

24 November 2008

Minister Barr
Minister for Planning
Legislative Assembly

Dear Minister Barr

Tuggeranong Power Station and Data Warehouses on Block 1610 – EIS

I am writing as a matter of some urgency on behalf of Canberrans For Power Station Relocation Inc (CPR), a community group concerned with this development.

I note that volume two of the report from GHD filed as a draft Environmental Impact Statement contains, for the most part, reprints of the original PA and DA filed in both applications made by the proponents in this matter. There is however a new report, commissioned by ActewAGL, dated 13 October 2008 “The Economic Impact of the Canberra Technology City Project”. This is referred to by GHD in the body of their opinion.

I would like your urgent consideration given to the standing of this report. I was under the impression that time for filing documents in support of the development application, (PA and DA) had passed.

- Has this “Economic Impact” report therefore been accepted by ACTPLA as a submission?
- Will the community have extended time to consider this new report and respond to this report independently of the time allocated to responding to the draft EIS?
- Will ACTPLA consider this report and when will their report be due on this?
- Will this report be taken into account by Golders?
- Will Golders re-engage with the community to discuss the contents of this report?

The difficulty is that deficiencies in the PA and DA identified by ACTPLA in their evaluation and referred to in your letter to ActewAGL, dated 18 August 2008, requesting an EIS, does not allow for ActewAGL to commission and file entirely new reports which then get primary consideration within an EIS.

I do not understand therefore how this new document can now be accepted within the “EIS” as it was commissioned by and on behalf of ActewAGL. It belongs to ActewAGL and cannot, as per the authors’ statement at the front of this document, be relied upon by anyone except ActewAGL.

My understanding was that this report “Draft Environmental Impact Statement” was authored by an independent expert and that this independent expert would commission their own reports on areas of concern, file and analyse information

already in the public domain, evaluate risk independently and ensure the protection of the environment and the community were paramount consideration within this process.

This has clearly not happened here. I note that as per the minutes of a meeting between GHD, the proponents and the ACT Government Agency Stakeholders, on the 16 October 2008, at 9am, which did not include representatives of the community, Viv Straw of GHD had already accepted as “fact” the employment figures detailed within this new report, and felt able to present them as such, at this time, to the Government Agency Stakeholders.

That GHD received, considered, analysed and did their own independent research and verification of these facts, in one calendar day, to the point they felt confident presenting these key issues to this important meeting, is extraordinary to the point of unbelievable.

This one obvious example certainly does not instil confidence in the detail or independent consideration contained within the opinion given on air quality, noise, visual impact, long term environmental effects, etc.

I would therefore like your considered response to this issue and directly explaining under what legislative mechanism has ActewAGL been able to continue to file supporting documents and reports into this process, which have circumvented direct community consideration?

You will of course realise that the community is now in the position of only being capable of commenting on the “opinion” of GHD given on this report, with this report being accepted into the body of supporting documentation via this EIS.

We note that ACTPLA has not had an opportunity of evaluating this document.

We look forward to hearing from you as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Reid', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Bill Reid
President of CPR inc

cc. Mr N. Savery, ACTPLA