

## Hills of Gold Wind Farm (SSD-9679) - Response to IPC

At the initial stage of the assessment process *the Department considered the project, as it was proposed in the EIS, had substantial issues that would have likely led to a recommendation for refusal.* At this final stage those *substantial issues* remain and it is worth noting that the Hills of Gold Wind Farm is not located in the New England REZ or the Hunter-Central Coast REZ.

Following a protracted period of five years with NSW Planning, as of July 2024 the Hills of Gold wind farm has been before the IPC for six months - four public submission periods so far! 2 x DPHI and 2 x IPC.

Several significant issues with the project remain unresolved:

- non-viable with 47 turbines as recommended by DPHI
- 62 turbine scenario dependent on acquisition of Lot 47 DP753722
- unacceptable biodiversity impact on the ridge line and adjacent nature reserve
- questionable access and transport routes
  
- For the project to be viable the Applicant requires restoration of at least 15 turbines for a total of 62 turbines with a capacity of 386 MW - representing just 1.7% of the 22,000 MW in the NSW planning assessment pipeline - indicating that the contribution of HoGWF to total capacity is only marginal and therefore not in the public interest.
  
- The reinstatement to 62 turbines is reliant on the unresolved acquisition of private land - Lot 47 DP753722 (the land which contains DAD01)
  
- An unviable wind farm such as SSD-9679 seriously threatens the biodiversity of the Hills of Gold ridge line by attempting to construct massive turbines along fragile steep terrain. The location of this project is not appropriate, a most important fact that should have been obvious from the very beginning. HoGWF is not located in a NSW Renewable Energy Zone!
  
- The HoGWF is located too close to Crawney Pass National Park and Ben Halls Gap Nature Reserve. All turbines bordering the Nature Reserve should be removed to protect the Endangered Sphagnum Moss Cool Temperate Rainforest, Ribbon Gum, Mountain Gum, Snow Gum and habitat for Koalas.
  
- The Department's recommendation of 47 turbines not only makes the project unviable but 47 turbines will continue to disrupt the biodiversity of the ridge line. The only solution is zero turbines!

The IPC is encouraged to **reject** the application.