

Dr Ben Ewald

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Personal submission Winterbourne wind farm. SSD 10471

- I support the proposal.
- I have not made any reportable political donations in the last 2 years, and read and accepted the Dept disclaimer.

Reasons for support:

Climate change is a health issue. Heatwaves, fires, floods and storms are killing people already in Australia and around the world. These will get worse and more frequent with every increment of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Rapid closure of coal generation is one of the easiest and most achievable steps to prevent dangerous climate change.

Australia should proceed with development of electricity generation from wind as fast as possible, as this allows the most rapid retirement of coal generation which is a major contributor to climate damage and air pollution. While solar photovoltaics deliver the cheapest overall energy, the cheapest night time energy is from wind since storage at the scale required to deliver solar electricity overnight is still too expensive. Wind projects are being made more expensive by planning delays, and it is an embarrassing failure of governance that projects are taking many years to gain approval.

Objections to wind farms have been based on false arguments, of which I will address 3.

1. Alterations to landscape views: The assertion that a wind turbine damages a rural view is a matter of opinion. I find them beautiful.
2. Health effects from infrasound: The NHMRC review in 2015 found there was no adverse health effect from wind farm infrasound. This conclusion was strengthened by the research published in 2023 by Marshall reporting a double blind randomised cross over study conducted at the Woolcock Institute in Sydney, showing no adverse physiological, sleep, or health effects from 72 hours of infrasound exposure, although they could show adverse effects on these parameters from simulated traffic noise.
3. That the embedded energy in construction of a wind turbine is equivalent to many years of its operating output. This has been studied for some Australian wind farms by Haywood of Uni Southern QLD, finding an average energy payback time of 14months.

There will doubtless be many other false claims shamelessly presented to the NSW planning process during its consideration. They are easy to make and sometimes more difficult to refute and are used as a deliberate strategy.