

12<sup>th</sup> April 2013

The Secretary  
Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

via email [jcnbn@aph.gov.au](mailto:jcnbn@aph.gov.au)

**Re: Submission in relation to proposed Deuchar 42 metre NBN Fixed Wireless Tower in Old**

This submission is a brief summary of our recent experience and that of other residents of Deuchar, Queensland and the lack of any sort of consultation from NBN Co.

Deuchar, Queensland is a rural community made up of predominately lifestyle properties located between Allora and Warwick on the Southern Downs. Whilst rural in nature, the community is well serviced by fixed line, mobile phone and internet services and has mains electricity access.

In the Southern Free Times newspaper dated Thursday, January the 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013 (whilst many residents were away) a development notice appeared in relation to an application for a Material Change of use. Despite the property having an allocated street number only the Lot Number and RP was used and further investigation revealed the property in question to be adjoining our own. The notice gave scant detail and referred to the change of land use to 'Community Use – Telecommunication Facility.

On Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013, we contacted the Southern Downs Regional Council to get details of the application and Council officers responded on the same day to provide the information. The council provided a report lodged by the applicant dated June 2011. So presumably whilst planning the application for over at least a year and a half, NBNC Co did not think it worthwhile to talk to the residents of Hendon-Deuchar Road.

On the same day we contacted NBNC Co for further details and were finally contacted on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2013 by a representative of Daly International acting for NBN. This representative provided some requested information via email but was quite dismissive on the telephone as we ran through what must be to Daly the “usual” objections.

Many residents were unaware of the application and the length of time to lodge objections was not long enough. Given the time of year some residents were unable to lodge their submissions within the time period.

Seven objections from locals in the street were lodged to the application and the matter went to Council for consideration. The objections covered many topics including amenity, co-location with existing services in the region, reduction in saleability and property values, other more suitable sites, lack of consultation, more efficient internet access options, vegetation management and clearing, electricity access requirements, health concerns and proposed location in relation to the local aerodrome.

In a narrow vote the application was approved by council.

Whilst options existed to pursue the matter through an objection to the planning and environment

court, legal advice sought has demonstrated that we do not have the financial resources to pursue the matter and that the objection system is substantially weighted in favour of those with the deepest pockets.

We are not anti NBN and are currently heavy users of online and mobile technologies. We do however question the process and the wisdom and expense of building a 42 Metre tower to service a small number of people in a lifestyle property rural area that already have access to internet services.

Rural Queensland is getting shortchanged with this approach as superior services could be delivered by either of the two parties proposed roll out options without blighting our beautiful area with this eyesore. Under the current NBN rollout proposal the Optic Fibre cable will run through our area on the way to service Warwick. The Coalition fibre to the node approach using our current phone lines would deliver us services far superior to the fixed wireless option.

In Summary:-

- There has been no consultation on this proposed tower from NBNCo or its nominated agents.
- The first that we and many other Deuchar residents knew about it was the Free Times notice published during the holiday period.
- The area, while classed as Rural, is home to many residents who live there for lifestyle reasons.
- The NBNCo Fixed Wireless solution delivers an inferior product to Rural Australia.
- The Proposed site adjoins our property and will mean that the tower is within 450 metres of our home and within 200 metres of our planned future home site. It will also mean up to 500 metres of above ground power lines along the boundary of our property. Other neighbours will be even closer to the tower.
- The proposal will negatively impact on property values and quality of life.
- The proposal will have a negative visual and amenity impact.
- The proposed site is surrounded by acres of land governed by a Vegetation management Act (VMA) - classed as Remnant Vegetation under Section 20AH of the VMA.
- We understand that there are many such towers now proposed for the Southern Downs Area and are now aware of other small communities who find themselves in our situation and are similarly being railroaded.
- In our area the NBNCo fixed wireless towers offer only an inferior product. To put rural regions on a level footing with our urban counterparts, NBNCo should run the faster cabled services (optic or connection to the node via our existing copper network that runs down the street.)
- Colocation with other existing services on existing tower and telecommunications sites

would seem a more sensible course of action if wireless is deemed necessary.

- Although the World Health Organisation does not currently support a link with health implications to humans associated with WIFI technology, there are plenty of scientific studies which do report health issues living near a tower.

We respectfully ask you to consider the impact of Fixed Wireless Towers in rural areas across Australia.

Yours sincerely



Brad Jones & Kym Rose

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Public Notices

**Proposed Development**  
**Have your say**

**From:** Rural Use  
**To:** Material Change of Use  
(Community Use -  
Telecommunication Facility)  
**At:** Hendon-Deuchar Road, Deuchar  
**On:** Lot 5 on RP164860  
**By:** NBN Co Limited  
**☎:** 1800 881 816  
**web:** www.nbnco.com.au  
**Approval Sought:** Development Permit  
**Application No.:** MCD01354

**Comment Period**  
10/01/2013 to 01/02/2013

**Written comments to:**  
The Assessment Manager  
Southern Downs Regional Council  
PO Box 26, Warwick Qld 4370,  
mail@southerndowns.qld.gov.au  
(07) 4661 0300  
www.southerndowns.qld.gov.au

Copies of the full application can be  
viewed or obtained from the assessment  
manager.

Public Notification Requirement per  
Queensland Government - Sustainable  
Planning Act 2009 Form 5 version 2.0