



Fortescue Metals withdraws from Rawlinna renewable purchase citing approval delays

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Mining magnate Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest's **Fortescue** Metals Group has officially pulled out of its planned acquisition of the enormous parcel of land that hosts Western Australia's largest sheep station, Rawlinna Station, following extended delays in receiving ministerial approval.

Cornerstone of Australian farming

Rawlinna Station, managed by Jumbuck Pastoral, has long been a cornerstone of the Australian sheep industry and one of the country's largest shearing operations.

The decision, confirmed by the company on Saturday, leaves uncertainty over the future of the iconic 1-million-hectare property - for reference, that's the size of Sydney - 1,000 kilometres east of Perth on the Nullarbor Plain.

Fortescue, through its green energy subsidiary **Fortescue** Future Industries, had proposed transforming Rawlinna Station into a renewable energy hub.

Green energy production goals

The acquisition, first announced in April 2023, was part of **Fortescue**'s broader strategy to expand green energy production across WA, with the enormous tenure intended to play a key role in this vision.

And yet 18 months after the initial bid, the company decided to abandon the transaction, citing "extended delays" and "policy ambiguity" surrounding government approvals.

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A WA Government spokesperson pointed out the complexity of processing applications for such large tracts of land, noting that these assessments are governed by the Land Administration Act, which seeks to prevent excessive concentration of pastoral land ownership in private hands.

Still intending to be green

Fortescue's withdrawal, according to the spokesperson, was therefore a decision entirely within the company's discretion - moreover, it marks another instance of Forrest pulling out of a green deal before it came to fruition.

The company that runs Rawlinna confirmed its commitment to continuing its operations following **Fortescue**'s exit.

Fortescue, meanwhile, said its intention was still to explore "long-term green energy opportunities" in the Nullarbor and southeast WA through other avenues, and claimed it will continue to remain active in the region's renewable energy landscape.

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