



Project Ares: A legal information guide for community

Have your say on the referral of Project Ares

Energy North Pty Ltd referred Project Ares to the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (**NT EPA**) at the highest tier of environmental assessment under the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (NT) (**EP Act**).

You can let the NT EPA know your views by sending in your submission by no later than **11:59pm (ACST) on 20 August 2026**.

The referral documents can be found on the NT EPA's website here: [Project Ares | NTEPA](#)

What is Project Ares?

Energy North Pty Ltd (**Energy North**) propose to develop a hyperscale data centre in the Barkly Region on Muranji Station approximately 52km from Elliot. The 1 GW data centre is one of the largest planned data centre facilities in Australia and includes:

- A **7,000-hectare solar farm** capable of generating up to 3,000 MWp,
- Battery energy storage of up to 16 GWh,
- **Gas-fired generation** capable of generating up to **1,038 MW**,
- Groundwater extraction of up to **4 GL per year** from the Wiso Basin,
- A preliminary development footprint of approximately **19,150 hectares** within a broader 186,000-hectare project area; and
- Supporting infrastructure including roads, airstrip, workers accommodation.

What is a data centre?

A data centre is a facility that powers the online services we use daily including email, cloud computing, AI tools and digital services.¹ Data centres are the physical backbone of generative AI. The increased use of generative AI results in a growth in demand for data centres.² Data centres require a significant amount of energy because they operate 24 hours a day and require a significant amount of water to cool the constantly operating machines.³

¹ Lee Hickin, 'Australia's expectations for data centres: what it means for your business' [Australian Government: AI National Centre](#) (Article, 27 May 2026).

² Greenpeace, Australia Pacific, '[Energy Vampires: The AI data centres draining Australia](#)' (May 2026) p. 68.

³ Climate Council of Australia Limited, '[Clouded Future: Managing Risks of the Data Centre Boom](#)' (3 June 2026) p 7.

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Approvals

The environmental approval is one of a number of approvals which Energy North will need to obtain for Project Ares to proceed. Other approvals may include:

- Commonwealth approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (which was submitted on 29 June 2026 and is currently under assessment),⁴
- Pastoral land clearing permit,
- Groundwater extraction licence,

⁴ Energy North's referral for environmental assessment under the *Environment, Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) remains under assessment. You can find the referral on the EPBC portal [Project Ares Referral 2026/10560 · EPBC Act Public Portal](#)

- Permission from the Native Title holders under an Indigenous Land Use Agreement,
- Permission from the Aboriginal Land Trust,
- Authority Certificate from the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority; and
- Transfer of tenure from pastoral lease to special purpose lease OR a non-pastoral use permit.

There will be additional opportunities for the public to raise concerns by submitting comments when Energy North apply for a pastoral land clearing permit and a groundwater extraction licence.

What is this referral about?

Under the EP Act, any project or development (**action**) which will, or is likely, to have a significant impact on the environment, must be assessed and given an environmental approval from the Minister for Lands Planning and Environment (**Minister**) before it can proceed.

Energy North have accepted that Project Ares will have a significant impact on the environment. They have proposed that the NT EPA assess the Project at the highest tier of environmental assessment, through an Environmental Impact Statement (**EIS**).

Energy North have already accepted Project Ares will have a significant impact on the environment. What happens now?

Energy North acknowledge that Project Ares is large-scale and complex and an EIS provides a suitable process to ensure that the principles of ecologically sustainable development are appropriately considered. The NT EPA must now make two decisions:

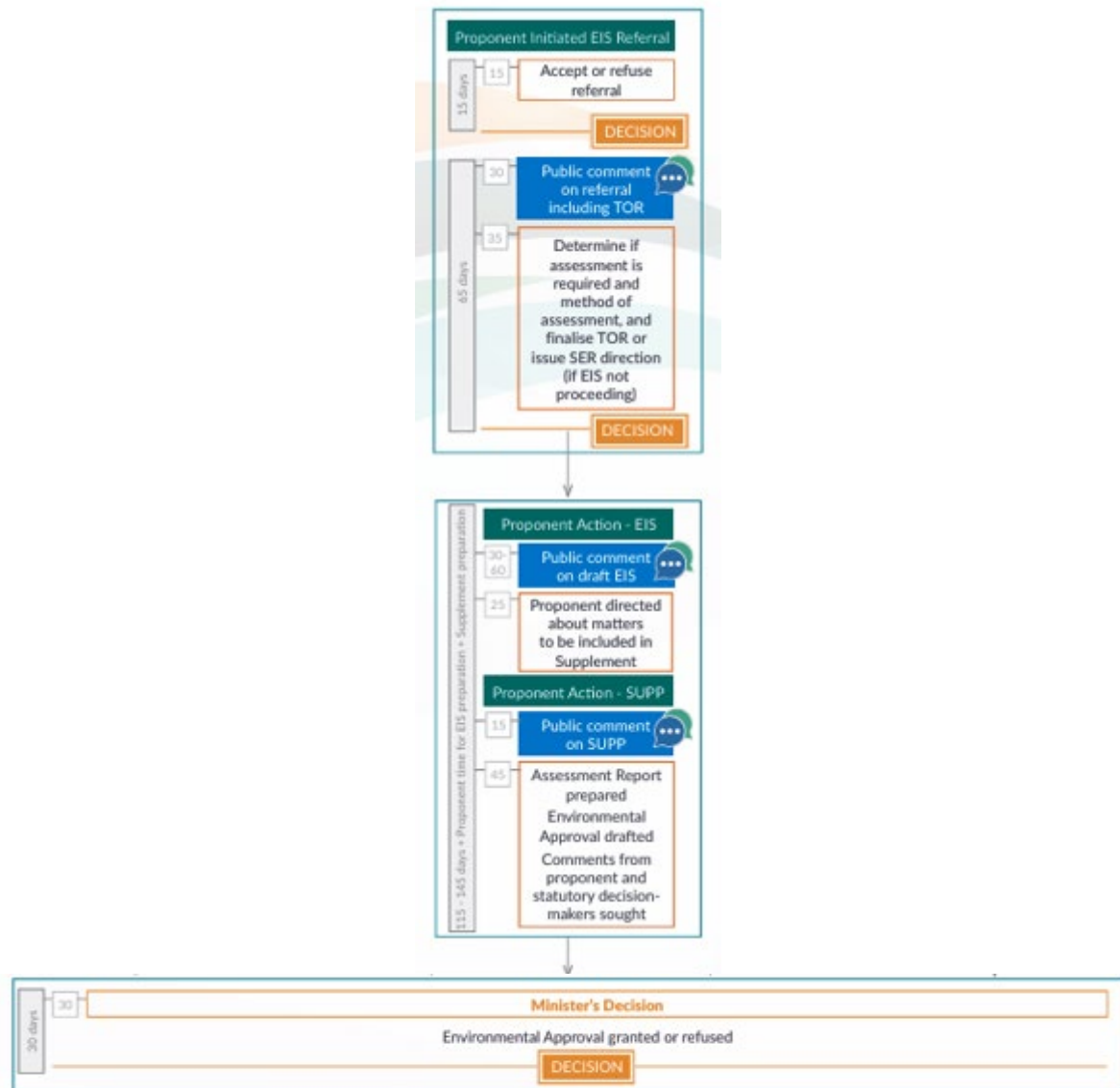
1. Should Project Ares be assessed at the EIS level or a different level of assessment; and
2. Whether to:
 - a. approve, or
 - b. approve and change; or
 - c. refuse to approve the draft Terms of Reference submitted by Energy North.

This is the first opportunity for the public to comment on Project Ares, and in particular on what should be included in the EIS by way of the Terms of Reference for the assessment process.

After submissions close on **20 August 2026**, the next opportunity the public will have to comment on the environmental assessment process, is when the draft EIS is released.

Below is a flowchart outlining the environmental assessment process.⁵

⁵ You can find a copy of the flowchart on the NT EPA website here: [Indicative Environmental Impact Assessment and Approval Timelines - Flowchart](#)



Which tier of assessment should NT EPA assess Project Ares at?

We agree with Energy North. Project Ares should be assessed by the NT EPA at the highest tier of environmental assessment.

When deciding whether Project Ares should be assessed by EIS, the NTEPA must consider:⁶

- The significance of the potential impact of Project Ares,
- The level of confidence in predicting the potential impacts of Project Ares, taking into account the extent and currency of existing knowledge,
- The level of confidence in the effectiveness of Energy North's proposed measures to avoid, mitigate or manage the potential significant impacts of Project Ares,
- Community engagement that has occurred in relation to Project Ares, and
- The capacity of communities and individuals likely to be affected by Project Ares to assess and understand information about the Project and its potential significant impacts.

⁶ *Environment Protection Regulations 2020* (NT) reg 59.

Should the Terms of Reference drafted by Energy North be approved?

The Terms of Reference sets out the matters that must be addressed in the draft EIS. Energy North have drafted a Terms of Reference; however, you can have your say on what you think Energy North should assess in Project Ares' draft EIS.

What must be included in the Terms of Reference?

Under the *Environment Protection Regulations 2020* (NT), the NT EPA must consider submissions received from Energy North, the public and the views of government authorities. The Terms of Reference can include anything the NT EPA considers appropriate.

When making any decision under the EP Act, the NT EPA must also consider and apply the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (**ESD**) which include:⁷

- Decision-making principle: Decision-making processes should integrate short and long-term environmental and equitable considerations and provide for community involvement.
- Precautionary principle: If there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.
- Principle of evidence-based decision-making: Decisions should be based on the best available evidence.
- Principle of intergenerational and intragenerational equity: Ensuring that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for future generations.
- Principle of sustainable use: Natural resources should be used in a manner that is sustainable, prudent, rational, wise and appropriate.
- Principle of conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.

What may be included in the Terms of Reference?

The environmental impact assessment process may consider the following matters:⁸

- Biological or Physical Environment Assessment: An assessment of the impacts of Project Ares on the biological and physical environment.
- Health Impact Assessment: An assessment of the potential impacts of Project Ares on human health or wellbeing. The NT EPA must consult with the Chief Health Officer before requiring Energy North to conduct a health impact assessment.
- Social Impact Assessment: An assessment of the potential impact of Project Ares on communities or individuals.
- Cultural Impact Assessment: An assessment of the potential impacts of Project Ares on the natural and cultural values of the area including Aboriginal cultural values and sacred sites, and the Northern Territory's natural and built heritage.

⁷ *Environment Protection Act 2019* (NT) Pt 2, Div 1.

⁸ *Environment Protection Regulations 2020* (NT) reg 79.

- Economic Assessment: An assessment of the potential costs and benefits of Project Ares to a region or local area and/or the Territory more broadly.
- Cumulative Impact Assessment: An assessment of the combined potential impacts of Project Ares taking into account any other projects in or near the area.

The NT EPA suggest addressing the following in a draft EIS:⁹

- What alternatives have been considered and a clear description of any uncertainties,
- How potential impacts, including to matters of national significance, from a project will be avoided, mitigated or offset and a holistic assessment of the impacts of Project Ares on the whole of the environment,
- Assessment of potentially significant environmental impacts and how actions that have a significant impact on the environment have been assessed, planned and carried out, taking into account the principles of ESD, the environmental decision-making hierarchy, the waste management hierarchy, the ecosystem-based hierarchy and the impacts of a changing climate,
- How a proponent like Energy North meets their general duties,¹⁰
- How the draft EIS considers the NT EPA environmental factors and objectives such as protecting terrestrial habitats, groundwater and surface water so that ecological health, land uses and the welfare and amenity of people are maintained;¹¹ and
- Appendices with site technical studies, qualifications of persons who prepared the draft EIS and detailed technical information.

What we think should be included in the Terms of Reference

We think the Terms of Reference should include:

- Comprehensive assessment of the atmospheric impacts of Project Ares including climate risk assessments, estimations of greenhouse gas emissions and air quality assessments.
- Project and site-specific surveys which assess the ecological values of the project area, taking into account the environmental variability between the wet season and dry season in the region.
- Impact assessments detailing the flow on effects of Project Ares' proposal to extract 4 GL from the Wiso basin, assessments of the impacts to stygofauna from the proposed extraction.
- Impact assessment of the light, noise and vibrations from Project Ares on every species (both threatened and non-threatened) in the area, weed and pest management plans and impact assessments of potential disruptions to groundwater and surface water connectivity.

⁹ Section 4 of the NT EPA's '[Preparing an environmental impact statement \(EIS\): Environmental impact assessment guidance for proponents](#)' recommends what matters should be addressed in the draft EIS. These are not statutory requirements and a draft EIS which fails to address these matters may still be approved.

¹⁰ Section 43 of the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (NT) sets out a proponents general duties under an environmental impact assessment. You can access the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (NT) on the [Northern Territory Legislation website](#).

¹¹ You can find a list of the NT EPA's environmental factors and objectives in their '[NT EPA Environmental factors and objectives: Environmental impact assessment General technical guidance](#)'.

How can I be involved?

The NT EPA must consider all submissions received by the public in relation to the referral and the draft Terms of Reference before making decisions about the level of environment assessment Project Ares should be assessed at and what should be included in the Terms of Reference for the assessment.

You can ask the NT EPA to require Energy North to comprehensively assess Project Ares to ensure that all the impacts and risks are fully known and understood.

You can have your say by making a submission by no later than **11:59pm (ACST) on 20 August 2026**.

Your submission should clearly identify your concerns with Project Ares and explain why you say Energy North should acknowledge them. We strongly recommend including the issues that matter the most to you. [Personalising your submission makes a difference](#).

Read: For help in preparing your submission and making it persuasive, take a look at [EDO's Factsheet on submission writing](#) and the [NT EPA's Guide for making a public submission](#).

What are some of the biggest concerns with Project Ares?



Largest gas fired power plant in Australia

- Energy North propose the project will require between 900 MW and 1.1 GW of energy to support the facility's 1 GW IT capacity.
 - We note that on Energy North's website, it states that Project Ares has the potential to be upscaled to 5 GW.¹²
- For context, the entire Darwin-Katherine energy grid only has capacity to generate around 494.4 MW of power across five power stations.¹³
- Therefore to support this energy use, Energy North propose to build Australia's largest gas fired energy system generating 1,038 MW at full build out.
- Energy North have not told us how much of the energy required for Project Ares will be generated from the gas-fired power station or what type of gas-powered generator Project Ares will use. The efficiency of different gas-powered systems can range between 64% and 35% depending on the type of generator. The below table shows an estimation of annual greenhouse gas emissions from the Project Ares gas-generated power plant for 3 different efficiencies (60%, 50% and 40%) producing

¹² Energy North, '[Project: Ares](#)' (website) (accessed on 11 August 2026).

¹³ Utilities Commission of the Northern Territory, '[Northern Territory Power System Performance Review 2024-25](#)' (December 2025) p 39.

1,038 MW power. The table estimates the annual emissions if Project Ares was to operate using 10% gas or using 100% gas.¹⁴

Efficiency	Gas used	Annual emissions (100% utilization)	Annual emissions (10% utilization)
60%	6,228.0 GJ/hr	2.81 MtCO ₂ e	281,136 tCO ₂ e
50%	7473.6 GJ/hr	3.37 MtCO ₂ e	337,360 tCO ₂ e
40%	9342.0 GJ/hr	4.22 MtCO ₂ e	421,700 tCO ₂ e

- If the gas-fired system used by Project Ares is only 40% efficient and utilised at 100% that is **approximately the same amount of energy used by over 2 million homes in a year**.¹⁵
- Energy North have identified that greenhouse gases from the gas-fired power plant will be Project Ares' primary atmospheric emission source but they have failed to estimate how much greenhouse gas the proposed gas-fired power plant will release.
- Energy North also propose that the gas-fired infrastructure will be designed to operate on hydrogen fuel blends to transition away from natural gas but they assess hydrogen as technically and commercially non-viable within the Project timeline.
- Energy North should estimate the greenhouse gas emissions from the proposed gas-fired power plant as well as greenhouse gases emissions generated in the construction and operational phases of Project Ares (such as greenhouse gases generated from road and rail transportation of construction materials and emissions from the planes transporting workers in and out) when calculating how much greenhouse gas will be released from Project Ares.

What we think should be included in the TOR

1. Emissions assessment: Assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions of Project Ares including estimated emissions if Energy North apply to upscale Project Ares to 5 GW usage in the future (as per their website).
2. Climate impact assessment: Climate impacts of Project Ares that uses current Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change science and site-specific data that captures the variability between wet and dry seasons.
3. Cumulative assessment of all climate impacts of Project Ares and the cumulative impacts of all other projects in the region.

¹⁴ These figures are an estimation only and are based on the limited information provided by Energy North in their Referral documents. The actual emissions will depend upon the technology profile and type of gas-powered generator used.

¹⁵ Based on Australian average household gas consumption of 33GJ per year published on page 20 of Deloitte Access Economics, '[Decarbonising Australia's gas distribution network](#)' (November 2017), the energy and emissions of 9,342 GJ/hr equates to 82 Petajoules (PJ) per year, which is similar to the amount of energy used to power over 2,000,000 residential homes for a year.

4. Assessment of the risks of rising temperatures, climate change and alterations to water availability in the region, particularly on the effectiveness of solar generation.
5. Air quality report which considers the impacts to workers and the nearby homestead, particularly the production of nitrogen oxides generated from natural gas combustion.
6. Risk assessment: Risks of transitioning Project Ares from gas to hydrogen fuelled power, including risks of changes in policy and technology availability.



4 billion litres of water every year

- Energy North propose to extract 4 billion litres of water per year, an amount equivalent to 1600 Olympic swimming pools.
- Project Ares is located within the Georgina Wiso Water Allocation Plan (**WAP**) area. The Georgina Wiso WAP allocates 13,178 ML/year from the Wiso Basin to ‘other consumptive uses’ which includes agriculture, aquaculture, cultural, industry and mining activities.¹⁶ Project Ares would be considered “industry” for the purpose of the WAP.
- The proposed 4 billion litres of water per year represents approximately 30% of the entire volume of water allocated for ‘other consumptive uses’ in the Wiso Basin.
- Energy North have identified that the water licence held by Power and Water Corporation that supplies water to the residents of Newcastle Waters is only 35km away.
- Groundwater in the Wiso Basin is connected in the region, flowing north into the Tindall Limestone (Daly Basin) and further into the Flora River.¹⁷
- The referral documents rely on a groundwater assessment that has not been made publicly accessible and it is unclear where Energy North’s data has come from.
- Energy North have not been clear whether the construction of Project Ares will include the diversion of Bucket Creek and Goochegoochena Creek. If construction of Project Ares requires diversion of surface water, the draft EIS should include an assessment of all impacts associated with the diversion of the creeks and mitigation of any adverse impacts on ground water dependant ecosystems and cultural values.

What we think should be included in the TOR

1. Site specific data about local impacts instead of regional data and a detailed breakdown of proposed water use.
2. Detailed groundwater investigations and modelling of the spatial extent of the 4 GL/yr drawdown assessing the risk of both local

¹⁶ Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security, ‘[Georgina Wiso Water Allocation Plan 2023-2031](#)’ (**Georgina Wiso WAP**) p 10.

¹⁷ Georgina Wiso WAP, p 21.

impacts of the drawdown and the impacts to the regional aquifer system.

3. Cumulative impact assessment of all impacts on the Aquifer from Project Ares as well as the combined impacts from all projects in the area.
4. Water quality assessment which accounts for impacts to the salinity of the Montejini Aquifer.
5. An assessment of aquatic ecosystems including stygofauna.
6. Impact assessment of the downstream impacts from disruptions to connectivity of groundwater and surface water resulting from Project Ares.



Impacts to threatened species

- There are nine threatened species that occur in the Project area: the vulnerable Greater Bilby, critically endangered Northern Blue-tongued Skink, vulnerable Yellow Spotted Monitor, vulnerable Grey Falcon, vulnerable Plains Death Adder, vulnerable Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, the critically endangered Curlew Sandpiper, the endangered Australian Painted Snipe and the endangered Common Greenshank.
- Even though it is estimated that there are only 10,000 Greater Bilby's left, Energy North have identified that construction and operation of Project Ares will potentially result in direct mortality of the vulnerable Greater Bilby and loss of the Greater Bilby's habitat.
- The Project area is currently unused pastoral land. Project Ares will introduce light, heat, noise and vibrations to the Project area 24 hours a day. Yet the referral fails to address how the light, heat, noise and vibrations will impact all species in the area (including nocturnal threatened species). Sensory pollutants alter how animals process information by masking, distracting and misleading them.¹⁸
- Large scale solar arrays have been considered to have a 'lake effect' where the panels may be mistaken for water by overflying waterbirds.¹⁹ This is a risk identified in Project Ares' Commonwealth environmental referral which is curiously absent in the NT EPA referral.
- In our view, Energy North must assess all impacts on threatened species from Project Ares during the EIS process and ensure that impacts are avoided, mitigated or offset appropriately.

¹⁸ Dominoni, DM, et al. '[Why conservation biology can benefit from sensory ecology](#)' (2020) *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 502-511.

¹⁹ P.A Fleming, '[All that glitters – Review of solar facility impacts on fauna](#)' (2025) *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* p 9.

What we think should be included in the TOR

1. Project specific field surveys to determine ecological values and impacts of Project Ares on the ecological values.
2. Impact assessment of sensory pollutants such as light, heat, noise and vibrations on biodiversity, identifying risks, mitigation measuring and outlining monitoring plans.
3. Weed management plan and pest management plan.
4. Cumulative impact assessment of all impacts on species from Project Ares as well as the combined impacts from all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area.



Large scale land clearing (up to 19,150 ha)

- Energy North state that Project Ares will occur within 186,000 ha yet only calculate the ‘physical disturbance associated with the Project’ as 19,150 ha. It is therefore unclear how much land Energy North propose to clear for Project Ares.
- Energy North estimate the following areas of land required to construct and operate Project Ares include:
 - the hyperscale data centre proposed to cover 90 ha,
 - the solar PV generation system proposed to cover 7,000 ha,
 - the Battery Energy Storage System proposed to cover 80 ha,
 - 65-70kms of internal road network, and
 - a 2000m sealed airstrip.
- However, Energy North fail to estimate how much land is required for the remaining components of Project Ares which include:
 - the gas-fired power plant and connecting pipeline,
 - the rail siding,
 - the construction/accommodation village,
 - workshops,
 - fuel storage facilities, and
 - waste management facilities.
- In our view, Energy North should make clear to the public how much native vegetation is proposed to be cleared to facilitate all components of Project Ares and ensure that any impacts to the quality and cultural heritage values of the land and any risks of erosion are identified and avoided, mitigated or offset appropriately.

What we think should be included in the TOR

1. Impacts to threatened species caused by land clearing which fragments ecosystems.
2. Assessment of site-specific ecological values if land and soil are significantly impacted by land clearing.



There are substantial knowledge gaps in the referral that must be determined through the EIS process

When deciding which level of environmental impact assessment is appropriate, the NT EPA must consider the level of confidence in predicting potential significant impacts and take into account existing knowledge.²⁰ The NT EPA must also make their decisions guided by careful evaluation to avoid serious or irreversible damage to the environment.²¹ The presence of substantial knowledge gaps at the time of this referral serve to highlight why Project Ares must be assessed at the highest tier of environmental impact assessment.

What the referral fails to address includes:

- Energy North propose to use coolant as a thermal management strategy at Project Ares. The referral does not explain what the coolant is made of or how the coolant will be disposed and fails to identify any risks that may occur if the coolant is released into the environment.
- Energy North say that there are no human health impacts from Project Ares because it's located away from residences and does not involve any inherently hazardous materials. However, Energy North explain that the solar panels will need to be replaced during the life of Project Ares which requires '*special management due to the presence of hazardous materials*'. Energy North have also identified that they will be required to obtain licences under the *Dangerous Goods Act 1998* (NT) because Project Ares involves the storage, handling and use of prescribed dangerous goods during construction and operations.
- Energy North rely on solutions that have not been created yet. For example, Energy North say they are committed to a zero landfill disposal of e-waste generated from Project Ares but this can only occur if industrial recycling technologies and reuse opportunities '*advance considerably by the time decommissioning activities are required*'. Further, Energy North acknowledge that current limitations prevent them from being able to assess potential residual impacts of Project Ares.
- Energy North have not explained how much energy for Project Ares will be generated by the gas-fired power station, how much energy will be generated by the solar arrays and how much energy will be generated by the battery system. If we don't know how much energy will come from renewable sources, we cannot understand how much greenhouse gas will be emitted by Project Ares.
- Energy North have also proposed to transition Project Ares toward renewable-powered operations, yet acknowledged that '*This level of redundancy cannot be achieved by renewable energy and storage alone at the scale and duration required with current technology and natural gas is the most technical and commercially viable firm power option available...*'.²²

²⁰ *Environment Protection Regulations 2020* (NT) reg 59(b).

²¹ *Environment Protection Act 2019* (NT) s 19(2)(a).

²² Energy North Pty Ltd, 'Referral under the *Environment Protection Act 2019* NT)' (June 2026), p 24.

- Energy North further acknowledge that ‘*There is currently insufficient information available regarding the Project design and available mitigations to assess the significance of impacts to terrestrial ecosystems*’.²³
- Energy North have acknowledged that the significance of the impact of Project Ares on cultural heritage cannot currently be determined.
- Unlike mining and petroleum projects in the NT, there is no requirement that Energy North provide a security bond to compensate the NT Government for any rehabilitation work required once Project Ares has ended. In order to avoid passing any rehabilitation costs onto the taxpayer, Energy North should include an estimate of rehabilitation costs in their Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan which may convince the Minister to exercise their discretion and impose an environmental protect bond for Project Ares as a condition of the environmental approval.

What have Energy North proposed in their draft Terms of Reference?

Energy North propose to submit their draft EIS within two years from the date the NT EPA approve the terms of reference. The table below summarises what Energy North propose to assess in the EIS of Project Ares by including information in the draft EIS such as:

	What does Energy North propose to assess?
Land clearing	• Identification of potential significant impacts to land and soil quality and integrity from Project Ares including potential contamination of the land from spills or leaks, hazardous materials and disposal of e-waste • Outline of measures to avoid and mitigate impacts and enhance or restore environmental quality • Proposed monitoring and reporting activities
Threatened species	• Descriptive information including maps and field verification of all species of conservation significance • Identification of direct, indirect and cumulative and residual impacts of Project Ares on flora, fauna and ecological communities • Identification of habitats critical to survival and quantification of the significance and extent of the impacts of Project Ares • Outline of proposed measures to avoid, mitigate and manage potential significant impacts on flora, fauna and ecological communities such as infrastructure design choices • Proposed monitoring and reporting activities • Assessment of any required offset measures
Water	• Description of the existing groundwater and surface water resources

²³ Energy North Pty Ltd, ‘Referral under the *Environment Protection Act 2019* NT)’ (June 2026), p 80.

	• Assessment of potential significant impacts and residual impacts of Project Ares on groundwater systems and surface water systems • Description of any uncertainties or further work required to understand potential significant impacts of Project Ares • Outline of measures to avoid or mitigate groundwater or surface water impacts such as management plans and adaptive management strategies • Details of proposed monitoring and reporting activities • Demonstration that proposed monitoring locations are appropriately sited
Greenhouse gas emissions	• Assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions generated by Project Ares and description of Project Ares's net contribution to the NT's greenhouse gas emissions • Estimation of annual scope 1 and scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions from Project Ares • Description of any further work required to understand potential significant impacts and reduce uncertainty • Outline of proposed monitoring and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions and proposed offsets.
Community and economy	• Identification of potential social and economic impacts and benefits associated with Project Ares for the local, regional and NT community and economy • An economic and social impact assessment which assesses and quantifies the potential impacts and risks to communities and the economy • Description of measures to avoid, mitigate and manage potential social and economic impacts
Culture and heritage	• Maps showing location and extent of cultural heritage values presented in accordance with wishes of Aboriginal stakeholders and an assessment of potential impacts including cumulative impacts of Project Ares on the cultural heritage values • Outline measures to avoid and mitigate impacts to cultural heritage values from Project Ares • Determination of any significant residual environmental impacts or risks to cultural heritage values
Matters of National Environmental Significance	• Details of any matters protected by the controlling provisions of a controlled action decision made under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiveristy Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cth)

Do you think this is sufficient? Do you want Energy North to assess any other potential impacts that may result from Project Ares? Thinking about how Energy North rely on future solutions that are not yet feasible, do you think two years is a long enough time frame for Energy North to comprehensively assess the potential impacts of Project Ares?

What's missing from the draft Terms of Reference?

We are concerned that the draft Terms of Reference fails to include:

- Assessment of the indirect impacts on the quality and integrity of the land and soil from land clearing,
- Impacts on threatened species of fragmenting habitats caused by land clearing,
- Project specific data,
- Impacts of sensory pollutants such as light, noise, heat and vibrations,
- Weed and pest management plans,
- Downstream impacts to species from disruptions to the groundwater and surface water in the region,
- Impacts of drawdown from site specific groundwater investigations,
- Cumulative impact assessment of proposed water extraction taking into account other water users in the area,
- Assessment of impacts on salinity in the aquifer,
- Stygofauna assessment,
- Details about proposed water use,
- Waste management plans from the proposed accommodation village,
- Assessment of the risks associated with the use of coolant for thermal regulation during operation,
- Quantification of Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions generated during the construction phase and from air transport of workers and air and road transport of construction materials,
- Cumulative impact assessment of greenhouse gas emissions taking into account other projects in the region,
- Identification of specific impacts of greenhouse gas emissions on humans, fauna, flora and ecological communities,
- Impacts of upscaling the Project to 5 GW usage,
- Impacts of climate change on environmental factors,
- Long term impacts of climate change on solar energy generation,
- Air quality assessment from the combustion of natural gas,
- Closure and rehabilitation plans for the gas fired-power station,
- Details about upscaling Project Ares to 5 GW capacity,
- Risk assessment for a transition to hydrogen fuelled power,
- Assessment of Project Ares' annual energy and water usages
- Human health impacts of Project Ares; and
- Risk assessment of hazardous materials and hazardous waste including waste generated by the accommodation site.

Let the NT EPA know what you want Energy North to assess in the environmental impact statement and make a submission.

How do I lodge a submission?



Online

[NTEPA website](#)



Post

NT EPA
GPO Box 3675
DARWIN NT 0801



In person

Level 1 Arnhemica House
16 Parap Road
PARAP NT

You can also make your submission orally in person or by audio or audio-visual recording.

You can have a look at the NT EPA's Guide for making a public submission for more information.

Read: [NT EPA Guide for making a public submission](#)

If you have further queries about the submission making process relevant to your individual circumstances, you should contact the NT EPA by email at eia.ntepa@nt.gov.au or by phone on (08) 8924 4218.

What happens after I send in my submission?

All comments received during the referral process will be published by the NT EPA as soon as practicable online, unless anonymity or non-publication of certain information has been requested.

Once the referral consultation period has closed, the NT EPA has **35 business days** to make a decision whether they agree that Project North should be assessed at the highest tier of assessment and whether they approve Energy North's draft Terms of Reference.

The EDO acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which the Project is located and the surrounding areas, being the Murrinji (Narlwan/Nyirrinji), Marlinja, Yijiparta, Elliott, Warranangku, Kulaja, Powell Creek, Ngapurr, North Western people. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Contact details

For further information please contact the EDO on darwin@edo.org.au