



JR:CA:A0420255

17 December 2018

Attention: Natasha Homsey
NSW Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Natasha,

RE: CRUDINE RIDGE WIND FARM (SSD 6697) (MOD 1)

Thank you for providing Mid-Western Regional Council (Council) with the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed Crudine Ridge Wind Farm (Modification 1). Council has reviewed the Environmental Assessment and in response, provides the following comments.

Aarons Pass Road

Aarons Pass Road is part of a critical route for the transportation of components to the Crudine Ridge Wind Farm (CRWF). Aarons Pass Road will be used by a significant number of over-mass and over-size vehicles during the construction of the CRWF and general service and maintenance vehicles once operational. The current road is inadequate and incapable of having the traffic on it that is proposed by the project.

Council understands that the proposed modification incorporates a revised road design for Aarons Pass Road. Council supports the upgrade of Aarons Pass Road as it is necessary to manage road safety issues associated with the increased traffic due to the project, subject to the following:

- The revised road design for Aarons Pass Road must be approved by Council prior to any works being undertaken;
- A key component of the design and upgrade of Aarons Pass Road should include passing bays in locations to ensure safety and reduce undue delays to the travelling public. A maximum distance of 1 kilometre between passing bays is recommended;
- Construction of Aarons Pass Road must meet Austroad standards (which is the standard for all new roads constructed in the Mid-Western Region);
- The cost of undertaking the upgrade works is the responsibility of the proponent.

The pre-construction and site assembly works which have occurred in recent months have demonstrated the potential risks and safety issues arising due to the current condition of Aarons Pass Road. A number of incidents (and near misses) have been reported to Council and the Crudine Ridge Community Hotline. For this reason, Council has previously requested and continues to require that the upgrade of Aarons Pass Road is undertaken prior to the commencement of construction of CRWF to ensure the safety of all road users.

Biodiversity Impacts

Council understands that the proposed modification will require additional clearing of vegetation along Aarons Pass Road. It is also noted that the reduction in the number of turbines approved will result in a net overall decrease in the area to be cleared for the total project.

Council does not object to the additional clearing of vegetation along Aarons Pass Road as long as the relevant assessments have been undertaken to identify any significant impacts on vegetation and habitat in the local vicinity.

The Environmental Assessment indicates that any clearing will be undertaken in accordance with the Biodiversity Management Plan approved by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment in December 2017. Council supports this approach and would like to emphasise the importance of having appropriately qualified personnel available at the site of any clearing along Aarons Pass Road to ensure that the Biodiversity Management Plan is consistently implemented and adhered to.

Community Consultation

Council requests that the proponent continue to work in close consultation with the community during all phases of the project. This will ensure the community has current and accurate information available in order to provide relevant feedback on the proposed project including ecological, visual, noise or social impacts. Council acknowledges that the proponent has already established a Crudine Ridge Community Hotline.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact Council (02) 6378 2850.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BRAD CAM', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

BRAD CAM
GENERAL MANAGER