

## **Objection to Modification to White Rock Wind Farm**

I object to the proposed modification to the White Rock Wind Farm.

The modification involves such a substantial increase in the size of the wind farm and a dramatic increase in the size of the wind turbine generators that it is, in effect, a new development that is being proposed.

My concern is that the planning process is being exploited by this, and similar modification applications, which has implications for other wind farm developments, one of which, the Jupiter Wind Farm proposal, is highly relevant to me and my neighbours.

### **Visual Assessment**

The visual assessment submitted in support of the proposed increase in the size of the turbines is laughably simplistic.

The turbines are to be increased in height by 50 metres (ie by 33.3%) and by 59 metres in rotor diameter (40.4%). More importantly the swept area of the rotors is increased from 11,499 square metres to 22,698 square metres – almost double. The rotors are the part that moves and it is movement that attracts the human eye. The visual impact of the increased sized turbines would more than double.

However, the modification document claims

“The potential for the proposed wind turbine modifications to result in any additional significant cumulative visual effects is considered to be low. The proposed Stage 2 modification would result in a largely unchanged visual impact rating in accordance with the approved White Rock Wind Farm project. The overall assessment of magnitude of visual effect associated with the modified WRWF Stage 2 wind turbines is summarised as Low to Medium.”

This is impossible to believe.

For example, turbine number 139 is now to be 385 metres further away from residence L230, which is 18.3% further away. Yet the turbine is to be 50 metres higher than originally approved - an increase of 33.3% - and the highly visible rotor sweeps 97% more area.

The swept area of the proposed rotors, with a diameter of 170 metres, is bigger than the playing surface of the Sydney Cricket Ground, which measures 155 metres by 136 metres. You could play an international standard cricket game on the same horizontal area as the proposed rotors.

**Increase in area**

The application includes an increase in the area of the wind farm by 2000 square metres. This is 2000 sq m locked up from future development and restricted to agriculture. In any other circumstances a proposal locking up this area of land would require a full planning assessment. The fact that it is now to house a wind farm should not change this.

**Precedent**

The history of this wind farm development does not reflect well on the NSW planning process. The project was originally approved in 2012 but there have been a series of modifications culminating in this proposal which drastically changes the character and impact of the original approval. Developers cynically propose a series of modifications once an approval is obtained, knowing that the resistance of the local community has been worn down. Once a wind farm has been approved, the damage is done. People become resigned to the fact and can no longer muster the energy to keep resisting further modifications even though they radically change the scope of the original proposal.

I note that although there are 59 residences within 4 kilometres of the wind farm, only 6 'non associated neighbour' agreements have been reached.

The Department should not accept modification proposals for approved projects which change the nature and scope of the original approval. Such a proposal should be subject to the full planning assessment process.

I submit that the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) should hear this proposal and I urge the PAC to reject it.