



**JEFF SEENEY**

*Deputy Premier*

*Minister for State Development, Infrastructure & Planning*



*Member for Callide*

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## **State to assess North Queensland wind farm**

The State Government will now assess the Mount Emerald Wind Farm proposal on the Atherton Tablelands in far North Queensland.

Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning Jeff Seeney said his decision to call in the proposed \$380 million development followed a request from Mareeba Shire Council and would deliver better planning as promised at the election.

*"Under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, I am able to call in development applications that involve matters of state interest," Mr Seeney said.*

*"Wind farm developments attract keen public interest and it is important that development proposals balance community expectation with potential economic and environmental benefits.*

*"Following Mareeba Shire Council's request, I invited affected parties to have their say on the development from 10 April to 14 May this year and I received a number of representations.*

*"After considering all of the matters raised, I have arrived at my decision to call in the development application.*

*"We are delivering on our promise to make better planning decisions for Queensland by developing a state code to assess wind farm proposals.*

*"Labor had no plan for wind farms in our State, whereas once finalised this code will provide consistency to industry and certainty to councils and communities.*

*"The Queensland Government understands councils, which are currently the assessment managers for wind farms, do not have the provisions in their planning schemes specific to wind farms.*

*"Nor do most councils have the resources or expertise required to assess these technical developments and outsourcing assessments can be costly."*

The proposal for the Mount Emerald Wind Farm at Arriga includes up to 75 turbines to potentially generate enough electricity to power 75,000 homes each year. It is estimated 158 local jobs could be created over the potential development's two-year construction phase.

Mr Seeney said given the complexity of the proposed development, independent assessments will be undertaken to evaluate economic, environmental and community impacts and benefits.

“The Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning will use the information gained in the independent assessment and consider the application against the relevant planning instruments before making a recommendation on whether or not the proposed development should proceed,” Mr Seeney said.

“Affected parties will receive notice of my final decision, which is expected to be made later this year.”

For more information about a Ministerial call in visit

<http://www.dsdiq.qld.gov.au/development-applications/ministerial-call-in.html>