

20/01/23 Received

18 /01/2023

Director – Energy Assessments, Development Assessment
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Reference: Winterbourne Wind Farm SSD - 10471

I OBJECT to the Winterbourne Wind Farm development.

- I declare that I have not made any reportable political donations in the previous two years
- I acknowledge and accept the Department's disclaimer and declaration.

I object to the Winterbourne Wind Farm Project for the following reasons:

Name: Kevin Hickey
address: 46 (RMB) Berman st Woolbrook 2354

Objection attached.

Signature

Kevin Hickey 18/1/23

17/1/23

I object to the proposed construction of a wind farm at Winterbourne

I will list my categories of objection, then elaborate on each of them

1. Loss of visual amenity
2. Walcha township and shops, ^{and waste depot} overburdened.
3. Ongoing serious disruption of all traffic using the Oxley Highway between Bendemeer and Walcha during proposed construction.
4. Uncertain inadequate water supply.
5. No guarantee that concrete pours would not occur during frost temperatures
6. No plan for traffic management during the biggest delays that would be encountered by long and wide loads
7. No consultation with any landowners living along Oxley Highway between Bendemeer and Walcha nor consultation with adjoining villages of Woolbrook and Walcha Road.
8. Poor consultation with local Dungahatti people
9. No guarantee that explosive demolition would not occur for roadwork purposes on Oxley Highway

① LOSS OF VISUAL AMENITY

I love the majestic beauty of the natural landscape and unhindered view of the entire skyline. This area was perfect for me when I chose to live here. Having lived here for more than half my life, I am even fonder of the land, the town, and all the people who live here.

I am not looking forward to any of our spectacular landscapes having the view of them and the skyline dominated by current sized windfarm towers let alone the extra tall ones that you have planned.

The ill thought and congested nature of your proposal will encourage similar poorly thought out windfarm projects to follow in your wake.

This area does not need to have windfarm towers ruining our views so that people hundreds of kilometres away can turn their lights on.

I do not like the look of a windtower, I do not like the look of the nacelles and I do not like the look of the blades. Windfarm towers are the ugliest thing on the planet.

② Walcha Council has no extra capacity other than for our community.

Any work that Walcha Council might need to do when the proposed windfarm is under construction would lower services to us, the ratepayers. That then means that we, the ratepayers, are paying for any help Walcha Council assists you with.

You have no plans for even a temporary car park for your workers, when in Walcha. Unnecessary traffic congestion will prevent the elderly from parking outside the shop they want to go to.

The shops will not be able to magically stock exactly what your various workers require. The limited stock that small town shops hold, means that products used by most people will be in shorter supply everytime a windfarm worker comes to town.

A smile and no response from your representatives was not what I expected when I suggested the obviousness of Walcha having no fires on a cold day as each shop sold what it had to windfarm workers.

Hundreds of workers over a couple of years are bound to produce large amounts of rubbish. You have not adequately addressed rubbish disposal.

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③ The Oxley Highway is a well known road for motorbikes, lots of turns, hills, and only a few places between Bendemeer and Waleha where a B-double can pull off the road safely.

If your project commenced now, the entire length of the Oxley Highway between Bendemeer and Waleha would have to be shut from all traffic as the wide loads transit between Bendemeer and Waleha.

The Oxley Highway is not wide enough to allow vehicles to pass safely, your wide loads. It is not wide enough in most places for a truck to turn around. I insist on an independent study into your travel route.

Considerable roadworks will be required long before any road blocking loads commence their journey so as to construct several safe off road spaces for vehicles using the highway to be "corralled" as wide loads pass.

None of your proposal mentions either the necessity or extra community disruption with these additional and necessary roadworks.

Unless there are a good number of "pull off" areas ~~are~~ constructed, the Oxley Highway will have to shut for a couple of hours at a time multiplied by the number of your large vehicles + loads.

(4)

Incredible to me that such a large project as your proposed windfarm has sourced materials, logistics, data, planned workforce, access to "the grid", experts of your choice and the construction of the windfarm is left to the hope that you will find enough water with the uncertainty that the El Nino forecasts bring.

Similarly hard to believe that water from different sources will not make the concrete mixing any easier with different chemical analysis between water sources and differing amounts of suspended matter and dissolved minerals.

None of the concrete footings for the turbines can be uniformly the same unless the same ingredients go into every concrete batch.

I already know this now, years before you start mixing concrete.

I have similar misgivings about uniformity in the gravel that goes in the mix as you have not got a 100% guaranteed source.

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5) It is unacceptable for your representatives to not give me a guarantee that no concrete pour takes place during frost temperatures. Concrete's behaviour changes significantly pouring and trying to cure below 0°C .

I would expect a wind turbine that was bolted to such concrete to fall over as the concrete fails.

- ⑥ You have submitted no plans of traffic management during transit of your long and wide loads, when on the Oxley Highway between Bendemeer and Walcha. Such a plan would involve a number of "checkpoints" between Bendemeer and Walcha where a radio network between them and the large loads would allow "held up" sections of traffic to pass the large loads. Monitoring of numerous adjoining property access roads as well as the villages of Woolbrook and Walcha Road would be necessary so the wide load doesn't confront a "stray" vehicle that might not be able to turn around. You have given no attention to the potential blockage of traffic on the Oxley Highway between Bendemeer and Walcha for hours at a time on a regular basis. I insist that an independent study be undertaken to fully evaluate how local traffic can still flow when your large loads transit the Oxley Highway between Bendemeer and Walcha.

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⑦ During all the time that you have assembled your proposal for a windfarm and right up to this time you have disregarded all the people living along the Oxley Highway between Bendemeer and Walcha. The only access for these people is the Oxley Hwy.

You have shown callous disregard for this part of the Walcha community by your ignorance in not contacting all these people and advising them of extreme local road disruption. All of these people will need to be advised when, and when not to drive on the Oxley Hwy.

④ It is unacceptable and sad that you can't demonstrate you have sought and maintained 100% confidence with local Aboriginal Nations. Your representative made it clear that he wasn't sure which one they were because a couple of people reckoned it was them.

Whether there is one representative of First Nations people, 3 or 10, it doesn't matter.

You have failed. As it is at this time of my writing, the local Aboriginal Nations are not on the same page as you.

I have to assume that you are happy not having 100% relations with local Aboriginal people in general if you don't even have a photograph with a handshake between you and local Aboriginal elders.

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From the moment that any of the long loads leaves the N.E. Highway and enters travels on the Oxley Hwy to Walcha then Winterburne, none of the roads were constructed designed, constructed for the safe transit of any of these 'loads'. No local road was or is designed for the load length turning circle or compaction required for such localised heavy loads (reps to dog, trailer).

The Oxley Highway is famous across Australia for being one of the best roads for motorbikes, - i.e. lots of curves and hills.

The length of the Oxley Highway from Bendemeer to Walcha is lined with trees grass and scrub right up to every roadside marker, overhanging trees are plentiful on this road.

Your E.I.S. makes no mention of even one tree that you will remove to allow your loads to pass dozens of bends in the highway that will be impassable by your loads unless they are removed. There are a finite number of trees that it should not be up to the community to fund the omission in your inadequate E.I.S.

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② Walcha Council should not be bribed into a position of subservience with promises of money or the "shall be right" attitude that your proposal asserts. Walcha Council has }

EIS Submissions due before
23rd January 2023

✗ Reckless Biodiversity risk assessment

The Developer has tabled an inaccurate, incomplete and somewhat erroneous report on the potential impacts to biodiversity values. This is particularly concerning given the immediate proximity to the UNESCO Gondwana Rainforests and the Wilderness associated with the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park. There are many examples of the paucity of their assessment response. Some of these include ...

Wedgetail Eagles and Raptors – being present and threatened by the Wind Turbines as they soar from the gorges into the Wind Turbine area. There is a high concentration of Eagles that exist on the edge of the gorge, where a large number of turbines are located. These birds are particularly prone to bird strike with Wind Turbines.

Loss of connectivity habitat – impacting wildlife corridors to the National Park. Most of the retained vegetation on farmland is on ridgelines that will be cleared to make way for 113km of roads, underground cabling and turbines, that are targeting those same ridgelines.

Loss of habitat for threatened species - loss of 207Ha of Koala and Greater Glider habitat. Turbine strikes with Endangered Birds (Little Eagle, Glossy Black Cockatoo and White Throated Needle Tail) and Bats, losing an important insect pest control in the ecosystem. Loss of the threatened Narrow leaved black peppermint and other threatened ecological communities.

✗ Biodiversity Offset Scheme

Project construction and operation is resulting in assessed destruction of native habitat, that is carrying a penalty and Ecosystem Credit payment of \$50,887,024 and Species Credits payment of \$13,431,558. Over \$64 Million in total. This is a destructive project by industry standards. The health of our natural ecology should not be for sale. You simply cannot re-create the 207 Ha of habitat that is being destroyed. This project is in the wrong place.

✗ Economic Analysis

With an estimated \$200/MWhr pricing, this project is likely to generate \$420Million annually in energy sales. Lease agreements with Wind Farm hosts is likely to be around \$3.6M in total per year, and community fund \$0.75 Million per year. For damage to the environment, they will get the chequebook out and fix that for \$64 Million, once off, through Biodiversity Offset costs, (because threatened and endangered species will appreciate the money??) An off-shore turbine manufacturer and developer is taking advantage of our community and the environment, with little regard to the long term impacts to both.

✗ Neighbour Benefit fund

Neighbours to the project should be compensated, with no strings attached, for the effects of sound, flicker, flashing night lights, visual amenity, construction activity, loss of capital value etc that the development has imposed upon them. Neighbours who are impacted by this project should be compensated through a neighbour benefit fund. There should be no need to sign a Neighbour Agreement with confidentiality clauses and ongoing commitments. Neighbours are being coerced into signing contracts in order to get any form of compensation. The neighbour benefit fund, which was initially proposed by the developer, and recently scrapped, is the only fair course of action.

✗ Diminished Aviation Services

Spreading of fertilizer, seed and chemical under threat with Wind Turbine Generators creating a no-fly zone near rural airstrips, and low cloud conditions. National Parks also flag concerns with aerial wild dog baiting.

✗ Increased bush fire control risk

With WTG's creating no fly zone. Water collection from paddocks west of project area, while Oxley Wild Rivers NP is on the Eastern side of project area. We lose our most important aerial tools for gorge fire control. Of particular concern is the location of WTG's against the National Park "Strategic Fire Advantage Zone", critical to wildfire control.

✗ Visual Impact

119 Turbines, 230m high, a height not previously constructed in Australia. Compare to the largest project currently constructed in Australia (Oct 2022) – Coopers Gap in QLD, which has 3.63MW Turbines, to a height of 182m. Add the flashing White, or Red lighting and our night skyline is dramatically altered. Sugarloaf tower sits at a height of 47m for local perspective.

✗ Inadequate Plan for Decommissioning

The developer intends to avoid any contribution to a bond, until they decide this "might" be necessary when their first assessment occurs at 15 years of project life. No oversight, no arms length bond held by independent party, and no insurance against financial default. This is the perfect recipe for a "walk away".

✗ Error ridden EIS

Indicating an unprofessional and an incapable project developer. Early errors pointed out to the planning department have forced their hand into publishing corrections – *how many times can this occur before the EIS is totally dysfunctional?*



We urge you to make use of this material to test your ideas ...

1. Scrutinise it, and fact check it against the EIS
2. Talk to us about any questions you have
3. Write and Submit your EIS submission NOW.

<https://voiceforwalcha.com/eis>