

Ted Baillieu MP

Leader of the Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition
Leader of the Opposition
Leader of the Liberal Party
Shadow Minister for the Arts



Phone: 9651 8512 • Fax: 9651 8426
Email: ted.baillieu@parliament.vic.gov.au

Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Media Release

Thursday 13 May 2010

WIND FARM FAIRNESS AND CERTAINTY UNDER A BAILLIEU GOVERNMENT

A Baillieu Coalition Government will restore fairness and certainty to the planning system for wind farms if elected in November.

Launching the Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition's wind farm policy in Ballarat today with Shadow Planning Minister Matthew Guy, Mr Baillieu said the Brumby Government had allowed wind farms to divide country communities.

"Despite being in office for nearly eleven years, Labor has failed to set clear guidelines on location, placement and compensation issues for wind farms," Mr Baillieu said.

"It is time to give local communities the key role in deciding where wind farms will go and restore certainty to the planning process for wind farms."

Key features of the Coalition's wind farm policy include:

- the placement of turbines no less than two kilometres from the nearest home unless a contract between the resident and wind farm developer is agreed;
- the reinstatement of local government as the planning authority for wind farm applications;
- the establishment of a shared payment system for landowners whose properties are within one kilometre of the nearest turbine, as a compensation mechanism for adjacent landholders;
- the establishment of 'no-go' zones for wind farms at places such as Wilson's Promontory, the Mornington and Bellarine Peninsulas, Surf Coast and Great Ocean Road regions, McHarg and Macedon Ranges, Dandenong and Yarra Ranges and sections of the Bass Coast;
- the exclusion of wind farms in or near National and State Parks, designated tourist areas and designated regional population growth corridors; and
- the public availability of all data on the energy output of wind farms.

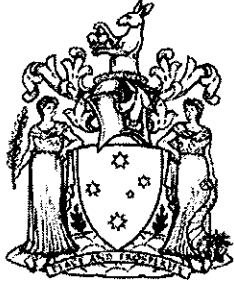
A Baillieu Government will also establish new guidelines relating to the construction and operation of wind energy facilities to monitor noise and strobe lighting impacts on nearby residents as well as shadow flicker and bird kills at wind farm sites.

Mr Baillieu said the Coalition supports the development of the renewable energy sector as an important contributor to the sustainable delivery of Victoria's future energy needs.

"Our wind energy plan is fair and reasonable and will provide certainty to operators and communities. We will minimise the effect of wind farms on our natural environment and ensure that our coastal landscapes are protected.

"This policy is about ending the division caused by Labor's years of inaction on proper wind energy guidelines and will give certainty to the wind energy industry and to communities where wind farms are located," Mr Baillieu said.

Media: Emily Broadbent 0400 390 008



Media release



The Hon Matthew Guy MLC
Minister for Planning

Thursday 3 March 2011

Minister announces first steps to restoring fairness for industry and communities on wind farms

Planning Minister Matthew Guy today announced the Baillieu Government has delivered on its election commitments to ensure homes within two kilometres of proposed wind turbines are considered in planning applications, and local government will have its authority restored for all new wind farm permits.

"These are the first steps in restoring fairness and certainty to the planning system in respect of wind farms," Mr Guy said.

"Amendment VC78 will amend the Victoria Planning Provisions and all local planning schemes to restore decision-making powers to councils for wind farms with a capacity of 30 megawatts or greater," Mr Guy said.

"There is an ongoing working group chaired jointly by the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Municipal Association of Victoria to assist all councils with the management of planning issues related to wind farm developments.

"Amendment VC78 makes changes to strengthen wind farm policy by promoting greater consideration of local amenity impacts, introducing additional information requirements from applicants and updating standards and guidelines.

"Importantly, any new application will require identification of all residential properties within two kilometres of the proposed wind farm," Mr Guy said.

The Minister for Planning will continue to be the responsible authority for most of the approved, but yet-to-be-built projects may require a minor amendment or time extension. Decisions about these matters will be made in conjunction with councils.

Revisions to *Policy and Planning Guidelines for Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria* support the Amendment VC78.

The Coalition has consulted widely on this policy over the past year. Other changes to wind energy facility policy will be implemented by the Baillieu Government progressively to facilitate best practice planning for wind farms.

Amendment VC78 changes:

- **Clause 19.01-1** of the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) to promote greater consideration of the effects of a wind energy facility proposal on the local community.
- **Clause 52.32** to:
 - include additional application requirements, including the need for:
 - a plan showing all dwellings within two kilometres of a proposed turbine.
 - a concept plan of associated transmission infrastructure, electricity utility works and access road options.
 - an assessment of noise impacts prepared in accordance with the *New Zealand Standard NZS 6808:2010, Acoustics – Wind Farm Noise*, in place of the existing 1998 Standard.
 - all applications to be assessed to determine where a 'high amenity noise limit' is appropriate, using procedures set out in the Standard.
 - amend the decision guidelines:
 - with an updated reference to the revised *Policy and Planning Guidelines for Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria (March 2011)*.
 - by referencing the *New Zealand Standard NZS 6808:2010, Acoustics – Wind Farm Noise*.
 - provide transitional arrangements that preserve existing, pre-VC78, provisions for a 12 month period for any application for an extension of time or amendment to an existing wind energy facility planning permit where it does not result in a material change in scale or impact.
- **Clause 61.01** to make local councils the responsible authority for all wind energy facility permits. This removes the previous provision whereby facilities over 30 Megawatt capacity were referred to the Minister for Planning for determination. The changes to Clause 61.01 also include administrative amendments unrelated to the wind energy facility implementation that simplify the operation of the clause.
- **Clause 81.01** by updating reference to the most recent edition of the *Policy and Planning Guidelines for Development of Wind Energy Facilities in Victoria (March 2011)*.

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