



**ACKMA Inc.**

Australasian Cave and Karst Management Association Inc.

Incorporated in Victoria (Registration No: A0031855P)

██████████ Court

American River SA 5221

[President@ackma.org](mailto:President@ackma.org)

22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023

**Hills of Gold Wind Farm SSD 9679**

**(Refer our letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2021)**

ACKMA – the Australasian Cave and Karst Management Association – is an association concerned with the conservation, presentation and management of caves and karst. Land areas with caves and karst both private and public and its flora, fauna, geology and hydrology are interrelated and are a focus of our interests. ACKMA has members from five continents, with most members from Australia and New Zealand. Members include scientists, managers of show caves and karst areas, guides, rangers, and cavers.

The ACKMA membership includes organisations and individuals that have research, management and recreational interests in caves and karst. Karst is a term used to describe a landscape principally formed by the dissolution of rock and characterised by landforms such as caves, closed and underground drainage systems. As an organisation, ACKMA advocates and facilitates sustainable management of caves and karst and encourages public education and research and training to improve cave and karst management.

I write to express the Association's concerns about the Hills of Gold Wind Farm proposal, particularly the intent to clear some 487 hectares of vegetation -native and introduced- as well as direct and indirect impacts on the nearby Timor Caves and other geological features and also bats which roost in, and in forest around, the caves which they forage in the area proposed for the wind farm.

ACKMA acknowledges the commitment in developing alternative renewable energy.

Our concerns surround the clearing of habitat to install and maintain this project. It destroys the connectivity of habitat linking reserves and national parks, much of which is critically endangered ecological communities.

We wish to point out a disparity between the homes for wildlife that this project only has to be at least 100m buffer from blade tip to nearest national park/nature reserve canopy and yet setback 2km from homes for humans. We are particularly concerned about bats and the habitat supporting their food sources of insects. This is regardless of them being cave dwelling or forest dwelling, their food and cover when hunting. As stated in our original letter, ACKMA is firmly of the view this Hills of Gold Wind Farm renewable energy proposal on the basis it is intent on sacrificing valuable habitat and will have negative impact through hydrological processes on geological features such as fissures, grikes, sinks and caves.

Yours sincerely

Ian Eddison



President ACKMA