

Tuesday, 4 December 2007

## **Ourimbah-Wamberal environmental assessment on display**

The community is being encouraged to provide comments on the environmental assessment for the planned Ourimbah-Wamberal power line, which is on display from today.

The project is part of a \$50 million upgrade to the local electricity network that also involves development of a new zone substation in Willoughby Road. The new power line will link the substation to EnergyAustralia's bulk supply point at Ourimbah.

EnergyAustralia's General Manager Network, Geoff Lilliss, said strong community input had helped form the proposed project outlined in the environmental assessment.

"We have listened to the local community throughout our two-year consultation period," Mr Lilliss said.

"Their input has been vital in helping us make changes to the route and design of the proposed power line.

"We are continuing to consult with the local community on the project – that's why we have written to 500 homes in the area to inform them about this assessment."

Features outlined in the environmental assessment include:

- Construction confined to an existing easement between Ourimbah and Tumby Umbi to avoid clearing of bushland;
- Design in Bohringer Lane and Hansens Road that halves the number of poles and reduces the number of wires in these streets;
- Line design and placement on Tumby Road that significantly reduces EMF impacts;
- Use of existing poles near the intersection of The Central Coast Highway and Tumby Road to observe environmental regulations around Wamberal Lagoon; and
- Undergrounding of 3.2km of the line through dense residential streets.

"The overhead section of the line along Tumby Road will be 58 metres from the nearest school building at Wamberal Public School and 94 metres from the nearest school building at Tumby Umbi Campus," Mr Lilliss said.

"This means that EMF levels in either school building will not change as a result of the line and levels at the school boundaries will be less than one per cent of the draft national standards for EMF."

Demand for power on the Central Coast is growing at about 5% a year – almost double the level of growth across the EnergyAustralia network.

To help cater for that demand, more than \$320 million is being invested in the electricity network on the Central Coast – including this proposed upgrade.

The REF document can be viewed at EnergyAustralia's Tuggerah offices, 14 Pioneer Avenue, Tuggerah Business Park. It will also be available on the EnergyAustralia website.

Submissions on the REF will close on Friday, December 14.

Mr Lilliss said EnergyAustralia would examine submissions on the assessment before approving construction. EnergyAustralia hoped to start construction in early in 2008.

**Media contact: EnergyAustralia News Pager 02 9962 9754**