

Submission to Senate Inquiry on the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

By email to: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

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This submission is **not** confidential.

I live approximately 2km from the site of the Hepburn Community Wind Farm currently under construction in Leonards Hill, Victoria. My family and I are proud to be members of the co-operative building this project. (I am also an employee of Hepburn Wind but this submission is made in a personal capacity and in my own time.) Our community is justifiably proud of playing a leading role in Australia in the introduction of medium scale renewable energy generation, even though these projects are common in many countries overseas. Our efforts come on top of initiatives Hepburn Shire residents are already taking on household level renewable energy through PV panels and solar hot water.

In summary, I believe that, in view of the scientifically established need to take urgent action on climate change, government policy at all levels needs to actively support community-based renewable energy initiatives such as Hepburn Wind.

Health effects

I do not believe there is any credible scientific evidence of adverse health effects for people living near wind farms. This was confirmed by the recent NHMRC review.

Economic impact

There are many positive economic impacts from locally based renewable energy projects such as Hepburn Wind. These include local purchase of materials and services, local employment, return on investment to local investors and the substantial payments into community sustainability projects through Hepburn Wind's proposed Community Sustainability Fund.

Planning laws

The Hepburn Wind project is complying with many conditions on noise, radio and tv reception, heritage and visual impact among other conditions set through the planning process.

There is no justification for specific additional laws for wind farms and any changes to the current planning laws needs to be consistently applied across other industries and be informed by science.

Jack Gilding

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