

# Community News

## November 2009

## Munmorah – environmental assessment of a proposal to rehabilitate the power station

Delta Electricity has submitted a proposal to rehabilitate the two units at Munmorah Power Station. This project is part of the NSW Government's Energy Reform Strategy and has been identified as one of seven development sites to be sold to the private sector to encourage investment in the development of new base load power generation.

This newsletter provides an update on the project and details of the public exhibition of the Environmental Assessment (EA) of the Munmorah Power Station Rehabilitation project.

### OVERVIEW OF THE MUNMORAH REHABILITATION PROJECT

- The Munmorah Power Station Rehabilitation project involves the rehabilitation of power generating Units 3 and 4 along with associated infrastructure to allow the station to operate as a base load power station. The rehabilitated facility would operate with increased efficiency at a maximum generating capacity of 700 megawatts (MW). The power station would be fuelled either by coal, or natural gas or a combination of both, using the rehabilitated existing generating plant.
- Coal would be provided to the power station via the existing fuel supply routes from Vales Point Power Station, which receives coal via the Wyee Rail Coal Unloader or from local mines via the existing local conveyor network. Options for gas supply include upgrade of the existing Sydney-Newcastle supply system and interconnection with potential developments in gas supplies to the region.

– The main objectives of the project are:

- To maintain base load generating capacity using existing infrastructure to help satisfy NSW's future energy requirements
- Restore the output of Units 3 and 4 to 350 MW each
- To provide this capacity economically by replacing worn and outmoded components with the latest technology available to improve the efficiency and reliability of the existing facility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity generated
- To include modifications or provisions to enable Munmorah to be carbon capture ready
- To minimise and manage any environmental or social impacts which may result from the rehabilitation and ongoing operation of the power station
- To make provisions to enable gas to be used as a fuel source either in combination with coal or as a replacement fuel

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE MUNMORAH REHABILITATION

The Munmorah Power Station Rehabilitation has been deemed a Major Project under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The project is also a Critical Infrastructure project by virtue of a declaration by the Minister for Planning on 26 February 2008 concerning applications for generating facilities prior to 2013.

A Project Application was authorised on 5 June 2009 and submitted to the Department of Planning outlining the proposal along with a Preliminary Environmental Assessment of the project. The Department of Planning consulted with relevant government agencies regarding the application and prepared the requirements for an Environmental Assessment.

Based on those requirements, an Environmental Assessment has now been prepared and submitted to the Department of Planning, along with a draft Statement of Commitments. The Environmental Assessment is being exhibited for public comment from 21 October 2009 to 20 November 2009.

All submissions made during the public exhibition will be considered and addressed in a Submissions Report provided to the Department of Planning. The proposal may be modified to address concerns raised and to minimise impacts identified.

### SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

The Environmental Assessment addresses the key issues indicated in the Director-General's requirements, and can be briefly summarised as:

- There is a need to provide a significant increase in base load generation capacity in NSW within the next five to seven years.
- Munmorah Power Station, being an existing operational power station, has infrastructure (electricity transmission and fuel supply) and a skilled workforce already in place thereby reducing the cost and impact of the project compared to a new development.
- The best commercially available technology would be used to rehabilitate the existing power station including incorporating options for future gas firing which would minimise the level of greenhouse gas emissions.
- The rehabilitated power station would more efficiently use the same fuel energy inputs to produce an additional 100 MW of electricity, increasing energy output from the current 600MW to 700 MW.

- Air quality modelling of the rehabilitated plant, including low Nitrogen Oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) burners and an examination of existing monitoring data has identified that local air quality is well within relevant air quality standards. It indicates that there would be a negligible change in air quality impact following rehabilitation.
- Munmorah will be compliant with new more stringent emission standards with the possible exception of NO<sub>x</sub> when the plant is operating at lower loads during start up and shut down.
- The existing monitoring program has been identified as suitable to quantify any change in air quality.
- Domestic water consumption by the power station is included in allocations to the local water supply authority and Delta Electricity operations are consistent with the objectives of Wyong Shire Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Sub Plan.
- The existing cooling system uses salt water from the Tuggerah Lakes which minimises the consumption of scarce fresh water resources.
- Noise and vibration levels are not expected to exceed guideline requirements under most conditions. Mitigation measures to ensure compliance with noise guidelines in relation to the operation of the upgraded coal delivery conveyor may be required.
- There has been no potential to impact on the flora or fauna from the proposed rehabilitation identified. Any areas of threatened species habitat will be avoided.
- Studies indicate that there is negligible potential for Aboriginal or historic archaeological sites to be located within the project site.
- Any visual modification of the existing built environment would have a relatively low impact as the bulk of the rehabilitation occurs within the existing power station which is a considerable distance from sensitive viewing locations. Changes to the MV conveyor would be expected to have a minor impact.

- All waste products would be re-used, recycled or disposed of in accordance with a Waste Management Plan.
- The proposal would result in little perceivable change from the existing situation for the local community and would offer an extension of employment opportunities to the staff of the Munmorah Power Station and maintenance staff based at Vales Point Power Station and in the community.

The key findings of the environmental assessment indicate that any impacts from the proposed rehabilitation could be kept to a minimum using appropriate measures.

### CENTRAL COAST ASH STORAGE

As coal is an option to fuel a rehabilitated Munmorah Power Station, the Department of Planning required an indication of Delta Electricity's proposal for managing future ash storage at the facility. As part of the Environmental Assessment for the rehabilitation project a feasibility study to demonstrate that viable options for ash storage under possible ownership and operating scenarios has been prepared. Detailed investigation and additional approvals will be required during the life of the rehabilitated power station. The community will be kept informed as this process progresses.

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE MUNMORAH POWER STATION REHABILITATION ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

Consultation with the community is an important part of the environmental assessment process. Submissions will be considered and a Submissions Report will be prepared to address issues raised in the comments provided.

As advertised by the Department of Planning, the EA will be on public exhibition until Friday 20 November 2009 during regular business hours, at the following locations:

- Wyong Council, 16 Hely Street, Wyong;
- Lake Macquarie Council, 126-138 Main Road, Speers Point;
- The Entrance Library and Council Services Centre, 211a The Entrance Road, The Entrance;

- Lake Haven Library and Council Services Centre, Lake Haven Shopping Centre, Goobarabah Avenue, Lake Haven;
- Department of Planning, Information Centre, 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney; and
- Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Level 2, 301 Kent Street, Sydney.

A copy of the EA may also be viewed on the

- Department of Planning website at: <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/>
- Delta Electricity website at [www.de.com.au](http://www.de.com.au)

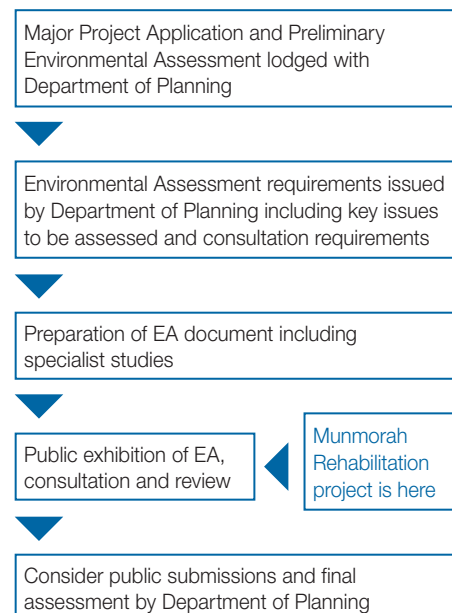
Written submissions should be forwarded to the Department of Planning at the following address no later than 20 November 2009.

#### The Executive Director

Department of Planning  
Major Projects Assessment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The following diagram indicates the status of the project with respect to the environmental planning and assessment process.



**For more information about the project:**  
call the toll free project number  
**1800 057 630** or email  
[munmorahrehabilitation@de.com.au](mailto:munmorahrehabilitation@de.com.au)