


NOTICE OF DECISION AND STATEMENT OF REASONS

Section 55 of the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (EP Act)
Regulations 57(2) and 63(1) of the *Environment Protection Regulations 2020* (EP Regulations)

Name of proposed action	Jabiru Power Station
Proponent	Northern Territory Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (DCMC)
NT EPA reference	EP2021/006 Referral accepted 6 April 2021
Description of proposed action	To construct and operate a hybrid power station (solar and diesel) to supply electricity to Jabiru. The power station will be located on Commonwealth land within the existing boundary of the Jabiru Town Plan on Lot 2303, land zoned UJ (Utilities). It will consist of five diesel generators (0.9 MW each) and a ground-mounted solar photovoltaic array (3.9 MW). It will be remotely operated to provide power to Jabiru via existing infrastructure owned and managed by Power and Water Corporation. The project life is expected to be 25 years.
Nature of proposed action	Utilities (power station)
Person authorised to make decision	Dr Paul Vogel AM – Chairperson, Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA)
Decision	<p>The proposed action does not have the potential to have a significant impact on the environment (section 55 of the EP Act)</p> <p>Environmental impact assessment is not required in accordance with regulation 57(2) (a) of the EP Regulations</p>
Signature	
Date of decision	7 June 2021
Matters considered under EP Regulation 56	<p>The NT EPA has considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the accepted referral (including the referral form, referral report and appendices) • submissions received in relation to the referral information during the public consultation period 7 April 2021 to 7 May 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ public submissions received: 0 ○ government authority submissions received: 11
Consultation	The government agency submissions confirm that the proponent has used appropriate survey tools, assessments and available information to provide a reasonable understanding about the condition of the existing environment and that the proposed activity is unlikely to cause a

significant impact, provided appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

Statement of Reasons

Overview

The Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) considers that the proposed action has the potential to impact environmental values associated with four environmental factors¹, however the potential impacts are not considered to be significant and the NT EPA has decided that environmental impact assessment is not required. The reasons for the decision are outlined below.

The NTEPA is of the view that the potential impacts can be adequately managed through implementation of the proposed action in accordance with the referral information and the proponent's proposed avoidance and mitigation measures. Advice provided by the government agencies and the NT EPA will assist to further minimise the potential impacts.

Justification

Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrestrial ecosystems – The proposal poses a low risk to threatened species likely to be in or near to the development area. Any risk to Black-footed Tree-rats (BFTRs) using the area on a seasonal basis is likely to be reduced by the proposed measure to improve the suitability of the surrounding habitat for BFTRs by reducing fire frequency and weeds in the proposed 295 ha area adjacent to the proposal site. The proponent has committed to improving and maintaining the Dry season condition of the Black-footed Tree-rat habitat adjacent to the proposed location for the Jabiru Power Station for the life of the project.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrological processes – There is potential for increased runoff from the solar panels. Sediment retention basins are proposed to control change to hydrologic processes and erosion during construction. The increase in runoff is not considered to be capable of having a significant impact. To further avoid and minimise potential impacts to surface runoff during clearing and land preparation, the Rangelands Division recommend consideration of permanent stormwater infrastructure design and installation in accordance with advice from a certified professional in erosion and sediment control.
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atmospheric processes – The proposal is expected to generate 102,999 tonnes of carbon emissions over its 25-year life-span. The proposal includes provision for 50% of power generation to be from renewable energy, contributing to minimising greenhouse gas emissions. The proponent advised that the capacity for the power station to operate in zero diesel operation, means that when technology developments improve battery energy storage and photovoltaics, the renewable energy fraction could be significantly higher in the future. • Air Quality – Emissions from the diesel generators that are proposed to be installed in Jabiru are unlikely to have a significant impact on the ambient air quality of Jabiru. To minimise impact, the proponent has committed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ choosing modern equipment with the lowest practical emissions of pollutants to air ○ demonstrating that the diesel generators will comply with Australian stationary source emission standards for air quality by ensuring equivalent or better than the standards of concentration for stationary fuel burning equipment are prescribed under the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations (Clean Air) Regulation 2010</i> [NSW] (available at: https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2010-0428).

¹ [NT EPA Environmental factors and objectives](#)

- carrying out emissions testing during commissioning to benchmark emissions against manufacturer specifications and conform optimal operation, and ensuring this is done in accordance with the NSW Approved Methods – Sampling & Analysis ([Approved methods for the sampling and analysis of air pollutants \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://nsw.gov.au))
- ensuring as low as reasonably practical sound power levels, minimal vibration, tonal and impulsive noise characteristics to minimise the likelihood of causing noise nuisance at sensitive receptors during meteorological conditions when noise is likely to travel long distances.

People

- **Culture and heritage** – An archaeological and cultural heritage survey was undertaken for the entire Jabiru town lease area, including the location of the proposed power station. No cultural and heritage sites were identified to be present on the Project area during the survey.

The Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Certificate issued for Lots 2303, 2306 and 1428 indicates that there are no recorded sacred sites within the boundary of the proposed project.

The archaeological consultant makes a number of recommendations that the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities, Heritage Branch supports, including provision of cultural heritage induction to all staff and contractors working in Jabiru, installation of a 10 m buffer around any culturally modified trees and reporting any suspected Aboriginal archaeological materials are found during the course of works.

Other environmental factors

The NT EPA considered other environmental factors during its consideration of the referral, and the impact on those factors is not considered significant.

Conclusion

The NT EPA has determined that the proposed Jabiru Power Station does not have potential to have a significant impact on the environment due to the nature, extent and scale of the proposed action, provided appropriate design, planning, construction, operation and mitigation measures are implemented.

Environmental impact assessment of the proposed action is not required.

In making its decision under EP Regulation 57(2)(a), the NT EPA has considered:

- the objects of the Act in section 3 of the EP Act
 - the purposes of the environmental impact assessment process in section 42 of the EP Act
 - the matters under regulation 56 of the EP Regulations.
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