

Media release

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Wind farms meet noise limits, breach other conditions

An audit of three major wind farms has found they met noise limits but breached approval conditions on a range of other issues.

The Department of Planning and Infrastructure today released the results of an audit of the Cullerin Range, Woodlawn and Capital wind farms in southern NSW.

Measurements taken at nearby residential properties by an independent acoustic expert found that all three wind farms were compliant with their noise-related approval conditions.

However, the wind farms breached a number of other conditions, including failing to:

- Commission a report confirming that the turbines were on stable ground before operation (Cullerin Range)
- Make monitoring and management plan documents readily publicly available (Woodlawn and Capital)
- Complete landscaping on residents' properties (Capital)
- Get approval for a required Operational Environmental Management Plan, and undertake bird and bat monitoring, before operation (Capital)

The department required the wind farm operators to rectify these breaches.

The operators have undertaken the required work with the exception of landscaping works which are underway and are expected to be completed shortly.

The Department also issued the proponent for Capital Wind Farm with a formal Warning Letter for the failure to obtain approval of the Operational Environmental Management Plan prior to operation commencing.

Cullerin Range, Woodlawn and Capital were audited last year followed continued resident complaints about noise and other issues. They are the only operational State-approved wind farms in NSW.

The audit also made other suggestions to the wind farm operators as to how they could improve community access to information and improve their environmental performance.

The audit included a questionnaire sent to all 144 residences within 4 kilometres of each wind farm, face-to-face interviews and consultation with the three local councils of Upper Lachlan, Palerang and Goulburn-Mulwaree.

A total 58 surveys were completed and returned to the department.

All three audit reports, including a separate report detailing the Department's community consultation in relation to the audits, are available on the department's website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/compliance

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