



4 August 2016

To whom it may concern

AQUATIC OPINION – LAYOUT AMENDMENTS TO BRANVALLEY WIND ENERGY FACILITY NEAR SUTHERLAND

Scherman Colloty and Associates (SC&A) was approached by EOH Coastal and Environmental Services on to assess the potential impact of the layout amendment against the aquatic assessment submitted early April 2016 and revised in July 2016. Based then on the proposed layout supplied on 2 August 2016, the developer has taken cognisance of the ecological assessment in order to further reduce the potential impact on the terrestrial environment as follows:

1. Removing 10 turbines from the proposed layout.
2. The road widths are reduced from 12m to nine meters
3. Reducing the overall project footprint from 160ha to 110ha.

The layout however retains that same amount of wetland and water course crossings (new and or existing), however with a smaller crossing footprints. In conclusion the final impact of the proposed layout on the aquatic environment with suitable stormwater management and improvement of current water courses crossings the overall impact will remain LOW for the following impacts

- Impact 1: Loss of riparian systems and alluvial water courses in the construction, operation and decommissioning phases
- Impact 2: Impact on riparian systems through the possible increase in surface water runoff on riparian form and function during the operation and decommissioning phases
- Impact 3: Loss of wetlands and wetland function in the construction phase
- Impact 4: Increase in sedimentation and erosion in the construction, operation and decommissioning phases
- Impact 5: Potential impact on localised surface water quality during the construction and decommissioning phases
- Impact 6: Storage of hazardous substances particular in the construction phase
- Impact 7: The No-go Alternative
- Impact 8: Cumulative impacts

The proposed layout for the facility would still seem to have limited impact on the aquatic environment as the proposed structures for the most part have either avoided the delineated watercourses and wetlands with the exception of a number of water course crossings. The layout also makes use of as many existing roads, particularly with regard the wetland crossings, although the wetlands concerned are already impacted by the surrounding roads, dams and farming activities. Thus based on the findings of this study no objection to the authorisation of any of the proposed activities. The only recommendation that remains is that during the final design process, the design team should ensure all the construction camps are located outside of the water courses (including the 32m buffer).

Please don't hesitate to contact me directly should you have any further queries.

Yours Sincerely

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