

## **Submission regarding D/A 10-2020-81-1 Timber Optimisation Hub**

I write to lodge my objection to the abovementioned development proposal. The main reason for my objection is that there has been no assessment of the impact of this proposal on the surrounding environment and the wider world.

Bega Valley Shire Council has declared a climate emergency and developed our Draft Climate Resilience Strategy so I feel that it is critical that this application is assessed in terms of its impact on our carbon emissions and the state of our environment here in the shire and beyond.

With more than 80% of our native forests lost in the recent fires, the local environment just cannot bear the impact of this proposal and we ask that the proposal be refused as ANWE hasn't made any assessment of the impact on our climate or forest environment. This is not just about approving three sheds on a block of land at Jews Head as the implications of this proposal going ahead would have dire consequences for our local forests and the threatened species contained therein.

An examination of the documents submitted with this proposal reveals that climate change is given only two dismissive references, one being that, in reference to the DCP, "5.8.5 – *Not relevant. Section 5.8.5 applies to residential development*", and the other related to the effects of carbon monoxide. This serious omission certainly has ethical problems and possible legal implications.

The various studies submitted with the application undertake assessments of various impacts over an area outside the property itself but fail to assess the impacts of the supply chain to the proposed development. This should include the impacts of the increased demand on the resources within our state forests, especially given the loss of 80% of these forests from the fires and the follow-on deleterious effects on water quality, soil erosion and wildlife. It is estimated that one billion animals may have been lost in the fires yet the Biodiversity and EPBC Act Protected Matters Report fails to address any losses from the fires. One assumes that this report was undertaken before the 2019/20 fires. The Statement of Environmental Effects actually says, "This assessment was prepared prior to the bush fires that affected the site in late 2019 and early 2020." There is reference to "*additional commentary...to address the changes to the site since this event*" but these relate to visual impact and biodiversity only on the site itself, not the wider area where the impacts have been disastrous.

Another serious concern of this proposal is the creation of a monopoly for timber processing, meaning that ANWE would get all forests logged in Bega Valley Shire plus a whole lot more from Eurobodalla Shire and down into Victoria. The proposed new mill is automated and will employ only 20 people to replace the more than 50 people who were employed with Blue Ridge Hardwoods to whom the timber supply was previously contracted.

Finally, Council really needs to consider the future impacts of ongoing logging of our native forests in terms of bushfire intensity. The 2019/20 fires demonstrated how

intensely the fires progressed through over-logged compartments and regrowth forests, getting from the Victorian border to Eden in a matter of hours. Recent science has shown that *“Logging of native forests increases the risk and severity of fire and likely had a profound effect on the recent, catastrophic Australian bushfires, according to new research. In the wake of the country's worst forest fires in recorded history, researchers have been investigating Australia's historical and contemporary land-use.”* (<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/05/200505121655.htm>). It is truly incumbent on Council to take this science into consideration in determining this application so that your duty of care is fulfilled for the safety of the shire’s infrastructure and people.

I ask that Council either reject this proposal for the reasons set out above or at least allow a longer period of community input given the current state of affairs post bushfires and mid COVID isolation.

Yours sincerely,

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