Winterbourne Wind Farm, NSW.

We strongly disagree with the construction of the Winterbourne Wind Farm.

We have 3 rural properties engaged in Primary Production that join the Winterbourne Wind Farm in the Walcha Local Government Area.

We live beside a quiet rural road that will become the major construction access road.

We.have many, many concerns about the industrialization of prime agricultural land where the wind farm is to be located. The massive size of the farm, 22,000 hectares is of mammoth proportion. The farms in the area consist of sheep and cattle grazing producing meat and wool. Bordering the wind farm is the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park, part of the Gondwana Rainforest Wilderness.

We believe that contracts to host wind turbines or be an associated neighbour or local council should not have been presented to landholders to be signed, before the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was published. The information in the EIS could then be studied and more informed decisions could be made, including our decision. A majority of hosting contracts we believe were signed in ignorance and naivety and with a lack of understanding of the impacts to their farms and the township of Walcha. The Walcha Energy Project has been engaging the Walcha Community for more than 14 years with information and plans that lacked detail and much of it changed.

The enormous magnitude of the farm area and construction logistics is beyond the resources such as water, gravel, cement etc that can be sourced within 100km radius of the farm. A small town like Walcha, population of 3018 in the 2016 census is unrealistic in nature to provide labour and cope with traffic predicted along the New England and Oxley Highway, particularly from Bendemeer through Walcha (50.8km) and then out on the roads east of Walcha.

The daily proposed vehicle movements through Walcha from EIS, 860 light vehicles, 418 heavy vehicles, total of 1278 vehicles with noted absence of oversize vehicle statistics.

A large part of these roads does not allow for overtaking for the majority of the length or roads. Other road issues include maintenance, congestion, dust and vehicle sound pollution. Scaling down the size of the Winterbourne Wind Farm may assist but will still pose an inconvenience to residents in business or residential occupants.

As a town, many residents are retirees and coping with increased burden of traffic negotiation would be difficult.

Rental accommodation is extremely limited in Walcha, Uralla, Tamworth and Armidale, where are the Wind Farm employees going to reside?

There will be an increased demand on health care and patients. The current Walcha hospital is a Multi-Purpose Service Hospital. There are very limited services that it provides. The hospital has great difficulty in attracting and keeping medical staff to work in the hospital.

The additional population employing Wind Farm staff and associated workers will not be sustainable to cater for increased health care demand.

Patients requiring emergency specialist care will have 100km to travel on the congested major traffic Wind Farm route to Tamworth Hospital. This will delay possible life saving care.

A very large number of local school students rely on school buses to access education. Again, imposing increased travel time and safety remains a concern.

Telecommunication in the Winterbourne/Moona areas is extremely limited. The majority of people in this area rely on mobile phones for business, emergency and personal reasons being their only available form of communication. The scoping report discusses how the wind turbines will impact on mobile phone, TV and radio signals. Farming has the 2nd highest rate for injuries/death. We rely on communication signals as it is our only contact available including emergencies. We have enhanced our technology in the form of aerials to boost mobile phone reception at our house and in our work ute. We rely on satellite internet as our mobile signals are not strong enough.

Biosecurity is an ongoing issue where many workers and vehicles will be entering farming land. Will there be mandatory procedures to check for, and manage biological contamination and a register to record people entering including a record to follow up any possible outbreaks?

Land values will decrease especially with landholders who chose not to host turbines. Property/Land purchaser will not want to be impacted by visual, noise, dust, traffic, lack of communication signals. There is no financial compensation for purchaser of land next to the wind farm, therefore no encouragement to continue Primary Production.

Water management of the wind farm in the scoping report stated that it would be under the Namoi unregulated and Alluvial Sharing Plan. This is a council arrangement. The Winterbourne Wind Farm is on the eastern side of the Great Dividing Range and all water travels east. It flows into the Macleay River and would be managed by the Northern Rivers Catchment Authority NSW. A significant error in the EIS.

The bio-diversity investigation was undertaken in June 2020. This is in the middle of winter. Walcha has a long cold winter 13.5C max and 0.2C minimum averages for June at Woolbrook weather station. Flora and fauna at this time is not active. No reptiles, insects and amphibians were recorded during this time. Migrating birds would not be present during winter in this area. Reptiles would be hibernating at this time. Seasonal recording would be more accurate.

Large birds and bats are in danger of turbine blade strike, in particular the black cockatoos, ducks, wedge tailed eagles and the Little Eagle and other birds of prey. The construction sites are in close vicinity to flora and fauna of which some are vulnerable and/or endangered such as the Koala (endangered), Brush Tailed Wallaby (near threatened), Long

Nosed Bandicoot (vulnerable), Spotted Quoll (near threatened) and native vegetation such as the Peppermint species.

The wind farm borders the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park. Tourists, residents and tourists to Walcha value the undisturbed nature of the landscape.

We don't agree with foreign owned companies controlling energy supply and taking economic advantage through the sale of electricity. Vestas, is owned by Denmark Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners Company. The huge outlay of capital to install overhead transmission lines estimated to be 50km long to connect to the main electricity grid is to be considered plus again making the landscape an industrial development eyesore.

The resources used and the environmental impact of constructing 119 wind turbines at a height of 149 metres and maximum blade tip height of 230m is unrealistic and of a massive scale. Some considerations are; the production of Green House gases and toxic chemical pollution through turbine production using coal, water, gravel, steel and fibre, lubrication oil in turbine, laying turbine foundations with 942 cubic metres minimum and up to 3,534 cubic meters of cement, not including substation constructions. For example, 220 ton of coal is used to produce a 1mv wind turbine. Transport emissions are not noted in the EIS.

Decommissioning and disposal of the turbines and foundations remains a serious issue not yet resolved.

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A summary of our concerns includes

1. Poor and limited consultation process. The EIS should have been presented to Wind Turbine hosts, neighbours and the community of Walcha before <u>any</u> contacts and agreements were made.
2. Poor site and size selection in Prime agricultural land.
3. High ecological impacts.
4. The biodiversity off set scheme is not acceptable. Does money through fines replace fauna, flora and the physical environment? A shameful disgrace.
5. Limited resources to build the massive Wind farm that are not locally available.
6. Industrialisation of the rural landscape including visual impacts.
7. Community of Walcha socially changed forever.
8. Foreign owned construction and financial benefit through electricity sales.

Small Modular Reactors (SMR) would be a simple, faster, more cost-effective solution. Locate them at existing coal fire power stations where the infrastructure exists. Let's move into the future with environmentally friendly, reliable, sustainable energy. A win for Australia and our independence from global control.