



NSW GOVERNMENT
Department of Planning

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Mr Andrew Durran
Executive Director
Taurus Energy Pty Ltd
Suite 104, 349 Pacific Highway
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060

Our ref: 9041055
Your ref:

Dear Mr Durran

Proposed Conroy's Gap Wind Farm, Yass Valley LGA

I refer to your correspondence received on 27 February, 2006 which requested the Director-General's requirements for the preparation of an Environmental Assessment for the above project.

The Director-General's Requirements are attached. The requirements have been developed in light of:

- the Department's draft guidelines "*Steps in the Part 3A Project Application Process*";
- the outcomes of the Planning Focus Meeting held on 11th November, 2005; and
- the Project Application received from the Proponent.

The requirements have been prepared based on the information provided by **ngh**environmental, on behalf of Taurus Energy, in relation to the proposed project.

In respect of the Environmental Assessment to be submitted by Taurus Energy, the Department should be consulted at least one week prior to the lodgement of the Environmental Assessment to confirm the:

- consultation and public exhibition arrangements that will apply; and
- number and format (hard-copy or CD-ROM) of the Environmental Assessment that will be required.

The Environmental Assessment should focus on key issues associated with the likely environmental impacts of the project and associated mitigating measures and be compliant with the attached assessment requirements.

Once you have lodged the Environmental Assessment, the Department will consult with the relevant authorities to determine the adequacy of the Environmental Assessment. Following this review period, the Environmental Assessment will be made publicly available for a minimum period of 30 days.

You should keep the contact officer for this project, Rebecca Newman ((02) 9228 6340, rebecca.newman@planning.nsw.gov.au), up to date with the progress of preparation of the Environmental Assessment, and seek clarification of any issues that may be unclear or may arise during this process.

Yours sincerely

Chris Wilson
**A/Deputy Director General
as delegate for the Director General**

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CONROYS GAP WIND FARM

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS UNDER PART 3A OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

Project	<p>The proposal consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ up to 16 wind turbines with a total generating capacity of up to 30 megawatts; ▪ three-bladed turbines, up to 46m long, mounted on tubular steel towers up to 80m high (total height of up to 126 m from ground to blade tip); ▪ underground and overhead cabling to connect the turbines; ▪ a sub-station and transmission connection linking the wind turbines to the existing TransGrid 132kV transmission system located adjacent to the site; ▪ access roads around the site, and upgrades to access via Black Range Road and/or Paynes Road and the Hume Highway, for installation and maintenance of wind turbines; ▪ on-site control room and equipment storage facilities.
Site	<p>Approximately 17 km west of Black Range Road consisting of various lots: Lots 183, 189 of DP 753596 owned by Andrew & Tarina Walker; Lots 207, 208 and 298 of DP 753596 owned by Kerry & James Payne; Lots 53, 60, 79, 80, 81, 82, 167 of DP 753633 owned by Donald a& Marjorie Payne; Lots 94, 99 and 104 in DP 753633 owned by John & Teresa Kaveney.</p>
Proponent	Taurus Energy
Date of Issue	Date of the letter
Date of Expiration	Two years from the date of the letter
General Requirements	<p>The Environmental Assessment must be prepared to a high technical and scientific standard and must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an executive summary; • a description of the proposal, including construction, operation, and staging; • an assessment of the environmental impacts of the project, with particular focus on the key assessment requirements specified below; • justification for undertaking the project with consideration of the benefits and impacts of the proposal; • a draft Statement of Commitments detailing measures for environmental mitigation, management and monitoring for the project; and • certification by the author of the Environment Assessment that the information contained in the Assessment is neither false nor misleading. <p>The Environmental Assessment should consider the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft NSW Wind Energy EIA Guidelines, Planning NSW (2002); • Draft Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plan

Key Assessment Requirements

The Environmental Assessment must include assessment of the following key issues:

- **Project Justification** – the Environmental Assessment must include a clear demonstration of quantified and substantiated greenhouse benefits, taking into account the proposal's capacity factor and identification of sources of electricity that could be realistically replaced and the extent of the replacement.

The Environmental Assessment should also identify the socio-economic benefits of the proposal, including benefits that can be provided to the local community potentially affected by the proposal.

- **Visual Impacts** – comprehensive assessment of the landscape character/values of the affected areas and the visual impact of the proposal on this landscape and on the existing and approved residences, particularly within 2 km of the turbines. Visual assessment should include impact on the recreational users of the Hume and Hovell Walking Track and Burrinjuck Waters State Park access road, and on the Hume Highway which carries recreational and tourism traffic.

Consideration should be given to the Australian Wind Energy Association and Australian Council of National Trust's draft issues paper *Wind Farms and Landscape Values*.

The assessment must also discuss/provide:

- impact of blade "flicker" and blade "glint" on existing and approved residences and road users (including road safety matters) within 2 km of the turbines;
 - "flicker vertigo" issues;
 - proposed mitigation measures, including screening, turbine layout and location and operating protocols;
 - photomontages of the proposal taken from strategic vantage points.
- **Flora and Fauna** – the Environmental Assessment must address:
 - impact on critical habitats, threatened species, populations, ecological communities, and their habitats listed under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 and the Fisheries Management Act 1997;
 - impact on birds and bats from strikes and alteration to movement patterns from the turbines and transmission lines. Assessment should consider the Australian Wind Energy Association's publication *Assessing the Impacts on Birds – Protocols and Data Set Standards*. An outline of an adaptive management program should be provided;
 - vegetation clearing during construction and maintenance.

The threatened species assessment must generally be in accordance with the DEC's *Guidelines for Threatened Species Assessment*. Where ecological offsets or compensation are proposed (eg compensatory habitat or rehabilitated areas), appropriate details of each offset option must be included in the Environmental Assessment, including implementation measures for each offset option.

- **Archaeology/Cultural Heritage** – the Environmental Assessment must address the potential impact on Aboriginal heritage values and items and must generally be in accordance with the DEC's *Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation*.
- **Operational Noise** – comprehensive assessment of the noise impacts associated with the proposal (including 'infrasound') to be undertaken in accordance with the DEC's *Industrial Noise Policy and Wind Farms – Environmental Noise Guidelines*, South Australian Environment Protection Authority (February 2003). If any Noise Agreements with residents are proposed for areas where noise criteria cannot be met, sufficient information should be provided to enable a clear understanding of what has been agreed, and what criteria have been used to frame any Agreements.
- **Bushfire Risk** – the Environmental Assessment must address the potential for

	<p>wind turbines to start/influence the pattern of bushfires, and include bushfire management strategies and measures in consultation with the Rural Fire Service and the local council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic and Transport – the Environmental Assessment must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify transport routes to and from the project site, including details of any proposed upgrading or construction of road/access to the site; • assess the construction traffic impact of the project in terms of capacity and safety of these routes and potential damage. • Land Values/Development Potential – assessment of potential impact of the wind farm on surrounding land values, including a prediction of expected land value changes as a result of the development in the short and long term. Any consequences for future development of surrounding land. • Community consultation – strategy for community consultation to keep affected landowners and communities involved and informed about the project, including proposed measures to address community concerns. • Services and Infrastructure – assessment of potential impact on aircraft and telecommunications, roads, bridges, rail crossings and electricity infrastructure, in liaison with relevant authorities. In reference to aircraft, the assessment should consider the Civil Aviation Safety Authority Guidelines Draft Advisory Circular AC 139-18(0), December 2005, <i>Obstacle Marking and Lighting of Wind Farms</i>. • Proposed substation and grid connection – discussion of connection agreements/approvals by TransGrid, including ownership and management of the connecting transmission line following construction. The Environmental Assessment must clearly demonstrate that grid connection is achievable. If proposed, full justification must be given for the use of aboveground lines, instead of underground lines, to connect turbine groups to the substation. • Cumulative impact – assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposal having regard to existing or other proposed wind energy facilities in the area. This should include consideration of the area’s ability to accommodate additional wind energy facilities. • Commencement – the Environmental Assessment should indicate time lines, which clearly indicate when the proposal is likely to be implemented, if it is approved, and what commitment there is to such a time frame. • Decommissioning – discussion of the envisaged lifespan of the project and the Proponent’s commitment, arrangements and necessary approvals for removal of the wind turbines and associated infrastructure at the end of the project’s life.
<p>Consultation Requirements</p>	<p>You must undertake an appropriate and justified level of consultation with the following parties during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage regarding the application of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act; • NSW Department of Environment and Conservation; • NSW Roads and Traffic Authority; • Yass Valley Council; • Rural Fire Service; • TransGrid; • Department of Primary Industries; • Department of Natural Resources; • Civil Aviation Safety Authority; • Aerial Agricultural Association of Australia; • Rural Land Protection Board; • South-west Slopes Noxious Weeds Authority; and • the local community. This should include how commitments made to community members during the consultation process will be confirmed. <p>The Environmental Assessment must clearly indicate issues raised by stakeholders</p>

	during consultation, and how those matters have been addressed in the Environmental Assessment. This should include matters identified in the Planning Focus Meeting of 11 th November, 2005, as recorded in the meeting minutes.
Deemed refusal period	Under clause 8E(2) of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000</i> , the applicable deemed refusal period is 120 days from the end of the proponent's environmental assessment period for the project.