

# Hills of Gold Wind Farm Newsletter

Summer 2022

## Message from the Project Manager



Welcome to the latest edition of the Hills of Gold Wind Farm newsletter.

We have kicked off the year by reaching a huge milestone for the Hills of Gold Wind Farm project. The Response to Submissions (RtS) was officially lodged with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) on January 10, 2022. This 2000-page document aims to address the submissions received during the public exhibition period and feedback received through ongoing consultation. You can see some key changes made to the project as a result of the submissions below.

I would like to thank the community for their patience and support while we worked to take into account your submissions. I encourage everyone to have a look at the RtS, which can be viewed in full on the Department's [website](#). Hardcopies and USB drives with the files are also available at the Nundle Library.

ENGIE and Someva representatives will be in the local region to hold a series of community information sessions from February 14. We're encouraging all community members to come along and learn more about the project and how the changes address concerns raised while maintaining the benefits projects like this offer local communities.

As part of these future benefits, ENGIE have been working with our energy retailer to be able to offer an exclusive electricity plan to local residents if the project is approved and constructed.

We also recently engaged the University of Newcastle to compile a report on Wind Farm Tourism. This was highlighted as an area requiring further investigation during the public submissions period. The report highlighted many benefits around wind farms in relation to tourism and we've made the report available to the wider community.

As we kick off 2022, we look forward to continuing to engage with the Nundle, Hanging Rock and Timor communities, as well as key stakeholders across the wider region. While we wait for the DPIE to assess the proposed Hills of Gold Wind Farm development, we encourage anyone with questions about the project to get in touch.

Regards,

**Meredith Anderson**  
Development Manager

We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the lands on which our sites are located and commit to building a brighter future together.

## Response to Submissions Lodged

A major project milestone was reached in January, with ENGIE’s Response to Submissions (RtS) officially lodged to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

The document addresses matters raised during the public exhibition period, where more than 600 submissions were lodged by community members, local organisations and other stakeholders. The RtS includes significant reassessment and highlights the resulting project changes.

While the RtS was delayed beyond our initial schedule, ENGIE took additional time to undertake the necessary studies and site investigations and subsequent project design changes needed to address all the community feedback received during the public exhibition period. This has led to a number of project changes, which are detailed below, along with the projects’ economic benefits.

The development will now be assessed by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

**ENGIE’s full Response to Submissions is available [here](#).**



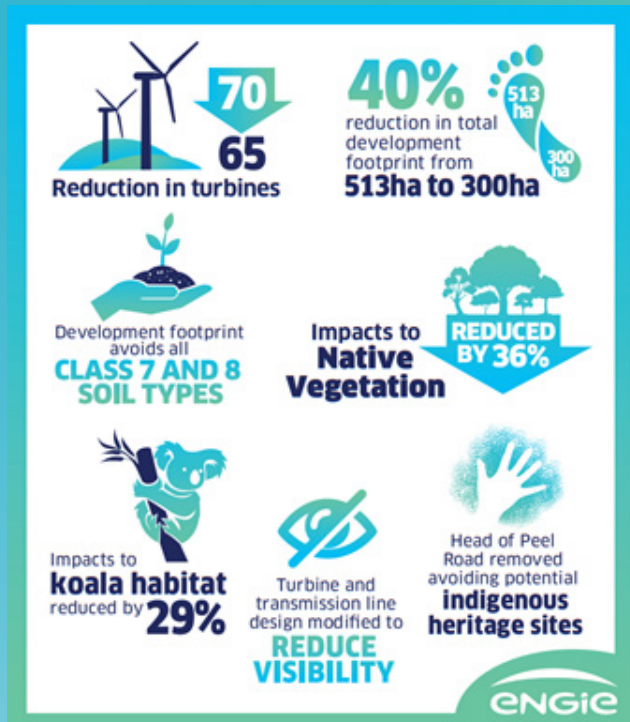
### Community Consultation

- 204 Supportive Submissions** (Icon: Document and hand)
- Most supported wind farm in NSW** (Icon: Wind turbine on a map of NSW)
- 138 supportive submissions from Tamworth Regional Council LGA** (Icon: Map of NSW with Tamworth highlighted and a magnifying glass)
- 122 SUPPORTIVE SUBMISSIONS** from Nundle, Hanging Rock, Bowling Alley Point and Woolomin (Icon: Document with a checkmark)
- Supporters identified **jobs, diversification of opportunities and road improvements** as key project benefits. (Icon: Car on a road with an upward arrow and 'NUNDLE' label)
- 46%** of all submissions received from **outside of Tamworth Regional Council LGA** (Icon: Map of NSW with submission locations marked)

**ENGIE**



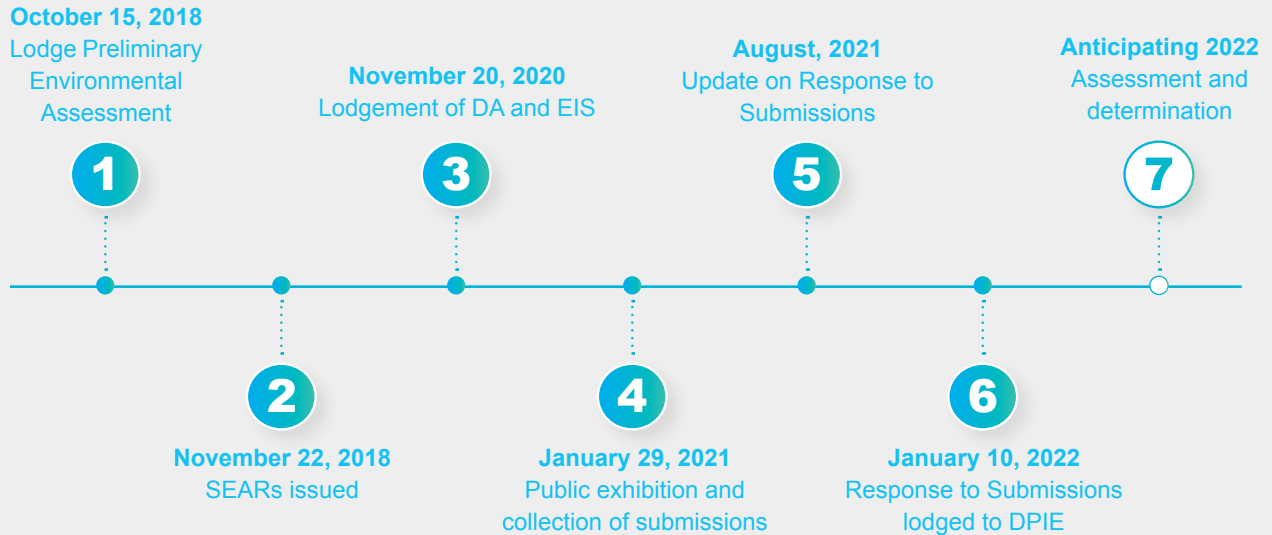
## Project Changes



## Economic Benefits



# Project Timeline



## New team member at ENGIE



Jacqui Niemand has started in this new role having previously worked in a variety of stakeholder engagement and community development roles within local and state government, and the resources sector.

As part of ENGIE’s commitment to working with the communities in which we operate, we’ve recently appointed a Stakeholder and Community Engagement Manager.

Jacqui will play a key role in liaising and working with the community and is looking forward to joining members of the ENGIE and Someva teams when we visit the region in mid-February.



## Energy Offer for Local Residents

To further support the local community, if the Hills of Gold Wind Farm is approved and constructed, ENGIE's energy retailer will offer an exclusive electricity plan to the residents within Nundle, Hanging Rock and Crawney area.

Under this exclusive electricity plan, ENGIE will cover the wholesale cost component of all electricity used by residents within the area, enabling them to further benefit from the proximity of the Project by saving on their energy bills.

## Community Consultation

Following the lodgement of our Response to Submissions, ENGIE representatives will be holding a series of community information sessions in the region in February.

### **NUNDLE**

February 14th - 16th  
6:30am - 10am  
Outside Machina Coffee &  
Donuts, 80 Jenkins Street

February 14th  
5pm - 7pm  
Nundle Bowling Club

### **HANGING ROCK**

February 15th  
5pm - 7pm  
Hanging Rock Hall

### **TIMOR**

February 16th  
5pm - 7pm  
Timor Community Hall

We encourage everyone in the community to look over our Response to Submissions and come along to our community information sessions. It will be a great opportunity to drop in have a chat and ask questions about the project and the RtS.

## Wind Farm Tourism Study

ENGIE has undertaken further investigations into the proposed development's impact on tourism. The University of Newcastle was engaged to compile an independent report on wind energy and tourism.

The desktop study looked into the benefits and opportunities of wind farm tourism, concluding that 'there is very little academic evidence that the presence of wind farms has a significant negative economic impact on the tourism industry in rural localities' (Dr Barrie Shannon, 2021).

It also stated that 'adventure tourism, eco-tourism and educational tourism incorporating wind farm infrastructure are

emerging globally as key opportunities for rural localities' (Dr Barrie Shannon, 2021).

This report highlights that wind farms can provide massive opportunities for rural communities and often complement existing tourism markets.

ENGIE looks forward to further engagement with local and regional tourism organisations to establish how we can work with and support the industry.

The University of Newcastle's report can be accessed on our [website](#) and hardcopies will be available at the upcoming information sessions.



## In the Media

ENGIE's General Manager, Asset Development, Andrew Kerley featured in a number of local news reports recently to talk about the project changes as part of our Response to Submissions. Access to the reports can be found in the links below:

ABC New England North West's Breakfast Program with Kristy Reading - click [here](#)

Northern Daily Leader - click [here](#)

## Upcoming Events



### Community Information Sessions

February 14th - 17th

.....

### Next CCC meeting

February 17th

## Website Updates

ENGIE is committed to keeping the local community up to date on project milestones and developments. The Hills of Gold Wind Farm [website](#) has a wide range of information on the project, including a suite of recently developed fact sheets covering the key project changes made since the public exhibition process.

The website also includes a link to key studies and reports undertaken as part of the Response to Submissions process, including the Wind Farm Tourism report compiled by the University of Newcastle.

The [frequently asked questions](#) section of the website answers common questions and addresses misconceptions about the proposed project and renewable energy. The website also provides information on the key steps in the NSW government's development process and outlines what stage the Hills of Gold Wind Farm is at.

If there's something else you'd like to be included on the website, please get in touch with the team via:

[info@hillsofgoldenergy.com](mailto:info@hillsofgoldenergy.com).



Get in touch with us or learn more about the Hills of Gold Wind Farm project by visiting our FAQs.



[hillsofgoldenergy.com/faqs](https://hillsofgoldenergy.com/faqs)



[info@hillsofgoldenergy.com](mailto:info@hillsofgoldenergy.com)



0435 135 937