

10 April 2024

Tasmanian Planning Commission
GPO Box 1691
Hobart TAS 7001

Dear Sir or Madam,

Whaleback Ridge Renewable Energy Major Project – Assessment Criteria

Thank you for the opportunity to provide advice on the assessment criteria for the Whaleback Ridge Renewable Energy Major Project (the Major Project).

Hydro Tasmania is Australia's largest water manager and renewable energy generator, comprising six large catchments covering 35 per cent of Tasmania's land area. We own and operate 30 hydropower stations in these catchments and are responsible for managing 53 lakes and water bodies, and 67 major rivers and creeks consistent with our various obligations. As part of these operations Hydro Tasmania also owns or manages around 120,000 hectares of freehold, vested and Reserved land, waterbodies and waterways across the State.

Hydro Tasmania has particular interest in the Major Project as a significant landowner, road manager (Pieman Road), and operator of a significant renewable energy generator (Reece Power Station). In addition to the expected assessment of potential impacts of the Major Project on natural and cultural values, we would recommend that specific consideration should be given to the existing and future infrastructure provision, and traffic & access requirements associated with the Major Project. These project specific assessment criteria are outlined below.

Project Specific Assessment Criteria

Existing and future infrastructure provision

The Major Project should demonstrate how it contributes to achieving strategies that coordinate transmission and generation investment to an acceptable level, and the impact of the Major Project on existing renewable generation assets.

This should include consideration of long-term strategies for the development of the regulated transmission network and relevant government actions taken to coordinate the location and

optimised outcomes related to major energy users, electricity generators, transmission network investment and interconnectors.

The Panel, in consideration of this aspect, should have regard to:

- network augmentation or network support that may be required in the regulated transmission network to accommodate the energy output of the major project and avoid the potential of congestion on the shared network;
- the capacity of the existing transmission network and potential impact on existing renewable electricity generators;
- the potential impacts on the maintenance of existing transmission assets;
- the capacity for the major project to progress in stages, considering the potential network congestion and impacts on existing renewable energy generators; and
- the extent of proposed on-site energy storage to support system stability;

Transport, traffic and access

The Major Project should detail the access and transport routes to and from the site during the construction and operation phases of the project can be efficiently and safely achieved.

The Major Project has the potential for significant adverse effects caused by access and transport to and from the site on private (Pieman Road) and public road infrastructure, traffic, the local environments and surrounding areas are minimised or managed to an acceptable level.

The Panel, in consideration of this aspect, should have regard to:

- viable options and alternatives to the routes that may be used to transport material and equipment to the site, and the site access locations;
- the maximum extent of the transport task and associated traffic across different stages of the major project;
- the likely transport task associated with accessing civil construction materials and water resources from proven viable sites;
- the design and location of permanent and temporary access points to the public road network;
- the condition of existing transport infrastructure assets and any asset upgrade, maintenance or rehabilitation works that may be required;
- the degree of new civil works, asset improvements or vegetation removal that may be associated with the transport of oversize or overmass equipment;
- any safety or amenity implications for other road users and nearby land uses;
- potential effects of proposed transport and traffic arrangements to threatened ecological communities and species, or significant ecological systems; and
- whether access points and supporting infrastructure are suitable for meeting security, resilience and emergency management needs of a facility of this type.

Land management

The Major Project should identify the potential impacts of construction on land management across the development site including major buildings, structures and on-site quarries.

The Major Project has the potential for significant adverse effects across the project site and surrounding areas, these impacts should be minimised or managed to an acceptable level.

The Panel, in consideration of this aspect, should have regard to:

- the area and dimensions of land to be leased, occupied or managed by the wind farm operator, containing buildings, substations and battery storage systems;
- the potential for existing site contamination associated with historic mining or industrial activities;
- the location and dimensions of buildings, structures, perimeter fences, external lighting, access tracks, cut and fill, parking areas, landscaped areas of proposed facilities such as control room and maintenance functions, substations, battery storage systems;
- the area and dimensions of typical hardstand, laydown or works areas associated with the construction and maintenance of high voltage overhead lines and wind turbines;
- the extent and depth of works, land used for storage and access, site water management and stages of development of onsite quarries; work exclusion areas; and
- the need and staging of rehabilitation of construction and operational footprint of the Major Project.

Should you have questions on any of the matters raised in this submission please feel free to contact me on 0402 822 265 or at ian.jones@hydro.com.au.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Jones
Hydro Tasmania