

Mortlake Power Station Project

Community Newsletter

No 5 March 2006

This is the fifth in a series of project newsletters and the first for 2006. Our goal is to keep you informed of Origin Energy's progress in gaining approvals for the proposed gas-fired power station 12km west of the township of Mortlake (with a nominal capacity of 1000MW) and a 78km gas pipeline from near Port Campbell to the proposed site.



Local Mortlake excavation contractor undertaking soil testing work on the proposed power station site.

Background

The Environment Effects Statement (EES), Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Works Approval Application, Planning Scheme Amendment and Pipeline Permit Application for the project were released for public comment on 17 November 2005. At that time, the community was invited to formally submit comments on the project. Origin also held information evenings in Mortlake and Timboon to enable community members to ask questions about the project or the EES process.

This newsletter provides an update on issues raised by public submissions and information on the Panel Hearing process taking place in March 2006.

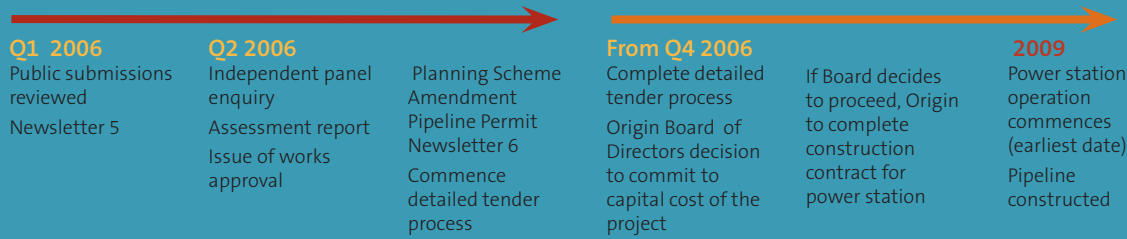
Progress on approvals

The following project activities and milestones were achieved from November 2005 to February 2006:

- The EES, application for works approval and proposed amendment to the Moyne planning schemes were released for public comment from 17 November to 12 January with 10 submissions received in that period (more information is provided overleaf)
- The pipeline permit application was available for public comment from 17 November to 19 December 2005 with one submission received
- Some minor changes to the pipeline route have been proposed following spring flora and fauna surveys undertaken at the proposed power station site and along the proposed pipeline route
- The Directions Hearing for the Panel Hearing was held on 13 February in Mortlake
- The aim of the Directions Hearing was to explain to participants of the Panel Hearing to be held in March, the order of proceedings and the process of the panel
- The Panel Hearing is scheduled to take place in Mortlake in the week commencing 20 March 2006.

Timeline

Indicative earliest possible timing for construction if project approval is received.



Survey and testing carried out on the proposed power station site to assist with developing the technical specification for the tender process.

Submissions received

A total of 10 submissions to the EES were received during the public review period. Two of those were made by nearby landowners. The balance came from local government, state government departments, referral agencies and other organisations. In general, the submissions sought additional information or clarification on some of the issues previously identified during the consultation process. Origin has undertaken further work to provide additional information. In some cases, modifications have been made or mitigation measures agreed with stakeholders to address their concerns. These consultations are ongoing.

Broadly, the issues raised related to:

- The impact of the project on roads and traffic. Origin has committed to developing a Traffic Management Plan with input from Moyne Shire, Corangamite Shire, Vic Roads and emergency service providers to minimize traffic impacts
- Emergency management and training and how Origin Energy and the Country Fire Authority can work together to ensure effective emergency management at the proposed plant during construction and operations

- The potential environmental impacts - such as visual amenity, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, water management and flora & fauna and suggested mitigation measures
- Social and economic issues, such as potential social issues that could be associated with a centralised construction camp, employment opportunities and the impact on regional accommodation availability during the construction phase
- Potential for localised flooding of parts of the proposed power station site and the associated risk of downstream contamination from effluent contained on the site.

The Independent Panel will consider the submissions and Origin's responses in conjunction with the EES, associated approval documents and evidence presented to the Panel at the March hearing. The Panel will produce a report addressing the outcomes of the hearing which will be available from The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) in May or June.



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