

14 August 2024

Attention: Ellena Tsanidis  
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure  
Locked Bag 5022  
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124  
Email: [ellena.tsanidis@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ellena.tsanidis@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Madam,

**RE: Junction Rivers Wind Farm – Further Submission of Application SSD- 30448824**

I write on behalf of Murray River Council to provide further considerations to the department from Council's planning perspective in particular relating to the impact on multi-generational cropping and nut farmers in the Junction Rivers area for the proposed windfarm.

Whilst Council's submission dated 22 July was of a general nature and provided in-principal support subject to some vital considerations, further information has been provided to Council that does not provide Council confidence in the proposed development proceeding at this point. It appears that it is unlikely that the high value cereal and nut farms adjoining the selected site or within reasonable proximity will not be able to practically mitigate impacts, which will essentially mean that these properties will have to cease their operations. And furthermore, landowners will not be able to obtain appropriate level of insurance, the financial burden as direct impact of the wind turbines in operation and the ongoing liability issues resulting from the contracts/agreements landowners are being requested to sign.

Council staff have met with a number of impacted farmers in this location, that either are close by or directly adjoin the proposed wind farm area proposed by Windlab. Unlike other potential green energy projects in the surrounding location, this location appears to be the only location that will impact on high value agriculture land, pertaining to broad acre cereal cropping and pistachio nut farms.

Other green energy projects within the Southwest Renewable Energy Zone have chosen grazing land locations, where the majority of the impacts can be largely mitigated and where their normal farming operations can continue with only some of the likely impacts.

It is clear to Council, that whilst the property owners (and Council) are not opposed to these projects in the Murray River Council area, they want to see these developments located away from the high value agriculture production land, as the issues being raised via their individual submissions largely relate to impacts on their land and amenity that **cannot** be mitigated against, without choosing an alternative location.

Our LGA is known for its agriculture and food sector, where our agriculture industry sectors make the greatest contribution to our local economy and provides approx. 1200 jobs. Over \$450 million worth of regional export of our total regional export of \$794.8 million is provided through the agriculture sector.

Through various Council strategic plans, Council has and continues to recognise and advocate for protection of agriculture and food production areas in appropriate locations. Certain areas that have access to irrigation water, and good soil conditions provide for high value cropping. The area chosen by Windlab (Junction rivers) is one of these areas, and unfortunately it appears that there are limited mitigation options to protect this area from any adverse impacts on the adjacent and surround land.

Council is therefore **Objecting** to the proposal at this point to enable the Independent Planning Commission to complete review of the project impacts (Environmental, social and financial) on the adjoining land and in the vicinity of the high value agriculture land in the Junction rivers area.

Following Council's SEAR's response dated 8 December 2021, it is considered the applicant has appropriately addressed the majority of the matters raised. However, it is noted that as the project has progressed since this time, matters pertaining to impacts on high impact cropping and nut agriculture lands where there are no practical mitigations to protect this area and landowners' livelihoods.

If you wish to discuss your case further, I suggest contacting Rod Croft, Director Planning and Environment for further information relevant to this development. [rcroft@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rcroft@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely



**Terry Dodds**  
CEO  
Murray River Council