

We live on a farm in the Western District of Victoria, and are faced with a future living less than 2 kms from a 183 turbine wind farm. It has been a steep learning curve, trying to sort fact from fiction. We felt we were unfairly dealt with by the developer – Southern Hydro – now AGL. Our fears about our future on the land were dismissed and trivialized.

Our farm is situated to the east of the proposed wind farm. We will be in the “shadow” of the turbines whenever the wind blows from the northwest through to the south southwest. Our fears about noise were dismissed by the developers. I was told that if I was affected I would show myself to be neurotic. It is interesting to note that Jack Green Energy admits that noise is a problem associated with the production of wind energy. We also wonder why there is a necessity for World Conferences on Wind Turbine Noise if our fears are groundless.

Jack Green Energy also acknowledges problems with visual amenity. We love our views and are not looking forward to 183 turbines standing 135m high. The landscape specialist stated they would be “absorbed” into the surroundings. His photo montages were open to question. Many of the future “views” were blocked by trees in the foreground.

The environmental study could also be subject to question. Brett Lane and Associates conducted the surveys for the Environmental Effects Statement. Brett Lane was responsible for writing the guidelines for conducting bird surveys for future wind farms. He has been employed on several projects. This is a gross conflict of interest.

These studies were conducted in such a way to appease the interests of the developers and participating landholders. We know there have been broilgas here for at least 50 years. (My husband was born and bred here – 1952). We found it rather pathetic (and amusing) to hear one of these landholders state that he had never seen broilgas here.

We are extremely concerned about devaluation of our property. We intend spending many more years farming this country. We look on this property as our superannuation and hope that it will provide for our future. Wind developers deny that wind farms have a negative impact on land valuation, but anecdotal evidence informs us that this is not the case. We would request INDEPENDENT investigation into this issue so that adversely affected landowners are compensated.

Wind energy has been hailed as the great saver of greenhouse gas emissions. We are promised power for a large number of dwellings –depending on the number of turbines. This figure is NEVER subject to the vagaries of the wind. The expected true capacity is NEVER given, leaving the vast majority of the population believing in a lie. The Victorian Government, and the Australian Government are happy to support wind farms because they are a visible symbol of something being done. The Greens and greenies are appeased! It would be encouraging to see an INDEPENDENT study done on the true value of wind power instead of relying on the rhetoric delivered by those with vested interests.

The emphasis is focused on trying to develop new forms of energy, or promoting renewable energy. There appears to be little or no thought given to conserving energy. Why is it that in winter we enter offices, shops, banks, shopping centers and entertainment venues and need to wear shirtsleeves to avoid being uncomfortably warm? Why does a friend of ours, and no doubt numerous others, need to take a cardigan to work in the summer because the office gets too cold? We imagine if thermostats were adjusted a few degrees in every home and work place there would be enormous savings. There needs to be greater emphasis in creating homes and work places that work with the environment. Letting the sunshine in in winter, and protecting with eaves in summer are two simple ideas.

We hope that there is more study into the true value of renewable energies. We are concerned about the future, and aware that there are issues that must be addressed. However we ask that our concerns are taken into account. It will be an injustice if we have to sacrifice our livelihoods and lives for political expediency.

If we are able to answer any queries, or give further explanation please contact us.

Chris Jelbart and Ron Jelbart