Submission No: 89

14 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry

We understand the Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and intends finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006).

A national code is urgently required to regulate wind farm developers seeking to impose large industrial developments in small rural communities.

We own land almost adjacent to the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, our lives have impacted upon, due to the uncertainty and personal stress of not knowing if our retirement home will become part of an industrial wind precinct.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected us in the following ways:

- Our plans to retire to Smeaton are now on hold until an outcome has been reached regarding the Tuki industrial wind development;
- My country retreat at Smeaton where we plan to retire, is currently used for tourist accommodation. My property is marketed as a peaceful and relaxing rural retreat for city folk to escape the urban bustle. If the wind development is built, we are concerned that our accommodation business will cease because guests will not want to stay near noisy 148 metre wind turbines with flashing aviation lights.
- Our plans to move from Sydney and relocate to Smeaton are will be abandoned if the Tuki Wind Farm is built. We purchased our property at Smeaton specifically to escape busy city life. Our dream to retire to the countryside will be ruined by imposing wind turbine towers overlooking our property.
- We will avoid investing any further in our property or carrying out any improvements until a decision is made about the Tuki Wind Farm proposal.
- We feel powerless in opposing the development. We are concerned that our voices are not being heard by community leaders and state representatives, and that our quality of life has no value to those who support the proposal.

We strongly urge the Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the human cost of wind farm proposals. Why is one's quality of life so undervalued in the Government's mad scramble for wind energy?

Yours faithfully,

Jaye Barker

Barry and Jaye Barker LLB, MEL (SYD) (MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW)

11 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

It has come to my attention that I the Standing Committee is investigating the impacts of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose help regulate wind farm operators seeking to place industrial wind developments in rural communities.

I know numerous families who own land near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of those families, and neighbours has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon them.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has had a profound impact on the Smeaton community. For instance:

- I have witnessed neighbours for and against the Proposal argue aloud in public, the most recent occurrence being at the second community 'consultation' session hosted by the proponent, Wind Power Pty Ltd, on 3 June 2007;
- I am aware of the theft of protest placards which have been placed on the fences and properties of residents opposed to the Proposal, removed, destroyed or stolen;
- I am aware of a resident opposed to the proposal being assaulted by a local male sporting club for his stance against the proposal, which occurred on 3 June 2007 and was witnessed by his young son;
- I know that certain opposing residents are too afraid to write a letter to the local paper for fear of a backlash against them personally.

It is clear to me that the neighbourly relationships and trust within the Smeaton community have been shattered by the Tuki Wind Farm proposal. Whether or not the Proposal proceeds, I am doubtful the fractured relationships between neighbours, families and friends will ever be restored fully.

I urge the Standing Committee to consider fully the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The human cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local planning regulations. One's quality of life and the relationships with those around them, should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

DIARMAID McGANN LLB.

Wednesday 13th June, 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

We understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

We own land near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon us.

During the past 100 years members of the Smeaton community have worked together and acted as responsible custodians of this historic region. The proposal to put a large industrial wind development in this small rural community and the way in which it has been implemented by the developers has damaged the heart and soul of our town forever.

Neighbours have signed confidential agreements with the proponent to put turbines on their land. These secretive deals have created mistrust about the proposed financial gain the participating landowners will receive. Long established friendships have vanished between those for and against the proposal. We now avoid socialising and dealing with people and local businesses which support the wind farm proposal.

We would not have chosen to move to Kooroocheang, north of Smeaton, 4 years ago and devote our hard work and money to renovating our 120-year-old home if we had known of the proposed industrial development. The uncertainty of not knowing if we will be living near to an industrial wind development, the visual impairment to the landscape the development will cause and the loss of amenity to our "lifestyle property investment" has created doubt about our future and caused immense daily stress and anxiety to us. We cannot continue with our property development because we do not know what our future will be living adjacent to an industrial wind development. We do not want to stay here if the wind farm proposal is approved. If the wind development is built, our retirement plans will be shattered. We cannot make any decisions about our future until an outcome regarding the proposal is reached.

The State planning guidelines are geared in the proponent's favour because the proponent can choose when to 'consult' with our community and when certain information is released. As the arrangements the proponent has with the participating landowners are kept confidential, this has caused speculation within the broader community about important issues such as who will be responsible for clean-up of the site, who will be responsible for noise emitted from the turbines, who will be held accountable if a fire is caused and who will compensate adjoining landowners such as myself for loss of amenity?

As some members of our local council want the income from turbines on their own land, I feel there is no-one who will listen to the shared concerns many community members have about living near giant wind turbines. The proponent has also offered a 'community fund' to benefit the township of Smeaton which has compromised people's ability to think freely, independently and rationally about whether the proposal is in the best interests of the area and the true impact the development will have on our natural environment and our quality of life.

Wind farm proponents tout themselves as being environmentalists, but are simply business speculators motivated by quick profits at the expense of vulnerable rural communities. No evidence has been provided by the proponent, Wind Power Pty Ltd, as to how wind turbines reduce greenhouse gas emissions, nor has any guarantee been provided as to who will be ultimately accountable for the development should it proceed. Wind proponents are able to hide behind the rhetoric of the climate change debate without substantiating any of their claims that wind turbines are beneficial to the environment. If wind turbines are as beneficial as claimed by their proponents, why isn't performance data from existing wind farms such as Toora, Wonthaggi and Challicum Hills being freely released to the public?

I urge the Standing Committee to investigate the unsubstantiated claims made by wind farm proponents as to the environmental benefits of wind turbines, and to place appropriate value on the health and well being of our communities which are being torn to pieces over these intrusive industrial developments.

Yours faithfully

JOHN & JENNY GILLESPIE

11th June 2007.

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

I own land near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon me.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me in the following ways:

- I have changed by retirement plans because of the uncertainty of this horrific proposal. I was quite happy to stay and keep running the farm for a few years, however with a major proposal for 19 turbines in front of our house I feel that the stress that these turbines will cause my family needs to be taken into account. We have for 3 generations farmed here at Werona. We have one of the best views that you would see anywhere in the State of Victoria and to spoil these magnificent views with 150 metre high industrial wind turbines is absolutely ridiculous. It could only be called environmental vandalism by the local shires and governments. Just imagine watching 19 wind turbines with a red flashing light on top of them for the rest of your life. We often watch the wedge tailed eagles soaring in the wind, but I suspect these will disappear from our area like they have from other wind farms in the state. My only option I believe is to sell out and move away from these horrific Industrial Machines that can be heard from up to 5 kms away at times. The stress of the noise that can penetrate houses even with double glazing will be too much to bear, so retirement plans will be to move interstate away from family ands friends.

- The Community Fund that the Windfarm Developers give to the area is only a bribe. In our area the community that has been offered $10,000 is 10 to 12 kms away from the proposal. The people that live at Smeaton 10 kms away and not able to see or hear the turbines have been bribed to get some support for the scheme. 98% of the landowners within 5 kms of the turbines are against the proposal, but the majority in the town are in support of the proposal because they cannot see it, they will not be able to hear it and their land values will not plummet like the values of the property owners within 5 kms of the turbines. In areas of other wind farms values have reduced by 25% to 40%.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. One's quality of life should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

Alister Longmire

11 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

To the Standing Committee,

Inquiry into the development renewable energy in Australia

I have heard that the Federal Government is wanting to finalise the draft National Code for Wind Farms. A National Code is needed to regulate wind energy proponents, such as Wind Power Pty Ltd.

I am greatly distressed at the 19 turbine Tuki industrial wind development proposed at Smeaton by Wind Power Pty Ltd. My current home (being a shed) on my land has not been acknowledged by Wind Power Pty Ltd as a house within the immediate vicinity of the proposed site. My home is located with 2 to 3 kilometers of where the turbines will be placed. I hold a planning permit to build a cottage on my land which has recently expired. It appears that I do not exist in Wind Power Pty Ltd's survey of houses which will be affected by the development.

Since October 2003, I have been living in a corrugated shed with no power, heating, running water, kitchen or bathroom facilities. I am persevering with my current living arrangements so that I can be a self-funded retiree. In fact, I am happy with my current arrangements because I am completely self sufficient in my energy needs.

My property at Kooroocheang is all I own. I turn 50 years of age at the end of this month and my land is my superannuation. I have recently had 3 different real estate agents visit my property, who have quoted me a $155,000.00 difference in land value between them. I have tried to borrow against my equity in my property, however do not have enough to buy another property to live, nor do I want to. With the local property market so high, I will never be able to afford to buy 175 acres again in this or any other area, with as good soil, water supply and fantastic views.

I will not be able to financially recover if I am forced off my land if I am not able to live here if the wind turbines are built. The quality of life I enjoy on my land now will not be the same if I am faced with noise and flashing lights of 148 metres turbines overlooking me. My land

is my home; it is not just some 'out paddock' compared to some parts of the Tuki Wind Farm proposal site owned by farmers who live elsewhere.

I recommend to the Standing Committee that it be a National Code requirement that the agreement of every property owner within a 5 kilometre radius from the boundary of a proposed wind farm site be obtained before a wind farm development can happen. If one person objects, then the proposal is dumped, and a more appropriate location must be identified where people's homes will not be impacted upon.

I have experienced the impact of large scale development encroaching upon my home before. The Bracks Government could not make a decision on where the Calder Highway expansion would go. I was living elsewhere, in a caravan on 10 acres for nearly 3 years. My mental health and well being was not good. The final outcome for me was that the Bracks Government did not give me what I had paid for my land 4 years earlier. I am carrying debt from that experience to this day and I cannot survive another financial setback from large-scale development happening near to me.

The noise effect from the proposed wind turbines is of great concern to me as my land at Kooroocheang has a natural echo. With 19 wind turbines, 148 metres high towering over me with flashing aviation lights, my block will be unlivable. How can neighbouring farmers invite wind turbines in, outsourced by State Government and encouraged by our Councils, local sporting clubs and other groups, with no comeback? It is simply not fair.

There is a 96% rejection of the Tuki Wind Farm proposal by those residents within a 3 to 5 kilometre radius of the proposed site. The host of reasons why local residents oppose the development have been ignored by Wind Power Pty Ltd and the Bracks Government. Wind Power Pty Ltd are being seen to be going through the process and procedures, but are totally ignoring any objectors (which are a lot of us).

I understand that Wind Power Pty Ltd has only $100.00 paid up capital. An investigation needs to take place why a company with no capital can propose a multi-million dollar industrial development. I am at a loss as to why Mr Steve Buckle, a director of Wind Power Pty Ltd, will not acknowledge that wind turbines have a negative visual impact on surrounding properties.

I am going totally solar myself when I build my home. Why should my quality of life be affected to by a wind energy development, when I am prepared to spend $27,000.00 on solar energy and continue to be entirely self sufficient in my power needs? It appears to me that big business and governments can't make any money out of me going solar, which is why solar energy is not being properly promoted. I do not see how I will survive living near to an industrial wind development.

Can someone please explain to me how the owner of Tuki Trout Farm Retreat who is a participating land owner in the Tuki Wind Farm proposal, can make a living out of calm, tranquility and stillness, and the Hepburn Shire Council promote the ambience of the Spa Country, and then sell myself and others out?

There are many more issues affecting my community, such as the physical assault on a neighbour who is also opposed to the Tuki Wind Farm development on 3 June 2007 by a group of local football club players, continual theft of protest placards and destruction of property on opposing residents' land, the fact the proposal contravenes the Hepburn Shire's Significant Landscape Overlay which partly protects the volcanic features of the site, indigenous heritage concerns and the feeling of fear among those residents that are opposed to the development.

I have voted for the Greens for years in the belief of biodynamic farming. I would even be prepared to pay a levy to fund the establishment of non-intrusive sources of renewable energy, but to hell with it all! It's too hard and really not fair that my quality of life will be compromised for an inefficient, environmentally destructive, wind energy development. All I want is to install solar energy and to be left alone.

I urge the Standing Committee to consider my concerns and those of others like me who have been marginalised by wind developments happening in inappropriate areas and destroying people's lives.

Yours faithfully,

Bronwyn Taylor

BRONWYN TAYLOR

12th June 2007.

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

I own land near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon me.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me in the following ways:

- I no longer trust my neighbours who have already and others who we suspect might be going to sign up. We will not know for another 12 months who have signed up because of the confidential clause. Long established friendships have all but vanished and I now avoid going out socialising because of the mistrust that has happened. I will now not deal with any business that has supported these horrific Industrial Wind Farms in my area.

- This proposal has torn the local community in two. Landcare groups will no longer be able to function because of the tension. The local church has 2 Elders and the Organist resign because they can no longer trust people in the Church group. Fire Brigades in the area will lose badly needed members and with wind turbines going up in flames every summer as they have this year, you will need a strong and vibrant Fire Brigade. The local Farmers Federation branch has already lost members because of the proposal. I feel that this is beyond reconciliation of the community.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. One's quality of life should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

Carmel Longmire

Carmel Longmire

14th June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I own land near the proposed Tuki Wind farm site near Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and stress placed on me.

Community cohesion has been **shattered.** (Townspeople 10kms from the site are supportive of the project because the promise of a "Community Fund" may save them a few dollars while those families in the shadow of the site suffer stress and depression.)

I am concerned that my voice is not being heard and that nobody in authority is listening to my concerns about living near giant wind turbines which would be visible from everywhere on my property.

I am self-employed and my efforts in objecting to the proposal have cost me a lot of time and money but the thought of these enormous towers (= 41 story building) being constructed on the **most significant volcanic cone plain area in Australia** keeps me at it for the benefit of future generations.

Property values decline due to the possibility of any "Wind-farm" proposals. (2 Buyers have ceased to negotiate on a property for sale 3kms from the proposed site.) This is of extreme concern to me as my property is in effect my superannuation.

The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. Please give urgent consideration to the social impacts of wind 'farm' proposals when considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

David Sewell

14 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms - A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

My family own land near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was first announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon us.

I cannot emphasis enough the real impact the wind farm proposal has had on our community. The uncertainty a proposed industrial development places on a township cannot be underestimated. The 'opportunity cost' of this proposal is also being felt in the Smeaton district; those who were planning to buy in our area won't; those considering extending or renovating their homes won't. There is anecdotal evidence that if the wind farm proposal proceeds, that some families will leave and remove their children from the local primary school.

A fellow neighbour was bashed on 3 June 2007 by a group of local football club players on a club event for his stand against the Tuki Wind Farm. On 10 June 2007 a flare was thrown by a unknown driver into another neighbour's paddock who is also opposed to the development. On 2 June 2007, two of my neighbours were woken at 12.30pm with thieves pulling up at their front gate and stealing protest placards. One neighbour even gave chase, only to lose the culprit who disappeared by driving down our main highway by turning his headlights turned off. One young person whose family is involved in hosting turbines on their land has been charged with theft and unlawful entry by trespassing onto a neighbour's land to remove and

destroy protest placards and attempting to push over an empty water tank with 'No Tuki Turbines' painted on it.

We are already seeing that wind turbines do not perform to standard. It was recently reported that performance data recorded between 1 June 2006 and 22 June 2006 (inclusive) found the Wonthaggi Wind Farm in Victoria drew from, rather than produced, power for the grid for 16% of the time. The Wonthaggi turbines produced less than 10% of electricity for 56% of the time and between 30% and 50% of electricity for 15% of the time. For 31% of the time, the Wonthaggi turbines produced 5% of electricity. Data recorded revealed that the plant had produced 1159 megawatts of power, which amounted to 19% of installed capacity, despite a 33% capacity factor promised by its proponent, Wind Power Pty Ltd (*Leongatha Northern Star*: 15 May 2007 p.37).

This is the first time performance data has been publicly released, and I am hopeful this will trigger further public scrutiny. At the Toora Wind Farm also in Gippsland, it has been reported that after 5 years, 5 of the 12 turbines are inoperative due to gear problems, and that local jobs promised have never been created. Compensation has been paid to local landowners for noise impacts and homes have been purchased and demolished (ABC *Four Corners Internet Forum*, Earth, Wind and Fire, 16-17 April 2007, http://www2b.abc.net.au).

I ask anyone who supports wind farm proposals to consider why community cohesion is not given equal standing with unsubstantiated greenhouse gas benefits. Why is one's quality of life so undervalued? Why does the human cost not form part of the 'net gain' equation of wind farm projects? The answer is: we are fooling ourselves if we think wind turbines promote happy, healthy communities and a cleaner environment.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to impose strict regulations on wind farm operators to regulate:

- When an operator first enters a community and begins approaching potential landowners, that the community be notified that their area is under consideration for a possible wind farm;
- That confidentiality agreements between participating landowners and proponents be prohibited and that all contractual documents be made publicly available on request or under the *Freedom of Information Act*;
- That a community be notified when a participating landowner has signed with the proponent;
- That a community be made aware via an independent third party of the feasibility investigations being undertaken by the proponent and the exact nature of those investigations;
- That 'community funds' or bribes/inducements be prohibited;
- That a decommissioning bond be a mandatory requirement of any planning permit granted for a wind farm;

- That any contractual document such as an agreement for lease, lease and wind testing tower agreement be made publicly available by registering these against the title to the subject land;
- That contractual arrangements between a proponent and participating land owner which allow ownership of turbines to revert to a landowner in certain circumstance be outlawed. Instead, ownership should remain at all times with the operator.
- That wind turbines be prohibited under our planning schemes from being placed on privately owned land or land where there is a Significant Landscape Overlay. Wind farms should be a public utility on public land.
- That turbines not be built within a 5 kilometre radius of any home;
- Reporting requirements be imposed on wind farm operators to report the efficiency and productivity of wind farms and evidence be provided as to the greenhouse gas reductions achieved;
- That the community control the consultation process with a proponent, so that the community can decide if an operator can conduct an information session or speak to the community. As wind farms affect the broader community and do not involve just the participating landowners, the community should therefore have the final say on whether a proposal should be built. The matter should be taken out of the hands of Council due to politicisation of the issue and handed back to the community;
- That operators set up compulsory compensation funds for any potential noise breaches, economic loss, loss of amenity to nearby residents.

The health and well being of our rural communities and one's quality of life should be given higher regard in the wind energy debate. Our community is in the grips of violence, property damage, fear and intimidation never experienced perpetrated by people we have known all our lives.

The mad scramble by participating landowners to place turbines on their land for financial gain has cost our community dearly. Whether or not the Tuki Wind Farm is built, many of us now know that there are people within our township who will use violence and intimidation to silence any opposition where they stand to gain financially. I feel sad and disappointed for our town because whether or not the Tuki Wind Farm is built, I am skeptical relationships within in our area will ever be the same.

Yours faithfully,

EMMA ELSWORTH
BA. LLB. Lawyer

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament house
CANBERRA ACT 2600.

Dear Sirs,
Inquiry into the development of the non fossil fuel energy industry in Australia.

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Windfarms-A Discussion Paper (May 2006).*
A National Code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on Wind Farm developers seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.
My family own land adjoining the proposed Tuki Wind Farm which is sited on Stoney Rises ,a protected Volcanic Ridge, 10 ks north of Smeaton in Victoria.
Since the proposal was announced in March '07 , the lives of my family and myself have been severely affected due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has caused to my family, my neighbours and myself.

The Tuki Windfarm proposal affects us in many ways of which the most serious are as follows-

1. Desecration of the Volcanic Landscape known as the Western Uplands, which is unique in that the volcanic formations (cones,ridges and mountains) retain their original shapes and are a centre of world interest, have Significant Landscape Overlays placed on them by our planners prohibiting obtrusive development, yet are blatantly targeted by Corporate "Cowboys" chasing a quick dollar because of their so called suitability for capturing wind. This is an enormous country , with many more suitable sites, where the wind still blows, without destroying this unique and historic landscape.

2. The majority of the volcanic formations between Daylesford and Clunes have been targeted.These formations were the subject of an Inventory and Evaluation of Scientific Significance by Neville Rosengren 1994 ,Titled the Eruption Points of the Newer Volcanics.The report was prepared for the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and Geological Society of Australia

(Victorian Division).The hills targeted by the proposal ,now expanded to over another 100 turbines between "Tuki" and Clunes are predominantly listed as being of National Significance, State Significance or Regional Significance.If such a proposal goes ahead the nation will lose forever the significance and potential of this pristine and historically and geologically significant area.(Refer to Julian Hollis, Vulcanologist & Professor Bernie Joyce, Earth Science Dept. Melbourne University)

3. Personally ,my extended family chose this area to develop our farming enterprise and invest our family funds.The intrusion into the area of the Wind Farm proposal has caused an immediate devaluation in property values as evidenced by the failure of a neighbouring property to sell, despite a dramatic reduction in price. The reason- **destruction of the visual amenity of our landscape.** I am also a Licensed Estate Agent and have spoken personally to a prospective purchaser of the property.She had the cash for a 30 day sale but walked away because of the proposed development in disgust.

4. Our neighbours, who have continuosly owned a substantial property adjoining the proposed development since first settlement, are devastated and have been the subject of vandalism, trespass and intimidation since their opposition to the proposal has been expressed.This community is suffering extreme anguish because of the arrogant proponents disregaurd for the amenity of our community.

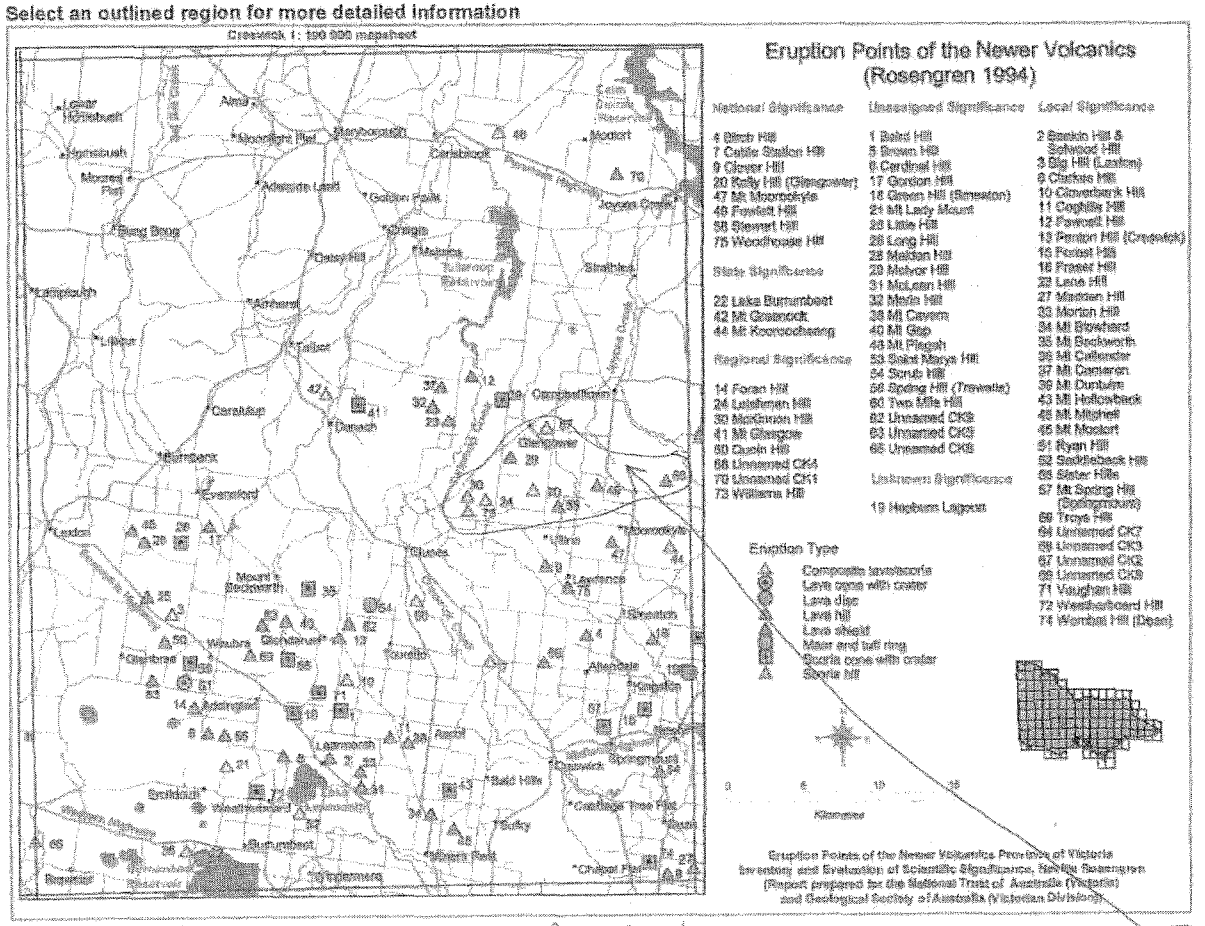
5. At this point of time it is obvious that we, as a community, are being subjected to a sinister **"SOFTENING UP PROCESS"** used to cause confusion and disunity in our community , a community which previously was proud of its heritage and community cohesion in a pristine rural environment .

Yours faithfully,

Arie J. Eydes.

MAP DATABASE

Select an outlined region for more detailed information



68 Equates to Stoney Rises.

TARGETED AREA 68, 49, 68, 20, 24, 73, 30, 29, 67 See Above

27

12 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

I own land near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon me.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me in the following ways:

- My plans to retire on my property are in limbo until the Tuki Wind Farm proposal is decided. If the Tuki Wind Farm is built, I do not know if I will remain in the area and see out my working life at a local hospital where I am employed. The uncertainty of not knowing if I will be living near to an industrial wind development is causing myself and my family personal stress and anxiety. I cannot spend any money to improve my property because I don't know if I will be here if the wind farm proposal is approved.

- I no longer trust my neighbours who have signed confidential agreements with the proponent to host turbines on their land. As a result, I avoid doing business with those who support wind farm proposals.

- I now avoid socialising and dealing with people and local businesses that support the wind farm proposal;

- I am fearful for my safety because protest placards I have placed on my property have been destroyed or stolen during daytime and nighttime by those in favour of the proposal. I am hesitant to voice my disapproval because a member of my local action group was assaulted by a group of local football club players because of his objection to the proposal. I do not want to write a letter to our local paper stating my

disapproval of the project because I am fearful for my safety traveling to work to do night shift;

- The proposal has torn the community into two. Whether or not the proposal proceeds, I doubt if the differences between those in our area will ever heal.

Since the Tuki Wind Farm proposal was first announced in March 2007, my quality of life has diminished for the reasons stated above.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. One's quality of life should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

HELEN ELSWORTH

12 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

Our Country is supposedly base on a fair go for all. I believe my family, and I can remember this as the basis for my father and grandfather in their dealings.

Our community was given a weeks notice before a public meeting was convened by Wind-Power Pty Ltd a company with $100 paid capital, informed us of an industrial wind generation plan nearby.

No thought by the proponents as to what has now happened in the Smeaton district. Division among the community is not a strong enough word; differences have always been part of any community or district, but I believe in my lifetime this issue will never be glossed over.

One neighbour has been bashed because of his objection to the proposal, signs opposing the turbines have been stolen, and the police are now involved in trying to keep the peace. For the first time in Smeaton's 168 year history the above has caused my family and myself to reassess our community involvement. I no longer will have business dealings with those proposing the turbines. All other contact with or assistance to proponents is being withdrawn by myself and many others in the district.

Our municipal council has made no attempt to quell the turmoil with the exception of one councilor from another riding. No politicians of any colour have shown interest except for Federal Minister Fran Bailey, who's electorate is further to the east.

My final remarks concern a 94 year old War Veteran who's home will be the closest to the proposed turbines, turbines 144 meters high with flashing lights, the highest yet proposed in Australia. In 1942-1943 my

neigbour was in New Guinea protecting our "A Fair Go" and to allow communities to be undermined and destroyed by large turbine instillations make he and I feel as though we are now being ruled not governed.

Yours Faithfully

Jim Elsworth

12/6/2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sirs

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand the Standing committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms- A discussion paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

I own land near the proposed Tuki wind farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed on me.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me in the following ways:

1. I no longer trust my neighbours who have signed confidential agreements with the proponent to put turbines on their land just across the fence from mine, without first asking my opinion or considering the adverse effects it will have on my family. Hence, long established friendships with my neighbours and those who support the turbines have been lost.

2. As the planning guidelines are not stringent, the proponent can choose when to consult and who to consult with. There must be a distance guideline set in place for the siting of wind turbines relative to an adjoining owner's property. I would suggest that it be prohibited for wind turbines to be placed less than 5 kilometres from another landowner's property. Without a control based on distance, the local community has very little say in proceedings as the proponent can bring in outsiders to help their cause, and try to create the illusion that they have majority support, which is not the case as is evident here at Smeaton with the Tuki Wind Farm proposal. This leaves local communities feeling powerless and dejected.

3. I am fearful for my safety and that of my family because we have had many protest signs located on our property stolen. Our property has been entered illegally by stakeholders in the Tuki Wind Farm project (who have been charged by police) but continue to reoffend. This has cost us a considerable amount of money to replace stolen and destroyed protest placards. We have had a neighbour assaulted and a flare shot into our land by those in support of the proposal. Smeaton is no longer a peaceful county town.

4. My efforts in objecting to the Tuki Wind Farm proposal has so far cost me considerable time and expense, it has taken me away from running my business and being able to spend time with my family. This has a flow-on effect to other businesses in the area that I would normally be spending much more money with if I was able to devote more time to my work.

I strongly urge the Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The human cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local planning regulations. The benefits of renewable energy must focus on preserving the quality of life of the members of communities where wind farm developments are either proposed or currently operating.

Yours faithfully

Leighton Evans

14th June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I own land near the proposed Tuki Wind farm site near Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and stress placed on me.

Long friendships with my neighbours who support the proposal (four landholders who have signed confidential agreements with the proponent to put turbines on their land – two of those who don't even live there) are lost, and may never be healed.

I am concerned that my voice is not being heard and that nobody in authority is listening to my concerns about living near giant wind turbines which would be visible from everywhere on my property.

I am suffering stress and anxiety due to the community tension the proposal has imposed on myself and 96% of the community within 5 kms radius of the site. The 'community fund' offered to the town by the proponent is nothing short of a bribe! I am unable to play the organ at our local church as a result of my personal stress.

The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. Please give urgent consideration to the social impacts of wind 'farm' proposals when considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

Lorraine Sewell

11 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing

Committee on Industry and Resources

Department of the House of Representatives

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Renewable Energy Inquiry

We are aware that the Standing Committee is investigating the benefits of renewable energy in Australia. A National Code for the development of wind farms is urgently to regulate the conduct of wind farm developers seeking to impose large scale industrial developments adjacent to people's homes.

We are hesitant to voice our disapproval because one of us violently assaulted by a group of local football club players because of our objections to the Tuki Wind Farm proposal. Our home is located less than two kilometres from the site where 148 metres turbines with flashing lights are proposed.

We fear for our lives and that of our family.

We are fearful to stay on our property, but are also fearful to leave it for the safety for ourselves and our home.

We have had protest placards stolen from our property and destroyed during the day and night time by those in favour of the proposal. We feel that theft and destruction of our protest placards is an attempt by those in favour of the proposal to silence our concerns.

We are dismayed by the lack of support from the local ward representative at Hepburn Council, particularly given the violence and theft which has occurred in the Smeaton are as a result of the proposal, which we have experienced first hand.

We do have any confidence in the local or state government as it fails to understand the community tension and personal stress the proposal has imposed on our family and other families in our area.

Yours faithfully

Gary Leech and Donna Robertson

Gary Leech.

Donna Robertson

11.06.2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

I own land near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon me.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me in the following ways:

- Since making my opposition to the wind 'farm' proposal known to the community, through writing letters to the local papers, I have been accused of being responsible for all the divisions the wind proposal has caused in this area. This despite the fact that Wind Farm Pty Ltd signed up landowners in the area behind their neighbours' back, and are responsible for the upheaval, in a hitherto peaceful and cooperative town. This accusation came from a neighbour with whom I worked for years as part of a fund-raising team to build a local community hall, and who only recently helped me with some hay.

- Since protest signs have been repeatedly torn down by supporters of the proposal, both from fences and within landholders' paddocks, I have been afraid that they will come to my place as well. I live alone, and am very vulnerable. Even families with little children were subjected to this abuse and denied their democratic rights to protest. I am afraid that this will spiral out of control into further violence.

- People in the area that have hitherto treated me with respect and kindness, have pushed me aside roughly, as they walked past. This happened after I joined a

busload of people to view the Challicum Hills wind 'farm'.

- At this visit to the Challicum Hills, I was told by a farmer interested in turbines on his land, that 'You've asked enough questions.' I have known this man for years, and am now treated with cold sneers and dirty looks. Another man brushed past me, muttering about all these 'paltry' questions. I had asked the representative from Wind Power Pty Ltd about turbines burning completely out of control in South Australia – hardly a 'paltry' question. The lure of easy money is changing people who have hitherto been polite and kind.

- I feel overwhelmed by the 'bull-dozing' tactics of Wind Power Pty Ltd, who gave no definite, written statistics to back up all their claims. In their first community 'consultation' in March, 2007, as part of the power point presentation, we only viewed trucks bringing parts of a turbine. An actual table of figures that contained definite information was removed so quickly one couldn't see what it was about.

- I feel disempowered by the deceit and misleading statements that was evident in the pamphlet given out a few months later (7 May, 2007). It claimed that there had been further discussions with the community, which was not true. None of the people most immediately affected by the proposed wind 'farm' had seen anymore from this company. The pamphlet is written as if there is no opposition and as if everyone agrees with the proposal – a complete misdirection.

- I am outraged by the subtle mind games these wind companies play, inserting words like 'where it ***will be*** located', when, in fact, the proposal is not definite. As well as disregarding all opposition as if it had not even taken place, the company misuses the term 'consultation'. Consultation implies that the other party has a choice to say 'no'. The way the wind power company uses this term is basically to consult on the *implementation* of the wind 'farm', not on whether the people nearby want it. The letter merely states that it will 'inform' the community of developments, and totally ignores the many protests that have taken place.

- Ignoring the rights of nearby rural residents discriminates against country landholders. In the city you can protest against building proposals unsuitable to an area and against noise. In the country, people who have farmed the land for five generations as well as those who have moved into the area recently, have been denied these rights by the divisive tactics used by the wind companies. Our democratic rights are being taken away by wind companies determined to wipe out all local opposition. They are using the 'green' concept of renewable energy to cover up the industrialisation of rural land for their own money-making business.

- The wind company's habit of treating any dissenters as 'invisible' is totally disempowering and stressful. It is obviously one of their tactics.

- It is also obvious that the government has 'thrown us to the wolves' and we have to fight our own battles. An enormous amount of our time is taken up with this issue, making it extremely difficult to get on with work and other demands in our lives.

- Even more divisive is that the community is softened up to keep some members 'on-side' of the proposed wind-farm. The company sets up a community fund to hand out

money to local groups. This causes an enormous rift between locals who see the chance of a quick buck, and who are therefore prepared to sell out country neighbours with whom they have fund-raised for years in peaceful cooperation – in fact – to build the very hall in which the wind company displayed all its propaganda.

- My friend, who has also written letters in the local papers opposing the wind proposal, was shouted down in the hotel by people who do not live near the proposed site. She is now afraid to send letters again. One man said that he would refuse to supply wood to anyone who was against the proposal.

- I have lived in harmony with the neighbours here for 34 years. I now get dirty looks from a lady who was always friendly, and who is the mother-in-law of my son's best friend. Her husband wants the turbines for the money and doesn't care about the ramifications it could have for the people living nearby. It is devastating to me that I may lose even the friendship of my son's best friend.

- I have been in tears for days after the most recent community confrontation in Smeaton regarding the proposal. Even though I have done my neighbours no harm, I am afraid that I will get no help with shearing, with hay, or with any of the ways in which country people normally cooperate.

- The blatant bias shown by the local Ballarat newspaper in its own articles, in favour of turbines, has been staggering, and has belittled any of the considerable protest in the district. This one-sided reporting plays into the hands of the wind companies and makes country residents feel disenfranchised. One example was a *factual* article on the theft of protest signs, which was filled up with vague opinions by someone who lives miles away from the proposed site, and who has only lived in the town for a year and a half. An article about the Waubra site was more like an advertisement for wind power. A double-page article mainly quoted from people in the local pub, even though only one of them was directly affected – and he was one of the landholders signed up for the turbines! They quoted someone who wouldn't even give his name.

- The fact that Wind Power Pty Ltd changes the proposal as it sees fit at any time causes more stress. The proposal here looks like being enlarged despite the fact that the consultation is supposed to be on the Stony Rises site. The lives of everyone in the district could be affected by the rezoning of large tracts of land to industrial use.

- My children are anxious for my safety since hearing of the assault of a landholder who is opposing the turbines in this area. This district is living in fear and distrust. The whole web of country living, which relies on cooperation, has been torn asunder.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. One's quality of life should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

Renate Metzger

11 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Renewable Energy Inquiry

I am aware that your Standing Committee is investigating the benefits of renewable energy in Australia. A National Code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

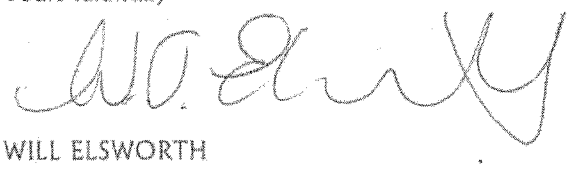
The 'Tuki Wind Farm' proposal located north of Smeaton between Ballarat and Bendigo has had a dramatic impact upon our small township. The once quiet community has now become a place of unrest, and there is the distinct presence of lost trust among community members. This situation has all stemmed from the secrecy of the entire wind farm process. From the way in which a Notice of Referral is made by the proponent, Wind Power Pty Ltd, where the immediate neighbours have no notification of the impending development, to the community's apparent lack of consultation by the proponent. The entire process is shrouded in secrecy between the proponent and the participating land owners because the participating land owners have signed confidentiality agreements.

The most devastating aspect of wind farm developments is the impact that they have on the health and well being of residents, amenity of the countryside, destruction of the natural environment and division within the community. The lack of regard that participating land owners have for their fellow community members when blinded by financial gain is astounding. Whilst this is all unfolding, the Government appears to stand back as the wind companies move through regional Victoria out for a quick buck.

Whilst wind companies continue to contact neighbours in the hope of signing them up to host turbines on their land, the fragmentation of a community deepens. Neighbours stop talking to neighbours. Local Country Fire Authority, church, primary school and other community groups begin to splinter, as member no longer see the point in participating. Business dealings with people promoting wind farms cease.

The Standing Committee now needs to not only take into consideration the social and moral issues associated with wind farm developments, but also the requirement for the National Code to require all information be made public concerning wind farm economics, performance data, planning issues and the contracts arrangements between the proponent, participating land owners, financiers and other stake holders, all of which is shrouded in secrecy. This information would empower rural communities to properly consider whether wind farm developments are beneficial and do in fact deliver the greenhouse gas reductions and energy output levels they are promised to.

Yours faithfully



WILL ELSWORTH

11 June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

As a resident of Smeaton that has the Tuki Wind Farm development placed upon it with little or no warning, I have witnessed our community's cohesion quickly fragment over the proposal. This has been evident in places such as the local primary school where some residents have removed their children to be educated elsewhere, to the uneasy atmosphere at the local hotel, to the lack of communication between neighbours.

The wind proponent, Wind-Power Pty Ltd, has offered the local residents community funds for their sporting clubs, contracts for employment and the promise of further riches for the town with tourism the wind farm would bring. The proposal has split a once cohesive community down the middle.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me because:

- I no longer trust my neighbours who have signed confidential agreements with the proponent to put turbines on their land. Long established friendships with my neighbours and those who support the proposal have vanished;
- I now avoid socialising and dealing with people and local businesses which support the wind farm proposal;
- The uncertainty of not knowing if I will be living near to an industrial wind development is causing my family and I personal stress and anxiety. We cannot make a decision whether to buy in the area because we do not know if we will be living near to wind farm;
- I doubt I will send my son (when he is school age) to the Smeaton Primary School because of the School Council's support for the wind farm proposal. The School Council should be independent, but is not.

Without strict guidelines in place, wind proponent such as Wind Power Pty Ltd are able to divide and conquer small communities with apparent ease.

The Standing Committee needs to carefully examine the communities that have experienced the dramatic impact of wind farms first hand. Social and ethical guidelines need to be developed for wind companies to adhere to, so that other townships like Smeaton which have been torn apart by the Tuki Wind Farm proposal are not repeated in the future.

Yours faithfully

THEA ELSWORTH.

15 June 2007-06-15
The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sirs,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

I own land and reside near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon me.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal (also referred to as Stoney Rises) has affected me in the following ways:

- The uncertainty of not knowing if I will be living near to an industrial wind development has caused my husband and I anxiety over whether we should proceed with planned renovations, and indeed if we should plan our future life here with our five children.
- We have been harassed by the theft of our protest placards in the middle of the night. Alarming our children as to who is wandering about in the night.
- My efforts in objecting to the proposal has caused me considerable fatigue and stress, impeding on my role as mother to five children, and reducing my allocated time to volunteer work and school community activities.
- My friendships within the town of Smeaton have become increasingly strained, and I am concerned they may never regain from the disappointment and distrust that this proposal has created.
- My connection to the Smeaton volcanic landscape is a sincere attachment borne out of my family's long history with the area (my children are the 7th generation of my matrilineal family line to live here), I am also related to the Dja Dja Warung (the Indigenous custodians) and the disrespect for the landscape, local heritage and Aboriginal mythology,
  that this proposal inflicts, is creating such anxiety that I have been suffering from emotional break downs.

- I am dismayed by the total disregard shown by the local ward representative at Council. I no longer have any confidence in the local or state government to understand the community tension and personal stress the proposal has imposed on myself and others like me.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. One's quality of life should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,

Donna Brasher-Spiller

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

To Whom It May Concern

SUBMISSION TO THE 'NATIONAL CODE FOR WIND FARMS - A DISCUSSION PAPER'

I am aware that you are currently in the process of investigating the externalities of renewable energy in Australia as well as finalising the *National Code for Wind Farms - A Discussion Paper* (May 2006). I submit this letter as means of outlining for the purpose of your discussion paper how a proposed renewable energy site in Central Victoria has affected me and my family.

As a resident next to the proposed wind turbine site of the Tuki Wind Farm at Smeaton, Victoria, I, along with many residents feel that the current status of the renewable energy industry in Australia is largely unregulated to detriment of those living in small rural communities. The need for a national code is imperative to ensure that more stringent standards are imposed wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities. The proposed site at Smeaton has been a source of divide among the community and has caused local residents nothing but stress, which results directly from the proposed industrial wind farm site.

Since the proposal was announced in March this year, the lives of my family, neighbours and myself has changed dramatically due to the uncertainty and personal stress the proposal has placed upon me.

The Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me in the following ways:

- I feel that my quality of life will be compromised by the construction of the industrial wind farm site as I will now have to live to constant shadow flicker from the turbines, subsonic noise, strobe lighting of the turbines at night, and impaired vision of the local volcanic landscape.

- I feel powerless because I am just an individual opposing the industrial development and do not have the financial resources of the proponent. I am concerned that my voice is not being heard and that nobody cares about my quality of life. People are more concerned about what financial benefit they will obtain from the proposal as opposed to how they are compromising one's quality of life.

- I am upset that the proponent has offered a 'community fund' to my town because it has compromised people's ability to think freely, independently and rationally about whether the proposal is in the best interests of our area. I feel that this is simply a 'bribe' to the community, and is a means of luring in farmers experiencing tough times with the drought.

- Saddened by the lack of support offered from the local ward representative at Council. I do not have any confidence in the local or state government to understand the community tension and personal stress the proposal has imposed on myself and others like me. The State Government has set a large quota within its Budget to ensure the construction wind farm sites, which puts pressure on small communities with insufficient resources to fight for their community.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The social cost of wind farm developments has been disregarded in State and local regulations. One's quality of life should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy, in order to ensure that **all** can maintain our current Australian way of life.

Regards,

Victoria Elsworth

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
Department of the House of Representatives
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Friday, 15 June 2007

Dear Sir/Madam,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australia and finalising the National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seeking to place large industrial developments in small rural communities.

My family own a farming property near the proposed Tuki Wind Farm site at Smeaton, Victoria. When they learned of the wind farm proposal earlier this year, it immediately put immense stress on them, and many neighbouring families, and as a consequence has caused unnecessary within the community.

Futhermore, the Tuki Wind Farm proposal has affected me in the following ways:

I will no longer have any involvement with my former school, Smeaton Primary School, following the principal's decision to support the Wind Farm and send out flyers to parents supporting the proposal.

I often return to Smeaton, but no longer support several local businesses that have supported the Wind Farm.

I am concerned for my family's safety following constant harassment by supporters of the Wind Farm, which has included physical violence and the continuous pulling down of placards late at night around the Smeaton area, which has disturbed and upset many families.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to consider the social and economic repercussions of the Wind Farm proposal. The proposal will continue to destroy what was once a harmonious and cohesive community, and I hope you will quash the Wind Farm plans immediately.

Yours faithfully,

Sophie Elsworth