

TO:
Director -Energy Assessments
Planning and Assessment,
NSW Department of Planning Industry
and Environment.
Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW ~~2123~~

From:
Dr David Beirman
Res. 17-19 Gill St Nundle NSW 2340
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Tel Mob 0419 615 479
20 January 2021

RE: Application No SSD-9679 Hills of Gold Wind Farm

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to register my objection to this project in the strongest possible terms. The very term "Hills of Gold Wind Farm" is Orwellian as it involves environmental degradation and vandalism of the worst possible type to despoil one of the most beautiful landscapes in New South Wales in the interests of what is being falsely promoted as an "environmentally friendly" renewable energy project.

The Hills of Gold have been named for their historic gold deposits and the fact that this is a visually beautiful ridge on the western escarpment of the Great Diving Range. The building of 70 wind turbines (each 220 metres in height) equivalent to the height of the MLC Building in Sydney (where I once worked) is tantamount to a despoliation of the natural landscape. My fundamental concern is that the working life of the wind farm will (at most) be about 30 years and there is nothing in this proposal which addresses what will happen to these ugly structures beyond their working life apart from their retention as a memorial to the folly of erecting them.

In order to construct the "wind farm" an access road to transport parts of the turbines will destroy many acres of virgin forest. Land clearance to erect and link the turbines will impact on flora and fauna.

The proponents of the wind farm claim that the construction phase will inject economic benefits into Nundle and surrounds but the truth is that they will be temporary in nature and there is no guarantee that local people will be sourced as employees. The financial compensation for landholders is at best tokenistic and temporary.

There has been no consideration of an alternative form of renewable energy project such as a solar power operation which would generate an equivalent or greater amount of energy without the visual and environmental blight of the existing proposal. The way this project has been promoted is that we accept the wind farm or nothing. If that is the choice, I opt for nothing.

Most people who visit Nundle from Sydney or Newcastle do so by turning off the New England Highway and proceeding along Lindsay's Gap Rd. When people do so now they

encounter a dramatic natural landscape which one of the main tourist attractions of Nundle region and,its surrounding region. If this project is approved they will see the full force and the full ugliness of this “wind farm”. Most tourists who visit Nundle are attracted by the beauty of the area. If this project is approved the magnificent approach to Nundle will be visually dominated by 70 ugly towers atop the hills of gold. Anyone who thinks that this will lure visitors is deluded.

I chose to invest my life savings in buying my home in Nundle. The overwhelming attraction for me and my wife was the natural beauty of the region and the happy and friendly community of Nundle. Unfortunately, this proposed project has divided the town and based on surveys conducted in Nundle and Hanging Rock the majority of locals oppose the project. Many of those who do support it have been misled by dubious claims that Nundle as a community will be enriched by the project. Most businesses in Nundle depend on tourism and if this project is approved it is likely (based in research conducted in Scotland and Germany which I have provided to the Hills of Gold Preservation Inc) that tourists, rather than being attracted to Nundle will repelled by the sight of 70 massive wind turbines atop the “Hills of Gold”. The vision of a crown of thorns comes to mind.

I sincerely hope that the NSW State government rejects this project and see it for what it is, an opportunity to make a quick dollar for foreign interests and leaving a long-term scar on what is currently a magnificent landscape. Do not sully my beautiful home town for the sake of short-term benefits and a memorial of 70 useless towers which will be an eternal blot on the landscape for generations after this ill-considered project ceases generating power. Let me state in conclusion, I and most people in Nundle support renewable energy but this wind farm proposal is simply the worst renewable energy option for Nundle and surrounds.

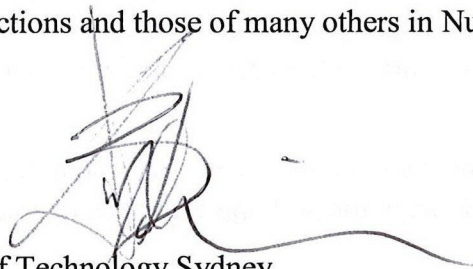
Declaration: I, David Beirman have never made a reportable political donation over the past two years (or the past 22 years for that matter).

Thank you for considering my objections and those of many others in Nundle.

Dr David Beirman

Senior Lecturer (Tourism)

UTS Business School, University of Technology Sydney

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Beirman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.