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**Independent decision for Yass Valley Wind Farm**

The Department of Planning and Environment has referred a proposal to establish a new wind farm near Yass to the independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) for a final decision, with a recommendation that the proposal be refused.

“In September last year the Minister for Planning announced that all wind farm development applications will automatically be referred to the PAC to strengthen independence and maximise the community’s opportunity to have a say,” a Department spokesperson said.

The proposal is to build and operate Yass Valley Wind Farm, consisting of up to 134 wind turbines around 20 kilometres west of Yass.

“The Department has carefully assessed the proposal, feedback from the community and government agencies, and the applicant’s response to that feedback,” a Department spokesperson said.

“Despite working closely with the applicant and clearly outlining the high quality of information the Department needs to carry out an accurate assessment, the application did not include enough detail for us to confidently predict the impacts. “The uncertainty means we have recommended the PAC does not approve the proposal and that the wind farm does not proceed.”

Submissions from the community and various Government departments raised concerns with impacts to aviation around both Canberra and Albury airports, as well as the possibility of the turbines interfering with nearby air traffic control radar systems.

The proposal is also estimated to impact around 225 hectares of vegetation, of which almost 90 per cent is endangered box-gum woodland.

The proposal includes construction on land which the applicant has not secured from its owners.

The PAC will now make a decision about the project, taking into account community feedback and the Department’s assessment.

To view the Department’s assessment of the proposal visit the Major Projects website at www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au.

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