Wind farms checked for visual impacts

The Department of Planning and Environment’s compliance team has conducted a series of checks on four wind farms operating in the Southern Highlands to make sure they were abiding by the rules set when they were approved.

The Department's compliance team inspected Taralga, Capital, Cullerin Range and Woodlawn wind farms, as well as nearby residential properties, to confirm the wind farms were meeting the strict conditions around impacts on local views included in their approval.

“Local communities are often concerned about how wind farms look and how visible they are from nearby homes,” a Department spokesperson said.

“Strict conditions to reduce and manage the impact they have on the views of other properties are applied when a wind farm is approved.

“Our compliance officers work with industry and the community to make sure these conditions are followed.”

The compliance team visited each of the wind farms, ensuring that any landscaping work designed to reduce their impacts on the views of neighbouring properties had been carried out properly.

“Landscaping can include growing bushes and trees to block lines of sight to the turbines,” the spokesperson said.

“There are also other ways wind farms are made less visible, including locating buildings in valleys, using underground cabling and applying matt-finish paint to the turbines to reduce glare.”

The team also spoke to people living near the wind farms and visited a number of their homes to see first-hand how visible the turbines were and to ensure the conditions were being met.

“The four wind farms we examined were following the rules and complying with their approval conditions,” the spokesperson said.

“It’s encouraging that such good work is being carried out by the wind farms to manage any impact on their neighbours, which is an important part of building community trust in the industry.”

Media contact: (02) 9228-6128