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Wednesday, January 26, 2011

**SUBMISSION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT  
WIND FARM ENQUIRY**

Over the past 5 years I have become very interested in alternative energy and in particular wind farm systems. My stance has changed from one of being a true believer in the effectiveness of wind energy to one opposed to any form of wind energy. The documents with this submission have been included to support questions that are proposed in this submission.

We live in Tooborac on the McHarg Ranges which has been proposed as a site for a wind farm consisting of 75-80 wind turbines to be built by Transfield Services. Residents opposed to this scheme have formed the Granite Boulders Landscape Guardians and we have produced several publications which are forwarded with this letter. A wind farm in the McHarg Ranges is totally unacceptable to 90% of the residents as demonstrated by the lowest Labor vote at a polling booth in Victoria and the election of the Liberal Candidate whose party has in its policy that a wind farm will not be approved in the McHarg and Macedon Ranges.

**Summary of Documents enclosed.**

1. McHarg Ranges an Environmental Report Author David Maughan published Feb 2009
2. An Economic Assessment of the proposed McHarg Ranges Wind Farm Author Access Economics published December 2008 commissioned by Granite Boulders Landscape Guardians.
3. McHarg Ranges (Baynton Wind Farm) Author David Maughan published July 10<sup>th</sup> 2010 presented to Transfield Services at an information meeting to try to gain information which was not successful.
4. Brochure published Nov 2010 prior to the Victorian State Elections distributed to the residents of the McHarg Ranges stating the case for the election of a Liberal candidate.
5. Brochure produced August 2010 to present to the councilors of the Mitchell Shire Council in a presentation to them espousing the value of placing a Significant Landscape Overlay on the McHarg Ranges.
6. Four Submission to the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission published May 7<sup>th</sup> 2009, Oct 30<sup>th</sup> 2009, Feb 11<sup>th</sup> 2010, & April 11<sup>th</sup> 2010 Author David Maughan.
7. Submission Dec 2010 to National Windfarm Development Guidelines author David Maughan.
8. DVD produced by Residents Against Turbines (now Granite Boulders Landscape Guardians) and Peter Russell-Clarke 2008.
9. Correspondence to and from ACCC regarding non accurate publications regarding the efficiency of wind power by the proponent of the McHarg Ranges wind farm from Oct 2010
10. European Guidelines for wind turbines and fire protection published CFPA Europe 2010 – sensible and comprehensive.
11. CFA Emergency Management Guidelines for Wind Farms Version 3 2007 proved most inadequate after Black Saturday..

I have listed below my main objections and queries and there is a lot about the wind industry that ends up with the same question why?

1. Noise - under Victorian Legislation you are protected from noise in all industries except one – wind farm noise. The latter is excluded from this legislation. (Refer Vic legislation). You can't help asking the question Why?
2. The NZ Standard for wind farm noise was adopted by Victoria, can't Australia produce its own standard – why?
3. The noise levels permissible are far too high in quiet country settings – why?
4. The output of electricity from wind turbines is highly exaggerated – why?
5. Each State has a separate set of rules for wind farms – why?
6. The Victorian Guidelines for Wind Farms is a biased document in favour of the proponent – why?
7. The guidelines give dictatorial powers to the Minister for Planning – why?
8. Local Government Planning under the Labor Government in Victoria had their powers to regulate wind farms taken from them – why?
9. Responsibility for the reticulation of power generated by wind farms from the source to the grid is not the proponent's responsibility – why?
10. The monitoring and enforcing the planning permit conditions is the local Shire Council's planning department – why?
11. Their expertise and authority in these matters is limited if not nil. When the Minister usurped the local Council to give planning approval why is it not his responsibility?
12. Illness caused by wind farms whether real or imagined is ignored by Government yet in any other situation a Government would investigate the matter thoroughly.
13. Victorian Guidelines for wind farms ask for comprehensive reports on all matters of things mineral, vegetable and animal except one animal - human beings – why?
14. These reports are generally done by experts in the field. They are repetitive, and in many cases the conclusions allow the building of these turbines to the detriment of the landscape, communities and the wildlife – why?
15. If any obstacle or farm activity caused just one endangered species (such as the wedge tailed eagle) to die there would be universal outcry, but silence from those that are usually so vociferous are silent – why?
16. Professional people engaged to report on matters such as the environment and landscape values are paid by the proponent. This leads to a fundamental flaw in the system, for a contract between parties where one pays the other for an opinion, by the nature of the transaction and the propensity to obtain future work from an agreeable outcome in favour of the proposal, cannot be seen as being free of prejudice and must be considered as tainted. A non arms length transaction in any other business where people's lives and livelihoods would be affected would cause an outcry, but with wind farms except for those affected there is silence – why?
17. The effect on land values where properties are considered more lifestyle and amenity are devalued and become hard to sell. This is a world wide phenomenon. Governments ignore this fact when estate agents and people affected make it plain that the wind farm is the cause of this devaluation – why? (See enclosed email from Elders Real Estate).

18. When you are affected by such a development and can prove it, there is no compensatory redress – why?
19. When an area in a shire is classed as largely an amenity area and in the process of changing from farming to that of local tourist attractions such as the landscape, B & B's, wineries, olive groves, boutique businesses, cafes and restaurants and local festivals, is what visitors come to see and enjoy the tranquility, and there is no place for wind turbines to overwhelm the landscape In the McHarg Ranges this is the case and much local employment has been gained through these businesses on a long term basis. Local employment by the wind farm company is touted as a reason for building them. In reality after they are built employment is negligible.
20. When your civil rights are affected and your peace and tranquility are interrupted changing your quality of life and amenity, your right to compensation is unavailable by law – why?
21. If companies were made to compensate those affected if proven and this was included in the guidelines and permit conditions, there is no doubt this would protect individuals and make proponents look more carefully at the site chosen for development.
22. The Modus Operandi for wind farm developers is underhand, not transparent and menacing – why?
23. The host farms are held to confidential agreements and secrecy – why?
24. Caveats are placed on host farms and are one sided in favour of the wind farm proponents – why?
25. The money that proponents are prepared to spend to gain favour is nothing short of bribery, the platitudes and lip service that is passed over as working close with the Community is a sham and an insult to ones intelligence.
26. The wind farm industry has bred companies with the same mentality that has been witnessed in the tobacco and asbestos industries. There one common factor that they have been most effective in doing is dividing small communities into two factions those for and those against. This is so successful that neighbours, families, cousins, uncles, brothers and sisters take sides and become bitter enemies.
27. This is not a case of sacrificing a few for the common good of many for it is well established that wind farms do not do what they are supposed to do. Especially in Australia, for when there is no wind, other sources must be kept running continually to kick in. Wind energy generated from turbines is simply a political ploy so that Governments can say we are doing something to save the planet. A greater scam could not have developed without massive Government support and subsidies. The extravagant claims that X number of turbines can power thousands of homes says it all for they fail to mention that it is only when the wind blows. Where does the power come from when the wind does not blow? Back up power generated by gas turbines require a generator that to fire up to take over is more expensive to operate than gas turbines that generate power continually and much less expensive and give off a smaller carbon footprint than coal fired power stations. (reference Access Economics Report page 26 clause 7.1.1 and page 32). This is a prime example of the stupidity of wind farm turbines especially when you take into account the afore mentioned problems. The dimension and scale of the wind turbines and the thousands of hectares of the Australian landscape ruined is nothing short of scandalous and as

- the famous architect Robin Boyd said it is like the blind spot that although you know it is there you never see it.
28. Wind farms on ridges and hills will be seen as visual pollution by future generations as dinosaurs of the past that have no intrinsic value and are monuments to Governments folly.
  29. If you can prove to the Government (Victorian Labor) that the proposed wind farm is uneconomic in an area, which we did by commissioning Access Economics (copy enclosed), and both the Minister and the Department of Planning still ignored our submissions that the McHarg Ranges was an inappropriate place to build a wind farm – why?
  30. The Planning process is so overindulgent in favour of wind farms prior to the change of the Victorian Government that the appeals process was nothing short of an exercise in going through the motions with the outcome virtually pre determined. The attitude is opponents are simply whingers which is a perception held by the public at large.
  31. The wind farm proponents use this perception to belittle those of us with deep concerns. Their pockets are deep. Our fight with Transfield has cost many thousands of dollars that has been raised by the local community. This extraordinary one sided battle is unfair and undemocratic. This is one area that private enterprise should not have been allowed to develop without proper consultation and compensatory measures to the communities affected and in stark contrast to indigenous Australians who seem to be able to have their land concerns taken extremely seriously by Governments.

Yours Sincerely,

David Maughan.