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## NSW Mayor Slams Wind Farm Plan

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A controversial wind farm proposal in regional New South Wales is drawing sharp criticism from the mayor of Yass Valley, who warns the project is pushing local farmers to their “mental breaking point.”

The proposed Bendenine Wind Farm, to be located about 20km north-west of Yass between the towns of Binalong and Bowning, is currently in the early scoping phase. Developer Wind Prospect, an Australian renewable energy firm, aims to install up to 90 large-scale wind turbines, each reportedly around 260 metres tall, on farmland across the region.

Despite the early stage of development, the project has already triggered strong opposition from residents and community leaders. Many fear it will devalue local properties and further strain rural communities already managing multiple state significant infrastructure projects.

Yass Valley Mayor Jasmin Jones, who has served on the local council since 2012, has been vocal in rejecting the development. Speaking to Sky News Australia, she expressed concern over what she called a “turbine tsunami” hitting regional communities.

“Our hearts are breaking over this,” she said. “Regional Australia deserves to be treated with respect, and we’ve done our heavy lifting.”

Mayor Jones noted that the Yass Valley region is already contending with six major infrastructure projects, with more likely to follow.

“This is yet another project being imposed on a rural community that has had no say. People are at their limit emotionally, mentally, and financially.”

Local residents echoed her concerns during a packed town hall meeting in Browning earlier this week. Many raised issues about the potential impact on the landscape, wildlife, tourism, and long-term liveability of the area.

Residents also expressed frustration with what they perceive as a lack of transparency in the consultation process. Some allege that private agreements have already been made with select landholders before wider community engagement began.

Jones argues that while regional Australians have played their part in supporting national energy goals, they are being excluded from meaningful decision-making.

“People feel unheard. These decisions are being made with minimal regard for the community’s wellbeing and rural heritage,” she said.

Wind Prospect has stated that it is still conducting environmental and technical assessments and intends to continue engaging with stakeholders. A formal development application has not yet been submitted.

The Bendenine Wind Farm proposal highlights a growing tension between Australia’s push for renewable energy and the rights of regional communities, a debate likely to intensify as more large-scale energy projects are proposed across the country.

