

# Renewable Energy Development Projects Policy

## 1. Introduction

For several years Council has wrestled with the impacts of large scale electricity generating works on the rural landscape and communities throughout Yass Valley.

On 13 June 2018 Council held a Planning Forum on windfarms with speakers for and against the land use.

On 18 June 2018 a Councillor Workshop was held regarding Council's approach to wind farms and other renewable energy projects.

From the Planning Forum and Workshop, Council has developed its policy position on renewable energy projects.

## 2. Policy Objectives

To outline Council's position in relation to renewable energy projects proposed in Yass Valley.

To act as a guide on the likely impacts and concerns of the local community that Council expects to be addressed in any planning documentation.

## 3. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all renewable energy projects proposed in Yass Valley.

## 4. Policy Provisions

The following policy statement has been determined by Council.

Having considered the social, environmental, economic and strategic planning impacts on the Yass Valley communities and the cumulative impacts of the four approved wind farm sites Council is of the view that it has reached the maximum number of industrial turbines for the Local Government Area.

While supportive of renewable energy in general, Council opposes in principle, further large scale wind turbine sites in Yass Valley.

Despite Council's position on wind farms it will consider any further proposed renewable energy projects submitted for assessment on its individual merits with the following matters (in addition to the Department of Planning & Environment's *Wind Energy Guide* and *Large Scale Solar Energy Guidelines 2022* or the like) to be taken into account:

- a. The location being consistent with the *Yass Valley Settlement Strategy*
- b. The 5km buffer area along the NSW/ACT border identified in the *Yass Valley Settlement Strategy* has been identified as an area to protect and retain the existing environmental values and rural character of the area and is not suitable for renewable energy infrastructure
- c. The infrastructure (e.g. turbines, panels, substations) not being within view lines of villages and towns or clusters of rural dwellings
- d. The infrastructure not having an adverse impact on the amenity of other dwellings
- e. The impact of infrastructure (e.g. turbines, panels) on the rural landscape and tourism values of the Yass Valley
- f. Roads being used by any heavy vehicles being upgraded to the appropriate standard in Council's Roads Standards Policy prior to commencement of works on site
- g. A sharing the benefits scheme(s) with the host landowners, immediate neighbours and a Community Enhancement Fund (as per Council policy)

- h. Noise impacts at adjoining dwellings being consistent with the applicable standards
- i. The project to commence within 5 years of a Consent being issued and completed within 5 years of commencement
- j. The impacts of the infrastructure (e.g. panels, turbines) on the heritage values of the site and Yass Valley
- k. The economic and social impacts on local communities and Yass Valley
- l. Any community and Rural Fire Service concerns in relation to the bushfire risks and any impediments to firefighting operations
- m. Any impacts with land contamination as a consequence of a grass or bushfire and appropriate mitigation and rehabilitation measures
- n. The project to include the development of housing solutions for their workforce

## 5. Review

This policy will be reviewed once each term of Council or as needed in response to any change of circumstances including changes in legislation.

## 6. Legislative and Legal Framework

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

<b>Legislation</b>	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i> <i>Environmental Planning &amp; Assessment Act 1979</i>
<b>Policies and procedures</b>	DPE Wind Energy Guideline Dec 2016 DPE Large Scale Solar Energy Guidelines 2022

## 7. Definitions

Under the *Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013*:

Term	Meaning
<i>electricity generating works</i>	means a building or place used for the purpose of making or generating electricity

## 8. Responsibilities

The following Council Officers are responsible for the implementation and adherence to this policy:

- Director Planning & Environment
- Manager Development Control
- Manager Strategic Planning
- Planning Staff

Development assessment staff are required to take into account the provisions of this policy in relation to any Development Applications.

## 9. Approval History

<i>Review Date</i>	<i>Report to Council</i>	<i>Minute No.</i>	<i>Exhibition Period</i>	<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Rescission Date</i>
9/2018	24/10/2018	290	11/2018	19/12/2018	
11/09/2019	23/10/2019	245	N/A	23/10/2019	
8/8/2023	24/8/2023	160	24/8/2023	26/10/2023	

## 10. Ownership and Approval

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Role</b>
Author	Chief Executive Officer
Owner	Director Planning & Environment
Endorser	Executive Management Team
Approver	Council