

Attention: Pam Allan, Chairperson Development Panel, Tasmanian Planning Commission

Reference: DOC/24/127810

PROPOSAL: Exhibition of draft assessment criteria, Bell Bay Wind Farm Major Project

Monday 21st October 2024

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide comments and feedback on the proposed project. We are the owners of [REDACTED] Beechford – a property in very close proximity to the proposed Bell Bay Wind Farm, that is currently going through subdivision for a 40 lot residential project.

The State currently is suffering from housing affordability and accessibility pressures. Many households are finding the bigger urban areas unaffordable, and many young Tasmanians who dream to own their own homes, can't afford them. New residential land released for the future construction of houses in Beechford will support the current housing crisis affordability that Tasmanians have been facing for a decade now, intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic. Land in Beechford is more accessible and affordable than land in more urban centers such as Launceston and surroundings.

The NSW Parliament, Legislative Council, General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 Rural wind farms (NSW, 2009)¹ recognizes that wind farms can have health and social impacts on the neighbouring community. The turbine noise is a significant concern that includes the potential impact on health, sleep interruption, the impact on rural amenity and property values and the creation of community division.

While green (wind) energy is the future, and we support projects providing green energy, acknowledging that wind farms can be a source of clean, effective and reliable energy, we want to make sure all needs can co-exist; that is, the provision of new affordable residential land and the development of wind power generation.

Wind farm critics suggest that wind energy is not only ineffective and unreliable, but that it comes at a cost to the local environment and community far greater than any value it has as an energy source alternative. Critics contend that wind farms impose negative impacts on biodiversity, landscape and the health and wellbeing of local residents. This can be the case when wind farms are developed within an inadequate and poorly supported planning and assessment system.

Through changing local environments, there is the potential for wind farms to change landscapes, generate shadow flicker, and have an impact on local cultural and family heritage (Clean Energy Council, 20, pages 18-20)². Related to landscape, the wind turbines will be visible from Beechford and can generate shadow flicker (shadow flicker refers to the strobing effect caused by wind

¹ New South Wales. Parliament. Legislative Council. General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 Rural wind farms / General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5. [Sydney, N.S.W.]: the Committee, 2009. – XXIV, 208 p.; 30 cm. (Report ; no. 31)

² Clean Energy Council, Best practices guidelines for implementation of wind energy projects in Australia. June 2018. <https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/advocacy-initiatives/community-engagement/wind-best-practice-implementation-guidelines.pdf> . Accessed 21 October 2024.

turbine blades blocking the sun as the blades rotate). We request clear guidance on how close turbines may be from neighbouring residences, given that it has been acknowledged that wind farms will impact upon local communities. NSW (2009) states that where `...visible from a non-related dwelling or immediate surrounds, the development shall not be located within 15 times the blade tip height or 2 km's (which ever is the greater) of any dwelling not associated with the development...' following (NSW, 2009, 5.92, page 65). Moreover, we expect that `...if it is essential for a wind turbine to be placed in a location that will adversely impact neighbouring residents, the issue of compensation should be considered...' following (NSW, 2009, 5.109, page 68).

For example, the (NSW, 2009) states that `... A number of residents in areas with wind farms or where wind farms are proposed expressed the view that wind farms reduce property values. For example, Mr Paul Miskelly, a resident from Mittagong stated: In the interim, we have had the property up for sale ... We have had it in the hands of a reputable real estate agent, who specialises in rural properties. It has been on the market for nearly 3 years. There has been some interest, but we have found that this interest from potential buyers quickly evaporates once those parties learn of the proposed wind farm development. Inquiry participants identified a potential decrease in property value of 20 to 30 per cent. Mr Julle Bierling, a retired engineer and a resident and property owner in the Scone area, stated: The impact [of property devaluation] will increase with a) the size of the wind turbines, b) the number of turbines c) the proximity to the property d) the visual impact of the turbines e) the noise generated in the otherwise quiet rural environment. A direct example is the reduction in value of our property, which was confirmed by two local real estate agents to be some 20% of value prior to the proposed Kyoto project. (NSW, 2009, 8.23 and 8.25, page 137).

Gibbons (2015)³ findings suggest that wind farm visibility reduces local house prices, and that the implied visual environmental costs are substantial. Sunak & Madlener (2012)⁴ provide evidence for negative local effects of site proximity and of shadowing caused by wind turbines. Sunak & Madlener (2016)⁵ found that the asking price for properties whose view was strongly affected by the construction of wind turbines decreased by about 9–14%. In contrast, properties with a minor or marginal view on the wind turbines experienced no devaluation. Jensen et al. (2018)⁶ find that on-shore wind turbines negatively affect the price of surrounding properties to a distance of **3km**, and that **the negative impact** increases with the number of wind turbines at a declining marginal rate but **declines with distance**. In contrast, Dong & Lang (2022)⁷ study the impact of Block Island Wind Farm (BIWF), situated about **26 km** [16 miles] from the Rhode Island mainland, on property prices and find no adverse impact of offshore wind views.

³ Gibbons, S. (2015). Gone with the wind: Valuing the visual impacts of wind turbines through house prices. *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, 72, 177-196.

⁴ Sunak, Y., & Madlener, R. (2012). The impact of wind farms on property values: a geographically weighted hedonic pricing model. Working paper No. 3/2012, for E.ON Energy Research Center, FCN, Institute for Future Energy Consumer Needs and Behaviour.

⁵ Sunak, Y., & Madlener, R. (2016). The impact of wind farm visibility on property values: A spatial difference-in-differences analysis. *Energy Economics*, 55, 79-91.

⁶ Jensen, C. U., Panduro, T. E., Lundhede, T. H., Nielsen, A. S. E., Dalsgaard, M., & Thorsen, B. J. (2018). The impact of on-shore and off-shore wind turbine farms on property prices. *Energy policy*, 116, 50-59.

⁷ Dong, L., & Lang, C. (2022). Do views of offshore wind energy detract? A hedonic price analysis of the Block Island wind farm in Rhode Island. *Energy Policy*, 167, 113060.

NSW (2009) acknowledges `... Mrs Julie Gray, a resident from Bungendore near Capital Wind Farm, stated: “[w]e are **2.1** kilometres away and I definitely have an underlying vibration at night—not during the day. It is definitely there when I am trying to go to sleep.” Mrs Ruth Corrigan, a resident from Tarago, also reported that there are noise impacts from the Capital Wind Farm turbines near her house and that the noise is most intrusive at night. Mr Humphrey and Mrs Jennifer Price-Jones who live on a property near the site of the proposed Crookwell II Wind Farm explained that the constant exposure to the noise caused by wind turbines might be a health and safety risk because “... as farmers, our days are spent OUTSIDE in the paddocks, in ALL SEASONS”. Mr Paul Miskelly from the Taralga Landscape Guardian expressed concern regarding the impact that wind turbine noise may have on property value, stating that “[i]t is the noise impact that effectively completely destroys any residential value that a property might have.”...’ (NSW, 2009, 7.5-7.7, pages 111, 112)

Based on this, and having given careful consideration to this proposal, and considering there are no detailed plans yet, we write to request some conditions to this proposed major project, assuming national guidelines are to be followed, including:

- The minimum wind farm setback (minimum permitted distance between wind turbines and houses) be **4km** (more than 2kms).
- Environmental assessment, including biodiversity impact and visual impact.
- Health and social impact assessment including electromagnetic interference, vibroacoustic disease, wind turbine syndrome, sleep interruption, stress and depression, the impact on rural amenity and property values, shadow flicker, and the creation of community division.
- Economic consideration assessments.

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