

**From:** [Silvia Lomaca](#)  
**To:** [Do-Not-Reply IPCN Submissions Mailbox](#)  
**Subject:** objection to the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) consent for approval of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm (HOG WF)  
**Date:** Tuesday, 13 February 2024 11:55:07 PM

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## Submission to the Independent Planning Commission - Hills of Gold Wind Farm (SSD - 9679)

I object to the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) consent for approval of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm (HOG WF), proposed by Engie, and disagree with many of the assessments within its Report.

I believe that the DPE Assessment Report ("The Report") has misjudged the balance of costs versus benefits and that this project is not in the public interest.

This development has never had social licence. For 6 long years the local communities most affected by this project have had clear and undeniable majority opposition. The ecological costs of the HOG WF far outweigh any benefits. How can it be a benefit to earth's sustainability to sacrifice multi-century old trees for a 35 year industrial wind development.

The impact of forcing this development into a fragile ecological landscape on the Great Dividing Range at elevations of 1400m; the geotechnical, near impossible, constraints associated with such; and the extensive destruction of the natural environment, on which it sits, will result in significant and irreversible environmental, visual, heritage, economic and social cohesion impacts.

The DPE assessment states that the visual integrity will remain and the wind farm will not dominate the visual landscape. The community disagrees as no amount of vegetative screening can hide structures that will sit on the natural elevation at 1600 m high. It is easy to rate a visual

blight as not impactful when you do not live it day in and day out for the next 35 years. The Hills of Gold Preservation Inc (HOGPI) commissioned an Independent Visual Expert Review

which states "the resultant change of character to a combination of Natural Appearing and Wind

Energy Character is significant. The proposed change will be critical to the ongoing community

perception of the value of the surrounding landscape."

This project site is deemed suitable by DPE and Engie because it has wind BUT does that make

up for the multiple unsuitable factors of this location - a resounding NO! Good wind does not

mean a good site.

The DPE has made the wrong assessment in approving this HOG WF project.

The IPC should reject the Hills of Gold Wind Farm application.

If the IPC does approve the Hills of Gold Wind Farm I seek that they implement the additional

Conditions of Consent set out in this Submission. ( see below)

## LIST OF ALL PROPOSED CONDITIONS OF CONSENT

1. Condition of Consent to remove 17 turbines to protect the BHGNR waterways from sedimentation impacting EPBC listed Sphagnum Moss Cool Temperate Rainforest and also to minimise the risks to avifauna in line with concerns raised by NPWS and BCS ( page 63 Point 206 of DPE Assessment Report). The nominated WTGs have proximity to key habitat features such as tree canopies, hollow bearing trees and the BHGNR.  
Condition of Consent to Remove WTGs 6, 9, 16, 18, 21, 22, 32, 33, 40, 42, 43, 49, 50, 51, 58, 59, 61.
2. Conditions of Consent that baseline, on the ground, noise assessments for traffic must be done for Timor community dwellings and for the The Crawney Pass NP, Ben Halls Gap Nature Reserve and the Teamsters Rest parkland area, which would all be considered noise sensitive/open space passive use sites under the NSW Road Noise Policy. This must be conducted prior to any work on the HOG WF commences.
3. Condition of Consent should state that a suitable and meaningful decommissioning bond must be instituted which starts at the commencement of construction and continues throughout the operation of the project ; the “within 18 month timeframe” must stand firm as the beginning of decommissioning with a finished rehabilitation timeframe of no more than 3 years from the rehabilitation commencement date; all rehabilitation objectives should remain firm and not be able to be waived by the Planning Secretary; additionally all the underground concreting and other underground infrastructure must be removed to enable the restoration of the development site to its natural vegetation and landscape value.
4. Condition of consent is for removal of WTGs 21 and 22 which are situated on the site of the recognised unauthorised cleared land.
5. Condition of Consent to remove WTGs 39, 40, 43 and 45 as they do non-compliant with distance from boundaries of the BHGNR.
6. Condition of Consent listed as B21 (b) (iv) needs to be amended and strengthened to include “avoid impacts on the quality of water flowing into the Chaffey and Glenbawn catchments and the Isis River.”
7. Condition of Consent added to B21 (b) to include “avoid impacts on the quality of water flowing into Perry’s Creek, Pages Creek, Dead Eye Creek and Whites Creek” to protect the quality of water flowing into the Isis River.”
8. Conditions of Consent made by the DPE for removal of 17 WTGs due to non-compliance with visual, noise and biodiversity guidelines - removal of WTGs 9, 10, 11, 24, 28, 42, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63
9. Condition of Consent that no local Upper Hunter Shire Council (UHSC) local roads be used for any part of this project.
10. Condition of Consent that construction, road upgrades, commissioning, demolition,

upgrading or decommissioning activities may only be undertaken from Monday - Friday  
7am - 6pm.

11. Condition of Consent that Blasting may only be carried out between Monday - Friday  
between 9am - 5pm

12. Conditions of Consent that no OSOM transport vehicle and associated escorts (both  
laden and unladen) must operate during school hours transport times ( 8am - 9:30 and 2:30  
- 4 pm) through the townships of Blandford and Murrurundi in the UHSC as well as those  
in  
Nundle.