community involvement in decision making. People wanted to see greater predictability in the approach used, greater accountability for assessments and judgements made and the use of 'local experts'.

- As indicated above there was agreement regarding the need to scope community involvement in landscape values assessment. There were, however, **varying opinions on whose views should be heard** and given weight in the process. For some people the issues of distance and direct impacts from development were important, with the view that people in the immediate area should be given the greatest say. Others took the view that a balance should be sought between immediate local concerns and the aspirations of the wider community (even international considerations).

Ideas for Consideration

- Many people suggested the **need for a strategic approach to landscape values assessment**, rather than attaching the assessment process to any particular development. It was felt that this would engender greater community confidence and take the heat of any particular project. The roles of local and state government were identified as important to the independence of this process.
- It was acknowledged that **community views can change over time** and that any assessment of landscape values is time sensitive and needs remain current and responsive to changes in values.
- In one session the view was expressed that it is possible to “...**consider all landscapes as significant** until proven otherwise.” (Albany roundtable) This option reverses the ‘burden of proof’ on communities to shown why any particular landscape is of value or significance.
- It was suggested that landscape assessment work could be funded by the proponent, but that the **professional could be appointed by and accountable to an independent entity**.
- It was suggested that the values in the Burra Charter could be used to ensure a range of different interest groups have an opportunity to articulate and discuss their particular values.

4.3

Wind Farms Impacts on Landscape Values

‘Less impact in already industrialised areas – already impacted by infrastructure.’

‘Can’t see that there are any areas that there shouldn’t be a wind farm given all the other changes on the landscape.’

‘If wind farms control the landscape (visually) then that can be detrimental – how they can co-exist aesthetically I am yet to see.’

‘Introducing a built structure in a natural landscape does not work.’

‘There needs to be a recognition that putting what is an industrial development in an agricultural area will have a major impact on the landscape for both surrounding landholders and the community.’

‘Needs to be a site by site consideration and the benefits of the wind farm need to be balanced with the impacts.’

‘Wind farms affect the memory of a place for those that live there – but for visitors it is part of the landscape.’

In areas which have no development and are truly in “pristine” state then a wind farm decision needs much consideration – however where development is already established – wind farm development should be encouraged.’

‘Turbines can enhance a bland landscape or detract from an attractive one.’

‘Not on the whole coastline. Not all over the place – needs breaks. Not in a natural environment. Utilise low value farmland before high value farmland and coastal areas.’

‘Wind farms completely change the landscape.’

‘What this ties in with is the “cultural” tier of sustainability not often considered with economic, environmental and social however landscape values should not impact on production opportunities for clean energy.’

Areas of Agreement/Support

- It was agreed that **views about the impacts of wind farms on the landscape (positive and negative) can differ** within and between communities and that this can be the cause of considerable community conflict. It was difficult for most participants to separate the impact on landscape values from other impacts (positive and negative). Responses to the **positive impacts** included creating a visual point of interest/landmark, a destination for visitors, signifying community support for renewable energy and opening up inaccessible areas. In relation to the perceived **negative impacts** on the landscape some participants referred to the ‘industrialisation’ of the landscape, intrusion on wildlife habitats, intrusion into views and sight lines, reflection and light means some turbines ‘glow’, disruption to quiet enjoyment of the landscape, decrease in land values.
- Consideration needs be given to the **impacts on the landscape at different times in the lifecycle of the project**. Reference was made to impacts during and post-construction, and during the decommissioning of wind farms. Accountability for the restitution of a landscape was identified as an issue.
- There was general agreement that there are **some areas/landscape that should be avoided** because of their unique nature and likely impacts on landscape values; examples included coastlines, iconic landscapes and wilderness areas. There was support for the strategic ‘mapping of these areas by government’.
- There was support for **a range of information products and techniques** to support communities to understand likely impacts. There was support for visual information (to scale), experiential information (visits and simulations), independent information (not marketing materials for one particular company) and staffed public displays. Those who had visited wind farm developments found this most informative in understanding the nature of the development and possible impacts.
- It was agreed that some landscapes can absorb such developments — it would depend on the capacity of the landscape and the scale of the development.

Issues of Concern/disagreement

- A strong theme in relation to the consideration of impacts was the views held by individuals about the impacts of wind farms in relation to the benefits of renewable energy. There was considerable debate in some sessions about the **viability of and support for renewable energy** and the degree to which support for renewable energies affect an individual’s perception of the impact of wind farms (e.g. some individuals relate to wind turbines as important symbols that the local community is doing something about climate change, others see them as an ‘industrialisation’ of the landscape).
- There was disagreement regarding the **balance between the local impacts on landscape values and broader global issues**. For those people who were supportive of the contribution of wind farms towards an improved environment there was either a positive view about the impacts of the wind farms on the landscape. “I think they are sculptural”, or a balancing of local community impacts and wider community concerns (e.g. climate change).
- Some concern about the **quality and conflicting nature of information available** to support communities to understand likely impacts on the landscape.
- Concern was expressed regarding the **cumulative impact of wind farms development** in some areas. This related to the scale of development and multiple developments within a region. It was therefore suggested that impact assessment should take possible cumulative impacts into account.
- A number of people felt it was inappropriate to be looking at the impacts of wind farms development on the landscape without considering the **comparative**

impacts of other developments. Others felt that the impacts of wind farms were unique because of their visual prominence.

- The **capacity of any particular environment to 'absorb' the impacts** of wind farms was also the topic of discussion. For many people the impacts on a 'natural' environment were seen as more significant than the impacts of already modified landscape. This related to views expressed along a spectrum from the need to understand the landscape better to determine what kind of change is acceptable to the view that some landscapes should remain totally undeveloped.
- There were differing views regarding the **impacts on the productive value of rural land.** Some participants acknowledged that wind farms could sit alongside agricultural uses, others expressed concern regarding compatibility with some types of agriculture (e.g. cropping where there is irrigation and aerial spraying).
- Concern was expressed **regarding 'viewpoints' and perspective** in relation to impacts. This related to distance, scale and individual perspective. In Glenn Innes we heard the example of a particular tree that was valued by the landowner and had been avoided by the developer in the wind farms layout. For others the view from the kitchen window, the acknowledgement of their farm as a working and living environment, and the enjoyment of special recreation areas (e.g. surfing and looking back at the coast) were all important to the consideration of impacts. An example was provided with respect to the wind farm at Wonthaggi. When viewed from Kilcunda against a backdrop of an already modified environment, it tends to blend in; however viewed from the other direction on a rural/coastal landscape it has higher visibility and visual impact.

Ideas for Consideration

- There was a call for **accurate, independent information and community education** to support the understanding of likely impacts.
- The opportunity to **monitor landscape impacts and community views** in relation to landscape impacts of existing wind farms was identified. There was also an awareness that as technology changes and improves the potential impacts may change (positive and negative).

4.4

Mitigation of Impacts

'Restrict the amount in a given area – visual capacity of the landscape.'

'Maybe both learn to debate from the opposite view point to understand completely where they are both coming from. Sometimes we can get very blinkered with righteousness.'

'Having a strong say as to where they are placed and how many there are. Stronger communication between the two bodies helps residents in being confident with the change.'

'Need to demonstrate the energy they produce and the greenhouse gas savings.'

'Wind companies need to discuss with communities and surrounding landowners prior to deciding on a site etc. Instead they are deciding on a site, instructing the landowner not to talk to neighbours etc. shrouding project in secrecy and railroading it through.'

'If the community feel that it is being impacted then they should derive a benefit – suggestion of a Bendigo Bank type arrangement where a sum of money is dispersed on community projects.'

'As long as there is sufficient prior consultation people will accept change. Change is the most difficult aspect for people to accept.'

Areas of Agreement/Support

- Consideration and mitigation of impacts during and post construction is important. This needs to include turbines and all supporting infrastructure.

- It was agreed that the scale of the development, the size of the turbines and the positioning of them impacted on the capacity to mitigate impacts on landscape values.
- There was support for responsive consideration at placement/siting, colour and scale. Particular reference was made to respecting important view lines at a macro and micro scale.
- There was support for community involvement in the identification of mitigation measures although few examples of where this had occurred to people's satisfaction. Individual examples of landowners who had worked with a responsive developer were described as contributing to a more positive outcome. Individual word from developers also provided examples of a proactive approach to mitigation (particularly in relation to the siting of turbines) although this project has not set out to measure the effectiveness of particular mitigation initiatives.

Issues of Concern/disagreement

- There were differing views regarding the effectiveness of changes to scale and siting in mitigating potential impacts. Some people identified examples of what they considered to be responsive mitigation measures, others were adamant that the size and scale of most wind farm development made mitigation measures ineffectual. There was strong concern in some groups that financial compensation for landowners generated conflict in community and ignored the impacts on surrounding landowners, leading to a perception of inequity.
- It was suggested that it is very important to recognise that wind farms are not permanent structures, and that other land use can occur around the turbines (e.g. farming).
- It was suggested that proponents should recognise the social impact and make a contribution to environmental works, community facilities etc., others felt that this would open 'Pandora's box' and wind farms should not be exposed to different requirements to other developments.
- A view was expressed that not a lot of focus has occurred in this area. Mitigation forming part of the planning considerations at the end of the process with the development application but not with community.
- There is a feeling that mitigation options are not negotiated with the community — communities are left out of this process which is being determined by panels. This encourages 'ambit claims'.

Ideas for Consideration

- Support for community education to inform people's views about wind energy. The need was identified to develop better information about impacts such as noise and glint to inform appropriate mitigation.
- The mining industry was put forward as an example of some proactive mitigation such as end of life reinstatement.
- The opportunity to explore alternatives to individual compensation and focus on net community benefit.
- It was suggested that minimum setbacks be developed — either in kilometres or by multiples of the height of the turbine from a dwelling.

4.5

National Assessment Framework

'Feel that the framework will provide consistency and greater confidence if applied.'

'Accept that in the early stages when trying to build a business case for the development it is difficult to fully involve the community.'

'Feel framework is good but all consultation objectives should be essential not optional.'

Like that it is outputs focussed rather than a prescriptive process.'

'Need to include an opportunity for people to follow up their concerns and be aware of where this information is going – what the outcomes will be.'

'How do you balance the different views – does one voice veto a project.'

'It should not replicate existing processes. Its jurisdiction should be defined i.e. how much power does it have – does it override State/local government jurisdictions.'

'Steps 3 and 4 – should narrow who the community are that influence at this stage – suggest adjoining owners and those that are affected.'

Areas of Agreement/Support

- There was general agreement that **the proposed framework is a sound and systematic approach** and an improvement on current processes. Most participants agreed that the approach offered greater consistency, rigour and predictability in the assessment of landscape values and the potential impacts of wind farms on landscape values. There was strong support for the iterative approach allowing for community and professional dialogue throughout the process. On the whole people agreed that steps were clear and easy to understand.
- There was a **positive response to the initiative** taken by the wind industry to undertake this work and develop an industry standard for landscape values assessment ahead of some other industries.
- Strong support was evident for the **role of local government** early in the assessment process as a broker to support a collaborative approach, provide accurate and consistent information and bring the parties involved together. It was generally agreed that local government should be the initial contact point for the exchange of information in Step 1A of the draft framework.
- This support was also echoed for **early community involvement** in the assessment of landscape values to ensure access to accurate information about the project, support the development of productive working relationships, and build a climate of trust. There was strong support for community involvement in Step 1A of the draft framework, and particular reference was made to working with Indigenous communities in the initial stage of the assessment.
- Support was also expressed to a fair and efficient process of consultation that was **effective for communities and efficient for developers**. The sentiment was expressed that well-managed community consultation can lead to a win-win for communities and developers.
- There was discussion in most sessions of the benefits of a **strategic assessment of landscape values**; with the option of involving local, state and commonwealth government canvassed. This issue was raised for a number of reasons including the opportunity to establish and assess landscape values on a regional or state-wide basis, independent of any particular development proposal; also the notion that the significance of landscape values can only be understood by comparing the value of different areas and the support for landscape values to be assessed on an independent and objective basis, rather than on behalf of a particular developer. These two elements; the strategic nature of landscape values and the notion of independent assessment received a high level of support.
- There was strong support for an **integrated approach to early development planning**, with the inclusion of landscape values alongside other issues. For local government representatives there was support for the framework as a planning tool to support an informed and holistic approach to development assessment.
- Most participants were eager to secure the 'buy-in' of decision-makers and regulators to the process. It was agreed that the integration of any landscape assessment framework into existing regulatory processes was critical for success. In the sessions where regulatory authorities were in attendance there was support for the proposed steps and approach. It was agreed that the draft framework provided the balance of certainty and flexibility in approach to enable **a workable interface with existing regulatory environments**.

- There was general agreement that application the framework needed to be able to be **monitored against clear criteria** for performance to ensure that minimum requirements were met. This was also supported by industry representatives wanting greater clarity around what is expected in relation to a fair and rigorous assessment.
- Support the concept of information being provided to the community throughout the process — there is not transparency at the moment.
- The industry needs to specify what its requirements are and be clear about them — wind resource, distance from the grid etc.

Issues of Concern/disagreement

- Concern was expressed regarding the **limitations of site-by-site landscape values assessments**. There was considerable discussion of the opportunity for Step 1 (Landscape Values Assessment) to be undertaken by local, state or regional authorities at a strategic level. As discussed above, concerns were raised regarding the independence of professional assessments conducted on behalf of individual proponents, the nature of landscape values not being confined to a particular site, the duplication of multiple assessment by different developers and the opportunity to rate significance of landscape values at a broader (regional, state-wide) level.
- Some people wanted the framework to be more explicit about the need to include both **positive and negative impacts** on landscape values, drawing on a 'representative' range of views.
- Concern was express about the nature of a desk top assessment for Step 1A, particularly if this occurred on the basis of limited or inadequate information. Many participants indicated that **direct community consultation should be included at this early stage**.
- A number of additional **concerns were raised regarding community consultation**, these included; allowing sufficient time for feedback, providing accurate information (as distinct from company marketing materials), the lack of expertise within the industry, the risk of over consulting on various aspects of the proposal, the need to ensure a representative consultation process.
- With respect to step 3 and 4 the main concerns related to the **provision of clear and accurate information**, suggestions included models, simulations and site visits. A number of participants also questioned the extent of an iterative approach to these stages, including the number of times a community could expect to be **involved in discussions about mitigation measures**; some people want it to be acknowledged that not all concerns about landscape values can be dealt with through mitigation measures.
- There was some concern that the **process outlined left the decision making open** and did not answer the question as to whether a particular proposal should go ahead on a particular site.
- A number of people were concerned about the **value of a framework that did not have a government mandate**. Some wanted to see endorsement by various levels of Government, others saw the opportunity to incorporate the process in a national code.

Ideas for Consideration

- In further developing the topic of strategic landscape values assessment, some participants identified the opportunity to **overlay mapping of landscape values with mapping of wind resources** to provide a strategic overview of the most desirable or opportune site for wind farm development. Some people wanted this assessment to identify landscapes of state significance that would be protected from development. It was also suggested that strategic landscape values assessment could inform the **understanding of the impacts of other forms of development** and infrastructure projects.

- With respect to concerns regarding the skills and independence of experts in the field, the suggestion was put forward that either a **panel of assessors be put forward at the state level or a process of peer review**.
- Some participants discussed the option of an additional step in the framework to encompass the **monitoring and review of mitigation measures**.
- It was suggested that the framework could be improved through a **clear and consistent definition of landscape values**; this could include categories of landscape values.
- In addition the opportunity was identified to integrate the assessment of landscape and heritage values on the premise that both are held and defined by communities.
- On that basis of both positive and negative experiences of community consultation with wind farm developers, some people consider capacity building within the industry regarding community consultation essential to the implementation of the framework.
- A number of people suggested that application of the landscape values assessment framework could be extended to other forms of development.
- Go/no go decision points be indicated across all of the steps in the framework.

4.6 Community Consultation

'Local government can provide a barometer of community values and issues.'

'A community information day held at the local store in conjunction with a community event was very effective in informing and discussing the proposal with the community. All of the information was on display and representatives from the industry were there to answer questions.'

'Taking community members to visit another wind farm is a good practice – helps to understand the impacts.'

'Confidentiality agreements with landowners are not good – puts landowners in difficult position. Landowners could be the best advocates within the community.'

'My experience has been where community process has been politicised by government.'

'In this area this has been the most divisive single issue ever.'

'Neither party leaving upset or completely happy, taking community views into account in making decisions, making sure the diversity is represented, honest, transparency, good levels of information, shouldn't discriminate, same page.'

'If you can come up with the 100% perfect consultation process that is 100% acceptable to both community and governments you will do what no one else has ever been able to do.'

Areas of Agreement/Support

- There was unanimous support for the involvement of communities in landscape values assessment. Most people thought that consultation should occur at each stage of the assessment process and want to ensure a representative process that **engaged all those potentially impacted by the development**.
- There was support for community process to **use a range of techniques** to involve people including workshops, information displays, one-on-one discussions and surveys.
- There was strong support for the **provision of accurate and accessible information early** in the consultation process. Some developers were complemented on the quality of the information provision and the range of techniques used to provide information, others were the subject of concern (see below).

- Where the principles for community consultation from the industry best practice guidelines were tested with the groups involved there was **strong support for those principles**, particularly transparency and responsiveness.

Issues of Concern/disagreement

- Views varied on **the success and value of consultation processes that had occurred with wind industry** representatives in different locations. In some areas people were positive about the information they had received, the way in which their views had been sought and responded to and negotiation processes with individual developers. In other locations there was considerable discontent and scepticism about working with the wind industry – in some areas the level of conflict has divided local communities and made individuals reluctant to participate. There were some examples of people who identified themselves as supporters of alternative energy sources being alienated by poor consultation and decision making processes. There were other examples of developers who had actively support processes of community education and responded to individual concerns.
- Of particular concern was the **timing of community consultation**, particularly in cases where developers have already negotiated with individual land owners. There were a number of examples of this being a divisive factor in local communities.
- In a number of states people were **sceptical about community consultation** because of the inherent inequities in power relationships between developers, communities and various levels of government. There was a lack of trust and goodwill indicated in some localities. Where the power over decision making was held at the state level some people felt consultation was tokenistic and not responsive to local concerns.
- Concern was expressed regarding **reliance on limited techniques** such as public meetings, which in some people's view "attract the aggrieved" and are not representative of the diversity of views.

Ideas for Consideration

- Opportunity to build industry skills and expertise in community consultation and for the wind industry to **understand the value of good community processes**.
- Consider the **provision of independent and accurate information** about wind energy and the operation of wind farms.
- 'Communities need to feel that they own the knowledge, the process and outcomes — they have to feel that they have truly participated.'

5

Recommendations for the NAF

The tables in the following pages provided the basis of a brief for the study team to revise and complete the National Assessment Framework (NAF) in the light of the comments received during the consultation. The content of the tables highlights the main *Issues* that arose from the consultation (including issues of agreement, concern and new opportunities) (column 2), with a suggested *Response* in column 3 (relevant step in **bold**, section in *italics*). The tables are structured into General issues followed by issues grouped in relation to each of the NAF Steps (1A-4). They appear as rough notes only, for internal use by the study team.

5.1 Finalising the National Assessment Framework

Topic	Relevant issues / suggestions (from consultation)	Response (relevant step in bold , section in <i>italics</i>)
GENERAL		
Compatibility with best practice standards / accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't prescribe the methods, do set the criteria. Provide performance standards more than 'to do' statements. Explicit distinction between mandatory ('must') and discretionary ('should') requirements Wording should take form of 'auditable statements' (i.e. can be proven based on objective evidence). 	All review and revise to describe performance standards and auditable statements
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify language wherever possible. Distinguish between manufacturer / utility (developer) / client (elect co). Be careful with the word 'developer' (speculative) 	All edit language throughout – e.g. 'management and mitigation' becomes 'respond to impacts' Intro / all Define the word 'proponent' and use throughout in preference to developer etc.
Scope of assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the framework apply in full to all projects? What about uncontroversial projects? Smaller projects? Make clearer that the framework can be implemented in detail or in less detailed process 	Step 1A – add requirement to scope the extent of assessment that follows in Steps 1B-4 (i.e. set the brief). It is expected that all steps will be followed, to some degree in <u>every case</u> , but that (for example) the level of iteration / review might be lessened).
Process for decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In what circumstances would a project <u>not</u> proceed beyond Step 1A? What criteria should be used? All landscapes should be considered significant until proven otherwise? How is the 'residual' landscape impact at Step 4 reported and to whom? The process assumes all wind farms will have negative impacts – is this the case? 	Step 1A – add to <i>process 1A.4</i> requirement for general statement of suitability (likely to be suitable, unlikely to be suitable or undetermined). Step 1A Add a <i>Practice Note</i> to provide guidance for the kinds of factors that might be taken into account to decide whether to progress to beyond Step 1A, (e.g. formal registered landscape values, level of community attachment to the study area). Step 4 – In <i>Required outputs</i> differentiate from professional assessment advice provided by consultant and statements of commitment by the proponent. Add requirement for publicly available document.
Legibility of process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make clear its not linear – add a flow chart Clarify the extent of iteration required, and in which case 	Intro – insert flow chart, including: locations of community involvement, iteration processes etc. <u>See also General: Scope of assessment</u>
Fit with normal development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key steps in accreditation process are: site selection; site / project feasibility; environmental assessment. 1A allows landscape to be added to the mix of factors affecting feasibility early in the process (e.g. wind resource monitoring) 	Intro Amend <i>Summary content table</i> to refer to these 1A (site selection / site project feasibility) 1B-4 (environmental assessment)

Topic	Relevant issues / suggestions (from consultation)	Response (relevant step in bold , section in <i>italics</i>)
Clear outputs and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outputs need to be auditable • Need to provide feedback to community – e.g. what their input has resulted in, opportunities to consider / review of conclusions about landscape values, impacts etc 	<p>Steps 1B, 3 and 4 – <i>Required outputs</i>: specify production of a public document.</p> <p>Steps 1B, 3 and 4 Specify opportunities for public review of documents.</p> <p>See also <u>General: Legibility of process</u> (flow chart)</p>
Defining the territory of landscape values for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement that landscape values are broader than visual values – not just scenic, though this is the big one • Consideration that broader cultural and natural values should form part of landscape assessment (even if we do not prescribe methods for all of these) 	<p>Step 1A / Step 1B Ensure that other landscape values (environment, Indigenous, heritage and potential heritage) identified in professional studies are incorporated in the assessment</p> <p>Option: do we provide a framework within which other cultural values (scientific, historic etc.) and natural values (biodiversity, geodiversity) fit, but only prescribe methods related to social, aesthetic scenic etc.</p>
STEP 1A: Preliminary landscape assessment		
Sourcing relevant information for Step 1A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about cases where there are no 'documented values'? • Role of local government in providing documents is important. Also local National Trust branch etc. • Local government development control plans (Planning Schemes, LEPs, Development Plans) will be important sources of information (e.g. protected landscapes). • Be aware that the existing documentation may be lacking in integrity, level of community engagement, or may be out of date. • Challenge where there is not much community to draw on, or where community is reticent to engage with the project – place may still have values? 	<p>Step 1A – Add detail to <i>Practice Notes</i> to refer to the role of local government, national trust, planning schemes etc.</p> <p>Step 1A – Add to <i>Required outputs</i> that a basic evaluation be made of the material reviewed and its relevance to values of the site. Is it still <i>current</i> and relevant to community held values (e.g. how was community <i>engaged</i>)?</p> <p>Step 1A – Add to in response to absence of documented values.</p>
Community involvement in Step 1A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over direct community-contact in Step 1A being optional. • Local government seen as an important first step for sourcing information and also 'testing the water' for community feeling. • Caution that without direct and open process some community concern may not be identified (even by local government). 	<p>Step 1A – Insert mandatory requirement to contact local council to inform scoping of stakeholders and understanding of community-held values of the landscape of the study area.</p> <p>Note: Option remains for direct community contact. It is in the proponent's best interests to use whatever sources of information they can to gauge the likely significance of the landscape of the proposed wind farm site.</p>

Process for progression to Step 1B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What circumstances / criteria would be used to inform a decision <u>not</u> to proceed from Step 1A-1B • Clearer identification of 'stop points'. • Decision making, even at this stage needs to be transparent. 	<p>Step 1A - Add a <i>Practice Note</i> to provide guidance for the kinds of factors that might be taken into account to decide whether to progress to beyond Step 1A, (e.g. formal registered landscape values, level of community attachment to the study area).</p> <p>Step 1A – Add to <i>Required outputs</i> reporting of decision not to proceed</p> <p><u>See also General: Process for decision-making</u></p>
Information back to community / stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue about confidentiality when project is in the early stages of site selection / feasibility. • Require that the proponent includes parameters / limits in Stage 1A (eg 'the wind is only here; min size of farm must be X; need to be within Y meters of this line' etc; 'the options re siting / design appear to be...') • Clearer identification of limitations, parameters and technical requirements of wind energy for stakeholders 	<p>Step 1A – Add <i>Process</i> dot point for the minimum requirements for information back to local governments and (where contacted) other stakeholders and general community about the project.</p> <p><u>See also Other issues: community engagement</u> (this is also an issue for the communication of the development generally, not just for landscape values purposes).</p>
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Readily ascertainable' 	<p>Step 1A – simplify wording throughout</p>
STEP 1B: Full landscape assessment		
Defining the territory of landscape values for assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement that landscape values are broader than visual values – not just scenic, though this is the big one • Consideration that broader cultural and natural values should form part of landscape assessment (even if we do not prescribe methods for all of these) • <u>See also General: Defining the territory of landscape values</u> 	<p>Step 1A / Step 1B Ensure that other landscape values (environment, Indigenous, heritage and potential heritage) identified in professional studies are incorporated in the assessment</p>
Comparative assessment / rating of significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure ratings of significance are justified relatively across the rest of the state • Provide clearer guidance for how significance should be rated. • Distinguish between values and significance. 	<p>Step 1B – Review <i>Practice notes</i> to determine if more guidance is warranted. Refer to Foundation Paper.</p>
Strategic assessment of landscape values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the material derived in Step 1B to inform a register of landscape values 	<p><u>See also Other issues: strategic assessment of landscape values</u></p>

STEP 2: Describe and model the wind farm in the landscape

Accuracy and reliability of information and communication to communities

- Considerable consternation about the accuracy and purpose of visual materials to depict the development
- Adequate communication of the development to members of local and interested communities
- Should 'worse case' scenarios be used to communicate the development? What about measuring the impacts?
- Concern that using various atmospheric techniques tries to 'hide' potential impacts.

Step 2 – Clearly define the purpose of Step 2 in two parts: firstly assisting communities to understand the development, its scale, location and potential impacts. Second to provide reliable, objective data on which to rate level of impact in step 3. Different types of material (and scenarios) may be required for these purposes.

Step 2 – Provide additional *Process* performance standards for the development of visual and other material depicting the wind farm (e.g. lens size, location). Be clear about whether the objective is accuracy or communication.

Step 2 – Add *Practice note* with other ideas for communication to community about the development (e.g. taking them to a similar wind farm)

Visual assessment

- The visual assessment component is not clearly set out as an important part of this step.

Step 2 – Outline the visual assessment component of this step more clearly as a substantial step with its own *Required outputs*.

STEP 3: Assess the impacts of the wind farm on landscape values

Transparency of assessment

- Concern that a bad assessment might get hidden by a developer.

Step 3 – *Required outputs*: Specify an open, public report from of this step to inform iteration with Step 4. Differentiate from professionally reported conclusions, and a position taken by the proponent for purposes of submission to a regulatory authority.

Step 3/Step 4 – *Required outputs*: specify that a consultants report be provided to the regulatory authority.

Clearer decision-making guidance for rating impacts

- Impacts should be weighted against the perceive benefits (or lack of) of wind energy.
- Balance local concerns with global issues?
- Consider uniqueness, rarity: e.g. coastline
- What about human interventions in the landscape?

Step 3 – consider an additional *Practice note* for weighting impacts.

Step 3 – Provide additional *Process* performance standards against which to determine whether impacts have been adequately assessed, and whether the conclusions are justifiable.

STEP 4: Develop management and mitigation measures

What is mitigation?

- Concern that mitigation is 'minimal' changes (mitigation only works for people not entirely opposed).
- Is avoidance an appropriate mitigation measure?
- Mitigation 'at source' vs. mitigation 'at the receiver'
- Give consideration to appropriate design in the landscape – e.g. responding to landform, siting away from viewlines etc.
- Colour and design of masts / nacelles

Step 4 – Retitle this Step as 'Respond to Impacts' or similar. Specify appropriate responses can range from avoidance, change to size / location, to smaller mitigation measures.

Step 4 – can more examples of mitigation measures be provided?

When does mitigation occur?

- How much mitigation happens in the development assessment process as opposed to after? Often mitigation involves a landscape plan being developed with an individual land owner after approval has been given.
- Concern that mitigation is not done well and developments are not changed because they are not compelled to (development likely to be approved anyway).

Step 4 – No change.

Study products

- Where is the commitment to changing the development reported?
- How can the conclusions of a professional landscape impact assessment be communicated independent of the proponent?

Step 3/Step 4 – *Required outputs:* differentiate between what the consultant reports (description of impacts, evaluation of acceptability, method used etc.) from the proponent (statements of commitment to changes or mitigation measures; intended mechanisms for mitigation measures e.g. contracts with land owners).

Step 3/Step 4 – *Required outputs:* specify that a consultants report be provided to the regulatory authority.

Other issues

Community engagement

- Consultation requirements are to be embedded into the NAF and throughout.
- Illustrate how to engage, how to take input on board, and what info to provide. Don't prescribe method, not a toolkit, not a manual. But sufficiently concrete: 'if you do these sorts of things, you'll be OK'.
- Example performance measures: You must undertake:
 - A gap analysis; A stakeholder analysis
 - Prepare a bibliography
 - Identify community values

All – Develop and insert basic performance standards to guide appropriate community engagement.

<i>Who</i> undertakes the assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success of the NAF depends upon the skills and expertise of the consultants undertaking the work – particularly in engaging with communities recommendations • How can someone come from a capital city, look at a landscape they've never seen and rate it? • Local authorities need to be assured by the technical competency of the assessors – follows current best practice and provides information that is useful for assessment. 	<p>Options:</p> <p>Panel of consultants?</p> <p>Peer review?</p> <p>Provide basic performance standards for measuring successful community engagement for landscape values, understanding impacts etc.</p> <p>Recommend ongoing work for wind energy industry to capacity build their constituents in working with stakeholders.</p>
Strategic assessment of landscape values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Really important to identify places with 'high' or special value and then overlay with wind resource • Understanding values and significance of landscape relates to more than just wind energy and ought to be supported by government. • Important that landscape values assessment is broad and independent. • Keep the material derived in Step 1B to inform a register of landscape values? • Even if strategic assessment was done, it would still not give all the answers? Values are time sensitive. Politics becomes involved. • Should all high significance places be sterilised from all development? 	<p>Options –</p> <p>Developer contribution to the landscape values assessment (Step 1B), managed and undertaken by a local or state authority (e.g. local council).</p> <p>Work with state and local governments to undertake strategic assessments to underpin the application of the framework</p> <p>Ensure that assessments undertaken are lodged and kept with a local authority or NGO for future reference.</p>
Integration with state processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can not be absolutely consistent with all systems (wording etc.) but BP guidelines can be used or referred to in planning schemes / LEPs / Development plans • Very important that this does not duplicate assessment required – or require something slightly different than the local authority. • Work with States / local govt after the project to ensure implementation and application of the framework. 	<p>Demonstrate how we fit into the state processes with a generic regulatory assessment <u>diagram</u>. Refer to Practice Review</p> <p>Ongoing consultation with States / local govt after the project to ensure implementation and application of the framework.</p>

5.2 Finalising the Foundation Paper

This table summarises comments received on the Foundation Report, under the following headings:

Comments received from

Additional resources identified

Additional suggestions

Comments received from	Notes
Department of Local Government Planning, Sport and Recreation (Qld)	Feedback from initial request to stakeholders in October
Stephanie Clegg and Tara Cherrie (Department for Planning and Infrastructure WA)	Detailed comments and additional suggestions received following Perth Round Table Forum.
Donna Bolton	Primarily related to Victorian section of Practice Review, but may have implications for Foundation Paper.
Additional resources identified	Notes
Landscape Assessment for Wind Farm Planning and Design – Character and Sensitivity. Cork County Council, IRE.	From Juliet Bird at Vic National Trust
European Landscape Convention	Identified by participants at Queanbeyan consultation. Previously reviewed but not referenced in Foundation Paper
South Australian Tourism Commission Policy Statement on Wind Farms	Provided at Adelaide Open House session.
Summary of Landscape Quality Assessment Projects – Andrew Lothian	Supplied by Andrew Lothian
Historic Towns in the Landscape Forum: Forum Report – Heritage Council Victoria / Jan Schapper	Supplied by Jan Schapper
Criteria for the Evaluation of Landscape as Heritage – Jan Schapper	Supplied by Jan Schapper
Landscape Analysis and Visual Modelling – Department of Primary Industries (VIC)	Supplied by Jan Schapper
NSW Far South Coast Landscape Assessment Study – K Taylor P Toon	Supplied by Ken Taylor
Telecom repeater station between upper Colo Heights Review of Environmental Factors – David Hogg Pty Ltd.	Supplied by Ken Taylor
Cultural landscape protection in Australia: the Wingecarribee Shire – Ken Taylor and Carolyn Tallents	Supplied by Ken Taylor
Aesthetic value and Coastal Resources: community workshop report, Eurobodalla Shire (March 2000) – Ken Taylor and Cath Renwick	Supplied by Ken Taylor
Aesthetic value and Coastal Resources – Progress Report (March 1998) – Ken Taylor and Susan Boden	Supplied by Ken Taylor
Aesthetic resources of the coastal zone July 1975 – Roy Man Associates.	Supplied by Ken Taylor
A social-ecological framework for sustainable landscape planning – Case studies from the Wet Tropics of Far North Queensland – Iris Bohnet.	Found on web
Additional suggestions	
Search content to ensure it does not describe a review of 'best-practice'.	Completed
Some additional technical terms need to be defined:	Partially completed

scenic amenity / amenity; landscape character / landscape character assessment etc.	
Strengthen section 1.2 of the report with a SWOT of methods / approaches and to provide a useful table / menu for the NAF.	Unsure
BD to contact Jane Lennon to get input on the scope and boundaries of landscape values as we have defined (pp12-14 of Foundation Paper) and the interplay with heritage.	Completed
Review Question 2 – particularly strengthening and updating the modelling and technical components – Alan Wyatt to provide input; also possibly Ian Bishop / Brett Grimm	Partially completed
Strengthen Questions 3 and 4 with more examples – possibly integrating the discussion and conclusions from the team about assessing impacts / significance	Completed
Update section on future generations – with implications from SC / EAP discussion.	Completed