

Our ref: SSD-10807896

Prof Mary O’Kane
Chair
Independent Planning Commission
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Sydney NSW 2001
ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au
19/02/2024

Subject: Thunderbolt Wind Farm – Referral to the Independent Planning Commission

Dear Professor O’Kane

The Department has completed its assessment of the merits of the application for the Thunderbolt Wind Farm (SSD 10807896).

The application is referred to the Independent Planning Commission for determination as Uralla Shire Council and more than 50 unique submissions objected to the project.

Neoen Australia Pty Ltd (the Applicant) proposes to develop a new State significant wind farm located about 47 kilometres (km) northeast of Tamworth in the Tamworth Regional and Uralla Shire Local Government Areas.

The project as proposed would have a generating capacity of around 192 megawatts (MW) and would connect to the 330 kilovolt transmission network that traverses the site.

During the exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) the Department received a total of 107 submissions, of which 100 were unique, in addition to advice from 15 government agencies and the two host Councils. The Department also received five additional comments from the public and a letter from Muswellbrook Shire Council after the exhibition concluded. Of the public submissions, 82 objected to the project, 14 supported the project and four provided comments. Uralla Shire Council objected to the project.

After reviewing the submissions, the Applicant amended the project to include a temporary above-ground pipeline for water supply during the construction phase in order to address issues raised in submissions and agency advice.

Under the delegation from the consent authority (i.e. the Commission for this development), the Department accepted the amended application for the reasons outlined in the Assessment Report.

The Applicant has offered to enter into a community benefit scheme / voluntary planning agreement with Tamworth Regional Council and Uralla Shire Council, to support the provision of community enhancement projects, with contributions of a total of \$5,605,500.

Department of Planning and Environment



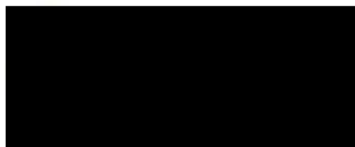
In assessing the merits of the project, the Department has considered the environmental, social and economic impacts of the project, submissions on the EIS, relevant environmental planning instruments, the suitability of the site, and the public interest, in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

During the assessment process the Department visited the site, and consulted with local residents, Councils and relevant government agencies.

Based on this assessment, the Department considers that the project is approvable, subject to the recommended conditions of consent. I have attached a copy of the Department's assessment report and other relevant documents for the Commission's consideration.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Brewer on 02 9274 6374 or via email at nicole.brewer@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Nicole Brewer
Director
Energy Assessments