

Riga, 31 May 2024

To the Environment State Bureau
Rūpniecības Street 23,
Riga, LV-1045

Name of the Proposer: LLC "EWE Neue Energien 1"
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Application for the proposed activity of constructing the "Valka" wind farm in the Valka municipality

In accordance with Section 4, Paragraph 1, Point 1 of the Law "On Environmental Impact Assessment" and Point 2 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 18 of January 13, 2015, "Procedure for Assessing the Environmental Impact of Proposed Activities and Approving the Proposed Activity."

Information about the proposed activity

LLC "EWE Neue Energien 1" is owned by one of the largest wind energy companies in Europe, "Eurowind Energy", which aims to expand the green energy network in Latvia. LLC "EWE Neue Energien 1" has planned to construct a wind farm "Valka" in the Valka municipality, with the intention of building up to 15 high-capacity next-generation wind turbines (hereinafter referred to as WTG), with a total capacity reaching 120 MW. The exact number of WTGs will be determined during the environmental impact assessment process, considering regulatory requirements for WTG placement, as well as evaluations by environmental and nature experts regarding the feasibility of constructing the WTGs.

When initiating the planning of the wind farm, LLC "EWE Neue Energien 1" identified a territory that is potentially suitable for the implementation of this project and has approached and reached agreements with landowners regarding their involvement in the wind farm development. However, given that circumstances may be revealed during the environmental impact assessment process that could require changes to the initial plan and possibly its scale, LLC "EWE Neue Energien 1" intends to conduct the environmental impact assessment in a larger area (hereinafter referred to as the research area), to ensure the best possible wind farm construction in the context of nature conservation and public health protection. The research area includes a total of 60 land parcels, the list of which is attached in Annex 1 of the application. Wind turbines and the related infrastructure will only be built on those land parcels where agreements with the landowners have been reached regarding the construction of wind turbines or the associated infrastructure. When analyzing potential wind turbine placement solutions within the research area, each residential building is considered, with turbines being placed at least 800 meters away from them. The placement of individual homesteads, as well as the proximity of villages such as Lugaži and Sēļi, and the towns of Valka and Valga, is also significant.

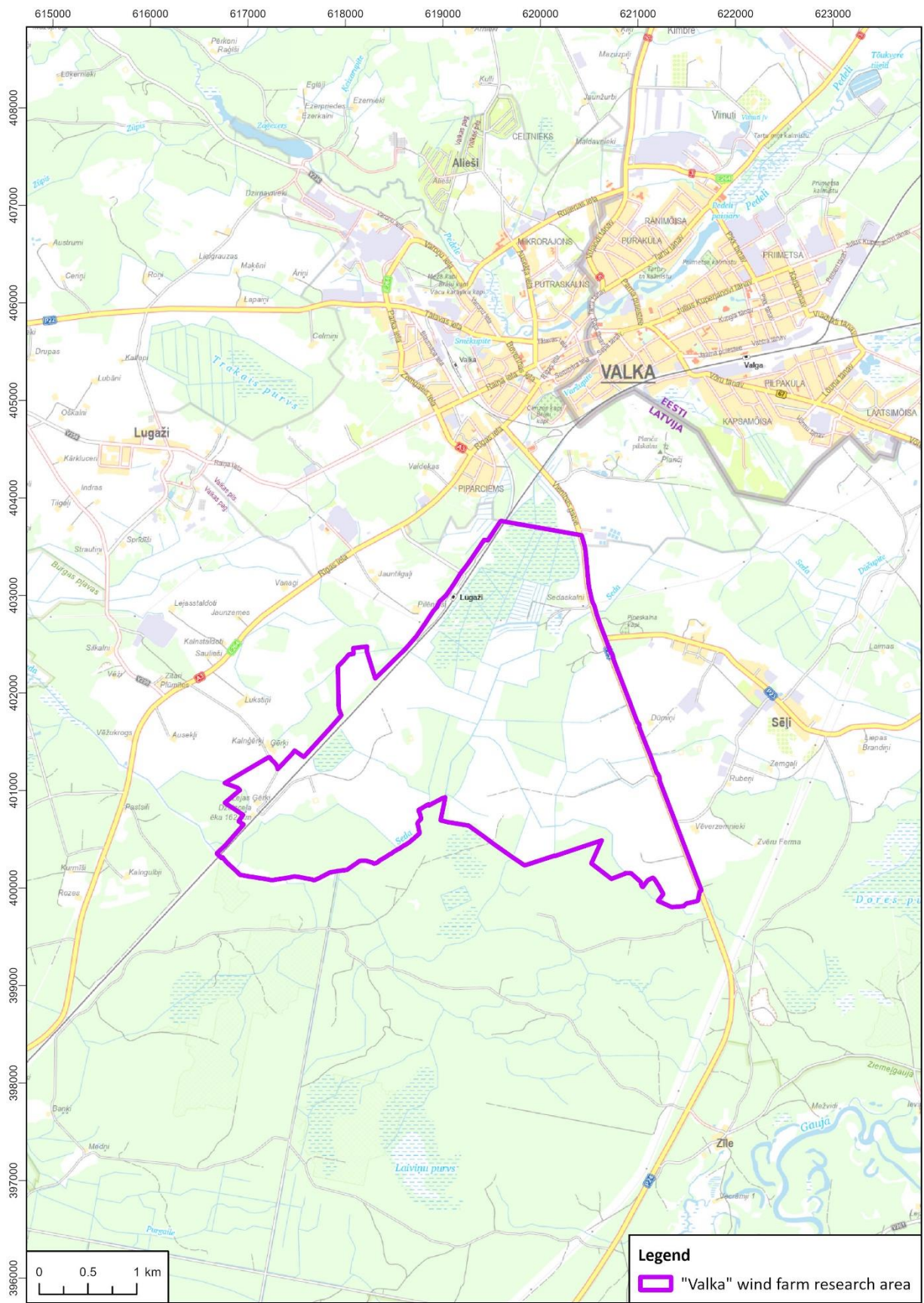


Figure 1. Location of the planned "Valka" wind farm research area

The proposer of the planned activity has not yet selected a specific wind turbine model that could be constructed in the planned wind farm. The choice of WTG model will largely be determined by the results of the environmental impact assessment, the production potential of a particular model, and its construction costs. During the environmental impact assessment, it is planned to evaluate and compare the latest WTG models from various manufacturers, such as Vestas, Siemens-Gamesa, Enercon, General Electric, or Nordex. The latest models from all these manufacturers share several common characteristics, which are important for describing the proposed activity:

- The nominal capacity of each turbine is approximately 8 MW;
- The tallest available WTG towers can reach a height of 175 meters;
- The rotor diameter of the WTGs ranges from 160 to 175 meters;
- The maximum possible total height of a turbine can reach 260 meters.

To ensure the transmission of the generated electricity to the main grid, power transmission lines will be constructed to connect to the 110 kV substation in Valka, located near the planned wind farm. The exact location of the transmission lines will be determined during the development of the WTG and infrastructure layout. When planning the placement of the cable lines, Article 21 of the Energy Law will be considered, which stipulates that the installation of new energy supply commercial facilities should, as much as possible, utilize road land boundaries in accordance with the provisions of Article 18 of the Law "On Roads."

Compliance with the territorial plan

In the research area, which is located in Valka municipality, the Regulations for the Planning, Use and Building of the Territory of the Valka municipality's territorial plan (for the period from 2017 to 2027, with amendments in 2021)¹ are applicable. The planned wind farm area includes zones designated for the following uses: agricultural, forest, industrial construction, transportation infrastructure, and water territories. According to the Valka municipality's territorial plan, the construction of energy supply enterprises is permitted in agricultural, forest, industrial construction, and transportation infrastructure areas. The Regulations for the Planning, Use and Building of the Territory specify that when planning the placement of wind turbines, the requirements of the applicable regulatory acts must be followed.

Public Health and Safety

The most significant aspects that, under certain circumstances, may potentially cause considerable impacts or disturbances are noise, including low-frequency noise, the flickering effect, and environmental risks, all of which, along with other environmental aspects, will be assessed in detail within the framework of the environmental impact assessment.

¹ https://geolatvija.lv/geo/tapis#document_22074

In Latvia, noise from wind turbines will generally be a minor environmental issue because the country has established sufficient minimum distances to prevent negative impacts. Specifically, wind turbines must be built no closer than 800 meters from residential or public areas, which means that even the loudest available wind turbine models will produce noise well below the limits set by regulations at this distance. As part of the environmental impact assessment, environmental noise levels will be evaluated in construction areas where environmental noise limits apply, and which are located up to 2 kilometers from the planned wind farm. Low-frequency noise levels will also be assessed in all residential buildings within 2 kilometers of the planned wind farm.

The flickering effect (also referred to as the "disco effect" or "shadow flickering") is caused by the movement of the rotor blades, which periodically block the sun and create moving shadows on the ground and the surfaces of various objects. The flickering effect's impact time limits are applied by considering the total flicker time produced by all wind turbines in a given construction area. In summary, the flicker effect in the area of any residential house must not exceed 30 minutes per day, and the total allowable impact time over the course of one year must not exceed 30 hours (assuming no cloud cover) or 8 hours (accounting for actual sunshine). The impact time of the flickering effect will be assessed in construction areas located up to 3 kilometers from the planned wind farm.

Although wind turbines are designed as safe and stable structures, wind turbines and wind farms are high-risk facilities that, in case of technical defects, improper operation and maintenance, or external factors, can cause accidents or emergencies. Therefore, potential accidents and risks associated with rotor blade icing, mechanical damage, lubrication system defects, and fires will also be assessed. During the preparation of the assessment, safety distances from wind turbines to sensitive areas will be calculated, and if necessary, measures will be identified to eliminate or reduce risks to acceptable levels.

Specially Protected Nature Territories and Impact on Natural Values

A small part of the planned wind farm research area is located within the Specially Protected Nature Territories "Northern Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve," while approximately 1.4 km to the south of the research area's border is a state-protected landscape area, and about 2.0 km to the southwest from the research area's border is a microreserve and the Natura 2000 area "Bulvāra Riests." To the west of the research area, 2.0 km away within the Northern Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve, lies the "Burgas Meadows" nature reserve, and 6.91 km away is the "Seda Swamp" nature reserve. Additionally, 8.03 km away is the microreserve and Natura 2000 area "Igaunijas Riests" (see Figure 2). Surrounding the research area, there are protected natural areas such as microreserves established with the purpose of protecting specially protected species or habitats outside of specially protected natural areas. Annex 2 lists all protected species and habitats for which microreserves have been established within 10 km of the planned "Valka" wind farm research area (a total of 45 microreserves). According to the Nature Data Management System OZOLS, one specially Protected Tree, a common oak (*Quercus Robur*), is registered in the area of the proposed activity.

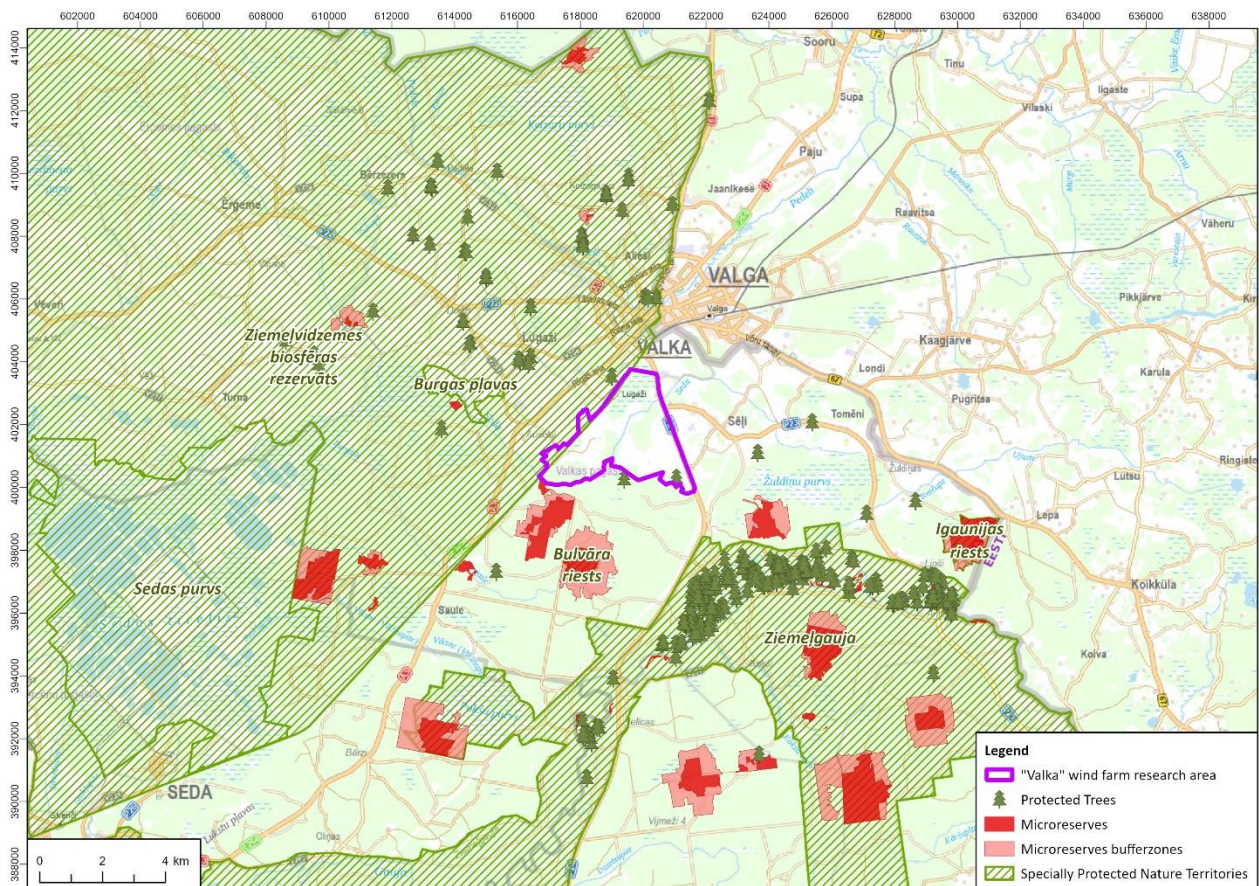


Figure 2. Specially Protected Nature Territories around the "Valka" wind farm

During the environmental impact assessment process, environmental and nature experts will conduct an in-depth study of the natural values found within the research area and its surroundings. They will assess the impact of the planned wind farm on these natural values and, if necessary, provide recommendations for mitigating or eliminating potential impacts.

Surface Water Bodies

The area of the proposed activity is located within the Gauja River basin, where the Seda River, a state-significant water body (code 5454:01), is found. It is worth mentioning that the planned "Valka" wind farm area includes drained agricultural land.

Landscape quality and cultural heritage

The impact of wind farms on the landscape is a significant aspect, especially in areas with natural or minimally altered landscapes. According to the Valka municipality's territorial plan and Regulations for the Planning, Use and Building of the Territory, there are designated scenic areas and scenic roads within the municipality. In a protected area like "Northern Gauja" (in Valka,

Vijciems, and Zvārtava parishes), construction or other activities that could obstruct views from publicly accessible viewpoints and scenic roads are prohibited².

In the context of wind farm construction, an equally important aspect that is assessed during the environmental impact assessment process is the proposed project's impact on cultural heritage. The nearest cultural monument is located 950 meters from the research area in the town of Valka, which is a regionally significant cultural monument, and the historical site named "Vidzemes Teachers' Seminary" (No. 97).

When developing the environmental impact assessment report, the proposed activity's impact on the landscape quality of the Northern Vidzeme Lowland and the Seda Plain, as well as the cultural and historical values in the vicinity of the planned wind farm, will be evaluated.

Contaminated Sites and High-Risk Facilities

According to the "Contaminated Site Management System," there are no potentially contaminated or contaminated sites within the research area. According to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 46 of January 21, 2021, "List of High-Risk Facilities," the nearest high-risk facility is the AS "VIRŠI-A" fuel station (Rīga Street 80, Valka, Valka municipality), which has been classified as a Category C facility. This facility is located approximately 1 km away from the research area.

The information provided in the application is true and complies with the requirements set forth in the regulatory acts.

Sincerely,

Member of the Board of SIA "EWE Neue Energien 1"

Arne Heeck

THIS DOCUMENT IS ELECTRONICALLY SIGNED WITH A SECURE ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE AND
CONTAINS A TIMESTAMP

² Valkas novada dome. 2014. *Valkas novada ilgtspējīgas attīstības stratēģija 2013.–2037. gadam*. Valka, Valkas novada dome. Pieejams <https://www.valka.lv/lv/media/2114/download?attachment>

Annex 1. Land parcels within the research area of the planned "Valka" wind farm

No.	Cadastral parcel	Cadastral number	Property name
1	94880100262	94880070032	Jaunosīši
2	94880090003	94880090003	Cerbuļi
3	94880090008	94880090006	Lejas Ģērķi
4	94880090009	94880090006	Lejas Ģērķi
5	94880090006	94880090006	Lejas Ģērķi
6	94880090007	94880090006	Lejas Ģērķi
7	94880090010	94880090010	Liepkalni 1
8	94880090020	94880090019	Liepkalni 2
9	94880090022	94880090019	Liepkalni 2
10	94880090019	94880090019	Liepkalni 2
11	94880090123	94880090035	Dzelzceļš 162. km
12	94880090035	94880090035	Dzelzceļš 162. km
13	94880100060	94880090058	Kalnpiļēnieši
14	94880100070	94880090061	Jaunpiļēnieši
15	94880090078	94880090061	Jaunpiļēnieši
16	94880090066	94880090066	Bez nosaukuma
17	94880090069	94880090069	Lauciņi
18	94880090080	94880090080	Vecsaulieši
19	94880090095	94880090081	Kalnsaulieši
20	94880090082	94880090082	Jaunsaulieši
21	94880090091	94880090090	Buli
22	94880090110	94880090110	Stacija Lugaži
23	94880090111	94880090111	Ceļš Ausekļi - Liepkalni
24	94880090207	94880090111	Ceļš Ausekļi - Liepkalni
25	94880090083	94880090142	Dzeniši 3
26	94880090081	94880090147	Kalnsaulītes
27	94880090079	94880090148	Paceplīši
28	94880090187	94880090187	Dukāti
29	94880100318	94880100001	Bābernieki
30	94880100042	94880100001	Bābernieki
31	94880100004	94880100003	Lielkājas
32	94880100005	94880100005	Dumpi
33	94880100007	94880100007	Rijsalas - 2
34	94880100008	94880100008	Rijsalas - 1
35	94880100012	94880100012	Saulstari
36	94880100090	94880100026	Antiņi
37	94880100039	94880100035	Vecavēni
38	94880100035	94880100035	Vecavēni
39	94880100036	94880100036	Avēni

40	94880100044	94880100044	Zīlēni
41	94880100049	94880100049	Smēķi
42	94880100048	94880100052	Vēverzemnieki
43	94880100157	94880100052	Vēverzemnieki
44	94880100150	94880100052	Vēverzemnieki
45	94880100055	94880100055	Sedaskalni
46	94880100058	94880100058	Karjers
47	94880100059	94880100059	Valsts brīvā zeme (ZET)
48	94880100257	94880100090	Sedieši
49	94880100091	94880100120	Sedaskalni
50	94880100056	94880100120	Sedaskalni
51	94880100152	94880100177	Autoceļš P24
52	94880100177	94880100177	Autoceļš P24
53	94880100245	94880100245	Bez nosaukuma
54	94880100255	94880100255	Sedaskalni
55	94880100319	94880100320	Kramiņi
56	94880100317	94880100320	Kramiņi
57	94880100261	94880100331	Svīres
58	94880100329	94880110072	Sedas upe
59	94880130031	94880130007	Ciņi
60	94880100088	94880140043	Kaičupes

Annex 2. Microreserves located within a 10 km radius of the "Valka" wind farm research area

No.	Name	Number of microreserves
1	Western capercaillie <i>Tetrao urogallus</i>	11
2	Riverside forest habitat	8
3	The white-backed woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>	4
4	Eurasian three-toed woodpecker <i>Picoides tridactylus</i>	4
5	Broadleaf forest habitat	3
6	Biotree	2
7	Lesser spotted eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i>	2
8	Primary forests in river meander bends	2
9	Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	2
10	Cedar Bark Beetle <i>Ceruchus chrysomelinus</i>	1
11	Cinnamon bracket <i>Hapalopilus croceus</i>	1
12	Hermit beetle <i>Osmoderma eremita</i>	1
13	Black stork <i>Ciconia nigra</i>	1
14	Black alder swamp	1
15	Mixed coniferous-deciduous forest habitat	1
16	Flattened Clubmoss <i>Diphasiastrum complanatum</i>	1