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## Ararat Wind Farm

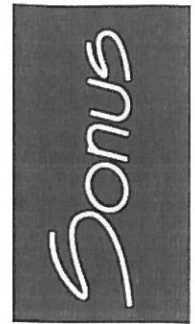
### Noise Complaint Evaluation and Response Plan

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT	
<u>Ararat</u>	PLANNING SCHEME
PERMIT NO. <u>09/004 799</u>	
ENDORSED PLAN	
SHEET <u>1</u>	TO OF <u>5</u>
SIGNED <u>[Signature]</u>	FOR
MINISTER FOR PLANNING	
DATE: <u>2 AUG 2013</u>	

S2894C19

July 2013

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT	
<u>Northern Grampians</u>	PLANNING SCHEME
PERMIT NO. <u>5. 2009. 94. 1</u>	
ENDORSED PLAN	
SHEET <u>1</u>	TO OF <u>5</u>
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

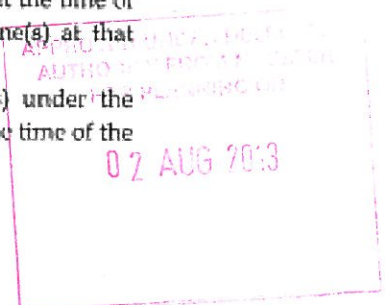
The planning permits for the Ararat Rural City and Northern Grampians Shire Councils<sup>[1]</sup> provide conditions for the use and development of the Ararat Wind Farm wind energy facility and associated infrastructure. The Permits have identical conditions and are hereafter referenced singularly as the "Permit".

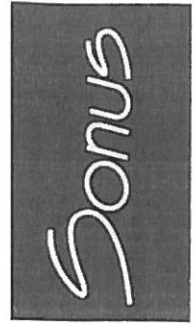
The Permit includes requirements for the preparation of a Noise Complaint Evaluation and Response Plan for approval by the Minister for Planning prior to the use of the wind farm.

## 2 PLANNING PERMIT CONDITIONS

The relevant excerpt from the Permit is provided below:

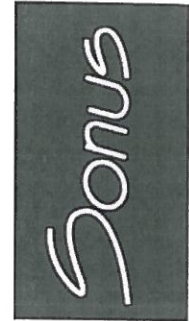
15. Before the use begins the proponent must prepare a detailed noise complaint evaluation and response plan in consultation with the Environment Protection Authority and the Ararat Rural City Council. The plan must be submitted to, and approved by, the Minister for Planning. This plan must include the following elements:
  - a) a toll free noise complaint telephone service;
  - b) the erection of a sign on site advising of the complaints telephone number;
  - c) minimum recording requirements for noise complaints (that is: date, time, noise description and weather conditions at the receptor);
  - d) a process for determination whether the noise complaint is a breach of Condition 11;
  - e) a response protocol for confirmed breaches including, but not limited to:
    - (i) determination of the meteorological circumstances at the time of the breach and the operational status of the turbine(s) at that time;
    - (ii) noise optimisation of the relevant wind turbine(s) under the same meteorological circumstances as occurred at the time of the breach;





- (iii) in the event of a further breach the selective shut down of the relevant wind turbine(s) or turbines in the same meteorological circumstances;
  - (iv) where under the same meteorological conditions subsequent confirmed noise breaches occur, the decommissioning of the relevant turbine(s);
- f) a register of complaints, responses and rectifications which may be inspected by the Minister for Planning and the Ararat Rural City Council; and
- g) provision for review of the complaint, any necessary improvement and an evaluation process 12 months after commencement of the operation of the wind energy facility.

This Noise Complaint Evaluation and Response Plan has been prepared in response to the Permit requirements.



### 3 NOISE COMPLAINT EVALUATION AND RESPONSE PLAN

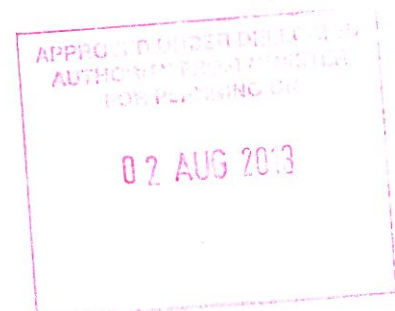
#### 3.1 Noise Complaints

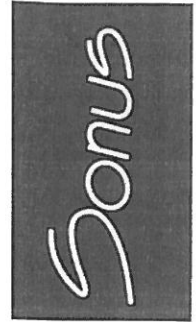
##### 3.1.1 Complaint Lodgment

1. A toll free noise complaint telephone number will be established and maintained; and
2. A sign on the site to advise the public of the toll free noise complaint telephone number will be established and maintained.
3. The toll free noise complaint telephone number will also be provided on the project website.

##### 3.1.2 Complaint Receipt

1. Record all details to an electronic (computer based) complaint log such as an Excel spreadsheet;
2. Provide an answering service for the receipt of after-hour complaints. Return all calls made to the answering service within the next business day. Record the time of the returned call/s if unsuccessful. Continue to call on each subsequent business day in the circumstance where the complainant does not have an answering service;
3. Record the following complainant details:
  - o Location of the dwelling (if provided);
  - o Contact details of the complainant (if provided);
  - o The time of the complaint;
  - o Confirmation that the complainant has been informed that the complaint will be logged but no further action will be taken if the location and contact details are not provided (if relevant).





4. Record the following noise source details:

- What is the subjective description of the noise?
- Does the noise relate to the typical operation of the wind farm?
- Does the noise relate to the operation of the wind farm under certain weather conditions? If so, what are those weather conditions?; and
- Does the noise relate to a new noise source that has not appeared previously during the typical operation of the wind farm?

### 3.2 Noise Response

#### 3.2.1 Maintenance Issues or Mechanical Defects

1. Determine whether the issue is related to a maintenance issue or a mechanical defect based on either the:
  - information provided during the Complaint Receipt; or
  - discussion with operational employees; or
  - an inspection of the location during the conditions of the complaint;
2. Where the issue is related to a maintenance issue or a mechanical defect, rectify the issue and provide the complainant with a summary of the above investigations. No further action is required.

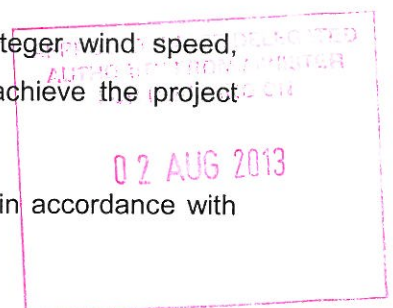
#### 3.2.2 Typical Operation

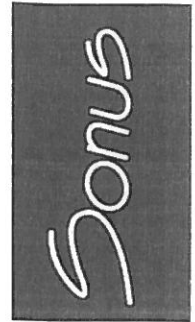
1. Where the issue is not related to a maintenance issue or a mechanical defect, review the "Noise Management Strategy" (NMS) document prepared under the separate Noise Compliance Testing Plan (refer Appendix) to determine the following:
  - a) Whether compliance noise monitoring has been conducted at the dwelling; or
  - b) Whether compliance noise monitoring has been conducted at a dwelling in the vicinity of the complainant that is closer to the nearest turbine;
2. In the circumstance where both 1a) and 1b) are not confirmed, proceed to Step 7;





3. In the circumstance where either 1a) or 1b) are confirmed, compare the operational status of the turbines, the weather conditions at the time of the complaint and any potential change in local conditions that might result in modified results such as the construction of structures, change in vegetation or the installation of pumps or air conditioning units against the conditions that underpin the NMS document as relevant;
4. Where the wind farm is found to be operating consistently with the conditions of the NMS and there has been no change in the local conditions, provide the complainant with a summary of the above investigations and a copy of the NMS, where that document has not been provided to the complainant previously. Record the above in the electronic complaints log. No further action is required;
5. Where the wind farm is found to be operating inconsistently with the operational conditions of the NMS, modify the operation accordingly and provide the complainant with a summary of the above investigations, the actions taken and a copy of the NMS, where that document has not been provided to the complainant previously;
6. After one week of modified operation, review the operating modes to confirm operation in accordance with the NMS and record in the electronic complaints log. No further action is required;
7. In all other circumstances, review the NMS document and determine the predicted noise levels at the complainant's location;
8. Where the predicted noise levels do not exceed 35 dB(A) at any integer wind speed at the complainant's location, provide the complainant with a summary of the above investigations and a copy of the NMS, where that document has not been provided to the complainant previously. Record the above in the electronic complaints log. No further action is required;
9. Where the predicted noise levels exceed 35 dB(A) at any integer wind speed, determine the modifications to the NMS document, if any, to achieve the project criteria in accordance with the Noise Compliance Testing Plan;
10. Implement the changes, if any, and conduct compliance testing in accordance with Noise Compliance Testing Plan;





11. Prepare a revised NMS document in accordance with the Noise Compliance Testing Plan;
12. Review the implications of the revised NMS for dwellings other than that of the complainant and repeat compliance testing at those dwellings if required;
13. Provide the revised NMS to the Minister for Planning for approval with a summary of the above investigations and a copy of the NMS to the Ararat Rural City Council, the Northern Grampians Shire Council, the complainant and to all dwellings where an NMS has been previously distributed. Record the above in the electronic complaints log. No further action is required.

#### 3.2.3 Review

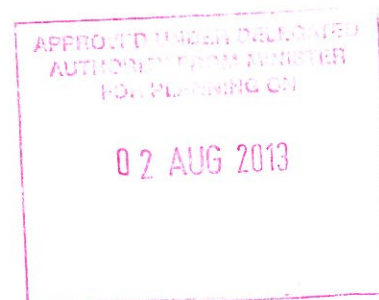
1. A review of the Noise Complaint Evaluation and Response Plan and the Noise Complaints register will be conducted every 12 months. Any recommended modifications (including status quo) will be reported to all complainants in that 12 month period and to the Minister for Planning, the Ararat Rural City Council and the Northern Grampians Shire Council;
2. The report will include a summary of the complaints and the actions taken in the preceding 12 month period.

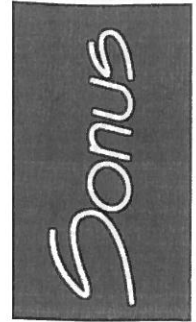




## References

1. Ararat Rural City Council Permit No. 09/004799 and Northern Grampians Shire Council Permit No. 5.2009.94.1.





## **APPENDIX – NOISE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (NMS)**

Permit Condition 13 requires the preparation of a Noise Compliance Testing Plan.

The Noise Compliance Testing Plan has been prepared separately. Section 4.3 of the Noise Compliance Testing Plan includes the following requirements for a Noise Management Strategy (NMS) document:

- Results for the primary testing for each dwelling in a graphical form;
- Results for any required supplementary testing for each dwelling in a tabulated form;
- The make, model and sound power levels in octave bands of all turbines, identified using a consistent project nomenclature;
- The turbines that are to operate under reduced noise level modes;
- The modes that each turbine must operate under and the wind speeds and directions that initiate that mode;
- The turbines required to be parked and the wind speeds and directions that initiate that parking;
- Photographs of the noise logging location and a general description of the local conditions in the vicinity of the location including structures, vegetation, and any noise generating plant and equipment;
- The percentage of downwind conditions per month per dwelling.

The NMS document will be provided to the Ararat Rural City Council, the Northern Grampians Shire Council and the Minister for Planning.

The wind farm will operate in accordance with the NMS document.

Changes to the NMS document will be subject to approval by the Minister for Planning in accordance with Permit Condition 14(c).