

Initial thoughts to SSD 9679 further documents:

Just how long is the red carpet for prospective wind farm developers? Evidently, it appears infinite in the case of SSD 9679. After review of the DPHI response dated 25th June 2025 I was left with the feeling the DPHI assessment team are somewhat annoyed and frustrated with the professional conduct or lack thereof from the Applicant. Welcome to our life for the past six years! Finally some acknowledgement by the DPHI our community has endured endless contempt from the Applicant, it is a shame this new found DPHI spine wasn't displayed in the scoping phase of the assessment process.

I broadly agree with the **Closing Comments** contained within the DPHI response, however my differing views are below. My personal experience with the Applicant's conduct throughout the approval process has found their consultation approach arrogant, incompetent and delivered with a complete lack of integrity, yet it would seem this is inconsequential when pursuing permission to impose a significant industrial development into our neighbourhood. (*Directly contravenes intent of Section 5 Community & Stakeholder Consultation NSW Guidelines for Wind Farms 2016*)

Project viability/ public interest:

I disagree with the recommendation of DPHI to impose voluntary acquisition rights to property DAD01 to address unavoidable impacts from reinstating turbines T53 - T63.

Why DPHI allowed the Applicant to progress through the assessment process without insisting the Applicant demonstrate how compliance with NSW Guidelines will be achieved to LOT47 DP753722 without a neighbour agreement in place beggars belief. (*This in itself is a direct contravention of Section 5 from 2016 Guidelines*)

ENGIE have known of the economic significance of T53 - T63 since before they purchased the project from Wind Energy Partners.

ENGIE chose to take the commercial risk of purchasing the proposed HOGWF despite being aware of an immediate neighbours intention to pursue their legal right to develop their property.

ENGIE have chosen to shrug their obligation to meaningfully consult and accommodate DAD01 into the project design and have taken the belligerent attitude to assume a cashed up alien tenant is more deserving than any existing landholders amenity.

ENGIE has chosen to ignore a valid CDC, claiming it is invalid despite not actually formally challenging the validity, until such time ENGIE proves this claim, the IPC should ignore such unsubstantiated claims.

ENGIE has chosen to publicly slander the professional conduct of a well respected local Private Certifying business with incorrect substantiating advice, to the validity of DAD01 CDC.

It is apparent, the DPHI recognises the DAD01 CDC is valid, and as such should be assessed and treated with the same weighting as other neighbouring non associated dwellings.

ENGIE's claim the weighting of the DAD01 should be given little weighting as it asserts it may never be built. Even if this presumptuous claim was worthy of consideration, one could say exactly the same thing to the proposed HOGWF!

When ENGIEs application has been shuffled off the DPHI and IPC approval desk, the ENGIE development team will pop the champagne, high five and collect their performance bonus and then the project will likely sit on the Fund Managers desk for up to a further 2 yrs before which it may or may not be built! So much for finality and closure for our community.

It should be noted by the Commissioners, despite DPHI approving ENGIEs Silverleaf Solar Farm near Narrabri (SSD 9358) over two years ago, not a sod of soil has been turned. Whilst ENGIE moans about extended project assessment timeframes, community opposition and onerous development guidelines, they don't appear as concerned with actually delivering tangible projects.

DPHI indicates the acquisition condition should not be seen as a precedent condition of consent for future wind farm developments. What an oxymoron, if this condition is implemented, the precedent is set!

As demonstrated above, if ENGIE don't like the answer they receive from a neighbour or a public authority they belligerently push on as they please. This contempt for our community and the assessment process is further demonstrated when an ENGIE representative has stated to a community member, regardless of the IPC determination outcome, ENGIE are preparing legal action to bully their way into our community, whether we like it or not. So much for "social licence"!

There is much angst and disdain developing in regional NSW due to the wide scale push for renewable energy and transmission projects in our communities. I find it unfathomable granting approval to HOGWF will foster confidence and build acceptance in rural communities that their concerns are being addressed with considered thought and due respect. Imposition of acquisition rights is not a respectful consent condition to address land use conflicts and should be rejected to send a clear message to prospective wind energy developers that half baked development projects will be refused consent.

In short, this project is UNVIABLE and NOT in the public interest.

Transport Routes:

DPHI have dismissed community and Tamworth Regional Council concerns regarding the proposed conditions of consent regarding transport routes as being too generic and ambiguous as being trivial or inconsequential. I continue to object to the use of Morrisons Gap Road for construction traffic access to the HOGWF. The site has ample area to turn trucks around and leave the site via the Crawney access road they drove in on. Permanent disfiguration and disruption to our quiet mountain road should not be allowed simply because it is operationally convenient for ENGIE.

Biodiversity Impacts:

Although DPHI essentially say, nothing to see here, next issue, I continue to object to any wind turbines that have been assessed as either high or medium collision risk to birds and bats, in particular turbines on the Ben Halls Gap Nature Reserve boundary. Use of a cheque book to purchase biodiversity credits and using unproven “smart curtailment” is not ok. Reliance on paper mitigation strategies to address significant biodiversity impacts to avian fauna surrounding a nationally significant nature reserve is a disgrace and is further grounds to reject the HOGWF.

Objectionable Mitigation Strategies:

I speak in reference to NAD 12 in particular, but the same issue applies to other non associated properties. DPHI continues to dismiss our objection to the Applicant utilising our screening asset (*existing native vegetation*) to provide visual compliance for turbines T65, T66, T67, T68, T69, T70. The DPHI recommended visual mitigation strategy will restrict our ability to provide effective Bushfire asset protection zones, harvest native timber for income or clear native vegetation for primary production activities. I ask the Commissioners to impose a condition of consent that addresses if the Applicant requires use of our private assets for visual compliance, then the Applicant must secure a formal agreement before the construction of the above turbines.

Summary:

The only determination this dud project should receive is refusal.