

Sunday, 30 January 2011

SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REFERENCES COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF RURAL WIND FARMS.

Submitted by
Muriel Scholz

I live in Beetaloo Valley which is adjacent to the proposed Collaby Hill Development by Origin Energy. The exact number of turbines planned is unknown but Origin has indicated it would be in the vicinity of 75 to 100. If this development proceeds, there are approximately 90 full time residents who will be potentially adversely impacted. The recent experiences from residents in the Mt Bryan & Hallett region (SA), as well as at Waterloo where some long term residents are have already moved away or are sleeping in their cars because of the noise, is making me extremely concerned.

The visual impact of wind turbines on landscape character should be adequately addressed. Consideration should be given to the positive and negative aspects of any development

The Collaby Hill area is situated in the Southern Flinders Ranges between Crystal Brook and Wirrabara, adjacent to Beetaloo Valley, a region recognised for its pristine and picturesque environment. The Southern Flinders Ranges are an integral part of the Flinders Ranges which have been included in Australia National Landscapes™.

The Southern Flinders Ranges are also increasingly popular for cycle tourism and public and private monies have been invested in infrastructure and promotion to offer visitors to the region cycling (or trekking) experiences in a natural and unspoilt environment. Clusters of wind turbines over the Ranges towering at 120 metres will detract from the natural beauty of the landscape. Wind towers simply do not mesh with the

nature tourism experience that can be offered by the region and anecdotal evidence through informal interviews with visitors to the region shows that people will be less likely to patronise the region if wind towers were present.

I am very concerned about the potential health effects of windfarms on humans and animals and have read many submissions from a variety of medical professionals and people directly affected. I do not believe these testimonies should be discarded, and believe a moratorium should be placed on all wind developments until proper analysis is made.

Symptoms described include sleep disturbance, headache, tinnitus, ear pressure, dizziness, vertigo, nausea, visual blurring, tachycardia, irritability, problems with concentration and memory, and panic attack episodes associated with internal pulsation or quivering when awake and asleep".(see p 135 of the Noise Impact Assessment Report, Waubra Wind Farm, prepared for Mr & Mrs N Dean, by Dr Bob Thorne July 2010).

These have been described at some length by Dr Nina Pierpont and others, and have been found in many other countries which have large Industrial Wind Turbine Developments placed close to people's homes. In Victoria, this is known as the WAUBRA disease, and overseas it is known as Wind Turbine Syndrome.

The end result of inappropriate location of wind turbines development is making many of those people who are living too close to the turbines suffer from severe chronic sleep deprivation and other symptoms. Infrasound is undetectable by the human ear and is not measured by normal wind farm sound monitoring equipment. It can trigger anxiety, sadness, revulsion and fear. This is probably not the sort of experience we wish to live with. The effects of wind turbines, also known as the "Wind Turbine Syndrome" are extremely well documented through independent scientific studies on a worldwide scale.

Wind farm developments require massive infrastructure such as access roads and pads which will inevitably destroy the integrity of the present natural environment. The shape of the hills will need to be altered as I understand that wind towers can only be built on a 1 or 2 degree slope so the cranes putting them up don't slip and the top of the hills can need to be shaved.

After researching property value I am concerned that family homes and farms will lose value due to visual amenity and based on the current

market, several properties close to nearby wind farms have been for sale for up to a year and still have not sold – which then drives the prices down further.

I am surprised that no legislation pertinent to wind farm development has been adopted and that large industrial scale development are left to the discretion of Local Government who freely admit they lack the expertise and technical knowledge to make a proper assessment.

In summary, I am concerned at the development of wind farms on several fronts being decreased quality of life through noise and light pollution, health effects including stress and high blood pressure and visual impact and I urge the distinguished members of this Senate Committee Enquiry to address the issues I have raised.

Yours sincerely

Submissions due 10 February 2011.

Submissions can be sent in the following ways -

1. in electronic form submitted online at <https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/pages/index.aspx> or sent by
2. email to community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au as an attached Adobe PDF or MS Word format document.
3. posted to
Department of the Senate, PO Box 6100, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600.

Notes to help you prepare your submission are available from the website at http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/wit_sub/index.htm.

Alternatively, the Committee Secretariat will be able to help you with your inquiries and can be contacted on telephone +61 2 6277 3515 or facsimile +61 2 6277 5829 or by email to community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au.

Important information

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