
Community Benefit Program Discussion Paper

Twin Creek Wind Farm and Energy Storage Project

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For Contributor Consultation

Author	Yvonne Anson
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We pay our respect to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their ongoing connections to land, sea and community.

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1 The Project

The Twin Creek Wind Farm and Energy Storage Project ('the Project') is being developed by RES Australia. The proposed Project is located 90 km northeast of Adelaide, in the Mid North area of South Australia, between the towns of Kapunda, Eudunda and Truro. The Project is located within three local government areas, Light Regional, Goyder Regional and Mid Murray Councils. The Project includes up to 42 wind turbine generators (each with a name plate capacity of 7.2MW and a tip height of up to 220m) with an installed generating capacity of up to 270 MW; a battery energy storage facility of 215 MW indicative capacity; an overhead transmission line; substations and other associated ancillary infrastructure.

The Development Application for the Project will be submitted in Q1 2025 and will then be subject to State government notification and assessment. Construction of the Project is dependent on receiving relevant planning approval(s) and electricity grid access. Construction is currently forecast to commence in 2027.

2 Sharing benefits from the Project

RES is committed to supporting the regional communities that host our renewable energy projects. We are reaching out to Local Councils, community groups, businesses, First Nations and neighbours to discuss and design a shared benefit program that meets community needs.

RES' shared benefits framework has 3 elements:

1. Benefits to local communities located near the Project (Community Benefit Program - CBP)
2. Benefits to neighbouring property owners in close proximity to the Project (Neighbour Shared Benefits Scheme)
3. Benefits to First Nations organisations who are the Traditional Custodians within the Project area.

Sharing of benefits would commence with the construction of the Project and would be funded via an annual dollar amount per MW - the nominal amount is yet to be determined. Benefit payments from the program are expected to be made annually for the operational life of the Project.

3 Designing local community benefits

The Twin Creek Wind Farm and Energy Storage Project Community Benefit Program needs to respond to a unique context including:

- The presence of 3 main towns (Kapunda, Eudunda and Truro) and several smaller townships near the Project.
- The location of the Project in 3 Council areas: Light Regional Council, Regional Council of Goyder and Mid Murray Council.
- The presence of other renewable energy projects that may also be providing benefits to these communities and working across similar stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups may experience "burn out" in decision making processes or fund management at the community level across multiple projects.

In early December 2024, members of the RES team met with Local Council staff and community organisation representatives from the Kapunda, Eudunda and Truro areas to kick off discussion about a Community Benefit Program (CBP) component of shared benefits. This paper details the benefit sharing options and opportunities shared during these discussions. These options and opportunities are preliminary in nature and do not constitute any specific commitment from RES at this stage. They will be developed further in collaboration with interested stakeholders with implementation subject to development approval.

The paper is a first step in developing a fit for purpose program with the local community and Councils, and we are sending it back to contributors for comment. We encourage you to give us feedback. A comments form is attached for your feedback, or we are happy to receive your comments in any other way that suits you.

Please return your comments to info@twincreek-windfarm.com by **Friday 21 March 2025**.

Each section of the paper is set out, firstly, with a summary of what RES staff heard during discussions and secondly, with an outline of some of the options and opportunities for further discussion. This is presented in 3 sections:

- What types of benefits should be considered
- How to ensure fair and equitable decision making
- How to administer and govern the community benefit program

4 Discussion topics

4.1 What types of benefits should be considered

4.1.1 What we heard

The following summary of ideas were raised during face to face meetings, online discussions and emails about community benefit sharing:

- Small grants to community groups are important for their future viability.
- Support should be provided for social programs alongside sports & recreation programs and community infrastructure upgrades.
- Multiyear grants for staged project or programs would provide more strategic benefits.
- Allocating a proportion of funds each year to be added to a shared “sustainable” fund (set up at a Council or regional level). Accumulated funds could be allocated to support development of major projects and/ or used after the life of the Project.
- Providing funds for a shortfall/ gap in larger community project budgets, through partnerships with Council and community organisations, can assist these worthy projects to be realised.
- Tertiary education scholarships are important to enable rural students to study away from home, or take up courses they could not otherwise afford, building the long-term capability of the community.
- Consider projects already defined in local town action plans/ master plan(s) that have been developed in consultation with the community. By way of an example, benefit sharing via this avenue could include contributing to infrastructure projects that assist smaller communities e.g. park upgrades; public water supply points.
- Supporting major events that celebrate the community and attract tourists can boost local economic outcomes
- Councils have community grants programs covering different local needs. It will be important to build on these, not duplicate them.
- Innovative solutions to any predicted housing and accommodation shortages, especially during construction. Purchase, or build and retain, legacy workers accommodation for use as social housing or tourist accommodation.
- The towns include many heritage buildings that need support for maintenance and upgrades.

4.1.2 Options and opportunities for further discussion

From recent discussions and RES' experience in developing community benefit programs, the following option and opportunities are presented for discussion.

Scholarship fund

A commitment for annual tertiary education scholarships to assist students from the District via the Kapunda, Goyder (Eudunda students) and Barossa (Truro students) education foundations for the life of the project.

Grants

The final combination of grant programs could be focused differently for each Council area, to enhance each Council's established grant program and meet the needs expressed by each Council and community. The nominal amounts listed below serve as an example only and are subject to further discussion as the CBP is collaboratively designed and developed.

Small grants for community organisations

A dedicated program to fund one-off grants of up to \$10,000 for community organisations equipment, events, facility upgrades or programs.

Social grant program fund

A dedicated program to fund one-off grants or multi-year programs (up to 5 years) that aim to improve the social wellbeing of the community, focused on the most vulnerable community members and groups. This could form a part of the small grants program.

Environment grant programs

A dedicated program to fund one-off grants or multi-year programs that aim to conserve or improve the natural environment and biodiversity within 20 km (as an example) of the wind farm.

Multi-year grants

Funds provided for staged projects or programs over 5 years to a nominated value, focused on upgrades to community facilities, historic buildings or tourism.

Event sponsorship grants

One-off grants to support local events that facilitate community cohesions, capability, tourism and economic development.

Partnership projects

A dedicated amount made available for Project proponent contribution to major projects being developed by Councils or community organisations, under a partnership arrangement. As an example, the Project operator may offer to fund one partnership project every 2 years.

Energy equity programs

Providing assistance to vulnerable local residence by providing initiatives like:

- annual energy bill rebates
- energy efficiency upgrades
- contributions to rooftop solar systems.

Annual or upfront allocation to a “sustainable” community fund

Allocate a proportion of the overall value of the community benefits program to a local or regional fund that can accumulate to provide benefits to the community via grants and/or support to major projects and programs during and after the life of the wind farm. The preference highlighted at this stage is for a regional fund with contributions from multiple renewable energy developers (and possibly other types of developers).

Examples can be found via the links below:

<https://foundationbarossa.org.au/>

<https://www.southwestcommunityfoundation.org/>

4.2 How to ensure fair and equitable decision making

4.2.1 What we heard

The following summary of ideas about community benefit program decision making were raised during face to face meetings, online discussions and emails:

- Decisions about fund allocation need to be made against tight guidelines and in a fair and equitable manner that does not favour the organisations represented on a decision-making body.
- Funds should be distributed across the 3 LGA’s according to the level impact of development on their communities.
- Establish the program with principles that outline what percentage of the fund should go to what type of benefits. For example, sporting, social support, hero/larger projects that have gaps in funding (partner projects)
- Community engagement is critical in developing the program and in decision-making about fund allocation
- Local Councils would like to be involved in how the overall pool of benefit funds are split between key communities and Council areas as well as decisions about the annual allocations of funds to projects, event etc. Councils do not want to be left with legacy projects, if a community organisation can no longer manage that project.
- Decisions could be made by a management committee with Local Council, community and developer involvement (in accordance with agreed guidelines).
- Local Councils have experience in setting up fair and equitable decision-making processes for Council and Developer managed grant programs and can provide the Project Proponent with advice.
- The 3 Councils expressed support for working together to set up one coordinated decision-making process or aligned decision making process in each Council.

4.2.2 Options and opportunities for further discussion

From recent discussions and RES' experience in developing community benefit programs, the following options and opportunities are presented for discussion.

Decision making

Scholarships

- An annual allocation paid directly from the Project operator to the education foundations. Decisions regarding use of the funds would be made using established education foundations processes, according to Project operator preferences for types of tertiary education courses to support.

Grant programs - (Developed and managed in accordance with the Project operator's guidelines in collaboration with Local Councils and local communities). Decision-making by:

- The 3 Councils using established grant processes via a Project grant scheme for each Council
- A Community Consultative Committee established and administered by Council (one for each Council) with the assistance of the Project operator
- A Consultative Committee (community and Councils) established and administered by the Project operator (one Committee to cover the 3 Council areas and the entire fund)
- An independent community organisation that has an appropriate charter, administrative arrangements and capacity to manage a fund for the life of the Project. E.g. the Murra Warra Wind Farm fund is managed by the Wimmera Southern Mallee Development organisation - <https://wsm.org.au/initiatives/murra-warra-fund/>

Partnership projects

- Decisions about partnership projects would be made by the Project operator, after the Operator calls for direct applications from Councils or key community organisations. This could occur once every 2 years (as an example).

Energy equity funds

- Energy bill rebates could be provided directly by the Project operator to residents receiving Commonwealth Assistance benefits within a defined distance of the Project
- Energy efficiency and/or solar programs could be managed by the Council or the Project operator to support the same cohort of recipients

Sustainable long term community fund

- An annual or upfront nominal allocation (set up for the life of the Project) directly from the Project operator into the appropriate long term regional "trust" fund to enable the funding of larger regionally significant projects and/or projects after the operational life of the wind farm. Decisions about how the trust fund is used for community benefit are made according to the charter and business plan of that community trust fund and not the Project operator.

Fair and Equitable Fund Distribution

Allocation between communities and Local Council areas

There are a number of ways that allocation of the funds could be made across the Local Council areas:

- Populations within a defined distance to the Project boundary – distribution of funds across various communities according to the population within a distance from the Project boundary (for example 10 km) and transmission line corridor (for example 2 km) (indicatively Light 65%; Goyder 20%; Mid-Murray 15% based on approx. populations of 3500, 1000 and 700 respectively) Note: these figures are preliminary and subject to population verification and development approval.
- Infrastructure – distribute funds according to the location/nominal distribution of Project infrastructure (indicative split 40 Goyder/40 Light/20 Mid Murray split). Note: these figures are preliminary and subject to development approval.
- Change in amenity (visual/noise) – use technical studies to determine the relative impacts on populations in the 3 Council areas. Note: this would be a difficult qualitative process.

Allocation across types of benefit

Following decisions about types of benefits to be funded, one of the following options could be used to allocate fund amounts to each type. Options also need to consider both the CBP decision-making framework and the agreed administrative and governance arrangements.

- A set percentage or dollar value to be allocated to the various benefit types across the entire fund annually with a five yearly review. For example, a portion to scholarships, plus the remainder split equally between small grants, social programs and events sponsorships.
- The Project proponent to work with each Council to develop a program that allocates funds to benefit types, that best address identified needs of each Council area and enhances established grant programs.
- A hybrid of above e. g a dollar amount allocated for scholarships, partnerships and sustainable community fund and the remainder allocated to various grant programs as per each Councils' advice.

4.3 How to administer and govern the community benefit program

4.3.1 What we heard

The following summary of ideas about community benefit program administration and governance were raised during face to face meetings, online discussions and emails:

- Most community organisations do not have the capacity to manage community benefit program for 30 years.
- A “trust” fund could be established and managed by a regional organisation like Regional Development Australia.
- There needs to be a co-ordinated approach across Local Councils/communities so that benefits are distributed to the areas each Council and community identifies as having the most need.
- Local Councils have their own community grant programs and manage grant funds for other renewable energy projects. They are happy to explore how they could help manage any grant program for the Project proponent and how this might supplement their own and other grant programs. Council management of a grant program would be in accordance with agreed CBP guidelines.
- The governance structure of a benefits program is important for Local Councils as they do not want to be managing legacy projects that may be handed back by community groups. There is a need for sound and equitable decision making during the development and operation of a CBP. The 3 Councils are happy to work together to develop a suitable governance model.
- Local Councils' preferred governance model is for community grant programs to be managed by individual Councils in accordance with CBP guidelines.

- A regional or Council focused “sustainability” fund would require a different structure and governance model to annual or multi – year grant funds. Partnership projects would also require a different form of agreement.
- Scholarships could be awarded through established governance arrangements of the various Education Foundations.
- Any model or program needs to have built in review periods to ensure the model/program responds to changing needs across the life of the Project.

4.3.2 Options and opportunities for discussion

From recent discussions and RES’ experience in developing community benefit programs, the following options and opportunities are presented for discussion.

Managed by individual Local Councils

- Each Council has expressed an interest in managing CBP grant funds as an additional grant stream within their overall program. Some Councils are already doing this for other renewable energy projects. This would enable Council to focus funds into areas of local need and use their already established administration and governance structures. Community and Project operator involvement in decision-making would be required, if that is not already part of the Council grant program decision-making structure.
- Scholarships and partnerships would require a separate framework for fund allocation, administration and governance compared to grants via the Project operator.

Managed by an affiliation of Councils

- The 3 Councils could work together to administer the grant component of a CBP with a lead Council holding and allocating funds in accordance with joint decisions made by representatives from the 3 Councils and the community.

Managed by a regional or local community organisation

- A suitable regional organisations or community foundation could administer the funds with the assistance of the Project operator and advice from the community and Council representatives. Organisations that already administer similar programs, with suitable charters, governance processes, decision making processes that involve the community, could be considered.
- Established local community organisations with appropriate governance structures could be used to administer some elements of a CBP e.g., scholarships.

Managed by the Project Operator

- The Project operator could administer the entire CBP using a community consultative committee approach to ensure Council and community representatives are involved in decision making.

Hybrid model

- It is most likely that different types of benefits may need to be administered in different ways, using a hybrid model that includes some or all of the above options e.g. Council for grant programs, Education Foundations for scholarships and the Project operator for partnerships/major project allocations.

5 Next steps

This Options paper is the first step in designing a fit for purpose community benefits programs for the Twin Creek Wind Farm and Energy Storage Project. RES welcomes feedback on this paper from the organisations that contributed ideas and other key community organisations.

A feedback form is attached – please provide your responses via this form (electronically or handwritten) and email the completed form back to us to the email below. If you are providing hand-written comments, please scan or take a photo of the completed form and attach it to the email. Please return your comments to info@twincreek-windfarm.com by **Friday 21 March 2025**.

Your comments will be used to develop a draft Twin Creek Wind Farm and Energy Storage Project Community Benefit Program proposal. We will keep you informed as we develop the proposal as well as when we intend to distribute the draft proposal for broader community consultation.

Appendix A – Benefit sharing ideas for local projects

During the first round of consultation, discussions were held with the following groups:

- Light Regional Council
- Mid Murray Council
- The Regional Council of Goyder
- Kapunda Business Alliance
- Eudunda Community, Business and Tourism Committee
- Truro and District Community Association
- Kapunda Golf Club
- Kapunda High School Centenary Foundation

A range local projects and program ideas were mentioned during discussion. This list is not exhaustive and only reflects suggestions from the groups that accepted the opportunity to have an initial discussion. Some ideas are existing programs/projects, some from local action or development plans and others are blue sky/longer term projects. Some may be suitable for short term sponsorship before the community benefit programs commences at construction.

Sports and recreation

- Kapunda Golf Club point of sale software
- Kapunda Golf Club junior golfers program
- Kapunda Golf Club driving range (multi-year project)
- Kapunda Golf Club levelling tees project
- Kapunda Golf Club upgrading disabled access and facilities

Education & Training

- Early years literacy programs (Light Regional Council)
- Training scheme to build local business and employee capability, ready for construction or operation
- Ongoing (for the life of the Project) for tertiary education scholarships via the Kapunda and Goyder (Eudunda) Rural Education Foundations and the Barossa Foundation (Nuriootpa) - (university and trades qualification). Could be focused on STEM or agricultural degrees or trades relevant to the renewable energy transition.

Social Programs

- Rooftop solar for vulnerable households (Light Regional Council)
- Social programs at 'The Hub' (a men's and women's "shed") Eudunda
- Social programs run by the Eudunda Community Op Shop (eg, food bank, sponsoring vulnerable families so they can send their kids to camps; buy uniforms; purchase petrol etc)
- Truro - community battery (reduce energy bills and improve reliability)

Arts programs

- Silo Art Kapunda
- Mural painting on the water tank near Eudunda

Town development

- Truro RV camping spot at the oval to help bring in tourists and raise funds for the town.
- Truro Place of Safe Refuge (from bushfire etc) at the Truro oval (CFS) – which requires water tanks and can be linked to irrigation of the oval.
- Truro - turning the Mogas site in town into a park

- Truro - upgrades to Hero's Park
- Projects that form a priority in the Truro Master Plan or the soon to be prepared Truro & Dutton District Action Plan (Mid Murray Council)
- Co- funding a Eudunda Business Facades program (small grants to co-fund businesses to paint their facades, fix verandas etc – goes to town pride, identity and visitor economy)
- Upgrading the entrance signage to Eudunda
- Heritage building upgrades (mentioned for all Council areas)

Accommodation

- Schemes to make available more accommodation in the area, especially for construction and then left for community housing, tourism or future workers
- Co- funding of tourist/workers cabins in the Eudunda caravan park that could be used by the Project operator during construction and then left to the community post construction.

Tourism promotion

- Possible Eudunda to Kapunda rail trail
- Promotion of the Lavendar trail and the Kapunda – Eudunda – Burra drive as a tourist destination

Environment

- Levi Creek Nature Reserve restoration (<https://eudundanews.com/category/clubs-organisations/levi-creek-nature-reserves-community-group/>)

Feedback Form

1. Types of community benefit

What is your preference for types of community benefits to be provided (choose more than one)

- Scholarship fund (annual)
- Small grants for community organisations (annual)
- Grants for social program (annual)
- Grants for Environment projects (annual)
- Multiyear grants for large projects
- Event sponsorship (annual)
- Partnership for major projects
- Energy equity programs (bill rebates, energy upgrades, roof top solar)
- Allocation to a “sustainable” community fund to ongoing benefits

Do you have any other ideas or comments?

2. Fair and equitable decision making

Who would you prefer makes the decisions about funding (choose one)?

- Your local Council
- A Community Consultative Committee managed by Council or the Project operators
- Decisions made by the Project operators
- Decisions made by a suitable local or regional community organisation

Any other ideas or comments about funding decision making?

3. Fair and equitable fund distribution across the local communities

How should funds be split across the local communities within a prescribed distance from the wind farm boundary?

- Proportional to the populations within 10 km in each Council area
- According to the number of turbines and other infrastructure in each Council area
- According to the predicted changes in amenity (noise and visual) in each Council area

Any other ideas or comments about fund distribution?

4. Administration and Governance

Who is best placed to administer and govern the program?

- Managed by the individual Councils
- Managed by an affiliation of the 3 Councils
- Managed by a regional or local community organisation
- Managed by the Project Operator
- Hybrid model - a combination of above depending on the types of benefits

Do you know of any community organisation or foundation that could manage the community benefit program?

Any other ideas or comments about how the program and funds should be administered?

5. Any other comments or suggestions?
