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Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning Industry and Environment
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Re: Rye Park Wind Farm (SSD-6693 Mod 1) Tip Height Increase

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above modification to the Rye Park Wind Farm (RPWF).

I have previously objected to the development of the RPWF and am also objecting to the modification to increase the size to a tip height of 200m, resulting in a 27% increase in the size of the structures, an increase in the overall footprint of the development from 258.8ha to 542.1ha and the 30m wide tracks that will now be cut into our country side. I will be directly impacted by the 10 turbines at the north of the development.

I have a merino wool producing property on the Little Plains Road at residence R121 and have been pretty much ignored by the proponents until I was offered photo montages in November 2019. I told James Becket there was no point in doing them from my home as I had already planted trees to mitigate the view from the house (this proposal has been in the pipeline for many years) but was concerned about working in the paddocks and being overlooked by 10 turbines and the noise associated with them. His reaction was to send me an offer of a neighbor agreement via email on 17/01/2020. In any other industry these neighbor agreements would be considered a bribe to keep people quiet, for me they are an admission by the proponent that there are problems for the people who will be living close to the turbines, and I wonder if the people listed as having made an agreement under the previous consent of 157m turbines are still going to be committed to living with 200m turbines. Have these agreements been updated?

The document - Modification Report, page 11, states 'Not considered to result in a magnitude of visual change that would significantly increase visual effects (and former visual impact ratings) associated with the Approved Project' and doesn't think the Consent Conditions need to be changed. Being less than 4km away from the closest 10 turbines which will be on a hill overlooking my property I strongly dispute this comment due to the total rotor sweep area for the project increasing by 49% and an increase of wind turbine height of 27%. How can this not be a 'magnitude of visual change'? For me personally the change will be significant, both visually and with noise, and I have no doubt it will also impact on the value of my land. It will also impact on my son and his young family who live in the second house on my property, a house that has never been recognised by the proponent.

This leads to another concern I have and am finding hard to comprehend. The maps included in the documentation identify 330 residences but there would be many more that have not been identified, such as my son's home. The large number of homes and people are clearly seen on Figure 1 & 2 – Residential dwelling locations within 4km of consented RPWF wind turbines. As we know wind turbines can be seen and heard at much greater distances than 4km so I find it hard to comprehend how this development can even go ahead under the current consent, let alone with much larger turbines.

On the Department of Planning & Infrastructure website there is a media release dated 7/03/2017. It states - "Up to 25 wind turbines should be removed from the Rye Park Wind Farm plan in order to maintain the rural character of the local village, a Department of Planning and Environment assessment has found". This increase in size and noise will not maintain the 'rural character' of any part of the RPWF and should not be approved.

In the same media release Mike Young said, "The Department recommends 25 wind turbines should be removed from the original 109 proposed". 16 of these turbines were near the village but then the PAC reinstated 8. The argument made by Rye Park Renewable Energy Pty Ltd that increasing the size of the turbines will allow a reduction of the number of turbines to 80 is not a valid argument when the Department of Planning have already recommended a reduction to 84 when they were only 157m high.

I also object to this modification due to the increase in the environmental impacts of the larger turbines. The plight of the Superb Parrot, listed as Vulnerable, is of greatest concern but the Pygmy Perch, Golden Sunmoth (endangered) and the local Eagle population will also be impacted, and in the case of the eagles will be eradicated. The proponent states in the documentation that impacts to the Superb Parrot will be increased but if we were to willingly kill any native bird or animal we would be prosecuted. Rye Park Renewable Energy Pty Ltd know that if they build these wind turbines they will be killing wildlife, they have admitted to it, will they be prosecuted when it occurs?

The closest turbines to me, T1 T2 T3 & T4, are located on the property of Linda and Paul Cavanaugh. These turbines, along with T151 and several others in the northern cluster, will be located in the corridor between 2 lots of vegetation. This placement can clearly be seen on Figure 1 – Residential dwelling locations within 4km of consented RPWF wind turbines (north). This couple have been office-bearers of the Boorowa Community Landcare group and I understand Mrs Cavanaugh is currently the liaison person between Local Land Services, landowners and funding opportunities. I find their position in the local Landcare group as being a conflict of interest when it is clear that when they are coordinating the distribution of hundreds of thousands of dollars to landholders for the building of tree lots to fill corridors to ensure the nesting ability and future of the Superb Parrot, and revegetation of the endangered Box Gum Grassy Woodland areas, they will be responsible for the building of several 200m high wind turbines in the corridor where the parrots, eagles and other birdlife will be travelling. It is also clear from looking at this map, along with Figure 2, the turbine placement will significantly impact the remnant vegetation in the area, and the animals that live there.

These turbines, as listed above, are also located at a significant Aboriginal site – SU27/L1, and therefore should be removed. In fact the significant number of sites noted on Fig 4-3 Location of known sites recorded with AHIMS in relation to the proposed area – Appendix G.6, (Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System) should have the local Aboriginal groups up in arms, and I'm sure they would be if they were properly consulted. The Rye Park area is well known as being a meeting place for the Wiraduri, Ngunawal and Gundungarra people of hundreds of years, and the 8 days spent on the field survey could not have possibly found the number of important artefacts that are in the area. Appendix C.4 doesn't even recognize the land long held Aboriginal land managed by the Onerwal Local Aboriginal Land Council which is at R75 and would have significant history and artefacts. Makes me wonder about the accuracy of the rest of the document supplied in the Modification 1 documents?

I also know of two families who have young children that should be going to the Rye Park Public School. Both families have one child at school and two younger children. Both families have sent their child to school in Boorowa due to their concerns about the impacts of the village being surrounded by the RPWF and the Bango WF currently under construction, as well as the large increase in traffic that will be going past the school, and additional risks while on the school bus. These concerns are obviously being felt by others with children, and any potential new families to the area, as there are only 4 children currently enrolled in the school compared to 18 enrolled in 2014 when this development first became widely known. I have no doubt that once construction begins there will be no new families wanting to move to the area and the school will close. There has been a recent influx of people to the area and all I have spoken to are horrified that they didn't know about the RPWF when they purchased, and are certainly worried about the modification. It seems a State Significant Development within 4kms of the intended purchase does not show on any searches done at time of purchase!

The beautiful village of Rye Park and the surrounding areas are being destroyed by a group of people who do their planning, assessments and decision making while sitting in an office in Canberra, Sydney or Melbourne. We in the

country are the backbone of Australia, which has recently been demonstrated during bushfires and pandemics, but are expected to put up with our lifestyle being destroyed so city people can continue to build huge houses with electric heating, air conditioners and everything else that sucks up electricity. In 2014 there were 130 submissions posted to the Department of Planning during the initial consultation period, the majority against. In 2016 there were 240 submissions, the majority against. How much longer does the Department of Planning intend to ignore the majority of people in the Rye Park area who are against this industrial development.

My comments above can only be based on the small amount of information I have been able to absorb in the Modification 1 documentation in the short time available. It is lengthy and full of information that is not relevant to the modification, such as in Appendix – I, Stakeholder Comm Engagement Plan. This has information relating to issues as far back as 2013 and does not give adequate proof of community consultation in relation to the modification. I am particularly distressed about the comments made in relation to the Rye Park community, Page 21, Table 5: Community Risk Analysis as a whole, but particularly at Ref R10 – Threats of violence against Tilt Renewables staff when engaging with communities face to face. The incident being referred to occurred at a Trustpower information session several years ago and occurred due to Trustpower having 2 ‘bouncers’ on the door and then physically removing an elderly resident from the venue. This is not relevant to the modification and this Risk Analysis is only one example of the contempt Trustpower/Tilt have treated us with, and has been a significant factor in the deterioration of my mental health, and that of many others in the area, some of which have recently outlaid significant amount of money for property that will be significantly impacted by the RPWF and it’s construction.

A current example of this contempt has been shown in Appendix F – Development Footprint Ex Roads. There are many instances in the photos where corners and sections of roads have been marked as ‘Development Footprint’. These sections have encroached on private land, but no agreement had been reached with the landowners at the time of release to the public, and came as a shock that their land was to be ‘taken’. Examples of this are at the intersection of Dillon and Long Streets in Boorowa, intersection of Rye Park Road and Yass St in Rye Park, and at a sweeping corner south of Rye Park on the Dalton Road. There has also been a clear lack of consultation with the residents of Dillon Street in Boorowa on the change to the preferred route. As there are a lot of new homes in that area I would assume there will be a lot of concern about the value of their homes during the 2-3 years of construction due to the increase in heavy vehicles through the area.

I am requesting the Modification to the Rye Park Wind Farm be rejected.

I am also requesting that an investigation into the initial approval be held due the fact that Trustpower misled the Department of Planning, as stated by Martine Holberton at the CCC meeting on 5/03/2020. The application by Trustpower was based on insufficient and vastly inadequate information, an example being that the internal roads were to be 12m wide but now will need to be 30m wide, and representatives of the proponent have stated to CCC members and community members on several occasions that the turbines would never be more than 157m high. The Department of Planning and Infrastructure, and the PAC, approved this development based on this misleading information and the development should be reviewed as a whole. (This comment by Martine was not minuted by the Chair and the minutes of the meeting were posted to the Tilt website without the approval of the CCC as a following meeting has not yet been held).

It is also clear from the diagrams and maps supplied by Tilt that the project will be built in an area that has a significant amount of remnant vegetation, endangered and vulnerable species of birds, moths, fish and habitats. After the summer bushfires we can no longer afford to lose any more of our natural environment. It has been maintained and managed for hundreds of years by both Aboriginal and European settlers in a way that has attracted the attention of many, and the Rye Park Wind Farm should not be allowed to proceed in any form, and particularly Modification 1.

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