



International Power



CHAPTER 6

Community Consultation

URS

Community and Stakeholder Consultation - Summary of Outcomes

A stakeholder consultation process was developed and implemented to advise community stakeholders, Council representatives and relevant government authorities about the details of the project and to solicit issues that should be addressed during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment.

Issues identified during the initial consultation phase included:

- limited awareness of the proposed peaking plant power plant and associated natural gas pipeline project;
- choice of power plant site and pipeline route;
- environmental impacts: visual amenity, flora and fauna, air quality, noise and water;
- impacts on land values, rezoning, and compensation;
- operational potential and future plant expansion;
- road traffic and public safety; and
- flooding.

It is intended that an additional consultation phase will be conducted with information session(s) proposed to be held in Parkes during the period when the Environmental Assessment report is on public display, where representatives of IPRA and members of the URS study team would be present to answer specific queries of the broader community.

If the Parkes Peaking Power Plant Project is approved, ongoing consultation with the key stakeholders would be maintained during the key phases of construction and operation.

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6.1 Introduction

The consultation strategy was designed to initiate and maintain open communication with key stakeholders and to provide a forum to proactively respond to and work with key community and government agency stakeholders. The consultation program was undertaken by representatives of IPRA and members of the URS team.

The key stakeholders identified for consultation for the Parkes Peaking Power Plant Project are:

- landholders immediately surrounding the proposed power plant site and natural gas pipeline route;
- the broader community through a press release in the Parkes Champion-Post;
- Parkes Shire Council officers and elected councillors;
- the Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council; and
- State Government agencies, specifically the Department of Planning, Department of Environment and Climate Change, Department of Health, Department of Natural Resources, TransGrid, RTA, NSW Rural Bushfire Service, Forbes Rural Lands Protection Board, and the Commonwealth Civil Aviation Safety Authority.

6.2 Objectives

The key objectives of the stakeholder consultation were to ensure that key stakeholders were:

- appropriately informed of the project parameters;
- aware of the approvals process; and
- provided with an opportunity to ask questions and to identify areas of concern in respect to the project.

It is also intended that an information session(s) would be held in Parkes during the period when the Environmental Assessment report is on public display where representatives of IPRA and members of the URS study team would be present to answer specific queries from the broader community.

While this initial phase of consultation completes the planned consultation activities for inclusion in the Environmental Assessment, IPRA would continue to respond to concerns raised by the community. .

Ongoing consultation with the key stakeholders would be maintained during the key phases of construction and operation.

6.3 Consultation Program and Issues Raised

The consultation program was designed to introduce the project to key stakeholders, focusing primarily on adjacent landholders, Parkes Shire Council, and relevant government agencies. Where possible, participant questions were addressed immediately. Where this was not possible, a commitment was made to follow up specific questions in the Environmental Assessment.

The majority of consultations with the community took place during mid to late October and early to mid November 2006 and were conducted by at least one representative of IPRA (or their contracted land access service provider) and/or at least one URS representative. In addition to meetings with individual landholders, meetings were held with:

- planning and engineering division staff at Parkes Shire Council;
- a formal presentation to Parkes Councillors
- the Road Safety and Traffic Manager of RTA's Western Region; and
- the Department of Environment and Climate Change including their Regional Operations Officer North West Branch, Environment Protection and Regulation Division.

The NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Department of Health, NSW Department of Natural Resources, Commonwealth Civil Aviation Safety Authority, and the Forbes Rural Lands Protection Board were all consulted through telephone and / or written correspondence.

Further, in the period April through July 2007, a number of meetings were held and correspondence exchanged with officers of the Department of Environment and Climate Change to clarify aspects of the proposed Parkes Peaking Power Plant Project insofar as:

- the nature of the plant proposed by IPRA and its operating regime;
- the air emission profile and characteristics of the proposed plant; and
- appropriate air emission limits and monitoring and control technologies.

Table 6-1 provides a summary of the issues identified by the community / landholders and various government Departments during the consultation process and references where in this Environmental Assessment these issues are addressed.

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Table 6-1 – Summary of Issue Themes

Issue Theme	Summary	Stakeholder	Relevant section of EA addressing concern	Comment
Awareness of the Proposed Project	Most participants either had not previously heard of the proposed Parkes Peaking Power Plant Project, or had only heard of the project recently, either through the local media or direct contact by the company.	Community	Consultation	
Choice of power plant site and pipeline route	No one questions the appropriateness of the site with most acknowledging that it was logical to locate the site immediately adjacent to the TransGrid substation thereby minimising the need for additional transmission lines.	Community	Alternatives	
	The proponent undertook to the fullest extent practicable to negotiate a pipeline easement within freehold property that fully satisfied the individual landholder’s preferences in order to minimise any potential impacts on the property now or in the future.	Community	Consultation	
Environmental Impacts: Visual amenity, air quality, noise, and water	Due to the location of the power plant site (i.e. to the south of the TransGrid substation which is already well screened from Condobolin Road) that visual amenity of the area was not going to be significantly affected by the project.	Community	Visual Assessment	
	The potential toxicity of emissions, and the contribution these emissions might make to the existing air quality of the area, was questioned by a number of landholders surrounding the proposed site of the power plant.	Community	Air Quality	
	Noise impacts were also raised in the context of the time of day of operations i.e. night time versus day time and duration.		Noise Assessment	
	Issues relating to water were also raised, with several participants wanting to know where the plant’s water would be sourced, what would happen to excess water, given the sensitivity of water consumption as a result of the extended drought the area is currently experiencing. The question of potential environmental and public health risks associated with the transport of treated effluent from the Parkes sewage treatment plant to the power plant site.	Community	Water and Preliminary Hazard Assessment	

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Issue Theme	Summary	Stakeholder	Relevant section of EA addressing concern	Comment
Impacts on Land Values, Rezoning, and Compensation	One land owner adjacent to the proposed power plant site raised the potential impacts on his ability to proceed with a small subdivision (3 x 10-13 ha lots directly opposite the proposed access road to the site). The subdivision was approved in 1992. This issue was pursued further with Parkes Shire Council who advised that the consent has since lapsed (refer to copy of correspondence in Appendix B).	Community	Land Use	
Operational Potential and Future Plant Expansion	Concern about potential expansion of the proposed power plant and its operational capacity in the future was raised by a number of stakeholders. There was a perception that the proposed peaking plant could extend operational capacity and operate as a base load plant at a later date.	Community	Project Need	
	Some stakeholders expressed doubts as to why IPRA would consider making such a financial investment in a plant that only operates up to only 10% of the time, a figure stated in the Project Application and Community Information Sheet.	Community	Project Need Alternatives	
Road Traffic, Public Safety Flooding	Of the remaining issues the impact of increased road traffic, particularly during the construction period, were raised by several stakeholders.	Community	Traffic and transportation	
	Land holders immediately adjacent to the power plant site indicated that water course immediately west of the site (Ridgey Creek) floods with the maximum flood height from significant floods extending well beyond the defined watercourse.	Community	Water Cycle Management	
Water Requirements	Water resource information including an approximate water budget for the development including water use requirements, existing or propose water supply sources and infrastructure.	Department of Natural Resources	Soils, Geology and Groundwater	Groundwater is not proposed to be used for the development.
	Full impact assessment required if groundwater or surface water is proposed to be used.	Department of Natural Resources	Soils, Geology and Groundwater and Water Cycle Management,	Groundwater is not proposed to be used for the development. Surface water runoff from site to be collected and used for landscape watering

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Issue Theme	Summary	Stakeholder	Relevant section of EA addressing concern	Comment
Groundwater	Details on groundwater aquifers, potential sources and pathways for pollution, mitigation measures, and information on any proposed groundwater monitoring bores.	Department of Natural Resources	Soils, Geology and Groundwater and Water Cycle Management,	Groundwater is not proposed to be used for the development.
Waste Management	Management treatment and storage of toxic, hazardous, contaminated, or potentially polluting substances.	Department of Natural Resources	Soils, Geology and Groundwater Water Cycle Management Preliminary Hazard Analysis Draft Statement of Commitments	
Erosion and Sediment Controls	Details of sediment and erosion control measures to be out in place during construction of the proposed plant and for ongoing management	Department of Natural Resources	Soils, Geology and Groundwater Water Cycle Management	
Surface Water Management	Runoff from the development site, infrastructure, access roads and their features of development	Department of Natural Resources	Water Cycle Management	
Rehabilitation	Information in relation to the rehabilitation of the site such as soil management and revegetation.	Department of Natural Resources	Flora and fauna Landscape and Visual	
Flooding	Flood characteristics for the site due to the close proximity of Ridgely Creek	Department of Natural Resources	Water Cycle Management	

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Issue Theme	Summary	Stakeholder	Relevant section of EA addressing concern	Comment
Visual Impact	Recommends softening visual impact through vegetation buffer zones	Department of Natural Resources	Flora and fauna Landscape and Visual	
Environmental Management Program	Requests a monitoring program be developed to determine effectiveness of environmental impact management and mitigating strategies.	Department of Natural Resources	Draft Statement of Commitments.	
Air quality assessment	Defining appropriate methodology for air quality modelling and assessment	Department and Environment Climate Change	Air Quality – Chapter 7	
Air emissions	Defining appropriate level of assessment and controls for air emissions relevant to the proposed peaking power plant	Department and Environment Climate Change	Project Alternatives – Chapter 3 and Air Quality – Chapter 7	
Effect of exhaust plume on aircraft operations	Need for plume rise study to adequately identify potential effects on aircraft operations in vicinity of the proposed power plant.	Civil Aviation Safety Authority	Air Quality – Chapter 7	

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IPRA would ensure that ongoing dialogue with local landholders continues to effectively monitor the social and environmental impacts of the development over time.

This may include initiatives such as:

- Consultation with landholders in proximity to the site during key phases of project development i.e. pre-construction, construction and operation.
- Ongoing consultation with local landholders and Parkes Shire Council to inform them of development progress.