

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Do-Not-Reply IPCN Submissions Mailbox](#)
Subject: Hills of Gold Wind Farm Submission
Date: Thursday, 15 February 2024 2:13:49 PM

Please with hold any personal details/information from publication. Thankyou

Submission below

I object to the proposed development.

As a resident of Tamworth I have watched the proposal develop in recent years. I have witnessed the division that has been created in the community, and consider this directly related to the approach taken by the beneficiaries and proponents of this development.

I am concerned primarily with the environmental impacts. In particular the significant misrepresentation of the overall environmental impacts of this project is of tantamount concern.

In the EIS there is a declaration that includes the following statement-

“The information contained in this EIS, to the best of our knowledge, contains all available information that is relevant to the environmental assessment of the development and the information provided is neither false nor misleading.”

Subsequently throughout the application process it has come to light that there have been extensive unapproved land clearing undertaken across the proposed project site, this illegal land clearing is acknowledged in the Assessment Report ,as quoted below: “The Department is aware that land clearing has occurred on the project site 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.”

Considering that the area illegally cleared likely exceeds the proposed clearing as part of the application, this is not a trivial matter. None of this detail is publicly available.

How many hectares were cleared? What was the Biodiversity of these areas cleared? What significant sites were disturbed? How does this relate to the size and scale of clearing being proposed in the development? These are legitimate concerns considering the scale of illegal land clearing undertaken, as well as the contentious operation of the biodiversity scheme.

None of this information has been incorporated into the Environmental Impact Statement as an amendment. As such the true environmental impact of this project remains grossly under represented. Furthermore, the fact that this clearing has occurred on land holdings of the primary land holder set to benefit from this development raises serious concerns around the integrity of the application and process. Considering this is a State Significant development, this is an alarming concern and would set a dangerous precedent for future developments in NSW.

I object, I cannot support this approach to development. There is a serious culpability that has not been adequately addressed. The extensive preparation of the site prior to approval, which is not incidental, and likely an environmental impact that exceeds what is currently being proposed, goes beyond negligence.

I also have concerns in relation to the impacts of the development to the Chaffey Dam catchment - the primary water storage for a growing downstream population. In recent times, for the first time in living memory, the Peel River stopped flowing above Chaffey dam accompanied by critically low storage levels in the dam. It was during this period that extensive land clearing was undertaken on the proposed site. We are yet to experience another cycle of drought conditions and at this stage it is unknown what impacts these activities will have on water quality and storage for the region in the longer term. I fail to see how these issues have been addressed in the application.