

I wish to express my concern about the visual impact of the proposed Biala wind farm, particularly as it affects the occupants of many relatively smaller properties.

**In the EIS, it states that the wind turbines are up to 185 metres high.**

In Section E8 Landscape and visual, it reads that:

‘The assessment concluded that the Project has a relatively limited visual catchment and will result in an overall moderate to moderate/low visual impact given: the limited number of sensitive residential dwellings in proximity to the PA’ (Project Area).’

I’m assuming ‘sensitive residential dwellings’ must be those non-hosting neighbours who live within the 2-3km of the nearest turbine. It is difficult to see how 185m of moving, flickering turbines will only have a moderate to moderate/low visual impact on close by neighbours. And what does this impact measurement mean? Against what standard is this assessment calibrated?

Further, under E12 Socio economic, I read that the ‘Project is expected to cause a moderate/high visual impact to non-involved residential dwellings located within 2-3 km from proposed WTG locations’ and that ‘the level of impact can be further reduced through the implementation of mitigation measures such as planting of vegetation screens at affected properties’. The measurement here is moderate to high visual impact. The previous measurement is moderate to moderate to low visual impact. These are very different measurements. And to assert that spoiling non-host views can be ameliorated by vegetation screens is an insult to intelligence: we all know that no amount of screening will make the wind turbines go away, or indeed ever screen a structure that is 185m high.

People who live in the Southern Tablelands do so for various reasons but one reason is universal: the glorious ‘borrowed scenery’. Commuting distance of Yass, Goulburn, Canberra and Crookwell and the subdivision of larger holdings means that city people are attracted to these picturesque locations. They are not expecting an industrial wind scape to replace their peaceful vista. And bear in mind that there are only 12 buildings taller than the proposed Biala turbines in Sydney (including the Sydney Tower), and they are architecturally designed for elegance.

While all reasonable people would judge that 185 metre turbines 2 km from a residence, and much closer to the property entrance, would have a severe visual impact, will the proponent at least justify the two different ratings in the EIS as highlighted above?

When will the Department of Planning and Environment accept that allowing industrial developments to be approved in rural residential areas shows how little we are valued. This industry thus far is not regulated or legislated. The developers and the department of planning do not adhere to their charter of ‘transparency’. Thousands of land owners Australia wide are subject to fraud to profit companies that then sell on the developments and are not required to decommission.. Shame

on the Department for allowing developers into populated rural settings and not protecting the rights of the people that live there.