

To whom it may concern

I would like to make a submission objecting to the proposed windfarm.

I am a part owner of a 140 acre rural residential property at Barnet, Mt Fairy NSW.

My objections are at least threefold.

Firstly, over the past 15 years, we have been planning our retirement at our bush property at Barnet. We planned to retire in the middle of a rural residential estate, an hours' drive in the country from our family in Canberra. We made these plans, and invested substantially in the property, on the basis that it and surrounding areas were zoned rural residential or agricultural uses, and we could enjoy our hobbies of birdwatching, bushwalking and recreational flying. Not that we would be living in the middle of an industrial estate. Our enjoyment of our investment is substantially destroyed if we look out onto, must drive by, and are surrounded by windfarms. Why do our investments, made on the basis of publicly established land use planning zones, not count for anything with these wretched industrial scale windfarms? If we wanted to retire to a property in the middle of an industrial estate we would have purchased in the middle of industrial Sydney eg Leichardt or Botany.

Secondly, I object on the grounds of the evident increase in bushfire risk from yet another windfarm nearby. Our property was badly damaged by the recent 'Currandoooley' fire. Whether the fire was caused by a crow or a contractor, is irrelevant. If the windfarm wasn't there, there would have been no fire. Windfarms demonstrably increase fire risk to our property. And it is a substantial risk. The thought of having one each side of us substantially detracts from our enjoyment of our property during the summer months, as we would easily be trapped in a 2003 type fire weather event – yes we were in Canberra-Barnet in 2003! What if Jupiter was there as a fire risk to the east of us as well! The fire risk from the east as well as the west will be exacerbated by the proposed additional windfarm, and in particular because of the difficulty of dealing with fires in the complex terrain to the east of us at Nerriga. Wind directions change so it would be extraordinarily irresponsible to effectively double the already high catastrophic fire risk to the Barnet, Boro and Mt Fairy local communities.

Furthermore, it is clear from the recent Currandoooley firefighting efforts that the unhindered movement of large DC10 aircraft was what saved the day. While small aircraft are important to the firefighting effort, they were impotent against a substantial scale and speed of fire. If the windfarm was in place, we would have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars of assets on our property, as the DC10 could not have been operated amidst a windfarm. It is arguable even whether smaller aircraft could have operated in this area if the windfarm were built. With firefighting technologies improving rapidly, our personal safety and property should not be compromised by the presence of the Jupiter windfarm denying us the protection of best practice firefighting technology.

Thirdly, as a professional economist, I understand the complexities of the economics of energy. However, I object to the substantial uncoded negative externalities of this windfarm, and in particular, as for Capital, the risk that changing technology – or litigation costs arising from criminal negligence by the windfarm company, or an economic environment less suited to such capital intensive investments, will render the facility unviable. Who pays the cleanup costs/windfarm demolition costs when the thing is closed down because solar energy innovation – or a successful

litigation against welding onsite during a total fire ban, or a sudden sustained rise in financing costs such as a rise in currently unsustainably low interest rates - makes windfarm operation commercial unviable. Unless the company is required to post a bond to fully cover such risks, the economic risks of windfarms are imposed on neighbouring properties and taxpayers, and should not be considered as acceptable as they are potentially very large. If the development couldn't sustain that, then it is not economic, even if it is potentially profitable to the company shareholders concerned. We have learned this from mining ventures. If or when such closedown, compensation or remediation risks eventuate, companies simply declare bankruptcy and they and their directors are off the hook. For the rest of us, as individuals or society, this cleanup cost cannot be avoided.

I have other objections to the windfarm including its effects on endangered ecological systems including Box/Gum woodland and grassland communities, again we purchased in this area because we valued such ecosystems and the wildlife that they nurture. The environmental damage from habitat loss, bushfire risk and blade strike from this additional windfarm is just as unacceptable as that from the Capital Windfarm. Incrementalism through individual developments doesn't alter the adverse environmental outcomes of loss of important habitat and loss of vulnerable flora and fauna.

The loss of visual amenity which is measured in the form of loss of rural property values does not capture the loss of values outlined above as it places no value on the social and environmental connections and risks listed above, and because such studies are mainly of agricultural land, not residential estates where people specially move there for the rural setting. Market values and compensation do not encompass the economic loss faced by property owners in these circumstances.

In sum, I am strongly opposed to the windfarm proposed by Jupiter and believe the economic costs and risks are high and unacceptable.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Julie Smith, B Ec(hons), B A; PhD (Economics)  
268 Barnet Drive  
Mt Fairy NSW.  
E:julie.smith@anu.edu.au