

Jim Field

Thank you for allowing me to speak here today. For those that do not know me I started Yass Earth Movers 50 odd years ago. It is still a very successful business that has done earthmoving work all around Yass and the surrounding districts including the Coppabella area. We know what will happen to the Coppabella hills.

The Coppabella hills which are very visible from the Hume highway and the Binalong area are going to change from beautiful, grassy, rolling hills to an ugly bare mess with massive erosion. If this development goes ahead there will be a lot of disturbance that will take place and it will cause a lot of problems i.e. irreparable erosion that will get increasingly worse, never better.

Imagine the view from the well-travelled highway and from the Binalong area, and all the people that will have to live with this view from their houses and properties. Would you like to have to put up with that? There are also noise problems and health issues created by these turbines.

All the wind towers you see on TV are on almost level ground, with no disturbance, and not a tree in sight. The people who do not know or don't have brains think that they are beautiful. This site we are discussing here today is the complete opposite. The hills are very very steep, close to mountains; this unbelievable disturbance will totally change the area certainly not for the better.

Access to the site will be difficult. The blades and towers are very long and do not bend in the middle. We, Yass Earth Movers have had a lot of experience with wide loads, not with long loads, but we know the difficulties that will arise getting these long loads to site. The turn off into Whitefield's Lane will require a lot of modification to the entrance and the road itself for these loads to have access.

To get from Whitefield's Lane onto site will be very difficult. To get the towers and blades off the highway and on to the top of the hills and along to where they will be will be almost impossible. The access will have to be almost straight and level because the hills are not in line, or the same height. These photos show this.

I will try to explain to you all what I mean. The access will have to be almost straight and level because the hills are not in line, or the same height.

Massive amounts of material will have to be moved to get this almost straight and level track. The tops of the hills are not in line and have big depressions in between. The sides of the hills are very steep and rocky. If the tops off the hills are cut off and the depression between the hills filled, the fill will have to be very deep and will therefore erode very easily. The sites for the wind towers will have to be levelled, and level access will be required to get the materials and towers themselves (including blades, concrete trucks, cranes, etc) across the whole site, from one end of the hills to the other. Imagine the massive change to the landscape, and the impact it will have on the productivity of the area by creating huge bare areas and more runoff.

It is going to be almost impossible to get a suitable track to achieve access for the large types of vehicles that will be required to get the material on site and construct the wind towers. Hundreds of vehicles will be required to get the material on site, plus the very large number of vehicles that will need access during construction.

If a cut is put along the side of the hills it will have to be a very very deep cut and will likely not be able to be made straight enough to get towers and blades along the track due to the length of the blades and towers.

Massive disturbance will occur either way with massive bare loose areas that will erode away and become unproductive. The areas that will be disturbed will not be able to have topsoil re-spread back onto it, which prevent grasses from growing and the batters will be so steep nothing will grow on them. Imagine the areas that will be made bare starting with the cut batters, flat areas and fill batters.

The traffic travelling along the new tracks will leave furrows, which will concentrate the rainwater runoff.

In any rain, but especially in heavier rain there will be 100% runoff which will concentrate to the lowest spot and start to erode and will never stop. The water will increase in speed into the wash out washing the dirt off the side of the hill away. This will silt up dams and creeks ruining water supplies for livestock and wildlife.

If the wind turbines generated electricity all of the time, they would be ok. They only generate electricity when suitable wind blows. No wind or very strong wind means that nothing is generated. This is the case approximately 80% of the time. Why do we need them at all?

Millions of dollars in subsidies are given to these overseas companies to construct these inefficient and ugly towers. Are they really worth the health issues and the absolute destruction of these hills forever? The change to the look of this iconic area is unimaginable. What would Banjo Patterson think?

I've worked all my life to build up some assets. Anyone with property close to the wind turbines will have the value of their property decreased. A property near me has been on the market for over 2 years and the real estate agent has taken it over due to lack of interest because wind turbines are going in next door. I will be 83 next February and these wind turbines are by far the worst thing to happen in my lifetime.