



FOSTORIA - FANNON
(AUST.) PTY. LIMITED

Balarang, Crawney Stations
Waverley Road
Timor NSW 2338
Mngr: Byron Hubbard
P: 02 6546 8199
M: 0428 650 602

Mailing Address:
PO Box 191
South Hurstville NSW 2221
Ph: (02) 9579 5353
ABN: 93 000 766 405

Att: Anthony Ko
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Thursday, 28 January 2021

Dear Mr Ko,

Re: OBJECTION to the Hills of Gold Wind Farm SSD-9679

We write as owners of a large parcel of land in the Upper Hunter called Crawney Station which adjoins Wallabadah Reserve to the West and Crawney Pass National Park to the right and is included within the Environmental Impact Statement of the Proposed Wind Farm Project. Our land parcel is fairly substantial at approximately 4855 acres. We believe that the main homestead on the property is identified as NAD_72 within the plan documents.

Firstly, I refer to the document provided labelled "Appendix F Landscape and Visual Assessment". On page 64, Table 16, *14.0 Overview of Dwelling Assessment*, there is a comment made that, *"the owner is not concerned about visual impacts."* This is a blatant lie, as we have not been consulted on our opinion of the visual impact of the wind turbines. We have expansive mountain and valley views, and to see upwards of 30 turbines on the mountain ranges within our focal point from almost every area on the farm, is an eyesore and visual pollution. This statement that *"the owner is not concerned about visual impacts"* is simply incorrect. We are one of the most affected, being able to see one of the highest number of wind turbines out of all neighbouring properties to the windfarm, and it will grossly affect our landscape and visual amenity.

Notwithstanding that deliberately misleading statement we would also like to object to the Hills of Gold Wind Farm (SSD – 9679) project at Crawney on the following grounds:


1. The sheer size of the turbines at 230m high and the extraordinary number of wind turbines will have a major impact on the mountainous region and from our place at Crawney Station, this will be the new focal point. This detracts from our views and visual amenity.
2. The number of the turbines visible in proximity to our farm will detract from the value of the property. At the moment we have struggled to maintain property value due to prolonged drought and bushfires. Now we have to factor in the landscape abomination which may just reduce the value of the property even further. When one considers country living, they do not consider a property with such proximity to a windfarm a benefit. There is a stigma attached to living so close to a windfarm which will drive our property value down, especially with so many visible on the horizon and mountain ridge surrounding.

3. In the past year we have experienced severe fire (Wallabadah Fire 2019/2020) on our property. This caused a significant amount of damage, the effects of which will be felt for many years. There were significant impacts to fencing and related infrastructure as well as to the vegetation and tree line. We believe that Wind Farming can contribute to the potential of fire with the oils and lubrication used for the turbines. These can be a hazard in a heatwave, which are regularly felt in the upper hunter. We have seen fires caused by grass on a car exhaust on a hot day, which is an indication of how quickly something can start.
4. We are in a location that is set to potentially be exposed to <30Db of noise. While this isn't a huge number, put into perspective the number of turbines on a quiet and still night and you potentially hear the "whomp-whomp-whomp" rather than the crickets. Over time, the one point of contention on wind turbines is constantly the rhythmic noise which it creates and the ensuing health or stress related issues which may result. Not only on humans, but the wildlife and predominantly our cattle.
5. Not only are the wind turbines visual and noise pollution, but they will contribute to the environmental pollution of the surrounding areas. Oil from the turbines will potentially spill on the surrounding land, and cause pollution to both the adjoining lands and Ben Halls Gap Nature Reserve. These lands are the catchment for many creeks and waterways including the Hunter and Barnard Rivers. We do not want to see the local creeks polluted which feed our livestock, let alone the pollution carried downriver to cause problems elsewhere.
6. We are concerned about the noise and traffic pollution which will result from years of construction of the turbines and related infrastructure and access roads. The roads are already quite dangerous and winding, and the options for cars passing by trucks is limited and dangerous at best. There will be significant dust and noise to the east of our property where the main Timor Crawney Road runs. As has happened in the past, our station employees have had to use farm machinery to winch and upright cars which had lost control on these roads. This puts the onus on the locals to assist where before there was significantly less traffic and reduced risk. This is a safety concern to all the residents of the area who may need to access Nundle or even more so, Tamworth.
7. We are concerned about the impact on the birds and bats of the local region. The animals to the area after the prolonged drought and significant bushfire are only just recovering, including the bird life. If you introduce 70 wind turbines, there are going to be a large amount of animals which are killed as a result of direct impact with the turbines which were not there before. We have animals in the area which are endangered and vulnerable and while the Tiger Quoll or Koala probably won't come into direct contact with a turbine, they will feel the impacts of the development and ecology alterations on their habitat and wildlife corridors. The bird species such as Peregrine Falcons and Powerful Owls are endangered and I would hate to see these species killed or made more vulnerable by a significant landscape change. What is being done to protect the species in the area which are protected and vulnerable?

We have a harmonious natural landscape currently in Crawney. It provides for an idyllic rural life. If the wind turbines are installed, they will be a serious blight on the landscape, and cause impact to the health and amenity of both humans and animals, damage to our local ecosystems and creeks as well as significant loss to our property value. It may also contribute to the risks of fire and pose a safety risk to the users of the roads and adjoining farms that will be used to access and build the infrastructure.

We are opposed to installing the Hills of Gold Wind Farm.

Regards,



Ian Plunkett
Managing Director



Photo 1 View of Crawney Pass from Crawney Station.



Photo 2 Portion of the mountainous view from the homestead verandah