

## ISSUE: DESTRUCTION OF NATURAL HABITAT

This proposed development should not be approved due to its irreversible actual and potential destruction to the high value biodiversity habitat, including the impact on the Karst environment and caves in the locality.

I would draw your attention to 2 Submissions of Objection which can provide evidenced based information about the impact particularly to bat colonies and the Karst and cave environment within this Project area. They are submitted by individual, Jodie Rutledge, Bolwarra Heights, NSW and by organisation NHVSS – Newcastle and Hunter Valley Speleological Society Inc, Broadmeadow, NSW.

The Development Footprint is planned to extend for 513 ha along the ridgeline of the Liverpool Range, part of the Great Dividing Range. However, the entire Project Area, which includes transmission line easements and switching station is a staggering 8316 ha. The amount of clearing and devastation to the natural environment is unthinkable and the impact on wildlife and forestry cannot justify the touted energy and financial outcomes.

P 150-154 of the EIS confirms the identification of 17 threatened terrestrial fauna species- both ecosystem and species credit species – at the site of this proposed Project.

The EIS on Page 160 summarises the results of the BDAR (Appendix D) in relation to following the the controlling provisions under Sections 18 and 18A of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 for Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). The results confirm the potential of significant impact to the threatened ecological and fauna species:

- the Yellow Box-White Box- Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland,
- Koala
- Large-eared Pied Bat
- Spotted-tailed Quoll

No amount of mitigation measures or “design phase refinements” or offsets can prevent the destruction of these significant species and habitats. The only way to do what our legislation says it will do is to stop approving industrialised development projects in threatened habitats, such as this one.

Further, on Page 167 of the EIS, in the section titled, Impact Summary and Biodiversity Offset Requirements it states:

*“For residual impacts that cannot be avoided or fully mitigated, offsets will be required to ensure no net loss of biodiversity”.*

Tables 9-9 and 9-10 tally total these Direct impacts as 559.18 ha with an Estimated total of Credits of 23,697.

It is impossible by simply using the offsetting scheme to declare “no net loss of biodiversity”. What good is renewable energy that destroys natural habitat and wipes an endangered animal species from the planet? As Bob Brown has stated in 2019 to the ABC on a wind farm proposal on Robbins Island, Tasmania: “...it is in the wrong place, will ruin the view and kill endangered birds like the Tasmanian wedge-tail eagle...and potentially migratory birds....We have alternatives for renewable energy. We don’t have alternatives for extinct species of birds”.

### Conclusion

This Project cannot offset the impact of the destruction of the naturally vegetated, timbered and forested corridor that runs across the entire range including all of the proposed project area and development footprint. This Project cannot minimise or offset the loss of 17 significant threatened ecosystems and species, 4 of which are of Matters of National Environmental Significance.

**I object to this Project based on its destruction of corridor connectivity along the Liverpool Range which protects and supports at least 17 threatened animal species and 2 threatened ecological communities.**