

I oppose the proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm to be located on the range at Nundle/Hanging Rock.

After visiting Nundle on several occasions, my wife and I decided to make an investment for our future. Purchasing a block of land 7 years ago on the outskirts of Nundle, with the plan to retire early to Nundle and become involved in the local community. Over the years we have done improvements to the block in preparation for our transition to Nundle.

Had we known that there was the possibility of a wind farm being placed on the hills, we would never have purchased in Nundle.

Our Reasons for choosing Nundle:

- The village atmosphere
- The magnificence and beauty of the hills
- Friendliness of the locals
- The peace and quiet, with the convenience of a major country town (Tamworth) 45min away.

My reasons for opposing the proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm:

- The detrimental change to the topography and ambience of the area.

I make reference to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

7.0 Zone of Visual Influence

7.20 Overview of Zone of Visual Influence (page 32)

“Views toward the project are likely to be available from large areas of land to the North West of the project, surrounding Crawney Road and further North to Nundle. Land in this area is in excess of 8 kilometres”

5.0 Visual Baseline Study

5.2.1 RU1 Zoning

The objectives of the RU1 zoning relevant to landscape and visual impact within the Upper Hunter LEP are “to maintain the rural landscape character of the land in the long term”

15.0 Visual Impacts on Landscape Character

15.1 Overview of Visual Impacts on Landscape Character (page 66)

“The Fact that the proposed wind turbines are generally positioned within a landscape that has remained largely unchanged for decades means the potential for contrast is significant”

- I requested a photomontage to be done from our property (17-19 Blake St) in April 2020, I received an email, From Michael Stranger at Someva Renewables on 1/4/2020 in response to our request. Below is an extract of his response.

“I will relay this information to Moir though and keep you updated however on when they intend on travelling to site next.”

-
- I was not contacted by anyone from Someva or Moir before their return to Nundle, to complete the photomontages. After emailing Michael Stranger on the 17/6/2020 enquiring as to why we had not been contacted re our request for a photomontage to be done. I received the below email 23/6/2020

“No, your request has not been denied. We had Moir undertake a visual assessment from your neighbours block last week on Tuesday afternoon, on the corner of Meadow Street and Crosby Street.

We will be able to share with you the photomontages prepared by Moir from this location when they are available, which will provide a close representation of the view of the project proposal from your block at 17-19 Blake Street.”

-
- Once the photomontages were provided and feeling that they were deceptive and not representative “of the view of the project” from our block. I once again contacted Mike Stranger by email on the 10/11/2020

Good Morning, Mike Stranger, Jamie Chivers and Aref Taleb

As you will see from the email trail below we have concerns re: the proposed “Hills of Gold Wind farm” and the impact it will have on our lives during construction and post construction.

A quick recap:

We purchased the block at 17-19 Blake St Nundle, 7 years ago for its beautiful uninterrupted outlook of the hills to the south east.

We requested an assessment from our property back in April of this year in an email to Mike Stranger.

This was not done and told that one had been done from our neighbour’s property, **“which will provide a close representation of the view of the project proposal from your block at 17-19 Blake Street”**.

We have just seen the photomontage of our neighbour’s property (16 Crosby St Nundle) and feel that this is not in fact a “close representation” from our block.

In the 7 years we have owned our block at Nundle, we have done improvements in the way of planting shrubs, fruit trees, a new build and installing an envirocycle septic system.

Our long term plan is to build a home on the block and retire to Nundle.

All our hard work and long term plans have now been placed in jeopardy, as we would never have purchased that block or even looked at land in the Nundle region, had we known that a wind farm was in the pipeline.

As such once again we request an assessment be done from 17-19 Blake St Nundle.

- I was contacted by Aref Taleb on the 10/11/2020 by phone. I requested that he email me, rather than have a phone conversation. His response is below.

Thank you for your time over the phone this morning.

The landscape and visual consultants in their assessment determine representative viewpoints in line with the NSW Wind Energy: Visual Assessment Bulletin that encompass the view for surrounding dwellings and locations. The photomontage and wireframe produced from 16 Crosby St Nundle can be used as a representative viewpoint for your block at 17-19 Blake St Nundle.

As discussed this morning, the updated public viewpoint photomontages have been made available on the News and Updates page on the Hills of Gold Energy website.

The link to the page with the updated public viewpoint photomontages is: <https://www.hillsofgoldenergy.com/news-and-updates>

If you have any further questions, please feel free to reach out.

Warm wishes,
Aref Taleb

I do feel my request was ignored and the photomontages are deceptive and are not representative of what we will see on the ridgeline.

- The Turbines only appear to show two blades.
- They have been made to look darker, in particular on the north side of each turbine.
- They do not represent the fact that they will be white and highly reflective, significantly changing the landscape.

(ref to images on pages 4, 5, 6 and 7 of this document)

As we brought the block of land for the outlook to the hills it would be senseless to implement mitigation.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

16.0 Mitigation Methods

16.4 Landscape Principle (page 70)

(Point 4)

Planting layout should avoid screening views of the broader landscape.

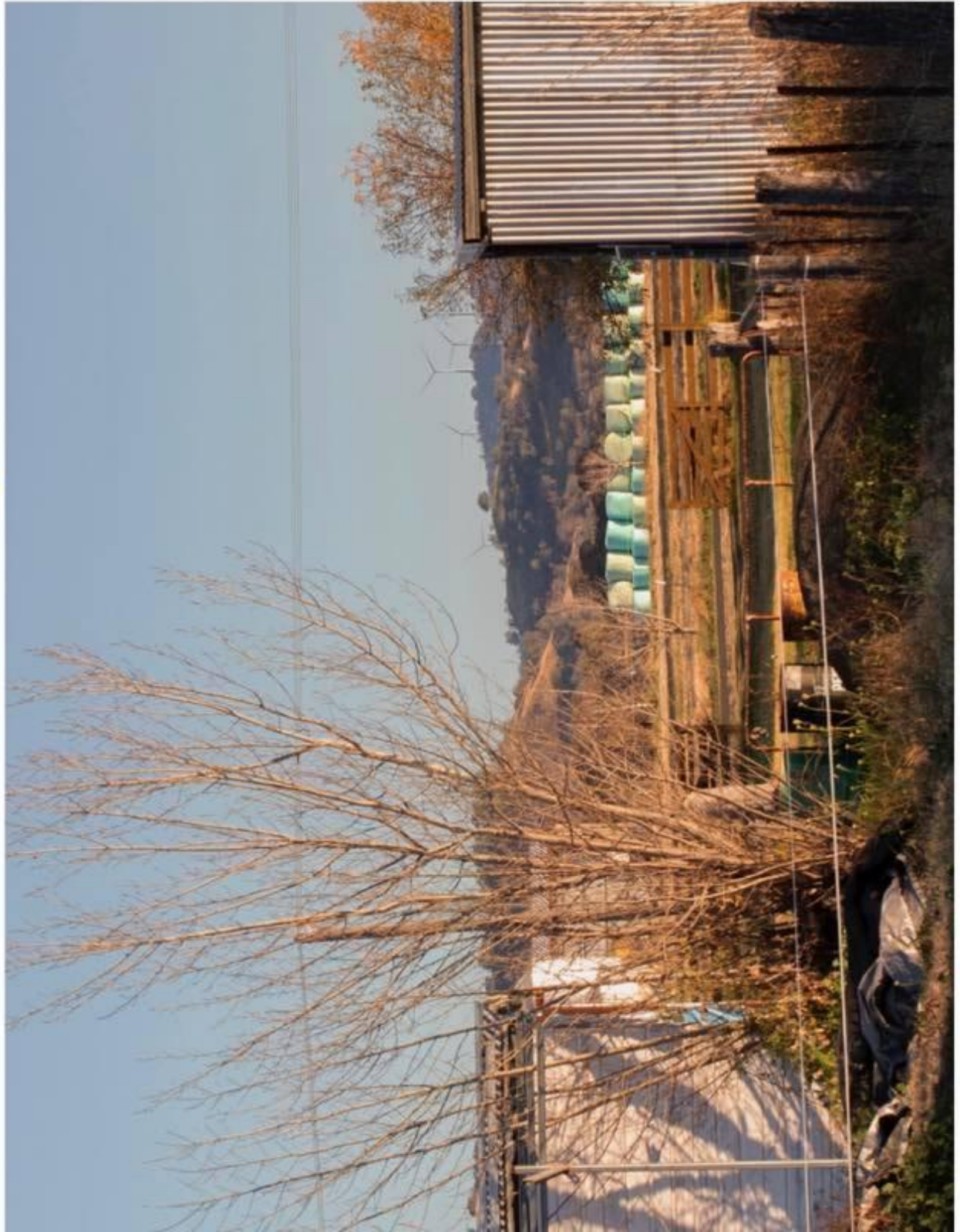
Wind Energy Visual Assessment Bulletin for State significant wind energy development December 2016

Vegetation screening (page 39)

“Vegetation screening, or the planting of trees and shrubs, to visually screen wind turbines or other potential visual impacts from view may be an option for selected viewpoints. However, this mitigation option should not be the first that is considered. A key reason for this is that visual impact issues often cause conflicts between the community or individual residents and the proponent’s proposed wind energy project, and people value landscapes and particular views of the landscape.”

10:15 am Tue 3 Nov

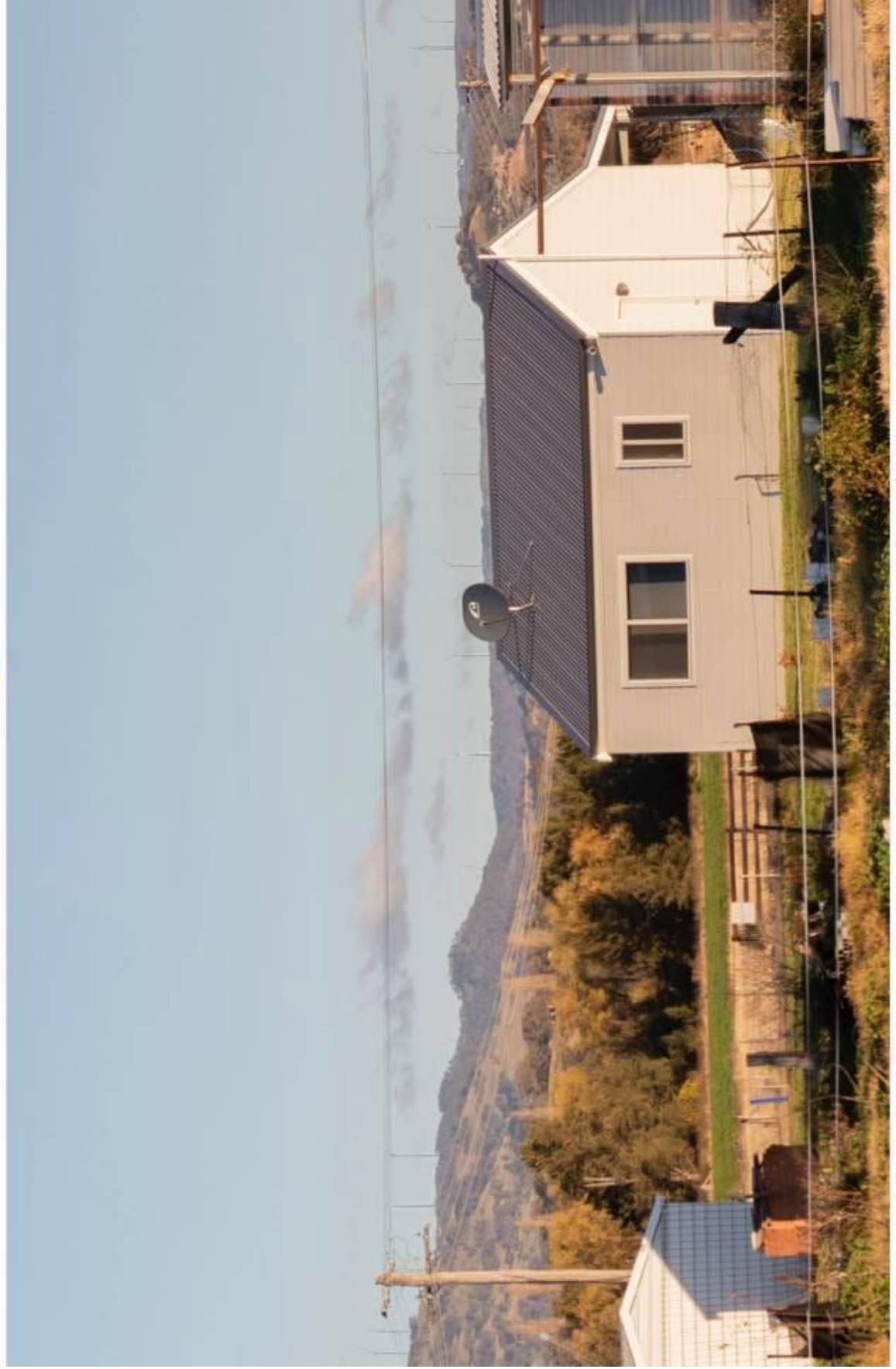
16 Crosby Street Photomontage and Wireframe.pdf

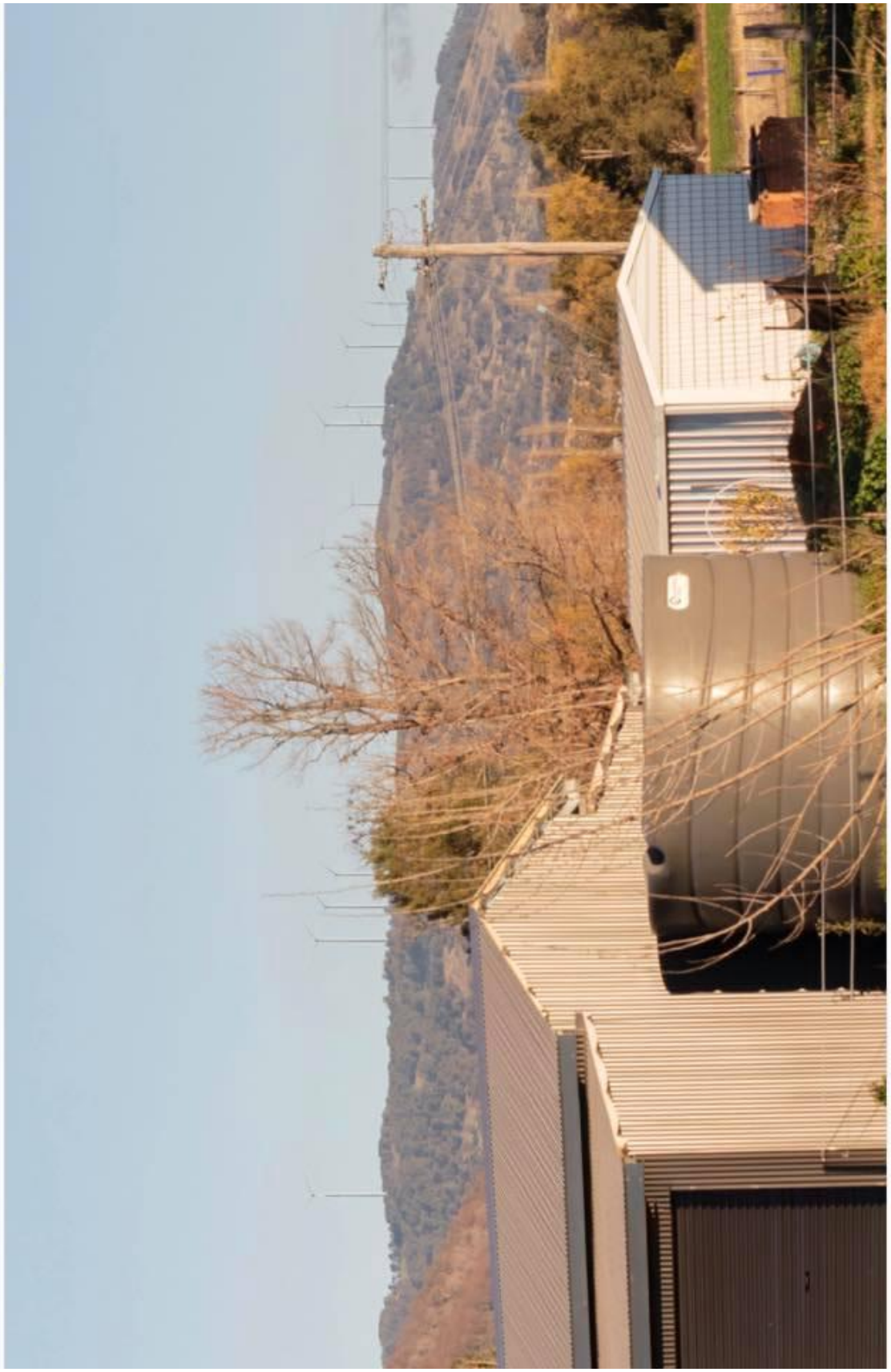


10:15 am Tue 3 Nov

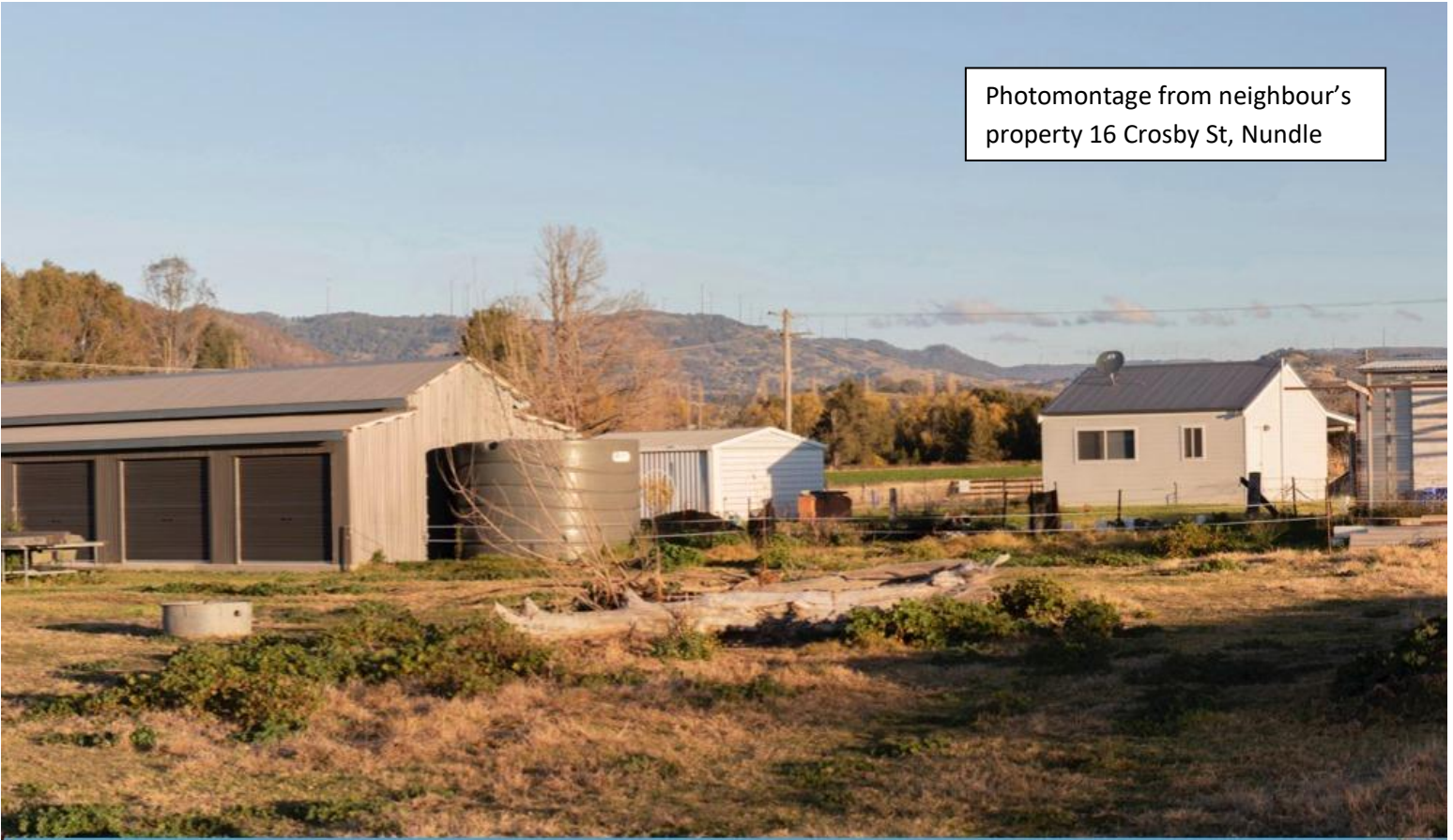
100%

16 Crosby Street Photomontage and Wireframe.pdf





Photomontage from neighbour's
property 16 Crosby St, Nundle



Photomontage from further
out of town.



It also states in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

4.0 Community Consultation

4.1 Community Consultation Process (page 15)

“the landscape values of the community are considered to be **subjective**”

It then goes onto say:

“It is best practice to utilize a objective frame of reference (refer to Scenic Quality Rating – Section 5.5) which can be applied by professionals. This process can be undertaken whilst taking into account (but not being driven by) values by the community.”

“**subjective**” = “influenced by emotions or opinion” There is a large percentage of the community have a high opinion of the value of the current landscape and therefore oppose the installation of a wind farm in their landscape

It appears the proponent maybe playing the communities values of the landscape down.

I conclude that:

- The project will be visible from Nundle and surrounding areas, changing the topography of the area dramatically.
- The proponent did not keep me informed and has been deceptive in its “photomontage”, it is not a close representation of the view of the project proposal from our block at 17-19 Blake Street”.
- The introduction of an industrial wind farm to the region would be in opposition to the Upper Hunter Local Environmental Plan 2013 creating a significant contrast to the landscape.
- That the community place a higher “value” on the landscape then what is “stressed” by the proponent in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- The ambiance of the locality will go from pretty and relaxed village, to uninviting and industrialised, with wind turbines in your line of vision from those areas mentioned in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- Nundle/Hanging Rock does not fall into the New England Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) and therefore should be considered an unsuitable area.

Other issues I place importance on, which would arise from such a project:

- Flora and fauna will be damaged and lost in clearing the ridgeline to accommodate each turbine.
- Increased traffic flow jamming up roads that are not up to catering for heavy and large traffic.
- Loss of fauna along, Lindsays Gap Rd, turning it into an unattractive and barren drive into Nundle.
- Loss of tourism due to increased traffic and delays along roads into Nundle.

There is the certainty that if the wind farm goes ahead, I would not want to retire to Nundle and would have problems selling our block and recouping what we have invested in it.

I feel strongly about the welfare of Nundle and our plans to move there. As such I oppose the “Hills of Gold Wind Farm”.