Response to the Sydney Morning Herald on the Wilga Park Power Station (11/01/2014)

No increase is being proposed to the approved capacity of the Wilga Park Power Station as part of the modification application currently being assessed by the department. An expansion of the gas fired power station's capacity from 12 megawatts to 40 megawatts was approved by the former NSW Government in December 2008.

Furthermore, no additional gas drilling or extraction activity is being sought in this application. This is a minor application seeking to modify the 2008 approval to use gas extracted from wells in two areas not covered the earlier approval - Petroleum Assessment Lease 2 (known as PAL 2) and Petroleum Production Lease 3 (known as PPL 3). However, any gas production in those areas must have separate approval.

Two State Significant Development applications for additional gas drilling and extraction in the area covered by PAL 2 are currently before the department and undergoing a comprehensive assessment - the Bibblewindi Multi-Lateral Project and Dewhurst Gas Exploration Pilot.

The public was given 4 weeks to comment on the Dewhurst proposal and six weeks to comment on the Bibblewindi proposal late last year. The department is now awaiting a response to the submissions on both projects from the proponent, Santos.

Most activity to date has been for exploration and the department understands that a future State Significant Development application will be submitted for production wells.