

Dear Committee Secretary - Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

This inquiry has only this week come to the attention of the Council. It is acknowledged that closing dates for a submission closed yesterday 10 February 2011.

The Circular Head Council would like to convey to the inquiry that the impacts of wind farms on its municipality have been overwhelmingly positive. Circular Head Municipality was the site for the first Wind Farm in Tasmania located on the Historic Woolnorth property. The first stage was completed in 2002. The Council is aware of plans for additional large and smaller scale wind farms and is fully supportive of the concept for further development of this clean renewable energy.

In terms of the following social and economic impacts of rural wind farms the following comments are offered.

(a) Any adverse health effects for people living in close proximity to wind farms;

Council is not aware of any negative health affects attributed to the wind farms.

(b) Concerns over the excessive noise and vibrations emitted by wind farms, which are in close proximity to people's homes;

In general the existing and proposed wind farms are some distance from built up areas. Proper site planning and development controls during the construction stage are expected to deal with these concerns.

(c) The impact of rural wind farms on property values, employment opportunities and farm income;

Council is unaware of any direct correlation between wind farms and property values within its municipalities. The employment opportunities, particularly during construction stage have benefitted the local community.

(d) The interface between Commonwealth, state and local planning laws as they pertain to wind farms;

Larger wind farms have required state environmental approval as a level 2 activity under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* in addition to local government planning permit. The smaller wind farms proposed for this municipality are unlikely to require this approval but could be dealt with locally.

It is understood that the Woolnorth wind farms were called up for assessment under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act).

(e) Any other relevant matters.

Council would be willing to supply any further information or comments if requested.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Saward
Executive Manager Development Services
Circular Head Council