



CWO REZist Inc.

We object to the proposed industrial wind project “Spicers Creek” SSD-41134610

1. Capacity

As stated in the EIS, *“The Project will have a capacity of approximately 700 megawatts (MW), with the potential to power approximately 397,000 homes”*. However, AEMO in 2022 stated that dispatchable power is only 29% of capacity for industrial wind projects. Therefore, the claim above by Squadron Energy for the Spicers Creek project is misleading. It will, using AEMO’s figures only have 203MW of dispatchable power and only be able to power 115,130 homes (based on their figures). When truth comes in to play it is suddenly far less beneficial for all the negatives it will bring into the wider community.

2. Project Overview

Squadron Energy’s claim of *“\$2 billion in investment”* is once again misleading, as it could easily be read that this investment will ALL go to the local/regional community. Yet the majority will go offshore to turbine manufacturers, shipping and multinational transport companies, then paid out to multinational contractors and their fly-in, fly-out staff. As evidenced in other wind projects in Australia this proponent’s claim of *“840 full time equivalent (FTE) construction jobs and 47 FTE operational jobs (includes direct and indirect jobs)”* is unlikely to be of any real benefit to the local community with few, if any, of these jobs available to locals (who are unlikely to have the skillset required being a predominately farming community).

3. Visual

Squadron Energy states in its EIS that *“the assessment found it is inevitable that the placement of large scale wind turbines in a rural landscape will alter the existing landscape character of the area to some degree.”* Rural residents will experience a huge negative impact from the proposed wind project, reducing their enjoyment of their home and property. There is an inevitable loss in property value associated with reduced visual amenity. Visual amenity in rural areas can be highly prized, and whilst it may not prevent the sale of an agricultural property, it will attract fewer potential buyers. Many realtors admit that once potential buyers find out that their view will include wind turbines, or that they are close to a wind project, they are no longer interested. This will result in less competition and ultimately a lesser price/value.

There is also the cumulative impact of multiple “renewable” developments in the regional landscape. The EIS states *“Regionally, significant landscape features would remain dominant features of the landscape and it is unlikely the Project would degrade the scenic value of these landscape features”*, however as the CWO REZ continues to attract developers (inevitable after Energy Co’s recent announcement of wanting to DOUBLE the capacity of the REZ), the effect of multiple developments needs to be considered by Squadron Energy and DPE. Applications for wind/solar can no longer be assessed purely on an individual scale.

4. Social Impact

The EIS states significant multiple negative social impacts including

“• Concerns about the incoming construction workforce causing strain on local services and changes to the composition of the community

• Concerns about public safety due to increased traffic

• Visual amenity concerns related to Project infrastructure and how this affects people’s sense of place. “

Yet the benefits only profit the hosts and the council. Token payments to neighbours and some community groups do not benefit the wider community to any meaningful degree. Even Squadron Energy’s attempt at *“investigating further initiatives”* are minor and limited. Their mitigation measures do not fully address the community’s specific concerns. Instead, they depend on small monetary grants and agreements, effectively buying off the poorly informed community organisations and neighbours.

The Ethics Centre (Australia) state that *“The social license to operate is made up of three components: legitimacy, credibility, and trust.*

- **Legitimacy:** *this is the extent to which an individual or organisation plays by the ‘rules of the game’. That is, the norms of the community, be they legal, social, cultural, formal or informal in nature.*
- **Credibility:** *this is the individual or company’s capacity to provide true and clear information to the community and fulfil any commitments made.*
- **Trust:** *this is the willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another. It is a very high quality of relationship and takes time and effort to create.”*

Yet, the number of community members Squadron Energy and/or its consultants have engaged with over the last few years is appallingly small. It is quite clear that Squadron Energy have not fully engaged with the wider community, that their information on the project is kept to a minimum rather than in-depth, and that the community’s concerns are not being meaningfully addressed.

The Ethics Centre sums it up perfectly *“social licence is thought to be something that can be purchased, like an offset. Big companies with controversial practices often give out community grants and investments...social licence to operate might be seen as a kind of transaction where community acceptance can be bought. Of course, such an approach will often fail precisely because it is conceived as a calculated and cynical pay-off.”*

Squadron Energy appears to believe that indeed social licence can be bought. In reality, it has a long way to go before it gains true social licence.

We reserve the right to add to our objection at a later date.

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Supporting individuals and groups within the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone