

Gloucester Coal Seam Gas Project

Community
information
fact sheet

Number 1
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An overview of the environmental assessment process under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act

Environmental assessment

Application lodgement & preliminary environmental assessment

To commence environmental assessment for the project, Lucas Energy lodged an application for project approval and a preliminary environmental assessment with the Director General of the NSW Department of Planning (DoP) on 6 August 2008.

Initial advertising

The application was advertised in the local newspapers and posted on the Department's website within 14 days of submission.

Initial consultation and list of requirements

The director general will consult all relevant public agencies and councils and develop a list of requirements.

Preparation of the environmental assessment

Lucas Energy will then carry out the assessment in accordance with these requirements and submit it for consideration.

The environmental assessment may contain a draft statement of commitments, the measures proposed by Lucas Energy to minimise the environmental impact of the project.

The DoP will consider the environmental assessment and may ask for additional information or a revised assessment.

Public display & submissions

Once it's accepted by the DoP, the environmental assessment will be publicly displayed for at least 30 days and anyone may make a written submission within that time.

At the end of the display, the director general may provide a copy of the submissions or a summary of the issues raised. Lucas Energy will be asked to respond to the issues and may modify the proposal and the draft statement of commitments to address them.

If the proposal or the statement of commitments is changed in response to the issues raised, a preferred project report describing the revised project would be prepared and made publicly available for information.

Assessment report for the minister

The director general then consults with agencies and councils and provides an assessment report for consideration by the Minister for Planning.

Ministerial review

The Minister for Planning decides whether to approve the proposal, with or without conditions.

If the minister approves the proposal, Lucas Energy considers the approval and determines whether to proceed.



The assessment report and minister's decision will be placed on the Department of Planning's website and potentially in other locations within 14 days. Lucas Energy would also upload the assessment to its website.

Assessing project impacts

The focus of Part 3A of the Act is to ensure the community is consulted and an environmental assessment is undertaken. This assessment will focus on the key issues identified as important by the DoP and other agencies to evaluate the proposal, including potential social, economic or environmental impact.

Part 3A also provides that concept plans for projects may be required by, or submitted to, DoP for approval. Concept plan approvals may consider route development options and determine the future assessment requirements for a project.

This community information fact sheet has been produced by the Gloucester Coal Seam Gas Project:
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Who will carry out the environmental assessment for this project?

The assessment is being conducted by an independent company, in this case, ENSR Australia Pty Ltd. ENSR have a long track record in environmental impact assessment. You can view their details and project history on <http://www.ensr.com.au/>

For more information

The NSW Department of Planning web site has a community guide to the process at: http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/assessingdev/pdf/part3a_communityguide.pdf

Right: Part 3A of the EP&A Act, simplified approval process chart

