



COMMISSION REJECTS SOUTH COAST GOLF COURSE PROPOSAL DUE TO WATER HAZARDS

Wednesday 26 September 2018

The state's Independent Planning Commission has rejected plans for a new championship golf course at Culburra, on the south coast, due to potential impacts on nearby Lake Wollumboola.

The Halloran Trust first lodged its development application for the 18-hole course on 36 hectares of land at Long Bow Point, west of Culburra Beach, with Shoalhaven City Council back in 2011.

However, the Minister for Planning declared the project a state significant development in March 2017 after receiving advice from the former Planning Assessment Commission* about the high ecological value of the adjacent lake.

The Department of Planning and Environment took over assessment of the proposal from Council and in July this year referred it to the Independent Planning Commission for final decision due to the level of community opposition.

Chair of the Commission, Professor Mary O'Kane, nominated Mr Ross Carter, Ms Ilona Miller and herself to constitute the Commission to determine this project.

They met with the applicant, as well as representatives of the Department, Council and the Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council, and inspected the site and surrounding areas.

A public meeting was also held at Culburra to listen to the community's views.

Residents who spoke in favour of the project cited economic and social benefits, including job creation, while those against the development raised concerns about potential impacts on Lake Wollumboola, biodiversity impacts associated with the clearing of native vegetation, and impacts on bird species that use the lake as a breeding and nesting ground.

The Commission sought independent advice from experts at UNSW Sydney's Water Research Laboratory about the project's potential impacts on hydrology and water quality.

Having carefully examined all the evidence and taken the community's views into consideration, the Commission has today (Wednesday 26 September) decided to refuse consent to the project.

.../2

In its Statement of Reasons for Decision, the Commission found:

- the site is unsuitable for the project because of the sensitivity of Lake Wollumboola and its catchment and the potential for adverse impacts on the highly sensitive ecosystem
- there is uncertainty regarding impacts on receiving environments, including Lake Wollumboola and two (SEPP 14) wetlands
- there is a lack of critical groundwater data to enable an appropriate assessment of the potential impacts of the project, and until a more detailed investigation is carried out, supported by appropriate field data, a precautionary approach is appropriate
- there is uncertainty in relation to construction impacts and mitigation measures to manage potential impacts during construction
- there is uncertainty in relation to social and economic benefits of the project

The Commission concluded the state significant development application is not in the public interest and consent should be refused.

Meanwhile, a separate application for a large-scale residential development at West Culburra remains under consideration by the Commission.

The Commission's Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:

<http://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2018/07/long-bow-point-golf-course>

** The Independent Planning Commission replaced the Planning Assessment Commission under changes to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act which took effect on 1 March 2018.*

Disclaimer

This media statement has been prepared by the Commission's media unit for general information only. It does not form part of the Commission's statement of reasons for decision, and should not be read as part of, or as a substitute for, that statement of reasons.