

Draft Wind farm state code for consultation

FACT SHEET

The Queensland Government is changing the way wind farm developments are assessed in Queensland. The changes include a new wind farm development assessment code and the transfer of development assessment responsibilities from local to state government.

You can have your say on these changes. See over the page for more information on how to get involved.

The Wind farm state code is expected to be operational from mid-2014.

What is the purpose of the state code?

The purpose of the Wind farm state code is to:

- facilitate the development of new wind farms or the expansion of existing wind farms in appropriate locations
- ensure potential adverse impacts on the community and environment are avoided during the construction, operation and decommissioning of wind farms.

A planning guideline has been prepared to support the Wind farm state code. The purpose of the Wind farm state code planning guideline is to

assist a proponent to prepare a development proposal for a new or expanded wind farm.

Why is the state code being prepared?

Currently, local governments are the assessment managers for wind farm developments – assessing these developments against their local planning schemes. However, most planning schemes do not include particular provisions for wind farms and many councils do not have the capacity to appropriately assess these highly technical developments.

This new approach to assessing wind farm developments is intended to provide the appropriate basis for determining wind farm proposals.

When will the state code apply?

The Wind farm state code will apply to a development that comprises one or more wind turbines - including any existing wind turbines on the site - with a generation capacity of over 500 kilowatts.

The code will also apply to associated infrastructure and works such as site access

(including internal roads), foundations, buildings and electrical works.

Single wind turbines used for domestic, industrial or agricultural purposes where the generation capacity is less than 500 kilowatts will not be covered by the code and will continue to be assessed by the relevant local government.

When the Wind farm state code is operational, those proposals that have already been lodged will continue to be assessed by the local government that is responsible for determining the proposal.

How will wind farms be assessed?

The Wind farm state code will be incorporated in the State Development Assessment Provisions (SDAP) in due course.

SDAP is a statutory instrument that sets out the matters of interest to the state for development assessment. SDAP is prescribed in the Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009, and contains the matters the chief executive may have regard to when assessing a development application.

The *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* (SPA) provides for the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA) to utilise SDAP in assessing development proposals. SARA will assess applications for wind farm developments.

SARA is the single lodgement and assessment point for all development applications where the state has a jurisdiction under SPA. A proponent for a wind farm would make an application to SARA in accordance with the Integrated Development Assessment System. This process will ensure a co-ordinated, whole-of-government approach is applied to wind farm developments across Queensland, making the process more straightforward, fair and consistent.

Have your say

The draft Wind farms state code is available for public consultation from 22 April 2014 to 13 May 2014.

To view the code and have your say visit:

www.haveyoursay.dsdip.qld.gov.au/windfarms

At the conclusion of the consultation period, the submissions received will be considered. The draft state code and planning guideline will then be finalised and incorporated in SDAP.

For more information

Copies of the draft Wind farms state code and draft Wind farms state code Planning guideline are available from the DSDIP website at:

www.dsdip.qld.gov.au/windfarms

If you have any questions please email:

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