Apex Energy drilling approvals in the Illawarra
Response given to Illawarra media outlets

1) Has the department approved the company’s Environmental Management Plan, which the proponent has been waiting on before they can start drilling?

2) Can the proponent commence drilling without a valid Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL)? Of the 16 approved wells, some are located in an area covered by an active PEL, while others are in an area covered by an expired PEL.

Department of Planning and Infrastructure response:

1) The Department of Planning and Infrastructure is waiting for the company to provide additional information in relation to the Environmental Management Plan.

2) Under its conditions of approval:

- Apex Energy needs to drill or operate petroleum wells before the expiry of PELs 442 or 444 (whichever is sooner), unless otherwise agreed by the Director-General of this department.

- Drilling and operation of wells must begin and end within the three year period commencing September 2009 (the date of approval).

To date, Apex has not applied for a modification of its conditions or sought the Director-General’s approval to enable drilling and operation.

Any application for a modification will be transparently assessed and will involve full community engagement.