

I am opposed to the proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm project. Nundle is not in a REZ. Based on this the project should be rejected. Areas near REZs need to be protected from development.

As a teacher at Nundle Public School I am very concerned about the impacts of heavy machinery on Lindsays Gap Road. This is already a treacherous road used daily by multiple logging trucks. More than one accident involving these trucks occurred in 2023. Some of my students use the school bus that travels this route. The safety of our youngest and most vulnerable community members must not be compromised. Our already busy, narrow, poorly maintained country roads are not suitable for trucks of the scale needed to transport turbine parts. I propose that these trucks be prevented from using Lindsays Gap Road between the hours of 7 and 9am and 3 to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

I am opposed to the project because of the catastrophic impact it will have upon the catchment area for Nundle Creek and the Peel River. This catchment provides water for hundreds of thousands of people and cannot be compromised. Without access to water communities will die. Water is the lifeblood of rural Australia, and no one understands the existential threat water shortages place upon us like people completely reliant upon dams and rivers to run farms, businesses and homes. Drought conditions experienced over the past decade has merely reinforced this. Our farms help feed this nation and in this regard our importance cannot be minimised by corporations or city bureaucrats. No water means no food production. If our groundwater is contaminated and our creeks, rivers and dams fill up with silt, this affects not just us but everyone down river from us, as part of the vital Murray-Darling system.

I have voted for the Greens all my life and understand how important it is for us to transition to renewable energy. However, in this case there is no justification for the large-scale destruction of extremely vulnerable and vital ecosystems in the name of green energy. This project is not environmentally friendly in any way. The project's proximity to Ben Hall's Gap National Park is one of the many reasons it cannot be permitted to proceed. This is a landscape of national significance and importance and the home to many endangered species. It also provides a corridor for already embattled native animals to travel from the interior to the coast. Hanging Rock is a koala habitat. The koala is now endangered, yet the EIS does not address this endangered status.

The soil at Hanging Rock has been tested and deemed to be completely inappropriate for large scale industrial activity. Clearing of hundreds of hectares of native bush will cause massive soil erosion and land slips. The project will be built along the ridge line of mountains, not hills, with no viable access route for the massive machinery to the site. The fact that there is no access route merely reinforces how unsuitable the planned site is. Engie itself has no clear idea about how to move these massive structures up incredibly steep gradients in areas prone to both fire and landslides.

Lightning strikes cause frequent bushfires in the location of the proposed project and the inaccessibility of these places necessitates the use of aerial spraying. Fire-fighting vehicles on the ground cannot access these areas. The turbines will prevent planes and helicopters from

reaching the bush and people's homes in bushfire events, endangering human lives and flora and fauna. It is simply not a case of if this should happen, but more a case of when. Lightning strikes are not uncommon in these areas and can burn for weeks, particularly if conditions have been dry. The safety of community members cannot be endangered. Our precious native vegetation and animals cannot be endangered.

My husband's family and my children belong to the local Kamilaroi nation and we have deep ties to the environment here. My sister-in-law is a respected Aboriginal artist who uses the flora found on this land in her award-winning art. The foothills behind Nundle are the focus of her PHD. My son is a musician who incorporates recordings of local native birds and other fauna in his music, and we are in the process of building a recording studio on our farm (DAD03), a short distance from where turbines will be located. This general area is rich in Aboriginal artefacts and sacred sites, some of which have only recently been discovered and require further exploration. It is unconscionable to allow areas of such cultural significance to the local Aboriginal people to be plundered and destroyed, in the worst type of colonial bastardry. My children have grown up on this land and we feel a great connection to it.

My family owns and farms land that will be directly impacted by turbines 47-70. These need to be removed.

As Australia becomes increasingly more industrialised and urbanised, these pristine pieces of wilderness and quaint relics from our colonial goldmining past will increase in value and significance. As many members of the local community can attest to, people come from all around Australia to visit Nundle and its surrounds, as a place renowned for its natural beauty and charm. These places are disappearing, which is a national tragedy. As a result, Australians highly value the places that remain; these sanctuaries, these havens, these natural wonders. In the light of this, it is obscene that a huge, French owned, multinational corporation could be allowed to destroy such a special place in the name of capitalist greed. Let's not delude ourselves that the French have any interest in the preservation of a cherished part of this country, or in real green energy. It is hard to imagine that a project like this, in such a fragile and unsuitable environment, would be allowed to proceed in France. However, the French have a long and sordid history of pillaging and destroying the resources and environments of foreign countries for their own economic gain. Let us hope our government protects its citizens from this type of foreign interference.

This project has no social licence whatsoever. The majority of people in Nundle reject this project. Tamworth Regional Council rejects this project. The science rejects this project. The project has caused terrible divisions in a formally harmonious place. Engie has frequently behaved in a duplicitous manner and lied to the citizens of this town. This project must not be allowed to proceed here in the Hills of Gold.

Nicola Worley