



REDUCTION IN TURBINES, REVISED ROAD DESIGN FOR CRUDINE RIDGE WIND FARM APPROVED

24 June 2019

A wind farm in the state's Central West will have 40 fewer turbines after the Independent Planning Commission approved changes to its development consent.

Crudine Ridge Wind Farm Nominees Pty Ltd had sought to reduce from 77 to 37 the number of turbines earmarked for its wind farm, 45km south of Mudgee, to align its existing development consent with the terms of the Commonwealth Government approval.

The company also wanted to revise the road design for Aarons Pass Road which would require the clearing of an additional five hectares of vegetation.

The Department of Planning & Environment referred the matter to the Commission after it received more than 25 public objections.

Commissioners Peter Duncan AM and Peter Cochrane were appointed to consider the modification application and make a determination.

They met with the Applicant and Department and held a public meeting at Pyramul, between Mudgee and Bathurst, to listen to the community's views.

Those in favour of the proposed changes spoke about the economic benefits to host landholders, local businesses and communities, as well as the improvements to local road safety through the Aarons Pass Road upgrade; while those opposed raised concerns about the environmental and ecological impacts associated with vegetation clearing along the road.

On Friday (21 June 2019), following careful consideration of the evidence and weighing the community's concerns, the Commission determined to approve the modification application.

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

- upgrades to Aarons Pass Road are necessary to facilitate the construction of the Project
- the reduction in the number of turbines will reduce overall Project impacts within the locality and will provide an additional benefit due to the retention of biodiversity offsets required under the Project Approval
- the assessment of the need for the Aarons Pass Road upgrade was satisfactorily undertaken during the initial assessment and determination of the Project and, as such, that assessment remains valid

- the Application does not have any additional impacts on other issues identified in the current Project approval and the existing conditions of consent are satisfactory for the management and mitigation of these issues, and
- the Application, as proposed, is generally consistent with the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development, the objects of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, and the public interest.

The Commission has imposed conditions on its approval, which are designed to:

- prevent, minimise and/or offset adverse environmental impacts;
- set standards and performance measures for acceptable environmental performance
- require regular monitoring and reporting; and
- provide for the on-going environmental management of the development.

The Commission's Statement of Reasons for Decision can be read in full here:

<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2019/05/crudine-ridge-wind-farm-mod-1>

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