

Selena Sylvester
BVSc PostGradCertRurSci IVAS
Wombramurra Station
504 Head of Peel Road
Nundle NSW 2340
selena@sylvestercattleco.com.au
Ph 0427468125

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The Secretary

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

12 Darcy Street,

PARRAMATTA

Dear Sir/Madam,

HILLS OF GOLD WIND FARM – SSD 18_9679

I am a Veterinarian and resident of 504 Head of Peel Road Nundle. My family property Wombramurra Station neighbours the Proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm site and I would like to submit my opposition to the project. After negotiating with the Proponents for the past three years something we have not been able to achieve is truth and transparency. The goal posts have continually changed and in one of our meetings with Someva we were informed that if we did not come on board with the project on their terms the project would go ahead without any financial benefit to us showing total disregard to our family, lifestyle and the reasons we purchased our property over 14 years ago.

Our property is in the unique situation of being highly fertile agricultural land in a high rainfall area and a very beautiful location. The property covers approximately 12,000 acres in the Head of the Peel River Valley and will be surrounded by the development. One of the access roads for the proposed development Head of Peel Road runs through the centre of our property and Kirks Road runs through our paddocks. The right of carriageway along Kirks Road was granted in good faith between two adjacent previous land holders assuming this would be just used for agricultural pursuits. At the time there was not any plans or thoughts of a Wind Farm development. The plan to use this as an access to the proposed development creates a much greater burden on us as the granting landowner than was ever intended and under this pretence, we have refused access to the site using this right of carriage way. We have tried to discuss this situation with the proponent who has not responded with a solution except to attempt to encourage us to sign a Hills of Gold Wind Farm Neighbour Benefit Sharing Deed which only relates to upgrades to the Head of the Peel Road. This agreement has a suggested annual payment fee of a non-significant amount of money in relation to the disturbance to our lifestyle and

business both emotionally and financially if the development were to proceed. It also comes with section 2.5 of the document.

Wind Farm Acknowledgement

(a) The Landholder

- (i) Acknowledges and accepts the construction and operation of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm in Proximity to the Property, including any visual aspects which may result.
- (ii) Must not bring or procure any third party to bring any Claims against the company or other persons in relation to any such impacts, except to the extent that:
 - (A) Such impacts constitute a breach of the Development Consent; or
 - (B) The noise impact from the Hills of Gold Wind Farm result in noise impacts on the Main Dwelling which exceed the noise criteria for landholders who have entered into agreements in relation to windfarms as outlined in the Wind farm environment noise guidelines.
- (iii) Must procure that any occupier of any dwelling on the Property complies with clause 2.5(a)(ii) as if they were party to this Deed; and
- (iv) Acknowledges that the Annual Payment is provided as full compensation for any impacts and undertakes not to make any request under the conditions of the Development Consent to require the Company or the Other Persons to provide any visual impact of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm on their Property or Dwelling.

My interpretation is once the Deed is signed I and anyone who lives on our property is not allowed to object to anything which is a position we are not prepared to take as the EIS has numerous sections stating plans need to be changed and further investigations carried out etc etc. We were presented with documents on two occasions to sign. Both times after consulting with our solicitor we were advised more detail was required. This was never provided by the proponent and we were then accused by the proponent of not wanting to be involved in the project. The most remarkable occasion was after multiple meetings and conversations with the proponent re location of transmission lines, substations and works yards that were to be located on our property we heard nothing back from Someva or WEP even after numerous attempts to contact them by phone and email. The first we knew we were no longer involved in the project was when we viewed the turbine location maps produced in March 2020. It is hard to quantify the time, emotional anxiety and stress involved in trying to negotiate a positive outcome with the proponent, however I do know it has come at a large cost to all the members of our family, both emotionally and financially. Should the project be approved I see no positive side for us.

The Head of Peel Road runs in close to our house, workshop, horse facility and two sets of cattle yards. If the Head of Peel Road is to be used as an access road, I would have great concern for noise, dust and safety issues related to the road. None of these have been clearly identified or recognised by the Proponent.

As a Veterinarian I am deeply concerned with the ecological damaged caused by a project like this being carried out on such sensitive and ecologically valuable land resources. In the 15 years we have owned Wombramurra Station the major landholders who will benefit financially from the project has progressive cleared large tracts of land. Many areas are very steep and questionable in a legal sense other area were snow gum forests with great value as habitat to both endangered and all wildlife. My question to the department is whether this type of clearing is promoted to allow a project of State Significance to processed through the DA process? The landholder has been investigated for illegal clearing and is required to provide an "environmental outcome" at the same time he has obtained another permit and is presently clearing the area where the substation and works yard will possibly be sited. This type of behaviour does not give me any hope for mitigation processes as suggested in the EIS and ultimately as there is no information in the EIS re the Decommission process what will become of this industrial waste land. The project is in very close proximity of a two important nature reserves which were severely damaged in the 2019/2020 bushfires. I have heard many reports recently suggesting the wildlife after the bushfires are extremely stressed and vulnerable and we should be taking great care of corridors adjacent to these reserves. I have contacted a number of ecologists and am awaiting a reply from Tim Faulkner of Aussie Ark. This may not be available prior to the submissions closing however would like the department to carefully review the ecological data as most of the studies were conducted during the worst drought ever recorded in this area and we are aware of colonies of Koalas and other numbers of endangered and animals not recorded on the ecologist's maps. We also spoke with some of the ecologists as they drove through our property to access their plots which were interestingly situated on cleared land within the development corridor.

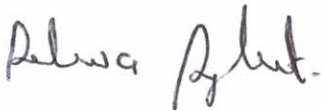
I am also concerned with the misrepresentation the proponent has made to members of the local community on issues such as local jobs, transport routes and the community enhancement fund. However, my main concern is the enormous amount of land clearing and habitat destruction that has already occurred predominantly in the areas where turbines and other structures will be built. This in association with the clearing that will need to take place to accommodate turbines on the Western aspect of the development, transmission lines and access roads. I have just read the application consent for the Liverpool Plains Windfarm and the cost of the project is far less than the Hills of Gold Project. Along with this the energy produced and the number of turbines being far greater than this project. I can only gather from this there is a significantly greater earthworks and construction for this project and this will result in more expensive power.

Our valley is a very beautiful place, and we did not purchase the property to be surrounded by wind turbines. The visual impact from our residence will reportedly be 3 sectors we have attempted to obtain an independent report on the visual impact however due to the EIS being on exhibition over a holiday period this has not been possible. Someva are also unable to give us accurate information on the visual impact of night lighting in our valley or the transmission line both which concern us greatly. We planned to build another homestead on our property however all the sites we were proposing will be in full view of very large numbers of turbines, so this has been put on hold. As our property is large enough to be subdivided in relations to the relevant LEP as part of our succession plan, we planned to subdivide and potentially sell or build on these blocks. We have an independent agricultural report stating that the

land is agriculturally viable for this type of subdivision however our concern is the large industrial development surrounding the land may well deter some buyers. We feel the project will affect the value of our agricultural holding Wombramurra Station as we are affected in so many ways however are not receiving any financial gain and purchasers of this type of asset could easily chose to purchase elsewhere. There are a number of rural properties on the market adjoining the wind farm presently and buyers seem unprepared to commit to purchase with the pending approval of the DA on the HOG project.

We purchased Wombramurra Station as our major investment in agriculture and lifestyle this project will change vastly our lifestyle and farming business and our home will become a place we no longer will enjoy living. All this comes with no financial compensation. Should this DA be approved we call on the Department to help us negotiate a fair outcome.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Selena Sylvester', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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