

To Whom it may concern,

RE: WINTERBOURNE WIND FARM | APPLICATION NO. SSD-10471

I am making a submission **in support** of the Winterbourne Wind Farm project.

REASONS FOR SUPPORT

I declare that I am a landowner who stands to financially benefit from the Winterbourne Wind Farm project. I will own 1 turbine on my property but I will also see another 4 turbines from the front of my home and these turbines will be situated within 2.5kms of my home.

1. I understand the need to transition to renewable energy as coal fired power plants shut down their operations 5-10 years ahead of schedule and that Australia needs to use the best options available to maintain a reliable electricity supply. Currently the best options are wind and solar which are far cheaper than establishing new coal-fired power plants. I understand that these projects need to be established where the resources exist for wind and solar and to be located close to the grid and where there maybe options for pumped hydro schemes to create battery storage.
2. Over the last 3 years, my husband and I have experienced the worst drought in our lifetime that killed at least 30% of the trees on our farm. We saw the worst fires in our lifetime that burnt all around our properties boundaries and witnessed the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park that joins our farm be decimated and see an extensive loss of wildlife. Most of the mature trees have died and the tree seedlings that have grown are now so thick it is impossible for NPWS staff to manage the area. Now we are experiencing the wettest conditions we have ever seen. This is evidence of climate change and how it is exacerbating the natural fluctuations in weather systems.
3. I believe that everyone should be “doing their bit” to help alleviate the impacts of climate change and by participating in the Winterbourne Wind Farm project, I am helping NSW achieve its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030.
4. The income (even though small) from the wind turbine on my farm will help alleviate the impacts of drought, severe fires and storm damage.
5. The Winterbourne Wind Project will stimulate Walcha’s local economy and bring much needed income into the district for local farms, local businesses and accommodation providers as a result of 300-400 construction workers over a 2-3 year period as well as 16-20 permanent jobs being created for maintenance over the life of the project.
6. The project will bring opportunities for jobs in our town and apprenticeships for young people, skilling them for the future. Walcha Council and local contractors may also have the opportunity to earn income from on-farm road construction, the carting of sand and gravel and other infrastructure works.

7. The host landowners have been able to obtain a generous Community Benefit Fund for Walcha with a \$1million upfront payment by the Developer and \$750,000 each year, indexed to the CPI. for the life of the project. This fund will be administered by the Walcha Council and will bring many benefits to many voluntary organisations and residents in the Walcha District.
8. The projects can help arrest Walcha's population decline and contribute to its ongoing sustainability and resilience
9. Money will be brought into the Walcha district by the many host landholders earning money from the turbines, powerlines and other infrastructure which may lead to more on-farm job opportunities as well as spending at local businesses.

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10. Increased opportunities for tourism. There is evidence to suggest that a wind farm can increase the tourism in an area as wind turbines are seen as an attraction to the public.
11. The wind farm development will help me and my husband with our succession plans and our ability to hand over the farm to the next generation.

CHALLENGES & RECOMMENDATIONS

There will be many challenges during construction including:

1. Large increases in traffic flows along the local roads from Walcha township to the turbine sites. This has the potential to cause significant delays in travel times unless there is a good traffic management plan for large loads that require escort vehicles as even though the roads vary between 4m-6m in width, it is impossible for cars to pass a wide load due to ditches and culverts along the routes along the Winterbourne Road, the Table Top Road, the Bark Hut Road and the Moona Road. The Winterbourne Rd the Moona Rd and the Rowleys Creek Rd are also school bus routes.

I recommend that , as part of the Development Consent for the Winterbourne Wind Farm, the Developer or appropriate authority give a schedule of movements each week or fortnight to all farmers and their neighbours who will be affected by the movements of trucks and equipment along their local rural roads to enable them to plan their necessary trips away from the farm. This should be made mandatory.

2. Anecdotal evidence shows that many contractors simply ignore "Codes of Conduct" attached to the Lease Agreements by cutting fences into paddocks that contain livestock and the livestock escape into neighbouring properties or they leave gates open within properties so that livestock get boxed together.
Contractors need to abide by these codes of conduct and landowners need to be able to charge the Developer for the time taken to sort up stock and for the inconvenience of having to stop work and sort out the problems caused.

I recommend that the Winterbourne Wind Farm “Code of Conduct” be part of the Conditions of Consent and that contractors are able to be financially penalised for breaches of the Code.

I have attached a copy of the Code of Conduct for your information.

3. Aviation lights on top of the turbines have the potential to severely disturb people who are living within a line of sight of the turbines especially if they flash into people’s homes.

I recommend that, as part of the Development Consent for the Winterbourne Wind Farm, all lights on top of turbines and other infrastructure that are required by CASA or the consenting authority be lights operated by a radar detection system so that lights will activate when an aircraft is in the vicinity of the wind farm and motion detectors be used to activate any night-time security lights.

4. The landowners in the Winterbourne area already have problems with mobile and internet connection due to the undulating and steep terrain. The EIS states that there is Aa “high likelihood of interference with mobile telephony systems within 2km of WTGs”. **This needs to be addressed in the Consent Conditions**

5. **I recommend that, as part of the planning approval process for The Winterbourne Wind Farm Project Owner should be required to pay a bond or establish a sinking fund or provide a bank guarantee to cover the cost of decommissioning the turbines and any infrastructure at the end of the project’s life. This should be a water-tight guarantee that will allay any host farmers and community concerns that currently exist.**