

Planning Services

NSW Department of Planning & Environment

GPO Box 39

SYDNEY NSW 2001

RE: Rye Park Wind Farm Project Application – Application Number 10-0223

Attention: Executive Director, Resource Assessments & Business Systems.

I object to this project on the following grounds.

Effects on bird life

The proposed removal of trees and the lengthening of the turbine blades are not acceptable and will impact greatly on the bird and bat species that inhabit this area.

4.4

Proponent statement: *the rotor sweep area remains above the worst case tree height of 20 metres by 5m. It also remains above the line connecting the two highest points of the canopy by approximately three meters. As such, avifauna flying within the confines of the tree canopy are considered unlikely to be at risk of collision. Avifaunas that fly above the canopy will be at an increased risk of collision.*

Fact: Over 108 different breeds of bird have been sighted from our property which is only 3km from the turbines. Many of them fly above the canopy which means that huge numbers of birds are at increased risk. Reports from people living near other industrial turbine sites in the area report that people are employed to remove the bodies of the birds killed by the turbine blade but are unaware if these are being reported to authorities. Do the proponents commit to the reporting of these fatalities? Wedge tail eagles are protected under the Wildlife Act 1975; killing, harming or interfering with them can result in fines of up to \$11,000 or six months in prison. Recent years have seen the rapid increase in the number of sightings of eagles, with groups of 18 birds seen soaring together in the thermals over this area. They are at great risk of being hit as they cover a wide area when hunting.

5.4.1

Superb Parrot, Regent Honeyeater and Painted Honeyeater

Proponent statement: *“the conclusion of a non-significant impact is still considered relevant to the preferred project design...”*

Fact: The National Recovery Plan for the Superb Parrot states that: *Over 90% of the NSW South Western Slopes bioregion has been cleared (Benson 1999), and the White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum woodland is now listed as an Endangered Ecological Community (NPWS 2002b). Remaining habitat now largely exists only along roadsides and in small, scattered remnant patches on private land. Clearing of box-gum woodland foraging habitat has been followed by the abandonment of nearby traditional breeding areas.* The Rye Park project extends over a critical area of the Superb Parrot's known breeding area in the south west slopes.

The Proponent proposes to clear 285 hectares of native vegetation including EEC and lower the blade height to 27 meters, less than 10 metres above tree height and yet still insists the impact will be non-significant?

5.6.1

The Proponent list 7 common native species that

Proponent statement: *“In accounting for impacts from the revised range of possible turbine dimensions, these species are also now considered at risk of collision during operation...”*

Fact: All native fauna is protected and any loss be they endangered or 'common' is not acceptable.

Superb Parrot

Proponent statement: *"With the revised turbine RSA there may be a moderate increase in collision risk for individuals....."* *"The revised design is unlikely to result in a significant impact to the Superb Parrot."*

Fact: Superb parrots in this area are observed to fly in or above canopy height when moving from tree to tree. However, when flying from feeding ground to feeding ground they fly at 10 to 20 metres above tree height and move at considerable speed. This is likely to result in unacceptable mortality to this vulnerable species.

Powerful Owl and Barking Owl

Proponent statement: *"Given that the owls favour woodland/forest edges and interior for foraging, changes to the RSA would not create a collision risk for these species."*

Fact: *"Powerful Owls are known to disperse up to 18 km, including across sparsely wooded areas (Higgins 1999; Cooke & Hogan 2008 NSW Scientific Committee September 2008.*

Turbines at 27 metres above ground will have a devastating effect on these species.

Swift Parrot

Proponent statement: *"The project area is not considered to support important foraging habitat for the Swift Parrot; this species was not observed during targeted surveys."*

Fact: The Threatened Species Profile and Threats Database states: *"In New South Wales, a number of ecological communities that provide habitat for the Swift Parrot have been listed as Endangered under the New South Wales Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, including: White Box, Yellow Box, Blakely's Red Gum woodland on the New South Wales tablelands and western slopes;...."* *"Because of their mobility, Swift Parrots have been recorded from hundreds of locations. These vary depending on the flowering of eucalypts and availability of other food resources such as lerp (eg. Blakers et al. 1984; Barrett et al. 2003; C. Tzaros June 2005, pers comm.)."* This site is central to the Swift Parrots Winter habitat and also contains recognised habitat of Box-Gum EEC. The Proponent proposes to destroy 50 hectares of this habitat.

I reserve the right to submit further submissions