

UNSUITABLE LOCATION = UNACCEPTABLE RISK

Timor / Isis River Community Presentation

Independent Planning Commission
Hills of Gold Wind Farm (HOG Wind Farm)
February 2024



Unsuitable Location =
Unacceptable Risk

Community
Engagement
(or Lack of it)

Upper Hunter Council - Three Submissions

The First - Not substantially addressed*
 The Second - Not published, Not Responded to??
 The Third - No Issues apparently



* Other than VPA

Upper Hunter Council - Development Control Plan 2015/2023

Multiple Breaches of the UHSC Development Control Plan 2015 / 2023

Proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm UHSC DCP Breaches updated post amended Report 22022

UHSC DCP	DCP SUPPORTING INFORMATION & CRITERIA REQUIRED	HILLS OF GOLD EIS / AMENDED REPORT RESPONSE	MET/NOT MET
Visual Impact (8c.5.O, p 137)	Where wind turbines are proposed on ridge lines or visible above a ridge line, assessment should include: i) computer modelling to a minimum distance of 10 kms from affected ridge line.	To date, there has still been no public visual computer modelling conducted on the Timor/Upper Hunter side (the southern side) of the ridge line. Engie continually minimises and underestimates the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) by setting its impact at 4550m. 5450 m short of minimum 10 kms distance the UHSC DCP expects. Setting such a short ZVI, means many properties have been excluded. After strong protest within Submissions to the EIS, 3 Timor/Crawney properties have had a photomontage. Yet even though properties are within 3600m of the nearest turbine their impact has been downgraded from low to negligible and from high to moderate. This is the case when NAD 72 is deemed to have 23 turbines visible, 17 within 8000m of the dwelling. NAD 73 will have 24 turbines visible within 8000m of the dwelling; NAD 01 will have 7 turbines within 4500 m. NAD will have a minimum of 28 turbines visible from the dwelling. Engie has been able to downgrade the Visual Impact by the suggestion of planting trees that may take over 10 years to screen out the entire view of the Great Dividing Range!	Not Met
	Where wind turbines are proposed on ridge lines or visible above a ridge line, assessment should include: i) photomontages which should depict night lighting in accordance with CASA requirements.	No photomontages in either the EIS or the Amendment Report for night lighting on this project have been conducted at all - none on either northern or southern (UHSC side) ridge line. The EIS was deliberately misleading, assessing no night lighting would be required. However, it is a fact that CASA has required night lighting on all wind farms in NSW above 150 m.	Not Met

Proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm UHSC DCP Breaches updated post amended Report 22022

Cumulative Impact (8c.7.C, p 139)	Ridge lines dominated with wind turbines will not be favoured	<p>April 2021 where 25 locals attended – the entire group voiced opposition and concerns, none of which were reflected in the Amendment Report. Engie representatives gave more misleading information saying “there will be no more than 10 night lights” totally ignores our request that the Amendment Report cite that they had not included Timor in consultations and omitted new information related to potential road usage. This disregard for proper consultation and participation of the Timor community accounts for minimal to almost no attendance at the subsequent Info Hubs that Engie has held – 3 attendees over 2 Hub meetings. They simply are not trustworthy.</p> <p>The initial EIS proposed 70 turbines, each 230 m high, along the ridge line of the Great Dividing Range. The Great Dividing Range at this point is between 1100 - 1400 m in height.</p> <p>The Amendment Report has removed 5 turbines and so the number is now 65 turbines. The removal of 5 turbines has done nothing to reduce the impact of this industrial infrastructure and its massive impact on this section of the Great Dividing Range.</p> <p>The proposal abuts the boundaries of both the Crawney Pass NP and The Ben Hall's Gap Nature Reserve and State Forest.</p> <p>National Parks & Wildlife Service requested in their submission to the NSW DPIE “Appropriate setbacks are required of wind turbines (WTGs) from BRGRNR and CPNP” to minimise potential impact of blade strike on birds and bats.</p> <p>In February 2022 NPWS has now asked for the removal of all turbine blades from Ben Hall's Gap NP to protect bird strike and microbats from blade strike and ensure its use of fixed wing aircraft to fight bushfire and avoid burning the Threatened</p>	Not Met
Distances from public roads and boundaries (8c.7.E, p 139)	The proposal should not be located with a distance of 460m from boundary of a formed public road or a non-host property boundary.		Not Met

Proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm UHSC DCP Breaches updated post amended Report 22022

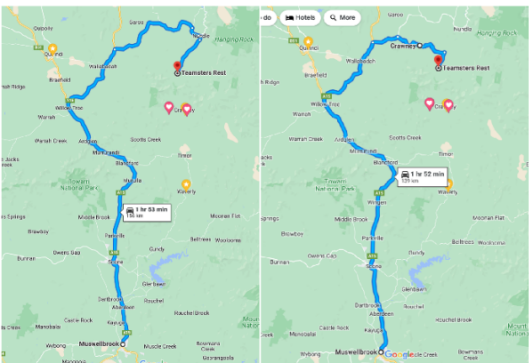
Geotechnical hazards (8c.5.G, p136 +10C)	A Geotechnical report must be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced person that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> considers all relevant matters relating to the development of the land, as outlined in this section, including on and off site impacts arising from development. includes recommendations to be applied in the approval and construction of the development. This report is required for i) land potentially subject to instability, slip or other mass movement i) steep land (slopes generally 1n 3 or greater) ii) significant land surface disturbance large scale industrial or commercial development. 	<p>Like the EIS, this Addendum Report contains no indication of the CPSS (Certified Professional Soil Scientists) status, or the qualifications of the Soil Scientists, Soil Surveyors or Geomorphologists, who prepared it. Geotechnical information in the Addendum Report is vague, misleading, poorly referenced and poorly geo-referenced.</p> <p>No Australian standard mapping practice has been used to provide risk or suitability information on this Project.</p> <p>No map based on soil profiles and fieldwork, nor any relevant soil laboratory data are presented.</p> <p>No mapped landslides, they are simply mentioned as occurring.</p> <p>No attempt has been made to look for landslips under the Development Footprint and along the whole route of proposed roads.</p> <p>No attempt has been made to do a soil survey, no soil profiles have been done as per the relevant Australian Standards for soil survey.</p> <p>Engie's Table 2-15/Soil Profile Summary Wind Farm Ridge line and Table 2-2 Soil Profile Switching Station Site – the claim that this is a soil profile description is false and does not meet any requirements for soil profile description at all. No engineering soil analyses are given.</p> <p>Whilst the Addendum Report has attempted to map slopes along the Development Footprint they have not used the map correctly for LSC classes because there is no soil information</p>	Not Met
1	Applicants must demonstrate that more suitable alternative development sites are not feasible - Slope of land determined by a registered surveyor - Measures recommended in a geotechnical report to reduce or minimise hazards are to be implemented		Not Met

Upper Hunter LGA

Local Rural Road Impacts

UHSC requested that as a condition of DPE consent that UHSC Local Roads not be used.
 This has not happened

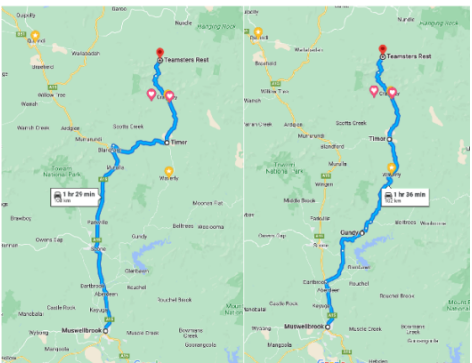
Access from the South via Nundle ~ 35km further and ~25 minutes longer!!



HOG Farm Access
 Route: Via Wallabadah and Nundle
 Distance: 156 km
 Time: 1 Hr 53 mins

HOG Farm Access
 Route: Via Morrisons Gap Road
 Distance: 139 km
 Time: 1 Hr 52 mins

Contractors from the South will obviously travel via Gundy and Timor to save time and km!!



HOG Farm Access
 Route: Via Blandford and Timor
 Distance: 108 km
 Time: 1 Hr 29 mins

HOG Farm Access
 Route: Via Gundy and Timor
 Distance: 102 km
 Time: 1 Hr 36 mins

Broader Community Impacts

- 9 months disruption to the businesses and communities of the villages of Murrurundi, Aberdeen and Willow Tree.
- 6 OSOM / day / 9 months.
- There are **no bypasses** for these villages.
- Highlighted by the Timor Community to the UHSC (Mayor, Councillors and GM) in Feb and March 2021.

*These communities, to this day, remain largely **unaware** of the disruption this Project will cause.

**This excludes any cumulative impacts from future New England / Northern NSW RE Proposals

Upper Hunter Council - ~~Community~~ Council Enhancement Fund

UHSC with the proponents have effectively restructured the CEF to move funding away from the most impacted communities

Originally: 100% CEF to Impacted Communities within 20 km

Now: Only 33% CEF to Impacted Communities within 20 km

7.6.2 Community Enhancement Fund

As discussed in Section 6.2.4.5, the Project proposes a Voluntary Planning Agreement in the form of a Community Enhancement Fund. A draft Community Enhancement Fund Charter has been consulted with Tamworth Regional, Upper Hunter and Liverpool Plains councils. The operation of the Fund commits to the following in accordance with the draft Charter:

- annual contributions of \$2,500 per WTG per year from the Project into the Fund;
- establishment of a Community Enhancement Fund Committee to administer and oversee the operation of the Fund, and includes membership from the community, at least one indigenous member, and representatives from each of the three councils; and
- protocols for the assessment and funding approval of projects with a direct benefit to the community within 20 km of the Project, based on established eligibility criteria across four key areas, being community upgrades, social or environment, education and flexible projects determined by majority of the committee.



Turbines in LGA	11 turbines of 64 turbines (based on current design)	
Fund	Total \$ Amount (indicative, subject to finalising the CIV)	Timing
Community Enhancement Fund 0.5% CIV	\$661,718	\$20,625 Annually from the start of construction and for the life of operations (32 years)
Regional Enhancement Fund 1.0% CIV	\$1,323,437	\$44,171 Annually for the life of operations (30 years) OR (for negotiation) \$661,718 during construction if capital works project/s could be agreed on with the Council that benefit the wider region (Upfront Payment) and then \$22,000 annually for the life of operations (30 years)
Total	\$1,985,155	\$64,796 per annum + CPI

Unsuitable Location = Unacceptable Risk

Western/Southern Project Area
Great Dividing Range
Isis Valley

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Hills of Gold Wind Farm (HOG Wind Farm)
February 2024

Suitable Location =
Acceptable Risk

Ideal Wind Farm

Flat historically cleared Land



As depicted : DPE Assessment Report HOG
WFarm

VERSUS

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Great Dividing Range

Mountainous Pristine Environment



Reality - Great Dividing Range - HOG WFarm proposal

Has the NSW Government now backflipped on protection of the Peel and Isis River Headwaters and the Great Dividing Range BioDiversity? What has changed in 5 years?

Crawney National Park Management Plan DPE 2019

1.2 Statement of significance

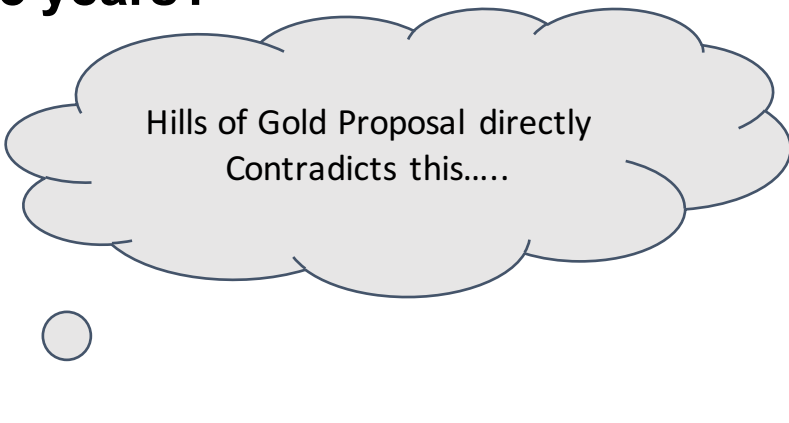
Crawney Pass National Park is significant because of its natural and cultural values.

Landscape and catchment values

The park encompasses an area of steep topography and terraced landscape with scenic values typical of the Liverpool Range. **It protects the headwaters of the Isis and Peel rivers. The park is part of a regional corridor providing habitat connectivity along the Liverpool Range and is also located within the broader Great Eastern Ranges Initiative conservation corridor.**

Biological values

The park protects habitat for 13 threatened native animal species and three plant species of conservation significance. Of particular significance is a population of Booroolong frog recorded in the park. This frog has experienced massive population declines in parts of its range and is now highly restricted within New South Wales.



Hills of Gold Proposal directly
Contradicts this.....

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Biodiversity

Sample of the Clearing by the Major Landholder prior to EIS being published

Before (Six Maps 2017)



After Google Maps (Winter 2020)



Tamworth LLS approved “Agricultural” clearing in 2020
HOG W Farm Project Area (WTG21&22)



195. Biodiversity impacts must be offset prior to the Applicant carrying out any development that could directly or indirectly impact biodiversity values requiring offset in accordance with the requirements of NSW Biodiversity Offset Scheme.

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186. The Department is aware that land clearing has occurred on the project site prior to any approval of vegetation clearing under this development application. The Department acknowledges that some of this clearing has occurred with approval under the *Local Land Services Act 2013* (LLS Act), and some areas had been cleared without prior approval and a Biodiversity Conservation Order has been issued for these areas. The Department notes that these cleared areas have been included in the calculation of the offset credit liability for the project.

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SOILS AND WATER AND THE
ENVIRONMENT

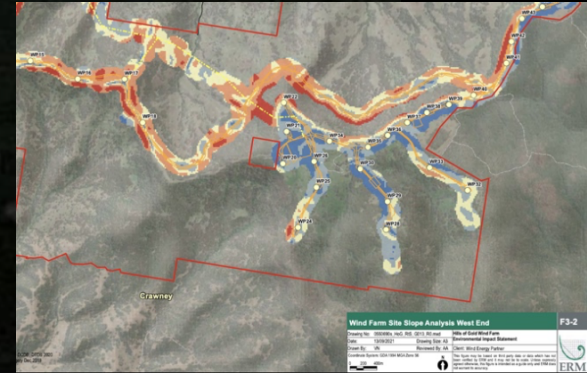
Great Dividing Range (Crawney NP to Ben Halls Gap NR)

Looking towards the
Western Section/South Facing Slopes - Project area - Hills of Gold Wind Farm



Pages Creek Fire – Dec 2019 – Looking up Perry's Creek towards the Wind Farm Project Area (WTG 18 - 25)

WTGs 2,7,8,14,15,16,17,18,20,22,24,28,29,32,33 - All on the Precipice



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