

Submission No: 67

My name is Dennis O'Donnell and I live at 1050 Foster Mirboo Road, DOLLAR Vic 3871

I attended much of the Panel hearing at Foster regarding the proposed "Dollar Wind Farm" which went from Tuesday 29 March to Friday 6th May 2005 and my position regarding wind farms is set out below.

My wife and I have lived here nearly 6 years, we have a hobby farm of approximately 48 acres, half of which is bush and on the pasture we graze a few cattle. We came to Dollar for the peace and tranquility along with the magnificent views and abundance of native wildlife... It is great to hear the odd kola grunting at night, the frogs croaking, the soft hoot of an owl and then to wake to the kookaburras, magpies and other birds in the morning.

We drew on my superannuation to buy our retirement hobby farm and I am not happy that our property will drop in value if the wind farm is constructed. It is surely unjust that so few stakeholders should profit by so much at the expense of so many. Most stakeholders I feel will move to other areas as it seems they will agree to any siting of towers very close to existing dwellings without any compulsory set backs or noise limits etc, and yet still reap the profits for the next 20 to 25 years. I was amazed to hear Mr Dwyer (for Meridian Energy), smugly state that the wind towers will only be there for 20 or 25 years and then there will only be a flat concrete area after decommissioning. Well, that is great as I will be dead and buried by then.

Having spent most of my working life in noisy industrial environments and living in the suburbs of Melbourne, Dollar is a great place to spend your retirement; or so I thought, as a wind energy facility of 48 turbines will change this area to an industrial site.

The reduction to 48 towers in the final proposal, down from 61 as originally proposed ... I feel was not due to public input or concerns, but rather that the noise, flicker, setback from houses and proximity to communication towers was the real reason, and I guess there was a bit of ambit in the original proposal simply as a publicity tool, endeavoring to appear to lessen the impact of the proposal by taking out 13 turbines.

The provision of access roads to the wind tower sites, maintenance buildings, transformers and cables to access the power grid will further add to the industrial makeup of the site.

These machines are so huge and overpowering ... yet we the local residents must live with them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We did not come to this area to be overwhelmed by these monstrosities or to plant screen trees to attempt to hide the towers ... and lose the view .... which was the prime attraction to live here in the first place.

At the hearing, Mr Garito, a Toora resident, told his horror story of the noise levels from the wind farm once it was commissioned, ... after all the assurances prior to their erection that the noise levels would comply with the standard. The problem has not been rectified and there seems little intervention from the responsible government department to enforce the agreed noise levels. In my opinion, I feel that the Dollar wind farm will most likely experience similar high noise levels ... and we will also battle to have the problem rectified.

The aspect of birds and bats being killed by the wind tower rotors is brushed aside as insignificant. However, I enjoy seeing the wedge tailed eagles, falcons, kookaburras etc. in the area. We are in Land for Wildlife and have lost several chooks and ducks to falcons or eagles, but that is part of the natural life cycle, being killed by a turbine rotor is not.

Meridian or Pacific Hydro or Dollar Wind Farm Pty Ltd - as the proponents of this development, are in the power supply business. They are NOT the saviors of the planet reducing greenhouse emissions. They are in it for profit and have been less than

upfront some of their information and their use of dubious statistics, stating that the project had widespread support in the community. I feel the main support is from the local stakeholders.

There is overwhelming rejection of this proposal by the large number of local residents in the immediate area, and I would hope that at the end of the day, the panel will, after considering all the facts, rule that a wind energy facility of this magnitude in this area is inappropriate and should not proceed.

At this point in time the State Government have not made the Panel recommendations known, more than two years after the hearing finished..a shameful result !!! considering the time, worry and dedication most of the locals living in the area put into presenting their case and we continue to wonder what will happen "down the track".

Dennis and Shirley O'Donnell