Ministerial Statement

Deputy Premier John Rau
Attorney General
Minister for Planning
Minister for Business Services and Consumers

Thursday, 18 October 2012

Statewide Wind Farms DPA

On Friday 12 October 2012, I approved the Statewide Wind Farms Development Plan Amendment (DPA). The approved DPA came into effect when it was gazetted earlier today.

I have made a number of changes to the interim DPA I released for consultation on 19 October 2011.

I have made changes to the DPA to substantially address the concerns raised during the consultation period, while still providing ample opportunity for investment in wind energy in South Australia.

The approved DPA updates policy guiding wind farm developments by:

- designating wind farms a Category 2 development except where they include turbines within 2km of dwellings or towns and other zones that could be detrimentally affected (such as airfield zones).

- changing public notification, comment and appeal right triggers – the changes mean, a proposal to install a turbine within 2km of dwellings, tourist accommodation and zones that could be adversely affected such as airfield, residential, settlement and township zones will default to Category 3 and third parties will have notification, comment and appeal rights in respect of such proposals

- establishing visual impact management policies that should form part of wind farm developments including, most notably, at least 1km separation between dwellings and turbines and 2km separation between townships and turbines

- removing policy that explicitly envisages wind farms in valuable environmental and scenic areas including the Clare Valley, coast and State coastal waters, Conservation Zones, the Fleurieu Peninsula, the Flinders Ranges and the River Murray corridor

- introducing policy that discourages wind farms in the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale
• adding policy that requires consideration of potential impacts of wind farms and ancillary development on low altitude aircraft movements associated with agriculture

• adding policy that requires consideration of potential consequences of wind turbine generator failure

• making it clear that wind farms and ancillary development (including wind monitoring masts) are envisaged in sparsely populated zones such as general farming, primary production and rural zones

I have taken note of and responded to key issues that were raised through the consultation process. Statutory public consultation ran for eight weeks from 19 October 2011 – 13 December 2011. This yielded 276 written submissions from public and councils.

The independent Development Policy Advisory Committee conducted public meetings earlier this year in Adelaide, Naracoorte, Port Wakefield and Peterborough. The independent committee has provided advice to me on all the representations made.

The key issues raised included;

• the areas in which it is appropriate to envisage wind farms;

• the balance that should be struck on third party notification, comment and appeal rights;

• the visual impact management techniques that should form part of wind farm developments; and

• the potential impacts of wind farms on low altitude aircraft movements associated with agriculture.

I have made my decision on the DPA seeking to balance the advice I have received, from honourable members here and in the other place, from members of the public, from the DPAC’s review of the consultation process and from the advice of my department.

The Government remains committed to providing ample opportunity for investment in wind energy in South Australia, while balancing the legitimate concerns of the community.