

Voice for Walcha solicited survey

Have your say ...

CLOSING DATE FOR
THIS SURVEY IS
FRIDAY 4TH NOVEMBER

Please note ...

There are numerous wind turbine projects proposed for our district. This survey is focussing on the Winterbourne Wind Farm (119 wind turbines), scheduled to begin next year, with a construction period of 2-3 years.

1. Do you have any concerns about the construction and ongoing existence of the proposed Winterbourne Wind Farm?

Please tick one

- ☐ Yes, I have concerns and I OBJECT to the Winterbourne Wind Farm project
☐ I am neutral but am submitting a COMMENT (below)
☐ I have no concerns, I SUPPORT the plan for this wind farm
☐ I don't know enough about the projects

Further comment

2. Do you feel that Winterbourne Wind, the developer of this proposed wind farm, has provided enough information to enable you to understand the impact of this project?

Please tick one

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don't know

Further comment

* The developer > www.winterbournwindfarm.com.au

3. How/when did you first hear about the project?

4. Is there anything else you'd like to say about the proposed Winterbourne Wind Farm?

5. Do you identify as of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to answer

Your name & address, please. As mentioned, this is essential to validating the survey results. Thanks.

Name

Address

Please feel welcome to provide your email if you'd like to receive updates on the Voice of Walcha campaign

Email

Details on reverse side on ways to submit your survey.
Thank you for taking the time to express your opinion.

VEWEV01

P.O. Box 230- Walcha
OR email To us@voiceforwalcha.com

Voice for Walcha gets a Voice with Council

By John Heffernan

On Thursday December 7, *Voice for Walcha* was granted a session with Walcha Council, allowing the community group to raise several very important issues concerning Winterbourne Wind Farm.

The session opened with a report on the survey of Walcha community's attitude to the wind farm project. Then it followed with a video of a selection of individual community members expressing their feelings and opinions about the various aspects of the project. After that a number of significant failings were highlighted in the 4000 page Environmental Impact Statement published by Vestas, particularly in regard to the depletion of crucial local resources of water and gravel during the construction and post-construction phases of the project, plus a frank outline of looming road and traffic issues as well as a brief look at the major matter of decommissioning twenty years or so in the future. The session ended with a reaching out by *Voice for Walcha* to help Council adopt a clear realistic set of guidelines for renewable energy development in the future.

This was a frank, honest and open meeting that put a number of key, crucially important issues front and centre as needing Council's attention. In fact it was so important that *Voice for Walcha* has decided to make a podcast of it available so that the whole Walcha community can also be made aware of the important matters raised in the Council session.

There will be three audio sessions in the podcast plus a separate video, all of between seven and ten minutes each. The first audio is the Survey report by Kerry Field, an expert in communications analysis; very informative. The second audio deals with the Traffic Impact Assessment of the wind farm project; a real eye-opener! The third audio is *Voice for Walcha's* reaching out to Council; an intelligent call to arms into the future. Then there is the video of some local opinions about Winterbourne Wind; definitely worth watching.

The podcast and video will be spread over two weeks. This really is something you should give some serious attention to.

To find out more, go to: <https://voiceforwalcha.com/podcast/>

Keep working on your EIS submissions

The *Voice for Walcha* drop in shop will be taking a break for the Christmas and New Year period, from 15th December until the new year – except for appointments. We will still be working behind the scenes, reading, answering emails and phone calls and helping with submissions –

so don't hesitate to contact us for help with your submission Email: us@voiceforwalcha.com

The submission period has been extended until the 22nd of January, but if you want to make a submission there is no time like the present – make it happen!

SAVE THE DATE: We will be holding an EIS Rally to support the community efforts to get those submissions made, on Thursday 12th January 2023, 5:30pm at the Walcha Bowling Club.

In the meantime, our website has plenty of information, podcasts, reference material and submission writing guidelines, so feast your eyes at www.voiceforwalcha.com

Voice for Walcha

Deceptive and misleading practices by Vestas ...

[The Winterbourne Wind project developer]

Why would a developer, or a consultant commissioned by the developer, create a montage of a site viewed from behind a bank of trees? Take photo 4, for example, on page 28 of the first Photo Montage series, "Appendix I - LVIA App. D Photomontages and Wireframes_1.pdf".

Turbines in the left hand distance can be shielded by trees in the montage, but the closer, centred turbines are hidden behind a large tree in front of the camera used in the creation of the montage. Why place the camera behind the tree?

This has occurred multiple times and indicates the contempt that the developer has for the community, and the inappropriateness of the EIS report in answering these concerns.

Photomontage 4A

This is NOT a cropped photo, it is taken directly from the report, and includes the full frame.

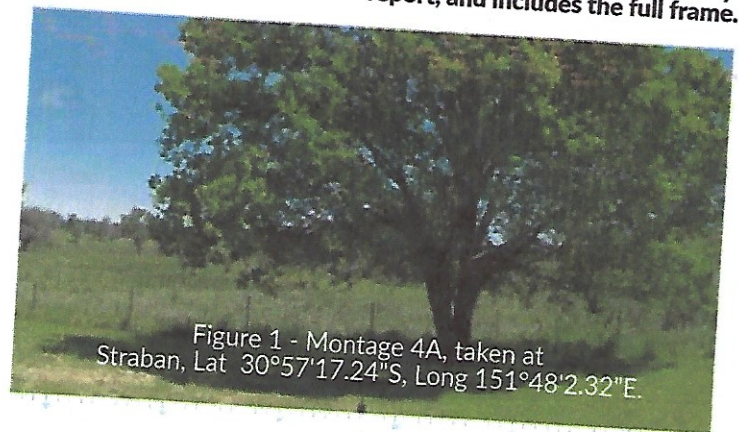


Figure 1 - Montage 4A, taken at Straban, Lat 30°57'17.24"S, Long 151°48'2.32"E.

WINTERBOURNE WIND FARM: LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

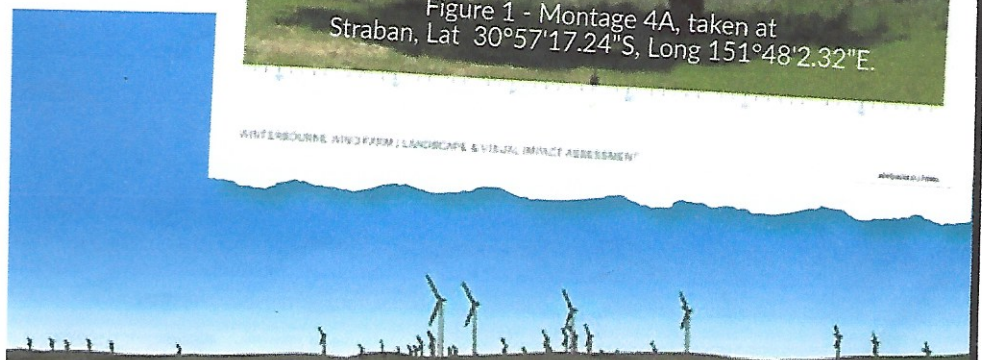


Figure 2 - Model view at same location and view direction (Straban, Lat 30°57'17.24"S, Long 151°48'2.32"E)



SHOP CLOSED FROM DEC 15 UNTIL THE NEW YEAR



Wrong place. Wrong size. Wrong developer.

Apsley Advocate 11/1/23

✗ **Poor Consultation Processes**

Both the Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Communities have been very poorly consulted with by the Developer. The Community has not been afforded sufficient information flow for what could be a game changing development for Walcha. A development that has potentially a 62 years project life.

✗ **Poor Site Selection**

The Developer has failed with statutory obligations to consider feasible alternatives to the site. The site selection and the proposed sizing of the site at 700MW unfairly intensifies impact on a small rural community like Walcha. It is totally inconsistent with any strategic land use planning and against the interests maintaining high quality agricultural land.

✗ **High Ecological Impact**

Due to construction against the unique and beautiful Oxley Wild Rivers National park, part of the World Heritage Gondwana Rain Forests. Concerns with this proximity relate to construction run-off directly impacting the Park and the Macleay Catchment and River itself. Diminished capacity to deploy aerial support to fight fires, Destruction of wildlife corridors into and out of the Park.

✗ **High Health Impact**

From noise and vibration, blade flicker and (during construction) dust inhalation.

✗ **Increased Cumulative Impact**

The size of the Project in the context of the other wind and solar projects which developers intend to be co-located in and around Walcha induce a significant cumulative or compounding effect on the Community including visual impact, noise, road congestion and road destruction.

✗ **Road works prior to, during and after construction**

Leading to extensive road user delays and stoppages. Our roads are simply not made for these vehicle weights, and this heavy traffic intensity. Roads will be heavily damaged, have shortened life and will need to be rebuilt on a large scale.

✗ **Traffic congestion impact**

Of trucks on the Oxley Highway during the 3-year construction period, with 288 trucks per day during the 11 months of peak construction. Unknown additional traffic carting gravel and water, as the developer does not yet know where this is coming from. This additional resource traffic is likely to dwarf the traffic noted in the current traffic report. Add to this outlook the cumulative impacts of tsunami.

✗ **Negative tourism impact**

With gigantic installed turbines sited against iconic visitor destinations and wilderness areas.

✗ **Significant Water Impact**

EIS suggests the requirement for 150 Megalitres. EIS also states 6ML for concrete foundations, but simple arithmetic of 20% of 750cu.m per foundation x 119 turbines gives 17.8ML. Similarly, dust suppression has been grossly understated using industry estimates. Vestas Project Director had earlier stated that 220ML of water will be required. This would be a considerable underestimate - realistic calculation would suggest a conservative 675ML is required.

✗ **Where is the water source?**

EIS suggests it will come from harvestable rights, bores in the area, farm dams or from Walcha council supply. The scale of this requirement is staggering - it will empty the Walcha storage dam, currently under construction, more than 2 times over. Put another way, it is 56,000 x 12,000L truck loads travelling on our roads.

✗ **Massive impact on the existing gravel resource**

Construction of 113km of road plus hardstands is estimated to require 850,000 Tonnes of road building gravel. For perspective, the Brooklyn gravel pit has a current annual license of 28,000 T. (3% of this total requirement). Assuming 22T truck and dog configuration, this is over 38,650 truck loads in total, with an unknown portion of this gravel coming into the project area. The EIS does not include the majority of these gravel and water truck movements in their assessment, as they do not know where this water and gravel is coming from. If the traffic movements estimated above are carried out over a 11-month period - this amounts to an additional 800 truck movements (allowing for both directions of travel) per day!

**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 \$420 Million 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>