

The economic claims made by the proponent do not stand up to scrutiny

On page 8 of the Flyers Creek Wind Farm Modification 4 EIS, the proponent suggests that the wind farm, as tailored by Modification 4, will provide the following primary benefit:

“It will result in a direct injection of approximately \$1 million per annum to the local community through payments to landholders, permanent staff and community fund contributions.”

At first glance, this is notable, but the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) would not be impressed if they examined the claims even slightly below the surface. In fact, DPE should insist on a detailed breakdown of this claim.

The term “direct injection” clearly means that this approximate \$1 million/annum will be spent in the local community. This is not supportable. There is no guarantee that any or all of the host payments will be spent in the local community. The Jupiter primary host planned to buy his Winnebago and “be off”.

There is no detail on what level of permanent staff will be associated with the Flyers Creek wind farm.

Infigen, the proponent for this wind farm, in its June, 2016 Newsletter said:

“Our team at Infigen is made up of 58 employees – three are placed at the wind farms in NSW, WA and SA, and the rest in the head office in Sydney.”

<https://www.infigenenergy.com/capital-precinct/community-updates/newsletter-june-2016/>

DPE on Page 6 of its 2013 Assessment for this wind farm wrote:

“The Proponent also states that the project will provide a significant economic boost to the local community by providing employment opportunities through the creation of 100 FTE jobs during construction and 5 FTE operational jobs.”

There is a vast difference between permanent staff and FTE’s

Also, contrast this with what Infigen writes on Page 8 of the EIS for Modification 4:

“It will provide full time employment for a peak of 140 people during construction and up to 6 to 10 ongoing regional jobs during its operational life.”

Clearly, some confusion reigns as to **gross** job levels associated with this project. A genuine assessment of job levels would include both jobs created and jobs destroyed.

Unlike for other wind farms, where proponents are more forthcoming, Infigen has not told us the levels of community funding it is planning, neither in this modification nor in the original EIS. Knowing the annual contribution for Capital and Woodlawn and the planned contribution for Capital 2, it is important that we know the level of funding and the terms.

DPE seems to be quite happy with this omission.

This modification is predicted to increase the project's output by 15 to 20 %. The revenue from electricity sales, and more importantly REC sales is highly likely to remain with Infigen.

There is no indication that:

- payments to landholders will increase.
- permanent staff numbers will increase.
- community fund contributions will increase.

But, let us assume when details of the claim are released, it will result in a direct injection of approximately \$1 million per annum to the local community.

Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act requires the determining body to consider the economic impacts in the locality of the proposal, both positive and negative. The department has never insisted that proponents provide this information. For a wind farm, the department has never provided this information to the PAC/IPC and consequently, the PAC/IPC has never considered it.

If all parties did the evaluation the Act requires they would find some economic impacts on the other side of the ledger.

For instance, just ONE lifestyle development that does not take place, and there is ample evidence over the last 10 years since the original SEARs were developed, that lifestyle investment is severely curtailed in the presence of wind developments, wipes out this one million dollar annual "direct injection". Do the sums:- land purchase, a dwelling, a garden, dams, internal roads, power, sewerage and water, livestock, machinery, sheds and outbuildings...and on it goes. Unlike the wind farm contribution, this single missed lifestyle investment would also have contributed much further financial benefit in the years ahead.

The department should insist that all economic information is made available as required by the Act. Failing that, this modification should be rejected as it is impossible for the determining body to do its job.