

Submission 1

444

Sent: Friday, 15 June 2007 10:27 AM

To: Committee, ISR (REPS)

Subject: Windfarm proposal f Glenthompson South western Victoria

14/06/07

Federal Inquiry
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry and Resources

I am writing this email as a response to the Windfarm that is proposed for the Glenthompson area referred to as Oakland Hill Windfarm. Glenthompson is situated to the east of Hamilton in Victoria near the Grampians in South Western Victoria.

Just over 2 years we moved to our property here near Glenthompson to seek refuge away from the Iluka Heavy Minerals Sands mine which has since started mining. It was quite a traumatic process to move away from the family farm that was selected by my husband's great grand mother back in 1876 in the district of Kanagulk near Balmoral ,north of Hamilton. We felt it was in our best interest (health wise) to move away from the silica dust that is exposed by the mining process.

Image our horror to find out belatedly that a windfarm was proposed to be developed in our vicinity not long after we moved to our new farm!

We had named our new farm "Wellaway". Well a way from mining! but not far enough away from developers, whose main interest is only to fund their own pockets not really caring for the environment. The EES process for the Douglas mine came down to the \$ versus the environment and the \$ won. The developer Wolf Martinick of Basin Minerals made millions of dollars from the project, at our local community's expense. We see that the developers will be the big winners should approval be granted to this wind farm development. The cost to the local community through division of its members will be huge. It is fracturing and straining relationships that would normally support the local community. A healthy community is one that nurtures its members thus radiating out and strengthening other communities.

Are wind turbines as efficient in converting wind energy as it is claimed to be?

We have researched the wind debate and find that turbines are not an option on the old fragile soils of the rolling Glenthompson Hills, so declined the offer to have 2 turbines on our property. I attach a copy of our letter that was published in the Hamilton Spectator, May 12 2007 and a copy of a letter sent to the DSE Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria, together with information regarding salinity problems. In our opinion, the salinity issue has been overlooked by the proponent, Investec-Winlab, in its application of a planning permit. More details upon request.

We are very disappointed that proponents are allowed to harass people by pressurising people to sign lease agreements quickly and provide lease agreements that are suspect and in the proponents favour. These proponents are experienced in the way they isolate and separate prospective leasees by drawing up confidential agreements. It is not an open and transparent process and I truly believe that most people who sign are not fully aware of the long term ramifications on them, their neighbours and their community. Once signed up they would consider themselves locked into the agreement. There should be "a cooling off period" for those that sign. It should be an open and transparent process rather than one shrouded in secrecy.

We are concerned also about ongoing salinity issues, noise, property devaluation.....should this wind farm proceed.

15/06/2007

Noise issue is a big concern also.

From the limited information provided by Investec-Winlab the noise monitoring clearly shows that there will be substantial noise pollution on days when the wind blows from certain directions. The projected base levels worked out by Investec-Winlab for noise will be higher at peoples houses as an average base line is worked out rather than the wind monitored at the same site as the noise.

If the base line for noise is falsely high then it will be assumed that that the turbine noise will have less of an effect on people. The wind should be monitored along side the noise monitor at peoples houses. This would clearly show that on the days when the wind is blowing towards our house the background noise is low therefore the turbines will be clearly heard.

Should the average of the wind monitoring from one site be used, monitored away from peoples home, it will be perceived that the noise will not be much higher than the falsely high background noise. It should be noted that the turbines will be placed on slopes and the noise will travel down the slopes along gullies to peoples homes. The noise could travel kilometres.

Who will monitor and enforce noise pollution guidelines? Are there any?

There needs to be Australian guidelines for windfarms and evaluation of the existing windfarms needs to be undertaken.

When we were looking for a farm in this region this was the only one that was available that suited our grazing enterprise and our budget due to the vast amount of grazing land that is now under blue gum plantations in south west Victoria.

Given the vast development of the blue gum MIS schemes, mining, and the proliferation of windturbines where is one meant to live in rural Victoria?

All information available upon request.

Yours sincerely

Helen and Adrian Lyon