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Final decision on Gullen Range Wind Farm changes to be made independently

The revised layout of Gullen Range Wind Farm has been referred to the independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) for a final decision, after objections from affected properties were withdrawn.

“The properties most affected have come to an arrangement with the wind farm, either through being purchased or by coming to some other agreement and as a result they have withdrawn their original objection,” a Department spokesperson said.

“Listening to community feedback is an important part of how we make decisions. So, the withdrawal of the original objections has been taken into consideration in the Department’s assessment.

“The Department has also received new independent expert advice about the biodiversity impacts of the relocated turbines that supports the new recommendation.

“In light of this new information and landholders no longer objecting, the Department is recommending the PAC approve the layout of the wind farm as it was constructed.”

Gullen Range Wind Farm was approved in 2009, including the location of its 73 turbines.

Last year the Department acted on community concerns that some of the turbines were not being built consistently with the approval and issued a draft order for the company to show cause as to why they should not be removed.

The wind farm had previously submitted an application to have the new locations approved, which was refused by the PAC.

The Land and Environment Court then set aside the PAC’s refusal when the wind farm appealed. The Department was then obliged to reassess the application.

“The proposal is now back at the PAC for a final decision, based on the Department’s new recommendation, the updated biodiversity advice and the withdrawal of opposition from the most affected properties,” the spokesperson said.

The withdrawal of objections, new expert evidence and the wind farm’s report on the draft order also mean that the Department has no legal basis to pursue the order.

To view the Department’s revised assessment, including the Department’s legal advice and the wind farm’s response to the draft order, visit www.majorprojects.nsw.gov.au.

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