

IPC Submission for the Bowmans Creek Wind Farm Project (SSD – 10315)

I am making a submission to the IPC that objects to this proposed development proceeding

Our family lives at [REDACTED] and makes a living from our beef cattle business, as it has for approximately 70 years. Our property is our home and our lifeblood. I believe we have been mapped as N21-1 and N22-1.

I am aware of many objectors to the windfarm development, and many of those are local and impacted, as compared to supporters that live abroad. A number of those objectors will have articulated their valid concerns with regard to questionable approval processes and conditions better than I can. One of the obvious and glaring failures however has been a complete lack of consultation.

No community consultation for over two years

- The most recent local hall meetings were held over two years ago in April 2021
- The last Community Consultation Committee (CCC) meeting was held in October 2021
- The CCC was disbanded in early April 2022, contrary to government guidelines

Bushfire Risk

- I have attached photos of a recent bushfire affected neighbouring paddock, that has turbines including 66, 67, 68 in it. We are deeply concerned that the RFS will be unable to use aerial firefighting to control and extinguish future fires in this area, which is within the approved wind turbine zone of the development. Much of this land is accessible by horseback only with very limited vehicle access. Please remember that fire doesn't necessarily follow roads, the proposed turbine access road will be of little to no benefit in fighting a bushfire in this area.
- Access to and from our property is via Scrumlo Road only. One way in, one way out.

Weed Control

- Legally, we are required to control and eradicate noxious weeds including Lantana and Wild Olive. This is monitored by the Local Land Services. The vast majority of noxious weeds that appear on our property are spread by birds scattering seed from adjoining coal country buffer land and other properties currently not being managed. Weed control on our property adjacent to the wind farm development **requires weed control via helicopter spraying**. Turbine 32 has particular impact. A photo of a lantana bush adjacent to the site identified for Turbine 32 is attached to this submission.
- Numerous objectors to this development have raised concerns with regard to aviation risk for those aircraft flying above the proposed turbines, our concern also includes the inability for us to engage aerial weed control contractors to operate in or around the turbines. We cannot spray from 240 or more metres above ground level.

Pasture Improvement

- **All pasture improvement including seeding and fertiliser is applied on our property by using fixed wing aircraft.** It will be impossible for us to manage soil chemistry and pasture species anywhere near the vicinity of the turbines. Remembering again, that this country is hilly, not flat or undulating, and is inaccessible to vehicles that might otherwise be used to fertilise or sow seed on level ground.

Visual and Noise Impact

- We have not been provided with any photo montages, nor were they offered to us
- We were not approached in relation to noise monitoring or sampling. Any such data that is implied to represent impact throughout our property is fictitious and unreliable.
- We have not been approached by any consultants engaged by the Applicant
- Theoretically minimising visual and / or noise impact from 200 (plus) metre high turbines with the introduction of new vegetation is highly unlikely to succeed in Hebden Area (Scrumlo Road) given the challenges faced with soil type, topography and access.

Flashing Red Lights or Beacons

- The idea that flashing red lights or beacons on top of the turbines will provide for safe aviation is somewhat questionable. I doubt that Department of Defence aircraft operating from Williamstown airport on their routine practice drills over the Hunter Valley will rely on turbine flashing lights for pilot safety. What flashing lights will do is negatively impact native fauna, this method is widely used to deter foxes from attacking sheep. Further, the lights would often be immersed in cloud and fog, resulting in flickering red light and refraction across the skyline and further reduced amenity.

Scrumlo Road

- Scrumlo Road is a single lane, barely maintained and mainly unfenced country bitumen road that currently provides one way in and one way out access for local residents, livestock carriers, farm suppliers, school buses and a host of B-Double trucks accessing a local gravel quarry, contrary to the conditions of their DA approval. Add to this that one of the local major coal mines (owned and operated by Glencore) has current approval to redirect Hebden Road (which connects to Scrumlo Road to the New England Highway) in order for major coal mining expansion. And now the Department of Planning also wants to approve even more heavy vehicles and roadworks. We question whether the impact of the combined Hebden Road reconstruction and Scrumlo Road works and associated road safety risk to users has been properly considered at all.

Environmental Impact

- The construction of concrete pads, installation of oil and fuel storage, construction of 200 metre plus high wind turbines from material widely documented as being impossible to break down or recycle is of course a serious concern.

- The construction of paddock tracks capable of providing the heavy machinery required to construct and maintain the wind turbines, and in particular the required incline, will lead to water erosion, habitat damage and flora degradation. The required incline from Scrumlo Road to the development zone is a key factor.

Ongoing Development

- Clause A8 of the recommended consent conditions would appear to allow the Applicant to upgrade wind turbines, including increasing their height without a Modification to the consent. This would render any screening conditions ineffective and is a concern as well.
- As long term residents and agriculturalists in the Scrumlo Road area, our family is acutely aware of the need for environmental sustainability. Failure on this front would see our property eventually become an unproductive wasteland. The Bowmans Creek wind farm development is not environmental friendly nor sustainable.
- Our community is suffering at the hands of Ark Energy and call upon the IPC to prevent the Bowmans Creek development from proceeding. The impact on our community, the environment and our livelihoods surely must be considered with more weight when assessing the benefits / costs associated with this project.

Please find my contact details, if required, in my accompanying email. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission.



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