

Annex I Landscape and Visual Impact

Cumulative Impact – The Upper Lachlan Shire Mayor in his own words voiced serious concern over the cumulative impact of the 12th Wind Farm proposal for this area. The EIS gives reference to the individual property owners, affected by Biala Wind Farm and the cumulative affect on them yet doesn't give reference to the impact of another wind farm on the area as a whole. Submissions previously made to other wind farms in this area should also be considered when considering an additional wind farm to this area. Adding yet another wind farm would undoubtedly alter the character of these rural communities as a whole, and rather than being considered individually, the Department of Planning now needs to broaden its perimeter to include the other wind farm areas. If the area becomes predominantly littered with wind turbines, any reasonable person's perception of the area would alter, this part of NSW would therefore become an industrial wind farm area. The real estate market, and type of residents wanting to live here would change along with the character of the area. Therefore I conclude that cumulative impact consideration be given to the area as a whole, including Gunning, Gullen Range Wind Farm, Crookwell Wind Farm 1,2 and 3, and Cullerin Wind Farm, hence why any previous submissions in regards to these wind farms should be considered together with the Biala submissions. Any attempt to ignore the history and concerns of the wider community would be arrogant and inconsiderate and in opposition to the DGRS.

5.4 of the EIS – Cumulative Visual Impact Summary – The summary itself states the addition of the Bialia Wind Farm would slightly increase the perceived density of wind farms in the area, however I believe the author has 'missed the point' in regards to the cumulative impact. Residents may have limited view or distant view of the other wind farms in the area from their homes, but by travelling from their home they are affected by the other wind farms in the area, together as a culmination a resident would be left feeling that the atmosphere, character, purpose of their rural community has been greatly altered.

Photomontages – The simulated views provided for properties that the consultant was not able to access are not acceptable, these computer generated images do not provide the reader with the true and accurate feel for the landscape, the visual amenity. These computer generated images fail to bring justice to the beauty of the rural landscape affected by the wind turbines. Evidence of attempts made to access these properties and reasons should be given as to why a computer image of a very real view was used instead.

I question why the turbines pictured in the photomontages are not stark white? Within this EIS they photo-shopped turbines are different shades of grey, almost black even red, or almost a transparent colour. This is not an accurate simulation of the turbines as my personal experience, living kilometres away from Capital Wind Farm, is that the turbines, even from a distance of 10kms are a bright, stark white colour, and therefore do not blend into the landscape. See photo below. I am therefore specifically concerned with the accuracy of the photomontages provided in this EIS representing wind turbines at a distance of around 2kms. The photomontages in this EIS give a false representation as to the true visual impact. The case has been in the past that once erected, people affected visually have found the reality of living with turbines a lot different to the photomontages provided in EIS, evidence of this in the form of complaints, queries and submissions is held by the Department of Planning and Environment.



Capital Wind Farm-
Bungendore Source Canberra
Times Newspaper

Annex D Stakeholder and Community Engagement:

According to the Newtricity website, the wind farm proponent released 5 newsletters in 2 years.

Source: <http://www.newtricity.com.au/biala-wind-farm/documents-reports>

The newsletters were 2 pages in length, the final newsletter being only 1 page.

The information contained within these are brief and repetitive. They contain map of the proposed area, map of the proposed transmission line, diagram of the process, project overview in a paragraph, a paragraph about the CCC. Even in their own words the proponent has discredited their community consultation attempts, example: “*Newtricity is unable to advise on...*” and “*We are not in a position to discuss...*”

The DGRs state the EIS must:

*Demonstrate effective consultation with stakeholders, and that the level of consultation with each stakeholder is commensurate with their degree of interest/concern or likely impact.

A generic table **4.1** apparently showing ‘consultation and engagement methods’ does not thoroughly meet the above DGR. The EIS has made reference to key stakeholders and targeted consultation yet then goes on to provide a ‘generic’ table.

The table provides no information as to the value, content or outcome of any of those methods, provides no evidence of community feedback. The complaint register on the proponent’s own website would indicate some of the methods used in this table failed, such as the posters used in the information day, not providing an accurate visual indication of the impact of the wind turbines. Despite listing their ‘methods’ there is no value in this part of the EIS without supporting evidence for validation that the target of their ‘methods’, the community, felt they had met this DGR.

Table **4.4 ‘Media Search’**, Content and Key issues, is evidence in itself that table **4.1 ‘Consultation and engagement methods’** was not effective, and that the community needed to voice their concerns over the project with members of parliament, local and national media and supportive groups.

The EIS is misleading as it often gives reference to information newsletters, yet we have already determined that only 5 were issued in a 2 year period and the information contained within was broad and generalised.

Conclusion:

I object to the addition of another wind farm for the Southern Tablelands area. I urge The NSW Department of Planning to pay particular consideration to the concerns of the public and consider the Senate Select Committee on Wind Turbines and the fact that Australia as a whole has decided the approach taken to date by Wind Farm Companies and their employed consultants is not good enough for those small rural communities.