



Council's wind farm policy position: Community research

Prepared for Moyne Shire Council

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Background, objectives and methodology



Background and research objectives

Moyne Shire is a major location for wind farm development in Victoria. This is due to the strong and steady winds, low population density and the location of electricity infrastructure such as large transmission lines and terminal stations.

To date, Council's position has been to oppose further development of wind farms in the Shire unless the State Government implements key recommendations of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner. Council is looking to reset its position, taking into account community views as part of the process.

Council has mechanisms for community feedback. It is important to hear from those residents who have an interest in Council's position on certain matters – this could include those with a genuine, general interest; those who are fully supportive of the further development of wind farms; and those who are vehemently opposed. Specifically, feedback often comes from those who have strong views.

To complement its community engagement activities, Moyne Shire Council commissioned JWS Research to undertake independent market research and obtain a representative view of community opinion.

The research will be used as a key input into strategic decisions around Council's position, taking into account the concerns of the community at large.

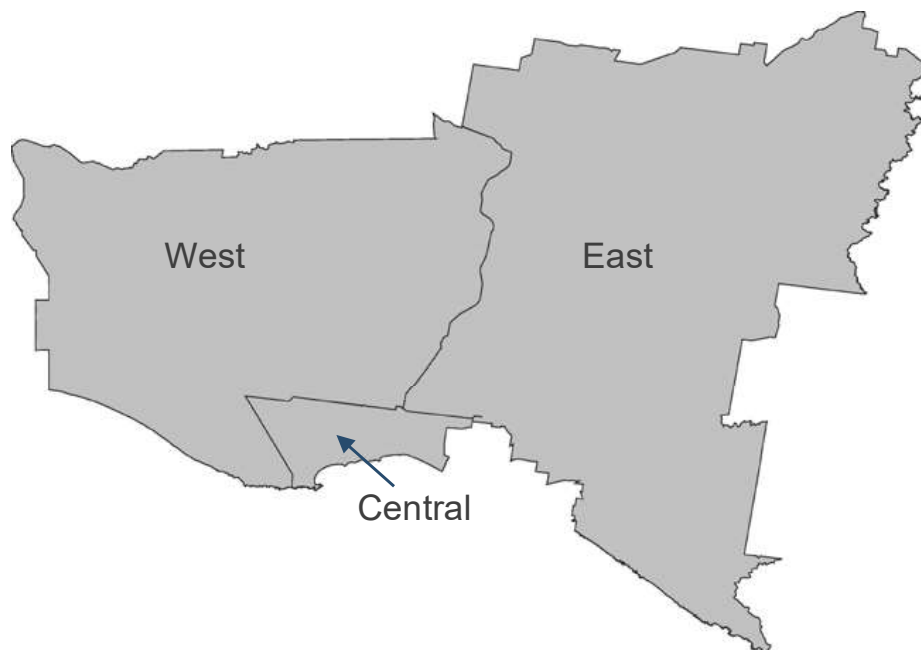
Research objectives

The objectives of the community research are to:

- Understand views of wind farms in the Moyne Shire (and whether there is a different view of onshore versus offshore wind farms).
- The level of support for the continued construction of wind farms in Moyne Shire.
- Measure community awareness and attitudes toward Council's revised policy position.
- Understand perceptions of the various elements of the policy position.
- Identify the elements driving support for or opposition to Council's policy position.
- Identify what further information is needed to improve awareness of wind farm development and Council's wind farm position.

Research methodology

Quantitative research: CATI survey



n=400 residents of Moyne Shire aged 18 years and over.

- Administered via Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI).
- Survey quotas on age, gender and location (Central, East and West), and weighting applied at the analysis stage to actual age/gender/location proportions based on ABS census data.
- The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=400 is +/-4.8% at the 95% confidence level.
- Differences of +/-1% for net scores are due to rounding.
- 10 minutes in length.

Conducted 1st to the 12th June 2022.



Executive summary



Executive summary

Residents of Moyne Shire have favourable opinions of wind energy



Most Moyne Shire residents are favourable toward wind as an energy source (62% favourable, including 38% who are *strongly* favourable).

- In contrast, favourability of solar is much higher (81%). Wind is clearly preferred over coal (40% favourable).

There are, however, differences by region.

- Residents in the Central region (79%) have significantly higher levels of favourability toward wind energy.
- Those in the East region have significantly lower levels of favourability (50%) – noting that even here, the proportion who are favourable outweigh those who are unfavourable (35%).
- Residents in the West region (63% favourable) align with the average. Interestingly, this region has the highest proportion of residents who claim to live within five kilometres of a current or planned wind farm (40%).

In general, residents are positive about wind farms in the Shire

The majority of residents (54%) have a positive view toward wind farms in the Moyne Shire, and a further 17% are neutral. The remaining 29% feel negative about wind farms in Moyne Shire.

- Residents in the East region are most divided with 43% feeling positive about wind farms in Moyne Shire, and an equal proportion (43%) feeling negative.



When contrasting onshore and offshore wind farms, residents are more favourable toward offshore wind farms (63%) than onshore wind farms (56%). Again, results differ by region.

- Residents in the Central and West regions are more favourable toward onshore wind farms than those offshore.
- The converse is true for East region residents and views are more divergent – 65% are favourable toward offshore wind farms, compared to 41% favourable toward onshore wind farms.



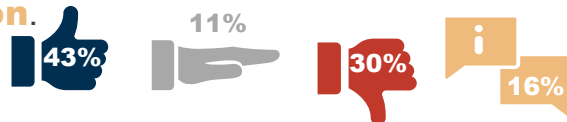
Executive summary

Support for the continued construction of wind farms outweighs opposition

Prior to learning about Council's revised position on wind farms, more than two in five residents (43%) **support** the continued construction of wind farms in Moyne, 11% are **neutral**.

Three in 10 residents (30%) **oppose** more wind farms.

The remainder (16%) **would like more information**.



Review of the position of residents demonstrate that there is not majority support for the continued construction of wind farms in the shire – at 43%, support falls just short of the majority. At the same time, opposition is well below majority (30%), meaning that most people do not oppose the continued construction of wind farms in the Shire.

- Opposition is highest among those in the East (42%).

16% of respondents would like more information to assist in forming their view. Key information-needs include:

- where future wind turbines will be located; and
- the impacts on the land, environment, wildlife and people.

There is support for Council's revised position on wind farms

Most residents (59%) are not aware of Council's current position on wind farm development in the region.

Following a brief description of Council's revised position:

More than two in five residents (44%) offer **support** for Council's revised position, 13% are **neutral**.

Opposition (12%) significantly reduces once Council's revised position is described. Nevertheless, there is **an increase in the need for more information** with 28% of respondents now stating a need for more information about council's wind farm position before they could for a view..



Residents in the East region, who had high levels of opposition to the continued construction of wind farms in the region, are in line with the rest of the region when it comes to Council's revised position. Their level of opposition is reduced to 10%.



Considerations

There is general support for Council's revised position

Many residents are unaware of Council's current position on wind farm development in the region and there would likely be little need to revisit this. Support for Council's revised position outweighs opposition. Information provision will be key to facilitate increased appreciation of the issues.

Council should continue to advocate for community benefits

There are high levels of agreement with considerations in respect to Council's position. Moyne Shire residents believe that they should benefit from the increasing number of wind farms in the region, including through discounted power and financial compensation for those within close proximity.

A need for information to assist in forming a view

A quarter of residents claim that they would like more information in order to be able to form a view on Council's revised position. There is a need for information to be provided to improve understanding of Council's position.

Pay particular attention to residents in the East region

A large segment of East region residents (although not the majority) are negative about wind farms in the Shire and do not support the continued construction of these. However, on hearing of Council's revised position, opposition reduces and openness to hearing more is evident.

Information provision is key

Residents are interested in where the new turbines will be located and the impacts of these on the environment and the community. Decommissioning of the turbines is also an area of concern and this information should be made available. Of higher priority are the community benefits and Council's advocacy efforts on its behalf.