

Presentation to the Independent Planning Commission –

Hills of Gold Windfarm (SSD-9679)

2nd February 2024

Commissioners, good morning

My name is Russell Sydenham and I am talking on behalf of members of Friends of the Wind Farm. This group was formed a few years ago and was set up to provide accurate information about the process of building a wind farm and as a group to show support for the project. The group is informal but has had up to 120 attendees at organised information sessions over the past 5 years.

The key messages we would like to present to this Commission are:

- A large number of the community in support of the Hills of Gold Windfarm remain silent for the fear of causing conflict, being intimidated and or having their businesses boycotted by those with the opposing agenda.
- Members of Friends of the Windfarm comprise local people. Some have lived in Nundle and district for generations. Others have moved into the district because of the beautiful location and were attracted to the friendly inviting town and community. Many have volunteered for multiple organisations in the town over the years. They love Nundle and strongly believe that a renewable energy project can co-exist and enhance the community. Many of the members of this Group are young family units with small children who are typically unable to attend information sessions or to voice their support when opportunities such as this come up.
- Over the past 6 years, there was a great deal of discussion and consultation with the proponents on several occasions and they made presentations to the community in information and question and answer forums both in Nundle and Hanging Rock – The proponent has also set up of an information hub in the main street of Nundle which is manned by a local.
- The group was given a brief opportunity to present a case for support for the project to Tamworth Regional Council in February 2022. (I will submit a copy of the letter sent to Council to request a hearing with Counsellors.)
- The Friends of the Wind Farm note that the proponents have amended the scope of the project to satisfy concerns raised by this group, the community and Local Government. We feel that the changes are an improvement to impacts on transport, Biodiversity and Constructability of the project.
- The Group also considers that there are many benefits that this project will bring to this locality, the LGA's the New England Region and the State.
- Economic benefits clearly include:
 - Very real help with cost-of-living relief by discounts on power bills for the local community
 - Significant direct Grant funding for local organisations and special interest groups.

- The flow of cash into the local economy – it has been estimated that in similar projects that a construction worker will spend about \$22 000.00 locally on food, accommodation, fuel etc. per year.
- There is also the Community Enhancement Fund – for which the friends of the Windfarm have concerns if the funds are not administered by a locally elected group of people.
- Creation of employment by the multiplier effect will also increase economic activity in the region
- More children in the local school during and post construction
- Improvements to roads and road safety, particularly Morrisons Gap Road and Barry Road
- Benefits of renewable energy by replacing environmentally damaging fossil fuel dependence.
- Opportunities for investment in different tourism ventures to enhance the current tourism offering of Nundle, Hanging Rock, Crawney and the Tamworth, Liverpool Plains and Upper Hunter LGA's

In Conclusion

The Friends of the Windfarm supports the approval of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment Recommendation to proceed with the Development and any conditions that the IPC conclude should be imposed or removed.

Prepared by Russell Sydenham

For and on behalf of the Friends of the Windfarm

Tamworth Regional Council

[REDACTED]
TAMWORTH NSW 2340.

Friends of the Wind Farm

[REDACTED]
Hanging Rock, NSW, 2340.

3rd February 2022.

RE: Friends of the Wind Farm request to address Council

Honourable Members of Council,

We are writing this letter for and on behalf of members of The Friends of The Wind Farm Group. The group consists of members of the Nundle and Hanging Rock communities, and we are requesting that we be given equal opportunity to put forward our case for the supporters of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm. We understand that Council will hear argument from members of Hills of Gold Preservation Inc (HOGPI). We believe Tamworth Regional Council should be prepared to hear from both sides of the community to remain fair and objective.

We ask Tamworth Regional Council to be respectful and fair to both sides of the community including supporters of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm.

We believe that over the last almost 4 years that the majority of community members are in support of the wind farm or are neutral about the proposal. Some people in the community, who initially signed the Petition put together by HOGPI, are now in support of the wind farm as they have been consulted and have been given better information to help their understanding of the project.

Nundle has many generational farmers that are in support of the wind farm. They want the town to grow, not to keep getting smaller. They want their children and grandchildren to stay and thrive in the Nundle and district community. The Nundle Public school has 35 children enrolled for the 2022 year, with the number of children attending school at Nundle dropping every year.

We understand that 67% of the store front businesses in the Nundle and Hanging Rock community also support The Hills of Gold Wind Farm. This is not just an opportunity to see direct economic growth for Nundle and Hanging Rock. There will be opportunities created for businesses in the greater Tamworth Region to share during the construction phase and beyond.

Robert Schofield put it succinctly recently, when he stated that Nundle and district were much more prosperous in past years and that the business activity in the region is on the wane.

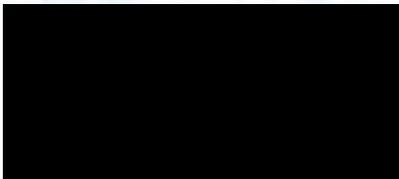
This renewable energy project will help to reverse the prosperity of Hanging Rock and Nundle for many generations to come.

The Friends of the Wind Farm are a quiet group of community members who have gathered at meetings over the years to get information in a friendly environment. There have also been discussion on how other communities with wind farms are functioning and in how those communities are benefitting from community enhancement funds paid to them by the wind farm operators.

Nundle and Hanging Rock residents will also benefit directly from cheaper energy because of the Proponents offer of giving rebates on their power bills.

We ask respectfully that Tamworth Regional Council give members of Friends of the Wind Farm the opportunity to put forward their case at the upcoming meeting.

Sincerely,



Russell Sydenham

for and on behalf of Steve Whale, Megan Carberry, Rose Nean Gomeroi Applicant,
and Friends of the Windfarm members
