



Government
of South Australia

Department for
Energy and Mining

GAWLER RANGES EAST

PROPOSED RELEASE AREA

GENERAL PUBLIC INFORMATION PACK



Department for Energy and Mining

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South Australian Resources Information Gateway (SARIG)
map.sarig.sa.gov.au

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205921-General Public Information Pack

Date	Comment
September 2024	First published.

Introduction

The South Australian government is proposing to declare an area of pastoral land in the Gawler Ranges as a release area under the *Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act 2023*. It is known as the Gawler Ranges East proposed release area.

We are seeking your feedback on this proposal.

Public consultation is open from 9 September to 22 October 2024. Submissions can be made by:

- uploading a submission through the YourSay website
- sending an email to ReleaseAreas@sa.gov.au

This initial area is a **proposal** for feedback. It is **not** the final declaration.

This is your opportunity to provide feedback.

The *Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act 2023* (HRE Act) is Australia's first dedicated licencing and regulatory system for large-scale hydrogen and renewable energy projects.

The HRE Act introduces a mechanism for renewable energy development over government-owned, designated land (pastoral land, prescribed Crown lands and state waters), called release areas. Government starts the release area process by working with Native Title groups and other landowners, representative organisations, communities and interest groups to identify areas of land that can sustainably host large-scale renewable energy development.

The government has identified a proposed release area under the new framework. The Gawler Ranges East proposed release area spans approximately 5,200 km² on the Upper Eyre Peninsula, wholly located in the Gawler Ranges Native Title Determination Area. It includes part or all of seven pastoral leases.

Public consultation on the Gawler Ranges East proposed release area has now commenced, and we invite your feedback on the location, boundaries and any sensitivities and constraints that may be affected by development on the land. Renewable energy developers are also asked to identify specific areas where they may wish to develop projects within the proposed release area.

Once a release area is declared renewable energy companies will submit competitive tenders to develop large-scale renewable energy projects on the land. This will ensure only the most suitable projects are awarded access.

The release area process will ensure development is strategic, sustainable, supportive of regional development objectives, and is the best use of the land, while co-existing with existing land uses.

Community engagement doesn't end at the release area stage. The HRE Act requires consultation and agreement-making throughout the development process to ensure projects are developed in line with landowner, community and state expectations.

Following consultation, the Minister for the HRE Act will consider the feedback, and with the agreement of the Minister for the *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989*, will make a decision regarding the declaration of a release area.

Gawler Ranges East Proposed Release Area

Area: 5,220 km²



Source: Department for Energy & Mining
Date: 23/07/2024
Spatial Reference: GDA2020 SA Lambert
MapID: 20240723-01
Disclaimer: There is no warranty that this map is free from errors or omissions.
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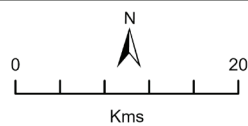


Figure 1 Gawler Ranges East proposed release area, comprising part or all of seven pastoral leases and over 5,200 km².



About Gawler Ranges East proposed release area

OVERVIEW

Gawler Ranges East proposed release area (Fig 1):

- Approximately 5,200 km²
- Gawler Ranges Native Title Determination Area
- Includes part or all of seven pastoral leases
- 15 km northeast of Kimba
- 80 km west of Whyalla at its southern point
- Adjacent to Lake Gairdner National Park to the northwest and Lake Gilles National Park to the southeast.

This area of the state has been the subject of significant industry interest in recent years with several large renewable energy projects proposed here. This is due to world-leading wind and solar resources and proximity to existing government projects in and around Whyalla, including the Hydrogen Jobs Plan and Port Bonython Hydrogen Hub.

[A link to SARIG \(including downloadable shape file\) is available here](#)

LAND TENURE AND USE

High level analysis has identified the following land tenure that interacts with the proposed release area.

- **Native Title** – Extensive engagement with the Gawler Ranges Aboriginal Corporation has informed the design of the proposed release area.
- **Pastoral properties** – Early engagement has occurred with the affected pastoralists.
- **Resources tenements** – As of August 2024 the proposed release area contained part or all of:
 - 6 petroleum and geothermal exploration licence applications
 - 28 mineral exploration licences
 - 1 mineral exploration licence application
 - 1 mining lease application

The declaration of a release area operates in parallel with existing rights, and future rights where compatible. Future licensing and decision-making processes will take into consideration other land uses and aim to accommodate all land users where appropriate.

Having your say

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Before deciding whether to release the proposed area, the Minister must consult the public. This is the public's first opportunity to share their views.

This consultation determines if an area may be able to support large-scale renewable energy development, and the terms and conditions that should be applied to ensure the development occurs sustainably with least impact.

Consultation is six weeks long (30 business days), and features both targeted and public consultation. The Minister must issue a notice describing the area and invite submissions from the public and prescribed relevant people.

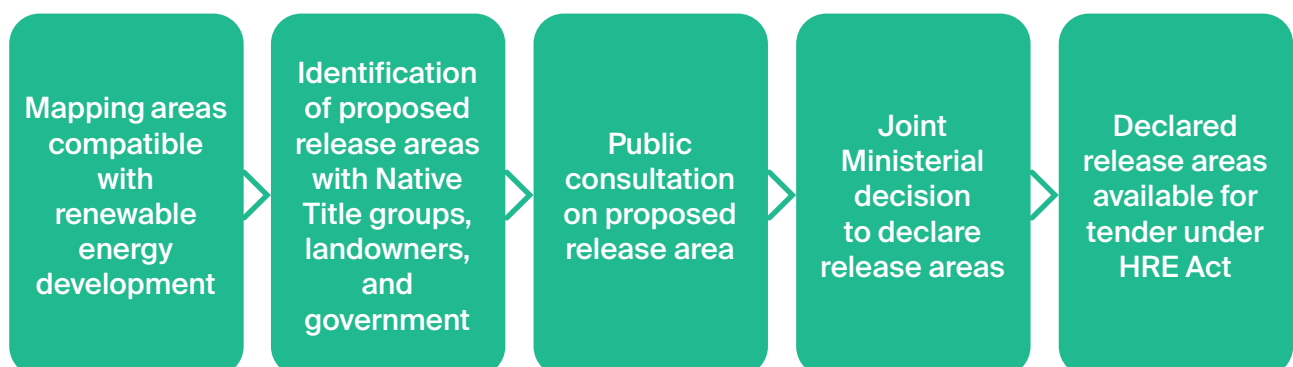
Following consultation, the feedback will be considered and a decision made on whether or not to declare a release area.

Before declaring a release area, the Minister must have agreement (or concurrence) from the Minister administering the *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989* for projects on pastoral land, or the Minister administering the *Harbors and Navigation Act 1993* for projects in South Australian waters.

Following consultation and relevant concurrence, the Minister can declare a release area by placing a notice in the *South Australian Government Gazette*.

Consultation on potential renewable energy projects will happen at multiple stages of the regulatory process. Licensees are required to continue consultation and engagement throughout the life of the renewable energy project.

Release area process diagram





GENERAL FEEDBACK

Release area consultation allows the department to hear the views of the public and other interested parties about a designated area.

The Minister is seeking feedback on the boundaries, size, location, sensitivities and constraints that may exist within the proposed release area. This may include:

- information gaps or omissions that are relevant in defining the release area
- new information—something that hasn't been considered in determining the release area, for example information that is not currently available through government databases
- recommendations on boundaries, or areas that may need to be excluded from the proposed release area, and reasons for these variations.

Submissions may address issues such as:

- existing and successive land uses
- proximity and access to existing infrastructure/access routes, impacts, grid connection, roads, housing, storage, transport, and export
- conservation values, flora/fauna, threatened and endangered species
- biosecurity matters
- soils and geology
- any cultural and heritage values
- nomination of tender selection criteria based on local context.

This information will be used to inform the final boundaries of any declared release area following consideration by both the Minister for the HRE Act and Minister for the Pastoral Act.

Feedback on the proposed release area may also shape the tender criteria that will govern the competitive tender process.

MAKING A SUBMISSION

The consultation period on the proposed release area is now open, with submissions accepted until 22 October 2024.

Submissions can be made by one of the following methods:

- Uploading a submission through the [YourSay website](#)
- Sending an email to: ReleaseAreas@sa.gov.au
- Mail: GPO Box 618, Adelaide, SA, 5001
- Lodged in person or by courier to Level 4, 11 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, SA

- If you require assistance to lodge a submission, please contact DEM via email ReleaseAreas@sa.gov.au to discuss your requirements.

Further information, including constraints mapping, an explanation of the process, and next steps is available in the **'Gawler Ranges East proposed release area information pack'**.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

Information provided to assist with making a submission:

- [South Australian Resource Information Gateway \(SARIG\)](#)
- [HRE Act and Regulations](#)
- [Further DEW information](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

As guests on Aboriginal land, the Department for Energy and Mining (DEM) acknowledges everything this department does impacts on Aboriginal country, the sea, the sky, its people, and the spiritual and cultural connections which have existed since the first sunrise. Our responsibility is to share our collective knowledge, recognise a difficult history, respect the relationships made over time, and create a stronger future. We are ready to walk, learn and work together.

