

Objections and Concerns related to HOGWF SSD-9679

1 - The overall visual impact has been under assessed. The IPC should carefully consider the Independent Expert Review which concludes with the statement:
The resultant change of character to a combination of Natural Appearing and Wind Energy Character is significant. This proposed change will be critical to the ongoing community perception of the value of the surrounding Landscape. The effect of this significant change of character should be carefully considered in the evaluation of the overall Project suitability and determination of Development Consent.

2 - Conditions of Consent for any proposed upgrades to Morrison's Gap Rd must specify protection of the native vegetation in the road corridor. This specially includes proposed widening of the corner at NAD12 where it is unknown if such work will involve encroachment beyond the road corridor together with the need for a retaining wall on NAD24 road side.

3 - Morrison's Gap Rd should remain as a scenic rural road for light traffic only.

4 - The main access to the project site should be a purpose built combination of roads and transport corridors referred to in the Report as the "Crawney access" to carry OSOM and all heavy vehicles and construction traffic.

5 - Remove 7 turbines - T64, T65, T66, T67, T68, T69, T70 - because they are all under 3km from NAD12 and they are too close to the corridor of Morrison's Gap Rd.

6 - If turbines 64 to 70 are not removed then the IPC is requested to add a Condition of Consent providing option for a Neighbour Impact Agreement to be available to non-associated neighbours at any stage during the life of the project. Refer to the Draft Benefit Sharing Guideline and Draft Private Agreement Guideline issued by Department of Planning and Environment (November 2023)

7 - The impact on the water table of 47 turbines, associated infrastructure and project tracks cannot be predicted. It is not worth the high risk of damaging the headwaters of the Peel River.

8 - The project site is located in a high bushfire zone and the proposed network of turbines would seriously limit aerial bushfire control methods.

9 - Conditions for Decommissioning are not adequately detailed to ensure that sufficient funds are held for decommissioning and there is no specific information on an effective Rehabilitation Plan and Objectives.

10 - The final statement in the Executive Summary in the Report is questionable;
On balance, the Department considers that the benefits of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm outweigh its costs, and the project is in the public interest and approvable.
There is no Cost-benefit Analysis to demonstrate whether the project is cost effective. The public interest is contestable. Social licence is not clearly defined nor quantified. Whether the project is approvable can be challenged on site location and access.