

## Renewable energy farm step closer

<https://thewest.com.au/news/mid-west/renewable-energy-farm-step-closer-ng-b88693418z>

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A wind farm similar to the one at Albany could supply much of Kalbarri's electricity needs. Picture: @miles7

Kalbarri's electricity users will be drawing an extra 3.5 megawatts of renewable energy if a new solar and wind farm is built at Yallabatharra.

Northampton Shire Council granted development approval for the \$7.3 million facility at its December meeting.

When complete, the project will include up to five wind turbines, a ground-mounted solar farm, containerised battery storage unit and a 3.5km overhead power line connecting it to Western Power's electricity grid.

Advanced Energy Resources, which is part of the Perth-based Castelli group of companies, intends to build and operate the facility at 4601 and 5540 Ogilvie West Road.

Councillors debated the matter for some time before the vote, first asking Shire principal planner Hayley Williams about the wind turbines' visibility. "They will be visible from public vantage points but they won't be of serious impact," she said.

Cr Terry Carson said he would enjoy seeing the wind generators.

"I think it's a great project and I see the wind turbines as progress, so it's all positive for me," he said.

Cr Des Pike said while he “fully agreed” with the “green, clean” project, he would have liked Advanced Energy representatives to attend a council meeting and answer questions. He moved to defer voting on the approval until the next meeting. “I think it’s a huge project and I’d like to know a bit more about it,” he said.

Shire president Craig Simkin said he had read Advanced Energy’s report to the council and thought it was fair, and answered all the questions he would have asked.

Cr Peter Stewart seconded Cr Pike’s motion and Cr Shane Krakouer supported it but the other councillors voted it down.

Cr Simkin then moved to approve the development with Cr Roslyn Suckling seconding the motion.

Cr Carson said Advanced Energy representatives could still be invited to a council meeting.

“This is just a development approval, then plans can come in and we can have their presentation in the February meeting,” he said.

The motion was carried 6-1, with Cr Des Pike voting against it.