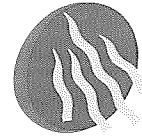




Hon Stephen Robertson MP
Member for Stretton



Queensland
Government

Minister for Natural Resources,
Mines and Energy and
Minister for Trade

MC3978
ME/09/1580

31 JUL 2009

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to a petition (No. 1242-09) lodged with the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 3 June 2009, regarding a proposal to build a gas-fired power station at the corner of Boland Lane and Mulgowie Road, Laidley South. In accordance with the requirement of Standing Orders of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, I am pleased to provide my response to the Petition.

Before a new power station can be built, there are various statutory requirements that must be met, or approvals obtained, including for environmental, technical and safety matters. First and foremost, a new power station will require some sort of development approval. Generally, to obtain development approval, an impact and environmental assessment will need to be completed.

For very large projects, this process may be overseen by the Coordinator-General (COG) under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*. For smaller projects, development approval is the responsibility of the relevant local government authority under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* (IPA). Through the Integrated Development Assessment System (IDAS) under IPA, the development approval granted by a local council includes all other State and Local Government approval-related conditions; for example, site based environmental conditions set by the Department of Environment and Resource Management under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*. Importantly, both the COG impact assessment process and the IDAS process include public consultation.

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In terms of other statutory requirements, power stations are subject to a range of licensing, technical and safety legislation including the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* and *Electrical Safety Act 2002* administered by the Department of Justice and Attorney General, and the *Electricity Act 1994* which is administered by the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI). The environmental activities of power stations are primarily governed by the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, which is administered by the Department of Environment and Resource Management.

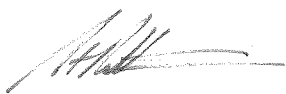
DEEDI administers the licensing of power stations under the *Electricity Act 1994*. Under this Act, the relevant licence would be a Generation Authority, which authorises the connection of specified generating plant to a transmission grid or supply network and the sale of electricity generated (noting that a Generation Authority does not authorise the construction of the power station). Generation Authorities are issued by the Regulator under the Act (i.e. the Director-General of DEEDI).

In considering an application for a Generation Authority, the Regulator must consider and be satisfied of a number of things set out under the *Electricity Act 1994*. This includes considering the relevant government policies about the environment and energy issues and the likely environmental effects of building and operating the power station. The type of information needed to support an application for a Generation Authority means that the environmental, planning and technical processes need to be completed, or nearing completion, before such an application can be made.

The environmental assessment and development approval processes is the responsibility of the Honourable Kate Jones, MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability.

Should you have any queries regarding my advice to you, Mrs Lorelle Hatch, Principal Policy Officer, Energy Regulation and Legislation Unit of Queensland Mines and Energy, will be pleased to assist you and can be contacted on telephone 3239 0046.

Yours sincerely



STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP