

Media Release

13 February 2002

Public Exhibition of the BassGas Project EES/EIS

After nearly nine months of preparation, involving a large number of environmental and technical experts, the Environmental Effects Statement / Environment Impact Statement (EES/EIS) for the BassGas Project has been release for public consultation. The exhibition period will run from 6 February to 22 March 2002 and the community are invited to comment on the proposal.

The BassGas Project involves the development of the Yolla gas field located 147km from the southern coast of Victoria in the Bass Strait.

A pipeline will carry raw gas from the offshore platform to the Kilcunda coastline where it will be drilled under the coastal dunes to avoid any adverse environmental impacts. The pipeline will then proceed to a gas processing plant near Lang Lang where it will be converted into three products. North of the gas plant site, the pipeline will continue and will transport sales gas to the existing Longford Main Line east of Pakenham. The LPG from the gas production process is also likely to be delivered by road tanker to the Shell Refinery at Geelong.

“The BassGas Project represents an extension of Origin Energy’s commitment to greener energy production and will increase the level of competition in the gas market in south east Australia”, Mr Geoff Wearne announced today. “We have inc=vested significant resources and time into ensuring that this project is compatible with the environmental values of the project area and have incorporated a range of environmental management to protect these values.

“We have held extensive discussions with the community, government agencies and special interest stakeholders to ensure that we get this proposal right. It is important to note that the exhibition period for the EES/EIS is only one of a number of ongoing stakeholder forums and Origin is committed to ensuring that community concerns are heard and resolved as soon as possible.”

Origin is continuing to negotiate with individual landholders regarding final alignment of the pipeline within the proposed corridors outlined in the EES/EIS and Mr Wearne is confident of finalising the route shortly. "We have received considerable public support for the project and the benefits it can bring to the local region, south east Australia and the Australian gas market," he said.

Origin will be holding public information sessions to provide the community with adequate opportunity to obtain information about the BassGas Project. These sessions are on:

- Thursday 28th February 2002, at the Kernot Community Centre.
- Monday 4th March 2002, at the Pearcedale Public Hall.
- Thursday 7th March 2002, at the Lang Lang Memorial Hall.
- Tuesday 12th March 2002, at the Kilcunda Community Hall.
- Thursday 14th March 2002, at the Bayles Public Hall.

Additionally, there will be an independent panel hearing and report to the Minister of Planning following the exhibition period, which will address the issues raised in submissions.

Ends

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