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13/6/16

Planning Services,
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RE: Rye Park Wind Farm Project Application – Application Number SSD-6693

I am pleased to have the opportunity to make a secondary submission in response to the Rye Park Wind Farm response to submissions. I have made additional comment to why I feel that this project is not suitable for this location.

I have been living in the Rye Park district for the past 25 years since my marriage in 1991. We have two children who have attended the Rye Park Primary School and are the fourth generation of the Veness family to do so. I have worked within the Boorowa Shire in the shearing industry for 13 years and have been travelling to work in Yass and now Murrumbateman to work for the past 12 years.

I strongly oppose the development of the Rye Park Wind Farm Project as I feel that there are far too many factors that the proponents (Trust Power) have dismissed and/or require further scrutiny.

Our home is located on the eastern side of Rye Park, the closest side to the proposed wind farm. The distance from the closest wind farm to our home is less than three kilometres. Not to ignore the possibility, if the Bango Wind Farm should also proceed, this figure will dramatically increase this number of turbines from the Southern to Western aspect of our home. We could be surrounded!

I have many concerns, but will document what I feel are the most relevant in my situation. (I have mentioned some of these facts in my previous submission in 2014, but I am still not satisfied with the response that has been provided), I have adjusted accordingly and detailed what that I feel has not been addressed:

1. Community consultation/Attitude: As stated on page 18 & 19 of the Rye Park Wind Farm Environment Assessment (RPWFEA), January 2014. "In 2010 the NSW Government commissioned a report 'Community Attitudes to Wind Farms in NSW' to assess residents attitudes towards targets set to achieve 20% renewable energy sources by 2020. The survey was conducted by telephone of 2022 resident's aged 18 years and older and 300 businesses across the 6 Renewable Energy Precincts, including the ACT/NSW Border Areas and a control area in regional NSW."

One of the key findings from this study was the overall support for wind farms as a source of energy generation within the vicinity of a residence. 85% of the population across the precincts supported wind farms in NSW, with 80% supporting them within their local precinct, and 79% supporting a wind farm being built 10 km from their residence." ALSO, "Based on this survey, including observations made by the project consultation team, it can be concluded that communities in the Yass Valley region are generally supportive of wind farms. **The survey also showed that a majority of the population did not feel they had adequate information about wind farms, even in areas where general wind farm awareness was much greater.**"

How can any valid result be devised from a sample of 2022 residents (page 18 of RPWFEA). According to (Ref: Pathways to Wind Power Development in the Australian Capital Region, dated 17/12/13, pg 22) "that these residents included NSW/ACT Border Region, South Coast and Cooma-Monaro which are located within the ACR". When the population of the Australian Capital Region in June 2011 was 613,600 (Re: Recent Population trends in the Australian Capital Region, Prepared by the ACT Demographer, Economic, Regional and Planning Policy, Chief Minister and Cabinet Directorate April 2012, page 1). How can a sample population that is actually approximately 0.0033% of the population of the Australian Capital Region be recorded as an indication of what the majority of the region actually think, when even the RPWFEA admits that the majority of the population did not feel they had adequate information on the subject? What would the result of this study show if all available information on wind turbines was available prior to survey??

I find it disturbing that the consultation process which has been detailed in point 6.1 of the RPWFEA proposal may not be a correct indication of what the residents may actually feel if the reality was to have a wind turbine situated within 3 kilometres from their home. Or according to map 9.4 with scale 80 turbines within a 10 kilometre radius from their back door as in our case.

As for consultation in the Rye Park Community, only those selected members of the community or let us call them "possible hosts" have been privileged enough to actually be approached or consulted about any proposed wind farms in our locality. Secret closed door meetings and non-disclosure clauses has already seen the destruction of family and friendships whilst the rest of the community wonder what in earth is going on here, and that is even before a sod of soil has been moved. What is our community going to become if it has started already?

A community meeting was held on the 4th of June, 2014 at the Rye Park Memorial Hall. This meeting was open to all the Rye Park community with no specific point of view, just information so that everyone could be advised about what is the Rye Park Wind Farm. The proponents (Epuron) were asked to attend the meeting to provide some "public consultation" but did not attend. The meeting was attended by 104 residents. An independent survey was conducted by ballot box on the night. Of the 104 residents, 88 people voted. Of the 88, 80 people (or 90.9%) were opposed to the Rye Park Wind Farm development, 6 supported the development (0.068%) and 2 were undecided. I feel that this is a real indication of how the local community feel and these are the Australian Capital Region residents that this proposal impacts the most.

2. Telecommunications are also a major concern that I have. The Rye Park area already has limited accessibility to mobile phone, internet, television and UHF radio. We have had to spend approximately \$1200 on VAST television because the new "great & free" digital television transmission does not connect adequately to this area. We cannot have only a mobile phone as they too are limited to reception, so we still have to pay for the home phone so we can be contacted when at home. We have satellite internet because we do not receive the National Broadband Network in Rye Park. UHF radio works in some areas but not in others. We struggle along paying an absolute fortune to stay in tune with the outside world and if the proposed wind farm occurs there is no guarantee that our TV, Internet, UHF radio & phone services will not be negatively affected. All factors discussed in the application state that no services should change. They do not discuss how the number of turbines in such a small area will impact our communication. The thousands of dollars that we have already spent and continue to spend on trying to be connected to the outside world will be in vain as we will be in an even worse situation than we are already. Why are we been treated like we are not important in any of this?

3. I have been an active member of the Rye Park Rural Fire Brigade for the past 22 years. The increase risk of being unable to protect our home, property and the Rye Park village from the East from possible wild fire is very frightening indeed. On the 4th & 5th May, 2013 as a fire burnt out of control in the proposed wind turbine development area, the support from water bomber aircraft to assist and control the fire was necessary. During the aerial water bombing witnessed by my fellow

brigade members and myself of the Rye Park Rural Fire Brigade in May 2013. It is necessary for the aircraft to come approximately 30 to 40 metres above the fire zone in order to effectively deliver the fire retardant to effectively extinguish the fire. The terrain which the fire was burning was such that without the assistance of the aerial water bombing would have burnt considerably more property and imposing more risk to lives, homes and livestock.

The Civil Safety Authority (CASA) in regulation No. 157 (1988) states that fixed wing aircraft cannot fly 500m above wind turbines or within a 1.2km radius. Given that the proposed height of a turbine is approximately 157metres tall with an additional 500metres no fly zone, the use of aerial water bombers as a vital fire control measure will be valueless. At approximately 657metres above the fire, it would be impossible to deliver any fire retardant to the required fire location with any effect.

As a member of the Rye Park RFS, we are not trained nor equipped to fight an industrial wind turbine fire. RFS has safety regulations as to how close we can get to turbine fires due to the hazardous material involved.

So not only do the turbines restrict the ability to distinguish fires in the local range by air craft, reduce the communications from the local brigade through our UHF radios, but also restrict the ability for active ground units to attend and distinguish fires as they occur due to the hazardous materials involved and from the wind turbines themselves. In the event of fire possibly due to lightning strikes and the possible risk of fires ignited by the turbines themselves, left to their own accord have the ability to grow and destroy many homes, livelihoods and lives of the greater region. Who will be responsible for any damage incurred by such an event? How do we as volunteer fire fighters try and protect our community and our families when we physically can't get to the fire to put it out and cannot access the required support that can.

4. Road access: The sacrifice that we make for living in such a beautiful and peaceful place in Rye Park include having to travel to access most things including work, sporting activities and to attend any shop. My husband (who works in the shearing industry and drives a truck for his father's livestock & wool carrier business) and I are extremely concerned how the proposed traffic and transport assessment will impact our access to work. I travel 130km's a day to Murrumbateman to work along the Rye Park –Dalton Road then onto Cook's Hill Road. I am concerned with the estimated 30110 trips anticipated by Trust Power in the development phase of the wind farm over all access routes. The possible road closures, increased traffic of approximately 600 vehicles a day, the slower trip times, increased accident risk (more vehicles and drivers unfamiliar to this dirt road and such driving conditions); damage to roads and subsequently damage to our vehicles are obvious impacts to not only our family but every family that uses those roads on a routine basis.

Also, Trust Power has proposed that trucks and associated vehicles will access the Rye Park wind farm through the main street (Yass St) of Rye Park. This will increase the risk of danger though the construction period for the local community and our children.

- The local bus stop is located in Yass St, and is the community pick up for the school bus service to collect and deliver children that attend Boorowa Schools. This would be significant risk for the safety of the Rye Park children as they access this bus stop twice a day every week day.
- Children also access the Rye Park Recreation grounds to enjoy the play equipment and associated facilities. Excessive traffic accessing the wind farm through this road will dramatically affect the everyday life of our most valuable resource...OUR CHILDREN.
- The only emergency service within a 20km radius is the Rye Park Rural Fire Brigade which is located also in the main street (Yass St) of Rye Park. Due to the increase likelihood that an emergency will occur as there will be significantly more traffic on the roads, the emergency response time could be extended as it could take longer for brigade personal to get to the

Brigade shed and also longer time for dispatch from the shed. This is also increasing the time before vital assistance is on site in an emergency situation.

5. The **decrease in value of our family home and associated property**. We live the eastern side of the Rye Park village (closest to the proposed wind farm development). Our only asset is our four bedroom home and attached 7 acres. Our family has lived in this home since 2002. We have extended and improved the home to be a comfortable home for our family of four. Local real estate agents have already identified that there is a 40% to 60% decline in value of properties in our area due to the proposed wind farm development. Our plans for the future were to see our children complete their education and for us to live on in this special place. If we are required to relocate due to the wind farm, how will we sell our existing property for enough capital to purchase another property? There would be such a reduced number of interested parties that would want to live within an area in such close proximity to a wind farm on the Northern, Southern and Eastern aspect. I only had lunch recently in Yass with seven other ladies. Without stating my opposition to this project, I enquired whether anyone would buy a property near a wind farm. 100% or all seven present stated that they under no circumstances would want to buy property near such a project. If that is just a sample of the nearby community, who would ever buy our house if we needed to sell. There would be no demand and therefore no market. Would you buy a property in such location?

6. **Unselected wind turbine model**: The Revised Landscape & visual impact assessment states on page on page 29 that "As new turbines come onto the market, it is possible that the final turbine selected may exceed, in minor respects, the turbine parameters described above, however the maximum tip height will be 157m." This fact was raised in my initial submission and I still find this a difficult fact to stomach. The true impact to our health and lives cannot be ascertained without direct evidence regarding the specific model, size and other vital studies demonstrating what risks our family will be exposed to if these proposed wind turbines which will be the largest standing such structures in Australia. It is like we have no voice and no choice. It seems like the buck is passed at all costs. Meanwhile, move the project to our back door and let us live or die by the feel good subsidies funding these projects. What are the long term health risks to not only our community but to all the other communities that have been exposed to such wind power when we don't even know what is going to be standing in front of us??

7. I am concerned that the **health and well being** of our family and the community that we live is being compromised. The application makes mention that there is no scientific evidence of adverse health effects of Wind Power. There appears to be more than enough evidence that this is **not the case**. "A statement from the people living with the Waubra Wind Farm near Ballarat Victoria, 14 December 2011" confirms the concerns I have and document the adverse health events that have occurred since the operation of the wind turbines has started. The proposed wind turbines in the RPWFAE are referenced as standing 157 metres high. The wind turbines in the Waubra Farm are only approximately 120 metres high. This concerns me even more. BIGGER turbines, LOADER noise, LARGER ground current, BIGGER electromagnetic radiation, BIGGER effect on the environment and those who live here. I am not convinced that there is enough evidence proving that wind power generation is a safe alternative. More studies are required. Is this going to be another Mr Fluffy scheme gone badly, and we are the guinea pigs in the firing line??

8. **Environmental**: The proposed size in area that will be cleared of natural vegetation will have a major impact to the environment and the associated ecosystem that exists in our local area. Associated earthworks with the construction of access roads and clearance areas that will totally destroy the virgin bush that exists in the proposed wind farm location. Photos attached were taken within this site.



Photo's of native bush in proposed wind farm location.

The virgin vegetation in the proposed site has never been previously cleared in recorded history. This pure untouched land will be destroyed forever. This land contains valuable historical vegetation which is an asset to be protected for future generations.

The de-vegetation of such areas will dramatically impact on the many native species of endangered birds (Superb parrot, wedge tailed eagles), bats, rare native orchids and the Southern Pygmy Perch. The Southern Pygmy Perch will be dramatically affected by erosion and associated runoff into the Lagoon Creek, Blakney Creek and Pudman Creek. These are only a few of the many species and colonies of native flora and fauna which currently live in this beautiful, native and untouched environment but will be destroyed by the clearing of such land to make way for the wind turbines. I still fear that Trust Power has not investigated the full environmental impact of this major industrial construction will have on this country. But maybe that was their intention.

In conclusion, there are many aspects of the Rye Park Wind Farm Response to Submissions that I consider to be incorrect or require further investigation. These include: Community consultation and attitudes, telecommunications, property at risk from bush fire, road access, the decrease in value of land, unselected wind turbine model, health & wellbeing of my family and of those in this area, environmental impact.

I pray that the Rye Park Wind Farm Development does not proceed as it will destroy not only the beautiful location that we live in, but also our hope and spirit. Without that there isn't much left.

Thank you for considering this submission. I **retain the right to submit further information.**

Regards,

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