

Objection to EPYC Pty Ltd - Jupiter Windfarm Project

Visual Amenity

I wish to submit my objection to the subject Project because of the proposed windfarm's impact on visual amenity to my personal area as well as to the communities in the vicinity of the proposed windfarm development.

I moved to a rural residential area in 2000 for the scenic value and a peace and quiet lifestyle. Yet now in 2017 I have the prospect of my view and the peace and quiet being polluted with industrial structures in the form of wind turbines.

I am told that my view has low scenic value therefore it's OK to build a windfarm.

Who decides what "Scenic Value" is? Is it the minister himself, the Planning department or some arbitrary consultant paid to report a favourable finding for the proponent? Sydney Harbour and the Blue Mountains are indeed very scenic in their own category of landscape e.g. "Harbours of the world" or "Mountain Ranges". Equally however, rural landscapes and even deserts can be incredibly scenic in their own category. Indeed, any landscape devoid of the visual pollution of windfarms is very scenic and appealing to the residents.

The Department's offering of 4 mitigation possibilities to reduce the visual impact of a wind turbine is incredible. Who was the intellectual giant that came up with this proposal? If you have a wind turbine reminiscent of something out of "War of the Worlds" towering 170+ Metres over you at 1 or 2 kilometres distance, tell me what would be effective screening? How high do you think eucalypts can grow and how long will they take to grow? Even if the turbine towers were painted an alternative colour do you really think I wouldn't notice the monsters dominating the landscape? No mitigation strategy will appease viewing 17+ industrial wind turbines. I do not propose to build a brick wall to block the view from my home. Further, I will see the turbines from many locations on my property. How can you possibly mitigate the visual impact this will have on a property that was bought for its panoramic views, with a home built to take advantage of the uninterrupted views of the Great Dividing Range and its surrounds.....YOU CAN'T.

Apart from being a completely farcical proposal there is no requirement of enforcement upon the proponent to ensure that visual impact mitigation is employed. It is only required that visual impact is 'considered'. Any consultant worth anything can come up with the appropriate 'weasel words' to justify the turbine placement.

Officials from the department of Planning at a public meeting on the 7th Dec 2016 made the following statements:

- What is proposed are big industrial structures in a rural residential area;
- The proposed turbines are 40M **higher** than the Sydney Harbour Bridge at its highest point (measured from water level);
- Turbines that high are visible from 40 kms distance; and
- Among all the wind farms considered in NSW, Jupiter is at the highest level in terms of the number of residences impacted.

According to the EIS there are 140 dwellings within 3kms of a turbine. This is the figure preferred by the proponent however it is well known that there are more than 250 residences within 5km and hundreds more not far beyond that distance.

It is clear that even some within the Department recognise that the wind turbines proposed will have a major impact on visual amenity to the vast majority of residents in the windfarm area.

Further, the EIS shows numerous photomontages of what the wind turbines will appear like from a number of vantage points and distances around the development region. It is curious that in almost every picture the turbines appear very distant and just above the horizon. The reader needs to be aware that the pictures have been provided by the proponent whose interest it is for the project to proceed therefore it is reasonable to assume that these photomontages have been “doctored” to illustrate a favourable representation. While it is understood that photomontages are not the only tool used to assess/determine visual impact, EPYC and its consultants have gone to great lengths to minimize the impact industrial-size wind turbines will have on landowners within the PA. One has to question where else have they adopted this same approach in their EIS? The Department must challenge EPYC and their consultants on their claims.

For the sake of comparison, the Jupiter structures are 173M in height to blade tip. The Capital Wind Farm and neighbouring generators are roughly 120M in height to blade tip. When viewed from the Federal Highway on the other side of Lake George (several kilometres distant) the Capital Windfarm and neighbouring windfarms dominate the horizon. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the Jupiter turbines will be even more imposing on the skyline, particularly at 2-5km distance from residences.

Note that this comparison is made using the current height data. It is believed that an increase in rotor size is being developed increasing the structure height to around 200M pending approval of this current DA.

I contend that EPYCs EIS portrayal of visual impact is deceptive and basically dishonest and on that basis alone the EIS should be rejected and the Jupiter Project not approved to proceed.

I strongly suggest that windfarms are **not** the answer to renewable energy and that the Department should not approve any further windfarm development in NSW including EPYC's Jupiter Windfarm Project.