



## COMMISSION APPROVES CHANGES TO WHITE ROCK WIND FARM

13 December 2019

The state's Independent Planning Commission has approved changes to a wind farm in the New England Region.

Goldwind Australia received planning approval in July 2012 to build the 119-turbine White Rock Wind Farm, 20km west of Glen Innes, in two stages.

Stage one, comprising 70 turbines with a maximum tip height of 150m, is already operational. However, the company lodged an application with the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment in January last year to modify its existing project approval for stage two – specifically to:

- reconfigure the layout of turbines and ancillary infrastructure
- reduce the number of turbines from 49 to 48
- increase the dimensions of the wind turbines (maximum tip height from 150m to 200m and rotor diameter from 121m to either 140m or 170m)
- increase the capacity of the existing substation to accommodate stage two and potentially cater for additional energy projects in the locality
- increase the project area from 13,176ha to 15,053ha, and
- increase vegetation clearing by 169ha.

The matter was referred to the Commission for determination because the Department received more than 25 public objections during exhibition.

Commissioners Peter Cochrane (Panel Chair), Wendy Lewin and Adrian Pilton were appointed to consider the modification application and make a final decision.

The Commissioners met with the Applicant, Department and Glen Innes Severn and Inverell Councils and inspected the site and surrounding area. They also held a public meeting to listen to the community's concerns which centred on biodiversity, visual and noise impacts.

After carefully considering all the evidence and weighing the community's views, the Commission has today (Friday 13 December 2019) determined to approve the modification application, subject to conditions.

"The Commission agrees with the Department's finding ... that on balance the proposed modification has merit, and is in the public interest as it would contribute 995,000 megawatt hours per annum of renewable energy to the National Electricity Market and assist in reducing GHG emissions (approximately 955,000 tonnes per year)," the Commission concluded in its Statement of Reasons for Decision.

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“The Commission finds that the Project, carried out subject to the imposed conditions, achieves a reasonable balance between maximising the use of the wind resource and managing potential impacts on the environment and surrounding landowners.”

**The Commission’s full Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:**

<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2019/08/white-rock-wind-farm-mod-6>

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