**Attachment 2**

**For Public Notice via Internet**

**REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978***

**Title of Proposal: Golden Plains Wind Farm**

**Proponent: WestWind Energy Pty Ltd**

**Description of Project:**

The proposed Golden Plains Wind Farm is 17,345 ha in area and is located to the south, south east and west of Rokewood, within the localities of Werneth, Rokewood and Barunah Park and within the Golden Plains Shire. The wind farm has been designed for up to 235 wind turbines. Ancillary infrastructure associated with the wind farm would include: internal site access tracks including upgrades to access (approximately 152 km), upgrades to intersections, hardstand and lay down areas, underground electricity cabling (approximately 207 km), overhead power lines (up to 220 kV) (approximately 26 km), four electricity collector stations, one terminal sub-station and connection to the 500 kV transmission line, six permanent meteorological masts, an operations and maintenance building, temporary infrastructure including four co-located construction compounds and concrete batching plants, car parking, site buildings and amenities.

The wind farm will have a total capacity of approximately 800 MWs and produce approximately 2,500 GWH of electricity each year. The operational life of the wind farm is anticipated to be 25 years. Wind turbine specifications are three to five MW wind turbine class, maximum tip height of 230 metres above ground level, wind turbine rotor will be in order of 150 metres in diameter, and lower rotor sweep will be a minimum of 40 metres from natural ground level.

**Decision:**

The Minister for Planning has decided that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required for the project, as described in the referral accepted on 14 June 2017.

**Reasons for Decision:**

* The project has the potential for a range of significant environmental effects. In particular the project as proposed is likely to have significant effects on:
  + Critically endangered native vegetation communities and species listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
  + The local and regional landscape values and visual amenity of the area.
* There are other potential effects on the environmental and social setting, including for surface water, groundwater, noise, traffic and transport impacts, although these are unlikely to be significant providing they are addressed and mitigated consistent with existing statutory requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, Water Act 1989* and *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
* Assessment of potentially significant effects through an EES is necessary to ensure their extent, significance and related uncertainties are sufficiently investigated. Those investigations will inform strategies for avoidance, minimisation or mitigation, including an assessment of project design refinements, to ensure acceptable residual effects are achieved.
* An EES would also enable a single integrated and transparent process for consideration of potentially adverse effects of the project to inform relevant statutory decision-making, including under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987, Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

**Date of Decision: 9 July 2017**