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Granite Hills Wind Farm turbine layout revised following detailed consultation

Akuo Energy has announced an updated and improved turbine layout for the 132MW State Significant Development Granite Hills Wind Farm, which is proposed to be built 12km from Nimmitabel. The layout was revised following detailed consultation with neighbours, local community members, independent environmental specialists, State departments and other crucial advisors such as telecommunication infrastructure owner Broadcast Australia.

The new project design guarantees a sizable reduction in the number of turbines with nine turbines being removed from the original thirty-two (32) turbine layout. This equates to a reduction of almost 30% of the turbines on the project.

Shane Quinnell, Business Developer for Akuo Energy Pacific said, "The project team worked hard to complete a full review, primarily to improve the project design based on environmental and community considerations. As a result, a new layout with twenty three (23) turbines has been developed. In designing the new layout, we voluntarily committed to avoid the sensitive eastern side of the site, closer to the South East Forests National Park altogether, and removed four turbines from that area".

"When compared to the previous 32 turbine layout, this new design creates a number of positive changes for the community and environment."

The new layout provides the following improvements:

- Significantly increases the distance from turbines to neighbouring houses
- Reduces the number of turbines by about 30%
- Reduces infrastructure required by over 30%
- Positions the nearest turbine 50% further away from the communications tower
- Reduces impact from public and private viewpoints
- Significant improvement environmentally; less turbines located in sensitive areas
- The 132MW State Significant wind farm would generate enough clean energy to power around 50,000 homes for approximately 25 years.

The new proposed height of each of the 23 turbines from the base of the tower to the highest tip of the blades is 220m (ground to blade tip). It was originally planned to be 200m.

Turbine efficiency and power output increase significantly with size and height. The small increase to turbine tip height and size enabled the project team to significantly cut the number of turbines in the design while more or less maintaining the total power output of the project.

Operational wind farms produce negligible emissions and use next to no water. Lifecycle analyses demonstrate, even when construction is factored into the calculations, wind energy still far out-performs current energy generation technologies like coal fired power stations. The lifecycle of a wind farm produces 1% of the emissions of the equivalent coal power and consumes less than 0.1% of the water.

Shane said, "The potential impact on water supply, flora and fauna, bushfire control, visual and noise amenity, along with many other criteria are all being carefully considered as part of the Environmental

Impact Statement (EIS) by independent specialists. We are designing the project to be as positive as it can possibly be and are proud of the improvements we have been able to make to date."

"The independent specialist findings will ultimately be considered by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to ensure this project meets all the assessments so it can be approved for construction."

The Granite Hills Wind Farm community liaison team has also met with nearby neighbours to discuss the project, potential impacts, and health related issues such as infrasound. Various studies have been completed into infrasound by the Australian Government and the National Wind Farm Commissioner, the outcome is turbines produce no known effects on human health.

Granite Hills would like to reassure the community that any possible health impacts are continually reviewed by State and Federal institutions and are taken into consideration by authorities on wind farm development applications, like Granite Hills Wind Farm.

Akuo Energy is currently preparing the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which will be submitted to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) for review. Once the EIS is reviewed by the DPIE, the community will be given their opportunity to review and make submissions.

Mr Quinnell said, "the period of public exhibitions is an important part of the EIS process. It is the community's chance to have their say directly to the Department and provide valuable feedback on the project to help inform its development."

"Effective and transparent community engagement is important to ensure we can deliver a good outcome for everyone."

Independent specialists are in the process of commencing the next round of assessments on flora and fauna, visual amenity, noise levels, hydrology, traffic management, bushfires, waste and more. Several studies have been delayed due to COVID-19. The full impacts of the pandemic on the project and timing are still being determined . The project team is working closely with the independent specialists to progress Granite Hills Wind Farm, even in these uncertain times, given its significance to the State of New South Wales and the energy security of the State. Subject to delay, the studies for the EIS are expected to be finalised near the end of 2020 and the submission available to public shortly before or around mid-2021.

For more information about State Significant Developments, please visit https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/assessment/state-significant-development/ssd-process.

Members of the community are encouraged to contact Granite Hills Wind Farm if they have any questions or would like to know more about the project via granitehills@akuoenergy.com or 1800 961 761. To find out more or subscribe to the newsletter visit http://granitehillswindfarm.com/.

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About Granite Hills Wind Farm

Granite Hills Wind Farm is a State Significant Development, situated in Steeple Flat, approximately 12 kilometres South East of Nimmitabel in New South Wales. When complete the project will comprise of up to 23-wind turbines, with approximately 4-6 megawatts capacity and a maximum tip height of 230 metres. The 132MW wind farm would generate enough clean energy for around 50,000 homes.