

Summary

Reason for Referral to Council

To advise Council of a submission to be lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment on the proposed Jupiter Wind Farm project.

Proposal:	Construction of a Wind Farm with up to 88 wind turbines
Applicant/Owner:	EPYC Pty Ltd, on behalf of Jupiter Wind Farm Pty Ltd.
Subject Property:	Project area covers an area of approximately 4,999 hectares, spanning across Goulburn Mulwaree Council and Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council.
Zoning and Permissibility:	RU1 under the Palerang Local Environment Plan 2015.
Consent Authority:	The Project is State Significant Development, therefore the consent authority is the Department of Planning and Environment
Issues Discussed:	Amenity of the neighbourhood Voluntary Planning Agreement Adjoining property owner concerns
Disclosure of Political Donations and Gifts:	Applicant Declared no Donations or Gifts to any Councillor or Staff have been made

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. lodge a submission with the Department of Planning and Environment addressing the issues outlined in this report.**
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Background

History of the Site

The area of the proposed development that is located within the Queanbeyan Palerang local government area has traditionally been broad acre farming land. The zoning under the Palerang Local Environment Plan 2015 is RU1, and under the previous planning instrument (Tallaganda Local Environment Plan 1991) the land was zoned Rural 1(a). There has been some subdivision development within the area, creating allotments with building entitlements ranging from 5 hectares, through to around 40 hectares.

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Apart from electricity infrastructure, there is no other major infrastructure or intensive development located within the project area.

20 Proposed Development

The development application seeks consent for the construction, operation and decommissioning of a wind farm with up to 88 wind turbines generators, together with the associated and ancillary infrastructure.

The project consists of the following key components:-

- Up to 88 Wind Turbines, each with: three blades mounted with a maximum height of approximately 173 metres, an adjacent pad mounted wind turbine transformer
- An electrical substation
- A permanent operations and maintenance building located adjacent to the substation
- Internal private access road network
- 30 • 33kV electrical reticulation and fibre optic cabling connecting the Wind Turbines
- A 33kV transmission line connection the electrical reticulation networks
- Upgrades to local roads and intersections
- Up to four permanent meteorological monitoring masts.

Temporary construction facilities will also be required during construction of the project. These include:

- Earthworks for access roads and Wind Tower foundations
- Temporary mobile concrete batching plant
- Temporary buildings for construction personnel
- External water supply for concrete batching and construction activities
- 40 • Transport, storage and handling of fuels, oils and other hazardous substances for construction and operation of wind farm infrastructure

Subject Property

The subject land covers an area of approximately 4,999 hectares and transverses two local government areas (Goulburn Mulwarree Council and Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council.) Project infrastructure will cover an area of approximately 86.3 hectares which constitutes approximately 1.7% of the project area. The project area extends from approximately 5km southeast of the township of Tarago, to approximately 9km south of the intersection of the Goulburn-Braidwood Road and the Kings Highway. A site plan has been provided at Attachment 1 to clearly show the project area.

50 Planning Requirements

The project is State Significant Development (SSD) in accordance with clause 20, Schedule 1 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* and will be assessed under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The project is also Designated Development under Schedule 3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* as it is an 'electricity generation station' which is capable of supplying more than 30 megawatts of electrical power.

Further, the project is also integrated development as it requires an Environmental Protection Licence (EPL) under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act* and approval under section 138 of the *Roads Act 1993*.

Other Comments*Development Engineer's Comments*

The development was referred to Council's Development Engineer, who provided the following comments to be included in Council's submission to the Department:-

- The traffic impacts have been modelled utilising an extrapolation of a one day peak hour count undertaken by the proponent's consultant. There is no reference to AADT volume counts (RMS &/or QPRC), hence the assessment is somewhat flawed,
- Traffic distribution is assumed to be 75% to Goulburn and only 25% to Canberra. These seems unrealistic and does not give consideration to the proximity of the site to Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Braidwood.
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be required prior to commencement of construction
- There are three proposed construction/ operational accesses to the wind farm, two off Goulburn Road near Boro and one off the Kings Highway at Manar. These roads are State roads controlled by the RMS and the proposed accesses will require construction to RMS requirements.
- During the construction phase the intersections should be provided with truck warning signs as per RMS document *Traffic Control at Work Sites'*
- The documentation does not clearly identify their locations nor justification for their selection (apart from achieving appropriate sight distance).
- As the State road network will be used for access there will be no impact on the local road network, hence S94 road upgrading or maintenance contributions are not applicable.
- The access points should all be rural addressed.
- The transport of oversize components by Restricted Access Vehicles (RAVs) will require approval by RMS. It is noted that the Kings Highway / Goulburn Road intersection will require upgrading to facilitate the left turn from Goulburn Road into Kings Highway for southbound RAV traffic
- Internal access roads should be constructed to a gravel standard suitable for use by Rural Fire Service vehicles
- The internal access roads will require a crossing point for Boro Road and for Manar Road. These access points will require approval by QPRC under S138 of the Roads Act 1993

(b) Town Planner's comments

The EIS has been reviewed by Council's planning staff and the following concerns have been raised to be included in any submission to the department:-

- Unacceptable visual impact from both the public and private domain, as the height of the proposed wind turbines will be 173 metres.
- Proposed additional vegetation planting to reduce visual impact will potentially contribute to bushfire risk in the locality
- Deterioration of quality of life as within the current landscape there is barely anything manmade
- Increase noise during construction periods
- Inadequate regard to blade flicker impacts
- As has occurred as part of other wind farm approvals, further assessment needs to be undertaken on individual rural properties and should address issues such as visual impact and noise impact, rather than blanket statements that cover the project area

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which is 4,999 hectares. This is especially important as 59 dwellings have been identified as having a medium to high impact on them due to visual impact

- A clear assessment of the potential of the Wind Towers to impact on the ability to undertake aerial firefighting duties, especially in light of the recent bushfire that went through the area and required aerial support to save dwellings.

Financial Implications

There is a proposed Voluntary Planning Agreement that is currently being assessed by Council's Strategic Planning staff.

Conclusion

Whilst the proposal is permissible under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* and is considered State Significant Development, there are concerns regarding the impact of the development on the existing amenity of the neighbourhood through visual impact, noise impact, traffic impacts and the potential to impact on aerial bushfire fighting abilities, therefore it is considered appropriate to lodge a submission with the Department outlining these concerns.

Attachments

Nil