

**From:** [Hills of Gold Preservation](#)  
**To:** [Portfolio Committee 4](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Impact of Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) on rural and regional communities and industries in New South Wales - Post hearing responses - 17 July 2025 - Hills of Gold Preservation Inc.  
**Date:** Tuesday, 19 August 2025 9:49:30 AM  
**Attachments:** [image010.png](#)  
[image011.png](#)  
[image012.png](#)  
[HOGPI\\_ltr\\_AEIC\\_11.7.24.pdf](#)  
[HOGPI Response to DPHI Additional Information 27.6.24\\_Final.pdf](#)  
[HOGPI Environmental Concerns 15.11.24.docx.pdf](#)

---

Dear Recipient,

RE: INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES (REZ)  
ON RURAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES AND INDUSTRIES IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES Hearing: 17 July 2025

Hills of Gold Preservation Inc executive member Selena Sylvester has asked me to respond to your email on her behalf. Selena has read the transcript and has no corrections. Thank you.

Please find responses to Supplementary Questions from Members below:

(1) You're contesting 14 species under EPBC rules for the hills of gold project. Do you believe impact assessments are missing baseline data?

Hills of Gold Preservation Inc attaches its correspondence with the Northern NSW Assessments Section of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

This correspondence summarises state government department concerns about the Hills of Gold Wind Farm and its potential environmental impact. However the project was recommended for approval by the NSW Department of Planning, and approved by the NSW Independent Planning Commission and then federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek.

HOGPI members remain concerned about state and federal government disregard for potential environmental impacts, ignoring feedback from the government's own staff, and missing baseline data on the potential impact of erosion and sedimentation on endangered environmental communities.

HOGPI members no longer trust the process of assessment for renewables projects. Projects will be approved regardless of environmental impact, because impacts will be minimised, mitigated and offset to generate renewable electricity.

(2) You pressed for stricter location tests—even though many other REZs bypass these. What would a fair, transparent site selection model look like?

Hills of Gold Preservation Inc responded to the NSW Government request for input into the New England Renewable Energy Zone. HOGPI requested that Hills of Gold Wind Farm not be included in the New England REZ because it did not align with the NSW Government's best practice to avoid national parks and locations without social licence.

Hills of Gold Wind Farm was not included in the New England REZ, but it was still

recommended for approval by the NSW Department of Planning and approved by the NSW Independent Planning Commission and then federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek.

A fair, transparent site selection model would ensure that project areas have:

- Evidence of legal access to a site;
- Engineered and costed internal and external access roads;
- Avoid national parks and protected lands;
- Avoid locations where there is significant local opposition, particularly projects lacking agreements from immediate non-associated neighbours.

Hills of Gold Wind Farm was approved with an outstanding Native Title claimant and claim on Crown Land that would provide access to the project area, and without published engineered and costed internal and external access roads.

The published cost of Hills of Gold Wind Farm is a 2020 figure, ignoring standard 20-30% increase in costs in the construction industry. Consequently, it is not known whether Hills of Gold Wind Farm is a good investment for tax payers or the industry.

HOGPI members believe approval of Hills of Gold Wind Farm was purely political, with disregard for the environment and the impacted community and local government.

Under current political and planning renewables targets, it is not possible for governments and public servants to responsibly and thoroughly assess renewables locations. Any pushback from public servants or communities will be ignored.

The attached HOGPI Response to DPHI Additional Information demonstrates the unanswered questions regarding project viability, environmental impacts, project constructibility, and access.

Hills of Gold Preservation includes its correspondence with the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner as background.

Thank you for your time and concern.

Yours faithfully,  
Megan Trousdale  
Secretary  
Hills of Gold Preservation Inc