

SCALED-BACK BANGO WIND FARM APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

Wednesday 2 May 2018

The state's Independent Planning Commission has approved, subject to conditions, scaled-back plans for a wind farm on the NSW Southern Tablelands.

Bango Wind Farm Pty Ltd had originally sought permission from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment to establish up to 122 wind turbines in three clusters between Boorowa and Yass.

The company subsequently amended its plans to include a maximum of 75 turbines to lessen the wind farm's amenity and biodiversity impacts.

That revised application was referred to the Commission in February this year for consideration.

Chair of the Commission Mary O'Kane appointed a three-member panel, comprising Mr John Hann, Ms Carol Austin and Mr Paul Forward, to determine the matter.

The Commissioners examined in detail the application, the Department's environmental assessment report, and information provided by Yass Valley and Hilltops Councils, as well as other government agencies.

They also met with the proponent and conducted an inspection of the proposed site before holding a public meeting in Boorowa to listen to the affected community's views.

Residents raised several key concerns in written submissions to the Commission and at the public meeting, including:

- impacts on visual amenity of residences close to the wind farm
- reduction in property values
- noise from both the construction and operation of the wind farm
- health impacts of low-frequency noise and infrasound on those living closest to the turbines
- increased traffic and potential damage to local roads
- biodiversity impacts, including on Wedge-tailed eagles, Superb Parrot habitat, as well as the removal of Hollow-bearing Trees, and
- specialist employment opportunities arising from the project would not benefit the local community

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The Commission also heard from residents who spoke in favour of the wind farm. They cited various reasons for supporting the proposed development, including:

- economic and social benefits for the local community from the Community Enhancement Fund
- benefits to local businesses
- direct employment opportunities during construction and operation
- it provides a source of income for host landholders, and
- contributes to a reduction in carbon emissions

Having carefully considered all the evidence before it and weighed the issues raised by those both for and against the proposal, the Commission has today approved with conditions the development of up to 71 wind turbines in two clusters.

In making its determination, the Commission concluded that, subject to the imposed conditions, the Bango Wind Farm:

- would not have a significant adverse impact on traffic and transport routes
- would not have a significant adverse impact on biodiversity
- would not create adverse noise impacts on the amenity of nearby residences
- would not create significant local or cumulative visual impacts that could not be appropriately mitigated
- would contribute renewable energy generation to meet the legislated Australian target, and
- would contribute social and economic benefits for communities within the Hilltops and Yass Valley Local Government Areas and will be in the public interest

The Independent Planning Commission's Determination Report and the Development Consent, including the imposed conditions, are available here:

<http://ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2018/02/bango-wind-farm>

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