



NEWS RELEASE
The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP
Member for Heffron
Minister for Planning
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

Friday 3 July, 2009

GREEN LIGHT FOR NEW WIND FARM TO DELIVER ENERGY, JOBS AND INVESTMENT

The NSW Government has given planning approval for a \$250 million wind farm at Gullen Range near Goulburn, in another major step towards green energy generation in NSW.

Planning Minister, Kristina Keneally, said the approval of the wind farm will generate around 150 construction jobs, 15 ongoing jobs, up to \$90 million for the local economy.

“The 73-turbine wind farm will supply up to 241 megawatts of clean electricity to the NSW power grid, enough power for around 63,000 NSW homes,” Ms Keneally said.

“The wind farm will also reduce greenhouse gases by up to around 511,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year, the equivalent of taking in the order of 102,000 cars off the road over the planned life of the project.

“Construction of the 73 turbines, a substation, transmission grid connections, on-site control room and maintenance facilities will create up to 150 construction and fifteen full-time operation positions.”

Ms Keneally said other benefits of the project include:

- Annual savings in pollution from coal fired power stations of up to around 2,740 tonnes of sulphur dioxide, approximately 1,222 tonnes of nitrogen oxides and 76 tonnes of particulates;
- Provision of a community fund of \$204,850 annually for local community and environmental projects; and
- Improved security of energy supply through diversification

Ms Keneally said a number of conditions had been placed on the approval after rigorous assessment and consultation had been undertaken.

“Consultation with the community, key Government agencies and stakeholders highlighted concerns about the number and position of some of the turbines,” Ms Keneally said.

“As a result the company was required to be reduced the number of turbines from 84 to 73, reducing the possible impacts on the operations of nearby Crookwell Aerodrome.

“The company will be required to undertake a range of other measures to reduce visual noise and other community and environmental impacts.” Ms Keneally said other conditions of approval include:

- The company is required to provide landscape screening, at the request of the owner(s) of non-involved residential dwellings situated within three kilometres of the proposal.

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- The area is also a nesting ground for the Powerful Owl and the company has agreed to a series of operational restrictions and penalties on wind farm activities during the period when juvenile Powerful Owls commence flying in the area before dispersing from the nesting area.
- The company is required to ensure that shadow flicker arising from the operation of the project shall not exceed 30 hours/annum at any residence not associated with the project.
- The company is required to adhere to the South Australian Noise Guidelines for wind farms 2003, which have been adopted for use in NSW.
- The company is required to undertake noise performance verification within three months of the commencement of operation. If acceptable noise outcomes are not met, the company is required to identify and implement additional mitigation measures at the request of land owners.
- The company is required to develop a compensatory habitat package to offset in perpetuity and on a 'like for like' basis, the value of habitat lost as a result of the project.

"The conditions placed on the wind farm operation are designed to ensure the environment, the local community and the generation of green energy can coexist," Ms Keneally said.

"These conditions are an example of how the major projects assessment system incorporates public input with rigorous and technical assessment, delivering a good outcome for stakeholders."

Ms Keneally said the new \$250 million facility will assist in meeting the Commonwealth's target of 20 per cent of Australia's energy supply being generated from renewable sources by 2020.

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IMPORTANT STATEMENT ABOUT POLITICAL DONATIONS

New donation disclosure laws came into effect on 1 October 2008. Under the new laws, proponents are required to disclose political donations made by anyone with a financial interest in the project made in the previous two years. Where there is a declarable political donation, the independent Planning Assessment Commission determines the application. More information on the process for assessing applications from proponents who have made political donations is available from <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/assessingdev/donations.asp>

The application for the Gullen Range Wind Farm was received on 27 August 2007. There is no record of any donations having been made by Epuron, the proponent. The Minister for Planning was the consent authority for the project.

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