



Media release

The Hon Matthew Guy MLC
Minister for Planning

Thursday 15 March 2012

Labor embarrassed by wind energy resurgence

Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, has slammed the Labor Party for its hypocrisy on wind energy policy.

The Minister criticised Brian Tee, the Shadow Minister for Planning, for not bothering to raise in Parliament his concerns about wind policy.

The Minister said the silence from the opposition in State Parliament exposed their wild claims as baseless.

“The Labor opposition has ignored more than 20 opportunities to raise concerns on wind policy in the Parliament this week,” Mr Guy said.

“Labor has remained silent on the topic.

“Further, Labor has said the sky is falling in, that the energy industry in Victoria will falter because of the Baillieu Government’s wind energy changes, however last week five more wind farms have begun construction in Victoria.

“Labor should stop its foolish scare mongering. They are doing their best to talk down jobs, construction and the wind energy industry in Victoria.”

Five wind energy facilities, with a combined total of around 200 turbines have begun construction this month after being given final approval of their development plans since January. The approved plans also take into consideration close management of road use and maintenance to ensure sufficient care is taken to maintain safe roads throughout the area during the construction period.

The five wind energy facilities now under construction are:

- Hawkesdale (developed by Union Fenosa) – 31 turbines approved
- Ryan Corner (developed by Union Fenosa) – 68 turbines
- Mount Gellibrand (developed by Acciona) – 68 turbines
- Woolsthorpe (developed by Wind Farm Developments) – 20 turbines
- Salt Creek (developed by NewEn) – 15 turbines

All of these projects had their permit expiry dates extended by Minister Guy, except for Salt Creek, which was extended by VCAT, and whose development plans were endorsed by Moyne Shire Council.

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The wind energy facilities will have a combined capacity of over 400MW, and represents more than \$400 million of investment, and hundreds of construction jobs in Victoria's south west region.

Development Plans for the Naroghid wind energy facility were this week refused by the Department of Planning and Community Development due to inadequate information being provided. The planning permit was due to expire in July 2011, but was extended by Minister Guy to a 15 March 2012 expiry date.

The proponent will now have the option of a new planning permit application, under the Coalition Government's wind farm policy, which restores community rights and guards against turbines in future projects being placed less than two kilometres from dwellings without owners' consent for the first time.

"The Baillieu Government is getting on with the job of bringing forward investment in regional Victoria, but with fairness and certainty restored to the planning system," Mr Guy said.

The Coalition Government will shortly make another major announcement regarding a sustainable energy project in south west Victoria.

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