

to Secretary

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
Councillor Rod Buhr

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20 April 2015

Ms Carolyn McNally  
Office of the Secretary  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Ms McNally

Thank you for your response to my correspondence directed to the former Minister for Planning, the Honourable Prue Goward, regarding ERM Power's proposed gas fired power station at Wellington, New South Wales.

Community concern regarding this project stemmed largely from a document developed by Mr Martin Sannikka, a former noise specialist and resident of Wellington. The document, which was sent with my letter to Ms Goward, was distributed widely throughout the Wellington community in late February 2015. It then became the point of discussion at a public meeting held in Wellington in early March 2015. ERM Power were also present at that meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting it was agreed that ERM Power, Martin Sannikka and representatives from Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) would be invited to attend a meeting at Council. The purpose being to give Mr Sannikka an opportunity to present his data to ERM's noise expert for interpretation and discussion.

That meeting was held at Wellington Council Chambers on Wednesday, 15 April, 2015. Unfortunately, Mr Sannikka declined to attend. In his absence I tabled his documents and these were subsequently examined by PB. There was a recognition from PB that Mr Sannikka has used a recognised method of calculating his noise level decay and that the figures presented were correct.

However PB pointed to the fact that the methodology applied by Mr Sannikka is used solely for "In Field" measurements and was the wrong application for a project of this type. Further, PB explained that they had used the internationally recognised software "Concawe" to produce their noise level predictions. PB stood by their data and sighted other similar projects they had been commissioned to produce noise level predictions without issue.

In general discussion there was an admission by ERM and PB that a discrepancy existed in their published noise level predictions. Council was informed that this was likely due to a software issue. ERM committed to investigating the matter. It was also recognised that ERM had failed to properly engage with or inform the Wellington community of the design change and the likely positive impact this will have on predicted noise emissions.

To that end I ask the Department to seek clarification on the discrepancy on noise levels and to mandate the formation of a Community Consultative Committee. This being chaired by an independent person and consisting of community members, ERM Power and Wellington Council.

Council is requesting that a final decision to extend development consent not be made until these two issues have been addressed.

On behalf of Council we thank you for your quick action in respect to this matter.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by a long horizontal line that extends to the right.

Clr Rod Buhr  
MAYOR